



Safeguarding Policy

Belfast Star acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice. Belfast Star has developed this policy in conjunction with Basketball NI Safeguarding Policy and Basketball Ireland's Safeguarding Policy.

The term child protection has been changed to safeguarding as it not only reflects a broader obligation for the health and safety of our members but also the protection from abuse. Safeguarding may be defined as "Doing everything possible to minimise the risk of harm to children and young people".

Safeguarding is about being proactive and putting measures in place in advance of any contact with children to ensure that children are going to be kept safe. This will be done by:

- Ensuring that volunteers are appropriately checked via Access Northern Ireland when recruited.
- Ensuring our volunteers are given appropriate training to ensure that they know what they need to do in order to keep children safe.
- Ensuring our volunteers are made aware of the indicators of abuse in respect of young members

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience of sport at Belfast Star Basketball Club in a safe and child centred environment.
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in Basketball or outside of the activity.

We acknowledge that some children, including disabled children or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

As part of our safeguarding policy we will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- value, listen to and respect children.
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.
- adopt safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people.
- provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about our policies, procedures and behaviour codes and follow them confidently and competently.
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents or concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual(s) who raise or disclose the concern.
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.
- record and store information securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
- prevent the employment or deployment of unsuitable individuals by recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- appoint a nominated safeguarding lead for children and young people, a deputy and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding.
- develop and implement an effective online safety policy and related procedures.
- share information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their parents via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions.
- make sure that children, young people and their parents know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- Everyone involved in providing activities for children will be given access to appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people.

Signs of abuse can be physical, behavioural or developmental. The following is a list of some indicators of abuse, but it is not exhaustive:

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
• Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas • Repeated injuries • Black eyes • Injuries to the mouth • Torn or bloodstained clothing • Burns or scalds • Bites • Untreated fractures • Marks from implements • Inconsistent stories/excuses relating to injuries • Weight loss	• Unexplained changes in behaviour becoming withdrawn or aggressive • Difficulty in making friends • Distrustful of adults or excessive attachment to adults • Sudden drop in performance • Changes in attendance pattern • Inappropriate sexual awareness, behaviour or language • Reluctance to remove clothing • Crying • Reluctance to go home

Belfast Star in Responding to Disclosure of Abuse will :

Always:

- Record what has been said ASAP
- Remain sensitive and calm
- Reassure child that they
 - Are safe
 - Were right to tell
 - Are not to blame
 - Are being taken seriously
- Let the child talk – do not interview
- Listen and hear, give the person time to say what they want
- Ensure a positive experience
- Explain that you must tell, but will maintain confidentiality – you cannot promise the child that you will keep the disclosure a secret
- Tell the child what will happen next
- Involve appropriate individuals immediately
- Stay calm
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling and that it will be dealt with appropriately



Never

- Question unless for clarification
- Make promises you cannot keep
- Rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- Make/pass a judgement on alleged abuser
- Take sole responsibility, consult the Designated Safeguarding Officer so you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself.

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Claire Louise Walsh

Safeguarding@belfaststar1964.org

This Officer shall be made known to young members, coaches and parents alike, as the designated person to whom concerns will be addressed.

The second designated person:

Laura Allen

Safeguarding@belfaststar1964.org

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in Belfast Star Basketball Club. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal or exclusion from the organisation.

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and/or government guidance.
- as required by the local safeguarding partnership, Sport NI and/or Sport Ireland, Basketball Northern Ireland and Basketball Ireland.
- as a result of any other significant change or event.

This policy was last reviewed in June 2026.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'B. McCotter', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Mr B McCotter
Chairman