

JK Academy Safeguarding Policy 2025-26

JK Coaching is fully committed to the safeguarding and protection of all their members. The welfare of every player is paramount, and we recognise our responsibility to provide a safe and enjoyable environment where children can learn football without the risk of harm, abuse or exploitation.

Introduction

Safeguarding falls onto the responsibility of everyone. Everyone who is involved at JK Coaching has a responsibility for keeping every child safe, irrespective of their role at the club.

There is a risk that children may be harmed in any environment, including the home, at school or in a sports club. Due to the nature of football, we acknowledge that it provides significant access to children and young people and can provide opportunities for an individual to cause harm to children.

It is however also recognised that individuals who have regular contact with young people play a key role in promoting in their welfare and identifying early signs of abuse. It is therefore essential that individuals who have contact with children and young people are fully aware of the early signs of abuse and/or neglect and understand the appropriate steps to report these concerns.

In addition, it is important to be aware that some children may be more vulnerable than others. These may include disabled children with specific additional needs, children with special educational needs and children training at a high-performance level within the sport.

We are fully committed to providing support, information, and training opportunities to make certain that individuals understand their role and responsibilities, and fully understand the risk factors linked to abuse within the sport. We strive to create a fun and safe learning environment where all children can develop and achieve their potential in the sport. We recognise that as a club, as well as all members of JK Coaching have a duty of care towards all members and will ensure that exacting standards are met with best practice being followed at all times when working with children.

Key Principles

This policy is based upon the following fundamental principles:

- The welfare of children (anyone under the age of 18 years) is paramount

- All children, regardless of ability, age, disability, sexual orientation, parental status, race, religion or belief or socio/economic background have a right to be protected from abuse
- Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility: every individual as well as the club must play their part in ensuring the sport is safe
- A child-centred approach: keep the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and working in partnership with them and their families. Football provision will better meet the needs of children if it is informed by a clear understanding of the needs and views of children

JK Coaching & Academy will:

- Ensure that all measures are taken to minimise potential risk of injury or abuse
- Ensure that all coaches work within the boundaries of their training and qualifications and always implement best practice
- Ensure all coaches and staff have suitable training in Safeguarding and Protecting Children to minimise potential risks to children and to protect themselves
- Ensure that all coaches and staff that have direct contact with the players have a valid Enhanced DBS
- Appoint a Welfare Officer who will deal with any complaints or grievances promptly and confidentially
- Ensure that a minimum of 2 responsible adults are always present during training sessions
- Ensure that adequate arrangements are in place in the event of an accident or fire
- Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy and these procedures
- Implement zero tolerance on bullying, abuse of poor practice and take active steps to eradicate any potential risks
- Not let players leave the field after a session until their parent or guardian has safely arrived to collect them

JK Coaching Responsibilities

This policy puts these requirements into a football context, outlining the minimum standards to which all JK Coaching staff, members and volunteers must adhere.

In addition to the main policy, there are various additional policies that must be applied. The overall aim of the policy is to ensure that everyone participating in the

sport of football does so in a safe, holistic, and child-centred environment that supports children to meet their potential.

This can only be achieved if everyone involved in the sport is fully compliant with the policy.

The key objectives of the policy are as follows:

- To ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding.
- To ensure everyone who comes into contact with children can recognise, identify, and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people.

To promote positive practice and challenge poor practice.

To ensure robust systems are in place to manage any concerns or allegations.

To develop a skilled and competent safeguarding workforce.

To ensure everyone who is involved in a role with children completes training at a level appropriate to their role in the sport.

To ensure everyone who is involved in a role with children has been through appropriate pre-recruitment checks, including the appropriate level criminal record checks.

To ensure young people and their parents/carers are consulted and, where appropriate, fully involved in decisions that affect them.

We will ensure that any allegations or suspicions of abuse or significant harm to any child are reported without delay to the relevant Statutory Authorities in line with established information sharing protocols. We will comply with the principles set out in current Data Protection legislation and Information Sharing for Practitioners (HM Government guidance) in relation to confidentiality and information sharing.

Information that is confidential in nature may be shared, without consent, where there is legitimate and lawful reason for disclosure.

In the event of an abuse allegation against a JK Coaching Team Member, we will take action to ensure all children and young people are protected and, where appropriate, will support the prosecution of individuals accused of a criminal offence against a child(ren). All other misconduct or poor practice issues/non-compliance with policy and procedure will normally be managed by the Head Coach, Directors and Club Welfare Officer. We will ensure that every effort is made to help prevent people who present a risk to children from becoming involved in the sport and to support the removal of anyone who is considered unsuitable.

JK Coaching will also ensure that:

- There is at least one suitably trained and competent Welfare Officer designated within the club to take the lead role in dealing with safeguarding issues.
- All staff and volunteers, who are working with children receive appropriate safeguarding training, updated every three years, and have access to advice on child protection, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children through the Club Welfare Officer.
- All players and their parents are aware of the club codes of conduct and recognise behaviour that is not acceptable and how they can help to keep themselves safe.
- Support Whistle Blowing and take steps to ensure members, parents/carers, and other individuals linked to the club feel able to raise concerns without fear or negative repercussions.
- Confidentiality is maintained in relation to concerns, and referrals, and information is only shared on a genuine need-to-know basis in line with confidentiality and Information Sharing Guidance.
- Carry out Safe Recruitment to prevent unsuitable people from obtaining, or remaining in, positions of trust or responsibility.
- Promptly identify and respond to any deficiencies or weaknesses in the arrangements for safeguarding and promoting welfare of children.
- Ensure any poor practice is addressed immediately and any required remedial action is taken.

Welfare Officers

Although the responsibility for safeguarding falls on everyone, there will always be at least one designated Welfare Officer who is responsible for all safeguarding matters and promoting the welfare of all members.

Our current Welfare Officer is: **MARIA KENNELL**

The Club Welfare Officer must:

- Hold a valid Enhanced DBS -
- Hold a valid Safeguarding and Protecting Children Certificate
- Keep up to date with any changes in legislation and best practice guidelines that relate to safeguarding children

Responsibilities of the Welfare Officer include:

- Promoting the welfare of children and importance of safeguarding
- Ensuring that children and young people are listened to and are involved in decision making

- Ensuring that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of Safeguarding/child protection
- Responding to safeguarding/child protection and poor practice concerns
- Liaising with local Statutory Agencies
- Working with other organisations as required

Club Registration:

When you register your child with us it is essential that we obtain appropriate personal information about yourself and your child before they can participate in a session. The information we collect enables us to risk assess each member based on the medical information provided, obtain the necessary parental consent as required by law as well as the information required in the event of an accident or emergency.

The information we collect is:

- Name(s) and address
- Date of birth
- Parent/Guardian information
- Emergency contacts
- Medical information
- First aid consent
- Photo/Video consent

All Data is securely held in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 (never outside these guidelines)

Provision of Safe Environment

To effectively Safeguard children, it is vitally important that we provide a safe environment where all members can participate in football.

To minimise the potential risk of injury or abuse while children participate at the club we will:

- Provide an open training environment – offering parents the opportunity to view sessions.
- Ensure there is a clear policy for us of changing rooms and toilets
- Regularly check and maintain equipment and other club property – anything deemed unsafe will be removed, and either replaced or repaired
- Always ensure that there is first aid provision (qualified first aider) on site at all times, a correctly stocked first aid kit, and a phone in case of emergency
- Provide safe storage of personal and sensitive information

Bullying

Bullying is behaviour, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group; physically or emotionally.

There is often a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim(s) to prevent or deal with the perpetrator's actions. The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated.

It can cause considerable distress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm)

We operate a zero-tolerance policy on bullying at the club and any form of bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Bullying can occur between:

- An adult and a child
- A child and another child
- A parent and their own child

Bullying can take many forms and can be conducted in person or through the actions of another person/other people.

These include:

- Emotional: Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings, threatening gestures), name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing/taunts, graffiti.
- Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Sexual: Unwanted physical contact or sexually offensive comment(s).
- Cyber: Email & internet chat room misuse, mobile phone threats by text message and calls, misuse of technology (camera and video footage)

Bullying can also take the form of singling out individuals because they belong to a particular group or are different in some way from others (prejudice-based bullying) and may include:

- Racist and religious based bullying
- Homophobic/bi-phobic/transphobic: because of their sexual orientation or perceived or actual gender identity
- Disablist: may focus on, or exploits, a particular aspect of the individual's disability

Procedures to Discourage Bullying

- Always provide an open environment with adequate supervision
- Ensure all coaches are approachable so children do not fear talking to them
- Encourage children to speak out and share any concerns with the Lead/Head Coach, the Welfare Officer, or other responsible adults at the club
- Take all signs or allegations of bullying seriously

Responding to Victims of Bullying

- We will seek to gain the trust of the child by providing them with reassurance that they have done the right thing by bringing the concern to our attention
- Explain that we will do everything we can to ensure that the issue is resolved
- The details of the conversation will be correctly documented by the responsible adult who the child has confided in, including the date, time, and names of those involved
- The Head Coach will be provided with full details of the conversation in order to make an informed decision on the appropriate next steps
- In minor cases, the Head Coach will aim to resolve the issue by talking with all the individuals involved and highlighting the football codes of conduct, and the acceptable ways to behave at the club – in more serious cases the information will be provided to the Welfare Officer and necessary authorities
- All actions taken will be documented
- If necessary, the club will provide support to the victim and his/her family

Addressing the Bully(ies)

- We will find a suitable time and place to talk to the individual(s) who have been accused of bullying – The situation will be explained to them and we will ask them for an explanation about the incident(s) – We will try to help them understand the consequences of their actions.
- We will then seek an apology from the bully (or bullies) to the victim
- Inform the bully's parents about the incident and actions taken
- If any items have been taken from the victim, then we will insist that these are returned
- If necessary, we will impose reasonable sanctions or disciplinary action
- We will report and record all actions taken
- Encourage the bully to change his/her behaviour

Supporting the Bullied

- We will work with the child and their parents to ensure that the issue is resolved quickly and effectively in order to minimise any lasting impact on the individual

- We will provide any further support needed to ensure that the individual feels safe and happy when attending our sessions – This may involve designating a responsible adult that they can always go straight to if they have any concerns or providing a football buddy who they trust to work within their group and to accompany them to the toilet
- If the issue is not exclusive to the club, then we can work with the parents as well as the child's school or other external clubs to help support the individual
- We may consider holding a reconciliation meeting if we feel it would be beneficial to help address the issues between the bully and the bullied child

Communication and Social Media

In the modern world where everyone, of all ages, has access to a mobile phone and the internet, it is vitally important to address the correct and safe methods of communication at the club.

The development of technology has many benefits; however, it does provide a large platform for bullying and abuse

Please acknowledge the acceptable communication channels below and ensure that your children are fully aware of them:

- Mobile phones must not be used on the field by members or coaches for personal use – the only exception is for lead coaches; however, the use of the phone must be restricted to accessing the academy information for players data and taking the attendance registers, acting as the club contact number, or being used in the event of an emergency
- Adult members must not communicate with players under the age of 18 years by text messages, through internet chat room/networking sites or email
- All communication on by the above methods must be through the parent
- Subject to parental consent, coaches can communicate with young people over the age of 16 years either by group emails/texts or by copying correspondence to either child's parents, head coach or Welfare Officer – however, this communication must be limited to work matters
- In the event of a player showing a coach a text message, image or email that is inappropriate for a child to have, the coach must inform the Welfare Officer
- When contacting the club, either the Head Office or a coach directly, please ensure that you as the parent or guardian makes the call or sends the email and not your child

We fully appreciate that you are empowering your child to be responsible. However, from a safeguarding perspective at the club we must only communicate with parents or individuals over the age of 18 years.

Social Media

- Coaches or adult members must not add players on any of their social media platforms, nor must they accept a friend request from a player who is under the age of 18 years
- Please ensure that you emphasise to your children that they must not try to add a coach on their social media platforms
- Children under the age of 18 years are more than welcome to follow the official club pages, however they must not communicate with an individual coach through these platforms
- If you become aware that a coach or adult member has added your child on social media or has started communicating with your child via social media, then you must notify the Head Coach or Welfare Officer

Photography and Use of Imagery

Occasionally we do take individual and group publicity photos and videos at the JK Coaching venues or during events.

These images are solely for the use of JK Coaching's publicity and advertising such as on flyers, the club's website and the club's social media.

Your consent is requested at the time of registration, however, if your preference changes during your time at the club then you must notify us in writing.

This can be done in the form of an email to info@jk-coaching.co.uk

When taking and using photographs or videos we will adhere to the following guidelines:

- A minimum of two club officials (with valid DBS) must be always present when filming or taking photos
- Photographs, video clips or other images of players will not be published whether in print or electronically without consent from the parent or guardian
- No personal information, other than their first name and their club venue, will accompany published images (provisions apply in connection to photography at public events such as competitions and displays)
- While some editing of images is acceptable, images taken of players will not be modified, merged, or manipulated in a way which might cause embarrassment or distress to the individual, or cause the final image to be inappropriate
- Ensure secure storage of video and photographic materials to avoid misuse - if you have any concerns relating to images or videos that have been taken or published by the club then you must raise these concerns with the Head Coach and/or Welfare Officer immediately

Late Collection of Children

In the event that you are delayed for any reason and will not be at the club to collect your child at the end of their session you must:

- Contact the Lead Coach or Head Office at the earliest possible opportunity -
- Provide clear instruction on what you wish the club to do, e.g. to keep your child at the club until you arrive or to provide consent for another parent to transport your child home

The Lead Coach must:

- Have access to a list of parent contact details and emergency numbers
- Never leave a child or young person alone unless he/she is over 16 and then only with parental permission
- Carry out appropriate assessments of situations as they arise, acknowledging that some young people aged 16 and over can go home alone if their parent is delayed and has provided consent

A Coach must never:

- Take a child home or to another location
- Ask a child to wait in a vehicle or the club with them alone
- Send a child home with another person without permission

If a parent is considered to be unduly late, the Lead Coach will:

1. Attempt to contact the child's parent using the contact details stored on the system
2. Attempt to contact the child's emergency contact (if different from parent)
3. If there is no reply from the emergency contact, the child will be asked if there is another family member who may be contacted
4. Wait with the child at the club with at least one other official/coach/teacher/volunteer or parent
5. Respond to any instructions received from the parent
6. If no-one can be reached after a reasonable amount of time, contact the local police or Children's Social Care Services to enquire about the best course of action

Persistent Failure to Collect a Child on Time

If you persistently fail to collect your child on time and do not make any effort to contact the club or provide a reasonable explanation for the delays, the Club Welfare Officer may be informed and a meeting with yourself, the Welfare Officer and another Club

Official will be arranged to discuss the matter. Following a meeting, if there is no change then the Club Welfare Officer will contact the children's team at the local Children's Social Care Services to seek further advice.

Policy Review

This policy and these procedures will be regularly reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children or following any changes within the Club
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the protection of children within the Club
- In all other circumstances until the policy will be review annually

IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN, REPORT IT TO...

MARIA KENNELL – Your Club Welfare Officer – p_kennett@sky.com

James Kennett – Lead Safeguarding Officer – info@jk-coaching.co.uk

Or alternatively...

- Surrey FA via Safeguarding@SurreyFA.com | T: 01372 387090
- The FA via Safeguarding@TheFA.com | 0800 169 1863
- NSPCC via help@nspcc.org.uk | 0808 800 5000
- Child Protection in Sport Unit via cspu@nspcc.org.uk