



**OUFC
SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN, THE YOUNG
AND ADULTS AT RISK
- Easy read summary
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 adults at risk and expects all staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment.

This is an easy read version of 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 Football Club. Any property or training ground belonging to or where OUFC operate, or where their activities occur.
- OUiTC – Oxford United In The Community Trust.
- 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 OUFCs 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.

The Care Act 2014 has widened the scope of safeguarding and the responsibilities to promote the well-being of adults at risk. Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and OUFC support this ethos. The Care Act 2014 is used in conjunction with a number of other legislation and guidance to provide a safe environment.

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.

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 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:

Empowerment: it is important for a young person to be supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent

Prevention: it is better to take action before harm occurs

Proportionality: the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented

Protection: support and representation for those in greatest need

Partnership: local solutions through services working with their communities – communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse

Accountability: accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice

Confidentiality and Managing a Concern

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

The secure safeguarding reporting and case management system 'My Concern' is used by OUFC 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 center of the OUFC 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 radicalisation to extremism should be managed as any other safeguarding referral.

Allegations made against an employee or anyone engaged by OUFC

OUFC 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. OUFC record all allegations and follow Low Level Concerns principles.

Reports can be made in the following way.

- 1) By scanning the following QR code. This will take you to a general report form that will be sent directly to the safeguarding team



- 2) By emailing the details of your concern to safeguarding@oufc.co.uk
- 3) By calling the dedicated safeguarding number 07521 416723

All safeguarding information can be found here [Safeguarding | Oxford United Football Club \(oufc.co.uk\)](https://www.oufc.co.uk/safeguarding)

Where necessary OUFC will work in partnership with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the FA Safeguarding Case Management Team and EFL Safeguarding Team. OUFC have a whistleblowing policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Andrew Taylor – Senior Safeguarding Manager

Principles of this 'Easy Read' policy

The main safeguarding policies will provide the operational framework for all OUFC staff to work within and ensure the young and vulnerable are kept safe in accordance with government and football governing body guidance. This policy is a summary of that information.

OUFC safeguard all children, young people and adults at risk who interact with us. We take all safeguarding concerns seriously and respond efficiently and appropriately.

A child centered approach is fundamental. OUFC follow the guidelines as set by the government, working in partnership with the local authority and the police.

OUFC provide a safeguarding framework to promote best practice, demonstrate the right standards of behavior in all interactions with the young and vulnerable. All people are treated equitably and fairly in line with our Equality and Diversity Policy.

OUFC provide a safe environment for our young and vulnerable people in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.

For further information regarding the content of this policy, please refer to the website published policies: [Safeguarding | Oxford United Football Club - OUFC](#) or contact the DSO: safeguarding@OUFC.co.uk

Information Management

OUFC will manage all safeguarding information and allegations in a transparent and open manner, in accordance with the relevant guidance from football governing bodies and external agencies, which includes the police when appropriate. OUFC will information share with statutory agencies as required.

OUFC have a risk register, for which safeguarding is included, this will reduce or negate risk and enable an ongoing evaluation process. All safeguarding incidents or concerns will be recorded confidentially through the 'My Concern' reporting and case management system.

Recruitment, Appointment and Training

OUFC operate a safer recruitment policy. At least two separate references acceptable to OUFC will be required. OUFC comply with the EFL guidance on who requires a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and the frequency of checks.

Each employee must abide by a code of conduct and sign a self-declaration form regarding any change in circumstance.

Safeguarding Awareness training forms part of the OUFC induction process. Regular safeguarding refresher training is key to each staff member's professional development.

Radicalism and Extremism

Radicalisation and exposing vulnerable and young people to extreme behaviors is a form of emotional abuse and is a safeguarding risk. OUFC will monitor and manage these in accordance with its established processes in the event a concern is raised.

Radicalisation can take place through direct personal contact, or indirectly either online or through social media. Extremism is defined as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

OUFC work in partnership with the police and local partnerships and support the government Prevent Strategy, in order to support the most vulnerable in our community who are at risk of radicalisation. OUFC have a Prevent policy which is published on the website.

OUFC activities

Safeguarding the young and vulnerable is embedded across all OUFC activities, whether at Home Park or any location where staff are working. There are safeguarding representatives across all aspects of the business and safeguarding training is part of the recruitment process and everyone's continued professional development. Please refer to the main published policies for more detail.

Match Day - there are safeguarding protocols and designated persons to minimise and manage any potential safeguarding risk. OUFC follow EFL and FA guidance on DBS checks and all appropriate staff members will have barring scheme clearance. For away games, OUFC have safeguarding policies in place for those who travel with our organised coaches.

Image capture - OUFC abide by consent protocols. We acknowledge that celebrating success is a key part of football, where match day activities are held in the public arena.

Social Media and Digital Communication – OUFC have policies and protocols in place regarding expected behaviours for using social media and any other form of digital communication. We include the actions to take when misuse is reported.

Residential Accommodation – Host Families are recruited to provide accommodation for those 16-18 year old Academy scholars, for which daily travel is not viable. House Parents are subject to a rigorous selection process, have DBS checks for all adults at the accommodation and the premises is subject to safety checks. OUFC understand the care required for young people living away from their home. OUFC have a comprehensive accommodation plan considering all of these aspects.

Travel, Trips and Tournaments - There are specific guidelines and policies relating to our young people travelling to play football, whether training, tournaments or matches. OUFC have a number of academy specific safeguarding policies, including; Travel, Trips and Tournaments and Senior Appearances for U18s.

Permissions, safeguarding risk assessments, health and safety provision, individual needs and vulnerabilities, appropriate staff supervision, records and constant evaluation will be adhered to ensuring the young and vulnerable are kept safe

Partnerships

OUFC works closely with statutory agencies, football regulators and appropriate organisations and follow the safeguarding information sharing principles.

OUFC work in partnership with Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and other relevant multi-agency partnerships, including the Oxfordshire 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 and the OUiTC, to confirm strong team working and collaboration.