



**Stevenage FC**  
**Safeguarding Strategy**  
**2023-2026**

**#WeAreStevenage**

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## **Our Three-Year Safeguarding Strategy**

Stevenage Football Club's Three Safeguarding Strategy runs from the period of March 2023 to June 2026 and seeks to embed safeguarding throughout all areas of the Club. The Club seeks to achieve this through implementing a preventative strategy whereby its policies and procedures are used by all stakeholders on a daily basis.

"There can be no safe sport in an unsafe society: expecting sport to be held to a higher standard than the political, social and cultural environment in which it operates is a forlorn hope." <sup>1</sup>

The Club can however reduce risks, learn from previous case reviews and investigations, and drive change at all levels. As a Club we will leave no stone unturned in relation to developing our approach to safeguarding. We will do everything within our power to prevent harm and abuse from happening within all areas of the Club, and when allegations and disclosures occur, we will respond quickly, appropriately and effectively in order to safeguard those in our care.

<sup>1</sup> "Child Protection in Sport: Reflections on Thirty Years of Science and Activism", C.H Brackenbridge and D Rhind, Social Sci. 2014, 3, pg. 334

## Strategic Aims

### Aim 1- Prevention & Protection

1.1 Robust leadership across the organisation. All activity contributes to safeguarding and is everyone's business regardless of role and responsibility.

1.2 Transparent and accountable governance arrangements and organisational structures in relation to safeguarding.

1.3 Continue to develop robust procedures in relation to safer recruitment and selection of all staff and volunteers within our club.

1.4 Through the work of the Club, its Academy and Foundation develop and enhance opportunities and activities which equip young people to stay safe, and that encourage self-motivation, self-esteem and build emotional resilience.

No.	Objective	How We will Achieve the Objective
1.1	Robust leadership across the organisation. All activity contributes to safeguarding and is everyone's business regardless of role and responsibility.	Safeguarding to be implicit throughout all Club, Academy and Foundation documentation, employee contracts and codes of conduct and behaviour.
1.2	Transparent and accountable governance arrangements and organisational structures in relation to safeguarding.	Named personnel within the Club to include a Board member, Senior Manager and Designated Safeguarding Officer who are responsible for safeguarding within the Club. Names and contact details of these individuals must be published on every club website, and clear procedures for escalating concerns relating to safeguarding and whistleblowing made available and understood by all staff and stakeholders.
1.3	Continue to develop robust procedures in relation to safer recruitment and selection.	Ensure the Club has an established recruitment and selection procedure and HR process that seeks to identify individuals who are unsuitable to work with children, young people and adults at risk.
1.4	Through the work of the Club, its Academy and Foundation develop and enhance opportunities and activities which equip young people to stay safe, and that encourage self-motivation, self-esteem and builds emotional resilience.	Work alongside the Academy and the Foundation on existing and new projects that enable young people to recognise harm and abuse. Look at targeted work in areas of prevalence for CSE, radicalisation, and online abuse. Build self-esteem and emotional resilience in vulnerable children, young people and adults at risk through the power of sport.

## Strategic Aims

### Aim 2- Performance Monitoring & Ensuring Consistency

2.1 Collate and analyse findings from seasonal club internal safeguarding review and risk rate the findings in order to target in-depth support from safeguarding specialists where it is needed most.

2.2 Produce an annual business plan for safeguarding with SMART targets and regularly report to the Board on progress against them.

2.3 Instigate robust data collection and monitoring/ reporting across the organisation and receive reports from FA case management to demonstrate distance travelled and highlight areas of concern.

2.4 Review data collection systems to ensure they include all areas required including protected characteristics and areas of abuse/concern so that patterns and trends can be monitored, and interventions put in to place when identified

No.	Objective	How We will Achieve the Objective
2.1	Produce and analyse responses from internal safeguarding review with regards to safeguarding policies, procedures and practice. Risk rate the responses in order to target in-depth support from Club Safeguarding Officers.	Carry out support and monitoring with all departments and review and risk rate responses to formulate an action plan for each department highlighting areas for action and examples of good practice.
2.2	Senior Safeguarding Manager to regularly report to EFL Board on progress against strategy objectives.	Safeguarding to be a standing agenda item within Executive reports at Board meetings. Reports will demonstrate action alongside strategy objectives.
2.3	Instigate robust data collection across all departments and receive reports from the FA to demonstrate distance travelled and highlight areas of concern.	Review current data collection procedures in departments to ensure they meet GDPR requirements but also help identify good practice, distance travelled and highlight areas of concern.
2.4	Review data collection systems to ensure they include all areas required including protected characteristics and areas of abuse/concern so that patterns and trends can be monitored and interventions put in to place at departmental level when identified.	Review quality of current data collection systems/ methods to ensure they include all relevant information to inform patterns/trends and areas of concern.

## Strategic Aims

### Aim 3- Learning & Improvement

3.1 Demonstrate that we are a 'learning organisation' evidencing continuous improvement informed by best practice and department analysis.

3.2 Utilise data from department reviews and stakeholder questionnaires to Club training needs analysis and plan for the forthcoming season.

3.3 Develop and deliver high quality training based on department needs. Review all current training materials and plans to ensure they reflect the current and emerging threats in relation to safeguarding those in our care to include Prevent, CSE, domestic violence, human trafficking and staying safe online.

3.4 Develop learning and research opportunities and participate in studies that help us to better understand safeguarding in sport in order to inform practice in the future.

No.	Objective	How We will Achieve the Objective
3.1	Demonstrate that we are a 'learning organisation' evidencing continuous improvement informed by best practice and national research/guidance.	Utilise our own findings on best practice and research as well as other EFL Club findings to inform learning and development across the Club.
3.2	Utilise data from surveys and department reviews to formulate a Club training needs analysis and plan in relation to safeguarding for the current and forthcoming seasons.	Risk rating of department review findings as well as a training needs analysis survey will help to identify concerns and needs in relation to training requirements.
3.3	Develop and deliver high quality training based on Club wide needs. Review all current training materials and plans to ensure they reflect the current and emerging threats in relation to safeguarding those in our care to include Prevent, CSE, domestic violence, human trafficking and staying safe online.	Review all current training plans and methods to ensure that they meet needs and cover all required areas. Develop new training materials and training delivery methods and equip relevant personnel to deliver them across the organisation alongside the training plan derived from the annual training needs analysis
3.4	Develop learning and research opportunities and participate in studies that help us to better understand safeguarding in sport in order to inform practice in the future and meet the requirement of the "Duty of Care review".	In conjunction with EFL and its member Club involve the organisation in learning opportunities that help us to better understand and improve safeguarding within sport.

## Strategic Aims

### Aim 4 – Policy & Procedure

4.1 Streamline complex policies and procedures and support Designated Safeguarding Officers to do the right thing. Staff will be enabled to be confident in their practice by providing training and access to quality management, supervision and consultation

4.2 Personalise our services by listening to views of parents and young people and adults at risk.

4.3 Ensure all policies and procedures have annual review dates and are ratified by the appropriate individual and at board level, details of which are documented in the policy

No.	Objective	How We will Achieve the Objective
4.1	Streamline complex policies and procedures and support staff to do the right thing. Staff will be enabled to be confident in their practice by providing training and access to quality management, supervision and consultation.	Consult with staff to identify areas of confusion/concern. Utilise department reviews to highlight areas of ambiguity and inconsistency. Provide clear lines of communication to ensure DSO's and staff feel supported in "doing the right thing".
4.2	Personalise our services by listening to views of parents and young people through the work of the Club, Academy and its Foundation.	Ensure that children and adults at risk views are consulted and that they contribute to safeguarding materials, procedures and policies produced by the Club.
4.3	Ensure all policies and procedures have annual review dates and are ratified by the appropriate individual and at board, details of which are documented on the policy.	Clear publication and review dates to be included on all policies with details of Board ratification process. Utilise contacts within other EFL Club's to peer review policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding. Guidance to be distributed to all staff through relevant communication channels in relation to regulatory/legal changes that need to be included in policies as well as an annual set templates highlighting all the relevant areas and information to be included. Clear deadlines to be given detailing time frame for change and publication and monitoring process to ensure that these are met.