



# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

## 1. Introduction

First Kick Management is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children, young people and adults participating in our coaching programmes. This document outlines our safeguarding policies and procedures in accordance with the Keeping Children Safer in Education Act 2023 to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for all children under our care.

First Kick Management recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child, young person and adult who has entrusted their well-being to our organisation. We are committed to ensuring that all children, young people and adults participating in our programmes feel safe, secure, and protected from harm.

### 1.1 Safeguarding is defined as

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

### 1.2 First Kick is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We believe that:

- All children have the right to be protected from harm;
- Children need to be safe and to feel safe at First Kick,
- Children need support that matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse;
- All children have the right to speak freely and voice their values and beliefs;
- All children must be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other;
- We can and do contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying, exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk-taking behaviours; and
- All team members and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children and protecting them from abuse.

### 1.3 Key Principles:

**Child-Centric Approach:** Our policies and practices prioritise the best interests of the child, ensuring their physical and emotional well-being.

**Staff Training:** All staff members undergo comprehensive safeguarding training to recognize signs of abuse, appropriate reporting procedures, and maintaining confidentiality.

**Code of Conduct:** Staff, volunteers, and coaches adhere to a strict code of conduct, promoting positive and respectful behaviour towards children and each other.

**Communication:** Open and transparent communication with parents, guardians, and relevant authorities regarding safeguarding matters.

Risk Assessment: Regular risk assessments are conducted to identify and address potential hazards within our coaching environments.

## 2. Overall Aims and Expectations

This policy will contribute to safeguarding all children that attend First Kick Management Ltd and promoting their welfare by:

- Clarifying standards of behaviour for team members and children,
- Encouraging children and parents/carers to participate;
- Alerting team members to the signs and indicators that all might not be well;
- Developing team members awareness of the causes of abuse;
- Developing team members awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities children face;
- Addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage; and
- Reducing the potential risks children face of being exposed to violence, extremism, exploitation or victimisation.

2.1 All team members will:

- Be familiar with this safeguarding policy;
- Be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and checks
- Be alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse
- Record concerns and give the record to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Deal with a disclosure of abuse from a child in line with the guidance given - you must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and provide a written account as soon as possible.
- Be aware of the guidance issued by the Safeguarding Children Board of the local authority that they work in.
- Be required to attend FA Safeguarding Workshop at regular intervals.
- Be subject to appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

## 3. The Designated Safeguarding Leader

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead has lead responsibility and management, oversight and accountability for child protection.

When First Kick Management Ltd has concerns about a child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide what steps should be taken.

Team members will be informed of relevant details only when the Designated Safeguarding Lead feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child. A written record will be made of what information has been shared with whom, and when.

**Do not disclose to a parent any information held on a child if this would put the child at risk of significant harm.**

## 4. Safer Recruitment

All staff and volunteers involved in coaching primary children undergo thorough background checks, including criminal records and reference checks, to ensure their suitability for working with children.

## 5. Training and Development

Staff members receive regular training on safeguarding policies, procedures, and updates in accordance with the Keeping Children Safer in Education Act 2023. This training includes recognising signs of abuse, appropriate reporting, and responding to concerns.

## 6. Safeguarding

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

There are four main types of abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. The abuser may be a family member, someone the young person encounters in residential care or in the community, including sports and leisure activities. Any individual may abuse or neglect a young person directly or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the young person.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a young person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated may follow the individual into adulthood.

### The Four Main Categories of Abuse

#### Neglect

**Definition:** Longstanding and/or severe neglect, Effect on the Child's development, Non-organic failure to thrive

**Signs/Symptoms:** Constant Hunger, tiredness, stealing or scrounging. Poor personal hygiene, or inappropriate clothing for weather or activities. Untreated medical problems. Low self-esteem, poor social relations

#### Physical

**Definition:** Deliberate injury to the child – allowing injury. Beyond 'reasonable' chastisement. Poisoning, inc. alcohol. Withholding drugs or apparatus. Both the use of an implement e.g. a belt or a physical strike that leave a mark are illegal

**Signs/Symptoms:** Unexplained or untreated injured, especially if repetitive. Refusal to discuss injuries, and untreated injuries. Shrinking from physical contact. Fear of returning home, undressing, or medical help. Aggression or bullying. Unexplained pattern of absences which may serve to hide bruises or other physical injuries

#### Sexual

**Definition:** Sexual exploitation of any kind including watching others and viewing pornographic material

**Signs/Symptoms:** Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age, through drawings, games, vocabulary etc. Frequent public masturbation. Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity. Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, fearfulness. This is a short summary, there are other signs, individual to certain children

#### Emotional

**Definition:** Must be persistent. Must undermine the child's sense of self-worth. Might reflect poor parenting skills. Includes witnessing domestic violence towards primary carer

**Signs/Symptoms:** Continual self-depreciation, self-harm or mutilation. Inappropriate response to painful situations. Compulsive stealing/scrounging. Air of detachment, social isolation or desperate attention seeking behaviour, depression or withdrawal. Eating problems, either overeating or a lack of appetite

## 7. Safeguarding children against other forms of abuse

### **Terrorism and Radicalisation**

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

First Kick Management Ltd is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and that protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of our safeguarding duty.

Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

First Kick Management Ltd values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both children and team members have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

First Kick Management Ltd seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism and recognises their duty to prevent children and families being drawn into terrorist or extremist behaviour and employ the following methods:

- Follows the guidance in the government document 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales 2015'
- We value all children and their families equally
- We promote the development of positive attitudes and behaviours to all people, whether they are different from or similar to themselves
- We have a commitment to challenging prejudice
- Report any concerns about children, staff or families to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or relevant authorities

### **Child on Child Abuse**

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos<sup>8</sup> (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)

- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

### **Child Sexual Exploitation CSE**

Involves exploitative situations where a child, male or female, receives something from an adult as a result of engaging in sexual activity. This can be seemingly 'consensual' relationships to serious organised crime gangs. There will be an imbalance of power where the perpetrator holds power over the victim. Technology is often used. This is a serious crime.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation CCE**

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

### **Female Genital Mutilation FGM**

This is illegal and a form of child abuse. It involves a procedure to remove all or some of the female genitalia or any other injury to these organs. It is a legal duty to report *known cases* to the police.

When a team member has reason to suspect that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl aged under 18, he/she will discuss the situation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who may consult children's social care before a decision is made as to whether the mandatory reporting duty applies.

### **Forced Marriage**

Forced marriage is illegal and a form of child abuse. A marriage entered without the full and free consent of one or both parties, where violence, threats or coercion is used.

## **8. Dealing with a Disclosure**

1. Listen and stay calm. Do not condemn the abuser, do not judge, do not make promises you can't keep
2. Reassure them. Tell them that you believe them. Tell them that it happens to others and that they are brave to tell you.
3. Stay with them. If you can 'ground' them ("grounding" means to draw the child back to a more comfortable state of mind through things like normal conversation e.g. what activities have you done today, what's your favourite TV program)
4. Accurately record the child words. Make it clear whether it is a fact, opinion or hearsay.
5. Report it to your immediate Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible; they will know the right procedure to follow. In some cases, they will speak to the parents first or report to the local safe guarding children's board.
6. If a third party expresses concern that a child is being abused, we will encourage them to contact Social Care directly. If they will not do so, we will explain that First Kick Management Ltd is obliged to, and the incident will be logged accordingly.

If you have any concerns about a child's welfare at your holiday club or evening course, do not keep it to yourself. Write it down and take advice. Only speak with your manager or directly to the Designated Safeguard Lead.

### **6.1 Allegation against a person within First Kick Management Ltd**

This procedure should be used in any case in which it is alleged that a team member has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

All team members working within First Kick Management Ltd must report any potential safeguarding concerns about an individual's behaviour towards children and young people immediately. Allegations or concerns about colleagues and visitors must be reported directly to the Director.

If there is a serious allegation of abuse made against you, First Kick Management Ltd will have to suspend you whilst the investigation is carried out. This is to protect all parties, including you. You should:

- Stay calm
- Follow the Manager's instructions
- Co-operate with questions and enquires
- Seek advice – Head Office or Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Not confront the accuser
- Not speak with your 'victim'
- Be supported through the process by a designated person at head office and/or your Manager.

First Kick Management Ltd has a legal duty to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service of any suspicions of any allegations even if staff leave before an investigation is started or completed.

### **6.2 Protecting yourself**

Part of safeguarding is also to protect yourself from allegations and to ensure your actions are not misinterpreted by anyone. Do this by observing the following:

- Avoid being alone with a child
- Take a register of which children are with you for each session, noting the time of the session.
- If you take a child somewhere e.g. an empty room, do not enter with them, wait outside. If you have to enter the room, **it's vital you keep all doors open.**
- Do not play-fight
- Children should not be encouraged to sit on your lap
- Challenge any child using 'bad' language

- Never let children touch themselves or others inappropriately in any form
- Never let a child's allegation go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted on
- Never do personal things for children that they are capable of doing themselves. Encourage children to help each other.
- Do not build 'special' relationships with individual children
- You must not, before, during or after your employment make or accept any contact with a child or a friend of a child you know through your work with First Kick Management Ltd or through social networking websites.
- Any images of children taken on site must only be of those children whose parents allow photos to be taken. Staff should not take any photos off site.
- Any images taken must be appropriate.
- It is each individual staff's personal responsibility to delete any images from cameras, phones and recording devices.
- Images must not be published elsewhere without the authorisation of a Company Director.

### **6.3 Allegation against an adult outside of First Kick Management Ltd**

If you have any concerns about an adult's behaviour, even if they do not work for First Kick Management Ltd, for example a parent, other provider on a school site, a member of school staff, etc. you have a duty to report your concerns using our normal procedure of escalating to your manager or the company safeguarding lead.

### **6.4 Whistle Blowing**

First Kick Management Ltd will not accept or condone any behaviour by staff or other adults associated with the Company that is contrary to our Aims and Objectives, Policies and Procedures. We will actively encourage and fully support the reporting of such behaviour. We will do this by:

- Promoting an environment of mutual respect, trust and open communication.
- Promoting an environment that is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Treating everyone equally and fairly, with dignity and respect and by valuing individual differences.
- Ensuring that the quality of the work of each staff member is effectively monitored as well as the work of the Company as a whole.
- Ensure that procedures are in place for reporting unacceptable behaviours/practices.
- Provide staff with a number of ways to report concerns
- Actively supporting staff/volunteers that 'Blow the Whistle' both during the investigation and after, and in line with the relevant legislation.

### **6.5 Promoting awareness among staff**

First Kick Management Ltd promotes awareness of child abuse issues through its staff training. The Club ensures that:

- Its designated CPO has relevant experience and receives appropriate training
- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all new staff
- All staff have a copy of this Child Protection Policy, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse or neglect
- All staff are aware of their statutory requirements with regards to the disclosure of information or discovery of child abuse
- Its procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)' and that staff are familiar with the 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused' flowchart

## **9. Good practice guidelines**

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote children's welfare and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

## **Good practice means:**

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all young people equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Making activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people– avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

## **Practices never to be sanctioned**

The following should **never** be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves

## **Incidents that must be reported/recorded**

If any of the following occur, you should report this immediately to the appropriate officer and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a player
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner
- If a player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- If a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

## **Use of mobile phones and cameras**

Photographs will only be taken of children unless consent has been withdrawn by the parent. Only the Company camera will be used to take photographs of children at the Club, except with the express permission of the Manager.

## **Changing**

Under 8's – Ensure there is always 2 members of staff in the changing area and that you can see each other at all times. Staff should not dress or dry children but support them in doing so themselves. Wait until all children are ready.

Over 8's – Staff should wait outside of the changing rooms. If there is a disturbance that warrants entry, avoid entering alone and never enter alone if there are less than 3 children left.

## **Toilet Supervision**

Under 8's – Children will be escorted to the toilets and staff will remain outside the door to assist if help is requested.

Over 8's – All children will ask to use the toilet facilities. Staff will monitor numbers and ensure children return to their play in the appropriate location

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| This policy was adopted by First Kick Management | Date: 07/12/2023      |
| To be reviewed: 01/12/2024                       | Signed: Suleman Desai |