



NC United Football Club – Safeguarding & Welfare Incident Response Process

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Purpose:

This document outlines the step-by-step procedure for responding to a serious safeguarding or welfare incident involving a member of NC United Football Club. The aim is to ensure the safety and well-being of all involved, to act in compliance with safeguarding regulations, and to provide clear guidance for club officials on how to respond appropriately to such incidents.

Scope:

This process applies to any serious safeguarding or welfare concern that arises within the club environment, whether it involves players, coaches, volunteers, or others associated with NC United. A "serious" incident may include, but is not limited to, child protection issues, physical injury, emotional abuse, neglect, or any situation that raises significant welfare concerns.

Key Roles:

- Club Welfare Officer (CWO): Responsible for overseeing safeguarding concerns and ensuring compliance with safeguarding policies.
- Club Committee: Involves senior club members responsible for decision-making should an incident require further actions beyond immediate welfare response.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): A trained individual within the club (usually the CWO) who acts as the point of contact for all safeguarding and welfare matters.
- External Authorities: In cases involving illegal activity, serious harm, or other significant concerns, appropriate external authorities such as the police or social services must be involved.

For the purposes of this document, the roles of Club Welfare Officer (CWO) and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) are held by the same individuals.

1. Immediate Response to the Incident

a. Ensure Immediate Safety:

- Remove any individuals from immediate danger (if necessary).
- Provide First Aid or emergency medical assistance where required.



- Ensure the welfare of the individual(s) involved by providing a safe and supportive environment (for example, moving them to a private space away from the general public).

b. Notify the Club Welfare Officer (CWO):

- As soon as a serious safeguarding or welfare concern is identified, the individual raising the concern (coach, volunteer, player, or parent) should immediately inform the CWO. - The CWO must be informed even if the incident is not immediately clear or fully understood. Early intervention and record-keeping are crucial.

c. Record the Incident:

- The individual reporting the incident (or CWO if they are first on scene) should record a detailed report of the incident using [this form](#), including:
 - Date, time, and location of the incident.
 - Names of those involved, including witnesses.
 - A clear description of what happened (factual and objective).
 - Any actions taken immediately following the incident.

2. Initial Assessment

a. CWO to Assess the Situation:

- The CWO should assess the nature and severity of the incident to determine whether it constitutes a safeguarding issue or a welfare concern.
- If the issue involves possible abuse (emotional, physical, sexual, or neglect) or serious injury, immediate steps must be taken to ensure the protection of the individuals involved.

b. Determine Need for External Referral:

- If the incident involves a safeguarding concern of abuse or harm, the CWO must follow local safeguarding procedures and may need to refer the case to external agencies such as social services, police, or other child protection services.
- If unsure, the CWO can contact the Shropshire FA safeguarding team or local safeguarding board for guidance on whether external referral is required.



3. Involving the Club Committee

a. Escalating the Concern to the Committee:

- If the CWO deems it necessary, or if the situation involves complex decisions regarding the welfare of the individual(s), the issue should be escalated to the Club Committee for further discussion.
- The Committee may need to make decisions about temporary suspensions, disciplinary action, or other interim measures.

b. Committee Decision-Making Process:

- A special meeting of the Committee should be called, involving at least two Committee members, plus the CWO's.
- The Committee will review the facts of the case and make decisions based on: -
 - The severity of the incident.
 - The welfare and safety of those involved.
 - Legal advice or guidelines from external agencies.
 - Any club policies or codes of conduct that may apply.
- Possible outcomes could include:
 - Temporary suspension of an individual pending investigation.
 - Communication with external authorities (e.g., police or social services). -
 - Further action regarding safeguarding training or policies within the club. -
 - Public statements or notifications to parents and members, as needed.

Note that all statements and evidence will be submitted to the Committee with any identifiable information redacted, to ensure impartiality and maintain the integrity of the investigation.

c. Communication with Parents/Guardians:

- In cases involving minors, the CWO or Committee will need to consider how to communicate with the parents/guardians of the affected individual(s).
- Depending on the situation, this communication may be done immediately or after external agencies have been contacted.



4. Ongoing Monitoring & Support

a. Support for Affected Individuals:

- Ensure that the individuals involved in the incident receive appropriate support, which could include:
 - Emotional support (e.g., counseling or therapy).
 - Providing information on external support agencies.
 - Ongoing monitoring of their welfare and involvement in the club.

b. Investigation (if needed):

- If the incident requires further investigation, the Committee, in conjunction with the CWO, may decide to initiate an internal review of the incident.
- This should be carried out impartially and may involve gathering evidence, speaking to witnesses, and reviewing any club policies or codes of conduct that were violated.

c. Ongoing Communication:

- The CWO should keep the Committee updated on the progress of any external investigations and actions taken.
- If appropriate, the parents/guardians of affected individuals should be kept informed about the outcome, ensuring transparency while respecting confidentiality.

5. Long-Term Follow-Up & Record-Keeping

a. Documenting the Outcome:

- The CWO should maintain accurate records of the entire process, from the initial report to the final resolution.
- This documentation should include all correspondence with external agencies, Committee meeting minutes, and any actions taken by the club.



b. Reviewing Club Safeguarding Policies:

- After the incident is resolved, the Committee should hold a review of the club's safeguarding and welfare policies to identify any gaps or improvements that could prevent future incidents.
- This review should include feedback from the CWO, coaches, and other relevant club members.

c. Feedback to the Club

- If appropriate, the Committee may decide to provide general feedback to the wider club (e.g., parents, coaches, and players) about the outcome of the incident.
- This should be done in a way that protects confidentiality and focuses on promoting a safer environment for all involved.

6. Conclusion

NC United is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all its members, particularly in safeguarding and welfare matters. The club will respond promptly, effectively, and sensitively to any safeguarding or welfare incident to ensure that individuals involved receive the support and protection they need. This process ensures that the club remains compliant with regulatory requirements while maintaining a high standard of care.

Approved by the NC United Committee on 09/02/2026.