



**LEWES COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CLUB  
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# **Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures**

**LEWES COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CLUB**

Policy Document Name: Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

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## **Lewes FC - Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures**

1. Lewes Football Club (Lewes FC) believes it is unacceptable for anyone to experience

abuse of any form. Lewes FC acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care. We are committed to working to provide a safe environment for all members, and we will follow the safe working practices outlined in this policy to achieve this. This policy applies to all staff including; directors, managerial staff, paid staff, seasonal and temporary staff, and volunteers working on behalf of Lewes FC.

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 (The FA) 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 or young person's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration; (as enshrined in the Children Act 2004)
- all children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, faith or belief
- 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 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. Lewes Football Club recognises that this is the responsibility of every adult involved in our club.

3. Lewes FC has a role to play in safeguarding 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 Football Association's Safeguarding Children Regulations (see The FA Handbook) 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 for recruiting volunteers and staff and we will:

- specify exactly what the role is and what tasks it involves beforehand
- request identification documents, alongside a declaration declaring any criminal convictions
- Ensure that anyone working children at Lewes FC will have an enhanced FA affiliated DBS check and have taken part in mandatory FA safeguarding training.
- as a minimum meet and chat with the applicant(s), and where possible interview people before appointing them
- Include questions about safeguarding in the interview, to gauge the candidate's attitudes to working with children and young people
- ask for and follow up with references before appointing someone
- where eligible require an FA accepted Enhanced Criminal Record Check (CRC) with Barring List Check in line with current FA policy and regulations.

5. We will ensure that all current Lewes FC members working in eligible roles, with children and young people - such as managers and coaches - are required to hold an in-date FA accepted Enhanced CRC with Barring List check as part of responsible recruitment practice.

6. We will seek guidance from the Football Association, in the event that there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached us to become part of Lewes Football Club. It is noted and accepted that The FA will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained via the CRC Process and that all suitability decisions will be made in accordance with legislation and in the best interests of children and young people.

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 practise with children or young people. This is to prevent direct sexual or physical harm to children and to minimise the risk of 'grooming' within football.

7. Lewes FC supports The FA's **Whistle Blowing Policy**. Any adult or young person with concerns about a person in a position of trust with football can 'whistleblow' by:

- Calling Sussex County FA on 01903 768578 or emailing [Safeguarding@SussexFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@SussexFA.com)
- Calling The FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 169 1863, or by emailing [Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com)
- Contacting NSPCC via [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) or 0808 800 5000
- Contacting Child Protection in Sport Unit via [cpsu@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:cpsu@nspcc.org.uk) or alternatively by going direct to the Police or Children's Social Care

Lewes Football Club encourages everyone to know about The FA's Whistle Blowing Policy and to utilise it if necessary. Whistle-blowing 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 many different walks of life.

8. Lewes FC has appointed a **Club Welfare Officer** in line with The FA's role profile and required completion of the Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officers Workshop. The post holder will be involved with Welfare Officer training provided by The FA and/or County FA. The **Club Welfare Officer is the first point of contact for all club members regarding concerns about the welfare of any child or young person**. The Club Welfare Officer will liaise directly with the County FA (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 club members.

### **9. Procedure to report your concerns about the welfare of a child or young person when there is a safeguarding concern.**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you are worried about a child it is important that you report your concerns – no action is not an option.

- If a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm, or if the concern is more serious (possible child abuse) contact the Sussex FA Welfare Officer first if possible, then immediately refer the case to the Police or Children's Social Care.
- If the child or young person needs immediate medical treatment take them to a hospital or call an ambulance and tell them this is a child protection concern. Let the Lewes FC Club Welfare Officer know what action you have taken, they in turn will inform the Sussex FA Welfare Officer.
- If you are worried about a child or have witnessed something, you need to report your concerns to the Lewes FC Safeguarding and Welfare Officer, Margaret Sinclair at [Margaret@lewesfc.com](mailto:Margaret@lewesfc.com) or 07551 880556, in the first instance. If there has been a form of disclosure, it is vital to make sure the child or young person is aware that you may have to share the information. The Safeguarding and Welfare Officer will decide whether the concern can be managed internally or should be escalated to the Sussex FA.
- If the issue is one of poor practice the Club Safeguarding and Welfare Officer will either deal with the matter themselves; or seek advice from the Sussex FA Welfare Officer.
- If the concern is relating to a child or young person under the age of 18 the concern should be shared with their parent/guardian and their consent sought, unless it would be unsafe or harmful to do so. If this is not possible within a certain period, the parent/guardian must be informed as soon as possible after the referral.
- It is the responsibility of the person who disclosed the harm/risk to follow up with the Safeguarding and Welfare Officer to ensure action has been taken.

If at any time you are not able to contact your Club Welfare Officer or the matter is clearly serious then you can either contact the :

- Sussex County FA Welfare Officer directly on 01903 768578
- FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 169 1863 or [Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com)
- Police or Children's Social Services
- NSPCC 24 hour Helpline for advice on 0808 800 5000 or text 88858 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## 10. Anti-Bullying and Harrasment

### 10b. Anti-Bullying

Lewes FC acknowledges and endorses The FA's identification of bullying as a category of abuse and endorse the above actions in case bullying is a concern. We are committed to maintaining a safe, anti-bullying environment and state that bullying of any kind is not acceptable at the club.

We endeavour to be a 'telling' club, meaning that if bullying does happen, incidents are expected to be raised and reported to the Club Welfare Officer. The club is committed to playing its part to teach players to treat each other with respect, allowing all members of our community to participate in football.

We define bullying as the use of aggression with the intention of hurting or harming another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and exist in many forms, including:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding football boots/shin guards, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Discriminatory, comments, jokes about disabled people, sexist or misogynistic comments.
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyberbullying, when a person uses technology or the internet to deliberately cause harm or upset someone.
- Trolling name given to posting deliberately offensive comments on people's social media pages aimed at causing upset and distress. This club commits to ensure our website websites and/ or social networking pages are being used appropriately and any online bullying will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately in line with procedures detailed in this policy.

Signs and Indicators:

- A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible
  - says he or she is being bullied
  - is unwilling to go to club sessions
  - becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
  - feels ill before training sessions
  - comes home with clothes torn or training equipment damaged
  - has possessions go "missing"
  - asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
  - has unexplained cuts or bruises
  - is frightened to say what's wrong
  - gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

We are committed to ensuring that victims are believed and swift actions are taken.

Objectives of this Policy

- All club members, coaches, officials, volunteers and staff have an understanding of what bullying is, know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All players and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises. Players and parents should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.

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Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to the club welfare officer or a member of the clubs committee. If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the incident internally, they should follow the procedure outlined in page 3 of the FA Anti-Bullying document.
2. In the case that the person being bullied is under 18, or the case is serious, the incidents will be referred to the county FA Welfare Officer for advice and possibly the

FA Case Management Team. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a team manager, official, coach or volunteer, the FA's Safeguarding Children Education Programme may be recommended.

3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, the police or children's social care will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour
7. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution.

#### Prevention:

- The club will have a written constitution, which includes what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members of which the anti bullying policy is one part.
- The club welfare officer will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of bullying arise in the club, will consider meeting with members to discuss the issue openly and constructively.

#### Respect - Code of Conduct

Respect codes of conduct for Players, Parents, Spectators, Officials and Coaches have been implemented by Lewes Football 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 County FA in more serious circumstances.

#### Procedure: Allegations against staff and volunteers - Template - Club Safeguarding Children Policy Procedures 427.5KB (PDF)

Lewes FC commits to ensuring all concerns regarding any staff, volunteers or visitors are dealt with promptly and transparently.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously. Working with other organisations, children and young people, and their parents and clubs is essential.

We will endeavour to identify behaviour as early as possible, lessen the risk of abuse and ensure that all those who are representing Lewes Football Club embody the values of the organisation.

We will endeavour to contact our Local Authority Designated Officer in East Sussex and refer to them for allegations. LADOs work within Children's Social Care and are responsible for the procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children.

Information about reports and referrals can be found here:

- <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/children-families/professional-resources/allegations/referrals>

- <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/children-families/professional-resources/allegations/referrals/form-lado-referral>

Further advice on Safeguarding Children matters can be obtained from:

**Lewes FC Safeguarding Officer**

**Margaret Sinclair**

T: 07551 880556

E: [Margaret@lewesfc.com](mailto:Margaret@lewesfc.com)

**Sussex Football Association's Safeguarding Manager +**

**Designated Safeguarding Officer:**

**Annette Madden**

T: 01903 753547 (#228)

E: [Annette.Madden@SussexFA.com](mailto:Annette.Madden@SussexFA.com)

**Senior Safeguarding Lead:** [Ken.Benham@SussexFA.com](mailto:Ken.Benham@SussexFA.com)

**Deputy Senior Safeguarding Lead:** [Victoria.Windslow@SussexFA.com](mailto:Victoria.Windslow@SussexFA.com)

**The Football Association**

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

T: 0845 210 8080 - The FA Safeguarding Children general enquiry line

E: [Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com)

Add harrassment, also anyone working with children will have FA safeguarding training.

When against code of conduct / bully . harrassment - needs to be clear how to procede to remove from position - regardless of if employed or volunteer.