



NETBALL SCOTLAND

COMMUNICATIONS
POLICY



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APPENDIX 6

GUIDANCE FOR REMOTE ONLINE COACHING

Lots of coaches are looking at ways to work with their athletes remotely and the delivery of sessions via online platforms to keep in touch, offer support, guidance and coaching has become more mainstream.

Online/remote coaching

General coaching and safeguarding principles apply, risk assessment is key, the coach must be appropriately qualified and PVG checked to deliver the activity planned.

Safeguarding principles should be followed and coaches should consider activities recommended so that they do not inadvertently recommend activities with increased risk factors that may result in injury.

The following guidance is offered to support coaches looking to deliver on behalf of their clubs via online/virtual training.

1. Coaching & Qualifications

Coaches should only deliver activity for which they are trained. In all instances coaches should apply good coaching practice. They should risk assess the activity, ensuring that it is appropriate for the developmental stage of participants and also take into account the fact that they will not be in close proximity to the athletes or directly supervising them in the same way as a face-to-face environment. Adjustments should be made accordingly.

2. Safety

Safety of the participant must be paramount. Delivering online/virtually can bring extra challenges that should be addressed. The following guidelines should be followed:

Before commencing any session:

- the coach should consider all of the usual safety considerations for the training they intend to deliver
- the coach should put together a pre-training introduction – either using a slide or a verbal safety introduction
- this should include points covering the following:
 - anyone doing the exercise should be aware of their own capabilities, only do what they are comfortable with and to stop if they need to
 - by continuing with the session participants agree to follow instructions and safety guidance from the coach



- under 18s must have permission from their parent/guardian before starting the session and the parent/guardian has checked that the environment is suitable for the training

Examples of what should be considered and included in the pre-training advice where applicable:

- what is the floor like? Is it safe and will it stay so when/if wet (if applicable)?
- is the area well ventilated?
- do athletes have a mat?
- can athletes exercise outside?
- is there furniture athletes may bump into - can it be moved?
- have athletes got enough space to exercise safely?
- are there any trip hazards?
- ensure that the coach and the athletes always wear appropriate clothing
- a responsible adult should always be in proximity of the athlete to deal with any issues that arise and to stop the athlete training if there are any health/safety concerns
- appropriate clothing should be worn including suitable footwear, no jewellery etc
- there is a mechanism for the athlete to feedback to the coach any problems or issues with the session and have a session debrief if possible
- the coach and athlete should stay hydrated
- ensure the athlete keeps pets and any other distractions away during exercise.
- general note - the coach/instructor should be mindful regarding the use of copyrighted music/material

3. Online Coaching: safe practice for coaches and clubs

As with any other form of coaching, implementing good safeguarding practice is extremely important to protect the participant and also the coach. Existing social media policies should still be followed but may need to be adapted to support online coaching. The risk to children and young people has the potential to increase online and therefore a risk assessment should be conducted.

The following additional safeguards are good practice and should be considered:

- remember to include the pre-training statement at the beginning of the training session
- ensure there is consent in place for U18s. The clubs normal consent form may already cover this, or the club may wish to send out an update or new form covering the online coaching programme. Parents/ guardians should be informed of the purpose of the training, when it will be done, on what platform, who will be leading it/adult supervision and if photos or recordings will be taken and how these will be used etc.
- in addition to consent, conversations should take place amongst all parties involved to discuss expectations around behaviour and boundaries. This includes parents, children and young people, coaches and any others involved in the activity



- the parents email address or phone number should be used for any communications regarding the on-line coaching schedule. There should be no direct communication between the child and coach outside of this
- the principle that applies to in person coaching - to avoid and minimise unsupervised one to one in person coaching of children; should also apply to online sessions. Online coaching should be delivered with a minimum of 2 adults in the session, this could be 2 coaches or one coach and an adult helper
- ensure that a responsible adult is in proximity to the athlete (if under 18)
- ensure the platform used has appropriate privacy settings are in place: ensure appropriate privacy settings are in place
- platform settings to allow coaches and children and young people to be on screen at the same time should be used
- be clear to all participants that images of the session should not be shared online, without consent
- be aware that instances of bullying can take place online and should be dealt with through the anti-bullying policies in place within your club or with reference to Netball Scotland's Anti-bullying Policy
- coaches continue to have a duty of care to children and young people, when they are providing on-line coaching sessions. They are entering people's homes virtually which means they may potentially witness behaviour which places a child or young person at risk of harm. In this situation coaches should follow responding to concerns procedures as normal
- it is important that everyone, including parents/carers and children, understand what to do if they have a concern and who to speak to. Raising awareness about how to go about this might include communications from the club and Governing Body or the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer dialling in to on-line coaching sessions on occasion
- if a concern is raised that a child or young person is being harmed, all normal procedures should be followed in line with club and Netball Scotland policy. If a child is at immediate risk of harm, statutory agencies (police or social work) should be immediately alerted