

PORTSMOUTH YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE
(Founded 1906)



**SAFEGUARDING &
CODES OF CONDUCT**

SEASON 2026-2027

www.pyfl.co.uk

Affiliated to Hampshire Football Association

**MAIN
PARTNER**



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**ACCREDITED
LEAGUE**
PART OF ENGLAND FOOTBALL

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

The FA has a network of 10,000 volunteer Welfare Officers supported by 50 County FA Designated Safeguarding Teams

Hampshire County FA

Safeguarding Team

Email: safeguarding@hmapshirefa.com

Portsmouth Youth Football League



Karen Stevens - League Welfare Officer

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FA Safeguarding Team - 0800 169 1863

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Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

The Football Association is committed to a safe, enjoyable and inclusive environment for young people in football whether they are players, referees, coaches or volunteers and therefore has a 3-part approach to safeguarding which includes:

- ‘The Right People’ – Seeking references and criminal records checks
- ‘Raising Awareness’ – Education and best practice
- ‘Dealing with Concerns’ – Policy, procedures and referrals

English football takes safeguarding extremely seriously. The ongoing work to make the game as safe and enjoyable as possible is led by The FA, the game’s governing body in this country. This work is delivered through County FAs in conjunction with leagues and clubs.

A clear safeguarding strategy has been put in place by English football to protect people involved in the national game. It is complete with policies, procedures and regulations. **Every** club in the country must adhere to the policies which apply to them. If not, they face sanctions, including suspension from playing.

Policies include the **mandatory appointment of a Club Welfare Officer(s) for every league or club with youth teams**. There is also a requirement for specified club committee officers to complete the free online ‘Safeguarding for Committee Members’ course. While mandatory for specified officers, the course is open to anyone to raise their awareness of potential situations and how to deal with them.

Welfare Officers must have an FA-accepted Criminal Record Check, which has to be renewed every three years. They must also undertake regular FA-approved safeguarding training. With the club committee’s support, Welfare Officers ensure the appropriate checks and training are completed for anyone at the club working with children and young people under the age of 18.

Explanatory films and general information (see link below) outline how safeguarding concerns should be reported to the football authorities – and how they are investigated. They also show how we work together across the game and with the statutory agencies to investigate and risk-manage any concerns raised.

[Safeguarding, Respect and Welfare - Hampshire FA](#)

Please remember that if a child or young person is in immediate danger then **ALWAYS** call **999**.

Our focus is on safeguarding the welfare of all young people who participate in the Portsmouth Youth Football League whilst protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying.

Serious causes for concern are fortunately rare. If and when they occur, they should be reported to the League’s CWO’s & Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) at Hampshire County F.A. for further investigation.

There is however equal concern for incidents which affect the conditions under which Youth Football is played, particularly those which are considered poor practice. These incidents range from conflict between opposing teams’ parents, spectator incursion onto the pitch and general threatening behaviour towards players, officials and supporters. Such incidents have become too common and every Club needs to work towards their elimination to ensure that the children in their charge are provided with a safe environment in which to play.

Clubs are held responsible for the behaviour of their Managers, Coaching Staff, Players, Parents, spectators (and may incur considerable fines if this duty is neglected) Clubs are expected to advocate responsible behaviour by way of education and example.

For more information on Safeguarding please contact your League Welfare Officer, Karen Stevens or Assistant League Welfare Officer, Julie Baker.

[Best-practice and guidance notes – the complete directory](#)

F.A. RESPECT PROGRAMME

Following on from Safeguarding, the Portsmouth Youth Football League and our entire member Clubs are committed to the F.A. RESPECT programme which has been developed to eliminate poor practice at all levels within the sport of football.

We expect ALL participants of the League to vigorously support the programme and trust in turn that ALL will benefit by its adoption.

RESPECT Marshalls are the first port of call on a match day as they should be monitoring behaviour on and off the field of play and reporting back to the Club any incidents that happen as well as trying to diffuse them at the source. The FA can provide training.

[Play your part - Code of Conduct - Respect | The Football Association](#)





CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT DATA PROTECTION ACT

1. Child Protection Policy Statement

The Portsmouth Youth League ("the League") recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people (defined as any person under the age of 18) involved in football which it organises or which it supervises and is committed to working to provide them with a safe environment. The League subscribes to The Football Association's Child Protection Best Practice Policy and Procedures, Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football (Revised Edition 2006) and endorse and adopt the Policy Statement contained in that document namely:-

"Every child or young person, defined as any person under the age of 18, who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and should be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in football. The FA recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. The FA is, therefore, committed to working to provide a safe environment for all children and young people to participate in the sport to the best of their abilities so long as they choose to do so".

2. Key Principles

The key principles of this Safeguarding Children Policy and that of the FA are that:-

The child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration

All children and young people have the right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately

Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents/carers is essential

3. Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that every child or young person who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse. The League recognises that this is the responsibility of every adult involved in football organised or supervised by the League.

3. Role

The League has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. It is noted and accepted that the Football Association regulations (set out in Appendix 2A hereto) apply to all persons involved in football whether in a paid or voluntary capacity. This means whether you are a volunteer, match official, helper on club tours, coach, club official or medical staff.

The League endorses and will apply the Football Association regulations and will treat any infraction of those regulations as misconduct which will be the subject of the disciplinary procedures set out in the League Rules in addition to any other procedures which may be undertaken by any other body or authority. The League also endorses and adopts the FA's Safeguarding Children and Best Practice Guidelines for recruiting volunteers and will:-

- Develop a role profile
- Request identification documents

As a minimum, meet and discuss with the applicants and where possible will conduct interviews before appointing

- Request and follow up with 2 references before appointing
- Require an FA CRB Unit Enhanced Disclosure where appropriate in line with FA Guidelines

All current League officials with direct access to children and young people will be required to complete a *DBS Enhanced Criminal Record with Children's Barred List Check*.

If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached the League to become one of its officials, guidance will be sought from the Football Association. It is noted and accepted that the FA will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained via the FA CRB Unit and that all decisions will be made in the best interests of children and young people. It is accepted that the FA aims to prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children or young people and the opportunity to influence policies or practice with children or young people. This is to prevent direct sexual or physical harm to children and young people and to minimize the risk of "grooming" within football.

4. Whistle Blowing

The League supports the FA's whistle blowing policy. Any adult or young person with concerns about a colleague can whistle blow by contacting the FA Child Protection Team or by writing to the FA Case Manager at the Football Association, 25 Soho Square, London W1D 4FA or by going direct to the police, social services or the NSPCC. The League encourages member clubs to familiarize themselves with the FA whistle blowing policy and to adopt it.

5. Youth League & Club Welfare Officer

The League has appointed a Youth League Welfare Officers (YLWO) and requires each member club to have appointed a Club Welfare Officer (CWO) in line with the FA's guidance as the appropriate profile for this role and following completion by the relevant individual of the FA Safeguarding Children workshop (formerly known as Child Protection and Best Practice workshop). The YLWO & CWO will also be required to complete the FA's Welfare Officer Workshop (WOW). The YLWO & CWO will be the first point of contact for parents/carers regarding concerns for the welfare of any child or young person. They liaise directly with the County FA Child Protection Officer (CFAWO) and will be familiar with the procedures for referring any concerns. They will also play a proactive role in increasing an awareness of poor practice and abuse within the League, in the case of the YLWO and within their respective clubs in the case of the CWO.

6. Bullying

We acknowledge and endorse the FA's identification of bullying as a category of abuse. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable within the League. If bullying does occur, all parents or parents/carers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. Incidents need to be reported to the YLWO and/or CWO or alternatively in cases of serious bullying, contact may be made with the CFAWO.

7. Codes of Conduct

Codes of Conduct for coaches, players, officials and parents/carers have been implemented by the League. Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct constitutes misconduct which may be the subject of disciplinary sanction in accordance with the League rules.

9. Further Advice

Further advice on Safeguarding Children matters can be obtained from:-

- The Hampshire County Football Association Welfare Officer, whose details can be found in the County Handbook
- The FA/NSPCC Child Protection 24 hour Helpline 0808 800 5000
- www.TheFA.com/goal
- The FA Child Protection team

This statement of Best Practice follows and adopts the Football Association's Safeguarding Children Best Practice Guidelines

1. Each member club of the League should acknowledge its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care and be committed to working to provide a safe environment for all members. A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any club football activity.

2. Each member club should subscribe to the Football Association's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures and endorse and adopt the policy statement contained in that document.

3. The key principles of the FA Safeguarding Children Policy are that:-

- The child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration
- All children and young people will have the right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents or carers is essential
- Each member club should acknowledge that every child or young person who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse
- Each member club should recognise that this is the responsibility of every adult involved in the club

4. Each member club has a role to play in the safeguarding of the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. It should be noted and accepted that the Football Association's Safeguarding Children Regulation (see the FA Handbook) applies to everyone in football whether in a paid or voluntary capacity. This includes those who are volunteers, match officials, helpers on club tours, football coaches, club officials or medical staff.

5. Each member club should endorse and adopt the FA's Safeguarding Children Guidelines for recruiting volunteers and will:-

- Develop a role profile
- Request identification document
- As a minimum, meet and chat with the applicants and where possible conduct interviews before appointing
- Request and follow up with two references before appointing
- Require an FA CRB unit enhanced disclosure where appropriate in line with FA Guidelines

All current member clubs whose members have direct access to children and young people should be required to complete a CRB enhanced disclosure via the FA CRB unit. If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved who has approached the club to become a member or involved in its activities, guidance will be sought from the Football Association. It should be noted and accepted that the FA will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained via the FA CRB unit enhanced disclosure and that all decisions will be made in the best interests of children and young people.

It should be accepted that the FA aims to prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children or young people and the opportunity to influence policies or practice with children or young people. This is to prevent direct sexual physical harm to children and to minimise the risk of "grooming" within football.

6. Each member club should support the FA's whistle blowing policy. Any adult or young person with concerns about a colleague should be encouraged to "whistle blow" by contacting the FA Child Protection Manager or by writing to the FA Case Manager at the Football Association, 25 Soho Square, London W1D 4FA or by going directly to the police, social services, or the NSPCC.

Each member club should encourage everyone to know about these procedures and use them if necessary.

7. Each member club should appoint a Club Welfare Officer (CWO) in line with the FA's role profile and required completion of the safeguarding children workshop. The post-holder will be involved with designated persons with training provided by the FA. The CWO should be the first point of contact for all club members and parents or guardians regarding concerns for the welfare of any child or young person. They should liaise directly with the County Football Association Welfare Officer and be familiar with procedures for referring any concerns. They should also play a proactive role in increasing an awareness of poor practice and abuse amongst club members.

8. Each member club should acknowledge and endorse the FA's identification of bullying as a category of abuse. Bullying of any kind should not be acceptable at any club. If bullying does occur players, parents or guardians should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. Incidents should be reported to the Club Welfare Officer of each member club, a member of the committee of the club or, in cases of serious bullying, contact should be made with the Youth League Welfare Officer or the County FA Welfare Officer.

9. The code of conduct for players, parents or spectators, officials and coaches should have been implemented by each member club. In order to validate these codes of conduct the club should have clear sanctions to deal with any misconduct at club level and should acknowledge the possibility of potential sanctions which may be implemented by the League or by the relevant County Football Association in more serious circumstances. All prospective members should be informed of these codes.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

In making an application to join the Competition, the personal information of the Secretary plus other of its Club members and the consent of all will be presumed unless otherwise notified.

The Management Committee point out that it is a condition of entry to the Competition that this information is held securely on computers and only used by members of the Management Committee and that email shall be used as a form of communicating correspondence within the Portsmouth Youth Football League

As a League we are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy.

We now have a Data Protection Policy in force which can be found on our website.