



SECTION POLICY /PROCEDURE	Human Resources
POLICY /PROCEDURE	Safeguarding Children
DATE OF CREATION	17th March 2017
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DATE OF REVIEW	31/01/2019 The Policy will also be reviewed following a major incident, organisational or key legislative change ahead of this date.

## 1. Statement of Intent

Club Doncaster believes that every child or young person, defined as any person under the age of 18, who plays or participates in any activity through Club Doncaster should be able to be part of an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of anyone engaged and working with Club Doncaster and its associated activities.

Club Doncaster recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by seeking to protect them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy outlines a strong commitment from the board to the safeguarding agenda and the promotion of wellbeing.

## 2. Safeguarding of Children Policy Statement

Club Doncaster acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and FA requirements.

This policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, all children have a positive and enjoyable experience of Club Doncaster in a safe and child-centred environment and are protected from abuse whilst participating in sport or outside of the activity.

Club Doncaster acknowledges that some children, including disabled children and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

As part of our safeguarding policy Club Doncaster will:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and well-being of children and young people, we will do this by educating all persons associated with Club Doncaster to ensure they place best practice at the centre of everything they do, and are clear in the standards of Club Doncaster via induction, this policy, liaison with the departmental Welfare Officers, and appropriate training.
- Ensure everyone understands their role and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people. We will do this not only in recognising the above statement through the continuation of training and standards, but also in

expecting all persons to carry out their association with the Club in line with specific codes of conduct within the Club Doncaster handbook, EFL issued guidance, and Academy specific codes of conduct.

- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individuals who raise or disclose the concern. We will do this via formal and informal meetings with the Safeguarding Steering group. We will ensure that all Safeguarding incidents are recorded and reviewed when they occur.
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored. We will record all incidents in line with GDPR requirements, and ensure that we will only make this information available to appropriate statutory services.
- Prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals. We will do this through consistent and safe recruitment services and Safer Recruitment Policy, and in line with Club Doncaster disciplinary policies share information of unsuitable individuals where needed.
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation. We will do this through the regular review of safe and best practice via the steering group and seek advice from the English Football League, Football Association, Rugby Football League, and OFSTED when required.

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anybody working on behalf of Club Doncaster. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may result in dismissal/exclusion from all areas of the organisation.

Through the dissemination of the policy at induction and annual communication, all persons associated with Club Doncaster will be provided with information and expectations on how to work safely with children and young people.

This policy should be read alongside our policies and procedures on:

Recruitment Policy

Procedure for reporting poor practice, concerns/allegations or disclosures of abuse

Code of conduct (Ethics)

Equal Opportunities Policy (Equity)

Academy Anti-bullying policy

Confidentiality Statement

Whistle-blowing Policy

Complaints Procedure and Appeals Process

Information Sharing Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Late collection of Children Policy

Policy for Trips, Tours and Tournaments

Parental Consent Form

Photography/Images Policy

Social Media Policy

Accommodation Providers Guidance

Transport Policy  
Management of Allegations against staff  
Prevent Duty Guidelines/Policy  
NCS FAROS Guidance (Reviewed every Summer)

### 3. Key Principles

#### **The child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration**

All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by the Designated Safeguarding Officer and responded to swiftly and appropriately. Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents and carers is essential. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will take the lead on liaising with Statutory Authorities and will gate keep all information in relation to any allegations or concerns voiced within Club Doncaster.

Club Doncaster is committed to working in partnership with the Police, Social Care Departments, and Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB) in accordance with their procedures. This is essential to enable these organisations to carry out their statutory duties to investigate concerns and protect all children and young people.

Club Doncaster holds with the principle that there are some roles within sport where adults have responsibility for, authority and influence over young people and therefore have an ethical obligation to safeguard and protect young people from exploitation. In the spirit of this legislation whilst legally young people aged 16 and 17 have reached the age of consent for sexual activity, any inappropriate sexual relations with young people aged 16 or 17 will be considered a breach of a 'Position of Trust' within Club Doncaster and will be referred to the appropriate regulatory authorities and statutory agencies.

### 4. Definitions of abuse

#### Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Children)

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

The terms and definitions of abuse below are based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2015)'.

Children	Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection.
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Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	Defined for the purposes of this guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.
Child at risk of harm	Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. A Section 47 enquiry refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
Child In Need	A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, in relation to their special educational needs, disabilities, as a carer, or because they have committed a crime. Where an assessment takes place, it will be carried out by a social worker.
Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
Physical abuse	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. In the sports environment, physical abuse might also occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child's or young person's immature and growing body (e.g. Overtraining) and also when parents or coaches encourage children/young people to take performance enhancing drugs or alcohol.
Emotional abuse	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone. In a sports environment, emotional abuse might include situations where parents or coaches subject children or young people to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations or to obtain standards they're clearly not able to reach. It may also include situations where children and young people are overprotected preventing them from socialising.

Sexual abuse	<p>Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.</p> <p>In a sports environment, sexual abuse might occur when inappropriate physical contact takes place e.g. Through inappropriate supporting, treatment or touching of children or young people. It is apparent that abuse is carried out by both males and females and other young people also sexually abuse.</p>
Neglect	<p>The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);</li> <li>protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;</li> <li>ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or</li> <li>Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.</li> </ul> <p>It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs. In a sports environment neglect may occur if children/young people are consistently left alone and unsupervised. It may also occur if a teacher, coach or manager fails to ensure children are safe, or exposes them to undue extremes of weather or risk of injury e.g. Through unsafe equipment.</p>
Young carers	<p>Are children and young people who assume important caring responsibilities for parents or siblings, who are disabled, have physical or mental ill health problems, or misuse drugs or alcohol.</p>

## 5. Promoting Clear Systems

Club Doncaster is committed to working together to ensure that robust and consistent safeguarding systems exist through a collaborative approach to safe recruitment, accessible education programmes and a coordinated approach to the sharing of information.

Club Doncaster requires that each strand of the organisations have a Safeguarding Officer (SO) responsible for Safeguarding:

Board Member Responsible for Safeguarding	Gavin Baldwin
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Marie Hepburn
Club Doncaster (Whole)	Kirsty Cavanagh
Doncaster Rovers FC	Mary Lally
Doncaster Rovers Academy	Kieran Scarff / Tony Morton
Club Doncaster Foundation	John Davis

Club Doncaster Sports College	Joe Burton
Impact Doncaster	Jan Budtz
Stadium Match Day	San Ramsden
Club Doncaster Academy	Ben Mawson

The persons listed above are the initial departmental contacts for persons that are concerned about any areas of practice or have some information in relation to the safeguarding of a child or young person that they wish to pass on.

The Safeguarding Officers are supervised by the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will receive information and ensure that this is dealt with in line with this and statutory procedure.

All persons listed above are available across the organisation to be able to receive and pass information onto the Designated Safeguarding Officer if required. If appropriate the Designated Safeguarding Officer can be contacted directly with any information, and this will be dealt with in the same way as the listed procedure.

Club Doncaster also supports any concerns been communicated into its affiliated governing bodies via the NSPCC FA Helpline 0808 800 500, the FA Case Management Team 0800 1691863, The Rugby Football League Safeguarding line 01132375046, or Doncaster Local Safeguarding Board on 01302 737777.

The Safeguarding Steering group meet on a six / eight weekly basis to ensure that they are all up to date with appropriate legislative changes, and to share information and incidents for the purpose of review and any further appropriate action. The steering group will also make decisions in relation to risk assessments required from DBS returned with content for roles at Club Doncaster.

The Club also has a safeguarding section on Rugby, Football and Foundation websites that is able to be accessed by all persons outside of the organisation requiring support and understanding of the Club Doncaster procedures.

All associated partners who are involved with Club Doncaster will be aware within respective agreements that they are expected to abide to best practice and agree to the legislative principles of safeguarding children and young people.

It is essential that everyone involved in Club Doncaster recognises that **taking no action when there is a concern regarding the welfare of a child is not an option.**

## 6. DBS and Safer Recruitment

Club Doncaster will work with the legislation provided by the Government, Football Association and Football League to identify roles that are carried out by persons that may meet the “regulated activity” guidance provided. Club Doncaster will ensure that enhanced DBS checks are carried out for relevant persons working within roles at a minimum frequency of three years.

For all roles it is a requirement of all agreement and employment contracts that persons declare any relevant convictions on an annual basis on the self declaration form issued and collated by the Human Resources department, this will ensure that accurate and up to date risk assessments are in place in line with both Safer Working Practices and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

## 7. Responding to Concerns, Allegations and Disclosures

There is a legal and moral responsibility to report any concerns about a child or young person in any context via the Safeguarding Officers and Designated Safeguarding Officer. Club Doncaster will support anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child or young person, even if that concern is proved to be unfounded.

Within section four of this document is some information that may assist you in making a decision of any concerns that you may have in relation to children or young people. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list and any concern that does not feel right should be referred to the Safeguarding Officers for consideration.

**Concerns may arise because:**

- A child or young person informs you directly that he or she is concerned about someone's behaviour towards them
- You become aware, through your own observations or through a third party, of possible abuse occurring.
- Most suspicions of abuse come about from observation of changes in the child or young person's behaviour, appearance, attitude or relationship with others
- Your suspicions may develop over time

**7.1 What to do if a child or young person discloses to you**

If a child or young person informs you directly that they are concerned about someone's behaviour towards them, this is known as a disclosure. A disclosure may be given slowly over time or all at once and it may seem incomplete, unclear and may sometimes be retracted. Children don't often tell in one simple 'disclosure'.

The person receiving the disclosure should:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child or young person
- Ensure the immediate safety of the child or young person
- Tell the child or young person that he or she is not to blame and that he or she was right to tell
- Take what the child or young person says seriously
- If the child or young person needs immediate medical treatment, take them to hospital or telephone for an ambulance, inform doctors of concerns and ensure that they are aware that this is a child protection issue as it is their responsibility to refer this on appropriately to the Police or Children's Services
- When speaking with the child or young person keep any questions to the absolute minimum.
- Ask only what is necessary to ensure a clear understanding of what has been said
- Do not make promises of confidentiality or outcome, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
- In the event of suspicion of sexual abuse try to avoid the child bathing or showering until given permission to do so. Washing can destroy valuable evidence
- Take a detailed written record of what the child said to you
- As soon as the child or young person completes the disclosure make sure you accurately record what they said using their language and of any actions you may have taken as a result using the template in Appendix 1

- Seek advice from the Safeguarding Officer / Designated Safeguarding Officer on the appropriateness of informing the parents/carers.

## 7.2 Reporting a Concern Allegation or Disclosure – Flow Charts

You become aware of an example of poor practice, and / or possible abuse situation

If the child or young person is in need of medical attention, phone for an ambulance. Inform Doctors of concerns and ensure they are aware it is a Safeguarding concern.

If the child is in immediate danger from harm, call 999 and request the police

Inform a Safeguarding Officer (SO) immediately.

The SO will report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will advise the required action to be taken

The DSO will report the concern to statutory bodies as required i.e. Social Services, Police, and LADO etc.

If the concern is in a football setting, the DSO will report the concern to the Football Association Safeguarding Team. In the case of any NCS participant FAROS would also be informed.

The DSO will contact Senior Members of Club Doncaster, along with the Safeguarding Strategic Lead to make them aware, whilst observing any required information sharing protocol.