



AFC Oakley – Safeguarding Children Policy (2024)

1. AFC Oakley acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care and is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all members. A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18.
2. The key principles of The FA Safeguarding Children Policy are that:
 - 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 and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
 - Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents/carers is essential.
 - We acknowledge that every child or young person who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse. AFC Oakley recognises that this is the responsibility of every adult involved in our club.
3. AFC Oakley has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. It is noted and accepted that The Football Associations Child Protection Regulation applies to everyone in football whether in a paid or voluntary capacity. This means whether you are a volunteer, match official, helper on club tours, football coach, club official or medical staff.

4. We endorse and adopt The FA's Responsible Recruitment guidelines for recruiting volunteers and we will:

- Request identification documents
- As a minimum meet and chat with the applicant(s) and where possible conduct interviews before appointing.
- Require a FA DBS Enhanced Disclosure.
- Require the successful completion of the FA Safeguarding Children course.

All AFC Oakley members with direct access to children and young people will be required to complete a DBS Enhanced Disclosure. If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached us to become part of AFC Oakley, guidance will be sought from The Football Association. It is noted and accepted that The FA will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained via The FA DBS Unit Enhanced DBS Disclosure and that all decisions will be made 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.

5. AFC Oakley has appointed Welfare Officers in line with the FA's role profile and required completion of the Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officers Workshop. The post holder will be involved with Welfare Officer training provided by The FA and/or County FA. The Welfare Officers are the first point of contact for all committee members regarding concerns about the welfare of any child or young person. The Welfare Officers will liaise directly with the County Welfare Officer and will be familiar with the procedures for referring any concerns. They will also play a proactive role in increasing awareness of Respect, poor practice and abuse amongst their members and committee members.
6. We acknowledge and endorse The FA's identification of bullying as a category of abuse. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all players or parents/carers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. Incidents need to be reported to the club Welfare Officer or alternatively in cases of serious bullying we may contact the County Welfare Officer. The club has a separate bullying policy.

7. Codes of conduct for Players, Parents/Spectators, Officials and Coaches have been implemented by AFC Oakley. In order to validate these codes of conduct the club has clear actions it will take regarding repeated or serious misconduct at club level and acknowledges the possibility of potential sanctions which may be implemented by the County FA in more serious circumstances.
8. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, if you are worried about a child, it is important that you report your concerns – no action is not an option.
- i. If you are worried about a child then you need to report your concerns to the Club Welfare Officers.
 - ii. If the issue is one of poor practice they will either:
 - deal with the matter themselves or
 - seek advice from the County FA Welfare Officer: Asfia Naureen T: 01582 567721
 - iii. If the concern is more serious – possible child abuse they will where possible contact the County FA Welfare Officer first, then immediately contact the Police or Children's Services
 - iv. If the child needs immediate medical treatment, take them to a hospital or call an ambulance and tell them this is a child protection concern.
- Let your County FA Welfare Officer know what action you have taken.
- v. If at any time you are not able to contact your Club Welfare Officer or the matter is serious then you can either:
 - contact your County FA Welfare Officer directly or
 - call The FA/NSPCC 24 hour Helpline for advice on 0808 800 5000 or text 88858 or email help@nspcc.org.uk
 - contact the Police or Children's Services.
 - Contact The FA's Safeguarding Team on 0800 169 1863 or safeguarding@thefa.com
9. If you have any concerns with regards the safeguarding of your son or daughter and you wish independent council, please do not hesitate to contact the Club Welfare Officer.

Name: Abi Fowkes

email: abigailfowkes@gmail.com

Phone: 07974817297