HARINGEY HEAT BASKETBALL CLUB (CIC)

Safeguarding Children Policy

V2.0 — Updated May 2026 | Review: May 2027

Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer (DLSO): Nikki Distras, Club Secretary
Tel: 07814 076541 | Email: haringeyheatbasketball@outlook.com
Deputy DLSO: Laxmi Harding, Club Chair
In an emergency: Police 999 | NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 | Childline: 0800 1111

Section 1: Policy Statement and Principles

1.1 Policy Statement

Haringey Heat Basketball Club is committed, under the terms of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, the Children Act 1989 and 2004, and Basketball England safeguarding requirements, to enabling every child who participates in our activities to do so in a fun, safe and friendly environment and to be protected from harm.

All staff, coaches, volunteers and Directors involved with Haringey Heat Basketball Club recognise that they have a duty of care towards children and young people. A child is defined as any person under the age of 18 (Children Act 1989 definition).

1.2 Key Principles

- The child's welfare is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse and poor practice
- All incidents of suspicious or poor practice and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All children have the right to participate in basketball in an enjoyable and safe environment
- It is the responsibility of statutory agencies to determine whether abuse has occurred, but it is everyone's responsibility to report concerns
- Confidentiality must be upheld in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Human Rights Act 1998

1.3 DBS Checks

All coaches, team bench personnel, minibus drivers and any other staff or volunteers with regular unsupervised access to young people hold a current Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, processed through the Basketball England DBS system. No person may work unsupervised with young people until a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check has been received.

1.4 Communication of This Policy

This policy is available on the Haringey Heat Basketball Club website (www.haringeyheatbasketball.com) and is provided to all new coaches, volunteers and staff upon joining. It is reviewed annually.

Section 2: Recognising Abuse and Poor Practice

2.1 Forms of Abuse

Child abuse can take many forms. Staff, coaches and volunteers should be aware of the following:

NEGLECT: Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of health or development.

PHYSICAL ABUSE: May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. In a sporting context this may include training that exceeds the child's capacity.

SEXUAL ABUSE: Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, including non-contact activities.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: Persistent emotional ill-treatment causing severe and persistent effects on a child's emotional development, including constant criticism, humiliation or unrealistic pressure to perform.

BULLYING: Deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated, including verbal, physical, online and social media bullying.

2.2 Indicators of Harm

The presence of one or more of the following does not prove abuse has occurred, but concerns should be reported:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries inconsistent with the explanation given
- Significant changes in behaviour — withdrawal, sudden outbursts, regression
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or behaviour
- Distrust of adults or difficulty forming relationships
- Suicidal threats or self-harm
- Significant weight loss/gain or changes in eating patterns
- A child disclosing abuse directly or indirectly

Section 3: Good Practice Guidelines

3.1 Expected Behaviour

All personnel should demonstrate exemplary behaviour. Good practice includes:

- Always working in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations
- Treating all young people equally, with respect and dignity
- Never engaging in personal contact with a young person via phone, email or social media without the specific permission of a parent/carer
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first
- Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries at all times
- Keeping up to date with qualifications, training and insurance
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs and any treatment given
- Informing parents at the first opportunity if their child is injured

3.2 Practice Never to Be Sanctioned

The following must never occur:

- Taking a young person to your home
- Spending time alone with a young person away from others
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative behaviour
- Sharing accommodation with a young person
- Any form of inappropriate touching
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a young person
- Humiliating, bullying or reducing a young person to tears
- Engaging in personal contact via phone, email or social media with a young person without parental consent

3.3 Coaching Ratios and Safeguarding

All sessions must comply with Basketball England's recommended coach-to-participant ratios. The requirement for appropriate adult-to-child ratios is a safeguarding requirement and non-negotiable. All coaches and bench personnel hold Enhanced DBS checks through the Basketball England system.

3.4 Changing Rooms

Young people should be supervised at all times in changing rooms by two members of staff. Adult staff must not change or shower at the same time as young people. No photographic equipment of any kind may be used in changing room environments.

3.5 Photography and Filming

Parental consent must be obtained before photographs or videos of young people are taken or published. When filming sessions for player development purposes, the club's iPhone and tripod should only be used by authorised coaches. No personal details of young people should ever be published alongside images. See the AidaForm registration for consent records.

Section 4: Responding to Concerns and Disclosures

4.1 If a Young Person Discloses Abuse

If a young person tells you they are being abused or you witness behaviour that causes concern:

- React calmly — do not show shock or distress
- Tell the young person they are not to blame and were right to tell
- Take what they say seriously
- Do not probe for more information or ask leading questions
- Do not make promises of confidentiality
- Do not approach the alleged abuser
- Record what was said, heard or observed as soon as possible using the Incident Report Form
- Report immediately to the DLSO (Nikki Distras)

4.2 Reporting Procedure

1. Record the concern in writing immediately using the Incident Report Form (available from the Club Secretary).

2. Report to the DLSO (Nikki Distras) immediately. The DLSO will contact the relevant statutory agency (Children's Services or Police) and advise on further action.

3. If you cannot reach the DLSO, contact the Deputy DLSO (Laxmi Harding). If neither is available, contact Children's Services or the Police directly.

4. If the concern involves the DLSO, report directly to the Deputy DLSO or the Board of Directors.

5. For expert advice at any time: NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 or Childline 0800 1111.

4.3 Confidentiality

Information should be handled on a strict need-to-know basis. All documents relating to concerns or allegations must be stored securely with access limited to those who need it. Information is shared only with the DLSO, statutory agencies, and others as directed by statutory agencies.

4.4 Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

Any allegation of abuse or poor practice against a coach, volunteer or staff member will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly. The DLSO will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Basketball England's safeguarding team. A decision will be taken on whether to suspend the individual pending investigation. The welfare of children and young people is always paramount.

Section 5: Key Contacts

Haringey Heat DLSO	Nikki Distras — 07814 076541

Haringey Heat Deputy DLSO	Laxmi Harding — Club Chair
Police (emergency)	999
Police (non-emergency)	101
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000
Childline	0800 1111
Haringey Children's Services	020 8489 0000
Basketball England Safeguarding	www.basketballengland.co.uk/safeguarding
NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit	0116 234 7278 | thecpsu.org.uk

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Approved by the Board of Directors, May 2026

Nikki Distras, Club Secretary & Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer
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