



OXFORD UNITED PREVENT POLICY

Version 1.0

Season 2024-2025

Oxford United Football Club is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at Risk and expects all staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment.

Policy Purpose

This safeguarding policy reflects the safeguarding ethos at OUFC. Oxford United Football Club is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the main 'OUFC Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy'. The main safeguarding policy is a point of reference for all policies and reference material used by OUFC. The 'OUFC Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy' reflects the same ethos.

In addition, the safeguarding policy aims to promote the safety and wellbeing of the young and vulnerable and to provide assurance to parents, carers and other parties.

Who this policy applies to

This policy and its operating principles, apply to all staff and volunteers (including all players) of OUFC, irrespective of the type of contract on which they are employed or the hours and days that they work, or the nominated location at which they work.

The policy also applies to any other individual, worker or consultant who is engaged by, or does work on behalf of, or for, OUFC. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.

Key Safeguarding Terminology and Definitions

- OUFC / the Club – Oxford United Football Club. Any property or training ground belonging to or where OUFC operate, or where their activities occur.
- FA – Football Association
- EFL – English Football League
- CEO - Chief Executive Officer
- Staff – paid or unpaid workers, agency or third-party workers, volunteers, who provides a service
- DSO – Designated Safeguarding Officer
- SSM – Senior Safeguarding Manager
- DLO – Disability Liaison Officer
- The Academy - The standalone Academy department within OUFC responsible for nurturing and developing OUFC's future generations of players.
- Child or young person – Defined by the Children's Act (1989) as any young person under the age of 18.
- Safeguarding - refers to the actions we take to ensure all children are safe from harm when involved in our clubs and activities.
- Child Protection - is a set of activities that are required for specific children who are at risk/or are suffering from significant harm.
- Abuse - refers to the acts of commission or omission that lead to a child experiencing harm.
- Harm - refers to the negative impact or consequences upon the child of those actions.
- Significant Harm - The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children.
- Violence - refers to "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse."

Policy statement

OUFC takes its responsibilities very seriously regarding providing a safe and positive environment where children and vulnerable adults are present at any of its OUFC led activities and (under the supervision) of one or more members of our staff.

All children and vulnerable people, regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion and/or sexual orientation (defined as Protected Characteristics within the Equality Act 2010) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. All participants and visitors to OUFC activities have the right to feel safe and to be safe.

Wherever they come into contact with us they will be treated both lawfully and fairly and with both dignity and respect. All the members of our staff have a duty to keep children safe and to help protect them from abuse or harm. All managers ensure that their staff understand and apply that duty.

Good safeguarding practice takes many forms. It is a thread that weaves throughout all OUFC activities that involve children and other vulnerable people.

This policy applies to all members of OUFC, from both the paid and volunteer staff, and all partner organisations including commercial partners, licence holders, contractors and consultants. For the avoidance of doubt this policy does not apply to the ACT; who operate in accordance with their own policies.

This policy also applies to individuals not included in this list who may be conducting related work that involves the children in our care.

The policy has been written in line with all relevant Government legislation to promote the welfare of children and young people, including the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance published in July 2018 and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' updated September 2022.

Principles of safeguarding children and young people

The term safeguarding is a shortening of the phrase "safeguarding and promoting the welfare" of children and young people. We follow the 6 principles of safeguarding:

1. **Empowerment:** it is important for a young person to be supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent
2. **Prevention:** it is better to take action before harm occurs
3. **Proportionality:** the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
4. **Protection:** support and representation for those in greatest need
5. **Partnership:** local solutions through services working with their communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
6. **Accountability:** accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice

Confidentiality and Managing a Concern

O UFC ensure that confidentiality of safeguarding cases is maintained. Everyone is told to report safeguarding concerns, however small.

This includes any concerns of extremism or radicalization. Exposing any person to extreme behaviors is a form of emotional abuse and is a safeguarding risk.

The secure safeguarding reporting and case management system 'My Concern' is used by O UFC for reporting safeguarding concerns. Only the DSO and essential people involved will be aware, on a need-to-know basis.

Statutory information sharing protocols will be followed where necessary including the FA safeguarding case management, the EFL safeguarding team, the local authority and the police.

A child centered approach to safeguarding is at the centre of the O UFC ethos. Wherever possible the young or vulnerable person will be involved in every aspect of managing the concern.

If a person is at immediate risk of harm or about to become the victim of a crime, the police must be informed via 999. Referral for any issue concerning potential radicalization to extremism should be managed as any other safeguarding referral.

The DSO provides the lead for O UFC on Prevent and can be contacted directly for any concerns or for clarification on process. All concerns must be reported to the DSO, either directly or via the 'My Concern' system.

Allegations made against an employee or anyone engaged by O UFC

O UFC operate in an open and transparent manner. Any concerns relating to a member of staff or volunteer, should be recorded via the 'My Concern' App and the DSO informed. O UFC records all allegations and follow Low Level Concerns principles. Where necessary O UFC will work in partnership with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the FA Safeguarding Case Management Team and EFL Safeguarding Team. O UFC has a whistleblowing policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Andrew Taylor – Senior Safeguarding Manager

Principles of the Prevent strategy

The Prevent strategy was published by the government in 2011, as part of the overall counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The aim is to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism or non-violent extremism. PAFC understands its responsibilities under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. We have drawn information from the latest government update, April 2021.

The DSO is the responsible person for Prevent, O UFC have a Prevent Risk Assessment and action plan. We support the Government's Prevent duty.

OUFC staff receive safeguarding induction and training, which includes identifying vulnerabilities which may lead to extremist views and radicalisation.

Radicalisation can take place through direct personal contact, or indirectly through the internet or social media. Extremism can refer to a wide range of views; racism, homophobia, right-wing ideology in addition to any religious extremism. It should be remembered that Islamist ideology should not be confused with traditional religious practice. Islamist ideology is based on a distorted interpretation of Islam, which betrays Islam's peaceful principles.

Anybody from any background can become radicalised. The grooming of children and/or adults at risk for the purposes of involvement in extremist activity is a serious safeguarding issue. Any person who is vulnerable is more likely to be influenced, including: loss of identity or belonging, isolation, exclusion, mental health difficulties, personal crisis, sense of injustice, bereavement or themselves a victim of hate or discrimination.

Children have travelled abroad either willingly or by coercion where they have been subject to harm (for example FGM), or radicalisation. If you have any concerns either prior to or after travel, this concern must be recorded.

The Channel Process is a multi-agency collaboration led by the Local Authority providing support to those who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The overall aim of the programme is early intervention and diverting people away from the risk they may face.

OUFC build resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling our young to challenge extremist views. OUFC support the British Values of; democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, as set out in Government's Prevent strategy.

OUFC values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Those we engage with and all employees have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

OUFC encourages the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our young and fans in general; however, we will positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers who we engage to provide such learning opportunities or experiences. This includes where appropriate checking the DBS of external providers, viewing material that will be used beforehand and conducting a social media check on such agencies or individuals.

Any visiting speakers or presenters will be checked for content prior to arrival and invites will be withdrawn if their views do not follow OUFC expectations of conduct or values.

OUFC have strong IT policies and protocols and filters to mitigate searching extremist material while at the premises or using our IT remotely.

Partnerships

The Prevent strategy uses effective partnerships. We work closely with statutory agencies, football regulators and appropriate organisations and follow the safeguarding information sharing principles.

OUFC work in partnership with Oxford Safeguarding Children Partnership and other relevant multi-agency partnerships, including the Oxford Prevent Partnership. OUFC abide by safeguarding information sharing protocols with statutory agencies, including the police.

OUFC work closely with the FA and EFL safeguarding teams to ensure compliance with a football wide governance. There are regular meetings between the safeguarding teams of OUFC to confirm strong team working and collaboration.