



NEXT LEVEL FOOTBALL CLUB

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Effective Date: June 2025

Approved By: Aaron Minott (Director)

1. Introduction

Next Level Football Club acknowledge its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care and is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all members. A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any football activity.

2. Policy Framework

Next Level FC subscribes to, endorses, and adopts The Football Association's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures, as detailed in the FA Handbook and associated guidance.

The Club fully supports The FA's safeguarding regulations, which apply to everyone involved in football, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

3. Key Safeguarding Principles

The key principles underpinning this policy are that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount and must always come first
- All children and young people have the right to be protected from abuse, regardless of age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, faith, or belief
- All concerns, suspicions, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to promptly and appropriately
- Safeguarding is a shared responsibility of all adults involved in the Club
- Working in partnership with parents/carers, children, The FA, leagues, and external agencies is essential

4. Club Responsibilities

Next Level FC acknowledges that every child and young person has the right to:

- Participate in football in a safe, enjoyable, and supportive environment
- Be protected from poor practice, abuse, bullying, neglect, or harm

NEXT LEVEL FOOTBALL CLUB®

Sparrows Farm, Sparrows Lane
New Eltham, London, SE9 2BT

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- Feel listened to, valued, and respected

The Club recognises its role in protecting children and young people from physical, emotional, or sexual harm, as well as from neglect, bullying, or exploitation.

Safeguarding responsibilities apply during:

- Training sessions
- Matches and fixtures
- Tournaments and tours
- Travel to and from football activities
- Residential trips and Club events

5. Behaviour, Conduct & Reporting

Safeguarding is closely linked to behaviour and conduct. Any behaviour by players, parents, staff, or volunteers that places a child at risk or brings the Club into disrepute will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in line with FA and Club procedures.

All safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the Club Welfare Officer. Concerns should never be ignored, regardless of the individual's role or status.

6. Safer Recruitment & Vetting

Next Level FC endorses and adopts The FA's Responsible Recruitment Guidelines and is committed to ensuring that all adults working with children are suitable to do so.

The Club will:

- Clearly define roles and responsibilities
- Request appropriate identification documents
- Meet and speak with applicants prior to appointment
- Obtain and follow up two references
- Require an FA-accepted Enhanced DBS (CRC) with Barred List Check, where eligible, in line with FA regulations

All current Next Level FC coaches, managers, and volunteers working in eligible roles with children and young people are required to hold a valid FA-accepted Enhanced DBS as part of ongoing safeguarding practice.

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7. Managing Concerns About Adults

If concerns arise regarding the suitability or behaviour of any adult involved with the Club, guidance will be sought from The Football Association and/or relevant safeguarding authorities.

The Club recognises that:

- The FA will assess the relevance and significance of information obtained through DBS checks
- All decisions will be made in line with legislation and in the best interests of children and young people

The FA aims to prevent individuals with a history of relevant or significant offending from having contact with children or influencing football activity, in order to:

- Prevent direct harm
- Minimise the risk of grooming
- Maintain safe football environments

8. Safeguarding & Welfare Officer

Next Level FC has appointed a dedicated Club Welfare Officer to oversee safeguarding matters and act as the first point of contact for any concerns regarding the welfare of children and young people.

All members are encouraged to contact the Club Welfare Officer if they have any concerns, questions, or safeguarding issues, no matter how small they may seem.

Club Welfare Officer:

Name: Jermaine Findlator

Contact Number: 07379205998

Email: admin@nextlevelfc.co.uk

9. Monitoring and Review

This Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy will be reviewed **annually** or sooner if required by changes to FA guidance, legislation, or league regulations.

Any updates will be communicated to members and made available via the Club's official channels.

10. Acknowledgement

By registering with Next Level Football Club, all parents, players, staff, and volunteers acknowledge their responsibility to uphold this Safeguarding Policy and understand that failure to do so may result in disciplinary or regulatory action.

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