



**OLDHAM ATHLETIC F.C, ACADEMY & OLDHAM ATHLETIC
COMMUNITY TRUST**

**POLICY AND RELATED PROCEDURES FOR SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN**

Version 1 – 25/02/2021

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Definition

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989)

Staff or Employees

Defined as any member of the workforce either paid or unpaid.

DSO

Designated Safeguarding Officer

LADO

Local Authority Designated Officer

MASH

Multi-agency safeguarding hub

DBS

Disclosure & Barring Service

CRC

Criminal Records Checks

O AFC

Oldham Athletic Football Club

OACT

Oldham Athletic Community Trust

1. SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Oldham Athletic and its associated companies acknowledge and accept it has a responsibility for the wellbeing and safety of all vulnerable groups who are under its care. It is the duty of all adults working at the club, academy & community trust to safeguard the welfare of children by creating an environment that protects them from harm, and we are committed to:

Preventing and reducing the risk of significant harm, abuse or exploitation to children and adults at risk

Responding effectively and appropriately to any incidents and concerns

Raising awareness of key messages and procedures to those who may be abused and to potential abusers.

Compliance with the rules of safeguarding set out in this policy.

This policy also links with other policies such as Equality, social media, Whistleblowing, complaints, staff induction, anti-bullying, health & safety, late collection policy, data protection, trips, tours and transport.

Our policies and procedures are working alongside guidelines and safeguarding policies from Affiliated football, The football association, EFL & EFL Trust

Here at Oldham Athletic we embrace the following principles: -

Safeguarding practices are incorporate throughout the recruitment process, as per our safer recruitment policy and staff induction.

Oldham Athletic is registered with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). DBS disclosures enable employers to undertake more thorough recruitment and selection procedures for positions which involve working with children and adults at risk. The club have a separate policy for safer recruitment. All staff requiring a DBS will be rechecked every 3 years.

All staff who are offered positions which involve working with children and adults at risk and will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS check and supply 2 references. All employment offers are subject to the outcome of the screening process and when applicable, this is set out in their offer of employment. Until such time as a satisfactory disclosure certificate and 2 references have been received, the member of staff will not commence employment.

All staff will receive appropriate training and are required to follow safe working practices including adherence to professional boundaries – an essential part of all relationships with customers

All people connected with the Oldham Athletic including partner organisations, will be made aware that there is a Safeguarding Team who can be contacted directly. There is a flowchart within this policy that gives you guidance on how to deal with safeguarding matters and another one with specific contact details for safeguarding officers, LADO, MASH, EFL, FA & Police if needed

All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be treated seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

Work in partnership with Local Authority Safeguarding Team.(LADO)

This policy has been endorsed by our Board and Senior Management.

2. SAFEGUARDING AIMS

- * A safe and welcoming environment for children and other vulnerable people involved in any activities, free from abuse and fear of abuse in all its forms.
- * A culture where safeguarding practice is widely understood, openly discussed and where the workforce recognise the role they play in keeping children, other vulnerable people, themselves and their colleagues, safe from harm.
- * A clear system which promotes and supports constant vigilance, prevention and early intervention in safeguarding matters and where necessary prompt and thorough action in response to any reported concerns or incidents.
- * To apply legislation, government policy and guidance and football governing body regulation, policy and guidance where applicable.
- * To work closely together with local statutory agencies and other partners to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and other vulnerable people.

In order to realise these aims we will:

Liaise and work with relevant football governing bodies, to ensure we meet all necessary regulations and standards in respect of our safeguarding practice.

Listen to children and other vulnerable people and take them seriously, consult with them when developing processes and react appropriately to ideas, feelings and concerns then address them in a fair, effective and timely manner.

Develop and communicate a series of clear policies, protocols and guidance designed to help deliver sound governance and good practice across all activities.

Create and co-ordinate an effective network of designated safeguarding officers and maintain a visible safeguarding presence across all areas.

Monitor Activities taking place at Boundary Park and those at any offsite locations.

Provide training, advice and support across all areas of the business where children and other vulnerable people are involved.

Support and help deliver 'Safer Recruitment Policy' in accordance with local legislative and regulatory requirements and in partnership with the HR department.

Maintain confidentiality of all information and documentation relating to criminal record disclosure, concerns, allegations and incidents in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

Share sensitive information with the relevant authorities when it is appropriate to do so, and in the knowledge that the information will be treated confidentially.

Prepare annual safeguarding reviews covering each strategic element of OAFC & OACT.

All safeguarding policies and procedures cover the sessions, to illustrate the scope of work is a list that provides an extensive list of sessions and welfare of people in our care.

3. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The safeguarding structure which ensures the safety and welfare of all children who interact with Oldham Athletic. The safeguarding team consist of SSM & DSO from the Club, Academy and Community Trust.

DSO are responsible and to provide leadership to deliver the safeguarding strategy, vision, values, priorities, policies promoting the welfare of vulnerable groups. They are also responsible for embedding safeguarding within their own departments as well as being the point of contact should a concern arise within their own department.

Employees, volunteers and Board Members are responsible for familiarising themselves with the policy and procedures, ensuring the safety and welfare of all children, adults at risk as well as promoting best practice and creating a safe and inclusive environment to prevent harm occurring through awareness of what constitutes abuse or neglect.

All SSM and DSO's will meet monthly to discuss any issues unless there is an incident then they will call an emergency meeting.

4. COMMITMENT STATEMENT

O AFC aims to create a culture of fairness, respect, openness, and best practice to safeguard and protect young people and adults at risk and adhere to legislation, through working with both local and national partners we as an organisation have a commitment to keep all our participants safe.

O AFC acknowledges and accepts it has a statutory obligation and responsibility for the wellbeing and safety of all Children, young people and adults at risk who participate in activities.

Our Safeguarding Children Policy in place applies to senior managers and all staff, board members, paid or volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, interns / students or anyone working on behalf of Oldham Athletic and will be given to all adults working with our children and young people.

We hold safeguarding in the highest regard and we work closely with Club/Academy and Community Trust to ensure standards across organisations are consistent.

The wellbeing of children is paramount, and all staff must make themselves aware of the Club's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, which is updated annually or when there is a change in legislation.

5. CHILD & ADULTS AT RISK POLICY - INTRODUCTION

Young people, adults at risk and children participate, annually, in activities or programmes provided by O AFC/OACT.

We recognise that we have a duty of care towards children or young people under 18 years of age or adults at risk and children enjoy participating in our activities and programmes.

Adults at risk is for people aged 18 years and over, who are in receipt of or may need community care services because of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or are unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation. For adults at risk under the care act 2014 we as an organization will follow the guidance provided as to making referrals, we will ensure that the adult at risk is part of this process, i.e., making safeguarding personal.

We acknowledge this duty of care places moral obligations upon as well as probable obligations under the law. We recognise that every adult who has an involvement in the Club has a responsibility to:

Do all they can to respect the rights, wishes and feelings of children and young people participate in our activities and programmes.

Do all that is possible to advance and supervise the wellbeing of children and young people who participate in our activities and programmes.

Develop promote and review ways of protecting this group of children and young people from discrimination, abuse, exploitation, or treatment which degrades them.

These obligations will be met by:

The production and annual review of our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for the club/community trust which will be informed by Oldham Area Child Protection Committee's Child Protection Procedures, and Government Guidance

All employees and volunteers of the Club/Academy/Community Trust will hold the appropriate qualifications for their role and all individuals will be DBS checked.

An environment within the club which provides respect for others regardless of their age; colour; disability; ethnicity; marital status; nationality; national origin; parental status; race; religion or belief; gender; sexual orientation or socio-economic status.

This policy refers to young people, children and adults at risk. There is also a specific adult at risk policy.

6. PRINCIPLES

All action taken under Oldham Athletic Safeguarding Procedures will be informed by the multi-agency safeguarding procedures developed by Oldham Area Child Protection Committee which in turn are informed by government guidance.

All action will be informed by a principle that the welfare of a child, adult at risk or a young person is of the paramount importance.

All young people, adults at risk and children have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age; colour; disability; ethnicity; marital status; nationality; national origin; parental status; race; religion or belief; gender; sexual orientation or socio-economic status.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse, especially those made against managers, coaches and volunteers within the club will be taken seriously.

At OAFC and OACT, we recognise and accept the specific statutory responsibility of Oldham Social Services Department to ensure the welfare of children. All our managers, coaches and volunteers are committed to cooperating with Oldham Social Services Department to protect children and young people who are involved with our programmes and activities.

We also recognise that having child protection procedures not only helps us to safeguard the welfare of children and adults at risk, but it also safeguards all our staff, volunteer's and board members.

SAFEGUARDING LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

The Following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

Children Act 1989 & 2004

Working together to safeguard Children 2018

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020

Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Modern Slavery Act 2015

Counter Terrorism and security act 2015

Private Fostering Regulations 2005

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003

SEN code of practice guidance 2015

General Data Protection Regulations 2018

7. RECOGNITION OF ABUSE

The staff and volunteers of OAFC, Academy & OACT are not experts in recognising child abuse. It is therefore expected that if any manager, coach, or volunteer have concerns about a child they will discuss their concerns with the DSO who is the person designated within the club/academy/trust to deal with child protection matters.

It is then The Designated Safeguarding Officer's responsibility to seek appropriate advice from the relevant area team of Oldham Social Services Department.

If the DSO is not available, the person having the concerns should contact our SSM or Social Services Department directly and seek advice.

8. WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse happens when a person – adult or child – harms a child. It can be physical, sexual, emotional or neglect. Neglect can be just as damaging to a child as physical or sexual abuse. There are many additional categories linked with abuse. The list is not exhaustive, further information will be found in the local safeguarding partnership guidelines and keeping children safe in education 2020.

Below is an outline of some specific categories

FORMS OF ABUSE

Physical Abuse

Neglect

Emotional Abuse

Sexual Abuse

Hazing

Child Sexual Exploitation

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Domestic Abuse

Bullying & Online Safety

Child Trafficking

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

O AFC, Academy & OACT will follow guidelines and follow legislation from Sexual Offences Act 2003, FMG Act 2013 and Keeping Children Safe. BULLYING and RACISM are also being considered forms of child abuse. We recognise that children often experience significant harm when they are the victims of bullying and/or racism.

Please see our Anti Bullying and Equal Opportunities policies for further guidance.

9. PHYSICAL ABUSE

The term PHYSICAL ABUSE usually relates to adults harming children in the following ways:

Physically hurting children by hitting, shaking, biting, squeezing, burning or scalding them

Giving children alcohol or inappropriate drugs.

Attempting to suffocate or drown children.

In a football setting physical abuse could be considered to have occurred if the nature and intensity of the training fails to recognise and take in to account a child's immature and growing body.

Training which leaves a child prone to injury because they are too tired could be considered as abusive.

Drugs, which are administered to children/young people to enhance their performance in a football setting, would be considered as being abusive.

10. NEGLECT

NEGLECT can be seen to occur if adults:

Fail to provide for a young people, vulnerable adults and child's basic needs such as food, warm clothing, and shelter.

Regularly leave young people, vulnerable adults and children alone without age appropriate supervision

Fail to provide children with appropriate love, affection and approval

Neglect in a football setting could occur if a coach does not ensure that children are safe and appropriately supervised or by exposing them to unacceptably low temperatures and harsh weather conditions

11. EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Young people, vulnerable adults and children could experience EMOTIONAL ABUSE if they experience:

A persistent lack of love, affection and approval

Constant over protection, which prevents them from developing age appropriate relationships both with their peers and other adults

Constantly being shouted at, threatened or teased so that they become withdrawn and develop a poor sense of their own self worth

In a football setting children and young people having their efforts or progress go unrecognised and them being constantly criticised

Being subjected to unrealistic pressure from coaches or parents

Being bullied by coaches or parents to consistently perform to high standards

12. SEXUAL ABUSE

SEXUAL ABUSE occurs when stronger more powerful and usually more mature males and females use children to meet their sexual needs.

Such abuse could involve:

Full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse, fondling or voyeurism

Showing children/young people pornographic books, videos or computer-generated graphics.

Taking inappropriate photographs of children in a football setting activity which involve close physical contact could provide potential situations where sexual abuse could occur without being noticed.

Coaches and managers could misuse their power and influences over children and young people to develop opportunities to sexually abuse them. We will rely on Sexual Offences Act 2003 for updated legislation when defining abuse.

13. BULLYING & CYBER BULLYING SAFETY

Bullying is behaviour that is intended to hurt someone physically or emotionally. It is often persistent or repeated over a long period of time and is hostile and intimidating. It can be name calling, isolation and exclusion, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening behaviour, constant criticism and undermining. Bullying is not always easily defined but most situations involving bullying include:

Deliberate hostility and aggression by the bully towards a victim

A victim who is perceived as being weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies.

An outcome which is always painful and distressing for the victim.

Bullying can take the following forms:

Physical bullying involving - pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, spitting and threats of violence.

Verbal bullying involving - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading of rumours and/or persistent teasing.

Emotional bullying involving - excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating.

Hazing – is the practice of rituals and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group. Hazing is seen in many different types of social groups, including gangs, sports teams and schools.

Racist bullying involving - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, denigration due to race or ethnic origins.

Bullying which is of a non-verbal nature is more likely to be present in football than is bullying which is of a physical nature.

Indicators may include, physical injuries such as unexplained bruises, afraid of going to school, training sessions, matches, mysterious illnesses, a dip in performance, problems eating or sleeping, loss of confidence and withdrawal.

ONLINE BULLYING

Bullying can happen anywhere, at school, home or online. When bullying happens online it can involve social networks, games and mobile devices. Online bullying can also be known as cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying includes:

Sending threatening or abusive text messages

Creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos

Trolling – sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games

Left out of online games, activities or friendship groups

Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child

Encouraging young children or vulnerable adults to self-harm

Creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass someone or cause trouble using their name

Signs of bullying or cyberbullying

It can be hard to know whether someone is being bullied. They might not tell anyone because they are scared the bullying will get worse. They may also think it is their fault they are being bullied.

No one sign indicated for certain that someone is being bullied, but you should look out for:

Belongings getting lost or damaged

Physical injuries such as unexplained bruises

Being afraid to go to school or college, being mysteriously ill each morning, or skipping school/college

Not doing well at school/college/work

Asking for, or stealing money (to give to the bully)

Being nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn

Problems with eating or sleeping

Bullying others

14. ONLINE SAFETY

The online world is growing and changing every day and with the pandemics increasing the need for being online with social media, video calls and online gaming. The use of online activities for social networking and learning is a positive thing, but unfortunately there are dangers out there when interacting online and we need to help young people stay safe.

When delivering any sessions etc you must be aware of the risks that children, young people, and adults at risk can be exposed so we would have to adopt clear guidance and arrangements for safeguarding the participant and the coach.

Ensuring to minimise risk and respond to appropriate concerns:

- * Please be aware of digital platforms being used to engage participants, ensuring risk is assessed and deemed suitable and appropriate.
- * Understand their responsibility to protect the personal information and data as per Data protection policy and GDPR.
- * Carry out due diligence on any third parties procured to deliver activities or sessions to children, young people or adults at risk to ensure their suitability.
- * Ensure a DSO is in place and available to all staff/volunteers supporting participants
- * Ensure suitability to all staff/volunteers in line with their internal safer recruitment policy.
- * Ensure all staff/volunteers engaging with participants online are fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and have received safeguard training, including training specific to safeguarding online.

* Ensure all staff/volunteers are prepared to respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns as they occur and be prepared to:

- 1, Recognise signs and indicators of safeguarding concerns online
- 2, receive disclosures from participants.
- 3, sign-post participants to specialist charities and support services.
- 4, Understand their professional limitations.
- 5, Escalate concerns to the DSO for further support or action.
- 6, Make thorough records of any concerns

* Ensure all staff/volunteers engaging with participants online are supervised and supported through regular one-to-one sessions. Safeguarding should be an agenda item during these sessions.

* Process will be in place for seeking consent for the participant to engage in the activity. * Have a process in place to risk assess all online delivery programmes and identify any support the participant may need. Risk assess their engagement in the activity and make reasonable adjustments to allow for full participation.

15. PEER ON PEER BULLYING

Children can abuse other children, generally referred to as peer on peer abuse. All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This can include but is not limited to bullying (including cyberbullying), physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise physical harm, sexual violence and sexual harassment, sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery), and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Workplace bullying is a persistent pattern of mistreatment from others in the workplace that causes either physical or emotional harm. It can include such tactics as verbal, nonverbal, psychological, physical abuse and humiliation.

This type of workplace aggression is particularly difficult because, unlike the typical bullies, workplace bullies often operate within the established rules and policies of their organization and their society. In most cases, bullying in the workplace is reported as having been by someone who has authority over the victim. However, bullies can also be peers, and occasionally subordinates. Bullying can be covert or overt. It may be missed by superiors it may be known by many throughout the organization. Negative effects are not limited to the targeted individuals and may lead to a decline in employee morale and a change in organizational culture.

16. MODERN SLAVERY & TRAFFICKING

Child trafficking is a child abuse. It involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited. Many children are trafficked into the UK from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Modern Slavery and trafficking encompass human trafficking, slavery, forced labour and domestic servitude. Victims can be coerced, deceived, forced into forms of abuse and inhumane treatment. Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 places a duty on public authorities to notify the National care agency if there are signs of intelligence has been received or, there are reasonable grounds to believe there is an indication that a person may be a victim of slavery or human trafficking.

Forced Marriage: There is a clear difference between a forced marriage. In arranged marriages the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether to accept the arrangements remains with the two people. In a forced marriage, one or both spouses do not consent to the arrangements of the marriage and some elements of duress are involved. This can involve physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced marriage is an abuse of human rights, and where a child is involved an abuse of the rights of a child. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/stop-forcedmarriage>

Hate crime is an incident of crime that is motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a victim's, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender identity.

Signs of child trafficking – Modern Slavery

Signs that a child has been trafficked may not be obvious, but you might notice unusual behaviour or events:

These include a child who:

Spends a lot of time doing household chores

Rarely leaves their house, has no freedom of movement and no time for playing

Is orphaned or living apart from their family, often in unregulated private foster care

Lives in substandard accommodation

Isn't sure which country, city or town they're in

Is unable or reluctant to give details of accommodation or personal details

Might not be registered with a school or a GP practice

Has no documents or has falsified documents

Has no access to their parents or guardians

Is seen in appropriate places

Possesses unaccounted for money or goods

Is permanently deprived of a large part of their earnings, required to earn a minimum amount of money every day or pay off an exorbitant debt

Has injuries from workplace accidents

Gives a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children

There are also signs that an adult is involved in child trafficking, such as:

Making multiple visa applications for different children

Acting as a guarantor for multiple visa applications for children

Travelling with different children who they're not related to or responsible for

Insisting on remaining with and speaking for the child

Living with unrelated or newly arrived children

Abandoning a child or claiming not to know a child they were previously with

17. FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

FGM is a form of child abuse which is illegal in this country. Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, it is also illegal to take girls who are British Nationals or permanent residents of the UK aboard for FGM whether it is lawful in another country.

FGM is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is also known as female circumcision or cutting.

The age at which FGM is carried out varies, it may be when a girl is new-born, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during pregnancy.

Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuses, it is dangerous and a criminal offence.

There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It does not enhance fertility and it does not make childbirth safer. It is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

Signs of FGM

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what is going to happen. But she might talk about or you may become aware of:

A long holiday aboard or going home to visit family

Relative visiting from aboard

Special occasion or ceremony to become a woman or get ready for marriage

A female relative being cut, a sister, cousin or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt

Missing school repeatedly or running away from home

A girl who has had FGM may:

Have difficulty walking, standing, or sitting

Spend longer in the bathroom or toilet

Appear withdrawn, anxious, or depressed

Have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college

Be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations

Ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear

We will do all we can to prevent bullying within our programmes and activities and our intentions are reflected by our staff and volunteers.

We will do all we can to ensure that bullying does not become a problem in our club. Please see Anti Bullying Policy located in Staff Handbook for more guidance. We will also get guidance and comply with FGM Act 2013.

18. RACISM

Racism does occur within football at all levels and at OAFC, we promote an environment where participants can take part in activities and programmes without fear of abuse or discrimination based on the grounds or ethnicity, cultural background or faith.

We will adopt a zero-tolerance approach.

Racism is difficult to define but is usually seen to involve the following features:

A belief that one's own race is superior to that of another person and this provides the right to dominate the other

A belief that one's own race is superior and therefore has the right to privileges and power over those of a different race

Prejudice is a central tenant of racism, which leads to opinions and feelings regarding those of another race to one's own, which are formed beforehand without knowledge or reasoned argument

The expression of hostile and negative and unreasonable feelings, opinions, and attitudes against a religious, cultural, racial, or national group which is clearly identifiable

Racism is usually rooted in an individual's beliefs, attitudes, and values. At Oldham Athletic we accept that those associated with our club will have differing levels of experience and understanding of racism. However, it is our intention to do all we can to ensure that racism is not an accepted feature of our organisation.

Bullying and racism can be closely interlinked. Children who experience bullying and racism are more likely to experience low self-esteem and isolation which in turn can make them more vulnerable to those adults who wish to exploit them for their own purposes.

At Oldham Athletic we recognise the importance of developing a club climate which seeks to eliminate bullying and racism. We hold annual workshops to educate the staff etc and at all briefings on match day's all stewards are informed of zero tolerance.

For more guidance, please see our Equal Opportunities Policy.

19. SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Sexual exploitation is a type of sexual abuse. Young people and adults at risk in exploitative situations and relationships receive things such as gifts, money, drugs, accommodation, alcohol, even affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activities.

The perpetrator will groom the victim over a pro-longed period and exert power which increases as the relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves a degree of coercion, intimidation, enticement, cyberbullying, and grooming.

Young people and Adults at risk may be tricked into believing they are in a loving consensual relationship. They often trust their abuser and do not understand that they are being abused. They may depend on their abuser or to be too scared to tell anyone what is happening. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol before being sexually exploited.

They can be groomed and exploited online. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose, of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

Sexual exploitation can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults and involve multiple perpetrators.

Signs of sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Warning signs can easily be mistaken for normal behaviour.

People who are sexually exploited may:

Go missing from home, care, or education

Be involved in abusive relationships, appearing intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations

Hang out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers

Get involved in gangs, gang fights and gang membership

Have older boyfriends and girlfriends

Spend time at places of concern, such as hotels or known brothel

Not know where they are, because they have been moved around the country

Be involved in petty crime such as shoplifting

Have access to drugs and alcohol

Have new things such as clothes and phones which they cannot or will not explain

Have unexplained physical injuries

20. CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION

Definition

Child Criminal Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through using technology.

Children can be exploited in many ways, including being trafficked, sexually exploited, and used to run drugs. All of these come under the banner of child criminal exploitation. Understanding of child criminal exploitation (CCE) and the scale of the problem is still limited. What we do know is that there is a need for agencies to work together to understand the bigger picture, using tools such as contextual safeguarding alongside an understanding of the different ways in which children may be exploited. This emphasises in a Joint Targeted Area Inspection Report (JTAI) in November 2018, which stated: “As we reported in 2016, understanding exploitation of children is not simply about identifying the characteristics of children who are vulnerable to abuse, it requires a wider perspective and understanding of the contexts, situations and relationships in which exploitation (of children) is likely to manifest.

CCE involves children up to the age of 18. It is possible to identify a lower age limit for when children become exposed to CCE identified below are getting younger. Arguably the younger the child the less likely they are to be arrested or identified by the law (the age of criminal responsibility – i.e. The age at which you can be arrested for a crime – is 10 years old in England). The JTAI notes that “all children are vulnerable to criminal and sexual exploitation, not just specific groups”, with “exploited children coming from a range of backgrounds”. The common feature across all forms of CCE is the imbalance of power. Often children and young people will receive something in exchange for them completing acts or favours for the person exploiting them. The something may be gifts, status in a group or gang, somewhere to live, etc. The acts or favours required in return are usually criminal in nature. The imbalance of power means that consent is not considered, and that choices that the child or young person believes that they have may be nothing of the sort.

21. KNIFE CRIME

Knife crime is crime involving a knife. It is a crime to threaten someone with a knife or carry a knife as a weapon in a robbery or burglary. Some knives are classed as an offensive weapon and are banned in public places.

What counts as knife crime?

Knife crime includes:

- * carrying a knife or trying to buy one if you are under 18
- * threatening someone with a knife
- * carrying a knife that is banned
- * a murder where the victim was stabbed with a knife
- * a robbery or burglary where a thief carried a knife as a weapon

Offensive Weapons is an article designed to cause injury to another person. An article carried with the intention of causing injury to another person.

Penalties for knife crime, the law says it is illegal for anyone, including a shop to sell a knife of any kind (including cutlery and kitchen knives) to anyone under the age of 18. Anyone over 10 years old can be charged and taken to court if they are caught with an illegal knife, even if it the first time they have been stopped by the police. The maximum sentence for carrying a knife illegally is four years in prison and an unlimited fine.

Stop and Search

Police officers have the right to stop and search any person or vehicle if they suspect an offence. Helping to stop knife crime Find out when your local police station run a knife amnesty. During an amnesty, you can hand in your unwanted knife without having to answer questions from the police. If you have information about knife crime and unsure what to do you can call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

22. SEXTING

The sharing of sexual images made by young people and sent to young people is a major issue in society. Sharing photos and videos online is part of daily life for many people, enabling them to share their experiences, connect with friends and record their lives.

We need to be able to respond swiftly and confidently to ensure that children are safeguarded, supported and educated. Much of the complexity in responding to youth produced sexual imagery is due to its legal status. Making, possessing and distributing any imagery of someone under 18 which is 'indecent' is illegal. This includes imagery of yourself if you are under 18.

The relevant legislation is contained in the protection of children Act 1978 (England & Wales) as amended in the sexual offences act 2003 (England & Wales). It is an offence to possess, distribute, show and make indecent images of children.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 (England & Wales) defines a child, for the purpose of indecent images, as anyone under the age of 18.

'Indecent' is not defined in legislation, when cases are prosecuted, the question of whether any photograph of a child is indecent is for a jury, magistrate or district judge to decide based on what is the recognised standard of propriety.

Young people who share sexual imagery of themselves, or peers, are breaking the law. It is not for the staff to decide.

For more information regarding sexting please see our policy.

23. GROOMING

Grooming is when someone bullies an emotional or transactional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purpose of sexual abuse or criminal exploitation. Children can be groomed on-line or by a stranger or someone they know, for example a family member friends or professional. Groomers can 'groom' family members in order to gain access to a child, they can be male or female or any age. Many children, young people do not understand they have been groomed or that it is abuse and so don't recognise themselves as being a victim.

Radicalisation is a form of grooming or exploitation whereby people come to support forms of extremist ideology which in some cases leads to participation in terrorist groups and activities. There is no clear profile of who is likely to become radicalised however, staff should be aware of changes in behaviours which may indicate help or protection is needed and have a general understanding of some key indicators which may make an individual more susceptible to exploitation and which for example may include:

Identity or personal crisis

Unemployment/underemployment

Underachievement

Isolation/exclusion

These factors would be considered in conjunction with the circumstances of any individual rather than individually many of our staff have completed Channel Awareness Training Module which is part of the governments PREVENT strategy.

Children, young people, and adults at risk may be vulnerable to online grooming. The use of chat rooms, social media platforms and smartphones makes it possible for predatory people or groups to target vulnerable groups, manipulating them in to taking explicit images, engaging in sexual conversations, or performing sexual acts on video/livestreaming platforms. Usually, the abuser has manipulated the victim in to thinking they care about them and uses this to assert control over them.

24. UPSKIRTNG

What is upskirting?

Upskirting is a highly intrusive practice, which typically involves someone taking a picture under another person's clothing without their knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear). It can take place in a range of places, eg. British Transports Police have seen a rise of reports on public transport. The new law will capture instances where the purpose of the behaviour is to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause humiliation, distress, or alarm. Anyone, and any gender, can be a victim and this behaviour is completely unacceptable. Upskirting is now a criminal offence in England and Wales.

What effect can upskirting have on victims?

Upskirting is distressing and a humiliating violation of privacy for victims.

We want victims to know and be confident that reports to the police will be taken seriously. What punishment can upskirting perpetrators face under the new law?

Perpetrators will face two years in prison. By criminalising this distressing practice, it is hoped that it deters people from committing the crime. Upskirting, where committed to obtain sexual gratification, can result in the most serious offenders being placed on the sex offenders register. The new law will send a clear message that such behaviour is criminal and will not be tolerated.

What can victims of upskirting do?

If you are a victim of upskirting, the police and other organisations are there to help you. Please do not suffer in silence, seek support. You may want to speak to someone you already know and trust or your DSO. It is important to know your rights after a crime has taken place, the police will be able to talk you through this.

Victims of upskirting will be entitled to automatic protection, eg from being identified in the media (so they won't be able to publish any identifying details such as names, addresses or photos).

Why has the law changed?

Upskirting has not gone unpunished in England and Wales depending on the circumstances it has already prosecuted under the common law offence of outraging public decency.

However, following concerns expressed by victims, a review of the law found that the existing criminal law may not have been able to capture all instances.

The voyeurism (offences) Act, which was commonly known as the Upskirting Bill, was introduced on 21st June 2018. It came into force on 12th April 2019.

25. HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

Children and vulnerable people who develop (HSB) harm themselves and others.

HSB can include:

Using sexually explicit words and phrases

Inappropriate touching

Using sexual violence or threats

Full penetrative sex with other children or adults

Sexual behaviour between children is also considered harmful if 1 of the children is much older – particularly if there is more than 2 years difference in age or if 1 of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them – for example, if the older child is disabled.

Signs of Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

It is normal for children to show signs of sexual behaviour at each stage in their development. Children and vulnerable adults also develop at different rate and some may be slightly more or less advanced than others in their age group or disability. Behaviours which might be concerning depend on the age or situation of child or vulnerable adult. If you are unsure whether a child's or vulnerable adult sexual behaviour is healthy, Brook provide a helpful, easy to use traffic light tool. The traffic light system is used to describe healthy (green) sexual behaviours, potentially unhealthy (amber) sexual behaviours and unhealthy (red) sexual behaviours.

26. DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people who are or were in an intimate relationship. There are many different types of abusive behaviour that can occur including emotional, sexual, financial, psychological, and physical abuse. This abuse can be underpinned by an on-going pattern of psychologically abusive behaviour, that is used by 1 partner to control or intimidate the other partner. In situations of domestic abuse both males and female can be abused or be abusers. Domestic abuse can happen in any relationship regardless of age, sexuality, gender identity, race or religious identity. The definition of domestic abuse also covers relationships between young people aged 16 and 17 (Home office 2013).

Children and vulnerable adult exposure to domestic abuse between parents and carers is an abuse. They can be directly involved in incidents of domestic abuse or they may be harmed by seeing or hearing abuse happening. The developmental and behavioural impact of witnessing domestic abuse is like experiencing direct abuse. Children and vulnerable adults where there is domestic abuse is also at risk of other types of abuse or neglect.

Signs of domestic abuse

It can be difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening, because it usually takes place in the family home and abusers can act very differently when other people are around.

Children and vulnerable adults who witness domestic abuse may, become aggressive, display anti-social behaviour, suffer from depression or anxiety, or not do as well at school due to difficulties at home or disruption of moving to and from refuges.

27. POSSIBLE WARNING SIGNS OF ABUSE

Possible warning signs of abuse include:

Children having bruises, cuts, abrasions or burns on parts of their body where such injuries are usually unexpected

The explanation for the injury does not match the nature of the injury

A child or young person makes a statement that they have been abused, or describe behaviour towards them, which could be considered as abusive

Other people have expressed concern for the child or young person's wellbeing

There are changes in the child or young person's behaviour or mood, for which there appear to be no logical explanations.

The child or young person displays an inappropriate sexual awareness or plays and talks in sexually explicit ways

The child or young person has difficulty making friends and/or is actively discouraged by those caring for him/her, from having close relationships

A child or young person becoming wary and distrustful and not wanting to be with an adult they previously appeared to like

A child or young person not being able to trust adults especially those with whom they would normally be expected to have a close relationship

A child or young person becoming increasingly dirty and poorly clothed

This list does not contain all the warning signs of abuse and for a more detailed list please see Oldham Area Child Protection Committee's Child Protection Procedures, a copy of which is available and is with The Designated Safeguarding Officer. We annually do a review with the staff around Safeguarding matters and refresh them of what to look for and who to report too.

28. EFFECTS OF ABUSE

Each individual act of abuse is unique and children who are abused can be affected in different ways Children and young people can experience abuse at any stage in their lives and the affects they experience can have far reaching detrimental effects, particularly if they remain unprotected or are not provided with help to overcome their abusive experiences.

Some children's abusive childhood experiences stay with them into adulthood and significantly impair their ability to make sustaining worthwhile relationships.

The most serious effect of abuse is that a child could die.

Some children who have been abused develop behavioural problems and present aggressive and angry behaviour, which is seen in their home, in school and sometimes in a sports setting.

Some abused children can become developmentally delayed.

Some can present significantly different behaviour in school which affects their ability to learn. In the long term this group of children develop low self-esteem and can sometimes present as being withdrawn and depressed

Adults who were abused in childhood have reported that they felt they were responsible for their abuse and are sometimes left feeling worthless. Such adults have also reported that they suffered from mental health difficulties such as anxiety and depression Some adults who were abused in childhood and do not receive appropriate help, go on to develop harmful negative relationships with their own children.

Children who experience discrimination e.g. because of disability or racism, often feel even more powerless to either protect themselves or to share their abusive experiences with others.

It is essential that all children are given the opportunity to talk about any abusive experiences they could be experiencing inside or outside of the club, academy & trust.

To ensure that children and young people have an opportunity to talk with someone our Child Protection Officer has agreed to be a peer "listener" for children and young people and adults at risk.

In addition, we will ensure that appropriate up to date telephone help line numbers are displayed in several prominent places throughout the club, academy & community trust.

29. LISTENING TO CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

To disclose that they are being abused and by so doing expose a very strong secret, is never easy for children. When they do decide to tell we have a responsibility to 'say' and 'hear' what they tell us.

Many children when they are finally heard will state that they thought they had told of their abuse in the past, but no action had been taken to end the abuse.

Children who experience abuse will only tell people who they trust and with whom they feel safe.

It is likely in a football setting a child or young person's coach is someone who they trust and with whom they feel sufficiently safe to tell, about their abusive experiences. If a child or young person does decide to tell, coaches and managers can offer positive help by doing the following:

Staying calm and not reacting in a way which will frighten the child/young person

Letting the child/young person know that "telling" about their abuse must have been difficult

Telling the child/young person that they are not to blame for their abuse and that they did the right thing in telling

Listening very carefully to what the child/young person is saying and letting them know what they are telling about is being believed

Letting the child/young person know that what they are saying is being taken seriously and when necessary acknowledging the additional difficulties of understanding what a child says if they have a disability which impairs their speech or English is not their first language

Keeping questions to a minimum and only asking questions to gain a clear and precise understanding of what a child is saying.

Being honest with the child/young person and avoiding making promises which could prove impossible to keep

By reassuring the child/young person that they did the right thing by telling but avoiding making promises of confidentiality which cannot be kept given the circumstances

Explaining to the child/young person that other people may also have to be told so that the abuse will stop

By keeping a full record of the facts, which is kept separate from personal opinions

30. HOW TO RESPOND TO SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

It is not the responsibility of any of the staff or volunteers of Oldham Athletic Community Trust to decide if child abuse has or is taking place or not. This is a job for trained experts.

We do, however, have a responsibility to protect children and young people by ensuring our concerns are discussed with agencies who have a responsibility to make appropriate inquiries and if necessary, act to protect the child or young person within Oldham, Greater Manchester Police and Oldham Social Services Department have a responsibility to undertake such inquiries and investigations.

Such inquiries could mean staff from Oldham Social Services Department talking to the child/young person and his family. Information could be sought from another people e g

schoolteachers, family doctors. On some occasions (usually sexual abuse or serious physical abuse) inquiries may be carried out jointly with the police.

Some children, young people and adults at risk who are associated with OACT may have their family home outside of the Oldham area. In such circumstances Oldham Social Services Department could be required to liaise with the Social Services Department for the area in which the person lives.

We believe in the principle of always working with parents and carers particularly when there are concerns about their children. In most situations it is important to talk with parents or carers to try and clarify any initial concerns. Such circumstances would normally relate to changes in a child/young person's temperament or behaviour, which could for example be because of bereavement or other family crisis

There are some occasions when a child/young person could be placed at greater risk when concerns are raised. An example would be when a parent/carer may have been or is likely to be responsible for the abuse.

Under such circumstances, or even after discussions with parents/carers, if concerns remain the staff member or volunteer holding the concerns, suspicions of abuse, allegation or incident should discuss their concerns with DSO as the Trust's designated person, who in turn should contact Oldham Social Services Department to either seek advice or to make a referral relating to concerns of child abuse.

If the DSO is not available it is the responsibility of the staff member or volunteer, holding the concern to contact Oldham Social Services Department or Greater Manchester Police (see Appendix 1. Flowchart for telephone numbers).

If the person holding the concerns is unsure what to do, they should contact the Social Services Office for the area in which the child lives and ask the duty officer for a consultation.

During out of office hours the person should contact Oldham Social Services Department's Emergency Team (see Appendix One for telephone numbers).

The NSPCC also provides a 24-hour Child Protection Helpline 0800 800 500 which can be contacted for advice

Social Services Department together with the designated person will decide how and when parents or carers should best be informed of the concerns relating to their child.

31. RECORDING OF INFORMATION

For Oldham Social Services Department or the police to make an informed decision regarding the course of action which is required they do need to have helpful information from the person holding the concerns.

Such information should include:

The child/young person's name, date of birth and address

The nature of the incident and the date upon which it occurred

The staff member or volunteer's observation of the child/young person

A note of exactly what the child/young person said, and a note of the staff member or volunteer's responses should be kept

Staff member or volunteers should make a note of the action they took because of their concerns This could include any discussions they have had with the DSO or SSM, parents and/or agency representatives

The record should be signed and dated and given to the DSO the designated person dealing with child abuse

It is important that staff members or volunteers do not take sole responsibility. They should consult with the DSO or ask for a consultation from the duty officer at the appropriate Social Services Department. If they have consulted with Oldham Social Services Department, they should advise the DSO as the club's designated person about the nature of the consultation.

32. ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF MEMBERS OR VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATED WITH OLDHAM ATHLETIC, ACADEMY & COMMUNITY TRUST

Child abuse is not confined to families. Children are abused outside of a family setting and such abuse has occurred in institutions, schools, churches, mosques and within sports settings.

It is now generally accepted that abuse which takes place in a public setting such as a school, nursery or junior football club is rarely a one-off event, and unless the abuse is dealt with by experts it is unlikely to stop.

It is crucial for all staff member or volunteer's to be aware of this point and that all allegations made against staff member or volunteers of Oldham Athletic Community Trust are taken seriously, and appropriate action taken.

If an allegation is made against a staff member or volunteer, there are three forms of investigation which could take place:

A child protection investigation

A criminal investigation

An internal misconduct/poor performance investigation This would relate to poor standards of coaching or football management

Experience has shown that in these circumstances a child protection investigation and/or a police investigation can have a bearing upon a misconduct hearing.

We have a legal obligation to make referrals to DBS. All staff, board members and volunteers will need a DBS before they start their role within the organisation. Any DBS that comes back with content will be risk assessed, to see if content is relevant to jeopardise their role.

33. PROCESS OF CONCERN

If the allegation is related to poor practice or misconduct the designated person, the Designated Safeguarding Officer should deal with this as a misconduct or poor practice investigation.

If the allegation involves the practice of a designated person, the matter should be referred to a board member or trustee.

All allegations or suspicions that a child/young person has been abused by a staff member or volunteer of Oldham Athletic should be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, who in turn should immediately consult with the Oldham Social Services Team which is responsible for the area within which the child/young person lives.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will do all that they feel necessary to ensure the immediate safety of a child or other children who could be at risk.

The designated person will decide with Oldham Social Services Department the next steps to be followed, which could involve a police investigation.

The designated person will decide with staff from Oldham Social Services Department about how the child/young person's carers should be advised of concerns.

The Safeguarding Team will after consultation with Greater Manchester Police and Oldham Social Services Department, inform the person about whom the allegation has been made that (s)he is suspended until the allegations are fully investigated.

The SSM or DSO should contact relevant parties such as FA, EFL or EFL Trust about the allegations and the course of action which has been followed. The FA is contacted to help, give advice with any incidents or allegations, depending on the severity would depend on who you would contact, all contact details are listed within this policy. They are also there to make decisions on any content on staff/volunteer/board members DBS, they also make decisions and enforce any safeguarding issues.

All staff member or volunteers involved with Oldham Athletic should respect all aspects of confidentiality to protect both the accused person and the child/young person involved.

The Board will decide who should deal with any media enquiries and together decide the extent of what the media will be told bearing in mind the principle of confidentiality as outlined above.

If the designated person the DSO is the person about whom allegations are being made, SSM or Board Member will be responsible for contacting and liaising with Oldham Social Services Department.

There is often insufficient evidence from child abuse investigations to allow the police to pursue further action. In such cases the Board of Trustees must reach a decision based on the information available, bearing in mind, that on the balance of probability it is more likely than not that the allegation is true.

Regardless of the outcome of the Social Services Department or a police investigation we will have to decide if the suspended person should be reinstated.

Decisions should be taken following a principle "that the welfare of a child/young person is always of paramount importance".

The designated person should also discuss with Oldham Social Services Department what support could be offered to the child/young person and his/her carers

The executive committee should also consider what support could be offered to the person about whom the allegation has been made and to others who have worked with this person.

Over the past year many adults have come forward and disclosed abuse from their childhood. Sometimes the person about whom the allegations are made has continued to work with children and young people.

If such an allegation of a previous abuse is made against a current staff member or volunteer the above Procedures should also be followed.

Experience has shown that sexual offenders rarely modify their behaviour unless they receive specialist help, and we should bear this in mind when considering past allegations against current staff members and volunteers.

The flowchart helps the steps needed if there are concerns about a child or young person who is involved with an activity or programme.

34. TRIPS, EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, TRANSPORT, MISSING CHILD & LATE COLLECTION

Trip Risk Assessment

Before undertaking any trip, employers are legally required to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment. A risk assessment should detail any significant risk associated with the activity/risk and the precautions to be taken to minimise the risk.

The Line Manager must ensure a risk assessment is completed prior to the event. However, it is always advised that this process should be completed by a team of people with relevant knowledge and experience to help ensure that the identification of potential risks is suitable and sufficient. The completed assessment will also need to be shared with all trip staff and volunteers.

The person in charge needs to ensure an ongoing process of risk assessment as new or unplanned situations arise leading up to and during the trip.

When staffing the trips/events we recommend one adult to 10 children. The ratio will increase if the group is made up of primary school aged children, or children with special needs, or the trip is of a nature where more supervision may be required.

If the group is mixed sex, there should be at least one male and one female supervisor/staff. There should always be at least two adults on accompanying any group. If the group included people with

special needs, there may be some specific skill requirements of supervisors that need to be considered. In some case's parents or designated carers may need to be included.

Transport

When travelling to competitions, events etc there may need to be other welfare factors to consider. Where an event is further away, it is often sensible to make arrangements to travel by hiring mini-bus, coach. If this is the case, we would then in force our transport policy and make sure drivers have been DBS/CRC checked and have insurance etc.

It is essential that parents/guardian are to complete a consent form for the trip and is asked to provide participant and emergency contact information. Parents need to be fully informed (in writing) of all details in relation to the trip, including information relating to the management of any identified risks, and information taken will be stored as per our Data Protection Policy.

Missing Children

In the rare event a child goes missing, the following guidelines have been devised to outline the actions that should be taken.

Ensure that other children in the group are looked after appropriately while a search for the child concerned is conducted

Inform the child's parents if they are present or nominate an appropriate person to telephone them and advise them of the concern. Reassure them that everything is being done to locate the child.

Organise all available responsible adults by areas to be searched. It is best to take a short time to organise the search properly so that all places are searched fully.

Search the area in which the child has gone missing including changing rooms, toilets, public and private areas.

Request all those searching to report back and to nominate an adult to stay at a specific point.

Make a note of the circumstances in which the child has gone missing and where he/she was last seen.

Prepare a detailed physical description of the child, including, approximate height, build, hair and eye colour, clothing he/she was wearing as this will be required by the police.

Report the concern to the police if the search is unsuccessful. This must happen no later than 30 minutes after the young person's disappearance is noted, even if the search is incomplete.

Follow police guidance if further action is recommended and maintain close contact with the police.

Ensure that you inform all adults involved including the parents, searchers, and police if at any stage the child is located.

Refer the concern ASAP to the DSO.

Late Collection of Children

The following information is a guideline on how to respond where a parent for whatever reason, does not arrive at the required time to collect their child.

All parents must be advised that in the event, they are delayed for any reason, they must:

Contact lead staff/coach at the earliest opportunity

Provide clear guidance on what they wish the staff/coach to do, e.g consent for another parent to transport child home.

Staff/Coach must:

Maintain a list of parent contact details and emergency numbers

Never leave a child or young person alone unless he/she is over 16 and then only with parent's permission

Staff/Coach must not:

Must not take the child home or to another location

Ask the child to wait in a vehicle or the club with them alone

Send the child home with another person without permission

If the parent is considered as being unduly late the lead staff/coach should:

Attempt to contact the parent – from the information sheet completed by the parent

Attempt to contact emergency contact person nominated

If there is no reply from the emergency contact, ask the child if there is another family member who may be contacted.

Wait with the young person making sure you are with at least one other person e.g coach, volunteer, teacher, or parent

Respond to any instruction received from the parent

If no one can be reached, contact local police or children's social services to enquire about the best course of action.

Persistent failure to collect a child/young person on time:

Parents, who regularly fail to collect a child on time or have not arrived after a reasonable period of time and have given no prior notice to inform that they are delayed, may be failing in providing adequate care for their child.

If the parent makes no effort to contact staff/coach or provide reasonable explanation for the delays, the DSO or other official staff should arrange to meet with the parent to discuss the matter. It may be parent/carer needs assistance to arrive on time.

If there is no change the DSO should contact LADO or seek advice from FA, ELF or ELFT.

35. IMAGE CONSENT FORM

Oldham Athletic & Community Trust would like to promote and celebrate success by using photographs and images.

This consent form should be completed by the parent or carer/guardian who has legal guardianship of any child, under 18 years old, who will participate in activities organised by the club/community trust.

I PROVIDE CONSENT TO ALLOW PHOTOGRAPH(S) / VIDEO RECORDING OF MY CHILD

Name of Child (Print)..... AgeDOB.....

Current AddressPost Code.....

Name of school (if U16).....

To be taken by Oldham Athletic Football Club, Academy, Community Trust or its designated representative:

As the legal guardian of the child, I agree that the images taken may be used in publicity materials and celebration publications produced by **OLDHAM ATHLETIC FOOTBALL CLUB**; EFL; EFLT, Community Trust(s) and/or any of their sponsors or future commercial partners/sponsors. I agree images may be used on websites or social network sites managed by any of those groups.

Images taken may be used for in publicity features including local press, website and social media.

I understand that in addition, the images of my child MAY appear on live or recorded televised footage and understand any images will be safely stored and archived digitally or manually and may be used at any time for promotional or publicity purposes.

I (NAMED BELOW) AM THE LEGAL PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF THE CHILD NAMED AND PROVIDE CONSENT FOR ANY IMAGE(S) TO BE USED AT ANY TIME FOR PROMOTIONAL OR PUBLICITY PURPOSES AS DESCRIBED ABOVE.

I understand that I must contact the O AFC, Academy or OACT Designated Safeguarding Officer if family circumstances change and I wish to withdraw my consent, or if my child is now or becomes the subject any Family or other Court Orders.

All information submitted on this form will be used only for what it's intended and fall inline with our Data Protection Policy which legislation and guidance comes from General Data Protection Regulations 2018

CONTACT DETAILS (Please print clearly)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POST CODE: _____

TEL: CONTACT: _____ MOBILE PHONE: _____

I agree that the organisations named may use any image(s) as outlined above.

Parent / guardian

SIGNED Parent / guardian: _____ (Relationship): _____

DATE: _____ DD/MM/YY

Social Media Code of Conduct Policy

Introduction to the Policy

All employees of Oldham Athletic, Academy and Community Trust and its associated companies are welcome to participate in Social Media, but it is essential that every member of staff who participates in online commentary strictly observes these clear and straightforward guidelines.

These rules and guidelines have been established to ensure that all employees who participate in Social Media do so in a respectful and relevant way, and that protects the club's reputation and follows legislative requirements. The intention is not to restrict your personal freedom, but we all have a duty to protect the reputation of Oldham Athletic FC by acting in a responsible manner.

The club and community trust expect appropriate standards of behaviour and communication from all employees, whatever the medium used. However, Social Media has unique hazards that other media does not. The lines between professional and personal / private communication remain blurred but the medium ensures that there is a permanent record of what has been said and done. Deleting unfortunate tweets, comments or photographs does not guarantee that they are removed from the public domain. Act with caution!

Publishing photographs can be as damaging as publishing words and any restriction on what you can post to Social Media accounts should be read as including photographs, match footage, music, video, links and information using any medium, as well as words.

Please see our social media policy for more information all new starters including volunteers will receive a copy of the policy and everyone will be issued with updated policies once reviewed annually.

The club and community trust as created a list of simple and clear rules and guidelines for your benefit and should you have any questions or queries please do contact either you Line Manager or the Chief Executive.

36. SAFER RECRUITMENT

Ex-offenders

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Oldham Athletic & Community Trust complies fully and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.

Here at OAF&C & OACT we do not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check based on a conviction or other information revealed.

We can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that we are legally entitled to know about and are not protected. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended)

O AFC & O ACT are committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

O AFC & O ACT actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records, candidates are selected for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.

O AFC & O ACT ensures that all those who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences and will ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place, about any offences, or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment. Also within the interview process there is a safer recruitment check list which helps you to ask relevant questions and what is needed from the prospected employee and what as an employer we should be looking for, this also stipulates references required and checked as well as the DBS and correct qualifications for the role.

Anything revealed on a DBS certificate will be discussed with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

37. SAFER WORKING

All adults who come into contact, with children and young people in their work, have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare.

The Education Act 2002, places a duty on organisations to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and young people. This includes the need to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of children and young people in these organisations are competent, confident, and safe to do so.

The vast majority of adults, who work with children and young people act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children and young people in their care. However, it is recognised that in this area of work, tensions and misunderstandings can occur. It is here that the behaviour of adults can give rise to allegations of abuse being made against them. Allegations may be malicious or misplaced.

They may arise from differing perceptions of the same event, but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned. Equally, it must be recognised that some allegations will be genuine and there are adults who will deliberately seek out, create or exploit opportunities to abuse children and young people. It is therefore essential that all possible steps are taken to safeguard children and young people and ensure that the adults working with them are safe to do so.

Some concerns have been raised about the potential vulnerability of adults in this area of work. It was suggested that there was a need for clearer advice about what constitutes illegal behaviour and what might be considered as misconduct. This document has been produced in response to these concerns. It was written by a team of individuals from various backgrounds who are knowledgeable about allegation procedures and the circumstances in which allegations might arise and provides practical guidance for anyone who works with, or on behalf of children and young people regardless of their role, responsibilities, or status. It seeks to ensure that the duty to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and young people is in part, achieved by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and inappropriate behaviours.

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that this guidance cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or which directly contravene the guidance given by their employer. It is expected that in these circumstances, adults will always advise their senior colleagues of the justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

It is also recognised that not all adults who work with children and young people work as paid or contracted employees. The principles and guidance outlined in this document still apply and should be followed by all adults whose work brings them into contact with children and young people.

The guidance contained in this document has due regard to current legislation and statutory guidance. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).

We will ensure that all staff, volunteers and board members are given the correct training to make sure, when they are out and about on behalf of the OAFC & OACT they are in a safe working environment. We will endeavour to make sure that first aid, DBS and safeguarding qualification are up to date and that we do regular CPD training. All staff will receive updated policies and procedures annually unless legislation dictates, such as Whistle Blowing policy, Safeguarding etc.

When working within schools we will adhere to their policies and procedures around the child's safety.

38. RESPONSIBLE RECRUITMENT

Those who apply for a role that involves working closely with children and in some cases adults at risk, on any of our activities will be subject to safer recruitment principles relative to the mandatory systems in place. As a minimum they will require a criminal record certificate (disclosure and barring service checks), we will also take and follow up 2 references, check qualifications and licences, and where necessary conduct medical checks. As a result of the roles and authority that many members of our workforce hold, they are considered, to be in a position of trust in relation to those in their care.

This means that staff, or other members of the workforce, are in a position of power and influence over children or other vulnerable people they must not abuse their position for personal advantage or gratification or that of others. Staff must also report any concern they have about another member of the workforce to a designated safeguarding officer.

DBS also known as CRC's are an essential part of our recruitment for staff and volunteer who work or have contact on a regular basis.

The criminal record check gives us the applicant's full criminal history. This includes spent or unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands, and warnings. From time to time, other information is released such as background information about an offence, impending prosecutions, or serious and relevant allegations. Most importantly the criminal record check tells us if the person is barred from working with children. If a person is barred, it is a criminal offence for us to allow them to work with children and young people, and we will have to suspend such people from our employment.

Many people have a criminal record that are not linked to the care of children and young people. Every check is different, and every effort is made in order, to make a fair decision as to whether the information released is significant and relevant to working with children. Sometimes, we cannot simply make the decision based on the written information and would need more information and would ask the applicant for more details and reference may be sought. We would also ask for help and guidance from other professionals such as FA and EFLT. All this is to help make an informed decision and ensure nobody is judged on mistakes they made when they were younger, or on information that is no longer relevant. O AFC have processes that are fair and transparent and of course there is a complaints process if people feel they have been unfairly treated. DBS are renewed every 3 years.

39. WHISTLE BLOWING

The aim of this policy is to provide a process through which people who work at OAFc, Academy and OACT and are able to raise a whistle blowing concern, safe in the knowledge that doing so will not led to reprisals, victimisation or detrimental treatment (e.g. denial of promotion, facilities or training which the member of staff would have otherwise been offered), provided that such a concern is based on an honest and reasonable suspicion.

What is Whistle Blowing?

Whistle blowing is a term used when someone within Oldham Athletic raises a concern about the possible,

Fraud

Crime

Danger

Breach of Laws, regulations, policies and procedures

Serious risk that threatens clients, colleagues, the public, the environment or Community Trust reputation.

Eligibility

This policy will apply to all members of staff.

This policy will not apply to:

Possible frauds, crimes, dangers, breach of any laws or regulations or other serious risks committed by people who do not work for OAFc & OACT.

Personal grievances regarding an individual's terms and conditions, complaints, bullying, harassment or disciplinary matters.

What should I do if I have a whistle blowing concern?

If you have a whistle blowing concern, write this down immediately. Make a note of all relevant detail, such as what was said, either on the phone or during other conversations, the date, the time and the names of those involved.

OAFc & OACT welcome the opportunity to address whistle blowing concerns as early as possible – you should not attempt to investigate your concerns yourself. We hope that you feel that you can raise such concerns promptly with your line manager. However, we appreciate that doing so is not always easy, if you have concerns and would like some confidential advice on whether and how to raise this, you can call the Employee Assistance Programme at the The FA Group. Any safeguarding incidents you can email safeguarding@oact.org.uk, safeguarding@manchesterfa.com or contact NSPCC helpline 0808 800 5000.

It may not be appropriate for a whistle blowing concern to be raised with your director or line manager (eg if that director or manager is the object of the concern). In these circumstances, you should discuss the concern with one of the following:

The person to whom the individual reports and or the CEO.

For more guidance please see our Whistle blowing policy.

40. DATA PROTECTION/CONFIDENTIALITY

Records relating to recruitment will be held and destroyed in accordance with the Data Protection Act. For further information, please refer to the Data Protection Policy where regulations are taken from General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

41. RESPONSIBILITIES – DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

The designated safeguarding officers are the first point of contact for all staff and volunteers to go for advice if they are concerned about a child (this may also need to be out of hours, so staff and volunteers should always know how to contact them or appoint a deputy).

They should have a higher level of safeguarding training and knowledge than the rest of the staff.

They are responsible for ensuring that their organisation safeguarding policy is kept up to date and reviewed annually and after any legislation change or after any serious incident.

They ensure that they comply with recruitment procedures for new staff members and their induction.

Are invited to sit in interviews as and when needed.

They support staff to assist in information regarding concerns and support decision making about whether staff concerns are sufficient, enough to notify Child Services, Police or NSPCC.

They ensure that concerns are logged and stored securely.

They have joint responsibility with the management committee or board of trustees to ensure that the organisations safeguarding policy and related policies and procedures are followed and regularly updated. We meet each month and review any issues and policies and are raised in the board meetings.

They are responsible for promoting a safe environment for children and young people. This is done by giving staff the correct information, so they can pass it on to the young people.

They know the contacts details of relevant statutory agencies.

We have a legal duty to make sure that all staff, volunteers and trustees have an up to date, DBS when working with children or have regular contact

New starters will be given the online information to complete their DBS, it will then need verifying and payment due.

DBS numbers and date of issued are logged, DBS are renewed every 3 years. The staff/volunteers will receive reminders of when they need to renew their DBS. We send reminders to staff three, two and one month in advance of DBS running out to ensure that it gets done in time before the other runs out.

If the DBS does run out this could mean that the person in question would be suspended until such time, they have a new DBS in place.

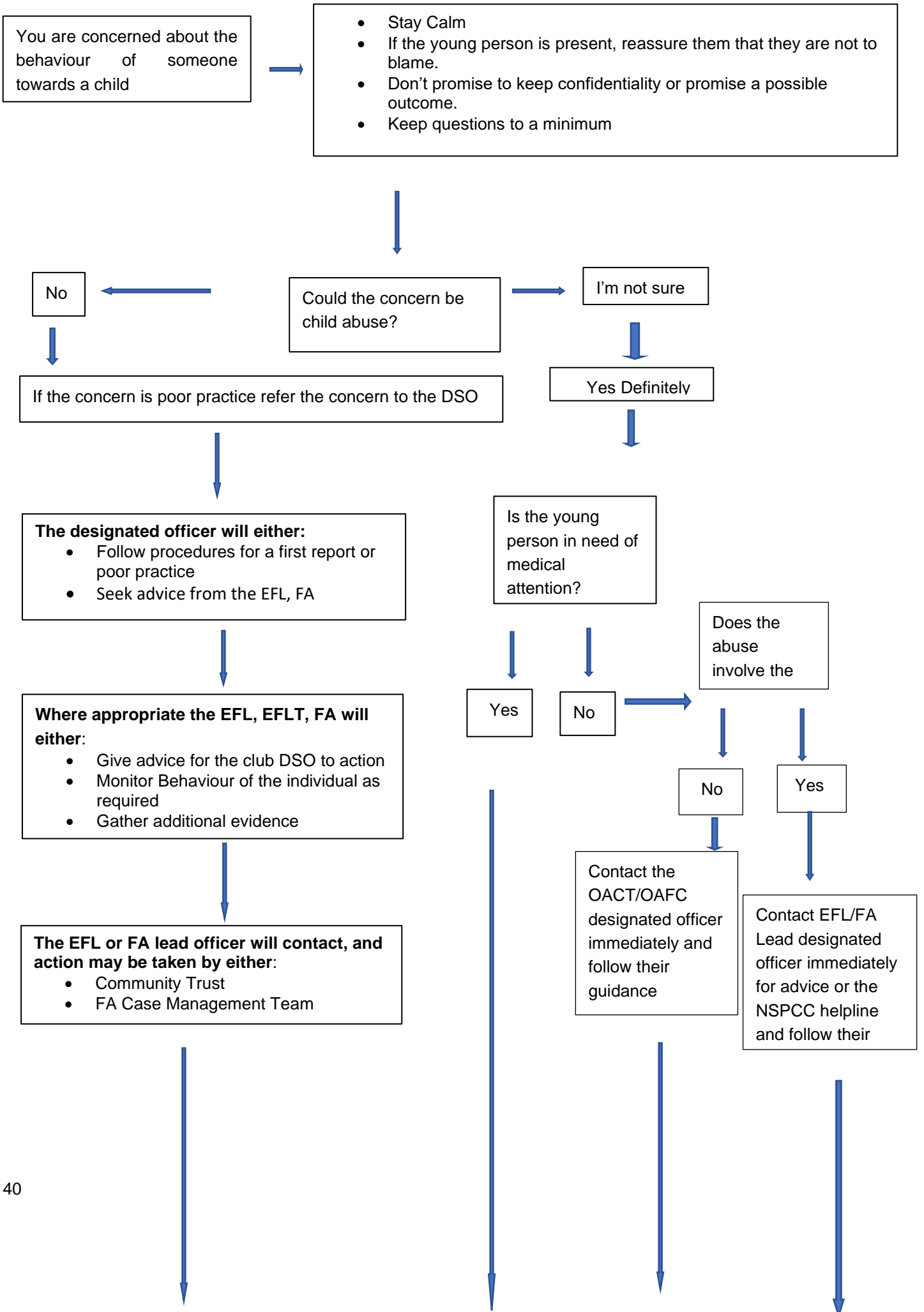
If a DBS comes back as unfit to work, it would be up to the safeguarding officer to advise a cause of action and could warrant termination of employment.

It is not the responsibility of the designated safeguarding officer to decide whether a child has been abused or not, that is the responsibility of investigative statutory agencies such as children's social services or the police. However, keeping children safe is everybody's business and all staff should know who to go to and how to report any concerns they may have about a child being harmed or at risk of being harmed.

We have a role to play in keeping safe and keeping others safe by preventing, identifying, and reporting incidents and concerns. Thankfully, incidents are rare but if you need to get in touch with the appropriate people, internally by the management structure list or for external help please see information below.

DSO works closely with all departments to make sure all safeguarding policies are adhered to. DSO's from the club, academy and community trust meet on a monthly basis unless a major incident has occurred which we will then meet to discuss as a matter of urgency. On matchday's the community trust DSO will be present and lead on any safeguarding incidents. In the absence of the community trust DSO you can contact the club DSO.

42. SAFEGUARDING – DEALING WITH CONCERNS



Possible outcomes:

Further information requested
Advice or warning as to future conduct and sanctions
Further training, support needed
Sanction by Manager
No case to answer
Refer to SSM and DSO for action, this may also include referral to Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Telephone for an ambulance or take the young person to hospital, you will need to inform the parents you are doing this, (if parents are involved in the abuse do not share any other information). Inform the doctor of your concerns in relations to child protection issues and the doctor will take the appropriate action. Inform the DSO of the action you have taken, they will then contact all relevant people

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or Senior Safeguarding Officer (SSO) will inform as necessary either:

- Childrens Services (LADO)
- Police
- FA Case Management
- EFL Safeguarding Officer

If you have been unable to contact your DSO please contact either of the below immediately

- **Children's Services (LADO) – 0161 770 8870 Out of hours 0161 770 7777**
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 0161 770 7777, out of hours 0161 770 6936
- **Police 999 or local police station 0161 872 5050**
- **NSPCC 24 hours helpline 0808 800 5000**
- **FA Case management 0844 980 820**
- **EFL Safeguarding Officer 07795628379 or 01772325811**

All Incident & Accident forms will be accessible to all staff via emails, office and within the coaches packs these forms must be submitted within 24 hours and sent to wendy.noble@oact.org.uk

Help & Advice

Safeguarding Manager – Wendy Noble 07949 107580
Club Safeguarding Number 07738 490236

EFL English Football League Child Protection Officer – 07795628379 or 01772325811
EFLT – English Football League Trust Safeguarding & Incident Officer (Tara Lawson) – 07964 905652

- FA case management Team 08000835902 non urgent email safeguarding@thefa.com
- Manchester County FA DSO – Lauren McCorry safeguarding@manchesterfa.com

Office contact number 0161 225 1966 or Mobile 07824 491994

- Lancashire FA DSO – safeguarding@lancashirefa.com office number 01772 644264
- Local Authority LADO –0161 770 8870
- NSPCC - NSPCC 24 hours helpline 0808 800 5000

FA Referral Process

Referrer has a safeguarding concern

Referrer completes an initial assessment of risk

LOW RISK OR POOR PRACTICE

MEDIUM RISK

HIGH RISK

Suspensions by the FA

When the FA suspends an individual the FA Safeguarding team will notify the safeguarding Manager of the suspension. This notification will be via a copy of the suspension letter sent to the individual.

For further details of The FA process of investigation and decision making (including the appeals process) please refer to The FA's Safeguarding Rules and Regulations available on www.theFA.com.

Safeguarding Accountability Chart

Senior Management Lead
Karl Evans – Chief Executive

Community Trust Safeguarding
Manager & Interim Safeguarding
Manager Academy and Club Advisor
Wendy Noble

Community Trust
Trustee
Safeguarding
Lead Helen
Murphy

Community
Trust DSO
Samantha
Hughes

Club & Match
day DSO
Michael
Beech

Academy
Foundation
DSO David
Hankey

Academy
Youth DSO
Craig Large

43. SAFEGUARDING THIRD PARTY AND PARTNERSHIPS POLICY

Oldham Athletic recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all Children and Adults at Risk participating in activities and when participating in activities arranged in partnership with an external service provider. We are committed to working within partnerships to provide a safe environment for all by utilising Safeguarding Policies and Procedures to protect vulnerable groups from physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect, bullying or exploitation.

Our commitment to safeguarding is outlined in any partnership agreements, service level agreements or any other agreements that are in place with any service provider or for commissioned services insofar as those services relate to Children or Adults at Risk of Harm.

Partnership agreements will include the following:

- * All partners will be fully aware of their areas of safeguarding responsibilities.
- * In the event of a safeguarding concern arising, local safeguarding policies and procedures will be followed.
- * An agreement confirming safer recruitment procedures have been followed.
- * If appropriate level DBS checks and self-declarations have been undertaken.
- * Agreement on the level of supervision to be provided by the partner during the activity.
- * If the provider has valid public liability insurance.
- * What safeguarding training has been undertaken by the deliverers.
- * Health & Safety, code of conducts etc.
- * Who has responsibility for completion of consent forms (e.g. medical and image consent), registration, record keeping and risk assessments.
- * Details of First Aid arrangements
- * Clear guidance on the reporting of safeguarding concerns or concerns regarding poor practice during the outside of normal hours.
- * Name and contact details of staff to whom safeguarding concerns or concerns regarding poor practice, should be reported.
- * Whether participants and their parents/carers have been provided with details of how to report a safeguarding concern.
- * What evaluation procedures are in place to gain the vulnerable groups' views about the activity.
- * The period by which the safeguarding arrangements in the agreement will be reviewed.

When working with schools and community groups we always have an SLA in place which covers all our delivery aspect as well as safeguarding. When dealing with safeguarding issues within a school we must adhere to their safeguarding policies and procedures and inform them asap regarding any incident. Staff will still be requested to complete a report and then the school is left to follow their procedures.

44. CONTACT INFORMATION – HELP & ADVICE

OACT Safeguarding Manager & Interim Safeguarding Manager Academy –

Wendy Noble 07949 107580

Club DSO – Michael Beech 07738 490236

EFL English Football League Child Protection Officer – 07795 628379 or 01772 325811

EFLT – English Football League Trust Safeguarding Officer (Tara Lawson) – 07964 905652

FA safeguarding case management Team: emergency 08000835902 or non-urgent email safeguarding@thefa.com

Manchester County FA DSO – Lauren McCorry safeguarding@manchesterfa.com

or ring office 0161 225 1966, Mobile 07824 491994

Lancashire FA DSO – 01772 644264 or email safeguarding@lancashirefa.com

Local Authority LADO – 0161 770 8870

Emergency Children’s Services Duty Team (Out of Hours) 0161 770 7777

Police 999 or local police station 0161 872 5050

FA Case Investigation Unit 020 7745 4787

NSPCC 24 Hour Helpline – 0808 800 5000 CHILDLINE – 0800 11 11

Pharos Response Team (NCS) 0203 6370520

Support

Abuse – Childline – <https://www.childline.org.uk>

Honour-Based Abuse – Karma Nirvana – <https://karmanirvana.org.uk>

Advice – childline – <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/>

Coronavirus – Childline – <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/>

Eating disorders – Beat – <https://www.beateatingisorders.org.uk>

Cyber Bulling – Childline – <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/bullying-cyberbullying/>

Gender Diversity – Stonewell – <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/> or Mermaids – <https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/>

Mental Health

Mind (EFL Partner) – <https://www.minds.org.uk> Young Minds – <https://youngminds.org.uk>

Kooth – <https://www.kooth.com> Calm (Men aged 15 to 35) – www.thecalmzone.net

Panic Disorders – No Panic – www.nopanic.org.uk

Self-harm & Suicide – Papyrus – www.papyrus-uk.org

Charity Regulations & voluntary Work

The charity commission <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-the-charity-sector>

National Council for Voluntary Organisations <https://www.ncvupdate@ncvo.org.uk>

Volunteer Safely

<https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/volunteer-safely/>

Information Security – The National Cyber Security Centre – <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk> Department for justice <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>

Safeguarding

The department for education <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid19>

The NSPCC – <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/coronavirus>

Social Care Institute for Excellence – <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-providers/coronavirus-covid19/safeguarding-adults>

Farrar & Co – Legal Services – <https://www.farrer.co.uk/news-and-insights/safeguarding-during-the-covid-19-emergency/#>

Local authorities have overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. They have a number, of statutory functions under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts which make this clear, and this guidance sets these out in detail.

This includes specific duties in relation to children in need and children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, regardless of where they are found, under sections 17 and 47 of the Children Act 1989. The Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services in local authorities are the key points of professional and political accountability, with responsibility for the effective delivery of these functions.

Whilst local authorities play a lead role, safeguarding children and protecting them from harm is everyone's responsibility. Everyone, who is in contact with children and families has a role to play.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- acting to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Local agencies, including the police and health services, also have a duty under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to ensure that they consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when carrying out their functions. Under section 10 of the same Act, a similar range of agencies are required to cooperate with local authorities to promote the well-being of children in each local authority area (see chapter 1).

This cooperation should exist and be effective at all levels of the organisation, from strategic level through to operational delivery.

Professionals working in agencies with these duties are responsible for ensuring that they fulfil their role and responsibilities in a manner consistent with the statutory duties of their employer.

45. REPORTING SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS

Allegation, suspicion or disclosure of poor practice or abuse

Concerns arise about the behaviour of a member of staff, coach or volunteer towards a child/children.

Always seek advice from your Designated safeguarding officer if unsure of the next step

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or Safeguarding Manager

Contact emergency services immediately if a child is in danger or is injured.

If concern is low level and a one off, the welfare officer may resolve this matter:

Possible outcomes:-

- Improvement plan/training/support
- Warning and guidance
- No further action

Without delay, report to DSO and Police/Children Services (LADO) if an individual has or may have:

- Harmed a child
- Committed a criminal offence against a child or
- Presents a risk to children

DSO will consult with children's social care/designated officer (LADO) & police (whoever appropriate) to determine the route for further action

Always record all actions and complete an incident form within 24 hours of any referral and send to DSO

If the concern is considered, to be poor practice/misconduct

Possible outcomes:

- Refer to DSO/Welfare Officer for resolution
- OACT/OAFC resolution
- OACT/OAFC disciplinary action (misconduct procedures)
- No further action

If the concern is considered, to be potential abuse

Possible outcomes:

- Criminal/child protection investigation/prosecution
- OACT/OAFC Safeguarding procedures
- OACT/OAFC resolution as poor practice/misconduct

Concerns about a child arising outside of Oldham Athletic e.g at home, etc must be reported to the DSO/Welfare Officer who may refer to or consult with, children social care (LADO) or police regarding what action to take (including who will inform parents/guardian).

When to report suspicions or incidents.

Staff are not expected to be experts in recognising abuse; however, staff should be vigilant and respond swiftly and appropriately.

If any of the following circumstances occur, you should report this immediately to the club Safeguarding Manager or Designated Safeguarding Officers.

Make a written record of the incident or grounds for concern.

You will be guided by the Safeguarding Manager as to how, when and by whom the parents of the child are to be informed:

- If you suspect a child may be the victim of abuse by any person, including neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse.
- If a child appears to have been the victim or perpetrator of bullying, including on-line cyberbullying.
- If you observe any injuries/marks on a child which they cannot account for, their explanation for the injury seems unlikely or you have suspicions as to how the injury may have been caused.
- If there is a sudden change in behaviour, i.e. the child/young person's behaviour alters significantly, they become withdrawn or tearful. If a child voices their intentions to self-harm or if you suspect, he/she may be exhibiting signs/symptoms of self-harm or an eating disorder.
- If you suspect a child has been exposed to any inappropriate or indecent images or discloses any inappropriate on-line behaviour.
- If you accidentally hurt a child or young person, or you observe another adult hurting a child
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner and you have concerns for their emotional state or welfare.
- If a child or young person appears to be sexually aroused by your actions or may have developed an infatuation with you or another member of staff.
- If a child or young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, which may compromise your position or working relationship with that child.

The circumstances of the concern will be fully investigated by the Safeguarding Manager who may decide to refer the concern to Children's Services or other agencies.

Do not worry that you may be mistaken. Being worried about doing the wrong thing is not a reason not to act. It is better to have discussed it with somebody with the experience and responsibility to make an assessment.

Responding to Concerns or Allegations

It is not the responsibility of anyone employed by O AFC & O ACT, in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether the alleged harm or abuse has taken place. However, it is the responsibility of all staff to act, by reporting any concerns or allegations of abuse of a child to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or by contacting the appropriate authorities.

Action to be taken when Abuse is Suspected.

The following actions must be carried out when abuse of a child is suspected.

- Any suspicion that a child has been harmed or abused by an adult, peer, member of staff, player or volunteer should be immediately reported to the club's Safeguarding Manager or Designated Safeguarding Officers.
- The member of staff reporting the suspicion of abuse will also record the incident, using the report form and immediately forward the document to the Safeguarding Manager.
- The Safeguarding Manager, Designated Safeguarding Officer or the member of staff dealing with the child at that time, must take steps to ensure the immediate safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at immediate risk of harm.
- The parents/carers of the child will be contacted immediately, unless they are suspected to have abused the child in question. In such circumstances, advice will be obtained, by the Safeguarding Manager/ DSO or staff member, from Police or Social Services with regards to when and who should inform the parents of the concern or allegation.
- The Safeguarding Manager will refer the allegation to Together for Children Integrated Contact and Referral Team, who may involve the police.
- If a child is at immediate risk of harm then the Safeguarding Manager/DSO or any staff member dealing may also report the incident directly to the Police and/or Children's Services.
- The Safeguarding Manager should also notify the Head of Community who will inform the Media and Communications Manager who will deal with any media enquiries.
- If the Safeguarding Manager is the subject of the suspicion/allegations, the report must be made to the Head of Community or Trustee who will refer the allegations to Social Services.
- In cases, such as sexual assault, where forensic evidence from a scene or the victim's body or clothing may be available then staff must attempt to preserve any such evidence e.g. locking a room to prevent other people disturbing the scene, advising the child not to wash, go to the toilet or change clothes if the assault was relatively recent. Staff should also be mindful of documentary or other evidence, which may be present on mobile phones, computers or other devices which may need to be retained.

Advice should be sought from the Safeguarding Manager or DSO as to the preservation of evidence in such cases, pending police involvement.

Action to be taken when a child discloses abuse.

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Do not promise to keep secrets –find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that to keep them safe it is likely that the information they tell you may need to be shared with others.
- Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace.

- Keep questions to a minimum; use the following as a guide to establish the brief, basic facts of the allegation:

WHO? – Names of who is involved.

WHAT? – What happened?

WHERE? – Where did it happen?

WHEN? -When did it happen?

- When they have finished make a detailed record of what they have said, using the child's own words, as soon as possible recording what actions you have taken so far.
- There is no requirement to get a lengthy account from the child at this stage. Remember that if the child discloses abuse you are only making a record of that child's initial disclosure and it is likely he/she will subsequently be fully interviewed by Police.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared

Contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer or a Safeguarding Manager immediately.

If none of the Safeguarding Team are available, and you feel the child is in immediate danger or at immediate risk of harm, then report your concerns direct to

Emergency Children's Services Duty Team (Out of Hours) 0161 770 7777

Police 999 or local police station 0161 872 5050

46. POLICY REVIEW INFORMATION

Author: Wendy Noble

Reviewed: February 2021

Renewal: February 2022 or if legislation changes