

Widbrook United Child Protection Policy

Introduction

Widbrook United is committed to ensuring that every child and young person participating in football has the opportunity to do so in a safe, enjoyable, and protective environment, free from abuse. The responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people lies with every adult involved in football.

We acknowledge that child protection is a sensitive and complex issue. While it is essential to recognize and respect the emotions surrounding such matters, it is equally important to ensure that these emotions do not hinder sound judgment when taking necessary action.

Commitment to Safeguarding

Widbrook United is dedicated to upholding the highest standards of care to protect children and young people from physical, sexual, and emotional harm, as well as neglect and bullying. We are resolute in our commitment to ensuring that all football clubs and organizations operating under our banner adhere to these standards.

To achieve this, we have implemented clear policies, procedures, and an extensive training program to equip all individuals involved in football with a thorough understanding of their responsibilities regarding child protection.

Objectives

Widbrook United aims to:

- Provide continuous development and training opportunities for all individuals within the club.
- Establish a proactive and preventative approach to safeguarding, ensuring that all children and young people can participate in football in a safe and supportive environment.
- Deliver accredited child protection training and establish a network of qualified trainers in collaboration with the NSPCC.
- Promote best practices in child protection and safeguarding.
- Uphold high ethical standards and professionalism throughout all aspects of football.

Key Principles

This policy is underpinned by the following core principles:

- The welfare of the child is, and must always remain, the paramount consideration.
- All children and young people have the right to be protected from abuse, irrespective of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial background, religious beliefs, or sexual identity.
- All concerns, suspicions, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and addressed promptly and appropriately.
- Effective partnership with parents, carers, social services, and child protection agencies is essential in ensuring the welfare of children and young people.

Widbrook United is committed to working collaboratively with Social Services Departments and local Area Child Protection Committees (ACPC) to uphold these principles in accordance with established procedures.

Regulations on Child Protection

As outlined in The FA Handbook, Widbrook United adheres to the following regulations:

- Any action, statement, behaviour, or conduct that harms a child, or poses a potential risk of harm, constitutes improper conduct and brings the game into disrepute.
- The term "Offence" refers to any offense listed in Schedule 1 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933, as well as any other offense where the accused individual may pose a risk to children.

Upon receiving notification of any of the following:

- An individual being charged with an Offence.
- An individual being subject to an investigation by the police, social services, or other authorities concerning an Offence.
- Any credible information suggesting that an individual may pose a risk to children.

The Association reserves the right to impose a suspension on the individual from all or specific football-related activities for a determined period, subject to terms and conditions deemed appropriate.

In determining whether a suspension order should be issued, the Association will consider factors including:

- The level of risk to children.
- The severity of the allegations.
- The necessity of the order to facilitate an ongoing investigation.
- Any suspension imposed shall remain in effect until the conclusion of legal proceedings or disciplinary action.

In cases where an individual is convicted or cautioned for an Offence, this shall constitute a breach of The Association's Rules, and The Association retains the authority to impose further suspension, including indefinite exclusion from football activities.

The Association shall act through its Council or relevant committees in the enforcement of these regulations.

A written notification of any imposed order shall be provided to the individual concerned and any affiliated club as soon as reasonably practicable.

Conclusion

By formally adopting this Child Protection Policy, Widbrook United reaffirms its commitment to ensuring that children and young people can participate in football in a safe, secure, and supportive environment.

Safeguarding is a continuous process of improvement, requiring the diligence and commitment of all adults involved in football. Every individual has a responsibility to uphold best practices, remain vigilant, and act in the best interests of the children and young people under their care.

Widbrook United remains steadfast in its mission to foster a culture of safety, accountability, and excellence in child protection within football.



Dan Pickles, 11/03/2025, Widbrook United FC Chairman