



**FLEETWOOD TOWN
FOOTBALL CLUB
SAFEGUARDING STRATEGY
2023/24**



Our vision for safeguarding

We plan to continually review and improve the safeguarding processes at the club.

We want to become an important safeguarding partner that protects children and vulnerable adults, to provide a safe environment to develop young footballers and to provide a safe and supportive environment for senior players and club staff to produce their best at work and home.

We have 5 goals to help us achieve this:

1. Ensure we have the right people involved at Fleetwood Town FC.
2. Work more closely with safeguarding partners.
3. 'No wrong door' approach for all safeguarding concerns.
4. Working culture which considers safeguarding first.
5. Ensure an environment where the child's voice is listened to.

1. Ensure we have the right people involved at Fleetwood Town FC

We acknowledge that having staff who understand safeguarding and a culture that puts the needs of children and vulnerable adults first is key to a safe environment. Having the right people enables us to:

- prevent abuse from happening.
- effectively assess and/or investigate safeguarding concerns reported to us.
- understand what we do deal with internally, what we should refer on and how guidance from the FA and the EFL informs our practice.
- remedy concerns which fall under our scope and responsibility and refer to/work with other organisations when they do not.
- know when to report safeguarding concerns to us for investigation and further action.

To make this happen, we'll:

- ensure compliance with the club's safer recruitment policy.
- ensure that safeguarding forms part of all staff appraisals.
- share information about our staff and prospective staff and partners effectively and within the law. In particular with the local authority and the FA.



2. Work more closely with safeguarding partners

We'll always look for ways to work closely with safeguarding partners to improve the safeguarding service that is being offered. We believe that understanding what we do will help safeguarding partners in their role.

Our parents and groups representing our players and staff will know how to report safeguarding concerns to us and we'll also know when to report safeguarding concerns to partners such as the police and the local authority.

We'll have close links with the EFL and FA safeguarding teams and the Local Authority

To do this, we'll:

- attend regional safeguarding meetings.
- engage with safeguarding reviews and meetings with the EFL Safeguarding representative for our club.
- engage in regular external supervision meetings with the EFL Safeguarding representative for our club.
- maintain effective and open communication with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- follow the FA threshold standards in what to refer to the FA.
- engage with and assist to the fullest extent the FA safeguarding team in all investigations into discriminatory behaviour.
- ensure our staff complete all mandatory FA safeguarding training.

3. 'No wrong door' approach for all safeguarding concerns

We do not ignore signs of abuse or neglect. Our 'no wrong door' approach to safeguarding means that we'll listen to all safeguarding concerns about adults and children who are at risk, not just the ones that fall under our area of responsibility.

If someone reports a safeguarding concern which is not directly connected to the club we will ensure that the safeguarding concern is sent to the right agency.

For example, if a concern is raised about a friend of a junior player, even though that friend may not be an FTFC player or they or their family have any direct links to our club, we will record and refer that concern to the local authority, childrens social care or the police as appropriate.



To do this, we'll:

- ensure all our relevant staff have completed safeguarding training.
- regularly review and refresh our club policies so that guidance for staff is clear and unambiguous.
- make sure that our people read and follow our safeguarding policy.
- encourage a working culture where safeguarding the user comes first.
- Maintain effective lines of communication with partner agencies through the club Head of Safeguarding.

4. Working culture which puts the safeguarding needs of children and adults at risk first

We want a working environment which protects and supports our players and staff. 'Safeguarding is Everyones Responsibility' is an important principle that we support.

We aim to develop an approach to safeguarding that means we put our players and staff first and involve them as much as possible throughout the safeguarding process.

We'll carry out a long-term programme of work (our 'safeguarding model') to improve internal processes and working culture to offer better protection to our users. This will be tied to our staff training matrix.

The safeguarding model will make sure that our people understand the role that they play in safeguarding. It'll create a working culture that puts safeguarding first.

Our senior leaders will encourage a working culture which brings attention to quality coaching, recording of observations and concerns and intervention whenever necessary.

To do this, we'll:

- maintain a suitably qualified head of safeguarding to give expert advice on handling safeguarding concerns, training and practice.
- hold regular operational safeguarding board meetings.
- hold regular strategic safeguarding board meetings.
- make sure our staff understand what they should do if someone reports a concern through easily accessible club policies and action flow charts.
- operate an approach of "if in doubt, speak out".

5. Ensure an environment where the child's voice is listened to.

We believe that all children deserve to have a voice and be listened to.

We'll improve our processes to enable our children to speak out and to be involved in decisions around the club and, in particular, the academy.

We'll provide guidance, input and advice to our children and their families. As groups and where needed as individuals.

To do this, we'll:

- maintain a players council within the academy.
- hold regular parent council meetings within the academy.
- follow our club policies on care and accommodation for those children housed by the club and meet with them privately and regularly as set out in that policy.

How we'll check the success of our safeguarding strategy

We'll carry out regular research amongst our players, parents and staff. We'll do this by:

- ensuring safeguarding reporting is accessible via QR codes and advertised around the club's buildings and in the academy newsletter.
- proactively seeking safeguarding feedback via Google forms at least twice a season to all parents.
- ensuring the safeguarding is included on staff appraisal meetings.
- ensuring that the head of safeguarding is visible and accessible to staff.
- engaging with the EFL safeguarding team for regular feedback and supervision
- engaging with PGAAC audit processes and Bernados for full reviews of our safeguarding provisions. We will approach these openly and with a willingness to listen.
- Beginning at the end of the 2023/24 season we'll publish an annual report for staff and key partners to show the work we're doing to meet our goals.