

## AFC Bournemouth Club Safeguarding Policy Amendment & Arrangements - COVID 19

*AFC Bournemouth Football Club is committed to creating a culture where safeguarding responsibilities and procedures for raising concerns are widely understood and embedded in our values. We are fully committed to seeking to provide a safe environment for everyone involved with the Club.*

**Neill Blake – Chief Executive Officer**

This document has been developed in response to COVID-19 and aims to:

- Outline our safeguarding priorities and the Club's responsibilities.
- Maintain effective safeguarding practice.

This amendment should be read in conjunction with the Club's safeguarding policies, current government guidance in response to COVID-19, Working Together 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance issued under the Education Act) and any Premier League requirements, protocols or guidelines on the return to training and playing.

### **Club Statement:**

The way in which our football Club is currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual, however, a number of our important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- The Club remains committed to safeguarding.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Our safeguarding procedures will be reviewed on a weekly basis or following changes to government advice and local statutory agency or key partner working arrangements, procedures or contact details.
- The safety, welfare and best interests of children and adults at risk will always continue to come first and remain a priority.
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about a child or adult at risk connected to the Club, they should continue to act and act immediately.
- The Head of Safeguarding or a Designated Safeguarding Officer will be available to deal with concerns or give advice.
- It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the workforce or gain access to children and adults at risk. When recruiting new staff, the Club will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes in line with the safer recruitment policy.
- The Club will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS, Premier League and FA anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or adult at risk.
- In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.
- The Club will ensure that regular contact is made with children and adults at risk, receiving or in need of safeguarding support, protection and/or care.
- Children and adult's at risk continue to be protected when they are online.

## Club Safeguarding Contacts:

During the Covid-19 lockdown period the safeguarding contacts for the Club are as follows:

Steve Thorpe - Head of Safeguarding. [steve.thorpe@afcb.co.uk](mailto:steve.thorpe@afcb.co.uk) 07554 446446

Dawn Roach – Academy Head of Education & Player Care. [dawn.roach@afcb.co.uk](mailto:dawn.roach@afcb.co.uk) 07921 801826

Steve Cuss – Head of Community. [steve.cuss@afcb.co.uk](mailto:steve.cuss@afcb.co.uk) 07973 893594

Meredith Hack – Community Sports Trust Safeguarding Manager  
[meredith.hack@afcb.co.uk](mailto:meredith.hack@afcb.co.uk) 07990 336461

**Remember that in an emergency or where there is risk to life you should contact the Police immediately.**

## Other Safeguarding Contacts in Football:

Whilst any safeguarding concern should be raised with the Club Safeguarding contacts in the first instance, we recognise that this may not always be possible or appropriate.

Below are the contact details for footballing partners with whom safeguarding concerns in relation to the Club can be discussed:

Premier League Safeguarding Team  
Tel: 020 7864 9000  
Email: [safeguarding@premierleague.com](mailto:safeguarding@premierleague.com)

Premier League Charitable Fund  
Safeguarding Manager – Kate Singleton  
Tel: 020 7864 9098  
Email: [KSingleton@premierleague.com](mailto:KSingleton@premierleague.com)

If the concern relates to the conduct towards a child or adult at risk by a person employed in football:

The FA Safeguarding Team  
Tel: 0800 169 1863  
Email: [safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:safeguarding@TheFA.com)

## Reporting a Concern:

Where staff have a concern about a child, adult at risk or member of staff, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Club's Safeguarding Policies, this includes making a report via MyConcern which can be done remotely.

In the event that a member of staff cannot access their MyConcern from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Officer and/or the Head of Safeguarding. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

## **Return to Training and Playing Protocols:**

The Premier League Return to Training and Playing Protocols require the club to develop and regularly review a COVID-19 operational policy and a COVID19 risk assessment. Safeguarding considerations will be included in these.

The Premier League will provide onsite monitoring via Club Assurance Officers. In addition to the Club Assurance Officers, expert Premier League Compliance Officers with medical/regulatory and/or audit experience will undertake unannounced compliance visits. The Compliance Officers will also assess the Club COVID-19 risk assessment.

The Club has a duty to:

- Ensure that all decisions that affect children and adults at risk are undertaken with systematic considerations of their safety, welfare and best interests.
- Work with the Head of Safeguarding to protect the safety and welfare of children and adults at risk, returning to playing/training and host family arrangements.
- Ensure that decisions to return to training/playing and host family arrangements are made based on informed consent. This should include parental/legal guardian consent where children are concerned.

## **Playing Matches Behind Closed Doors:**

In line with the guidance provided by the Department of Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) the club have appointed a COVID-19 Officer to manage the club's response to playing matches behind closed doors.

The COVID-19 Officer is responsible for oversight of the risk and mitigation planning, communicating information to all user groups and ensuring that the necessary standards are met.

Any risks around safeguarding will be considered in the relevant risk assessments associated with behind closed doors matchdays.

Any safeguarding matter should be referred to the COVID-19 Officer.

COVID-19 Officer – Paul Budden, Mobile – 07850 030791.

E-mail – [info@wessexsafetyservices.co.uk](mailto:info@wessexsafetyservices.co.uk)

## **Academy Specific Responsibilities:**

The Club has a duty of care to all Academy players and will:

- Maintain adequate provision for supporting Academy players with their mental and emotional well-being.
- Maintain regular contact with Academy players to provide mental and emotional well-being guidance including internal and external pathways for accessing support and advice.
- Ensure that Academy players and their parents/legal guardians are reminded how to contact the Head of Safeguarding and Safeguarding Officers to seek advice, access support or report concerns.
- Provide Academy players with online safety guidelines and support including internal and external pathways for reporting abuse or other concerns.



- Maintain standards for supporting vulnerable Academy players receiving or in need of safeguarding support, protection or care. This will be done by way of weekly contact and a record of that contact recorded on MyConcern.
- Maintain standards for safeguarding in delivery of essential activities, for example but not limited to: delivering face to face or online/virtual education, coaching sessions, rehab etc.
- Maintain regular contact with Academy players and their parents/legal guardians on individual and wider safeguarding matters.

## **Communication with Children and Young People:**

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with in line with the Clubs safeguarding policies. Where appropriate referrals should still be made to Children's Social Care and as required, the police via the Head of Safeguarding.

All staff must ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons and keeping in contact with young people especially where webcams are involved:

- Where possible all contact should be carried out in groups. 1-1 contact should be avoided where possible.
- All contact with Under 18's should be carried out with parental consent.
- If communicating directly with a player/parent is needed, staff should record, the time, date and a brief summary of the contact.
- Staff must consider the most appropriate platform to use.
- If the platform allows, staff should consider recording the contact/meeting.

## **Procedures and Safety Measures for Online Learning:**

The Club expects all staff and players to adhere to the relevant club policies. Boundaries must be maintained at all times. The risks in relation to online learning can be reduced by following the below guidance.

- All contact online being observable and interruptible.
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers being used should be in appropriate areas, for example not in bedrooms and the background should not be blurred.
- Online teaching will not be carried out on a one to one basis and will be done in a group setting with several players/students present.
- Another adult will be invited to be present in the room.
- All communication provided will have an educational purpose.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.

## ESports:

Any staff considering arranging an esports event should consider:

- Generally expected behaviour of officials, coaches and players towards each other.
- The prevention, detection and combating of any form of bullying, physical misuse or addiction to games and the reporting of in line with the Club safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Application of age limits.
- Gaining parental consent for under 18's

## Mental Health:

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of us all. Players/students who are struggling under the current circumstances should contact the Club safeguarding staff as outlined above.

Support can also be accessed through a number of national organisations including:

The Samaritans: Tel: 116 123 <https://www.samaritans.org>

ChildLine: Tel: 0800 1111 <https://www.childline.org.uk>

NSPCC: Tel: 0808 800 5000 <https://www.nspcc.org.uk>

Mind: Tel: 0300 123 3393 <https://www.mind.org.uk>

PFA: Tel: 07500 000 777 <https://www.thepfa.com/wellbeing>

Sporting Chance: If you are a member of the PFA please call 07500 000 777 or email [support@sportingchanceclinic.com](mailto:support@sportingchanceclinic.com).

If you have played at first team or academy level for a Premier League club, please call 07500 000 777 or email [talk@sportingchanceclinic.com](mailto:talk@sportingchanceclinic.com)

If You Care Share Foundation: Tel: 01913875661 <https://www.ifucareshare.co.uk/>

## AFC Bournemouth Mental Health First Aiders:

Holly Roberts – PA to General Manager: [holly.roberts@afcb.co.uk](mailto:holly.roberts@afcb.co.uk)

Dan Buckley – Marketing Manager: [dan.buckley@afcb.co.uk](mailto:dan.buckley@afcb.co.uk)

Steve Thorpe – Head of Safeguarding: [steve.thorpe@afcb.co.uk](mailto:steve.thorpe@afcb.co.uk)

Andrew Battison – Community Sports Trust: [andrew.battison@afcb.co.uk](mailto:andrew.battison@afcb.co.uk)

Natalie White – Events and Matchday Hospitality: [natalie.white@afcb.co.uk](mailto:natalie.white@afcb.co.uk)

## Online Safety:

It is important that internet safety and security messages are re-enforced during this time when we are expecting young people to be online more often. They may also be increasing their usage on devices during their own free time during this lockdown period.

It is important that both players/students and parents are aware of the help and support available should they be concerned about something they have seen or experienced online. These include:

UK Safer Internet Centre: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>

CEOP: <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

Internet Matters: <https://www.internetmatters.org/>

NetAware: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

ParentInfo: <https://parentinfo.org/>

ThinkuKnow: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

## **Peer on Peer Abuse:**

The Club recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where the Club receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as outlined within of the Clubs safeguarding policies.

The Club will listen and work with the child, adult at risk, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that child or adult at risk.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on MyConcern and appropriate referrals made.

## **Vulnerable Children:**

It is essential that staff are aware of the vulnerable children that they work with and pay particular attention to the plans in place for them during this time.

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

## **Whistleblowing:**

Whistleblowing Is the term used when a worker passes on information concerning wrongdoing. The wrongdoing will typically (although not necessarily) be something they have witnessed at work.

A whistleblower is protected by law and should not be treated unfairly or lose their job because they 'blow the whistle'.

Concern can be raised at any time about an incident that happened in the past, is happening now, believed will happen in the near future.

The NSPCC whistleblowing advice line offers free advice and support to professionals with concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation. Link to website below:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

All incidents should be referred to the General Manager (Elizabeth Finney) or the Head of Safeguarding.

## **Non-Recent Abuse, Incidents and Poor Practice:**

Non-recent child abuse, sometimes called historical abuse, is when an adult was abused as a child or young person under the age of 18.

Where non-recent incidents, poor practice or abuse are received concerning staff who are linked to the Club including those persons who are no longer work at the club, they should immediately be referred to the Head of Safeguarding for review.

Where required the Head of Safeguarding will be responsible for referring these matters to Statutory Authorities (Police/Children's Social Care or LADO) even if the alleged perpetrator of the abuse is believed to be deceased.

When matters are referred to Statutory Authorities, the Head of Safeguarding will also notify the football authorities (The FA and Premier League)

## **Guidance and Support for Club's and Foundations/Trusts:**

Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-provide>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on vulnerable children and young people.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

DfE guidance for schools about temporary closing.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for the charity sector.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-the-charity-sector>

NCVO – coronavirus guidance.

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/practical-support/information/coronavirus>

Ann Craft Trust - safeguarding and the coronavirus, info, tips and resources.

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/safeguarding-and-the-coronavirus-info-tips-and-resources/>

NSPCC – undertaking remote teaching safely.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2020/march/undertaking-remote-teaching-safely/>

NSPCC – how to have difficult conversations with children.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/how-to-have-difficult-conversations-with-children/>

World Health Organisation mental health considerations during COVID-19 outbreak.

[https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af\\_2](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2)

## Guidance and Support for Parents/Legal Guardians and Carers.

Guidance for parents and carers supporting children and young people's mental health and well-being during the coronavirus (COVID -19) outbreak.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

NSPCC support for parents on talking to a child or young person worried about coronavirus

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Internet matters online resources and advice to support families.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/staysafestayhome-tech-advice-and-resources-to-support-families-at-home/?qclid=EAlaIqObChMikZHY0fbL6AIVRrDtCh264woSEAYASA>

Internet matters tips for working from home with children during the coronavirus outbreak

<https://www.internetmatters.org/blog/2020/03/20/5-tips-for-working-from-home-with-children-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/>

Guidance for keeping children and young people safe online.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>

UK Safer Internet Centre keeping children happy and safe online during COVID-19

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19>

## Guidance and Support for Children and Young People.

NSPCC information and advice for children and young people on coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/>

Unicef guidance for teenagers on protecting their mental health during coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-teenagers-can-protect-their-mental-health-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Young Minds what to do if you are anxious about coronavirus.

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>

Childnet internet online safety for primary and secondary age children and young people.

<https://www.childnet.com/young-people>

Thinkuknow advice for all age groups.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Unicef cyberbullying guidance.

<https://www.unicef.org/end-violence/how-to-stop-cyberbullying>



## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Domestic Abuse - Advice and guidance for those who are experiencing or feel at risk of domestic abuse during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak:**

It is acknowledged that recent measures announced by the government to tackle coronavirus (COVID-19), such as the order to stay at home, can cause anxiety for those who are experiencing or feel at risk of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is unacceptable in any situation, no matter what stresses you are under.

This guidance highlights help and support available to you through the support services that continue to remain open at this time. If you are in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police – The police will continue to respond to emergency calls.

Guidance is also available to help perpetrators change their behaviour.

### **What is domestic abuse?**

Domestic abuse is more than physical violence. It can also include, but is not limited to:

- coercive control and 'gaslighting'
- economic abuse
- online abuse
- verbal abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse

### **Where to get help:**

If you believe you are being abused, or worried you may commit domestic abuse, please use the following services which can help you.

If you suspect that your neighbours or those in your community are victims of domestic abuse, we encourage you to report it to the police. Call 999.

### **National Domestic Abuse Helpline:**

The [National Domestic Abuse Helpline](#) - website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. They can also be called, for free and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. The website also has a form through which women can book a safe time for a call from the team.

### **Women's Aid:**

[Women's Aid](#) - has provided additional advice specifically designed for the current COVID-19 outbreak, including a live chat service.

### **Men's Advice Line:**

The [Men's Advice Line](#) - is a confidential helpline for male victims of domestic abuse and those supporting them. It can be contacted on 0808 801 0327.

### **Galop - for members of the LGBT+ community:**

If you are a member of the LGBT+ community, [Galop](#) runs a specialist helpline on 0800 999 5428 or email [help@galop.org.uk](mailto:help@galop.org.uk).

## **Economic abuse:**

If you are concerned about how COVID-19 may affect your finances and leave you vulnerable to economic abuse, please see the [advice provided by HM Treasury](#) on what support is on offer. The charity [Surviving Economic Abuse](#) has also provided additional guidance and support.

## **Hestia:**

[Hestia](#) - provides a free-to-download mobile app, Bright Sky, which provides support and information to anyone who may be in an abusive relationship or those concerned about someone they know.

## **Chayn:**

[Chayn](#) - provides online help and resources in a number of languages, ranging from identifying manipulative situations and how friends can support those being abused.

## **Support for professionals:**

[SafeLives](#) - is providing guidance and support to professionals and those working in the domestic abuse sector, as well as additional advice for those at risk.

## **Support if you are worried about hurting someone:**

If you are worried about hurting the ones you love while staying at home, call the [Respect Phonenumber](#) for support and help to manage your behaviour, 0808 8024040.

## **Further information:**

For more advice and guidance on domestic abuse, please see [Domestic abuse: how to get help](#).

## **Local Support Services:**

STARS (Sexual Trauma and Recovery Service) – (Children & Young Persons services 8 -18yrs)  
- Tel 01202 308855 <https://www.starsdorset.org/>

The Shores (Dorset Sexual Assault Referral Centre – SARC) – Provides a comprehensive service to men, women and children who have been raped or sexually assaulted – 01202 552056. <http://www.the-shores.org.uk/>

Dorset For You – Domestic abuse and violence – Where to get help -  
<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/dvahelp>

BCHA Refuge Services - a refuge is a safe house for victims of abuse, and their children, to escape to and access support to help them rebuild their lives and live a life free from abuse. Bournemouth and Dorset: 01202 547755. Poole 01020 710777.  
[bournemouthrefuge@bcha.org.uk](mailto:bournemouthrefuge@bcha.org.uk)

BCP Council - services in Bournemouth -  
<https://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/communityliving/CrimeDisorder/DomesticAbuse/domesticabuse.aspx>

**Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility – Doing nothing is not an option.**