

Safeguarding Adults At Risk



Last Reviewed 2025 by Tim Allison

Policy Overview

Our Academy Player Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy sets out our commitment to create a culture where mental health and wellbeing is recognised by all within our Academy. The subject is discussed, issues raised, and support provided.



Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Definitions**
- 3. Rules and Regulations**
- 4. Review**
- 5. Aims & Key Principles**
- 6. The Role of Senior Safeguarding Officer**
- 7. The Role of Designated Safeguarding Officer**
- 8. The Role of Employees, Contractors and Volunteers**
- 9. Recruitment**
- 10. Staff Training & Awareness**
- 11. Disclosure and Barring Service Checks**
- 12. Whistleblowing**
- 13. Signs of Abuse**
- 14. Responding to a Report or Suspicion**
- 15. Recording Allegations or Suspicions**
- 16. Allegations against members of staff**
- 17. Relevant Contact**
- 18. External Resources**



1. Introduction

The Board of Sutton United Football Club (The Club) acknowledges and accepts it has a statutory obligation and responsibility for the wellbeing and safety of all adults at risk who are under the Club's care, utilising the Club's facilities, or in its employment. Everyone working at the Club has a "duty of care" to safeguard adults at risk by creating an environment that protects them from harm.

The wellbeing of adults at risk is paramount, and all staff must make themselves aware of the Club's Safeguarding Adults Policy. The following guidelines will be supplemented by in-service training and additional guidance accordingly.



2. Definition

Under the Care Act 2014, the safeguarding adults procedures apply to anyone aged 18 or over who is in need of care and support and is at risk of or is experiencing, abuse or neglect, and is unable to keep themselves safe from significant harm or exploitation because of their care and support needs.

Abuse is the harming of another individual usually by someone who is in a position of power, trust or authority over that individual. The harm may be physical, psychological or emotional, or it may be directed at exploiting the vulnerability of the victim in more subtle ways (for example, through denying access to people who can come to the aid of the victim, or through misuse or misappropriation of his or her financial resources). The threat or use of punishment is also a form of abuse. In many cases, it is a criminal offence.

“Capacity” refers to the ability to make a decision at a particular time, for example when under considerable stress. The starting assumption must always be that the individual has the capacity to make a decision unless it can be established that they lack capacity as defined in the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

“Consent” – adults at risk should be provided with the support and information to empower the individual to make their own decisions. We recognise that adults have a right to independence, choice and self-determination including control over information about themselves. To this aim, staff are expected only to provide accessible information to the individual so that they may make informed decisions about the risks, benefits and consequences. Staff are not expected to support the Adult at Risk to make a decision, and as such should refer to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. The Designated Safeguarding Officer may determine that explicit consent is not required under the following circumstances;

- If other people appear to be at risk of harm (adults or children)
- If there is a ‘legal restriction’ or an overriding public interest
- If the person is exposed to life threatening risk and they are unreasonably withholding their consent
- If the person has impaired capacity or decision making in relation to the safeguarding issues and the withholding of consent.

3. Rules and Regulations

In the management of its programmes, the discharge of its functions, and in implementing this policy and procedure, Sutton United Football Club will remain mindful of its' duty of care and other legal obligations such as those set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Data Protection Act 2018, Equality Act 2010 and Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

In the case of adults at risk, the Club is also mindful of its responsibilities under the following legislation and guidance;

- The Care Act 2014
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance (updated October 2018)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Strategy)
- The Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2015)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Premier League and English Football League Rules and guidance. Derby County Football Club is fully committed to ensuring that the best practice recommended by these bodies is employed throughout the Club.

The Club also recognises its responsibility to work with other agencies, including the Local Safeguarding Adults Board to protect adults at risk from harm and to respond to safeguarding concerns.

4. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or if there is a statutory legislative or organisational change, or following a safeguarding incident, concern or allegation whereby the policy is found to be in need of revision to ensure the aims and key principles are met. All policy documents and reviews will be submitted to the Board for approval.

5. Aims and Key Principles

The aims of the Club's Safeguarding Adults Policy are:

- To safeguard all adults at risk who interact with the Club;
- To demonstrate best practice in the area of safeguarding adults at risk;
- To positively reflect and promote the club values in regard to safeguarding;
- To develop a positive and pro-active welfare programme to enable all adults at risk to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment;
- To promote high ethical standards throughout the Club.

The key principles underpinning this policy as defined in The Care Act are:

- Empowerment – people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent;
- Prevention – it is better to take action before harm occurs;
- Proportionality – the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented;
- Protection – support and representation for those in greatest need;
- Partnership – local solutions through services working with their communities;
- Accountability – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

6. The Role of Safeguarding Senior Manager

The Designated Safeguarding Senior Manager (DSSM) has overall responsibility for the safeguarding of all at the Club. The SSM will;

- Report to the Board on recommendations for changes to the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures taking into account legislative changes;
- Undertake regular monitoring and assessments of activities involving adults at risk or will designate this task to an appropriate and trained individual;
- Ensure they undertake regular and appropriate training for the role.

The Designated Safeguarding Senior Manager is Harry Dunne – 07595771787 – harry.dunne@suttonunited.net

7. The Role of Designated Safeguarding Officer

The Club has a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) who has responsibility for the safeguarding of adults at risk at the Club, and the Academy. The DSO will;

- Make the decision to investigate any allegations or concerns of abuse;
- Address any immediate protection issues;
- Make the decision to refer to an appropriate statutory agency (Police or Social Services);
- Liaise with the local Safeguarding Adults Board;
- Ensure staff are trained on Club safeguarding procedures;
- Ensure they undertake regular and appropriate training for the role;
- Source appropriate external training for safeguarding;
- Undertake regular monitoring and risk assessments of activities involving adults at risk or will designate this task to an appropriate and trained individual.

Anybody with a concern about an adult's welfare should contact the SSM or DSO direct, or their line manager for advice in the first instance. Contact details can be found at the end of this policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is Beverley Little – beverley.little@suttonunited.net

8. The Role of Employees, Contractors and Volunteers

All employees, contractors and volunteers are expected to;

- Be alert to signs of abuse and radicalisation and take responsibility for referring concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer;
- Be prepared to listen to and take seriously the concerns of adults at risk;
- Abide by the codes of conduct for employees and volunteers;
- Promote the health, safety and welfare of adults at risk;
- Maintain records as necessary;
- Set a good example to others by their own behaviour.

9. Recruitment

The Club follows Safer Recruitment guidelines as detailed in our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, and Recruitment Policy, and as such it is applicable to safeguarding adults at risk.

10. Staff Training & Awareness

This policy and procedure is issued to all employees at induction and is also available to all employees on the Intranet. The DSO holds specific Safeguarding qualifications relevant to the role. The Disability Access Officer is also trained specifically in relation to Safeguarding Adults at risk.

11. Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

The Club is registered with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to carry out criminal record checks on individuals who work for the club, including the Derby County Football Club Community Trust. Enhanced DBS, plus barred list check where appropriate, enable the Club to undertake more thorough recruitment and selection procedures for positions which involve working with Adults at risk.

New Appointments

All staff who are offered a position which involves working with Adults at risk will be required to complete a Self-Declaration Form and also undertake an Enhanced DBS with a barred list check where appropriate. All offers of work are subject to the outcome of the screening process and where applicable, this is set out in the initial job advertisement and the applicant's offer of work. Until such time as a satisfactory DBS check has been received, the member of staff will not be permitted to work with Adults at risk.

Should a positive DBS check be received, a risk assessment will be carried out by the Safeguarding Senior Manager, or relevant Head of Department, with the Chief People Officer and, where applicable the Designated Safeguarding Officer, to assess the information contained within the DBS check. The member of staff may also be asked to attend an interview prior to a recruitment decision being made. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and Protection of Freedoms Act should be considered in all cases before a final decision is made.

New Appointments who already have an FA DBS Check

If a new member of staff has been subject to an FA DBS check by their previous employer, the club will still require a further check if the date of such check is in excess of one month old.

If a new member of staff has been subject to a non-FA DBS check by their previous employer, the club will still require a further check.

The Club is committed to providing equal opportunities for all staff, players and supporters. Club's policy on equal opportunities can be found in the Employee Handbook.

12. Whistleblowing

Whistle-blowing in a safeguarding context means revealing and raising concerns over misconduct or malpractice within an organisation, or within an independent structure associated with it.

It can be used as an early-warning system or when it is recognised that appropriate actions have not been taken. This approach or policy is adopted in many different walks of life.

Any individual with concerns about a colleague's conduct towards an Adult at Risk can also use whistle-blowing by calling **0800 169 1863** and asking for The FA's safeguarding team, or via email to: **safeguarding@TheFA.com**.

Sutton United's own reporting form can be accessed via the Club's official website using the following link: **<https://www.suttonunited.net/about/safeguarding>**

13. Signs of Abuse

The following lists of possible indicators and examples of behaviour are not exhaustive, and people may be subject to a number of abuse types at the same time. Should you have any concern that abuse is occurring you should contact the Safeguarding Senior Manager or Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately.

Physical abuse – includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restrain or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic violence or abuse – includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; ‘honor’ based violence (crimes committed to protect or defend the honor of the family and/or community) which includes Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage

Sexual abuse – includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented to, could not consent to, or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological or emotional abuse – includes Emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or unreasonable or unjustified withdrawal from services or support networks.

Financial or material abuse – includes theft, fraud, exploitation, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adults financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Discriminatory abuse – includes hate crime, forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of the individuals’ race, sex, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or marital status.

Neglect or acts of omission – includes ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.

Self-neglect – includes neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

14. Responding to a Report or Suspicion

A Designated Safeguarding Officer or the Safeguarding Senior Manager should be contacted as early as possible and within 24 hours in any circumstance, however it is recognised that an individual may need to respond to a situation immediately. With this in mind the following guidelines offer help and support in responding to abuse or a suspicion of abuse or poor practice.

Do:

- Ensure the individuals immediate safety; if emergency medical treatment or protection from a perpetrator is needed, call the emergency services immediately;
- Reassure the individual that any allegations will be taken extremely seriously;
- Reassure the individual that they are right to tell you;
- Be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why;
- Tell the individual what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening;
- Take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse;
- Write down everything said and what was done (handwritten is preferable) and sign and date the notes. An Incident Report Form should be used where possible and, in any case, a referral must be made to the Club within 24 hours of the incident taking place

Don't:

- Make promises you cannot keep or to keep secrets/confidentiality;
- Interrogate the individual – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the local authority/Police who have experience in this;
- Cast doubt on what is being said, don't interrupt or change the subject
- Say anything that makes the individual feel responsible for the abuse

DOING NOTHING IS NOT AN OPTION; IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ACT.

Make sure you tell a Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately, they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.

15. Recording Allegations or Suspicions

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will immediately report any allegation to the Safeguarding Senior Manager, who will ask for a written factual statement from the person making the report. An Incident Report Form must be completed and submitted within 24 hours to the Designated Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Senior Manager.

Any statement made by the Adult at Risk should be reported in their own words. These reports should be confined to facts. Any opinion, interpretation or judgement should be clearly stated as this, questions kept to a minimum, and where used, they should be of an open format (TED questions; 'tell me' 'explain' 'describe'). No suggestion of who the perpetrator was or how any concern or incident happened should be suggested.

Investigations into possible abuse will require careful management. In these cases, the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Senior Manager will first seek the advice of the Local Safeguarding Adults Board, Social Services, a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the Police, or the Premier League/Football Association Safeguarding Team, before setting up an internal inquiry.

In any case of suspected abuse, as soon as the Local Authority or the Police have been informed, the club must provide a report to the Premier League or EFL Head of Safeguarding and inform the Club's Chief Executive Officer. Any external local authority provision will naturally take the lead on any case.

Providing it is appropriate to do so the Safeguarding Senior Manager will maintain constant dialogue with all parties involved with the allegation until such time as the matter has reached a reasonable outcome, taking the lead from the external agency. Escalation to inform Board level will take place at the Safeguarding Senior Manager's earliest opportunity.

16. Allegations against a member of staff

If the report involves an allegation about any member of the Club staff (whether full time, part time, paid, unpaid, contracted, engaged, voluntary etc.) and the Club believes that the report could demonstrate that the member of staff in question has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed an Adult at Risk, or may have harmed an Adult at Risk;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to an Adult at Risk; or
- behaved towards an Adult at Risk in a way that indicates he or she is unsuitable to work with Adults at Risk

Then the Safeguarding Senior Manager or Designated Safeguarding Officer shall immediately inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where the alleged incident took place so that he or she can consult with the Police and Local Authority Social Care colleagues as appropriate. Where the Safeguarding Senior Manager or Designated Safeguarding Officers are unsure as to whether the report meets the criteria stated above, the advice of the LADO shall still be sought.

The member of staff in question may be asked to write a brief report, as may any other person that is deemed to have an involvement in the allegation. The member of staff in question will be asked to stay away from activities pending the conclusion of any investigation. This process would only be carried out once the advice of the above-mentioned external bodies had been sought and only then in consultation with the Safeguarding Senior Manager or Designated Safeguarding Officer. Providing it does not contradict with any advice received from the LADO, any internal investigation will be carried out in line with the Club's Management and Human Resources Policies and either general or department-specific Grievance Procedures as they are applicable.

17. Relevant Contacts

Harry Dunne

Senior Safeguarding Manager

harry.dunne@suttonunited.net - 07595771787

Beverley Little

Academy Safeguarding Officer

Beverley.little@suttonunited.net - 07513834380

Bobby Childs

Foundation Safeguarding Officer

bobby.childs@suttonunited.net - 07966391761

18. External Resources

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003

Home Office: Mandatory Reporting of FGM

The Right to Choose: Statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/safer-recruitment/>

[http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/pages/vulnerable-people-](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/pages/vulnerable-people-abuse-)

[abuse-](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/pages/vulnerable-people-abuse-safeguarding.aspx)
[safeguarding.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/pages/vulnerable-people-abuse-safeguarding.aspx)

<http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/> <http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk/>

Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

Data Protection Act 2018

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 Equality Act 2010

Care Act 2014

Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014 Sexual Offences Act 2003

Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Mental Capacity Act 2005

Serious Crime Act 2015

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

DBS barring referral guidance

Police Act 1997

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 – Part 5

Home Office: Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults



Contact us.

Sutton United FC
VBS Community Stadium
Gander Green Lane
Sutton, Surrey
SM1 2EY

020 8644 4440
safeguarding@suttonunited.net
www.suttonunited.net