



Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Author	L Mowat
Approved by	P Alexandre, L Hellak, L Mowat
Effective date	1 August 2025
Version number	1.1
Date of last revision	27 July 2026
Next review date	31 July 2027

Rockets Netball (RN) is a netball club which was established as an association in Portugal in October 2023. RN is a competitive club, always striving to improve and achieve as highly as possible. However, we also want the Rockets family to be a fun and welcoming club, where your teammates are your friends both on and off the court.

RN is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare and wellbeing of all children and adults in its care, by creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment. Safeguarding is about taking proactive steps to prevent harm taking place and being ready to respond if we're concerned that harm may be happening. We recognise the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect everyone from harm, abuse and exploitation.

This policy outlines our commitment to protecting children and vulnerable adults. It doesn't exist in isolation and interacts with, and complements, RN's other policies, procedures and guidelines - including, but not limited to, the Constitution, Codes of Conduct, Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure, Reporting a Safeguarding Concern Procedure, Youth players transition to adult team guidelines, Transport and Accommodation Guidelines, Communications and Social Media Policy, and Filming and Photography Policy.

1. Definitions

- 1.1. *Child / Children / Junior player*: Anyone under the age of 18 years old
- 1.2. *Vulnerable Adult(s)*: Anyone 18 years or over who is, or may be, unable to take care of themselves against harm or exploitation, whether due to age, physical or mental disability or current situation.
- 1.3. *Safeguarding*: Safeguarding – is a broad term that refers to all the policies, procedures and actions that an organisation takes and puts in place to ensure that anyone working on their behalf, and anyone benefitting from the work they are doing, does not come to any harm, either intended or unintended, as a result of this work taking place. It includes both policies and procedures and the culture within the organisation that either promotes or hinders best safeguarding practice.

- 1.4. *Child Safeguarding* - refers to all the actions we take to keep all children we come into contact with safe. It includes the proactive measures we put in place to ensure children do not come to harm as a result of our contact with them.
- 1.5. *Adult safeguarding* – refers to all the actions we take to ensure that any adults we come into contact with through our work, or who work on our behalf are safe. It includes adults connected to the children we are seeking to benefit and adults that are included in the definition of our personnel.
- 1.6. *Child Protection*: Refers to the actions we take when we have specific concerns that a particular child is at risk of significant harm.
- 1.7. *Harm*: Refers to the damage caused by violence, abuse, harassment and neglect, and includes emotional, physical and sexual harm
- 1.8. *Personnel*: Any adults acting on behalf of, or representing, RN in any capacity including (and not limited to), members of the three governing bodies (Board of the General Assembly, Board of Directors, Supervisory Board) employees, volunteers, coaches and adult members.

2. Date of policy and review schedule

- 2.1. This document has been approved by the Board of Directors on 1 August 2025.
- 2.2. This policy will be reviewed after 1 year initially and then every 3 years by the Board, or:
 - when there are changes in relevant legislation
 - when there are changes in guidance on safeguarding children or adults
 - following any issues or concerns relating to safeguarding within the organisation, whichever is the sooner.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. The responsibility for updating and gaining approval of this policy is assigned to the Board of Directors.
- 3.2. The responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy rests with the Board of Directors.
- 3.3. This policy applies to, and the responsibility for responding to a safeguarding concern lies with, all adults associated with RN. This includes all RN personnel and the parents/guardians of children who are youth members of RN, who are required to sign and comply with the Code of Conduct applicable to their roles.

4. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy is to:

- 4.1. Ensure that the welfare of children and vulnerable adults remains the paramount consideration in all aspects of the work of organisation.
- 4.2. Ensure all personnel, and the parents/guardians of children who are youth members of RN, understand how to implement good safeguarding practice in their role.
- 4.3. Ensure all personnel know how to respond appropriately where concerns arise, so that action is taken in a timely manner and there is no unnecessary delay.
- 4.4. Provide clarity around the process that will be followed when this policy is breached.

5. Legal and organisational policy context

This Policy has been developed with due regard to the following laws and guidance:

- 5.1. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- 5.2. European Union - Council of Europe joint project "Child Safeguarding in Sport"
 - 5.2.1. Resolution of the Council of Ministers No. 112/2020 approving the National Strategy for the Rights of the Child for the period 2021-2024 (only available in Portuguese) - <https://files.diariodarepublica.pt/1s/2020/12/24500/0000200022.pdf>
 - 5.2.2. Country-specific roadmap for effective child safeguarding in sport policies - Portugal (only available in English) - <https://rm.coe.int/csis-portugal-roadmap/1680a57bab>
- 5.3. International Safeguards for Children in Sport - <https://safeinsport.org/>
- 5.4. Law No. 147/99, of 1 September - Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger (only available in Portuguese) - https://www.pgdlisboa.pt/leis/lei_mostra_articulado.php?nid=545&tabela=leis&so_miolo=

6. Principles

- 6.1. The safety and welfare of the child or vulnerable adult will be the paramount consideration in everything we do.
- 6.2. Children and vulnerable adults have a right to have their voices heard, and their views should genuinely shape and influence how we work.
- 6.3. Everyone has an equal right to protection from harm regardless of their ability, age, biological sex, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, or social background.
- 6.4. It is vital that it is recognised that some children and vulnerable adults may be more vulnerable than others of a similar age and that some regretfully may encounter

extra barriers due to their ability, age, biological sex, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, or social background.

- 6.5. It is the responsibility of safeguarding and child protection experts to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, but it is the responsibility of all RN personnel and the parents/guardians of children who are members of RN to act appropriately and report all concerns.
- 6.6. Breaches of this policy (or any other associated policies, procedures and guidelines) may result in formal disciplinary action being taken, following the process outlined in the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure document.

7. Rockets Netball will:

- 7.1. Promote the health and wellbeing of children and adults, by providing opportunities for them to take part in sport safely.
- 7.2. Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children and adults.
- 7.3. Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of children and adults and protect them from abuse.
- 7.4. Require all personnel to adopt and abide by this policy and other associated policies, procedures and guidelines.
- 7.5. Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children or vulnerable adults with sensitivity, in line with this policy as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- 7.6. Manage information confidentially and only share it without consent where the duty to protect children or vulnerable adults from harm supersedes an individual's right to privacy.
- 7.7. Observe national published guidance for the protection and wellbeing of children.
- 7.8. Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy, along with other associated policies, procedures and guidelines.
- 7.9. Ensure that all identified youth team coaches, who have responsibility for coaching children, are subject to safeguarding recruitment checks and undertake safeguarding training.
- 7.10. When necessary, undertake a safeguarding risk assessment and mitigate any risks identified before an activity outside of normal training (e.g. travelling as a team to take part in a tournament, an overnight stay without a parent/guardian, fun day) takes place which involves children and/or vulnerable adults.