



## **AGE GROUP/MIXED AGE GROUP PARTICIPATION**

Updated, April, 2017.

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 in contact sports such as basketball it can increase the risk of injury and psychological stress. In the interest of safeguarding, Basketball England recommends the following guidelines be adhered to:

Before making any mixed age or ability play decisions coaches should review a young person's individual situation and give consideration to the standard of play and type of players in the other division/team or session before considering mixing play between players over the age of 18 with young people under the age of 16. Should a club choose to do this they should obtain a signed parental consent form for any child or young person which plays up or trains within a higher division or with individuals outside their age group.

Basketball England does not advise that young people under the age of 14 or children be placed in play or training with adults aged 18 or over.

Clubs should follow these guidelines and if any changes are made by the club there should be a nominated Child Welfare Officer who is fully informed within the club that players, coaches and parents can contact if they have any concerns. Basketball England strongly suggests that club and personal liability (including insurance) be considered before clubs make any changes to this guidance.