

LONDON CITY LIONESSES

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

LONDON CITY LIONESSES FOOTBALL CLUB
Policy Document Name: Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
Document Owner: Kirsty Lilley
Document Created: Friday, 1 March 2024
Reviewed: Tuesday 3 rd December 2024
Next Review: Friday, 18 th September 2025

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Policy Aims

The aim of our safeguarding policy is to promote good practice and to enable club personnel to:

- Provide young, vulnerable and all other individuals with appropriate safety and protection whilst involved with London City Lionesses FC.
- Be educated in relation to Safeguarding and Safeguarding processes.
- Make informed and confident responses relating to specific safeguarding issues.
- Through education and communication, raise awareness amongst all members of the wider London City Lionesses community to understand their role in safeguarding.

Scope

This policy applies to all activities run or managed by London City Lionesses FC whether they are undertaken within the stadium, training facilities or at any external venue.

Policy

1. London City Lionesses FC acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child, adult at risk and all individuals who have been entrusted to its care and is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all. A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any Club football activity. We subscribe to The Football Association's Safeguarding Children - Policy and Procedures and endorse and adopt the Policy Statement contained in that document.

2. The key principles of The FA Safeguarding Children Policy are that:

- The child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration.
- All children, vulnerable persons and all individuals 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/ carers is essential.

We acknowledge that every child, adult at risk and all other individuals who play or participate in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse.

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London City Lionesses FC recognises that this is the responsibility of every individual involved in our club.

3. London City Lionesses FC has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of all children, adults at risk and all other individuals by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. It is noted and accepted that The Football Association's Safeguarding Strategy applies to everyone in football whether in a paid or voluntary capacity. This means whether you are a volunteer, match official, helper on club tours, football coach, club official or medical staff.

4. We endorse and adopt The FA's Responsible Recruitment guidelines and we will:

- Develop a role profile.
- Request identification documents.
- As a minimum meet and chat with the applicant(s) and where possible conduct interviews before appointing.
- Request and follow up with two references before appointing.
- Require an FA DBS Enhanced Disclosure where appropriate in line with FA guidelines.

All our current members who are regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of children and adults at risk will be required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure via The FA. If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached us to become part of our club, guidance will be sought from The FA. It is noted and accepted that The FA will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained and that all decisions will be made in the best interests of children, adults at risk and all other individuals.

It is accepted that The FA aims to prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children or adults at risk and the opportunity to influence policies or practise with children or adults at risk. This is to prevent direct sexual or physical harm to individuals and to minimise the risk of 'grooming' within football. The policy on DBS Enhanced Disclosures will be subject to change, in light of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. Further information will be provided on this via TheFA.com and via County FA Welfare Officers.

5. London City Lionesses FC supports The FA's Whistle blowing Policy. 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's recognised that appropriate actions have not been taken. This approach or policy is adopted in



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many different walks of life. Any adult or young person with concerns about a colleague's conduct towards a child or any other individual can contact The FA by calling 0800 169 1863 and asking for the Safeguarding Team or via email to:

safeguarding@TheFA.COM

Concerns can be reported to the local Police, Children's Social Care or the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

6. London City Lionesses FC have appointed a Club Designated Safeguarding Officer, Kirsty Lilley, in line with The FA's role profile requiring completion of the Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officers Workshop. The DSO will be involved with Welfare Officer Training provided by The FA and/or County FA (CFA). The DSO is the first point of contact for all Club members regarding concerns about the welfare of any child, adult at risk or any other individual.

The DSO will liaise directly with the CFA Welfare Officer and will be familiar with the procedures for referring any concerns. They will also play a proactive role in increasing awareness of respect, poor practice and abuse amongst their Club members.

7. We acknowledge and endorse The FA's identification of bullying as a category of abuse. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable in our league. If bullying does occur, all individuals should feel comfortable informing a representative of the London City Lionesses and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. Incidents will be reported to the DSO, in cases of serious bullying, we may contact the CFA Welfare Officer. London City Lionesses FC have adopted The FA Anti-Bullying Policy for Football Clubs ([FA Anti-Bullying Policy.pdf](#))

8. Respect codes of conduct for players, parents/spectators, officials and coaches have been implemented by our Club. In order to validate these Respect codes of conduct the Club has clear actions it will take regarding repeated or serious misconduct at Club level and acknowledges the possibility of potential sanctions which may be implemented by the CFA in more serious circumstances. All individuals associated with the club will be required to adopt the Respect codes.

9. Reporting your concerns about the welfare of a child or any other individual - Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you are worried about a child or any other individual it is important that you report your concerns - no action is not an option.

- If you are worried about a child or any other individual then you need to report your concerns to the DSO.
- If the issue is one of poor practice they will either:
 - a. Deal with the matter themselves or

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b. Seek advice from the CFA Welfare Officer.

- If the concern is more serious - possible child abuse - the DSO, where possible will contact the CFA Welfare Officer first, then immediately contact the Police or Children's Services.

- If the child needs immediate medical treatment take them to a hospital or call an ambulance and tell them this is a child protection concern. Let the DSO or your CFA Welfare Officer know what action you have taken.

- If at any time you are not able to contact the DSO or the matter is clearly serious then you can either:

a. Contact your CFA Welfare Officer directly.

b. Contact the Police or Children's Social Care.

c. Call the NSPCC 24-hour Helpline for advice on 0808 800 5000 or text 88858 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

All personnel must demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to safeguard children, adults at risk and all other individuals, report any concern both in the best interests of the young

person, adults at risk and all individuals and to protect themselves from allegations. The following are examples of how to create a positive culture within the club:

Good practice means always:

- Promptly respond to any request to complete or update your DBS Criminal Records Check.

- Promptly inform the HR Department or the DSO in respect of any investigation, allegation or arrest which may impact your role in working with young people, adults at risk or any other individual.

- Work in an open environment, for example, avoid private or unobserved situations and encourage transparency in communication.

- Treat all people equally and with respect and dignity.

- Put the welfare of the individual first in all instances.

- Maintain a professional relationship with any adult at risk and all other individuals for example, never have an intimate relationship with a child U18 (even if they are over 16) or an adult at risk (even if they are over 18).

- Never take advantage of a position of trust, control or responsibility for those in your supervision, care, support or coaching environment.

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- Make football fun, enjoyable and promote fair play.

Coaching Contact:

- If any form of manual/physical contact is required, it should be provided openly and according to coaching guidelines provided by the National Governing Body (NGB) of the sport and in line with child protection guidance. Care is needed as contact may be difficult to maintain when a child is constantly moving. Young people/participants should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should be carefully considered.
- All club personnel that have direct contact with children and adults at risk must pass an enhanced DBS check.
- Keeping up to date with the technical skills and qualifications in football to the appropriate level.
- Always ensure that coaches and club personnel work in pairs, particularly if there is a requirement to be in dressing rooms or undertake any personal care.
- All club personnel should be vigilant and ensure adults around children, adults at risk and all individuals act in accordance with the standards set by the club. Club personnel are also responsible to monitor those who enter changing rooms, etc.
- Ensure that if teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by club personnel and that appropriate club personnel ratios are planned and maintained.
- Ensure that at tournaments or residential events, adults do not enter the rooms of children or adults at risk or invite children or adults at risk into their rooms.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking, not drinking excessive amounts of alcohol, not using drugs or not using bad language in the company of young people, adults at risk and all other individuals.
- When coaching, give enthusiastic and constructive feedback recognising the development needs.
- Secure parental/guardian/carer consent in writing to act, if the need arises, in emergency circumstances to give permission for the administration of medication or emergency treatment.
- Obtain parental/guardian/carer consent in writing for taking photographs and/or video of any child or adult at risk and provide information on how such footage is to be used.
- Keep a written record of any injury or incident that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given and/or action taken and advise parents/guardians/carers and

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the DSO on any issue in relation to any treatment of any individual and to log such details on an incident/accident report form.

- Request written parental consent if club personnel are required to transport children or adults at risk in club vehicles. Transporting vulnerable persons in club members' personal vehicles should be avoided unless absolutely necessary.

Practices to be avoided:

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of either the child's parent/guardian/carer or someone in a position of authority within the club. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent/guardian fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a training session/match.

- Avoid taking an adult at risk to their own home where they will be alone.
- Avoid taking an adult at risk to your home where they will be alone with you.

Practices never to be sanctioned:

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- Share a room with any child (under 18).
- Engage in rough, physical or sexual provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching or language.
- Allow an adult at risk to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reduce an adult at risk to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unacknowledged, unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

If any of the following occur, you should report this immediately to the DSO or your line manager who will advise what to do next. You should make a record of the incident.

- If a child is injured during an activity other than as a reasonably foreseeable injury resulting from the activity.
- If you accidentally hurt a child or you observe another adult hurting a child.
- If the child seems excessively distressed in any manner.
- If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

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- If there is a sudden change in behaviour, ie the child's behaviour becomes bad, or they become withdrawn.

RECOGNITION – SIGNS OF ABUSE

There are six main forms of abuse as set out below, this is a non exhaustive list and abuse can come in many forms. Should you have any concern that abuse is occurring you should contact the DSO immediately.

1. PHYSICAL ABUSE

Where adults or other young people physically hurt or injure a vulnerable individual, including by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. Examples of physical abuse in sport may be when a vulnerable individual is forced into training and competition that exceeds the capacity of his/her immature and growing body; or where the vulnerable person is given drugs to enhance performance or delay puberty.

2. SEXUAL ABUSE

When adults (male or female) or other young people use vulnerable persons to meet their own sexual needs.

3. EMOTIONAL ABUSE

The persistent emotional ill treatment of a vulnerable person is likely to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve communicating to a vulnerable person they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only in terms of meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of the vulnerable person that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may involve causing the vulnerable person to feel frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the child very nervous and withdrawn. Ill-treatment of a vulnerable person, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse. Examples of emotional abuse in sport include subjecting children to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm or bullying. Putting a vulnerable person under constant pressure to perform to unrealistically high standards is also a form of emotional abuse.

4. NEGLECT

When adults fail to meet the physical and/or psychological needs of the vulnerable person, to an extent that is likely to result in the serious impairment of the person's health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a vulnerable person from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. Refusal to give a vulnerable person love, affection and attention can also be a form of neglect.

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Examples of neglect in sport could include not ensuring vulnerable persons are safe, exposing them to undue cold or heat, or exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury.

5. PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE

Peer-on Peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control exercised between and within a young/vulnerable person's relationship (both intimate and non-intimate). It can take many various forms including serious bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, teenage relationship abuse, domestic violence, sexting, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour and/or gender-based violence.

6. BULLYING

Bullying is not always easy to define and can take many forms including social media bullying, causing vulnerable persons to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Examples of bullying in sport could include constantly pointing out the weaknesses of another in front of other children and not giving praise.

Common signs of abuse:

Every individual is unique, so behavioural signs of abuse will vary from person to person. In addition, the impact of abuse is likely to be influenced by the person's age, the nature and extent of the abuse, and the help and support the person receives. However, there are some behaviours that are commonly seen in vulnerable persons who have been abused:

- The person appears distrustful of a particular adult, or a parent or a coach with whom you would expect there to be a close relationship.
- The person has unexplained injuries such as bruising, bites or burns, particularly if these are on a part of the body where you would not expect them.
- The person has an injury which is not explained satisfactorily or properly treated.
- A deterioration in the person's physical appearance or a rapid weight gain or loss.
- Pains, itching, bruising or bleeding in or near the genital area.
- A change in the person's general behaviour. For example, they may become unusually quiet and withdrawn or unexpectedly aggressive. Such changes can be sudden or gradual.
- If the person refuses to remove clothing for normal activities or wants to keep covered up in warm weather.

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LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

It is important that all concerns are reported to a representative of the club, including serious concerns and worries considered lower on the spectrum of behaviour.

A lower-level concern is any concern, doubt, or sense of unease, no matter how small, that someone may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with our code of conduct. This includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate behaviour outside of work, volunteering, or being either a player or member of staff. These concerns are often not considered serious enough for a referral to a statutory service such as the police or children's services and will often be referred to as poor practice.

Behaviour that might be considered as inappropriate will often depend on the circumstances. A lower-level concern may not be seen as immediately dangerous or intentionally harmful to a child, young or vulnerable person, but it can soon escalate and become a serious concern. Examples include:

- Thoughtless behaviour that raises doubts around the ability, motivation or skill to work with children.
- A captain or manager enforcing a humiliating team bonding activity or an act of initiation.
- A coach using social media to interact with children, liking posts or sending direct messages.
- A coach or official offering a child a lift home or waiting alone with a child.

MANAGING LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

To ensure children and vulnerable individuals are kept safe, it is important that lower-level concerns are responded to appropriately by us.

It is essential that everyone involved with London City Lionesses understands that all concerns need to be challenged as soon as possible. By creating a safer culture, staff and volunteers are likely to feel comfortable and confident in recognising and acting on lower-level concerns about a person's behaviour.

Having an awareness and culture allows us to act promptly as soon as low-level concerns are brought to our attention. Examples include:

- Correcting behaviour through education.
- Removing an individual from their role.

The risk in not receiving reports of low-level concerns when they arise is that behaviour cannot be addressed as soon as possible. Potentially, situations could escalate and adversely affect those involved. Although low-level concerns will often occur through a misunderstanding or lack of awareness, some behaviour may be intended to enable abuse at a later stage.

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It's vital that all those involved in our club can raise and address low-level concerns or underlying doubt, no matter how big or small the concern.

Further advice on Safeguarding Children matters can be obtained from:

Kirsty Lilley– Designated Safeguarding and Player Care Lead
07842 437928

kirsty.lilley@londoncitylionesses.com

Kent Football Association Safeguarding
01622 792140

safeguarding@kentfa.com

The Football Association

<http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding>

safeguarding@thefa.com

The FA Safeguarding Children General Enquiry Line - 0845 210 808

