



Adult safeguarding policy and procedures

Brighton & Hove Albion FC // Brighton & Hove Albion Women's FC // BHAFC Foundation

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FOUNDATION

Introduction to the policy

Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club (BHAFC / 'the club') is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment for all people involved in the club. The club accepts its responsibility to assist in the welfare of all people and to safeguard them from poor practice, abuse and bullying.

All individuals within the club have a role and responsibility to help ensure the safety and welfare of adults.

The club accepts that we are required to fulfil our duty of care, which means that we must do everything that can be reasonably expected of us to help safeguard and protect people from harm, and to act when we suspect that someone is being harmed or is at risk of harm.

Where the policy refers to 'the club' this also includes Brighton and Hove Albion Women's Football Club (BHAWFC) and Brighton & Hove Albion Foundation (BHAFC Foundation).

Scope

This policy applies to all those working on behalf of the club, including permanent, casual, volunteers and contractors regardless of their role.

All the requirements are mandatory and are to be enforced as indicated by the appropriate persons in all cases where there are any suspected instances of poor practice or abuse.

Activities undertaken by club departments at the following locations fall under the remit of this policy (this list is not exhaustive):

The American Express Community Stadium:

- Men's first team and Academy fixtures.
- Women's first team and reserve team training.
- Stewarding and all other matchday activities.
- Stadium tours, children's birthday parties.
- Stadium Superstore.
- Junior fans activities.
- BHAFC Foundation programmes and activities.

The American Express Elite Football Performance Centre and other venues:

- Men's first team training, Academy matches, training and development centres.
- Women's and Girls Regional Talent Centre and development squad training.
- Educational provision.
- All medical provision for children and young people under 18 years.
- Academy Host Family provision.

- BHAFC Foundation programmes and activities.

The People's Pension Stadium, Crawley:

- Women's First Team, Academy fixtures and Under-21 D&S fixtures.
- BHAFC Under-21 fixtures.

The six principles of adult safeguarding

The Care Act sets out the following principles that should underpin the safeguarding of adults.

Empowerment: *People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.* "I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process, and this directly inform what happens."

Prevention: *It is better to take action before harm occurs.* "I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is. I know how to recognise the signs, and I know what I can do to seek help."

Proportionality: *The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.* "I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest, and they will only get involved as much as is necessary."

Protection: *Support and representation for those in greatest need.* "I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want."

Partnership: *Services offer local solutions through working closely with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.* "I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me."

Accountability: *Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.* "I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they."

What is adult safeguarding?

The official definition of "Adult safeguarding" is working with adults with care and support needs to keep them safe from abuse or neglect. It is an important part of what many public services do, and a key responsibility of local authorities (Care Act 2014).

The safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs).
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect.
- Is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect, as a result of those care and support needs.

Adults who fulfil these criteria are 'adults at risk'.

People can have a need for care and support for a variety of reasons – for example they may have a learning disability, a physical disability, a chronic health condition or have a mental health issue. Such conditions may bring with them additional vulnerabilities, however having care and support needs does not mean that people are automatically adults at risk and need safeguarding.

Safeguarding adults is underpinned by:

- The Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005

Types of abuse suffered by adults identified in the Care Act 2014 are:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological/Emotional/Mental
- Financial and material
- Neglect and act of omission
- Discriminatory
- Organisational
- Modern Day Slavery
- Domestic Violence
- Self-neglect – including hoarding

Other types of harm that adults may experience include:

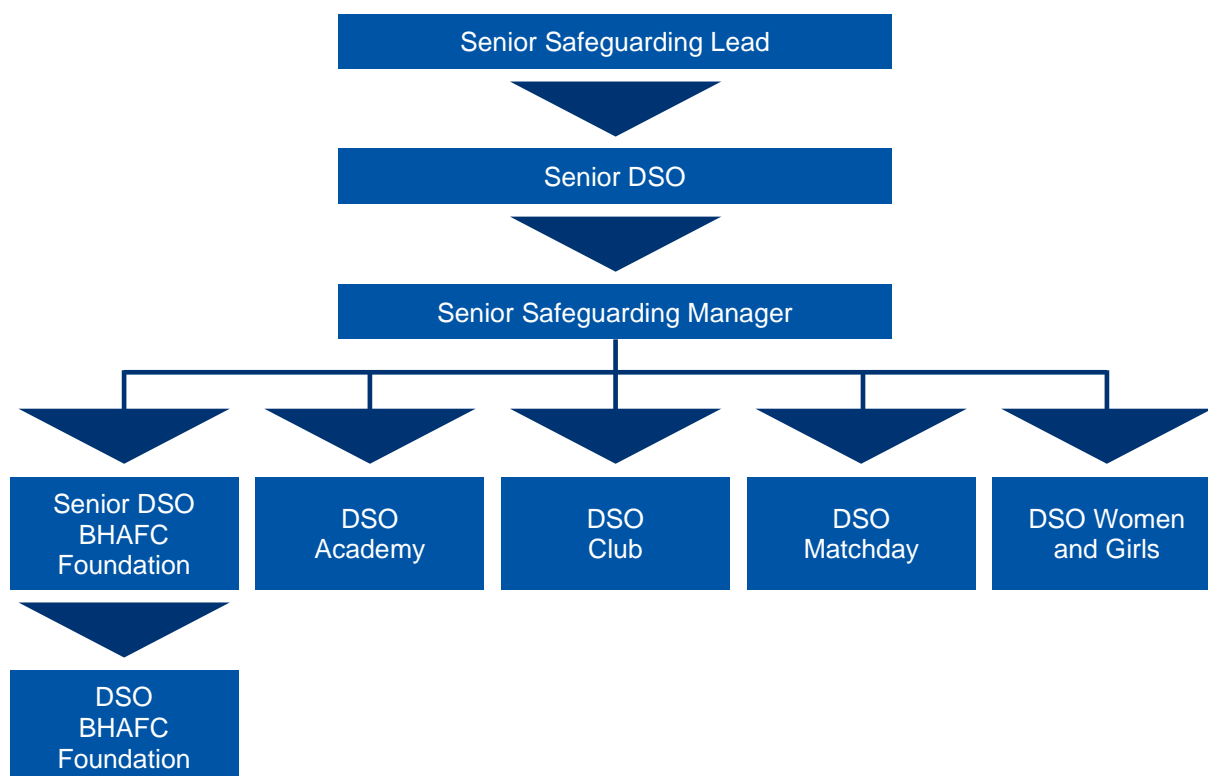
- Cyber Bullying
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Mate Crime
- Radicalisation

Safeguarding Framework

The club's comprehensive framework for ensuring the protection of adults at risk includes:

Roles and Responsibilities

It should be noted that all employees of the club have a responsibility for the welfare of adults at risk who engage in any club activity or are employees of the club; however, there are also more specific roles who have specified duties in relation to safeguarding.



Safeguarding roles

Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO)

Senior Safeguarding Lead

There is one Senior Safeguarding Lead at the club. Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Paul Barber, is the Senior Safeguarding Lead for BHAFC. The Senior Safeguarding Lead represents Safeguarding at the BHAFC board.

Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer

Rose Read is the Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer, Head of People & Culture and board member for BHAFC Foundation and BHAWFC. Rose's role is to assist and support the Designated Safeguarding Officers in every department and to deputise for the Senior Safeguarding Lead in his absence.

Matt Dorn, BHAFC Foundation Chief Executive Officer, is the BHAFC Foundation Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer. Matt's role is to assist and support the BHAFC Foundation DSO and champion Safeguarding within BHAFC Foundation.

Senior Safeguarding Manager

Richard Valder-Davis is the Senior Safeguarding Manager, and it is his role to provide club-wide strategic leadership and management in order to assist with the safeguarding strategy of the club. This role is responsible for ensuring all safeguarding concerns from all areas of the club are recorded correctly, reported to a Senior Safeguarding Leads and referred to the appropriate statutory agency.

Please see Appendix 1 for a detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the role.

Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO)

There is a DSO within each business area of the club. Their role is to provide support and refer all issues upwards to the Safeguarding Manager and the Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer. The relevant DSO will most often be your first point of contact for any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that arise. Where appropriate, the DSO will make the necessary referrals to the relevant statutory agencies, the FA Case Management Unit and the Premier League Safeguarding Team.

Appendix 1 provides a more detailed breakdown of the duties and responsibilities of the role.

- The senior DSO for BHAFC is Rose Read
- The DSO for the Academy incorporating the Boys and Girls academies is Richard Valder-Davis
- The DSO for the BHAFC Foundation Holly Baker
- The Senior DSO for the BHAFC Foundation is Matt Dorn
- The DSO for matchdays is Adrian Morris

The BHAFC Foundation Board of Trustees

The BHAFC Foundation Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for leadership and oversight of safeguarding at BHAFC Foundation.

Safeguarding Trustee

BHAFC Foundation has a dedicated Safeguarding Trustee. This role is to provide BHAFC Foundation Safeguarding oversight and accountability on the board of trustees. The Safeguarding trustee will receive Safeguarding updates from the Safeguarding Coordinator and the BHAFC Foundation DSO. Any employee occupying the above roles will have been issued with a detailed role description that sets out the responsibilities of the role

Safeguarding Board member

BHAFC has a dedicated Safeguarding board member who is responsible for oversight of safeguarding within the Women's & Girls area of the club.

Please see Appendix 2 for the contract details for all relevant safeguarding persons within the club and for some external contacts that may be of help if you have a safeguarding concern.

Safe recruitment and safeguarding training

The club recognises the importance of safe recruitment and has taken into account the FA's Responsible Recruitment guidelines to ensure there is a safe and responsible recruitment process for all individuals within the club who come into contact with adults at risk. This applies whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

The club has a duty to carry out due diligence that any third parties working with children or vulnerable adults on behalf of the club or charity, including but not limited to teachers, interpreters and mental health professionals will also have completed a safer recruitment process.

The club's safe recruitment process includes:

- Ensuring job descriptions and job advertisements highlight the key responsibilities of the role and the club's commitment to safeguarding.
- Applications must be made in writing by the candidate and not an agent; the club will then shortlist and interview as appropriate for the role. Each candidate will be interviewed by two members of staff prior to any offer and interviews will include exploration of candidates' attitudes and approaches towards safeguarding.
- Ensuring all applicants identity, qualifications and experience are verified through original documentation and any gaps in CVs will be properly explored.
- All roles or positions will require satisfactory references and criminal record checks under the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) appropriate to the role concerned. and in line with The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; Guidance for roles should be assessed in line with government guidance **DBS checks in sport for staff working with Adults** and **DBS checks in sport for staff working with Children**.
- The club will abide by the FA's guidance on roles which fall within a Regulated Activity and therefore need an Enhanced DBS. It will also follow Affiliated Football guidance on roles that, although outside the regulated activity definition, still warrant Enhanced or Standard DBS checks and roles where a basic check will satisfactorily serve the club's safeguarding policy.
- Those working with children or adults at risk will need two written references including an express request of details of any safeguarding matters recording by previous employers to ensure the fulfilment of the club's commitment to safeguarding.
- A person may commence work prior to the background checks and references being returned but such person will be supervised at all times whilst working with children/adults at risk until such time that all background checks and references are completed and deemed to be acceptable by the club.
- Ensuring all staff complete a probationary period.

The club also requires all agency staff and consultants to sign a self-declaration Form. This requires employees to declare any criminal history they may have.

Consultants and agency staff who undertake a regulated activity with children must have a valid Enhanced DBS. This will need to be verified through the DBS number and date of issue.

If a person's criminal record check reveals cautions, convictions, community resolutions, warnings or final reprimands, the club will consider the nature of the offence/offences in deciding if the person is unsuitable for working with children and young people.

The 'standard' and 'enhanced' criminal record check will show an employer past crimes, even if they're spent. Guidance on what classifies a 'Spent conviction' can be found at **www.gov.uk/exoffenders-and-employment**.

The club will conduct a risk assessment to evaluate the DBS information and the person may be required to attend a risk assessment meeting with the relevant Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) prior to any recruitment decision being made.

If a person is not suitable for a job because of a spent conviction or caution, the club may withdraw a job offer.

On occasions a participant may themselves pose a risk through their criminal past and a risk assessment in relation to the participant may be required. The Child Protection in Sport Unit (NSPCC) has produced guidance in this area.

Section 2 outlines: What to do if a criminal record comes to light: [Making safe and fair decisions about membership for people with criminal records.](#)

Re-certification

It is an expectation of all club staff who work with adults with care and support, needs to keep their certificates up to date. All certificates including DBS, FA Safeguarding and First Aid expire after three years.

Participants with criminal records

Child Protection in Sport Unit (NSPCC) has produced guidance in this area which should be referred to if needed: **Making safe and fair decisions about membership for people with criminal records.**

1. Being a participant or fan is not exempt from The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, meaning it is unlawful to refuse or withdraw membership or to prejudice a participant or fan in any way when a caution or conviction has been spent.
2. Whilst there is no requirement to perform checks on all participants and fans, there are occasions when a criminal background may come to light including, word of mouth, newspaper or online reporting, through the police or statutory agency or self-disclosure.
3. Following information coming to light, the club will establish whether the conviction is unspent. This can be achieved through a self-declaration form or a face-to-face meeting.
4. The club may also request a Basic disclosure from the individual if confirmation of the conviction is required.
5. Following confirmation of an unspent offence the club may carry out a Safeguarding risk assessment based on the activity being attended. Following the risk assessment, a decision will be made about the terms of participation.
6. In the event that a spent conviction comes to light, Safeguarding should be at the heart of any decision and any breaches of current Code of Conduct or current behaviours falling short of club values should be dealt with through normal disciplinary procedures, taking no account of the spent conviction.

Induction and Training

During the induction process, all staff will have mandatory in-house training on identifying and reporting concerns in respect of safeguarding. This training will also incorporate the Premier League guidance for safer working practice. Employees will also receive copies of this policy and procedures, along with other club policies, and must sign that they have read and agreed the contents. A refresher safeguarding course will be provided every three years or earlier if required.

The training will also include an overview of this policy with specific emphasis on:

- The principles and obligation to safeguard within a sporting environment.

- An understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse (sexual, physical, emotional, neglect, grooming, online, child-on-child and radicalisation).
- Practical advice regarding safeguarding practicalities in your role.
- Dealing with a disclosure.
- How to report a safeguarding concern.
- The impact of holding a position of trust and examples of good and bad practice.
- The safeguarding structure at the club.
- Safeguarding the safeguarder.

Safeguarding updates in line with current local and national safeguarding trends and priorities will be provided as part of the club's ongoing commitment to Safeguarding.

The Safeguarding Manager will attend mandatory Premier League safeguarding training for senior managers at least every two years.

The Designated Safeguarding Officers will attend mandatory safeguarding training delivered annually.

Records of attendance, content and changes to all training will be kept and made available to legitimate parties on request. This includes where, due to the nature of a role, a person is required to attend external training course.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

All vulnerable adults have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of the presence of any protected characteristics listed by the Equality Act 2010, age, disability, gender assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

All internal safeguarding training will embed a culturally sensitive approach to safeguarding practice.

What to do if you have concerns about an adult

The primary concern in safeguarding should always be the immediate safety and welfare of the participant or staff member. The following should then be considered:

Capacity to make decisions: any decision made in relation to the Safeguarding of adults at risk should always be made in collaboration/with the person involved.

A positive assumption that the Adult at risk has capacity to make decisions should be made unless, in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005, the adult is deemed to lack capacity. If capacity to make decisions is in question or you may feel an assessment is required, this should be completed by a mental health practitioner.

Information Sharing: The Care Act stresses that people being abused, and those making referrals about it to local authority safeguarding teams, should be included and kept informed throughout any safeguarding enquiry.

Consent to share information about adults at risk should be requested before sharing. If consent is not given and it is deemed the individual has capacity to make this decision information should only be shared without consent if a safeguarding concern needs to be raised to prevent a perceived harm to the individual or another person.

The club are compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations.

What action should you take if you suspect abuse or poor practise against an adult has occurred?

You cannot assume that someone else will act as everyone holds the safeguarding responsibility.

- You must act if you have a concern about the safety and/or welfare of an adult.
- You must act if you have a concern about someone's behaviour towards an adult.

Immediate considerations when dealing with abuse against an adult:

- Make an evaluation of any risks and take steps to ensure that the adult or others are not in immediate danger. Ensure that other people are not in danger.
- If a crime is in progress or a life is at risk call emergency services on 999.
- Encourage and support the adult to report the matter to the Police if a crime is suspected and not an emergency.
- Safeguard any potential evidence. Do not tamper with, clean up or move any potential evidenced if a crime is suspected.

In the event of the above, as soon as reasonably practicable you should report your concerns to one of the following:

- A Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Senior Safeguarding Manager

The following guidelines offer help and support in responding to abuse or a suspicion of abuse or poor practice:

- Listen carefully to the adult. Avoid expressing your own views on the matter. A reaction of shock or disbelief could cause the individual to 'shut down', retract or stop talking.
- Let them know they've done the right thing. Reassurance can make a big impact to the individual who may have been keeping the abuse secret.
- Don't talk to the alleged abuser. Confronting the alleged abuser about what the individual has told you could make the situation a lot worse.
- Ask the adult what action they would like you to take. This may involve contacting a professional or another family member.
- An adult should never be pressured to give information or show physical marks unless they do so willingly. If they choose to show markings, two members of staff should be present and any marks raising concern should be recorded on the skin map included within the incident and report form.
- If the adult does not want you to take any further action you have to respect this decision, unless you are concerned someone else may be at risk or are aware that the individual does not have capacity (as assessed by a professional).

- You should make the adult aware that you will notify the Club Safeguarding Manager and that their wishes will be respected.
- Where the adult provides consent for their disclosure to be shared, do not delay reporting the abuse. The sooner the abuse is reported after the adult discloses the better. Report as soon as possible so details are fresh in your mind and action can be taken quickly.
- Write down everything said and what was done and sign and date the notes if handwritten. An incident report form should be used and sent to the Club Safeguarding Manager as soon as possible and within 24 hours.
- **Doing nothing is not an option; it is your responsibility to act.**
- Investigations into possible abuse will require careful management. In these cases, the Club Safeguarding Manager will first seek the advice of the Football Association Safeguarding Team, the Premier League Head of Safeguarding, Adult Social Care, or the police before setting up an internal investigation and take their advice.
- In any case of suspected abuse, as soon as the local authority or the police have been informed, the club must provide a report to the FA Safeguarding Department, the Premier League Head of Safeguarding and the club's Chief Executive Officer. Any external local authority provision will naturally take the lead on any case.

What happens where the allegation of poor practice or abuse is made against employees, workers, consultants, agency staff and volunteers

If an allegation is made against someone who works within the club, there are three types of investigation that may occur. They are not mutually exclusive.

- A criminal investigation by the police.
- An investigation by the local authority in a multi-agency approach.
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation led by the club; this may also involve the FA depending on the role of the alleged abuser.

No internal investigation will commence until the Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer has consulted the local authority department overseeing adult social care.

The alleged abuser will be legally entitled to anonymity until they are either charged with an offence or they waive their anonymity. All employees involved in an investigation or are privy to such information have a legal duty to maintain confidentiality and only provide information to those that need to know.

The employee, worker, consultant, agency staff or volunteer who the allegation concerns will normally be informed as soon as possible after the result of the initial investigation is known.

If it is subsequently established that the allegation was false or malicious, on the basis of further investigation, a written record will be made of the decision detailing the justification for the decision. The person whom the complaint has been made against will normally be informed and the matter will be closed. Allegations that are found to be false or malicious will be removed from personnel records and not referred to in any reference.

Where a criminal investigation is continued, the person concerned will be suspended on full pay if no reasonable alternative. The reasons and justifications for suspension will be recorded.

In the event that a member of staff is dismissed or resigns in circumstances where s/he might otherwise have faced dismissal for a safeguarding related reason, the Senior Safeguarding Manager will act in accordance with FA regulations and DBS guidelines and make the necessary referral to the DBS, the FA and the Premier League as appropriate.

Appendices referenced in this document are available on request.