



Lancashire Football Association

Safeguarding Children Policy

Approximately four million children and young people are involved in football. For the vast majority, this is a positive and memorable time which often leads to lifelong engagement with the game be it as a player, ball-boy, official or mascot. But sadly, this is not always the case. As such affiliated football remains committed to continuing to raise awareness of safeguarding, developing its support and training across the game, dealing with inappropriate behaviours and promoting best practice.

Every child or young person, defined as any person under the age of eighteen, who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of everyone involved in football. Football recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by seeking to protect them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying.

Affiliated football is therefore committed to working to provide a safe environment for all children and young people to participate in the sport to the best of their abilities, whether involved in grassroots or professional football.

Key Principles

- The child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration.
- All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents and carers is essential. Affiliated football is committed to working in partnership with the Police, Social Care Departments, and Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB) in accordance with their procedures. This is essential to enable these organisations to carry out their statutory duties to investigate concerns and protect all children and young people.

Affiliated football holds with the principle that there are some roles within sport where adults have responsibility for, authority and influence over young people and therefore have an ethical obligation to safeguard and protect young people from exploitation.

Whilst legally young people aged 16 and 17 have reached the age of consent for sexual activity, any inappropriate sexual relations with young people aged 16 or 17 will be considered a breach of a 'Position of Trust' within affiliated football and will be referred to the appropriate football regulatory authorities and may also be referred to the statutory agencies.