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Ebbsfleet United Football Club – Safeguarding Policy

Bullying

Objectives of this policy:

- All club members, coaches, officials, and parents should understand what bullying is.
- All club members, officials and coaching staff should know what the club policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All players and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a club we take bullying seriously. Players and parents should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will **not be tolerated**.

Examples of bullying:

Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

Physical: Any form of physical violence, intimidating behaviour, theft, or the intentional damage of possessions. This includes hitting, kicking, and punching.

Emotional: Excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting people up and spreading rumours.

Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, homophobic comments, jokes about disabled people, sexist or misogynistic comments.

Cyberbullying: The misuse of digital technologies or communication to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation, Examples of cyberbullying include:

- **Abusive comments**, rumours, gossip, and threats made using digital communications and/ or technologies – this includes internet trolling.
- **Sharing pictures**, videos, or personal information without the consent of the owner and with the intent to cause harm or humiliation.
- **Hacking** into someone's email, phone, or online profiles to extract and share personal information, or to send hurtful content while posing as that person.
- **Creating dedicated websites** that intend harm, make fun of someone, or spread malicious rumours.

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- **Pressurising** someone to do something they do not want to do or a sexually explicit.

Whilst the above constitute forms of cyber bullying, it is also important to understand that some of what is described are also criminal offences.

Ebbsfleet United Football Club commits to ensure our club website and social media channels are being used appropriately and any online bullying will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately in line with procedures detailed in this policy.

Why does Bullying take place?

People can be targeted for any reason, but people who bully others target 'difference' and bullying can be a form of wider discrimination. For example, bullying behaviour may be:

- **Racist:** Targeted at ethnicity, skin colour, and language, religious or cultural practices.
- **Homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic:** Targeted at actual or perceived sexuality and/or gender.
- **Sexual and/or sexist:** This is behaviour that is intended to cause offence, humiliation, or intimidation.
- **Disablist:** Targeted at an impaired or special educational need.
- **Targeting and difference:** Bullying can also be targeted at 'looks,' weight and height, colour of hair, wearing glasses or braces, acne, psoriasis and eczema, scars, marks or conditions of the face or body, body odour, poverty, gifts and talents or family situation (E.g. divorce, bereavement, homelessness).
- **Discrimination:** Bullying because of discrimination occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against certain people or groups of people. This may be because of their gender, age, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, or ability.

Procedures:

1. Report bullying incidents to the Club Welfare Officer, Assistant Welfare Officer, or a member of the Club's Committee/Board.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to the County FA DSO for advice and to The FA Case Management Team.
3. Parents will be informed and will be asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly.

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6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
7. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will take disciplinary action under the club constitution.

Recommended Club Action:

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation, they should follow the procedure outlined below:

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails/not appropriate a small panel (made up from the Chairperson, Club Welfare Officer, Secretary, committee members) should meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.
3. The same 3 persons should meet with the alleged bully and parent/s and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed.
4. If bullying has in their view taken place the individual should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e., temporary, or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
5. In some cases, the parent of the bully or bullied player can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
6. All coaches involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e., the warning.

In the case of adults reported to be bullying anyone within the club under 18:

1. The County DSO should always be informed and will advise on action to be taken where appropriate; this may include action by The FA Safeguarding Team.
2. It is anticipated that in most cases where the allegation is made regarding a team manager, official or coach, The FA's Safeguarding Children Education Programme may be recommended.
3. More serious cases may be referred to the Police and/or Children's Social Care.

Equality, Inclusion & Diversity

Equality Statement

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The Club is committed to and endorses the principle of equality and strives to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in the Club and its activities whether as a supporter, player, the local community, customer, community outreach participant, employee, Board member, contractor, volunteer, partner, or supplier:

- Can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to enjoy their engagement at the Club without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment, bullying and abuse; and
- Have a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, without regard to their age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Our aim is to embed equality across all levels of the Club. Through this Policy, the Club aims to ensure that the message of equality is followed and actively practised.

Legal Obligation

The Club is committed to avoiding and eliminating discrimination of any kind in the Club and recognises that it is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly because of an individual's:

- age,
- disability,
- gender reassignment,
- race,
- religion or belief,
- sex,
- sexual orientation,
- marriage or civil partnership,
- pregnancy or maternity.

Individuals will be protected if they have a protected characteristic, are assumed to have a protected characteristic, are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic or with someone who is assumed to have a protected characteristic.

We are fully committed to compliance with all relevant equality legislation, this includes the Equality Act 2010.

The Club commitment includes, but is not limited to:

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- Having a culture of zero-tolerance on abuse, unlawful discrimination, bullying, misogyny, harassment and victimisation
 - Dealing with complaints of abuse, unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment, and victimisation seriously and timeously
 - Monitoring recruitment and selection methods
 - Providing equal opportunities
-
- Challenging unconscious bias
 - Developing policies and procedures to ensure they do not discriminate unlawfully because of any of the protected characteristics.
 - Monitoring the make-up of the workforce regarding protected characteristics to encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion.
 - Ensuring all activities promote positive equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Each member of staff and volunteers are expected to adhere to this policy and procedure to ensure that a positive equal, diverse and inclusive opportunities climate exist.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Definitions:

Equality - Is ensuring individuals or groups of individuals are not treated differently or less favourably, based on their specific protected characteristic.

Diversity - Is about recognising differences. It is acknowledging the benefit of having a range of perspectives in decision-making and the workforce being representative of the club's customers.

Inclusion - Is where people's differences are valued and used to enable everyone to thrive at the club. An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels that they belong without having to conform, that their contribution matters and they can perform to their full potential, no matter their background, identity or circumstances. An inclusive workplace has fair policies and practices in the place and enables a diverse range of people to work together effectively.

Types of Discrimination:

An individual may experience different forms of discrimination. Discrimination may take the form of:

- **Direct discrimination** – this occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have.

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- **Indirect discrimination** – this occurs when a condition, which applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who possess a protected characteristic.
- **Discrimination by association** - this is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
- **Discrimination by perception** - this is direct discrimination against someone because an individual believes that another individual possesses a particular protected characteristic when they do not have that protected characteristic.
- **Victimisation** – this occurs when someone is treated less favourably because of making or supporting a complaint about discrimination, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because they made/supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because they are suspected of doing so.
- **Harassment** – this is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.
- **Bullying** – this is a form of personal harassment involving the misuse of power, influence or position to persistently criticise, humiliate or undermine an individual.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments this is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

Complaints and Compliance:

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The Club consider all forms of discriminatory behaviour, including (but not limited to) the behaviour described in the Legal Obligations section of this Policy as unacceptable and are concerned with

ensuring individuals feel able to raise any bona fide grievance, report or complaint related to such behaviour without fear of being penalised for doing so.

Appropriate sanctions will be taken against any Executive Board member, staff, player, match day fan, participant in outreach programmes and other people engaged with the Club's activities who violate this Equality Policy.

Any individual who believes that they have been treated in a way that they consider to be in breach of this Policy by any other Club representative should in the first instance, and if they feel able to do so try and discuss it with that person. If that does not resolve the matter, or in the case of allegations against the Club itself, the individual may raise the matter with their manager, a staff member or the Club Welfare Officer / Safeguarding Officer.

Unfair Treatment:

All staff and volunteers should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination to fellow employees, volunteers, customers, suppliers, and the public.

Reasonable Adjustments

To ensure practices remain justifiable and lawful the Club will aim to make the necessary reasonable adjustments relating to all protected characteristics. This includes, but is not limited to, physical features and environmental adjustments in relation to any of its premises ensuring fairness and equality for potential employees, current employees and third-party contractors associated with the Club.

The Club will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure staff are able to participate in its business activities on an equal basis. You are encouraged to tell the Club if you need appropriate support/reasonable adjustments so that this can be provided.

Recruitment and Selection

The Club aims to ensure that job applicants do not suffer unlawful discrimination. Recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly, in line with the Equality Act 2010 and Safer Recruitment Guidelines, including but not limited to, to ensure that individuals are treated based on their relevant merits and abilities.

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Job selection criteria is regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant and are not disproportionate. Shortlisting of applicants is undertaken by more than one person. Job advertisements will avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a protected characteristic from applying.

Applicants will not be asked questions about health or disability before a job offer is made unless those questions are permitted by law, for example, to establish whether reasonable adjustments might be required for an interview or other selection process, or for equal opportunities monitoring.

The Club requests equality and diversity data from all applicants on a voluntary basis when applying for a position and will regularly review shortlisting as the recruitment process progresses. The information is kept in an anonymised format and retained solely within the Human Resources department. The data is used to support the Club to take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Club is required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status will not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration and right to work legislation.

Training, promotion and terms and conditions

Employees will be given appropriate access to promotions and training to enable them to progress. All decisions will be made based on merit, ability and job suitability coupled with transparent and justifiable methods.

Workforce composition and promotions will be monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the Club. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unjustified barriers and to meet the needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

Terms and conditions, benefits and facilities will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

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Sexual Misconduct

This policy applies to acts of sexual harassment or misconduct by and against any Staff, Volunteer, Player or Supporter on the Club's premises or elsewhere in connection with Club activities or events.

Under this Policy, a person may report and make a complaint about sexual harassment or misconduct where the Responding Party is a member of staff or volunteer including players, regardless of whether they were at the Club at the time when the alleged sexual harassment or misconduct took place, and whether or not they are employed by the Club at the point when the complaint is made.

The Club acknowledges that sexual harassment or misconduct can happen to anyone regardless of sex, gender, gender reassignment, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality, or background and that this may have an adverse impact on their working lives and can be carried out by anyone. Sexual harassment or misconduct can be both a cause and a consequence of inequality and power differences. Abuse of power will be a relevant consideration in deciding the seriousness of misconduct. Sexual harassment or misconduct is unacceptable in all circumstances and may, in some cases, constitute a criminal offence. The Club recognises its moral, legal and regulatory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all Employees, Staff, Volunteers and Supporters. Upon that basis, the Club's approach is underpinned by legislation, statutory and regulatory guidance, compliance with Football Authority Regulations (as defined below) and current best practice.

In light of these commitments, the objectives of this Policy are to:

- a) ensure that all Clubs Staff and Volunteers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to sexual harassment or misconduct;
- b) provide a fair, transparent and consistent approach for reporting, investigating and responding to allegations of sexual harassment or misconduct; and
- c) ensure that information about sources of support is made available to anyone who experiences sexual harassment or misconduct or who is accused of sexual harassment or misconduct.

What is Sexual misconduct?

Sexual harassment or misconduct describes a range of behaviours, including:

- sexual assault,

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- sexual harassment,
- stalking,
- voyeurism,
- Rape, and
- any other conduct of a sexual nature that is non-consensual or has the purpose or effect of threatening, intimidating, undermining, humiliating or coercing a person.

Any of these behaviours will be treated as a potential breach under this Policy. This Policy is intended to encompass behaviours that may or may not also be defined as sexual harassment or sexual offences in the context of civil or criminal courts. However, using the language of sexual harassment or misconduct makes it clear that this Policy is separate from and additional to any legal process.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of behaviours that may constitute sexual harassment or misconduct:

Consent

Under this Policy, a person is regarded as consenting to sexual activity if:

- they agree to it by choice; and
- have the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

Consent must be present every time a person ("**Person A**") engages in sexual activity with another person ("**Person B**"). Person A must stop if they are not absolutely sure that they have Person B's consent. Any prior consensual sexual activity or relationship between Person A and Person B does not, in and of itself, constitute Person B's consent to further sexual activity with Person A. Person B may withdraw consent at any time (including during a sexual act) and consent can never be implied, assumed or coerced.

Capacity

A person's capacity is dependent on whether they are physically and/or mentally able to make a choice and to understand the consequences of that choice. For example, a person does not have the capacity to give consent if they:

- are drunk or under the influence of drugs, for example they may still be physically able to have sex but they may not be able to consent;
- are asleep or unconscious;
- are below the age of consent in respect of the other person – i.e. below 16, or below 18 years in respect of a worker in a Position of Trust.

In some circumstances, a person may not have capacity if they have a disability or impairment, including learning difficulty, physical disability or mental health condition.

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Disclosing or Reporting Sexual harassment or misconduct

If Staff member, Volunteer, Player or Supporter at the Club has experienced any kind of sexual harassment or misconduct, they can disclose or report this to the Club as follows:

- provide an open but confidential Disclosure to the Line Manager, Club Welfare Officer, or anyone they view as trusted without being required to make a formal Report; or
- make a formal Report under this Policy, through which they can request that the behaviour of another member of staff / volunteer, or visitor to the Club's Premises is investigated.

When a Disclosure is made, the person who the Disclosure has been made to should:

- accompany the Reporting Party to a quiet place where they can talk through the incident without interruptions. This should be a safe space in an environment which the Reporting Party feels comfortable in. When dealing with a situation, ideally with consent of the person reporting two members of Staff should be present, one to talk to the Reporting Party and one to take notes. If available, one of the members of Staff be a member of the Club Welfare Team;

- obtain the Reporting Party's full name, date of birth and contact details (address, phone, email);
- if the Reporting Party is a child, (aged under 18), contact the child's parents/carers, provided that this will not put the child at further risk, and notify the child's local authority (LADO) and notifying police (this will be undertaken by the Club Welfare Officer / Safeguarding Officer);
- take an account of the incident, details of the Responding Party and any other useful information; and
- at the earliest opportunity, call the Club Welfare Officer / Safeguarding Officer.

It is important to note that this can be a distressing process and therefore this initial response should be handled sensitively, with the utmost respect and confidentiality, so as to protect both the Reporting Party and the Responding Party.

Following a Disclosure or Report, the Reporting Party will be given their reporting options along with information on resources for specialist support. The Club recognises that the Reporting Party may require time and reflection before making a decision. The Reporting Party will be given the option and support to do one or more of the following:

- report to the police;

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- report to the Club under this Policy;
- receive advice on the support that is available (see page 11).

If the Club is aware that the Disclosure or Report may amount to a crime having taken place, the Club will consider whether it is appropriate to report the matter to the police. If the Reporting Party refuses to provide police with a statement, which is their right, this will likely result in no further police action.

The County FA DSO will be notified and consideration will be made to inform The FA Safeguarding Case Management Team.

In Steps 1 & 2, the National League DSO is available to offer guidance and support.

Initial Review

Where the Club becomes aware of an allegation of sexual harassment or misconduct against a member of Staff, Volunteer or Player an initial review of the case shall take place and the case will be securely logged. An investigation will then be undertaken to gather the initial facts and the County FA DSO will be informed and consideration made to escalate to The FA Safeguarding Case Management Team.

Where the Reporting Party are staff, a volunteer or player at the Club, they will be offered the support of the Club Welfare Officer / Safeguarding Officer.

As part of the initial review, there will be, at the earliest opportunity, a meeting with the Reporting Party. In this meeting, the Reporting Party will be offered support, and an assessment will be carried out to identify any protective action required.

If it is identified that protective action is required, any relevant safeguards will be implemented as soon as possible. Actions may include, amongst others:

- setting boundaries with both parties;
- restricting the movement of Players or Staff within the Club's premises;
- suspending or excluding the individual temporarily; or
- supporting the Reporting Party to report the alleged sexual harassment or misconduct to the Police.

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The Reporting Party should be advised that the Club does not have the powers of the police and cannot make a determination of criminal guilt in respect of the Responding Party. The Club is bound to operate and make decisions under the lower thresholds of reasonable grounds of belief and the balance of probabilities. This includes decisions in respect of potential disciplinary action against the Responding Party, the suitability to work in given roles of the Responding Party, and transferable risk that identified behaviours of the Responding Party may indicate. An internal investigation will be focused on whether a breach of the Club's policies and codes of conduct has occurred by the Responding Party from an HR perspective, and if the Responding Party works in regulated activity, or in a specified establishment such as the Training Centre.

Report to the Football Authorities

The Club will report any sexual harassment or misconduct allegation as required in line with the relevant Football Authorities Regulations and the relevant thresholds. The Football Association may decide to investigate the matter independently and have powers to suspend individuals from football. In addition we may disclose matter to the relevant League and County FA Safeguarding officers.

Report to the Police

Where the incident is reported to the police and results in a criminal investigation or court proceedings, the Club will ordinarily suspend any ongoing internal HR investigation, and the safeguarding processes will take place under the guidance of investigating police and the local authority LADO. However, it may be appropriate for the Club to continue its internal investigation and processes (and conclude these) whilst the criminal investigation and judicial proceedings are still ongoing.

The Club's Welfare Officer / Safeguarding Officer will work alongside The FA and statutory agencies to ensure that appropriate information is shared from the criminal investigation to inform its internal decision-making on any further action required.

Where the Responding Party is convicted of a criminal offence or accepts a police caution in relation to sexual harassment or misconduct this will ordinarily be taken as conclusive proof of such behaviour, and the Club may decide not to continue its internal investigations.

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However, the Club may still take action within the context of the Club's investigation and process.

In some circumstances, the internal investigation will resume at the conclusion of the criminal investigation or judicial proceedings. A decision by law enforcement agencies to take no further action (in relation to a criminal matter), or an acquittal at a trial does not preclude the Club from taking action within the context of the Club's internal investigation and process.

An acquittal or police decision to take no further action should not and will not be automatically taken to mean that the Reporting Party has made a vexatious or malicious complaint.

On a case-by-case basis, the Club will put in place appropriate safeguards and support in place for the Reporting Party and Responding Party. This position will be reviewed from time to time to ensure appropriate support is in place and consider if any action by the Club is required, including resuming the internal investigation.

Internal Investigation

Where an incident is not reported to the police or does not result in a criminal conviction or caution, the Club will consider how to progress the internal investigation.

Multiple Allegations of Sexual harassment or misconduct

Sexual harassment or misconduct may be between a combination of individuals or several people.

Where complaints are made collectively, all Reporting Parties must provide consent for their evidence to be included in the collective complaint.

A Reporting Party may still choose to make an individual complaint separately, if they would prefer not to be part of a collective complaint. Where the Reporting Party makes a complaint against several people, this may be managed as a single investigation or as multiple separate investigations relating to each Responding Party.

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Where several complaints are made independently about one person, the Club will manage them on an individual basis. However the Club may make provision for dealing with all the complaints to ensure consistent treatment. If required, evidence obtained in one complaint may be used (with consent) for the purposes of another complaint.

Malicious Reporting

We require all individuals involved in a complaint made under this Policy to act with integrity and provide accurate information.

Complaints will always be assumed to be made in good faith and treated seriously unless there is compelling evidence to the contrary.

If someone makes a complaint as a result of a genuine mistake or misunderstanding, this will not be a malicious or vexatious complaint. Likewise, if the outcome of an initial or formal assessment under this Policy is a recommendation not to uphold the complaint (i.e. the conduct is not found to be sexual harassment or misconduct) it should be emphasised that this would not in itself mean the complaint will be regarded as malicious or vexatious.

For an investigation to indicate that a complaint may be malicious, vexatious or otherwise wrongly made, there would have to be evidence of manifestly false accusations and / or deliberate intent to discredit the Responding Party.

Where it is found that a complaint was malicious, vexatious, deliberately false or otherwise wrongly made, based on the evidence gathered by it, it will then deal with the matter in accordance with Club policies and procedures, which may include disciplinary action.

Support Services

Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs)

Sexual assault referral centres offer medical, practical and emotional support to anyone who has been sexually assaulted or raped. They have specially trained to paediatricians / Forensic Nurse Examiners (FNE) and support workers.

SARCs are free and confidential and offers:

- Special support for young people
- Examinations to collect evidence of rape or sexual assault
- Testing for sexually transmitted infections and HIV
- Specialist therapeutic aftercare such as Counselling, Psychology and ISVA support.

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You are not required to provide your details to obtain help.

Organisations for Women

National Domestic Abuse helpline

The National Domestic Abuse Helpline is a freephone 24 hour helpline which provides advice and support to women and can refer them to emergency accommodation. The National Domestic Abuse Helpline is run by Refuge. There are translation facilities if your first language is not English. The 11 Tottenham Hotspur Football Club Sexual harassment or misconduct Policy 2023-24 Helpline also offers BT Type talk for callers with hearing difficulties. The Helpline worker contacts the Type talk operator so that the caller can communicate through them.

Website: www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Refuge

The above helpline offers advice and support to women experiencing domestic violence. Refuge also provide safe, emergency accommodation through a network of refuges throughout the UK, including culturally-specific services for women from minority ethnic communities and cultures.

Their website also includes some information for men who are either being abused or who are abusers.

Website: www.refuge.org.uk

Women's Aid

The Women's Aid website provides a wide range of resources to help women and young people. This includes The Survivor's Handbook which provides a range of information including legal and housing advice, tips on how to create a safety plan and advice for people with specialist housing needs. It's available in 11 languages and in audio. They also run a website to support to children and teenagers who may be living in a home affected by domestic violence, or who may be in a violent relationship themselves.

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Website: <http://www.womensaid.org.uk>

Rights of Women

Rights of Women offers confidential legal advice on domestic and sexual violence. You can find out more about what they do and when they're open on their website.

Website: www.rightsofwomen.org.uk

Finding Legal Options for Women Survivors (FLOWS)

FLOWS gives legal advice to women who are affected by domestic abuse - they also give advice to front line workers.

Website: www.rcjadvise.org.uk/family/flows-finding-legal-options-for-women-survivors

Organisations for Men Respect

Men's Advice Line The Men's Advice Line is a confidential helpline for all men experiencing domestic violence by a current or ex-partner. They provide emotional support and practical advice, and can give you details of specialist services that can give you advice on legal, housing, child contact, mental health and other issues.

Website: www.mensadviceline.org.uk

ManKind Initiative

The ManKind Initiative is a charity offering information and support to men who are victims of domestic abuse or violence. This can include information and support on reporting incidents, police procedures, housing, benefits and injunctions. They can refer you to a refuge, local authority or other another support service if you need it.

Website: new.mankind.org.uk

Everyman Project

The Everyman Project offers counselling to men in the London area who want to change their violent or abusive behaviour. It also has a national helpline which offers advice to anyone worried about their own, or someone else's, violent or abusive behaviour.

Website: www.everymanproject.co.uk

Organisations for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline

Galop provides support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people experiencing domestic violence.

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Website: www.galop.org.uk/get-help

Organisations for disabled people

SignHealth - Domestic Abuse Service

SignHealth provides a specialist domestic abuse service to help Deaf people find safety and security. You can find out how to contact them on their website.

Website: www.signhealth.org.uk/with-deaf-people/domestic-abuse/domestic-abuse-service/

Social Media

Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share or consume content. As a public-facing organisation Ebbsfleet United Football Club recognise the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement, to communicate with and market promotions to our customers, supporters, participants and volunteers.

When someone clearly identifies their association with the Club or Trust or can easily be associated with Ebbsfleet United Football Club in this type of open forum, they are expected to behave and express themselves appropriately and in a manner that upholds the reputation of and doesn't bring the Club and/or Trust into disrepute.

The purpose of this social media policy is to provide some guiding principles for staff, players, coaches, and volunteers of the Club and Trust to follow when using social media.

Scope

This policy applies to all those associated with the Club, players, coaches, directors, trustees, staff, participants and volunteers of the Club and Trust. This policy covers all forms of social media. Social media includes, but is not limited to, activities such as:

- Groups (official and unofficial) conversing re private messaging such a Whatsapp, Texts and Email, this is especially important when it comes to the communication with children.

- Maintaining a profile page on social or business networking sites (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.)

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- Content sharing including using sites such as Flickr (photo sharing) and YouTube (video sharing)
- Commenting on blogs for personal or business reasons
- Leaving product or service reviews on retailer sites or customer review sites
- Taking part in online votes and polls
- Taking part in conversations on public and private web forums (message boards)
- Editing a Wikipedia page

The intent of this policy is to include anything posted online where information is shared that might affect directors, employees, volunteers, players, trustees, sponsors, partners, customers, participants or supporters of the Club and/or Trust as an organisation and the reputation of the Club, the Trust, the National League, the NL Trust, the Youth Alliance League, the Football Association, and any partner competitions or organisations.

Guiding Principles

The web is not anonymous. Everyone should assume that everything they write online, especially in open forums, can be traced back to them. Individuals should be aware that they may be personally liable to prosecution, and open to claims for damages, should your actions be found to be in breach of the law. In cases of harassment, a claim that you had not intended to harass or cause offence will not in itself constitute an acceptable defence.

Due to the unique nature of football the boundaries between personal and professional profiles and any associated opinions and comments can often be blurred. As such, it is essential that Club and Trust players, coaches, directors, trustees, staff and volunteers clearly acknowledge this ambiguity when posting anything online and always consider their connection to the Club and Trust and, as such, their role as a representative of the wider Club.

When using the internet for professional or personal pursuits, all Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy staff must respect the brands of Ebbsfleet United Football Club/ Ebbsfleet United Football Club Academy our partners, sponsors, the associations to which we are members, such as the National League, Youth Alliance League or the Football Association, as well as other staff, following the guidelines in place to ensure that the intellectual property of both Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy and our affiliated associations is not compromised and the organisation is not brought into disrepute.

Usage

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All Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy coaches, directors, staff, players and volunteers using social media must operate within the Ebbsfleet United Football Club Code of Conduct when engaging with electronic communications and social media. Such use:

- Must not contain, or link to, libelous, defamatory or harassing content – this also applies to the use of emoji symbols, illustrations or nicknames
- Must not comment on, or publish information that is confidential in any way
- Must not bring (or be perceived to bring) Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy or the sport and any affiliated governing bodies into disrepute
- Must refrain from posts supporting discrimination whether by reason of sex, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or disability
- Must not be directly linked with any players aged 18 or below from a personal social networking account
- Must not post named photographs of under 18s without parental/guardian agreement
- Must not otherwise be in breach of the Ebbsfleet United Football Club Player Code of Conduct and Professional Contracts.
- For Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy staff using social media, such use must not interfere with work commitments.

Staying Safe in the digital world

We all benefit from the digital world – when used appropriately. We create our own digital footprint every time we post comments, photos and videos – so be sure before you post. If you wouldn't say or do something face-to-face – then don't do it online.

The quick DO's & DON'T's:

DO:

- Use the privacy settings available on most social media sites. Facebook has different 'set up' guidelines for U18s to help to keep you safe – use them.
- Ensure you and your parents/carers know who from your club should be contacting you and how they should be doing this.

DON'T:

- Post, host, text or email things that are hurtful, insulting, offensive, abusive, threatening, or racist. This goes against football rules and could also be against the law.
- Give out personal details including mobile numbers, email addresses or social networking account access to people you don't know well offline.
- Invite your coach, manager, club officials, adult referees or mentors to become your friends online even if you get on really well with them. They have been asked not to accept such invitations.
- Say or do something online if you wouldn't do it face to-face.

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The advice if you're worried or feeling uncomfortable:

- Tell an adult you trust about any communications that make you feel uncomfortable or that ask you not to tell your parent/carer.
- Talk to your club's Welfare Officer if you are unhappy about anything sent to you or said about you over the internet, social networking sites, text messages or via email.
- Tell an adult you trust if an adult involved at your club (or a referee) asks you to become their friend online. Also inform your Club Welfare Officer.
- If you receive an image or message, you find offensive, threatening or upsetting, tell an adult you trust. Make sure you copy and save the image/message elsewhere – or print it off before you remove and destroy it. It may be needed as evidence.
- You can also report concerns directly to the police by clicking here: www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre.

WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH 16/17 YEAR OLDS WHO HOLD A POSITION OF TRUST AND/OR RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN FOOTBALL PLEASE ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE.

- Signed parental/carer consent should be given prior to email, social networking and mobile phone communications with young people holding a position of trust. Ideally the adult(s) who will be communicating in this way should be named. The purpose for the communication should be made clear.
- Both parties to only communicate for the purpose of the identified professional role(s).
- Email and/or social media communications between the parties should copy in either the parent/carer or Welfare Officer, or both.
- Leagues appointing young referees to games must copy in another league official or parent/carer to their communications.
- Do not use language that is directly (or could be misinterpreted as being) racist, sexist, derogatory, threatening, abusive or sexualised in tone in any communication.
- If any inappropriate communication or content is shared between an adult and an under-18-year-old, this must be reported immediately to the Welfare Officer who will seek advice from the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and/or statutory agencies as appropriate.

VIDEO CALLS WITH CHILDREN - SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FOR COACHES/MANAGERS

Online video calls are a great way for coaches/managers to keep in touch with players and other coaches, by providing training ideas, tips on keeping fit and skills challenges online. As a coach/manager, it's really important to keep appropriate boundaries in your digital space. Please ensure you continue to apply the principles of your code of conduct and remember that as a coach/manager even when encouraging players/coaching online you remain in a 'relationship of trust'. Follow the procedures outlined below to help keep you and those you are supporting safe online.

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Setting up

- Always work with groups, ensure you are inclusive when engaging with players.
- Wherever possible involve a second coach/manager or club official.
- All sessions online must be observable and interruptible.
- Where players are aged under 18, communications must go to parents/ carers to accept or decline the player's participation.
- Are there any individual player circumstances which may mean their involvement may not be possible? How might you ensure they still feel included as part of the team/club?

The environment when using video facilities.

- The setting for the background should be in a neutral area, avoiding anything inappropriate being heard or seen. Some apps may offer customisation of avatars, usernames and customised virtual backgrounds. What you may use for personal use may be inappropriate to represent your club – so think about this and make any changes, before contacting anyone.
- Do not host the session from a bedroom.
- The background must not be blurred or obscured.
- Coaches/managers and players must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household. Ideally other members of the household should not be in view when running your session(s).

Session content.

- The purpose of the session and what it will involve must be clearly outlined to all involved.
- All communication provided must have an educational or supportive purpose, or both.
- Language must be professional and appropriate. Please ensure any family members or others in the background also behave appropriately, if it is not possible for them to be out of view, and for them not to be heard during the session.
- Under no circumstances should any part of the session be recorded as this may create a potential risk of hacking by child sex offenders accessing recordings of sessions. The National Crime Agency (NCA), the NCA has identified the potential for an increase in online child sexual abuse during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The session should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.

RUNNING WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

The following guidance is to support clubs and leagues to manage their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

It aims to ensure children, young people, coaches, referees and adults in a position of trust are not subjected to improper online behaviour or improper allegations.

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Remember that clubs and leagues are responsible for ensuring all content hosted on their websites, social network areas and any associated message boards or blogs abides by the Rules and Regulations of The Football Association.

THE RULES:

It is against FA rules to post comments that are or maybe perceived as:

- Offensive
- Insulting
- Abusive
- Threatening;
- Racist
- Discriminatory
- Any other reference that may cause offensive or harm to others.

Any such comment made on club or league websites and/or social networking sites regarding match officials may result in disciplinary action being taken in line with The FA's disciplinary policies and procedures.

Comments made on websites that are threatening, abusive or racist could lead to legal action being taken against those responsible for posting or hosting them. Comments made may attract libel claims and legal action through the civil courts if they are untrue or defamatory. Children and young people should be advised by their coaches, parents/carers and Club Welfare Officer to always tell an adult they trust about communications that make them feel uncomfortable or where they've been asked not to tell their parent/ carer about the communication.

THE DO's & DON'T's:

Clubs/leagues are advised to adhere to the following:

DO:

- Appoint an appropriate adult(s) to monitor the content of the website, who should also attend The FA's Safeguarding Children Workshop to carry out this role.
- Make sure everyone within your club/ league knows who is responsible for monitoring the content of the website and social networking areas and how to contact them.
- Apply the principles within The FA's photography guidelines.

See Guidance Notes 8.3 and the Club Photography policy: Photographing and Filming Children.

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- Place the CEOP, 'Report Abuse' app on your web site and links to the advice offered via its ThinkUKnow.co.uk programmes which give age appropriate advice to children as well as parents/carers.
- Provide a link to TheFA.com safeguarding section – TheFA.com/football-rules governance/safeguarding.
- Consider the benefits hosting message boards, forums or blogs will bring to your club/league against the potential risks. If you decide to use them ensure that they are password protected and only allow comments to be posted by individuals known and permitted access by the club/league.
- Remember that the club/league is responsible for all content contained on its website, forum blogs, tweets or social networking areas.
- Regularly monitor the content of the above and use The FA's 'Respect Codes of Conduct' and 'Relationships of Trust Statement' as a guide to acceptable behaviour online
- Ensure privacy settings are locked so that the page(s) are used explicitly for club or league matters and not as a place to meet, share personal details or have private conversations.
- Get written parent/carer permission before access to view your club/league social media platforms is given to under-18s.

DON'T:

- Host children's or young people's details where they can be seen or used by others to contact them. This includes the mobile phone and email of referees and coaches under the age of 18. Any details hosted should only be done with written parental/carer consent.
- Host pictures of individuals without the express permission of parents/carers.
- Post detail of individuals which may lead them to be identified e.g. school/class/ year, player profiles detailing personal information e.g. favourite foods, movies, teams etc..
- Post or host items which may be considered to be hurtful, insulting, offensive, abusive, threatening, racist or discriminatory or otherwise may cause offence or harm to another or might incite such behaviour in others.
- Post or host match results for teams that are under-11. Remember the focus is on participation not outcome at this age.

Branding & Intellectual Property

It is important that any trademarks belonging to Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy or any affiliated competition or governing body, are not used in personal social media applications, except where such use can be considered incidental – (where incidents is

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taken to mean “happening in subordinate conjunction with some Ebbsfleet United Football Club or Trust Blogs, Social Pages & Online Forums”

When creating a new website, social networking page or forum that is in any way or can in any way be judged to be associated with Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy care should be taken to ensure the appropriate person is given permission to create the page or forum.

Similarly, appropriate permissions must be obtained for the use of logos or images. Images of children may not be replicated on any site without the permission of the child’s parents and/or guardian.

For official Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy blogs, social pages and online forums:

- Posts must not contain, nor link to, pornographic or indecent content
- Some hosted sites may sell the right to advertise on their sites through “pop up” content, which may be of a questionable nature. This type of hosted site should not be used for online forum or social pages as the nature of “pop up” content cannot be controlled.
- Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy members must not use official Ebbsfleet United Football Club/ Ebbsfleet United Football Club Academy pages to promote personal projects

All materials published or used must respect the copyright of third parties.

- Social networking sites allow photographs, videos and comments to be shared with thousands of other users. Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy players, coaches, directors, office bearers and volunteers must recognise that it may not be appropriate to share photographs, videos and comments in this way.
- For example, there may be an expectation that photographs taken at private Ebbsfleet United football Club, the Trust or Academy functions will not appear publicly or on the internet. In certain situations, Ebbsfleet United Football Club/ Ebbsfleet United Football Club Academy players, coaches, directors, office bearers and volunteers could potentially breach the Privacy Act or inadvertently make Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy liable for breach of copyright.
- Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy players, coaches, directors, office bearers and volunteers should be considerate to others in such circumstances and should not post information when they have been asked not to or consent has not been sought and given. They must also remove information about another person should they be asked to do so.

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- Under no circumstances should offensive comments be made about Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy, club staff or any affiliated persons on social media or online.

Breach of Policy

Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy monitors online activity in relation to the club and the sport. Detected breaches of this policy should be reported to Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy. If detected, a breach of this policy may, following investigation, result in formal disciplinary action from Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy under the Ebbsfleet United Football Club or Trust disciplinary procedures detailed in the Club's Code of Conduct. A breach of this policy may also amount to breaches of other Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy documents and policies.

Disciplinary action may involve a verbal or written warning or, in serious cases, termination of employment or engagement with Ebbsfleet United Football Club and Trust.

Consultation or Advice

This policy has been developed to provide guidance for Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy players, coaches, directors, office bearers and volunteers in a new area of social interaction. Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy players, coaches, directors, office bearers and volunteers who are unsure of their rights, liabilities or actions online and seek clarification should contact a member of the relevant board/committee within Ebbsfleet United Football Club, the Trust or Academy via: katie.knowles@eufc.co.uk

If you wish to report a Safeguarding Concern please contact the following:

Club Welfare Officer

Name: Katie Knowles

Contact number: 07500661160

Email: katie.knowles@eufc.co.uk

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