



## **ATFC Academy Safeguarding Policy**

### **Message from the Board:**

Aldershot Town F.C Academy Football Club is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and Adults at Risk. The Club expects all staff, players, volunteers, contractors and guests to share this commitment.

The Club believe that all staff, players, volunteers, contractors and guests have a responsibility to report any concerns to the Club should they be concerned about the welfare of any child or Adult at Risk.

**Aims of this policy:**

- To safeguard all Children and young people who interact with the Academy.
- To demonstrate best practice in the area of safeguarding Children.
- To provide guidance for parents to understand reporting procedures.
- To encourage a partnership between the club and parents/carers of children associated with the club.
- To ensure that coaches, parents and other adults who come in contact with children and young people provide good role models of behaviour.
- To promote high ethical standards throughout the Club

Child abuse involves acts of commission and omission, which results in harm to the child. The main types of abuse are:

- 1) Physical abuse
- 2) Sexual abuse
- 3) Emotional abuse
- 4) Neglect
- 5) Bullying

Should you have any concerns that a child or vulnerable adult may be the victim of any form of abuse you must ensure that the club Safeguarding manager is notified at the earliest opportunity.

The Safeguarding manager is Bob Green [bob.green@theshots.co.uk](mailto:bob.green@theshots.co.uk)

If the matter is of a sexual nature or urgent and SM is unavailable please contact the local police.

A flow chart is attached to show what actions are required should abuse be suspected.

### **Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO)**

The DSO's support the Club Safeguarding Manager to pro-actively promote and raise safeguarding awareness and assist with responding appropriately to safeguarding concerns and allegations. DSO's are based in strategic positions across the club.

The Club will provide ensure that suitable policies and practices are in place to ensure that staff are appropriate and adequately trained to prevent or deal with safeguarding issues.

The DSO are;

Club;

Bob Green - Club Safeguarding Manager - [bob.green@theshots.co.uk](mailto:bob.green@theshots.co.uk)

Academy;

Ross Mcneilly - Academy Safeguarding Officer - [academy@theshots.co.uk](mailto:academy@theshots.co.uk)

## **Safeguarding training**

A safeguarding induction will be provided to all new staff. If this is not offered to you please make contact with Bob Green (contact details shown above). Key elements of the Club safeguarding policy are discussed in more detail and specifically to the individuals' role.

All staff working in direct contact with Children are required to complete the FA's 3 hour Safeguarding Children Awareness workshop and undertake a refresher course, at least once every 3 years. Details of those satisfactorily completing this course are retained by the club.

## **Recruitment and disclosure**

All staff will undertake a specific safeguarding and safer working practices induction upon employment at the club. A briefing document and guidance for safer working practices will be provided. There is an expectation that staff will read the guidance and sign a declaration of agreement and understanding. Key elements of the Club's Safeguarding Children Policy are discussed in more detail if the role requires it.

All staff working in direct contact with Children are required to complete the FA 3 hour Safeguarding Children Awareness workshop and undertake a refresher course every 3 years. Details of this will be retained by the Safeguarding manager.

All staff or volunteers in a position of trust, and in roles that require contact with adults at risk, young people and children will undergo enhanced DBS or CRC disclosure, which is an on-going procedure throughout the association with the club.

## **Activities for Disabled Persons:**

All activities carried out for disabled persons are carried out under the guidelines of the Equality Act 2010. It is now known that children and young people with disabilities are at an increased risk of abuse.

## **Contractors**

All external contractors engaged by ATFC undergo a suitability test prior to commencing work. This will include evidencing the contractor's Safety Record, Safety Policy, Liability Insurance, Risk assessment and details of Competent Person. On arrival at the club the contractor will receive a site induction from a member of the Facilities team which covers safeguarding children and give details of the club's expected code of behaviour. Contractors are subject to regular inspection from club staff. In the event of a Contractor carrying out work on an area that is usually occupied by children this work, where possible, will be undertaken when children are not present. If a contractor undertakes work where a child or children are present, and they have not had appropriate DBS, they will not be left unsupervised with any children, young person or vulnerable adult.

## **Service Level Agreements**

The club 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.

## **Definitions of Poor Practice and Abuse**

**Poor Practice** is unacceptable and will be treated seriously with appropriate action. Any behaviour that contravenes existing Codes of Conduct, infringes an individual's rights and/or reflects a failure to fulfil the highest standards of care is an indication of Poor Practice. A child or young person may not be aware that poor practice or abusive is taking place, as they may deem the behaviour as acceptable.

**What is abuse?** - Abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. It commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and represents an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a child or a vulnerable adult regardless of their age, gender, race, ability, culture or sexual orientation.

### **Signs of abuse**

There are four main forms of abuse identified as follows, should you have any concern that abuse is occurring you should contact the Safeguarding Manager or nominated Safeguarding Officer for the relevant department for advice.

#### **Physical Abuse:**

Physical abuse 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.

Physical abuse can be caused through an act or omission.

#### **Sexual Abuse:**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to engage in sexual activity, regardless of 'implied consent.' This includes penetrative (penetration of vagina, anus & mouth) and non-penetrative acts (touching – over or under clothing, any part of the body in a sexual way).

Sexual abuse includes involving children in the watching of sexual acts, and encouraging children to engage in over-sexualised behaviour, and also grooming offences which can also be committed via the internet.

Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by anyone, including a parent or guardian, caregiver, extended family, friend, neighbour, stranger or a person in a position of trust (includes 16/17 year olds).

#### **Neglect:**

Neglect is 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. This includes failing to provide adequate nutrition, clothing, shelter, health care and protection from harm. Emotional neglect is the failure to meet the child's ongoing emotional needs for affection and a sense of belonging.

#### **Emotional Abuse:**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development, including verbal attacks on a child's sense of self, repeated humiliation or rejection. Exposure to violence, drugs, alcohol abuse or severe conflict in the home, forced isolation, restraint or causing a child to be afraid much of the time may also cause emotional harm. Emotional abuse rarely happens only once and it is usually part of a pattern of how the child is being treated over a significant period of time.

#### **Bullying/ Cyberbullying (strand of emotional abuse):**

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical, verbal and emotional, both face to face and via social media and other online forums. The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, cause them significant harm (including self-harm and suicide). All settings in which

children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies.

The Club have a specific anti-bullying policy in place to address concerns of bullying. This includes recording and reporting all incidents of bullying.

This is when a person uses technology i.e. mobile phones or the internet (social networking sites, chat rooms, instant messenger, tweets), to deliberately upset someone. Bullies often feel anonymous from the incident when it takes place online and 'bystanders' can easily become bullies themselves by forwarding the information on.

### **Domestic Abuse:**

Domestic Abuse is a significant indicator of risk of harm to children, whom may suffer directly or indirectly if they live in households where there is domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is likely to have a damaging effect on the health and development of children.

### **Signs and Symptoms**

The list below is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that abuse is taking place though they are indicators that abuse may have taken place:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- Disclosure of what appears to be an abusive act.
- Disclosure of unsatisfactory home circumstances i.e. Domestic abuse, drugs and alcohol misuse, mental health concerns of a parent or other person within the home.
- Someone expresses concern about the welfare of the child.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming quiet, withdrawn or sudden outbursts).
- Over sexualised behaviour
- Displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Weight loss for no apparent reason.
- Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.
- Evasive parents/carers

**Remember that: It is not the responsibility of staff (permanent or casual) or volunteers to decide if abuse has taken place, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns, in accordance with this procedure**

### **Responding to Allegations or Suspicions**

All staff, volunteers and players have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of children and to take appropriate steps to ensure that suspicions and allegations of abuse are taken seriously and responded to quickly and appropriately. It is not the responsibility of anyone within the club to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. You MUST however, listen to the child and reassure them. Inform the Safeguarding manager or DSO at the earliest opportunity.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff the one of the following may occur:

- A criminal investigation led by the Police
- A child protection investigation led in a multi-agency approach by the Local Authority
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation led by the club, which may also involve The Football Association or premier League.
- The club will delay an internal disciplinary or misconduct investigation while a criminal or local authority investigation takes place.

If a member of staff suspects abuse is taking place, or a report/allegation of abuse has been disclosed to them, where possible the Safeguarding Manager or a Safeguarding Officer should be contacted as early as possible. However, it is recognised that an individual may need to respond

to a situation immediately and prior to such contact if the nature of the suspicion or report is putting the child concerned in immediate danger.

If the concern or allegation relates to the Safeguarding Manager or any senior member of staff, contact directly the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Hampshire: Phone - 01962 876364 or email - [child.protection@hants.gov.uk](mailto:child.protection@hants.gov.uk)

**Staff should:**

- Listen carefully rather than question the child directly.
- Stay calm and not offer their personal opinions/thoughts.
- Be aware that medical or criminal evidence may be relevant.
- Tell the child that you are listening and taking what they say extremely seriously.
- Seek medical attention if necessary
- Take further action – they may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse.
- Inform the Safeguarding Officer and/or the Safeguarding Manager of the information or another senior member of staff if these are not available
- Write down **everything** said (in their words as far as possible) and what was done – accuracy and detail is important. Keep this information stored in a secure place. Concerns can be recorded of the Safeguarding reporting form (template shown below)

## Safeguarding reporting form

Please complete within 24 hours and send direct to the Safeguarding Manager  
[academy@theshots.co.uk](mailto:academy@theshots.co.uk)

Date of concern:	
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### Details of the person who is raising the concern

Name:	
Role:	
Venue:	
Telephone Number:	
Email:	

### Details of the person you are raising a concern about

Name:	
Role:	
D.O.B:	
Home Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Email:	

### Details of the parents/carers (if applicable)

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Email:	

### Nature of the concern

Circumstances (Include ALL of the information known to you:	
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<p><b>Details of any disclosures (Include ALL of the information known to you, including any verbatim comments):</b></p>	
<p><b>Injuries Seen:</b></p>	
<p><b>Witnesses (include full details, including name, role and contact details):</b></p>	

**Confidentiality**

**If the allegation is against a member of staff or volunteer, that person should not be informed of the concern until advice has been sought from the Safeguarding Manager.**

<p><b>Have the parents/ carers been informed of the concern?</b></p>	
<p><b>If not, please state why (If you feel sharing the information with the parent/carer will place the child at risk, you should not share this information. Advise should be sought from the Safeguarding Manager and reasons fully documented. Adults at risk need to be informed of the concern):</b></p>	
<p><b>When were the parents/carers informed of the concern:</b></p>	
<p><b>Have the parents/ carers or adult at risk given consent to share information?</b></p>	
<p><b>If not, why?</b></p>	

**Details of the person alleged to have caused harm (if applicable)**

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Role:</b>	
<b>D.O.B:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Do they work/volunteer anywhere else?</b>	
<b>If yes, please detail:</b>	

**Actions**

<b>What has been done about the concern?</b>	
<b>Who has been informed about the concern?</b>	
<b>When were they notified?</b>	
<b>What was the name of the person you spoke to?</b>	
<b>What did they say?</b>	
<b>What other actions have been taken?</b>	

If your concern relates to a sexual assault that has taken place within the last 7 days, you must notify the Safeguarding Manager and the Police at the time you are advised.

If your concern relates to immediate welfare of a child or adult at risk call the police on 999.

The Safeguarding Manager should then be notified.

Safeguarding Team  
Club Safeguarding Senior Manager Bob Green  
[bob.green@theshots.co.uk](mailto:bob.green@theshots.co.uk)

**Report to their Manager in addition to the Safeguarding Officer/Manager as soon as possible.**

Staff should not:

Offer to keep any information disclosed confidential. Say there may be occasions where you have to pass the information to the Police or other adult

Make promises they cannot keep

Interrogate the child – it is not their job to carry out an investigation.

Cast doubt on what the child has told them – they shouldn't interrupt or change the subject Say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse

Staff should ensure the Safeguarding Manager or a Safeguarding Officer is informed as soon as possible. They will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice. The 'reporting safeguarding concern' form should be used to record information and pass to the SM.

### **Whistleblowing Policy**

Whistleblowing refers to making a protected disclosure under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

By encouraging a culture of openness ATFC wants to encourage staff to raise issues, which concern them at work. Staff have a right and duty to raise matters of concern they may have about the services being offered by ATFC or serious malpractice associated with them. Staff may be worried that by reporting such issues they will be opening themselves up to victimisation or detriment, or risking their job security. However, all staff are protected by law if they raise concerns in the right way. Provided they are acting in good faith, it does not matter if they are mistaken. This policy is designed to ensure workers raise concerns properly and to ensure that mechanisms exist in ASFC issues raised by staff will be addressed quickly and effectively.

Although this list is not exhaustive, examples of situations in which a disclosure might be made are:

The committing of a criminal offence.

Improper conduct or unethical behaviour

Attempts to conceal any of the above

### **Image Policy/ Social network guidance**

The Club takes its guidance on the use of images from guidelines issued by the FA and Football League.

All images are taken by Club officials who have been briefed by the member of staff (and where possible a Club Safeguarding Officer) responsible for the activity being photographed / filmed.

Before taking images of Children, parental consent is sought in writing at the start of each football season or prior to the event. Parents/Legal Guardians are responsible for informing the Club of any change of circumstances within the season which may affect consent. Parents/Legal Guardians will be informed of how the image will be used. The Club will not allow an image to be used for something other than that for which it was initially agreed.

All Children featured in Club publications will be appropriately dressed. Where possible, the image will focus on the activity taking place and not a specific Child. Where appropriate, images represent the broad range of people participating safely in the event. Designated Club photographers will, where applicable, undertake a CRC and attend a Safeguarding Children

workshop and in any case will be personally responsible for keeping up to date with the latest guidelines on the Use of Images policies issued by the Club and by the Premier League from time to time. Club Identification will be worn at all times.

Children who are subject to family, care or legal proceedings, or who are under a court order will not have their images published in any Club document. No images of Children featured in Club publications will be accompanied by personal details such as their school or home address. Recordings of Children for the purposes of legitimate coaching aids are only filmed by Club officials and are stored safely and securely at the Club's premises. Any instances of inappropriate images in football should be reported to the Club's Publications Editor or Safeguarding Manager immediately. The Club does not put young player profiles with images and personal information on its website.

ATFC recognises the importance of social media and social networking services. However, ATFC are also aware of the potential safeguarding risks in this area. Staff should not add or invite children or young people they have responsibility for to become "friends" or contacts.

There is a separate policy for the use of social media.

### **Concerns around radicalisation and extremism**

The Counter terrorism and Security act places a duty on specified authorities, including sport in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the prevent duty). There is also a duty on local authorities to ensure there is a Channel Panel in place. This must include the local authority and senior police officers. The panel will assess to what extent identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The Act requires partners of the Channel Panel to cooperate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and the police in undertaking the initial assessment as to whether a referral is appropriate. There will be training rolled out in this area so that staff across the Trust and Academy are aware of signs to be aware of and referral pathways. Liaise with Safeguarding manager if there are any concerns about this.

### **Match day**

Unaccompanied Children In accordance with the Club's ticketing terms & conditions, the minimum age that a Child is permitted to attend a match at The Wham Stadium is 13 years old. Any person under 13 years must be accompanied by an adult 18 years or over.

### **Ball Persons**

The Club will only allow Children to be ball persons once parental consent has been obtained. A signed image consent form is also required before any images are published in the Club's match day programme. No photographs of ball persons featured in Club publications will be accompanied by personal information about the Child, such as their school, home address or local sports team. Whilst at the EBB Stadium, mascots and ball persons are accompanied at all times by a designated safeguarding officer, and in their absence, a member of staff with a satisfactory enhanced DBS.

### **Monitoring**

The policy will be reviewed yearly, or in the following circumstances:

Following a recommendation within a serious case review and/or from the LSCB or any other regulatory body.

Amendments to existing legislation, introduction of new legislation and/or government guidance.

As a result of any other significant change or event.

Key contacts and useful numbers/websites Club Safeguarding Manager:

Bob Green - [bob.green@theshots.co.uk](mailto:bob.green@theshots.co.uk)

Ross Mcneilly - [academy@theshots.co.uk](mailto:academy@theshots.co.uk)

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

The English Football league Ann Hussy  
Child Protection Advisor [ahussy@efl.com](mailto:ahussy@efl.com)

For emergencies dial 999

For non-emergencies dial 101

The FA Report Discrimination free phone number and email address ... 0800 058 0508 to report allegations of discrimination such as sexist, racist and homophobic abuse as well as abuse in relation to disability. This number is dealt with by FA staff in London although allegations can be passed back to a County FA or other organisation to deal with. There is also an email address: [reportdiscrimination@TheFA.com](mailto:reportdiscrimination@TheFA.com) which can be used as an alternative to the phone number.