

Safeguarding Guidelines

At SportMember UK, the safety and well-being of our members—especially children, young people, and vulnerable adults—are our top priority. We are committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where everyone can enjoy sport, free from harm or abuse. These safeguarding guidelines outline the practices we follow to ensure a safe environment for all participants.

1. Safe Recruitment and Training

- **Background Checks:** All coaches, volunteers, and staff who work with children or vulnerable adults must undergo background checks (e.g., DBS checks) in line with legal requirements.
- **Qualifications:** Ensure that all coaches and staff have appropriate training and qualifications to work with children and vulnerable individuals. This includes safeguarding and child protection training.
- **Ongoing Education:** Coaches and volunteers should regularly attend safeguarding workshops and training to stay up to date on best practices in protecting young people and vulnerable adults.

2. Code of Conduct for Coaches and Volunteers

- **Appropriate Behavior:** Coaches and volunteers should set a positive example through respectful, professional, and appropriate conduct both on and off the field.
- **Boundaries:** Maintain appropriate physical boundaries and avoid any unnecessary physical contact with children or vulnerable adults. Any physical contact should be justifiable and in accordance with the needs of the activity.
- **Communication:** All communication with young members should be conducted through club channels (e.g., club email, official social media) and not through personal social media or private messaging apps.

3. Reporting Concerns

- **Recognize the Signs of Abuse:** Coaches, staff, and volunteers should be aware of the signs of abuse, neglect, bullying, or exploitation. This includes physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and neglect, as well as signs of bullying or inappropriate behavior.
- **Reporting Process:** Any concerns regarding safeguarding should be reported immediately to the designated Safeguarding Officer or club management. All concerns will be taken seriously and handled confidentially.
- **Whistleblowing:** If you are concerned that a colleague or coach is not following these safeguarding guidelines or engaging in inappropriate behavior, you have a responsibility to report it. The club has a whistleblowing policy in place to protect those who raise concerns.

4. Safe Environment and Facilities

- **Safe Locations:** Ensure that all training venues, competition areas, and facilities are safe and well-maintained. Regularly check for any hazards and take immediate action to address any safety concerns.
- **Supervision:** Ensure that adequate adult supervision is present during all activities, with an appropriate ratio of adults to children or vulnerable adults, based on the nature of the activity.
- **Changing Facilities:** Where possible, separate changing facilities should be provided for children, young people, and adults to ensure privacy and reduce the risk of inappropriate contact. In cases where shared changing facilities are necessary, appropriate supervision must be in place.

5. Parental/Guardian Involvement

- **Consent:** Obtain written parental or guardian consent for children to participate in club activities, including any off-site events, travel, or media (photos/videos).
- **Information Sharing:** Keep parents or guardians informed about training schedules, events, and any changes in club policies. Encourage open lines of communication.
- **Pick-Up and Drop-Off:** Set clear policies around drop-off and pick-up times for children to ensure their safety when arriving and leaving activities. Parents/guardians should be informed of the club's expectations.

6. Anti-Bullying Policy

- **Zero Tolerance:** The club has a zero-tolerance policy toward bullying of any kind—whether physical, verbal, online, or emotional. This includes bullying from peers, coaches, or others associated with the club.
- **Addressing Bullying:** Any reports of bullying will be taken seriously and addressed promptly. Disciplinary actions may be taken against those who engage in bullying behavior, including suspension or expulsion from the club.

7. Respecting Privacy and Confidentiality

- **Confidential Information:** Any sensitive or personal information shared by members, parents, or guardians should be kept confidential, unless disclosure is necessary for safeguarding purposes.
- **Data Protection:** The club is committed to following all data protection laws and ensuring that personal information (such as contact details or health information) is stored securely and used only for legitimate purposes related to the club's activities.

8. Dealing with Allegations

- **Immediate Action:** In the event of an allegation or disclosure of abuse, immediate steps will be taken to ensure the safety of the individual involved. The Safeguarding Officer will be notified, and the matter will be reported to the appropriate authorities, in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.
- **Investigation:** The club will cooperate fully with any external investigation into allegations of abuse or misconduct. Internal investigations will also be conducted to determine whether any club policies were violated.

- **Support for Victims:** Victims or survivors of abuse will receive appropriate support, including access to counseling or other resources, as needed.

9. Regular Review of Safeguarding Policies

- The club will review its safeguarding policies and procedures regularly to ensure that they are effective and up to date. Feedback from members, parents, and staff will be considered in these reviews.

Safeguarding Officer: For any concerns or queries related to safeguarding, please contact our designated Safeguarding Officer:

- **Name:** Morten Buhl
- **Contact Information:** morten@sportmember.co.uk

By following these guidelines, we can ensure that SportMember UK is a safe and enjoyable place for everyone to participate in sport. We expect all members, staff, and volunteers to take these safeguarding principles seriously and contribute to a culture of safety, respect, and inclusion.