



Safeguarding Young People & Adults at Risk

An Easy Read guide for Participants,
Parents & Guardians

2023-2024



EFL Trust Safeguarding Statement

EFL Trust believe that all children, young people, and adults at risk have the right to live a life free from harm and abuse and that everybody has a role to play in their protection. We place safeguarding at the heart of all our activities and those carried out by our network of Club Community Organisations and other partners.

We are committed to working with local communities to develop impactful programmes which develop the skills of children, young people and adults at risk and create an environment in which they can realise their full potential. EFL Trust recognise our responsibility in promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of all participants accessing programmes and support our network of Club Community Organisations and other partners in implementing robust safeguarding policies & procedures and continually reviewing and improving their ways of working to ensure the best possible outcomes for individuals in their reach.

We understand that the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk is not limited to the delivery of safe programmes and our duty to recognise and respond accordingly to welfare issues unrelated to EFL Trust activities. We are committed to working with Local Authorities to prevent harm to children, young people, and adults at risk.

EFL Trust are committed to the ongoing support of the survivors of historical abuse in football and promote the work undertaken by affiliated football authorities.

Definitions

Activity – any activity, programme or event arranged by or in the name of the EFL Trust for Children, Young People and/or Adults at Risk, or to be attended by Children, Young People and/or Adults at Risk.

Child, Children, Young Person and Young People – any person(s) who have not yet reached their eighteenth birthday.

Adult at Risk – any person(s) aged 18 years or over and has needs for care and support (whether the local authority is meeting any of those needs); is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; or as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

EFL Trust – the charitable arm of the English Football League.

Club Community Organisation – the charitable organisation associated with an EFL member football club.

Partner Organisation – any organisation that is not a Club Community Organisation that runs activities in the name of EFL Trust.

Safeguarding Children and Young People – the actions taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.



This means:

- Protecting Children and Young People from abuse and maltreatment
- Preventing harm to their health or development
- Ensuring they grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all Children and Young People to have the best outcomes.

Staff – any person employed or deployed by the EFL Trust whether in a paid, voluntary, consultancy or third-party capacity.

Safeguarding Adults at Risk – the actions taken to promote the welfare of adults at risk and protect them from harm.

This means:

- Protecting adults at risk from abuse and maltreatment
- Responding to any signs that may indicate that abuse is occurring outside of our activities
- Taking action to enable all adults at risk to have the best outcomes.

Online Safety – keeping children, young people, and adults at risk safe when using online platforms such as social media platforms and live streaming forums and any devices which connect to the internet such as computers, smart phones and tablets. This includes raising awareness of personal safety online and keeping personal information safe online.

The Football Association (“The FA”) – English football’s governing body.

Local Authority – the organisation responsible for public services in your area and promoting the interests of your local community. For safeguarding, this may include the police and departments responsible for the welfare of children, young people and adults such as Children’s Services and Adult Social Care.

What types of harm and abuse may children & young people vulnerable to?

Abuse can be defined as the violation of a child’s human rights, by any other person or group of people. This can range from treating someone in a way which significantly affects their emotional wellbeing, to causing physical harm. This includes, but is not limited to Physical, Sexual and Emotional abuse.

Neglect can be defined as the failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of a child’s health or development.

Contextual safeguarding can be defined as an approach to understanding and responding to children’s experiences of significant harm beyond their family and home that recognises the different relationships children have in their schools, peer groups, online and in their community. Parents and carers may have little influence over these environments.

Staff and volunteers are trained to recognise the indicators that a child may be experiencing or at risk of abuse, neglect or contextual safeguarding concerns.



What types are harm and abuse may adults at risk be vulnerable to?

Although adults at risk are vulnerable to many of the same types of abuse as children and young people, EFL Trust recognise that they may be at risk of other types of abuse or harm, particularly where they rely on the support and care of others, and staff and volunteers working with them are trained to identify any indicators that abuse or neglect may be taking place.

How do EFL Trust keep young people & adults at risk safe from harm and abuse during their activities?

Staff suitability – EFL Trust are committed to the recruitment and development of suitable staff.

This means:

- All staff working for EFL Trust have been through a strict 'Safer Recruitment' process to make sure they are suitable to work with children, young people, and adults at risk. This includes a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check, which is rechecked every 3 years.
- A Code of Conduct is in place for all staff working on EFL Trust activities.
- Staff receive a safeguarding induction and safeguarding training to make sure they fully understand their responsibilities to protect children, young people, and adults at risk, as well as what action to take if they have a concern.
- Staff receive ongoing support and supervision from EFL Trust.
- A clear process is in place for managing concerns around staff conduct or behaviour. This includes notifying the Local Authority/police where conduct harms a child, young person, or adult at risk.

Suitability of premises – EFL Trust make sure that any venues used to carry out activities with children, young people and adults at risk are safe.

This means:

- Health & Safety checks are carried out.
- Risk Assessments are carried out to identify and minimise any risks.
- Venues provide EFL Trust with insurance documents.
- EFL Trust carry out 'Dynamic Risk Assessments' while using venues to identify and minimise any new or unforeseen risks.
- Site inductions are carried out so that all staff, children, young people, and adults at risk are made aware of general facilities, any areas which are "off limits" and the protocol for emergency evacuations.



Suitability of online platforms – When engaging with children, young people, and adults at risk online, EFL Trust will:

- Risk assess online platforms to ensure they are safe for use.
- Ensure online platforms suitable to keep participant information secure.
- Ensure there is clear guidance in place for safe and appropriate use, including a code of conduct for staff and for participants.
- Train staff on safe use of online platforms and risks online.
- Make sure there are staff running and supervising online activities.
- Clearly outline safety measures for all participants and ensure they know the process to follow if there is an issue.

Suitability of activity providers – EFL Trust make sure that any third parties used to deliver activities on our behalf are suitable to work with children, young people, and vulnerable adults. EFL Trust will:

- Risk assess activities to make sure they are suitable and fit for purpose to deliver to children, young people and adults at risk.
- Carry out “Due Diligence” checks on third party activity providers to make sure they are suitable to work with children, young people, and adults at risk. This includes ensuring they have been through a safer recruitment process and have an appropriate DBS check.
- Supervise the delivery of all activities by a third party.
- Make sure third-party deliverers are aware of EFL Trust safeguarding arrangements.

Safeguarding Arrangements – EFL Trust operate a safeguarding process for all activities, which includes:

- A Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) at every activity who is responsible for managing safeguarding concerns and informing the relevant people to make sure appropriate action is taken.
- A clear process is in place for managing safeguarding concerns and all staff working on the activity understand their responsibilities.
- A Code of Conduct is in place for all children, young people and adults at risk accessing an activity.
- Children, young people, and adults at risk are made aware of who they can speak to if there is a problem.
- On-call arrangements are in place to make sure senior staff are available to provide guidance and management in case of a serious incident.



What do Club Community Organisations/Trusts do to keep young people & adults at risk safe?

EFL Trust supports the network of CCOs and partner organisations with their safeguarding arrangements in the following ways:

- All CCOs and partner organisations are assessed by EFL Trust to make sure that their safeguarding, health and safety and safer recruitment policies, procedures and ways of working are fit for purpose, and they can deliver safe programmes.
- EFL Trust hold regular workshops and training with CCOs and partner organisations to support them to develop their working practices and stay on top of any changes to government guidance or legislation.
- The Safeguarding Team at EFL Trust are on hand to provide support and guidance in case of an incident or concern.

Who can I contact if I have a concern?

EFL Trust Safeguarding & Incident Manager

01772 325800

Tara Lawson

safeguarding@efltrust.com

**EFL Trust Senior Safeguarding Manager
(Interim) Chief Executive Officer**

01772 325800

Cathy Abraham

EFL Safeguarding Manager

01772 325800

Alexandra Richards

arichards@efl.com

Lancashire Safeguarding Children Partnership

0300 123 6720

Out of hours: 0300 123 6722 (5pm - 8am)

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

01772 536 694

The FA/NSPCC

0808 500 5000 24 hour helpline



The FA Safeguarding Case Management Team	0800 169 1863 #6300
Anti-Terrorism Hotline	0800 789 321
NSPCC Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Help line	0800 028 3550
Forced Marriage Unit (FMU)	0800 050 2020
Stonewall (LGBTQ+ support & guidance)	0800 050 2020

What action will EFL Trust take if a safeguarding concern is raised, or a disclosure is made?

Recognise – Staff are trained to recognise the indicators that a child, young person or adult at risk is experiencing or at risk of abuse or harm. Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and where they have a concern, they will follow EFL Trust procedures.

Respond – Staff will follow procedures by ensuring the immediate safety of the child, young person, or adult at risk. They will notify the activity's DSO, who will ensure that appropriate action is taken.

Report – The DSO will report the concern to the relevant people on a 'need to know' basis only to make sure that the child, young person, or adult at risk is supported in the most appropriate way.

Record – A thorough record of the concern will be made. This will include the date and time, the facts of what was seen or what was said only and the actions that have been taken so far. This record will be accurately updated as actions are taken.

Refer – Where the concern meets a 'Threshold' it will be referred to appropriate local authorities whose job it is to ensure protection of a child, young person, or adult at risk (Police, Children's Services, Adult Social Care). This includes where the child, young person or adult at risk is at significant risk or harm or abuse, where a crime has been committed or where the conduct of a staff member would have caused serious harm to the person.



Who will EFL Trust share information about a safeguarding concern with?

EFL Trust operate a Data Protection Policy, which underpins the following government legislation:

- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018

EFL Trust only collect, store, and share information that we need to for legitimate purposes and will inform all participants of how and why their information is being used.

EFL Trust are committed to working with parents and guardians of children, young people and adults at risk accessing our activities. When sharing a concern with a parent or guardian, the following will be considered:

- If discussing the concern will negatively impact upon the welfare or safety of the child, young person, or adult at risk (where the parent/guardian is the alleged perpetrator of abuse or harm).
- If the child, young person, or adult at risks consents to you sharing the information.

Where a child, young person or adult at risk is at risk of harm, EFL Trust will need to share personal information with other parties such as the Local Authority to ensure their safety. At times, this may mean that we need to share information of a concern without their consent. In this case we would always be open and honest with them about:

- What information needs to be shared,
- Why this needs to be shared, and
- Who it will be shared with.

EFL Trust will never promise a child, young person, or adult at risk that a disclosure or concern can be kept a secret.

Under GDPR and The Data Protection Act 2018, it is clearly stated that data protection is not a barrier to the sharing of information in relation to safeguarding. Schedule 8 of The Data Protection Act 2018 states the conditions for sensitive processing under Part 3 (Rights of the data subject) as:

Safeguarding of children and of individuals at risk

This condition is met if—

(a) the processing is necessary for the purposes of—

- (i) protecting an individual from neglect or physical, mental or emotional harm, or
- (ii) protecting the physical, mental or emotional well-being of an individual.



How does EFL Trust review safeguarding arrangements to make sure they are fit for purpose?

EFL Trust formally reviews all safeguarding policies and procedures once a year as a minimum. These are reviewed by an experienced and qualified Safeguarding & Incident Manager, The Senior Management Team, and The Board.

Policies and procedures are reviewed more frequently because of any of the following:

- Changes to government legislation or guidance.
- Changes to risk (for example, the outbreak of COVID19).
- Review of an incident on an EFL Trust activity where lessons have been learned on how something could have been done differently.
- When new resources or information are available which change the way we operate.

Does EFL Trust work with other support services?

EFL Trust recognises the professional limitations of our workforce and that of CCOs and partner organisations operating within our network. We are committed to supporting children, young people and adults at risk accessing our programmes to achieve the best possible outcomes and as such endeavour to work with specialist support services operating nationally and within local communities.

Where a concern about the wellbeing of a child, young person or adult at risk does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority for intervention from Children or Adult Services, EFL Trust will work with individuals on a person-centred basis to “signpost” them to appropriate professionals who can offer tailored support and guidance.

What support is available for survivors of historical abuse in Football?

To support those who have come forward and disclosed sexual abuse in a football context, affiliated football authorities have:

- **Set up a dedicated helpline number for survivors via the NSPCC.** This provides survivors with initial advice and guidance, as well as ensuring referrals are made to the police. From 23 November 2016 to 19 October 2017 the football helpline received more than 2,500 calls. 941 calls were from people concerned about abuse in football and approximately 65% of these resulted in referrals to external agencies. The remainder of the calls were enquiries and advice contacts.



- **Partnered with Sporting Chance:** This partnership is to provide nationwide opportunities for support to survivors of sexual abuse in football. Sporting Chance has increased the number of available phone lines, tailored the initial face-to-face therapist assessment process for survivors, developed a set of criteria to select therapists with expertise in the field, and educated them about the Crown Prosecution Service pre-trial therapy guidance. This is important to ensure that survivors receive support that will not hinder the progress of any criminal or civil justice processes.
- **Offered direct support to all known survivors via the police:** Only the police know the details of the survivors who have come forward to pursue a criminal justice route. A letter signed by all the football authorities was sent by Operation Hydrant to all 43 police forces to distribute to everyone who had come forward. This offered survivors who chose to, free specialist therapeutic support for a sustained period. This offer from the football authorities was shared with and supported by survivors with whom we had an active dialogue.

Information on how survivors can access support and further guidance is available here:

<http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-9-support-for-survivors>



EFL Trust Safeguarding Concern Process

