

# SWAN Netball Club

## Playing up Age Band Policy January 2017

The SWAN netball playing up age band policy is to ensure the safety of all young players and adheres to the England Netball Guidance regarding playing out of a player's own age band, with the welfare of the young player being paramount.

**England Netball recommends that the following restrictions apply:**

- **Any player competing in Adult competition must be over the age of 14**
- **Any player competing in under 14 matches/competition must be over the age of 11 and under 14.**
- **Any player competing in under 16 matches/competition must be over the age of 14 and under 16.**

These restrictions are in place to ensure that all teams apply the same age limits and to ensure the protection of potentially vulnerable players.

However in the interest of fair and enjoyable participation in netball, it is recognised that for the development of players it may be desirable for them to play above their age band.

In all decisions, the welfare of the young person is paramount. This means their personal development and enjoyment of an activity are key determinants in reaching the decision, not the needs of a team or the attainment of results.

In order to reach such a decision, the player's level 2 coach and the Safeguarding Officer along with the parent (and SWANS Head Coach if necessary) should complete an assessment that will assist them in making the decision about that young person suitability to play outside their age band.

The coach is best placed to judge the young player's physical development and skills level. They should consider :-

- **The position within the team which the young player usually plays and the one which they would be playing in if they played up;**
- **The young player's physical development in comparison to the other team members, including opposition;**
- **The potential impact on the team mates and opposition on the young player;**
- **The young player's social and personal development, particularly in regard to their resilience for coping with new environments and greater demands;**
- **The benefits for the young player's development (physiological, physical, tactical, technical)**

Practicality dictates that different situations will result in different assessments being required, so the policy has been structured to consider continual, season long playing within a league structure and one-off tournaments.

**Playing up forms are only required to be submitted to England Netball where EN are the competition organiser, for all other competitions the forms should be submitted to the relevant**

**competition organisers. It is not mandatory for competition organisers to adopt this process, and where competition regulations state different practices, these will take precedence.**

## **LEAGUE NETBALL**

At the commencement of the season the Lead coaches should undertake a risk assessment of the playing environment in which all young team players will be playing, to ensure that a safe environment for the players exists.

If a situation arises where it is requested/ recommended that a player plays up, the results of the risk assessment and any risk management measures should be discussed with the player, parent and Club's Safeguarding officer.

The playing up form should be filled out by all parties and if agreed by all parties the form can be used as evidence that the player is suitable for playing up.

The specific rules in relation to the league in question should be reviewed in order to assess whether there are any explicit restrictions on players playing up, and these should be adhered to.

***Please fill out SWAN Playing up Consent Form.***

## **TOURNAMENTS**

As above, on registering for a one-off tournament, when considering if an individual is suitable to play above their age band, the Lead coaches should undertake a risk assessment of the playing environment in which it is suggested the young person play. The whole event should be assessed including the training and any game environment, transport arrangements and changing facilities, to ensure that a safe environment for that young person exists. Where any identified risks are noted, consideration should be given to whether and how those risks can be minimised. Where the risks cannot be minimised, the decision should side toward caution.

The risk assessment and risk management measures should be shared and discussed with the player, parent and the Club's Safeguarding Officer.

The playing up form should be filled out by all parties and if agreed by all parties the form can be used as evidence that the player is suitable for playing up.

The specific rules in relation to the tournament/ competition in question should be reviewed in order to assess whether there are any explicit restrictions on players playing up, and these should be adhered to.

***Please fill out SWAN Playing up Consent Form.***

## **ENGLAND NETBALL NATIONAL EVENTS AND COUNTY LEVEL**

At the commencement of any EN National or County level competition the Lead coaches should undertake a risk assessment of the playing environment in which all young team players will be playing, to ensure that a safe environment for the players exists.

If a situation arises where it is requested/ recommended that a player plays up, the results of the risk assessment and any risk management measures should be discussed with the player, parent and Club's Safeguarding officer.

***Please fill out the official EN Age Banding Application Form.***

***Note this is a different form to SWAN Playing up Consent Form.***