



# GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATING AGAINST ADULTS

Version 1.0

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## 1. Introduction

England Squash is committed to the principles of equality in sport.

England Squash aims to ensure that all people within the squash community, irrespective of their age, gender reassignment, disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity or breastfeeding status, race (including ethnic origin, nationality and colour), religion or belief, sex, social status or sexual orientation, have a genuine and equal opportunity to participate in squash at all levels and in all roles.

England Squash will ensure that there will be open access to all those who wish to participate in any aspect of squash activity and that they are treated fairly, equally and with respect.

## 2. Definitions

- **Squash:** References to 'squash' include all forms of squash (including Squash 57) played at all levels and in all playing environments and facility types.
- **Scope:** England Squash is the National Governing Body for the sport of squash in England. Therefore the guidelines and procedures set out in this document relate solely to activity within this territory. England Squash is responsible for setting standards and values to apply throughout squash at every level in England. It is the responsibility of England Squash to apply the rules of squash and regulate participation of persons as competitors in squash matches to ensure that it provides fair competition and has due regard for the safety of all competitors. It runs and organises a range of competitions to suit the needs of all players. England Squash would expect players to play at an appropriate level.
- **Child and Young Person:** Any player under the age of 18 that plays squash. Please note that any player under the age of 19 **must** wear goggles as per WSF regulations.
- **Adult:** Any player over the age of 18.

The document does not cover competitions sanctioned by England Squash; it provides a basis for guidance to those delivering local squash in competitive and non competitive situations (i.e. club night, club box leagues and county league matches) . For the avoidance of doubt, the word competition is defined as activity where the result (winning and losing) has a meaningful outcome.

England Squash's Guidelines and Procedures apply to all individuals involved, whether paid or in a voluntary capacity.

## 3. Guidelines

Dividing young people into groups on the basis of age has traditionally been used as a tool for matching those of supposedly similar abilities. Young people develop at very different rates physically, psychologically, emotionally and socially. If young people are unevenly matched, particularly it can hamper development but can increase the risk of injury and psychological stress. In the interest of safeguarding, England Squash recommends the following guidelines:

- Before making decisions on children and young people playing against adults; coaches should review a young person's individual situation and give consideration to the standard of play and type of players in the division/ opposing team or session before considering their inclusion.
- Should a club choose to undertake this they should obtain a signed parental consent form for any child or young person which plays up or trains within adults. England Squash also recommends that a parent, coach, welfare officer or other suitable adult is in attendance during individual matches and training.
- England Squash does not advise that young people under the age of 14 be placed in play or training with adults.
- Provisions should be put in place for appropriate use of changing rooms; for further guidance please see the CPSU briefing sheet (<https://thecpsu.org.uk/media/445544/safe-use-of-changing-facilities-lg-sept-2018.pdf>)
- Where possible glass courts should be used so spaces are open and participants can be seen.

#### **4. Procedures**

Clubs should follow these guidelines and if any changes are made by the club there should be a nominated Club Welfare Officer who is fully informed for players, coaches and parents to contact if they have concerns.

Clubs should refer to the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures at [www.englishsquash.com/safesquash](http://www.englishsquash.com/safesquash) if there are immediate safeguarding concerns and they wish to raise a formal safeguarding issue.

#### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

All squash organisations should:

- Explain the guidelines and procedures and ask for consent to proceed.
- Ensure the needs of the child are taken into account first (i.e. an adult does not exert influence on the child for their own benefit if they are not ready to play against adults) and that as best as possible their suitability to play against adults (emotional, social, physical and psychological understanding) is taken into account.
- When participating, take prompt and decisive action against anyone in the organisation whose behavior or language is inappropriate or offensive. Disciplinary procedures should be employed to manage this.
- Ensure a Code of Conduct is publicised indicating a zero-tolerance attitude towards all bullying/harassment.