



# Leighton United Football Club

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY**

**This policy is based on the Football Association's Safeguarding Children Policy for youth football clubs.**

### **1. Our Responsibilities**

1.1 As an England Football Accredited Club, **Leighton United Football Club** acknowledges our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person and are committed to providing a safe environment for all. We recognise that a child is anyone under the age of 18 and subscribe to The Football Association's (The FA) Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures.

1.2 **Leighton United Football Club** endorses and adopts the following key safeguarding principles:

- The child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration.
- All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their; age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability, pregnancy and maternity.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately; and
- Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents/carers is essential.

1.3 **Leighton United Football Club** acknowledge that every child or young person who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in our club, including the parents/carers of our players and we will effectively communicate this to them.

1.4 **Leighton United Football Club** commits to ensuring that children and young people have the right to take part, be heard and have their views and opinions taken into account when making club decisions and actions that concern them.

### **2. Our Role**

2.1 Leighton United Football Club has a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. It is noted and accepted that

The FA's Safeguarding Children Regulations (see current edition of The FA Handbook, website <https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/lawsandrules/fa-handbook>) apply to everyone in football whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, including coaches/managers, volunteers, match officials, helpers on club tours, or medical staff or other club officials/helpers.

### 3. Safer Recruitment

3.1 We endorse and adopt The FA's Safer Recruitment guidelines and we will, where appropriate:

- Specify what the role is and what tasks it involves.
- Request identification documents.
- As a minimum, meet and chat with the applicant(s) and where possible interview people before appointing them.
- Require an FA-accepted Disclosure and Barring Service enhanced criminal records check.

3.2 The Club implements its own volunteer recruitment policy.

3.3 Everyone working in eligible roles with children and young people, such as coaches/managers, first aiders and physiotherapists, are required to hold an in-date FA-accepted Disclosure and Barring Service enhanced criminal records check as part of safer recruitment practice and we commit to managing this consistently with individuals in current roles and those new to roles.

3.4 If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached us to become part of **Leighton United Football Club**, guidance will always be sought from the County Football Association (CFA) Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

3.5 It is accepted that The FA aims to prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children or young people and the opportunity to influence policies or practice with children or young people. This is to prevent direct sexual or physical harm to children and to minimise the risk of football being used in the grooming of children.

### 4. Our Club Welfare Officers

4.1 **Leighton United Football Club** has appointed Club Welfare Officers ('CWOs') in line with The FA's role profile who have completed the Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officers courses. We commit to supporting post holders to be involved with ongoing Welfare Officer training provided by The FA and/or County Football Association (CFA).

4.2 A CWO is the first point of contact for all parents/carers and club officials regarding concerns about the welfare of any child or young person. The role of CWOs and their contact information is widely communicated throughout the

club. The CWOs will liaise directly with the CFA Designated Safeguarding Officer (CFA DSO) and will be familiar with the procedures for referring any concerns.

- 4.3 We recognise the need for proportionality in appointing individuals to the role of a CWO to ensure visibility for those associated with the club. We will ensure adequate resources to implement this policy and to drive safe working practices and a proactive culture, as necessary.

## 5. Bullying

- 5.1 We acknowledge and endorse The FA's identification of bullying as a category of abuse. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable at our club. All players and parents/carers will be able to access our antibullying policy and know that incidents will be dealt with appropriately. Incidents need to be reported to a CWO and in cases of serious bullying the CFA DSO may be contacted.

## 6. Acceptable Behaviour When Working With Young People

- 6.1 Everyone who works or volunteers with children is responsible and accountable for the way in which they behave around and towards them. Every child has a right to be treated with respect and dignity. We always require adults within our club to exhibit acceptable behaviour. We adopt the FA's Acceptable Behaviours guidance. This is Guidance Note 5.7 which can be found in the safeguarding area of The FA website.
- 6.2 Codes of conduct for Players, Parents/Spectators, Officials and Coaches have been implemented by our club. The club has clear actions it will take regarding breaches of the codes, 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.

## 7. Ratio of Adults to Children

- 7.1 In accordance with FA policy, whatever the age of the children/young people and type of activity, **a minimum of two FA-DBS-checked coaches/adults** must always be present. This ensures at least basic cover in the event of an incident.
- 7.2 Young leaders (under-18) or coaches aged 16-17 cannot be considered as adults.

## 8. Reporting Concerns

- 8.1 In this club, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and we know that inaction is not an option. If anyone is worried about a child, they must report their concerns to a CWO. The CWO will then action accordingly.

8.2 Our CWOs will manage low-level concerns and where necessary seek advice from the CFS DSO.

8.3 Our CWOs will make referrals about more serious concerns to the CFA DSO, or in an emergency contact the Police or Children's Social Care.

We will ensure that if the child needs immediate medical treatment that we take them to a hospital or call an ambulance and tell them it is a child protection concern.

Our CWOs will keep records of the actions taken and keep the CFA DSO informed.

8.4 If at any time a CWO is not available, or the matter is clearly serious, all associated with the club should be aware that they can:

- Contact the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer directly  
Tel. 01582 567721/07960 500723 or via email  
[Safeguarding@BedfordshireFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@BedfordshireFA.com)
- Contact the FA Safeguarding Team on **0800 169 1863** or via email  
[Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com)
- Contact the Police or Children's Social Care; and/or
- Call the NSPCC Helpline (Monday to Friday 08.00 to 22.00 or 09.00 – 18.00 at weekends for advice on **0808 800 5000** or text **88858** or email  
[help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

8.5 Guidance on reporting safeguarding issues is given in the club document on Guidance for Reporting Safeguarding Concerns and Incidents.

## 9. Whistleblowing

9.1 **Leighton United Football Club** supports The FA's Whistle Blowing Policy (as described in this paragraph) which requires any adult or young person with concerns about an adult in a position of trust within football can 'whistle blow' by contacting The FA Safeguarding Team by writing to The FA Case Manager at The Football Association, Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London SW1P 9EQ, by emailing [Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com) or alternatively by going directly to the Police, Children's Social Care or the NSPCC.

9.2 We encourage everyone to know about The FA's Whistleblowing Policy and to utilise it when necessary.

9.3 NB. Whistleblowing 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.

## 10. Our Commitment

- 10.1 As an England Football Accredited Club, our Management Committee understands and accepts the collective responsibility to adhere to our safeguarding children's policy and procedures and to ensure that safeguarding is always an agenda item at our committee meetings. We commit to proactively sharing our policy, procedures and CWO contact details with those associated with the club.

## 11. Information

The club's welfare officers are:

Jo Baggaley – Tel. 07807 096652, Email [jobaggaley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jobaggaley@hotmail.co.uk)

Laura Redrup – Tel. 07476 921152, Email [lauraredrup@gmail.com](mailto:lauraredrup@gmail.com)

Assisted by:

Michelle Hibbert – Tel. 07947 217288, Email [michellehibbert@aol.com](mailto:michellehibbert@aol.com)

Alan Redrup – Tel. 07465 418160, Email [alanmkdons@outlook.com](mailto:alanmkdons@outlook.com)

- The club's safeguarding policies can be found online via [www.leightonunitedfc.co.uk](http://www.leightonunitedfc.co.uk) > Information > LUFC Policies and Guidance > Click here (to access the document library) > 10. Policies – Safeguarding

Includes the safeguarding children, anti-bullying, equality, social media and volunteer recruitment policies and guidance on reporting safeguarding concerns and incidents.

- FA guidance can be found in the safeguarding area of the FA website: <https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding>

An image of the first page of the current edition of the safeguarding children policy template is shown below:



**GUIDANCE NOTES NO:**  
**1.4**

# **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURES: TEMPLATES**

**FOR CLUBS WITH YOUTH TEAMS & YOUTH LEAGUES**

**Version: 1.3  
Published: JULY 2020**