



Suffolk County Football Association Limited

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Policy & Procedure

Author	J Mulcahy - Trustee
Approved By	Board of Trustees
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Every child or young person 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 every adult involved in football, thus every club is required to endorse and adhere to this Policy.
- 1.2 The Association recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children and young people who play or participate in football by protecting them from abuse and harm. The Association is 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 for as long as they choose to do so.
- 1.3 The Association recognises that the terms 'child or young person', 'abuse' and 'harm' are open to interpretation and challenge but for the purpose of this Policy they are defined as follows:

A child or young person shall be defined as: 'anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.'

Abuse shall be defined as: 'a violation of an individual's human or civil rights by any other person or persons and, for the purposes of safeguarding children, shall include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, bullying and hazing.'

Harm shall be defined as: 'ill treatment and forms of ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical) and also the impairment of or an avoidable deterioration in physical or mental health and the impairment of

physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.’ Harm may be caused by acts of commission and acts of omission.

- 1.4 This Policy has been prepared in response to government legislation and guidance, developed to safeguard the welfare and development of children and young people.
- 1.5 This Policy applies to trustees, members of staff (if applicable), volunteers and others involved or associated with the Association, all of whom have a duty to safeguard the welfare of all children and adults at risk with whom they come into contact on behalf of the Association and must therefore familiarise themselves and comply at all times with applicable policies. This Policy will be provided to all trustees and (if applicable) staff and volunteers on induction. Such contact is most likely to occur as a result of visits to programmes, although the principles set out in this Policy apply in all situations.
- 1.6 The Policy also covers situations where the Association funds, supports and partners with organisations that work with children or adults at risk.
- 1.7 Every person who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse.

2. General policy principles

- 2.1 The child’s welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration.
- 2.2 No child or adult at risk will be treated less favourably than others in being able to access services which meet their particular needs.
- 2.3 All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, race, faith, belief or sexual orientation.
- 2.4 All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately; and
- 2.5 Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents and carers is essential.

3. Working with other agencies

The Association is committed to working in partnership with the Police, Children’s Services Departments, Local Safeguarding Children’s Boards (LSCB) and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) 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.

4. Code of Conduct (Safeguarding)

4.1 All individuals to whom this Policy applies should:

- 4.1.1 avoid: one to one or unnecessary physical contact with children and adults at risk; and any behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.
- 4.1.2 always: treat everyone with respect; respect a person's right to privacy; and recognise and allow for the needs of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

4.2 Breach of this Code may lead to disciplinary action.

5. Position of trust

Adults associated with the Association who work with children and adults at risk may be in a position of trust. A relationship between a member of staff, volunteer or any other individual associated with the Association and a child or adult at risk cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable individuals and all members of staff, volunteers and others associated with the Association have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

6. Responsibility for safeguarding and duty to report concerns

Hayley Chart **The Designated Safeguarding Officer** is the individual at the Association with responsibility for **operational** safeguarding matters (**Designated Safeguarding & Services Manager (Designated Safeguarding Officer)**).

- 6.1 If any member of staff, volunteer or anyone else involved with the Association has a concern relating to the safeguarding of children or adults at risk they should raise this with the Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as reasonably practicable. If the concerns relate to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, they should be raised with the Senior Safeguarding Lead or Board Safeguarding Champion (who is the trustee with responsibility for safeguarding).
- 6.2 Members of staff, volunteers and others must report concerns immediately to the individual named above and must not investigate concerns themselves.
- 6.3 If a child or adult at risk makes an allegation of abuse or mistreatment by anyone (whether or not that individual is connected with the Association), the child or adult at risk should be listened to and given reassurance but should not be probed or asked leading questions. Questions should be limited to the minimum necessary for clarification.
- 6.4 The content of the discussion should be noted in writing as soon as possible and the report passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. No guarantee of confidentiality should be given to the child or adult at risk, instead he or she should be informed that the matter will be referred in confidence to the appropriate people in positions of responsibility.

7. Welfare officers

- 7.1 Clubs and Leagues with youth teams must appoint a Welfare Officer in line with The Association affiliation requirements. A Club's Welfare Officer must sit on the management committee of that Club.
- 7.2 All League and Club Welfare Officers are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct and training requirements as set out by the Sanctioning Authority for volunteer Welfare Officers

8. Manner in which concerns relating to safeguarding will be treated

- 8.1 Everyone involved with the Association has a duty to report concerns regarding safeguarding. Concerns will always be taken seriously, and individuals who raise concerns in good faith will never be subjected to any detriment as a result.
- 8.2 Concerns should be reported internally as set out above. Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child or adult at risk is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the Association will make appropriate referrals to external bodies, such as the Local Authority and/or the Police.
- 8.3 Serious incidents will also be reported to the Charity Commission.

9. Safeguarding vetting checks

- 9.1 The Association is committed to safe recruitment, selection and vetting and carries out appropriate checks on all members of staff, volunteers and others involved with the Association who have contact with children or adults at risk, including (where applicable) DBS checks, checking references, requiring proof of identity and relevant qualifications and carrying out a face to face interview.
- 9.2 Under no circumstances will any individual who is considered to pose a risk to children or adults at risk be deployed to work with these groups.
- 9.3 All staff, volunteers and others involved with the Association who have contact with children or adults at risk are required to notify the Safeguarding Lead immediately if there are any reasons why they should not be working with children or adults at risk.
- 9.4 It is a criminal offence knowingly to employ an individual barred by the DBS to work in regulated activity with children and adults at risk. For working with children, regulated activity includes unsupervised teaching or supervising, on a frequent (once a week or more often) or intensive (4 or more days in a 30 day period) basis. For adults at risk, regulated activity will generally be the provision of health or personal care, social work, assistance with household matters or the person's own affairs, transporting an adult at risk to receive medical care.
- 9.5 The Association complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly, and not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

10. Working with partner organisations

- 10.1 Before the Association funds, supports or partners with an organisation working with children or adults at risk, the trustees shall ask the organisation to:
- 10.1.1 confirm it has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place; and
 - 10.1.2 confirm that it is committed to safe recruitment, selection and vetting and that it carries out appropriate checks on all members of staff, volunteers and others involved with the organisation who have contact with children or adults at risk, including (where applicable) DBS checks, checking references, requiring proof of identity and relevant qualifications and carrying out a face-to-face interview.
- 10.2 The Association will not fund, support or partner with any organisation that is unable or unwilling to comply with the above requirements to the satisfaction of the trustees.

11. The Respect Programme

- 11.1 This Policy is supported by the Charity's Respect Programme to address verbal abuse and bullying of children and young people by parents and coaches on the sidelines.

12. Further guidance

Please refer to the following for further guidance:

- 12.1.1 What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (March 2015): https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf
- 12.1.2 Working together to safeguard children (March 2015): https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf
- 12.1.3 Disclosure and Barring Service: <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview>
- 12.1.4 Charity Commission safeguarding guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/charities-how-to-protect-vulnerable-groups-including-children>



13. Contact details

Hayley Chart: 01449 616606 / 07572107791

Geraldine Day: 07591 166902

14. Policy Review

- 14.1 This policy does not form part of any employee or worker's contract and may be amended at any time.
- 14.2 The policy is reviewed and approved by the trustees annually or when legislation changes.