



Hartlepool United FC

**Safeguarding Policy
2021/2022**

Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults at Risk Policy Statement

Hartlepool United Football Club is committed to safeguarding, as far as reasonably practicable, the welfare of children, young people, its workforce and vulnerable groups.

The Club expects all staff, players and volunteers to share this commitment and believes that all staff, players and volunteers have a responsibility to report any concerns to the Club should they be concerned about the welfare of any child, young person or vulnerable adult.

The Club is committed to ensuring that: -

- The safety and welfare of vulnerable groups, and the HUFC workforce under the care of the club is paramount; -
- All vulnerable groups, workforce and volunteers that engage with the club, regardless of age, culture, social background, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to safety and protection from abuse or harm; -
- All suspicions, reports and/or allegations of abuse will be taken seriously & investigated thoroughly which may involve the appropriate local authority teams where necessary; -
Appropriate action is taken if/when necessary following any investigation of reported poor practice;

The club commits to working towards implementing, maintaining, and embedding best practice within every aspect of the club.

This Safeguarding policy will also be continually monitored and subject to review annually or following any incident or near miss of a Safeguarding nature.

Signed on behalf of Hartlepool United Football Club

Date:

Definitions:

Child/Young Person

Defined by the Law as a person aged under 18 years of age.

Vulnerable Adult

Vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over who may need community care services because of a disability (mental or other), age, or illness. A person is also considered vulnerable if they are unable to look after themselves, protect themselves from harm or exploitation or are unable to report abuse.

Adult(s) at Risk

An adult (person aged 18 or over) who is receiving one of the following services: health care; relevant personal care; social care work; assistance in relation to general household matters by reason of age, illness or disability.

Vulnerable Group(s)

The collective term used when talking about or referring to Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults as a whole.

Safeguarding

Preventative and reactional measures taken by the Club to ensure; the risk of harm or mistreatment of vulnerable groups is minimised; the health or wellbeing of vulnerable groups is not impaired whilst engaging in Club related activities; an environment exists that supports the best possible outcomes or life chances for vulnerable groups.

The Club

Refers to Hartlepool United Football Club, Victoria Park, Clarence Road, Hartlepool, TS24 8BZ, its workforce and all activities undertaken by the organisations or at these premises.

The FA

Refers to the Football Association, the National Governing Body for Football in England.

The English Football League

Refers to the organisation responsible for governance and administration of English Football League 2, of which Hartlepool United FC are current members.

First Team

The players and management team attached to the 1st team.

Staff

Refers to persons employed by and receiving payment for services from the Club or Community Trust. This is irrespective of the length or nature of their contract.

Volunteers

Persons who freely offer their skills and expertise or take part in a task, event or enterprise with the club at their own expense in terms of time, travel and resources.

Local Authority

Refers collectively or individually when named to the district, borough, city and county councils that are responsible for governance of Hartlepool in which the Club operates.

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Safeguarding Team

The collective group of staff within the Club that have a professional responsibility for the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups. Specifically, this is made up of the Board, Designated Safeguarding Officers and Staff.

Safeguarding Children Policy

Safeguarding - Mission Statement

Hartlepool United Football Club, acknowledges and accepts a responsibility for the well-being and safety of all vulnerable groups, and its workforce, who come under their care whilst engaging with the club or utilising their facilities.

The Club are committed to delivering a Safeguarding programme that ensures the wellbeing of vulnerable groups and volunteers is always maintained through effective training, promotion and embedding of best practice amongst staff, volunteers and partner organisations. The wellbeing of children and young people is paramount for all staff and accordingly, they must make themselves aware of the Club's Safeguarding Children Policy.

Where appropriate, the following guidelines will be supplemented by in-service training and additional guidance or policies.

Rules, Regulations and Guidance

The Club is governed by the rules and regulations set out by several key governing agencies including the Government, Football Association, Football League and the NSPCC Child protection in Sport Unit, amongst others. The content of this policy is underpinned by legislative and statutory documents and policies as presented by these key governing agencies.

The Club is fully committed to ensuring that the best practice recommended by the legislations, policies and guidelines listed below is implemented, maintained and embedded within the day to day working practice of all staff at all times.

Key documents underpinning this policy include:

- 'The Children Act' (2015) - HM Government <https://www.gov.uk/en/publication/e2bd0a-children-and-family-relationships-act2015/>
- 'Every Child Matters – Change for Children' (2003) - HM Government <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/every-child-matters>
- 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act' (2006) - HM Government <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>
- 'Local safeguarding boards' - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/localsafeguarding-children-boards>
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2015) - HM Government <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguardchildren--2>
- 'Keeping Children safe in Education' (2020) - HM Government <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- 'Human Rights Act' (1998) – HM Government <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>
- 'No Secrets' (2000) – Department of Health <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-secrets-guidance-on-protectingvulnerable-adults-in-care>
- 'Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport' (2005) - NSPCC CPSU <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2013/standards-for-safeguarding-andprotecting-children-in-sport/>
- 'Football League Rules; Section S' (2014/15 season) – The English Football League <http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance>

- ‘Guide for Safer Working Practice’ (April 2015) - The English Football League
<http://www.safetyatsportsgrounds.org.uk/publications>
- ‘Working together to Safeguard Football - Policy & Procedures’ (2014) - The Football Association
<http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/policy-downloads>
- ‘Sexual offences Act 2003’ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents>

Aims and Key Principles

Hartlepool United is committed to sport and physical activity being inclusive and providing a safe and positive experience for everyone involved in the Club. Hartlepool United will ensure they are proactive with preventative work, including training and recruitment and policies are in place to safeguard.

The Aim for Hartlepool United’s Children’s Safeguarding Policy:

- To promote a safe and welcoming environment for all vulnerable groups who interact with the Football Club’s activities
- To demonstrate and promote a culture where safeguarding practice is widely understood, openly discussed and where the workforce recognises the role they play in keeping vulnerable groups, themselves and their colleagues safe from harm.
- To promote high ethical standards through the whole of the Football Club.
- Address the additional vulnerabilities of some participants and the extra barriers they may face i.e. mental health issues, disabilities, those in care, looked after children etc....
- To work in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents/carers is essential.

Key Principles:

- The safety and welfare of vulnerable groups is paramount; -
- All vulnerable groups, workforce and volunteers that engage with the club, regardless of age, culture, social background, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to safety and protection from abuse or harm; -
- All suspicions, reports and/or allegations of abuse will be taken seriously & investigated thoroughly which may involve the appropriate local authority teams where necessary; - Appropriate action is taken if/when necessary following any investigation of reported poor practice;
- All of the workforce of Hartlepool United who are in contact with vulnerable groups provide good role models of behaviour. They all have the responsibility for the welfare of vulnerable groups and are bound by this policy and must act in accordance with the law in relation to such matters.

Objectives

The Club Safeguarding Children Policy objectives are to ensure that:

- All staff/volunteers will be alert to signs of behavioural change/abuse.
- If a concern arises over the welfare of a child, HUFC staff/volunteers will adhere to the HUFC Safeguarding Policy
- All staff/volunteers will be aware of HUFC’s procedures for handling suspected cases of abuse of children, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused

- The Designated Safety Officers (DSO's) will have the responsibility for co-ordinating Safeguarding Children procedures within HUFC and liaising with the FA, children's services, the police, the EFL and other external agencies as required.
- Parents will be made aware of the Clubs Safeguarding Children Policy and the fact that this may require cases to be referred to external statutory agencies or the FA as appropriate.

Who we are responsible for

Below is a list of examples across the Club where we need to consider the welfare of people with our care:

- Under 18 players who are part of the senior squad.
- Players involved in the Academy or Associated Programs.
- Children visiting the Club for matches, tours etc...
- Ball Boys, Mascots, Flag Bearers
- Children and Adults at risk taking part in community activities.
- Disabled Supporters and other adults at risk who are visiting the club.
- Every Child, young person or adult at risk that comes into contact with the club and club facilities.

Safer Recruitment

We endorse and adopt The FA's Safer Recruitment guidelines and we will:

- Specify what the role is and what tasks it involves;
- Request identification documents;
- As a minimum meet and chat with the applicant(s) and where possible interview people before appointing them;
- Ask for and follow up with 2 references before appointing someone; and
- Where eligible require an FA- accepted DBS enhanced with barred list Check, in line with The FA's current Safeguarding Children Policy and Regulations.

All current Hartlepool United members working in eligible roles with children and young people, such as coaches/managers and physiotherapists, are required to hold an in-date FA accepted DBS enhanced with barred list check as part of safer recruitment practice.

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

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

Whistle Blowing

Hartlepool United supports The FA's Whistle Blowing policy (as described in this paragraph) which requires any adult or young person with concerns about an adult in a position of trust within football

can 'whistle blow' by contacting The FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 169 1863 or by writing to The FA Case Manager at The Football Association, Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London SW1P 9EQ, or by emailing Safeguarding@TheFA.com. Alternatively, by going direct to the Police, Children's Social Care or the NSPCC. The Club encourages everyone to know about The FA's Whistle Blowing Policy and to utilise it if necessary.

Guidelines

The designated contact for all safeguarding children issues are the 'Club Designated Safety Officer' on 01429 272584 who will ensure that the incident is dealt with in a discreet manner, confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed if the seriousness of the incident requires disclosure to the police or children's services.

Throughout the enquiries the DSO will:

- Ensure that HUFC procedures are followed.
- Ensure that all staff/volunteers are aware of these procedures.
- Ensure appropriate support is provided to all staff.
- Keep the Senior Manager fully informed as appropriate.
- Develop effective working relationships with the FA, social services, and police.
- Make a decision as to where any allegations should be directed.
- Liaise with the social services or any other involved agency during any investigation.
- Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure/locked place and marked 'strictly confidential'.
- Provide guidance to parents, children, and staff about obtaining suitable support.

Contacts:

- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – 01429 284284 or out of office - 01642 524552.
- The First Contact and Support Hub – 01429 284284 – www.teescpp.org.uk
- Preventing extremism in schools and children's services:
 - counter.extremism@education.gov.uk - 020 7340 7264
- Child Protection in Sport Unit: 0116 2347278/7280 - www.thecpsu.org.uk
- FGM helpline 0800 028 3550 - fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk
- CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection): <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>
- EFL - www.efl.com/-more/governance/safeguarding PFA www.thepfa.co.uk
- LMA - www.leaguemanagers.com
- FA - www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding
- County FA - www.TheFA.com/about-football-association/who-are-we/county-fas
- Sporting Chance - www.sportingchanceclinic.com

Policies

Please see attached Hartlepool United Safeguarding Policies: -

- Low Level Concern Policy
- Equality Policy
- Recruitment of Staff Policy
- Complaints Process Policy
- Complaints & Disciplinary Policy
- Health & Safety for Training Games Policy

- Anti- Bullying Policy
- Best Practice – Photographs Policy
- Text Advice Policy
- Lost Child Policy
- Matchday Ball Person Policy
- Matchday Mascot Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Prevent Policy
- Allegations of Abuse against Staff Policy
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

Code of Conduct – Staff & Volunteers
Staff Procedure for Reporting Safeguarding Concerns
Recording Safeguarding Incident Form