

LANCING FOOTBALL CLUB

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

Club: Lancing Football Club

Address: Culver Road, Lancing, West Sussex, BN15 9AX

Welfare & Safeguarding Officer: Steven Carlberg

General Contact: LancingFcExec@outlook.com

Policy Owner: Lancing FC Committee

Adopted: [Insert Date]

Review Date: Annually, or sooner following any significant legal or regulatory change

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Lancing Football Club is committed to providing a safe, positive, inclusive and enjoyable football environment for everyone who participates in, works with, volunteers for or visits the Club.

The welfare of children, young people and adults at risk is paramount.

Lancing FC accepts its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and to take reasonable steps to protect them from abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, harassment and other forms of harm.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

This policy applies to all officers, committee members, coaches, managers, players, employees, contractors, volunteers, parents, carers, supporters and anyone acting on behalf of Lancing FC.

2. LEGAL AND GOVERNING FRAMEWORK

The Club will operate in accordance with applicable legislation and football safeguarding requirements, including:

- The Children Act 1989.
- The Children Act 2004.
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- The Data Protection Act 2018.
- UK GDPR as amended by applicable UK legislation.
- The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

- The Football Association's Safeguarding Children Regulations, policies and guidance.
- The FA's Adult Welfare and Safeguarding in Affiliated Football Policy and Procedures.
- Sussex County FA safeguarding requirements.

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

The Club also recognises its responsibility to safeguard adults who may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation because of their circumstances or support needs.

3. OUR COMMITMENT

Lancing FC will:

- Treat the welfare and safety of children and adults at risk as a priority.
- Provide an environment where people are treated with dignity and respect.
- Promote equality, inclusion and appropriate behaviour.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns are taken seriously.
- Respond promptly to allegations or disclosures.
- Work with The FA, Sussex County FA, local authorities, police and other agencies where required.
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding procedures are available to staff and volunteers.
- Take appropriate action where conduct falls below the standards expected by the Club or The FA.
- Promote a culture in which people feel able to speak up without fear of retaliation.

4. CLUB WELFARE & SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

The Club will appoint an appropriate Welfare & Safeguarding Officer.

The current officer is:

Steven Carlberg – Welfare & Safeguarding Officer

Safeguarding concerns can be raised with the Welfare & Safeguarding Officer or through:

LancingFcExec@outlook.com

The Welfare & Safeguarding Officer is responsible for helping the Club implement safeguarding procedures, maintaining appropriate records, providing guidance and escalating concerns where necessary.

The Welfare & Safeguarding Officer is not responsible for investigating allegations of abuse. Investigations must be undertaken by the appropriate football or statutory authority.

5. RECRUITMENT AND VETTING

Lancing FC will follow safer recruitment procedures for roles involving children or adults at risk.

Where a role is eligible for a Disclosure and Barring Service check, the Club will ensure the appropriate level of check is completed in accordance with FA requirements and UK law.

The Club may also require:

- Appropriate references.
- Identity verification.
- Relevant safeguarding qualifications.
- FA safeguarding training.
- Relevant coaching qualifications.
- Confirmation of previous football roles.
- Appropriate checks required by The FA.

No individual will be permitted to undertake duties for which appropriate safeguarding checks are required until the Club is satisfied that applicable requirements have been met.

6. EXPECTED STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

All adults working with children or adults at risk must maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

They must never:

- Physically, emotionally or sexually abuse another person.
- Engage in inappropriate sexualised behaviour or communication.
- Develop inappropriate relationships with players or young people.
- Use their position of trust improperly.
- Bully, intimidate, humiliate or discriminate against another person.
- Use threatening, degrading or abusive language.
- Share inappropriate content through social media, messaging applications or electronic communications.
- Encourage secrecy between an adult and a child.
- Ignore suspected abuse or safeguarding concerns.

Coaches and volunteers must follow relevant FA Codes of Conduct and Lancing FC codes and procedures.

7. ONLINE SAFEGUARDING AND COMMUNICATION

Electronic communication with children and young people must be appropriate, transparent and football-related.

Where reasonably possible:

- Parents or carers should be included in communications involving younger players.
- Club-approved communication methods should be used.
- Adults should avoid unnecessary private one-to-one messaging with children.
- Coaches and officials should maintain professional boundaries on social media.
- Inappropriate images, videos or messages must never be requested, shared or stored.

Any online behaviour that raises a safeguarding concern must be reported.

8. PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO AND MEDIA

Lancing FC may photograph or film football activities for legitimate club, promotional, journalistic or sporting purposes.

Additional care will be taken where children are involved.

The Club will follow relevant consent, safeguarding and data-protection procedures and will not knowingly publish material that places a child or vulnerable person at increased risk.

Images must never be taken in changing rooms, shower areas or other locations where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

9. CHANGING FACILITIES AND TRANSPORT

Children and young people must be appropriately supervised in accordance with FA guidance.

Adults must respect privacy when using shared changing facilities.

Where transport is organised by the Club, reasonable safeguarding arrangements must be put in place.

Club officials should avoid unnecessary one-to-one situations with children and should follow FA guidance relating to transport, changing rooms, overnight stays and football trips.

10. BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

Lancing FC has zero tolerance for bullying, harassment, discriminatory abuse, sexual harassment and threatening behaviour.

This includes conduct based upon a person's age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or other protected characteristics.

Bullying may occur face-to-face or online.

Reports will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action and/or referral to The FA, Sussex County FA or other appropriate authorities.

11. REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

Anyone who witnesses, suspects or receives information suggesting that a child or adult at risk may be at risk of harm should report the concern promptly.

Concerns should normally be reported to the Club Welfare & Safeguarding Officer.

When making a report:

- Listen carefully.
- Remain calm.
- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Do not conduct your own investigation.
- Do not ask leading questions.
- Record what was said as accurately as possible.
- Record the date, time and circumstances.
- Pass the information to the appropriate safeguarding person without unnecessary delay.

If a child or other person is in immediate danger, contact the emergency services on **999**.

Where appropriate, concerns may also be referred to Sussex County FA, The FA, West Sussex County Council children's services, adult safeguarding services or Sussex Police.

12. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST CLUB OFFICIALS, STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

Any allegation concerning an adult working or volunteering with children must be treated seriously.

The matter should be reported immediately to the Club Welfare & Safeguarding Officer unless the allegation concerns that individual.

Where the allegation concerns the Welfare & Safeguarding Officer, it should be reported to the Club Chairman or directly to Sussex County FA.

The Club will not undertake its own investigation where doing so could compromise a statutory or football investigation.

Where required, allegations will be referred to the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer, Sussex County FA, The FA or police.

The Club may suspend an individual from duties while enquiries take place. Suspension is a neutral safeguarding measure and does not by itself imply guilt.

13. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Safeguarding information will be handled sensitively and only shared with people who have a legitimate need to know.

However, data protection law must never be used as a reason to withhold information where sharing is necessary and proportionate to protect a child or adult from harm.

Safeguarding records will be securely maintained with access restricted to authorised individuals.

14. WHISTLEBLOWING

Anyone connected with Lancing FC who believes that:

- A safeguarding concern has been ignored.
- Inappropriate behaviour has been covered up.
- Club procedures have not been followed.
- An individual presents a risk to children or adults at risk.

should raise the matter with the Welfare & Safeguarding Officer, Chairman, Sussex County FA or The FA.

No person raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith should be subjected to retaliation or victimisation.

15. SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Relevant coaches, officials and volunteers will be required to undertake safeguarding education appropriate to their role and in accordance with FA requirements.

The Club will encourage continued safeguarding awareness and will communicate changes to procedures where necessary.

16. RECORD KEEPING

Safeguarding concerns, decisions, referrals and actions must be appropriately documented.

Records should:

- Be factual.
- Be dated.
- Identify the person making the record.
- Distinguish between fact, allegation and opinion.
- Be stored securely.
- Only be accessible to authorised individuals.

17. FAILURE TO COMPLY

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- Removal from Club duties.
- Suspension.
- Disciplinary action.
- Termination of volunteering or employment arrangements.
- Referral to Sussex County FA or The FA.
- Referral to statutory authorities where appropriate.

18. POLICY REVIEW

The Committee will review this policy at least annually and following:

- Significant legislative change.
- Updated FA safeguarding requirements.
- A serious safeguarding incident.
- Changes to the Club's structure or activities.

Lancing FC expects every person associated with the Club to contribute to creating a football environment where safeguarding, dignity and welfare come first.