



SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

Luton Town Football Club

Approved by: Executive Board

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LUTON TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

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Safeguarding Adults at risk Policy 2021-22

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

The Club is committed to football being inclusive and providing a safe and positive experience for everyone involved in the game.

Whilst it is hoped that the law, the FA's Respect programme, the Club's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and positive approaches to training and education are sufficient to safeguard all adults in football, the Club recognises that it has a responsibility to safeguard Adults at risk of harm from abuse and harm and to respond where abuse and harm are perceived to have occurred.

This policy will seek to provide guidance as to how to prevent harm, give clarity on how to report harm, to ensure investigation into harm and to respond to the outcome of such investigations in such a way as to reduce the risk of further harm to the individual adult at risk of harm and to other adults at risk who may be affected in the future.

The Club recognises that the terms 'Adult at risk of harm', 'abuse' and 'harm' are open to interpretation and challenge, but for the purpose of this policy they will be defined as follows:

Adult at risk of harm shall be defined as:

'A person aged 18 or over who is or who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or who may be unable to take care of himself or herself, or unable to protect himself or herself against the risk of, or the experience of, abuse, neglect, significant harm or exploitation'.

This may include people with learning disabilities, sensory impairments, mental health needs, older people and people with a physical disability or impairment. It may also include people who are affected by the circumstances that they are living in, for example, experiencing domestic violence. This list is not exhaustive. An individual's level of vulnerability to harm may vary over time depending on the circumstances they are in and their needs at that time.

Abuse shall be defined as:

'A violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It includes acts of commission (such as an assault) and acts of omission (situations where the environment fails to prevent harm). Abuse may be single act or omission or series of acts or omissions.'

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.

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The responsibility taken by this policy is to:

- Safeguard the welfare of vulnerable adults in football by protecting them from any significant physical, sexual and emotional harm and from neglect, bullying and financial harm within the game. This may include training and codes of practice amongst other strategies for reducing risk.
- Safeguard the welfare of vulnerable adults in football by making use of such vetting as is available to the Club when seeking to establish suitability for a new or pre-existing role with vulnerable adults in football.
- Report to the appropriate authorities any concerns about abuse or harm to vulnerable adults whether this occurs within the game or elsewhere and whether this be a criminal offence or other concern. The appropriate authorities may be internal or external to the game. This will include identifying reporting frameworks and developing guidelines for reporting.
- Ensure appropriate investigations and responses to concerns about abuse or harm within the game including football sanctions as appropriate. This will include work in partnership with the Police and other statutory agencies charged with investigating and responding and with the vulnerable adult who is believed to be at risk or believed to have been harmed.
- Following such investigations, act to put appropriate safeguards in place to safeguard the vulnerable adult in the future and to reduce the risk of harm to other vulnerable adults in the game.
- Report when appropriate to the Independent Safeguarding Authority anybody in the game who is believed by the Club to be a risk to harm vulnerable adults.
- Seek to develop internal skills and knowledge based on research, Government guidance and learning from experience.

Key Principles

Self-determination

Safeguarding adults can be complex. Adults have a right to self-determination and may choose not to act to protect themselves. Safeguarding adults means creating a culture that informs the adult and consults them on all decisions affecting them and works in partnership with them.

As a principle safeguarding concerns should be discussed with the adult to establish their views and involve them in the safeguarding process. Occasionally however this may not be possible or safe. If in doubt seek advice from safeguarding@TheFA.com

The Care Act

The six principles of the Care Act apply. The principles work together:

- 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.





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- 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.

How to respond to and report a suspicion / disclosure of abuse

- Staff and volunteers should always share safeguarding concerns with their Designated Safeguarding Officer except in an emergency when Police, health and/or adult services or health services should be contacted.
- Any concerns regarding a potential or actual breach of the Adults at Risk Regulations should be reported to The FA and other Football Authorities if relevant.
- Abuse outside football: If you become aware of an incident outside of football relating to someone involved in football and need to seek advice, please contact safeguarding@TheFA.com.

Relationships of Trust

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes it an offence for those engaged in providing care, assistance or services to someone with a learning disability or mental disorder to engage in sexual activity with that person whether or not that person has the capacity to consent. This clause does not apply to football but the principle of power imbalance must be considered when working with adults at risk.

There are some roles in sport where adults have responsibility for, authority over and influence on others and as a result there is a power imbalance between the two adults. Roles with this power imbalance are described as 'Relationships of Trust'

Relevant roles that may create power imbalance include those that involve caring, advising, supervising, training, coaching, teaching, managing, tutoring, mentoring, assessing, developing, guiding, treating or providing therapy.

Some adults may have additional vulnerabilities arising from previous abuse, complex care histories or conditions that make understanding boundaries in relationships difficult. This can leave adults open to exploitation or abuse.

The power imbalance between those with responsibility and those being coached, mentored or otherwise supported may mean that the Football Authorities may consider a sexual relationship to be inappropriate although not illegal. The FA Safeguarding Adults at Risk Regulations enable an assessment to be undertaken of the suitability of a person to be involved in football if they may place adults at risk. Sexual relationships where there is an imbalance of power and possible breach of the relationship of trust perceived to be inappropriate will be assessed on a case-by-case basis in partnership with the adult.

All possible breaches of the relationship of trust must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Record keeping and information sharing

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will maintain a record of safeguarding concerns and records while adhering to data protection legislation.

Adults are assumed to have capacity and this means they may not wish information about them to be shared. It is good practice to try to gain the person's consent to share information.





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Emergency or life-threatening situations may warrant the sharing of relevant information with the relevant emergency services without consent. As long as it does not increase risk, employees should inform the person if they need to share their information without consent.

The law does not prevent the sharing of sensitive, personal information within organisations. If the information is confidential, but there is a safeguarding concern, sharing it may be justified.

The law does not prevent the sharing of sensitive, personal information between organisations where the public interest served outweighs the public interest served by protecting confidentiality – for example, where a serious crime may be prevented.

If anyone has any concerns, please contact one of the Designated Safety Officers on either 01582 411 622 or 01582 561 622.

Or:

Writing to either the Safeguarding Senior Manager, Luton Town FC, Kenilworth Stadium, 1 Maple Road, Luton, LU4 8AW or to the Head of Safeguarding, Kenilworth Stadium, 1 Maple Road, Luton, Beds, LU4 8AW.

Date of next review: July 2022