



Safeguarding Children and Young People

POLICY & PROCEDURES

MARCH 2018

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy & Procedures

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1.0 Principles

Reading Football Club (“the club”) is committed to safeguarding and protecting children and young people and fully accepts its responsibility for the safety and welfare of all children and young people who engage with the club. Simple flowcharts on how to respond to a safeguarding concern and what constitutes abuse and neglect can be found in Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4.

The welfare of children and young people is of paramount importance and all children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief or age. Through the application of policy, procedures and best practice, the club promotes the safety, welfare and well-being of all children and young people enabling them to participate in any club activity in an enjoyable, safe, inclusive and child-centred environment. This equally applies to the safety and security of those working with and who are responsible for the activities involving children and young people.

Employees, workers, consultants, agency staff and volunteers who come into contact with children and young people in club related activities should be positive role models and display high moral and ethical standards in line with the club’s vision and values.

This Policy and Procedures is approved by Reading Safeguarding Children Board and is compliant with legislation including but not limited to the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, statutory guidance such as Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 and governing body rules and regulations including the FA Premier League Rules and FA Regulations. This Policy and Procedures should be read in conjunction with related club policies and procedures, a list of which are available in Appendix 5.

1.1 Scope

This Policy is for use across the club and is to be observed by all those working and coming into contact with children and young people to ensure best practice in safeguarding is promoted and adhered to.

Activities undertaken at the following locations/departments are under the remit of this policy including:

- Reading FC Community Trust
- Reading FC First Team and Academy training ground;
- Reading Women’s Football Club;
- Reading FC Soccer Schools;
- Madejski Stadium;
- Reading FC Retail store;
- Stadium tours, Stewarding and all other activities on matchdays and roles that come into contact with children and young people;
- Travel, Events and Supporter Liaison;
- Youth Development Centres; and
- Other club related entities/activities undertaken outside of the UK.
- All employees and workers are made aware of the Policy and Procedures through induction and where appropriate their work with children and young people will be supported by a comprehensive on-going safeguarding training programme.

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2.0 Definition of a Child

- A child or young person is defined as anyone up to their 18th birthday.

Children Act 1989

Safeguarding children and young people is defined as:

- Protecting children and young people from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children or young peoples health or development;
- Ensuring that children and young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best life chances.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

3.0 Recruitment and Disclosure

As part of the club's recruitment and selection process, offers of work for positions which come into contact with children and young people are subject to a satisfactory self-declaration and a criminal record check (CRC) as relevant, CV checks, appropriate references, right to work in the UK checks and a qualification check, if applicable. All offers of work are subject to a satisfactory outcome to the rigorous screening process and until such time that all background checks are deemed as acceptable by the club, the person concerned is not permitted to commence work.

All employees, workers, consultants, agency staff and volunteers in a position of trust are required to undergo regular CRC disclosure clearances, normally every three years or earlier if required.

Should any person's CRC reveal any cautions, convictions, community resolutions, reprimands and final warnings the club will consider whether the nature of the offence/offences renders the person concerned unsuitable for working with children and young people. In such circumstances, when the nature of any disclosure has to be considered, a risk assessment is carried out to evaluate the information contained within the disclosure certificate. The person may also be required to attend a risk assessment meeting with a Departmental Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and/or a member of the club's Safeguarding Team prior to a recruitment decision being made. Further information can be found in the club's Recruitment Policy and Safer Recruitment Guidance available in the club's employee handbook.

All new employees, workers, consultants, agency staff and volunteers working with children and young people at the club are required to complete a self-declaration on commencement of duties.

When the club uses suppliers or agencies to undertake its work, they are to be subject to rigorous vetting and safeguarding checks and required to adhere to the club's policy and procedures as set out in their contracts or service level agreements where relevant.

When the club engages with schools and organisations in connection with child or young people related activities, where appropriate the club writes to the school or organisation to state the club's policy and procedures in relation to criminal record checks and safe recruitment. The club only discloses the name, date of birth, disclosure and issue numbers of the employees, workers, consultants, agency staff or volunteers criminal record checks. Disclosure information in relation to

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checks will not be divulged. Schools and organisations are required to comply with the club's safeguarding arrangements as set out in contracts and/or service level agreements.

3.1 Induction and training

During the induction process, employees who work with or come into contact with children and young people are required to attend the club's safeguarding and protection training along with the Premier League's /EFL's safer working practice training. Employees also receive a copy of this Policy and Procedures as well as other club policies and are required to sign an acknowledgement that they have read and agree to abide by them.

Workers, consultants, agency staff and volunteers who have roles that work with or come into contact with children and young people undertake both club and Premier League/ EFL training. They also receive copies of the club's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures and are expected to read and abide by them as set out in their Agreements.

Refresher safeguarding training is provided every three years or earlier as required.

4.0 Roles & responsibilities

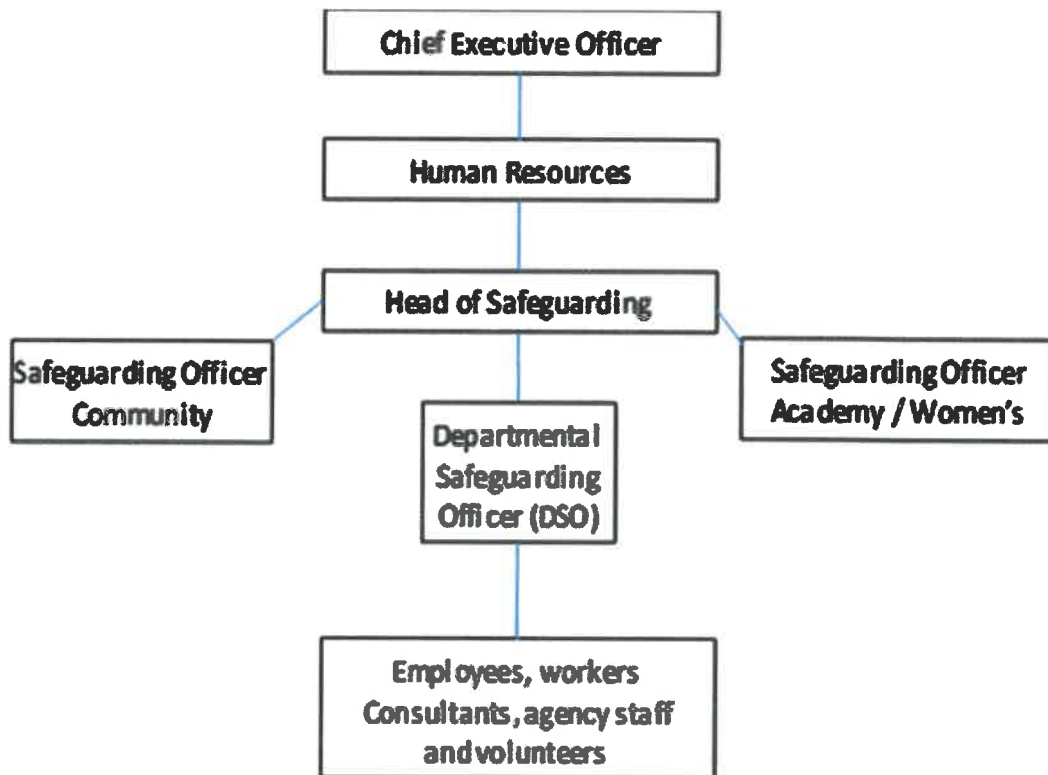
The club has a comprehensive safeguarding structure which ensures the safety and welfare of all children and young people who engage with the club. For the purpose of this Policy and Procedures the Safeguarding Team consists of; the Head of Safeguarding, Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Administrator.

Chief Executive Officer is responsible for all aspects of the club and to ensure safeguarding is a key priority at Board Level.

Human Resources Manager is responsible for providing club-wide strategic leadership that assists the club to deliver the safeguarding strategy, vision, values, priorities, policies, promoting the welfare of vulnerable groups, communicating at Director and Heads of Department level.

Head of Safeguarding is responsible for the strategic and operational direction and embedding safeguarding across the club. The Head of Safeguarding is also lead point of contact should safeguarding concerns arise and the Lead Disclosure Officer.

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Safeguarding Officers are responsible for all operational aspects and embedding safeguarding in all of the football and community departments as well as being the lead point of contact in all those areas.

Responsible for ensuring all vetting checks including criminal record checks adhere to the club's Recruitment Policy as well as legislation and governing body rules.

Departmental Safeguarding Officers (DSO) are responsible for embedding safeguarding within their own departments as well as being the point of contact should a concern arise within their own departments.

Employees, workers, agency staff, consultants and volunteers are responsible for familiarising themselves with the club's Policy and Procedures, ensuring the safety and welfare of all children and young people as well as promoting best practice and creating a safe and inclusive environment to prevent harm occurring through awareness of what constitutes abuse and neglect.

5.0 Abuse and neglect

Abuse is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children or young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child, children, young person or young people.

There are 4 recognised categories of abuse as defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015:

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1. Physical abuse;
2. Sexual abuse;
3. Emotional abuse (includes bullying); and
4. Neglect.

Full descriptions of each category of abuse and neglect can be found in Appendix 4.

Children and young people may be at additional risk of abuse and neglect through some of the additional vulnerabilities they may face.

5.1 Additional vulnerabilities

If children and young people have additional vulnerabilities when engaging with the club, further safeguards may need to be put in place to reduce the potential risk of abuse and neglect.

5.2 Radicalisation and extremism

Radicalisation and extremism of children and young people is a form of emotional abuse. HM Government states that the aim of radicalisation is to attract children and young people to a particular extremist ideology. In many cases it is with a view to inspiring children and young people eventually to become involved with harmful or terrorist activities. Radicalisation can take place through direct personal contact, or indirectly through social media. Extremism is defined as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

5.3 Looked after children and young people

Looked after (such as those living in foster care) children and young people may be especially vulnerable to abuse and neglect for a number of reasons:

- Experienced abuse and neglect previously;
- Living with people who are not their immediate family or friends;
- Less support networks; and
- Stigma for being in care.

5.4 Online world

Although the online world provides many benefits to children and young people, there are also a number of potential associated risks:

- Inappropriate language or images;
- Online grooming;
- Cyberbullying; and
- Sexting.

Further information about the online risks is contained in the club's Safeguarding Social Media Policy and Procedures which can be accessed on the club's intranet.

5.5 Deaf and disabled children and young people

The Equality Act (2010) defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term (has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months) adverse effect on one's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This definition includes conditions such as cancer, HIV, mental illness and learning disabilities.

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Deaf and disabled children and young people may be vulnerable to abuse for a number of reasons:

- Increased likelihood of social isolation;
- Dependency on others for practical assistance in daily living (including intimate care);
- Impaired capacity to resist, avoid or understand abuse;
- Speech and language communication needs may make it difficult to tell others what is happening;
- Limited access to someone to disclose to; and
- Particular vulnerability to bullying.

Children and young people with disabilities may also feel less valued than his/her peers and poor care may be observed but tolerated by others. This might include such things as not speaking directly to the child or young person; not offering choices; not moving and handling them safely; not respecting his/her privacy and dignity; not treating him/her according to his/her age; allowing physical restraint to occur; or using derogatory language.

There is no single route to ensure that children and young people are protected, especially those with additional vulnerabilities. However, the safest environments are those that help children and young people to protect themselves by helping them to speak out and do their best to stop any abuse and neglect from happening and take responsibility for observing, challenging and reporting any poor practice and suspected abuse and neglect.

Safe environments for children and young people with additional vulnerabilities are also safer for all children and young people.

6.0 Use of photography and film

All images are taken by club photographers who have been briefed by a club Departmental Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or by a member of the Communications and Marketing Department responsible for the activity being photographed or filmed in an appropriate way and manner. Where appropriate and possible, parent/carer consent is sought in writing at the start of the season or prior to an event. The club adhere to the following principles when using photography or film:

- All children or young people featured in club publications are appropriately dressed;
- Where possible, the image will focus on the activity taking place and not a specific child or young person;
- Where appropriate, images represent the broad range of people participating safely in the event;
- Designated club photographers will, where applicable, undertake a CRC check and attend the club's and FA Safeguarding workshop and in any case, will be personally responsible for keeping up to date with the latest guidelines on the 'Use of Images' policies from the Premier League. Club identification is worn at all times;
- Children or young people who are the subject of a court order will not have his/her images published in any club document;
- No images of children or young people featured in club publications are accompanied by personal details such as his/her home address;
- Recordings of children and young people for the purposes of legitimate coaching aids are only filmed by club officials and are stored safely and securely at the club's premises;
- Any instances of inappropriate images in football should be reported to a DSO or the club's Safeguarding Team;

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- The club does not put young players under the age of 16 profiles, images and personal information on its website.

7.0 Good practice and code of conduct

To ensure all children and young people have the most positive and safe experience when engaging with the club, all employees, workers, consultants, agency staff and volunteers should adhere to the following principles and action (to ensure they role model positive behaviours and so reduce the risk of allegations, abuse and neglect occurring):

- Listen carefully to children and young people about his/her needs, wishes, ideas and concerns and take them seriously;
- Treat all children and young people equally not showing favouritism;
- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets);
- Make the experience of the activity fun and enjoyable;
- Promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying;
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with children and young people and avoid unnecessary physical contact;
- Where any form of manual/physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the child or young person;
- If children and young people have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure coaches etc. work in pairs;
- Request written consent if the club are required to transport children and young people using the club's Multi-Use Consent Form (Appendix 6) for any activities, events or significant travel arrangements e.g. overnight stays;
- Employees and workers should maintain their qualifications and professional development;
- A qualified first aider is in attendance or readily available;
- Maintain appropriate professional relationships with children and young people, including only engaging with them online with prior approval and through the club's social media channels;
- On trips, ensure that adults should not enter a child or young person's room unless there is a safety concern, in which case two adults should enter and should not invite children or young people into their rooms;
- Be a good role model, this includes not swearing, smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children and young people;
- Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
- Promote the club's vision and values and be an ambassador for those values;
- Ensure children and young people adhere to his/her relevant Code of Conduct;
- Secure written consent for the club to administer emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises;
- Reward effort as well as performance;
- Challenge unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour;
- Encourage children and young people to take responsibility for his/her own behaviour and performance;
- Keep a written record of any incident or injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given or action taken using the club's Accident and Incident Report Form (Appendix 7).
- Recording safeguarding concerns on the Safeguarding Concern Form (Appendix 8).

This list is not exhaustive.

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8.0 Unacceptable practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all employees, workers, consultants, agency staff and volunteers:

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time individually with a child or young person away from others;
- Being alone in changing rooms, toilet facilities or showers used by children and young people;
- Taking children and young people alone in a car or journey unless a club pool car is used, and written consent is sought from the club's Safeguarding Team for emergency situations;
- Taking children and young people to your home or places where they will be alone with you;
- Sharing a room with children and young people;
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form;
- Allowing children and young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- Making sexually suggestive comments to children and young people, even in fun;
- Reducing children and young people to tears as a form of control;
- Allowing allegations made by children and young people to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
- Doing things of a personal nature that children and young people can do for themselves.
- Not recording safeguarding concerns on the Safeguarding Concern Form (SCF);
- Sending inappropriate text messages or social media messages to children and young people;
- Having children or young people engaged with the club as 'friends' or 'followers' within social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram; and
- Engaging with children and young people on 'one to one' personal electronic communications.

9.0 Searching children and young people

To ensure the safety and security for all club activities all children and young people may be subject to the club's search process. Children and young people are asked to self-search as the preferred method; however, should the club suspect that the child or young person may be concealing a prohibited item, consent will be sought from their parent/carer before a Steward or Security member of the same sex who is being observed by a Supervisor searches the child.

9.1 Lost or missing children and young people

During club activities every effort is made to ensure children and young people remain with their parents/carers or the activity leaders. Should a child or young person become lost or go missing during a club activity every effort will be made to locate the child or young person as quickly as possible. Should a child or young person not be located within a reasonable timeframe, contact will be made with their parents/carers and the police to file a missing child/young person's report.

9.2 Children and young people who are not picked up on time

All parents and carers should collect their child or young person on time in line with the instructions given by the club. Should the child or young person not be collected on time a minimum of two appropriate adults will wait at the venue until the parent or carer arrives. Should the child or young person not be picked up at all, a club employee or worker will contact the DSO or the club's Safeguarding Team. Should sufficient time pass, the club may contact the police and/or children's services to take care of the child or young person until their parent or carer is contacted.

10.0 Risk assessments

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For all club activities including, trips, tours, events and activities, thorough risk assessments are completed to identify and minimise potential risks. The club's Health and Safety Policy outlines the process to undertake when completing risk assessments as well as how to capture information regarding accidents and incidents and how the club learns from such matters.

Where a child or young person is involved in a trip, activity or event, a risk assessment must take account of his/her particular vulnerabilities whilst in the club's care. The risk assessment will set out what arrangements are in place for his/her care and supervision and how risks will be minimised. Activity leaders will be required to continually monitor and amend the controls within the risk assessments whilst leading such activities.

11.0 Supervision of children and young people

The club adheres to best practice guidance set out by the FA in relation to the supervision of adults to children/young people. Generally, there should always be a minimum of two adults and an adult to child/young person ratio of:

- 0 – 7 years of age, one adult to every ten children;
- 8 – 17 years of age, one adult to every sixteen children/young people.

Particular activities may require more or less adult to child/young person ratios due to:

- Age, needs and ability of children and young people;
- Nature of the activity and environment;
- Risk assessments or intelligence information identifying potential behavioural or other issues;
- Expertise and experience of the staff involved;
- Mixed gender children and young people activities will require adults of both genders to supervise where possible.

Should the ratio not be suitable, the club's Safeguarding and Health and Safety Managers decide whether the activity or event takes place.

12.0 Working with external partners

The club always ensures external partners and organisations we engage with promote the safety and welfare of children and young people and this is outlined in contracts and/or service level agreements. External partners and organisations are required to demonstrate competencies in safeguarding and the club assesses this through its own safeguarding audits. Where organisations do not have their own satisfactory safeguarding arrangements, they will be expected to comply with the club's standards.

13.0 Referrals

If the club has safeguarding concerns in relation to a child, young person or their parents/carers the club may refer these concerns to external agencies. External agencies include, but are not limited to children's social care, adult social care, the police, health agencies, the FA. (Appendices 1, 2 and 3).

14.0 Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality of safeguarding cases is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only which would not normally include anyone other than the following:

- The Safeguarding Team and Human Resource Manager;

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- The child or young person or the person raising the concern; The employee, worker, consultant, agency staff or volunteer who received the concern or disclosure;
- The parents/carers of the child or young person who is alleged to have been abused, where appropriate;
- Local Authority and Police;
- Dependent on role, the National Governing Body.

Employees, workers, consultants, agency staff and volunteers may have access to confidential information about children and young people in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances, employees, workers, consultants, agency staff or volunteers may be given highly sensitive or private information. Confidential or personal information about a child or young person or his/her family should not be used for their own or others advantage.

Confidential information about a child or young person should never be used casually in conversation, or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the child or young person's identity does not need to be disclosed, the information should be handled anonymously.

There are some circumstances in which an employee, worker, consultant, agency staff or volunteer may be expected to share information about a child, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, employees, workers, consultants, agency staff and volunteers have a duty to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated safeguarding responsibilities (DSO and Safeguarding Team).

If an employee, worker, consultant, agency staff or volunteer is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, guidance should be sought from the club's Safeguarding or Legal Teams. The storing and processing of personal information about children and young people is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998.

15.0 Information sharing

The club abides by the 7 guiding principles as set out by HM Government on sharing information:

1. The Data Protection Act 1998 and human rights laws are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about children and young people is shared appropriately;
2. Openness and honesty with the child or young person (and/or their parents/carers or family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so;
3. Advice is sought from the club's Safeguarding and/or Legal Team if there is any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the child or young person where possible;
4. Information is shared with informed consent where appropriate and, where possible, there is respect for the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. Information will still be shared without consent if, in the club's judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. Judgement will be based on the facts of the case;
5. Safety and well-being of the child or young person is always considered;
6. Information is only shared when it is necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure to do so;

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7. Records of the club's decision to share information in relation to any reported concerns, with whom and the reasons are always recorded on the Safeguarding Concern Form (Appendix 8).

The club will share information with the relevant statutory agencies, the Premier League and FA where appropriate in relation to safeguarding cases.

16.0 Review

The club shall review this Policy and Procedures at the end of every season or whenever there is a change in legislation, guidance, governing body rules or learning from safeguarding cases.

17.0 Procedures

17.1 Consent

The first priority in safeguarding should always be to ensure the safety and welfare of the child or young person. If concerns arise, it is best practice to always gain the consent of the child or young person before an external referral is made. There are a number of circumstances whereby an external referral can be made without consent and these include:

- The child or young person is at risk of harm;
- Other people are, or may be, at risk, including other children or young people;
- Emergency or life-threatening situations may warrant the sharing of relevant information with the emergency services without consent;
- Sharing the information could prevent a serious crime;
- The child or young person lacks the mental capacity to make that decision;
- A serious crime has been committed;
- There is a risk of significant harm and meets the threshold for a multi-agency strategy meeting;
- Employees, workers, consultants, agency staff or volunteers are implicated.

17.2 What to do if you suspect abuse or poor practice has occurred

If you are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child or young person or you are concerned about an adult's behaviour towards a child or young person you must act. Do not assume

that someone else will help the child or young person. Safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility.

It is important that you report your concerns to one of the following:

- Departmental Safeguarding Officer;
- Safeguarding Team; or
- Human Resources Manager

Taking no action is not an option.

17.3 What to do if you receive a safeguarding disclosure from a child or young person

Children or young people who may be vulnerable are likely to disclose abuse or neglect to those they trust and how one responds to a disclosure is crucial.

Stage 1

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Deal with the disclosure as it happens and ensure that the child or young person's immediate needs are met and that he/she feels supported. When a disclosure is made, it is most important to understand that you must not investigate the disclosure yourself. The disclosure must always be taken seriously and dealt with according to the guidance in this Policy and Procedures, even if the validity of the disclosure is uncertain. You are not expected to act as a social worker, counsellor, judge, and jury or avenge the abuser; you are however expected to act in the best interest of the child or young person who may be at risk.

You must:

- Put your own feelings aside and listen as if the information is not sensational;
- Allow the child/young person to lead the discussion and to talk freely;
- Listen to what the child/young person is saying without investigating. Try not to interrupt them or ask lots of questions. Being asked a lot of questions can feel like being interrogated;
- Allow the child or young person to tell you at his/her own pace;
- Don't worry if the child/young person stops talking for a while, silences are ok. You don't have to rush in to fill the gaps;
- Accept what the child/young person says without challenge;
- Allow the child/young person to talk but protect him/her from sharing the information with too many other people;
- Provide reassurance that you are taking them seriously and he/she have done the right thing by disclosing;
- Let the child/young person know it is recognised how hard it is for him/her to tell you;
- It is ok to let him/her know if you are unable to answer all their questions;
- Avoid asking leading questions, for example "Did the coach hit you?";
- Never ask questions that may make the child/young person feel guilty or inadequate;
- If physical abuse has taken place, you may observe visible bruises and marks but do not ask a child/young person to remove or adjust his/her clothing to observe them and do not take photographs of the injuries, you should make a note of the injuries on the Body Map in the Safeguarding Concern Form (Appendix 8);
- Tell the child/young person who you will be contacting e.g. club's Safeguarding Team or DSO and that you will support him/her through that process;
- If you establish that they he/she has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed, do not pursue the conversation any further. This is important to ensure that questions cannot be raised later about possible manipulation of the disclosure; and
- Respect the confidentiality of the disclosure and do not share the information with anyone other than those who need to know. Those who need to know are those who have a role to play in protecting children/young people.

You must not:

- Panic or show that you are shocked. It is important to remain calm and in control of your feelings;
- Document the conversation while the child/young person is disclosing. This should be done as soon as possible after the child/young person has disclosed to you;

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- After the child/young person has disclosed, the conversation must be documented remembering as accurately as you can, the words and phrases used by the child/young person to describe what happened to him/her;
- Investigate;
- Give the impression that you might blame the child/young person e.g. don't ask: "Why did you let him?", "What were you doing there anyway?" or "Why didn't you tell me before?"
- Press for details by asking questions such as "What did he/she do next?"
- Ask leading questions;
- Pass judgment on what is said;
- Make false promises and/or promise confidentiality – it should be explained that the child/young person has done the right thing, outline who will need to be told and why;
- Approach the alleged abuser yourself.

Do remember, when a child/young person discloses they may feel:

- Guilt: he/she may blame themselves for the abuse and often feel guilty for telling.
- Ashamed: he/she may feel ashamed about the abuse itself.
- Confused: he/she may be confused about his/her feelings for the alleged abuser.
- Scared: he/she may be fearful of the repercussions of telling. He/she may be scared of the alleged abuser.
- Be careful about touching (e.g. hugging or cuddling) the child/young person if they have not initiated the contact. He/she may be upset by physical contact.

Stage 2

As soon as possible, once the immediate comfort and safety of the child or young person is secured, you must inform your

DSO, or the Safeguarding Team of the disclosure. You may make a referral yourself directly to a statutory agency if you are concerned about the child/young person's immediate safety and/or are having difficulty contacting the designated safeguarding person/s or if the designated safeguarding person is the alleged abuser. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

Stage 3

You should complete the club's Safeguarding Concern Form (SCF) as soon as possible after the disclosure has been made and send the SCF (Appendix 8) to the Safeguarding Team within 24 hours of the disclosure.

Wherever possible, you must record information as it was relayed to you using the language of the child or young person rather than your own interpretation of it.

What happens next?

It is important that concerns are followed up and it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that they are. You should be informed by the club's Safeguarding Team what has happened following the report being made. If you do not receive this information, you should be proactive in seeking it out.

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If you have concerns that the disclosure has not been acted upon appropriately, you should inform the club's Human Resource Manager and ultimately contact the relevant statutory agency.

A disclosure is not the only way that you may be made aware of an issue. Sometimes another adult or even a child or young person may say something about a possible abusive situation. On occasions you may witness an incident that may cause concern or indeed you may pick up on things that cause concern or information may be passed to a coach or manager anonymously by a person or persons who do not want to be directly involved for whatever reason.

17.4 Raising a concern

You do not need to have firm evidence before raising a concern. But we do ask that you explain as fully as you can the information or circumstances that gave rise to your concern.

Step 1

If you have a concern of any form of safeguarding poor practice or abuse, raise it first with the Departmental Safeguarding Officer, who will raise it with the club's Safeguarding Team.

Step 2

If you feel unable to raise the matter with the DSO for whatever reason, raise the matter with the club's Safeguarding Team.

Step 3

If you feel the Safeguarding Team has not handled the concern appropriately you should contact the club's Human Resource Manager. If these channels have been followed and you still have concerns, or if you feel that the matter is so serious that you cannot discuss it with any of the above, you should contact the Head of Safeguarding at the FA on 0800023 264

For a flowchart of the process to follow, please see Appendices 1, 2 and 3.

17.5 Managing allegations against employees, workers, consultant's agency staff and volunteers

Should a concern arise about an employee, worker, consultant, agency staff or volunteer's conduct in relation to a child or young person, this should be reported to the club's Safeguarding Team who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child or young person in question and any other person who may be at risk. The person raising the concern should complete the club's Safeguarding Concern Form (Appendix 8). When managing an allegation against an employee, worker, consultant, agency staff or volunteer the Safeguarding Team will follow this process:

- The allegation will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)/Designated Person at the Local Authority and/or the Police;
- The parent/carer of the child or young person will be contacted as soon as possible, following advice from statutory agencies;
- Senior Management will be notified and if applicable Premier League/EFL and the FA;

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- If a member of the Safeguarding Team is the subject of an allegation, the report must be made to the Human Resource Manager who will refer the allegation to the appropriate statutory agencies;
- If required, a full investigation and possible sanction in accordance with the club's Disciplinary Policy for employees will follow. Workers, consultants or agency workers may have their Agreements terminated;
- Referrals as appropriate will be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

For a flowchart of the process to follow, please see Appendix 3.

17.6 Managing concerns for a child or young person

Any concern relating to the abuse of a child or young person by another child or young person must be dealt with through this Policy and Procedures. Any such concern should be reported immediately to the DSO who will inform the Safeguarding Team.

17.7 Making a referral

All employees, workers, consultants, agency staff and volunteers should complete the club's Safeguarding Concern Form (Appendix 8) after referring any case to the DSO and/or

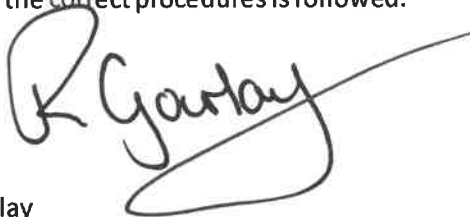
Safeguarding Team. The Safeguarding Team will contact the relevant Local Authority Children's Services Team completing their Referral Form and update the Safeguarding Concern Form for the club's records.

17.8 What to do if a child or young person is in danger of immediate harm

The first priority is to ensure the child or young person is in a safe place away from the alleged perpetrator. Emergency services should be summoned whenever a situation is felt to be beyond the control of employees, casual workers, agency staff, consultants or volunteers. In addition, employees, workers, consultants, agency staff and volunteers should have, readily available, all the contact numbers of the club's Safeguarding Team, DSOs, colleagues, or other services which can assist in an emergency or urgent situation (Appendix 9). Report the matter to the Safeguarding Team and/or Human Resources Manager at the earliest opportunity.

In the absence of the Safeguarding Team and/or Human Resources Manager, contact Reading Children's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub on 0118 937 3641 and/or the police on 101 for help and to ensure the correct procedures is followed.

Signed:



Date: 30/3/18

Ron Gourlay

CEO