



SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

COVID-19 RESPONSE

SAINTS

SAFEGUARDING

CONTENTS

BACKGROUND	2
- Scope	
- Governance	
COVID-19 RESPONSE	3
MOVING FORWARD	4
- Safer Recruitment	
- Good Practice	
- Esports	
- Reporting a Concern	
- Review	
- Key Contacts	

BACKGROUND

DURING THIS UNPRECEDENTED TIME, THIS POLICY STATEMENT OUTLINES SOUTHAMPTON FOOTBALL CLUB'S COMMITMENT TO MAINTAIN CLEAR AND ROBUST SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS ACROSS ALL ELEMENTS OF OUR OPERATIONS.

This includes Saints Foundation, Academy and wider Club functions following the COVID-19 pandemic, with current safeguarding arrangements remaining in place and unchanged.

SCOPE

This policy statement applies to all employees, partners, volunteers and representatives of the Club and relates to children, young people and adults at risk.

It should be noted that the definition of vulnerable children extends to those children up to the age of 25 for those with social workers, looked after children or with education, health and care plans, assessed as being in need or who otherwise meet the definitions set out in the Children's Act.

GOVERNANCE

The Club's Safeguarding Team are maintaining strategic and operational safeguarding arrangements during this time. The Club's Safeguarding Manager continues to report to the Director of Legal and Risk who also acts as the Club's Senior Safeguarding Lead at Board level.

This maintains coverage of risk, concerns and clear governance at Board level. All individuals of the Safeguarding Team continue to be fully accessible during working hours and the Safeguarding Manager is contactable by phone out of hours throughout this period.

Supporting the central safeguarding structure are a number of Safeguarding Officers and Leads, this structure maintains touchpoints across operational delivery. Throughout the ongoing crisis, our Board has a daily call and the Club's Crisis Management Team also meet at least three times each week. The Senior Safeguarding Lead sits on both of these groups and so there is full discussion of safeguarding issues and evaluation of the Club's ongoing safeguarding obligations in those forums.

Throughout this time the Senior Safeguarding Lead and Head of Safeguarding remain in frequent, contact, this allows any specific requirements to be identified and actioned appropriately at the earliest stage possible.



COVID-19 RESPONSE

THE CLUB'S HR TEAM ARE CONDUCTING WEEKLY SURVEYS TO IDENTIFY ANY MEMBERS OF STAFF WHO MAY BE DISPLAYING SYMPTOMS WITH A VIEW TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE SUPPORTED THROUGH ANY PERIOD OF ILLNESS.

The Club have also been promoting positive mental health activities for staff during the prolonged period working from home and staff can access the Employee Assistance Programme and Mental Health First Aiders for support.

Following the postponement of Academy operations, arrangements were implemented to ensure players returned home safely. Regular welfare and well-being checks have been scheduled in with Academy players and participants of the Club's Foundation programmes.

SOCIAL DISTANCING	The Club implemented an early policy of promoting social distancing by arranging for staff to work remotely at an early stage of the outbreak of COVID-19 prior to Government guidance. The Club also followed all guidance on postponing Academy, Regional Talent Centres and Foundation programmes. The decision to do this was to protect all participants on those programmes, as well as our staff to reduce any likely spread of the virus.
SHIELDING	The Club are supporting the Government guidance advocating 'shielding' as measure to protect people who are clinically extremely vulnerable by minimising all interaction between those who are extremely vulnerable and others. Where this affects individuals within our workforce or our participants, support is being put in place to ensure ongoing well-being checks are taking place and where additional support is needed this is given.
SAINTS AS ONE	The Club together with the Saints Foundation have launch a new campaign in response to the crisis – Saints As One. This outreach and engagement project has been designed to support fans who find themselves isolated or vulnerable. The Club have committed to supply 12,000 meals over the coming 12 weeks, for distribution to those most affected and struggling to obtain food in the local communities across Southampton. The Club have partnered with FareShare to distribute food and Saints Foundation staff are volunteering to support the distribution.
SAINTS FOUNDATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Contacting isolated and vulnerable participants to check on them;- Offering an inbound call service for older people across the local community, including taking referrals from the ticket office for those that need additional support;- Delivering two 'soccer schools' for up to 80 children of key workers for two weeks in the Easter holidays, including both Bank Holidays;- Working with the Clinical Commissioning Group to run the prescription delivery service for the city, supporting isolated and vulnerable people in the local community.

MOVING FORWARD

SAFER RECRUITMENT

Normal safer recruitment practices will be maintained during this time and DBS identification verification will be completed in line with revised DBS guidance. All outstanding DBS renewals will continue to be processed by the HR team, with applicants invited to show ID documents through live video calls e.g Skype with the caveat that all original documentation will be verified in person when we are in a position to do so.

Alternatively, individuals are also encouraged to use the Post Office ID verification service where this can be accessed. Guidance has been issued to those individuals who are affected. Any costs incurred through the Post Office verification service will be reimbursed by the Club.

Any new employees entering the business at this time will be reviewed on a case by case basis. This will include input from the Club's Legal and Risk Team, Safeguarding and HR. All key policy documentation will be shared through our existing approach via Workday.

Safeguarding training will be completed when the Club are in a position to do so. An appropriate, basic induction will be provided to any new starter and all line managers will make sure that suitable support mechanisms in are place so that any required guidance can be provided. The Club's Safeguarding Team will continue to form part of any induction.



SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT COVID-19 RESPONSE

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

The issue of protecting children, young people and adults at risk during any online communications has been identified as an important issue by the Club. Given the additional online interactions happening as the result of social distancing guidelines it is important that staff recognise and fulfil our duty to keep everyone safe online. The Club's Safeguarding Team are working with key areas of the Club who are undertaking ongoing engagement through video calling software.

Good practice guidance has been issued which includes materials and useful websites. Information has been issued to parents regarding online safety through the Academy newsletter and players have been reminded to report any concerns regarding online content or cyber bullying incidents by peers. The following guidance has been issued:

DO

- ✓ Adhere to normal SFC code of conduct
- ✓ Ensure that all conversations and content are appropriate and relative
- ✓ Ensure parents are communicated with and invited to be present when appropriate e.g. 121 reviews
- ✓ Ensure you are dressed appropriately
- ✓ Be aware of your backgrounds
- ✓ 2 staff must be present at all time for any online engagement for anyone under 16
- ✓ Record online meetings with our young people as good practice in-case we need to refer to them at a later date.

DON'T

- ✗ Conduct video messaging meetings via WhatsApp for anyone under the age of 16
- ✗ We should not be encouraging anyone under the age of 18 to register for a Zoom account
- ✗ Give any personal details e.g. don't call fans, parents or our young people on your own mobile or using personal email addresses
- ✗ Share details of other parents or participants without consent
- ✗ Share videos without the approval of the person who originally shared or made it.

Staff have also been signposted to the following resource tools:

CHILDNET www.childnet.com/young-people

NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk

CHILDLINE www.childline.org.uk

THINKUKNOW www.thinkuknow.co.uk

YOUNG STONEWALL www.youngstonewall.org.uk

ESPORTS

The Club are currently not engaging with Esports, however safeguarding guidance will be issued prior to adopting this as an option.

The Club has undertaken a review of all current and historical safeguarding cases to identify any immediate concerns or risks to any individuals. Additional vulnerabilities and support options have been considered in-light of Government self-isolation guidance and where concerns are identified, key individuals are engaging through regular communication to ensure the well-being of those individuals. The Safeguarding and Player Care team continue to work closely together to support coaches undertaking outreach work with players.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT COVID-19 RESPONSE

REPORTING A CONCERN

The expectation remains where a current or historical safeguarding concern is identified either via external communication with players or participants or where we have concerns around our internal workforce.

ALL CONCERNS SHOULD BE REPORTED DIRECTLY TO THE CLUB'S SAFEGUARDING TEAM OR VIA THE CLUB'S REPORTING SOFTWARE CPOMS.

All concerns will continue to be given the same level of priority and appropriate action will be taken to ensure the safety of children, young people and adults who may be at risk is paramount.

WHISTLE BLOWING

Where a concern is identified the Club's existing Whistleblowing channels remain in place:

Phone: 0800 915 1571

Email: saintsfc@safecall.co.uk

Online: www.safecall.co.uk/report

Any report may be made anonymously (if the person making it wishes to remain anonymous). Further information is available in the Club's Whistleblowing Policy or from the Legal and Risk Department or HR team.

REVIEW

Safeguarding arrangements will continue to be dynamically reviewed on a weekly basis or as Government guidance changes promoting the need for these arrangements to be reviewed more immediately. These arrangements will be considered as part of the Club's overall integrated planned response to the crisis, which at its heart has ensuring the safety and fair treatment of everyone that works for or with us.

KEY CONTACTS

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