



PRESTON NORTH END FOOTBALL CLUB

MATCHDAY SAFEGUARDING PLAN

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POLICY, PLAN AND GOVERNANCE

This Matchday Safeguarding Plan and risk assessment provides Preston North End FC with a written and clearly articulated plan for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults on matchdays. The main purpose of the plan is to provide guidance, structure and consistency to how safeguarding incidents and concerns are handled on matchdays. It has been derived from the principles and practices outlined in the clubs key overarching safeguarding and welfare policies. There are a number of policies and practices that may have influence over this plan. Where this is the case, references will be made accordingly.

This plan and relevant guidance has been written with the Head of Safeguarding and in consultation with the Safeguarding Governance Group. As part of the process for identifying and allocating resources, clear processes to assess safeguarding risks are in place covering all potential types of interactions with children and or vulnerable adults to ensure appropriate mitigation measures are in place.

CULTURE AND AWARENESS

This plan recognises that effective safeguarding on matchdays requires a culture that promotes effective safeguarding across all aspects of its operation. The club expects all staff, customers, stakeholders and partners to respect and share this commitment. To support this, the club adopts a reciprocal safeguarding policy which includes sharing policy and best practice with all such parties and requests their commitment to the club's safeguarding expectations via all contracts and agreements made.

All employees who may have direct contact with children as part of their role receive relevant training on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. On matchdays key customers, stakeholders, partners and staff are most likely to include, but are not limited to:

- Security personnel
- Ground Safety Stewards
- Steward Supervisors and managers
- Ball Team Supervisors
- Mascot Supervisors
- Emergency services personnel

To support staff and volunteers to safeguard children and vulnerable adults effectively the club is committed to providing safeguarding training for all.

On matchdays the club's safeguarding operation is also, as far as reasonably practicable, supplemented by members of the club's safeguarding team. The role of this team is to offer expert support and guidance on all safeguarding matters arising on matchdays.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The misuse or ill-considered use of marketing and communication platforms on matchdays carries safeguarding risks to children and vulnerable adults and, as a result, this plan considers and ensures responsible

marketing, advertising and communication plans are in place on matchdays. It also considers additional safeguarding risks associated with the use of marketing and communication tools such as social media, digital images and live streams/videos, are effectively managed with club guidance. The following guidance is implemented on matchdays at Deepdale to safeguard children and vulnerable adults appearing in any images or communications:

- Ball Team sign-up procedure (including attaining consent)
- Mascot sign up procedure (including attaining consent)
- Matchday Ticket Terms and Conditions
- Ground Regulations

PROVIDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

There are a number of considerations to be taken into account in order to provide a safe environment on matchdays. Whilst not every possible scenario can be accounted for in this plan, the following broad areas of operation have been identified as central to providing safe environments.

- Safer recruitment of matchday staff
- Risk assessment and risk management

The safe recruitment of staff who engage with children or vulnerable adults on matchdays is of paramount importance and the club has clear policies on this, detailed as follows:

- Safer Recruitment Policy
- ED & I Policy

Under these policies the club has subsequent 'club-wide' guidance for recruitment and where applicable the handling of Disclosing and Barring Service (DBS) with content.

This guidance includes the requirement for all staff to complete an application form pre-employment, undertake a DBS check where applicable, and undertake relevant induction and training. As such guidance is 'club-wide' in nature it is therefore considered applicable to matchday staff.

The Ground Safety Officer (GSO) and Deputy Ground Safety Officer (DGSO) are responsible for the management of the ground, and recruitment and employment of stewards and matchday security personnel. The GSO/DGSO have their own guidance and plans in place in line with ground safety requirements alongside internal procedures.

As such, PNEFC are responsible for ensuring all stewards employed by the club are DBS checked. Consideration is given to the varying roles which would require an enhanced check, this may include steward supervisors, steward assistant supervisors, where stewards operate in 'search and intervention' and 'family enclosure' roles (this list is not exhaustive). They are also responsible for ensuring agency personnel are appropriately covered. Ball team supervisors and mascot supervisors are

sourced by the club and these fall under club guidance with regard to DBS requirements.

Some wider staff may also have DBS checks in place at lower levels, as identified as appropriate. It is noted that regulated activity is most likely to occur, but not exclusively, at the club's academy and foundation led matches at the various 'home venues'. Where this is the case, the guidance listed above may require being adapted, but the principles remain the same.

This plan also recognises that matchdays, particularly at Deepdale can present many risks or potential hazards to children and vulnerable adults, largely, but not exclusively, due to the high volumes of people who attend matches. In order to manage risks associated with matchdays, risk assessments are undertaken by the club's safeguarding team in co-ordination with other departments within the club.

The GSO/DGSO are responsible for risk assessing of the stadium footprint.

Safeguarding is included as part of the risk assessment process and details are included in the various pre-match briefings as appropriate.

Through undertaking such risk assessments potential risks are identified and mitigated against accordingly. As far as reasonably practicable, specific risks are identified in the risk assessments. However, it is noted that some risks cannot be predicted due to the nature of matchday. Where specific risks have not been previously identified and are notified to the club, arrangements will be made to mitigate risk.

For some matchday activities, such as the ball team operation, the club will be required to act 'in loco parentis'. The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is always considered to be paramount and take precedence in any decision making processes. This is made clear at recruitment and consent forms are completed by parents/carers.

For risk assessment to be effective, this plan acknowledges that they must also be considerate of a number of matchday specific or related policies including:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Data Protection Policy

Through consideration of guidance documents, policies, risk assessments and staff training as well as historic work, a number of safeguarding guidance documents have been identified to support effective matchday operations.

These include:

- Ground Regulations
- Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy.

- Standard Operating Procedure for Lost Children & Vulnerable Adults
- Guidance U5's Attending Matchdays

These guidance documents are stand-alone documents held separately to this plan. Additionally, there are processes in place to make individualised arrangements or adjustments for any children or vulnerable adults so that relevant assistance is received, or any reasonable adjustment they require can be made. Typically, all safeguards of this nature are implemented in a personalised way and arrangements made on a case by case basis.

MANAGEMENT OF INCIDENTS AND/OR CONCERNS

Despite extensive planning and preparation this plan recognises that every eventuality cannot be predicted and or planned for, and incidents cannot be eradicated. It also notes that concerns about the welfare of individuals may not necessarily arise from particular incidents or actions and may be based upon gut instinct or intuition.

Where matchday staff or members of the public are concerned about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, there are clear and confidential channels for raising such concerns both internally and externally. The club has a culture that "safeguarding is everyone's responsibility" and the very clear message across all documentation and training is to pass on any concerns to a member of the safeguarding team, contact details are widely available.

This plan also recognises that it may be members of the public attending matches who have concerns, and where this is the case, they are encouraged to utilise the same processes to raise concerns at the first opportunity. All stewards have received training on what to do if they receive information relating to a safeguarding concern. All concerns, incidents or complaints that are brought to the attention of the club are treated seriously and action taken accordingly.

Where required this may involve an impartial investigation process to seek appropriate resolution. There is also a process for informing the relevant statutory authorities of any safeguarding concerns where required.

1. Matchday incident or information of concern involving a child or vulnerable adult:

- For stewards - anything to do with a welfare concern or any incident involving a child or adult at risk must inform a supervisor or the Control Room immediately.
- For supervisors or Control Room - inform the Ground Safety Officer, (GSO) and Deputy Ground Safety Officer, (DGSO) immediately.

Each matchday there will be a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) whose details will be on the Matchday Stewards Briefing document, this will generally be the DGSO. If the DGSO is not available for any reason,

the club's Head of Safeguarding will stand in to provide cover.

2. Matchday Operational Procedures

This policy is applicable to Preston North End FC Safety Stewards. The procedures outlined below supplement the other child and adult at risk safeguarding procedures adopted and used by Preston North End FC.

A child is defined in the Children Act 2004 as;

- a person who has not reached their 18th birthday
- an adult at risk is someone aged 18 years or over; who is, or may be, in need of community services due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability and who is, or may be, unable to take care of himself/herself, or unable to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation
- an adult may also be considered vulnerable if they are unable to care or protect themselves due to intoxication from alcohol or substance abuse.

All Safety Stewards Supervisors who come into contact, or are likely to come into contact with children or vulnerable adults must be fully conversant with, and ensure that this policy and accompanying risk assessment are adhered to. They must ensure that stewards understand their responsibilities and are aware of the policy and apply it consistently during their matchday duties.

3. Deployment

- Stewards should always work in pairs when dealing with children and adults at risk.
- Supervisors should attend as soon as possible. This will ensure additional help and advice and will also assist in corroborating actions taken. All supervisors are expected to have an enhanced DBS check.

Searching of persons entering the stadium is covered under Ground Regulation 6.

- All persons seeking entrance to the stadium acknowledges the club's right to search any person entering, and to refuse entry, or to eject from the stadium any person refusing to submit to such a search.

If any hands-on searching is to take place of a spectator the policy for Preston North End FC is the steward is expected to have an enhanced DBS check.

4. Searching of children

Stewards have discretion as to who they search. It is not good practice to search anyone who appears to be under the age of 14 years. If a search of a child is considered necessary, searches should be carried out by a steward of the same gender as the child. Stewards must always identify themselves and provide proof that they are an authorised event steward with the club. Searches must be witnessed by a second steward and a receipt given for any property that is subsequently confiscated. Best practice is to request the child empties their pockets/bags and again a second steward must witness this. An Incident Record must be completed that

includes details of any property confiscated, along with the child's name and contact details.

5. Searching of adults

Stewards have discretion as to who they search. If the search of a vulnerable adult is considered necessary then this must be approved by the Ground Safety Officer. The search should be done in the presence of a carer if they are with the vulnerable adult. Searches must be witnessed by a second steward, and a receipt given for any property subsequently confiscated. Best practice is to request the adult at risk empties their own pockets/bags, and again a second steward must witness this. An Incident Record must be completed that includes details of any property that is confiscated, along with the adult at risk's name, contact details and that of their carer/s.

6. Lost children or vulnerable adult

Should a child or adult at risk report themselves as lost to a steward. The GSO should be notified immediately and another steward or supervisor be directed to attend to prevent lone working. The individual should be returned to their seats or carers, if known. If necessary the lost person should be escorted by stewards to the Sir Tom Finney Reception and further enquiries made. If the child or vulnerable adult has not been collected following all attempts to locate parents/carers we will follow our safeguarding procedures and contact the police. A full written report of the incident will be recorded by the DSO. Stewards must show maximum tolerance when dealing with children and vulnerable adults.

Physical restraint must only be used as the very last resort, and only then to prevent the child or adult at risk from harming him or herself, or harming others. It should never be used to move a child or adult at risk from one position to another, even in the rare event of a steward needing to separate two fighting children, minimum force may only be used.

If a child or adult at risk's behaviour is extreme and could cause actual or potential harm, he or she should be taken to a place of safety within the stadium complex as dictated by the Ground Safety Officer. The place of safety must be suitable and have toilet facilities and a telephone.

Parents/carers must be contacted immediately and asked to collect the person from the stadium as soon as possible. The person must be released into the care of an appropriate adult, even if this means waiting until after the end of the match.

The person must be accompanied by at least two stewards throughout the procedure. If the person is female, at least one of the stewards must be female.

7. Ejection of child or young person

If a child or young person/s behaviour is extreme this does not prevent an ejection taking place to ensure the safety of others. If a child or young person is violent the police should be involved.

Ejection of a child

- In accordance with English Football League guidelines and a government white paper, Preston North End FC allows supporters aged 14 years and over to travel unaccompanied on the club's official travel to away match fixtures.
- If a child is aged 14 years or over and they have travelled to the stadium by their own means and unaccompanied then it is reasonable to eject them if their behavior is extreme. It may be the case that if a child is removed from one area of the stadium to eject them and their behaviour improves, they may be taken to a place of safety as outlined above. The police must be contacted if a child has been ejected due to extreme behaviour.
- In all instances of a child being ejected and not taken to a place of safety stewards should try to establish the child's name, address and Parent/carer's contact details. The child should also be asked if they have attended the stadium with a parent/carer or other appropriate adult. This information should be given to Match Control.
- The child should be told it is not club policy to eject children unless there are extreme circumstances and for their welfare they are advised to remain outside the stadium until an appropriate adult can be contacted. The child will also be advised that if their behaviour improves they will be taken to a place of safety until the appropriate adult arrives.
- The ejected child should be monitored by stewards and CCTV whilst outside the stadium. Checks should be made to establish the child's identity and appropriate adult from their match day ticket.

8. Ejection of an adult at risk

If a vulnerable adult's behaviour is extreme this does not prevent an ejection taking place to ensure the safety of others, if violent the police should be involved.

A vulnerable adult may be with a carer if this is the case, the carer should be spoken to in order to resolve any developing or escalating situation:

- In all instances of an adult at risk being ejected and not taken to a place of safety, stewards should try to establish the person's name, address and appropriate adult/carer's contact details. The Ground Safety Officer must approve all ejections of an adult at risk. The adult at risk should also be asked if they have attended the stadium with an appropriate adult or carer. This information should be given to Match Control. The police must be contacted if an adult at risk has been ejected and who's behaviour is extreme, or there are concerns that the adult at risk may be unable to take care of himself/herself, or unable to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation.
- The adult at risk should be told it is not club policy to eject unless there are extreme circumstances, and for their welfare, they are advised to remain outside the stadium until an appropriate adult can be contacted. The adult at risk will also be advised that if their behaviour improves they will be taken to a place of safety until the appropriate adult arrives.
- The ejected adult at risk should be monitored by

stewards and CCTV whilst outside the stadium. Checks should be made to establish the person's identity and appropriate adult from their match day ticket.

In any of the incidents referred to above, the most senior steward involved must make a written report of what was said, done and heard on the club Match Report form as soon as possible, and in all cases before they leave the stadium.

No children or an adult at risk, including those who have been removed from the stadium may be photographed or videoed individually without parent/carer permission.

9. Emergency evacuation

Stewards will need to be especially protective of children and vulnerable adults during emergency or evacuation procedures. In such incidents a specific area should, if practicable, be allocated to unaccompanied and lost children and adults at risk and details registered of the child or adult at risk. They can be taken off the register once they are collected by a parent or other appropriate adult or carer.

If it is not possible to contact the parents or appropriate adults and carers of a lost child or adult at risk, the lost person must be handed over to the police or social care. These professional organisations have a legal responsibility to take a child to a place of safety.

10. Further information

Stewards are entitled to ask any spectator their age so that they can be dealt with appropriately. If no answer is received the steward is entitled to make a decision based on the spectator's appearance and behaviour. There may be occasions where a steward is challenged verbally and/or physically by a spectator who appears to be under 18 years of age. In such cases the steward should do all they can to defuse the situation. If the situation escalates, assistance must be sought from police officers and/or the Search and Response team if the steward feels threatened.

Should any child or vulnerable adult make a safeguarding disclosure to any member of staff during the matchday this should be referred immediately to the Ground Safety Officer, or the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will inform the police.

SUMMARY

All stewards have a duty of care towards all spectators at the stadium.

This duty of care must be exercised with particular vigilance when dealing with children and vulnerable adults, and must be equal at least to that which would be expected of a responsible parent or carer. It must also be remembered that strict adherence to this policy will not only ensure the safety and welfare of our younger spectators and adults at risk, but also protect the integrity of our stewards and our stewarding operation.