

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER REPORT

I thought I would start with explaining the role of the County Safeguarding Officer:

The County Safeguarding Officer is a point of contact for Club Safeguarding Officers (CSOs) when concerns are raised about a club or from within a league. Occasionally they should also be available as a contact for clubs, should someone feel they cannot approach their own CSO.

The County Safeguarding Officer **will not** receive reports of, record or investigate serious or repeated instances of abuse or poor practice: that is for the England Netball safeguarding team to do, but they may on occasion be requested by EN to support them.

The County Safeguarding Officer is responsible for supporting CSOs within the county in relation to giving advice about the Wellbeing, Safeguarding and Protection of all members, promoting good practice and Safeguarding within Clubs and Leagues and to work with others towards the safest and most inclusive environments.

For advice and guidance on safeguarding there are useful resources on the England Netball website under Safeguarding. <https://www.englishnetball.co.uk/governance/safeguarding>

Here you will find new sections for clubs, players, coaches and parents as well as new guidance documents including on how to recognise and respond to abuse and poor practice and some case examples.

England Netball have recently carried out an audit to ensure the club safeguarding officers (CSO) in clubs with one or more junior member (under 18), have DBS checks in place. There are quite a number that do not and they have been emailed directly.

My first request is for each league to put a process in place to ensure that every club / team participating in your league, has a CSO and they are named on Engage. And if the club / team have any U18 members, each CSO has a current DBS.

England Netball send useful quarterly Safeguarding bulletins and guidance to those CSOs.

I am hoping by now the league AGMs have been held and I can start building a contact list of all the appointed CSOs for the leagues. My second request therefore is for each **league** to supply me with the name of your appointed CSO for season 24/25. I would like to support them in ensuring that all teams participating in their respective competitions (who have any U18 players), have the following checks completed:

- Every coach has the relevant DBS checks in place (if any U18 players)
- Every coach and volunteer, including the CSO, have the correct safeguarding training
- Clubs hold records of the DBS checks, training completion and renewal dates

It is important to highlight that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and every volunteer should remain vigilant and challenge any concerning behaviour. Safeguarding shouldn't just be there for when something goes wrong. It should be embedded into everything the club and league does.

I am here to support you with this and look forward to working with you 😊

Christina Berenger

You can contact me on berkssafeguarding@gmail.com