



# CHARLTONATHLETIC

The Valley, Floyd Road, Charlton, London SE7 8BL  
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**Charlton Athletic Football Club**

## **Safeguarding Children Policy**





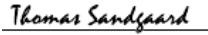
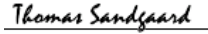

## Version Control

<b>Document Title:</b>	Safeguarding Policy
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## Document Review

Last Review	By
November 2022	Katie Whitmore
November 2023	Dean Jarman

## Version History

Version	Date Released	Originator	Authorised	Comments
1.0	July 2021	Tim Ford	 Thomas Sandgaard	First Release
2.0	November 2022	Katie Whitmore	 Thomas Sandgaard	Combined all policies together to create one safeguarding handbook.
3.0	December 2023	Dean Jarman	 Jim Rodwell	Separated the policies and included additional information. What to do if you are concerned about a child. MyConcern. Use of Mobile Phones and Social Media. Academy signing in and out of players. Confidentiality and Sharing Information.



## 1. Child Safeguarding Statement

Charlton Athletic Football Club (referred to as 'the Club') recognises its moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people connected with the club. We endeavour to provide a safe, welcoming, and enjoyable environment where children and young people feel respected and valued. We maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned and promote a culture of openness where children and young people are able to talk and are listened to, leading to them feeling supported.

This policy will provide all staff and Directors with the framework they need to keep children and young people safe. It will be used to inform parents and carers of how we will safeguard children and young people whilst they are in our care. The policy provides information regarding different types of abuse, links to statutory and non-statutory documentation and outlines our procedures which ensure our children and young people receive effective support and protection.

## 2. Introduction

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all club staff and Directors and are consistent with those of our statutory partners Royal Greenwich Safeguarding Children and young people's Partnership (GSCP), the English Football League (EFL) and The Football Association (FA). The club takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the children and young people in its care.

These sections outline the responsibilities of the Academy and the Club to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people by ensuring that procedures are in place to assist staff to understand their role and responsibilities. The Club will support children and young people in their understanding of staying safe and reporting concerns. We will also support them in their understanding of personal safety through broader curricular activities that the club will offer through the Academy's unique Champions Programme and adapted Player Care.

## 3. Aims

To provide staff and Directors with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and young people and in doing so ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities.

- To ensure consistent good practice across the club.
- To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children and young people.

## 4. Principles and values

Children and young people have a right to feel safe & secure. They cannot fulfil their full potential unless they do so.

All children and young people have a right to be protected from harm.

All staff and Directors have a key role in the prevention of harm and an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child or young person is at risk of harm, either in the club or in the community, taking into account contextual safeguarding, in accordance with the guidance.

We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and young people and reduces risk and so we will engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard children and young people.



Whilst the Club will work openly with parents and carers as far as possible, it reserves the right to contact children and young people's social care or the police, without notifying parents if this is believed to be in the child's best interests.

## 5. The Club

The Club will ensure safer recruitment procedures are robust and in line with national legislation and a strict staff code of conduct is promoted. (Safer Recruitment Policy followed to ensure this is met) Ensure a suitably trained workforce who are confident to implement the outlined procedures for identifying and reporting cases (or suspected cases) of abuse/poor practice and responding to reports of sexual violence and harassment between children and young people.

We recognise that because of how much contact the Club has with children and young people day to day, club staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The Club will therefore:

- Raise awareness of safeguarding issues and give children and young people the skills needed to keep themselves safe.
- Establish and maintain an environment where children and young people feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to so that they feel supported.
- Ensure children and young people that there are staff at the club who are here to help.
- Promote opportunities across the club's programme for children and young people to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

## 6. What to do if you are concerned about a child

It's not easy to know if a child or young person is being abused or neglected. You might have noticed bruises or moments of distress such as crying, however, unsure whether they are related to football or being physically abused or neglected. Knowing the signs of abuse can support you, albeit if unsure, it is important that you share your concern.

You may find it difficult to report any concerns in case you are worried about being wrong, or scared/worried you won't be believed. If you do not share your concerns, you risk a child being in danger and continuing to be abused or neglected. By reporting it, you are taking the first step in keeping them safe and getting the support they need. Remember, you don't have to be certain. Our safeguarding team can support and advise helping you decide what to do if you're worried about a child or young person. A child may already be known to social services or children's services and have an allocated social worker. Any additional information could make all the difference in protecting a child.

If you think a child or young person might be being abused but have not said anything, there are things you can do which may help. Firstly, talk to the child or young person. They find it difficult to talk about or may not have someone in their life that they trust. Build a positive and trusting relationship, this will support them and may come to talk to you when they're ready.

Secondly, notify a designated safeguarding officer and raise on MyConcern. We may have some contextual information about the child or young person already, to support and build a wider picture. Keep notes and send to the DSO to update MyConcern, this can support us building the concern, however, understand the patterns occurring. See Appendix 4 in how to respond to a safeguarding concern.

## 7. MyConcern

This platform will be used as a reporting tool for any safeguarding or welfare concerns. All members of staff will have access to MyConcern and are able to download the app on their devices to submit any concerns they have or that have been raised. Players can be created at the point of reporting a concern.

All wellbeing or child protection concerns are logged on MyConcern for every child, including the following:

- If a child or young person is living in Private Fostering arrangements or living in a host family arrangement.
- Any correspondence with a player, participant, supporter or their family where a contemporaneous record would be of value in order to monitor the development of a matter.
- Any informal player care conversations.
- Any matters relating to the mental or emotional wellbeing of a participant.
- Any matter relating to equality, diversity or inclusion of a player or participant.

Details on what and how to report an incident is guided throughout the Concern page. Reports should always include who, what, why, when and how and the appropriate professionals should be copied in. These reports are overseen by the SSM and DSO's of each department.

## 8. Child Abuse: Bullying and Cyber Bullying

It is now recognised that for all categories of abuse, the abuser may not always be an adult but could be a child or young person. Bullying may be seen as deliberate, hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. The Club acknowledges that bullying can lead to physical injury, social problems, emotional problems, and even death. Children and adolescents who are bullied are at increased risk of mental health problems and the club will deal with any issues of bullying at the most senior level following the Club's behaviour policy.

## 9. Child Abuse: Child Sexual Exploitation

Child criminal exploitation is a geographically widespread form of harm which is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity (county lines is when drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban areas and seaside towns).

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community, the definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) has been adopted: 'Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology'. It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point.

The Club is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The Senior Safeguarding Manager will lead on these issues and work with other agencies as appropriate.



## **10. Child Abuse: Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling, or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. The Club recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-term emotional and psychological impact on children. We work with other key partners and will share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm.

## **11. Child Abuse: Female Genital Mutilation and ‘Honoured Based Violence**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse. As of October 2015, the Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. The Club will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with local safeguarding procedures.

A forced marriage is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue.

## **12. Child Abuse: Mental Health**

Our staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. We understand that, where children have suffered abuse or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Where we have concerns, this may impact on mental health, we will seek advice and work with other agencies as appropriate to support a child and ensure they receive the help they need. Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that Club play a key part in this. The Club aims to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all children and young people. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone’s vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual’s life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter-balance and promote further growth of resilience.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of children and young people at our Club. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with the Club, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

## **13. Child Abuse: Prevention of Radicalisation**

As of July 2015, the Counterterrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015) placed a new duty on schools and other education providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent Duty.

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.



The Club operates in accordance with local procedures for PREVENT and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns as appropriate. Where we have concerns about extremism or radicalisation, we will seek advice from appropriate agencies and, if necessary, refer to Social Care and / or the Channel Panel if appropriate.

#### **14. Child Abuse: Poor Practice**

This is behaviour that falls short of abuse but is nevertheless unacceptable. It is essential that poor practice is challenged and reported even where there is a belief that the motives of an individual are well meaning. Failure to challenge poor practice can lead to an environment where abuse is more likely to remain unnoticed. Incidents of poor practice occur when the needs of the child or young person are not afforded the necessary priority compromising their welfare, for example, allowing abusive or concerning practices to go unreported, placing them in potentially compromising and uncomfortable situations, failing to ensure their safety, ignoring health and safety guidelines, giving continued and unnecessary preferential treatment to individuals.

#### **15. Child Abuse: Children potentially at risk of greater harm**

We recognise that some children may potentially be at risk of greater harm and require additional help and support. These may be children with a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan, those in Care or previously in Care or those requiring mental health support. We work with Social Care and other appropriate agencies to ensure there is a joined-up approach to planning for these children and that they receive the right help at the right time.

The Club understands that children with special educational needs (SEND) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration.
- That they may be more prone to peer group isolation than others.
- The potential to be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs.
- Communication difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

#### **16. Child Abuse: Online Abuse**

We recognise that children are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but we recognise it also presents challenges and risks. Any child or young person can be vulnerable online, and their vulnerability can fluctuate depending on their age, developmental stage and personal circumstance. We want to equip children with the knowledge needed to make the best use of the internet and technology in a safe, considered and respectful way, so they are able to reap the benefits of the online world. The three main areas of online risk could be categorised as:

**Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views.

**Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults.

**Conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

## **17. Child Abuse: Peer on Peer Abuse**

Whilst at the Club children and young people's behaviour may be challenging and defiant towards each other, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children. The Club recognises that some children may abuse their peers and any incidents of peer-on-peer abuse will be managed in the same way as any other safeguarding concern and will follow the same procedures. We will seek advice and support from other agencies as appropriate. We would also seek to work alongside families in these matters.

Peer-on-peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, sexual violence / sexual harassment, 'up-skirting', 'sexting' (UKCCIS Guidance). We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour at the Club and will take swift action to intervene if this occurs.

## **18. Use of Mobile Phones and Social Media**

It is prohibited for staff members to make one to one contact with a child or young person through online communication, including all social media platforms, WhatsApp, iMessage and Text Message.

It is prohibited for staff members to make unsolicited contact with parents, carers or guardians of a child or young person that is unrelated to their footballing performance, participation, education, safety or wellbeing.

If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect a child or young person's device contains evidence in relation to an offence. The device must be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be relevant to an offence, or extreme pornographic images, inclusive of children and young people, should not be deleted before being handed to the police.

## **19. Academy Signing in and Out of Players**

The academy is committed to the safety and welfare of the children and young people we have within our age groups. We understand the importance of communication and working closely with parents, carers, guardians, host families, schools and local authorities to ensure the wellbeing of all children in their care.

On arrival all players must be signed in using a registration process at the start of the session/activity scheduled. Should a player not be able to attend a session/activity, parents, carers and guardians are required to notify the Academy a minimum of one hour prior to the player's expected arrival time at Sparrow's Lane for the Boys Academy and Foots Cray for the Girls Academy. Should a player fail to arrive within one hour of the expected session/activity start time, with no explanation for non-attendance, the Academy will contact the parent, carer or guardian to inform/determine the reason for non-attendance.

It is the coaches' responsibility to regularly check the number of players they have within their session. Where a player may temporarily leave the session i.e., to go to the toilet, the lead staff member is expected to complete a head count on their return.

It is the parent, carer and guardian's responsibility to ensure their child is dropped off and collected by a responsible person. All U9-U13 players are required to be collected at the canteen and released individually by the lead coach. Unless written permission via letter, email, message has been given to the Academy for the child or young person to walk or travel home alone or collected by another individual, coaches should not discharge the player from their responsibility.





Whether a child has participated in a training session, activity, fixture or returning from a tour/event, parents, carers and guardians must use the designated waiting area for collection of their child. Staff have a responsibility to ensure they have signed out all players appropriately. Only players who have been given prior permission to travel home alone may do so. Parents, carers and guardians must complete in writing at the start of the season, along with their journey home. Any player being collected by their parent, carer or guardian should be met no later than 15 minutes after the session, activity, fixture and tour/event has finished.

Should a child or young person not be collected within 15 minutes, coaching staff are required to use the late collection policy which outlines their responsibilities.

## **20. Closed doors**

Whenever possible, don't be alone with a child or young person. A child or young person's allegations made when there are no other witnesses hinge on credibility, and authorities often tend to favour the alleged victim in these circumstances. Never be alone with a child or young person inside a room and close the door, keep the door open and stay in plain sight. Never give a child or young person a lift home.

## **21. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

When a concern has been brought to your attention through a player, you must inform them that you need to share this information with the SSM and/or DSO's. A child or young person should never be pressured to give information or show physical marks unless they do so willingly. Should a child or young person choose to show markings, two members of staff must be present the whole time and all markings be raised using the body map on MyConcern.

Staff are obliged to take action once aware of the problem. Undertakings of confidentiality should not be given to the person making the allegations or to the person being interviewed. A matter is confidential on a need-to-know basis and nobody should have reservations to escalate and refer to the DSO and/or SSM.

Please refer to GDPR and Data Protection Policy regarding the sharing of a person's information. Consent must be considered throughout this process. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not be expecting information to be shared. It is important to inform the child or young person raising a concern, that you are unable to withhold any information they pass onto you. All information gathered will be passed onto the SSM and/or DSO.

## 21. Anti-Bullying Policy

Charlton Athletic Academy is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our players, so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our Academy. If bullying does occur, all players should be able to tell, and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Charlton Athletic Academy is committed to educating our players on how to treat everyone with respect.

### What is bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- Physical assault.
- Social bullying.
- Threatening behaviour.
- Name calling.
- Cyberbullying.

### What is considered as bullying?

- People calling you names.
- Making things up to get you into trouble.
- Hitting, pinching, biting, pushing and shoving.
- Taking things away from you.
- Damaging your belongings.
- Stealing your money.
- Taking your friends away from you or leaving you out.
- Posting insulting messages or rumours, in person online.
- Threats and intimidation.
- Making silent or abusive phone calls.
- Sending you offensive texts or messages.

### Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Players who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Charlton Athletic Academy have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. All staff, players and parents should understand what bullying is. All staff should know what the Academy policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported. All players and parents should know what the Club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises. As an Academy we take bullying seriously. Players and parents should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported. Bullying will not be tolerated.

### Signs & symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs, and they should investigate if a child:

- Says he or she is being bullied.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Is unwilling to go to the Academy.
- Is frightened to say what is wrong.
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Changes their usual routine.

- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Comes home with clothes torn or equipment damaged.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Has a possession go 'missing'.
- Starts stammering.
- Cries them self to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Begins to do poorly in schoolwork.
- Doesn't want to go on the Academy minibus.
- Begs to be driven to the Academy.
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully).
- Has monies continually 'lost'.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

### **Procedures**

Report bullying incidents to the coaching staff if the concern is about a member of coaching staff report the concern to the Academy Manager, Education and welfare staff or the Senior Safeguarding Manager. In cases of serious bullying, staff will record the incidents. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come into for a meeting to discuss the problem. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying stopped quickly. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

### **Outcomes**

The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. If all involved agree we will use a Restorative conversation approach. Other consequences may also take place following the academy's behaviour ladder.

In serious cases suspension or de-registration will be considered. If possible, the players will be reconciled.

All coaches involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e., the warning.

After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

### **Prevention**

The Academy have a players and parents codes of conduct as well as a staff code of conduct, which includes what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members of which the anti-bullying policy is one part. All Club members and parents will sign to accept the constitution upon joining the Club. The Academy's Senior Staff will raise awareness around bullying, why it matters and meet with staff, players and parents to discuss the issue openly and constructively. All Charlton Athletic Academy staff are committed to promoting good practice, building a culture of safeguarding in action and to make timely referrals to statutory agencies and football governing bodies, when there are concerns. The Academy strive to ensure all staff, players and parents are educated, trained and aware of policy and procedures surround safeguarding and the welfare of our members.

## 22. Dealing with Allegations of Abuse made against Staff

Charlton Athletic Football Club is committed to providing the highest level of care for all players, staff and supporters. It is extremely important that any allegations of abuse against a member of the Club are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently, maintaining the highest level of protection whilst also giving support to the person who is the subject of the allegation.

This policy is designed to ensure that all Club stakeholders are aware of the procedure for the investigation of allegations of abuse in order that all complaints are dealt with consistently and efficiently as possible. A clear policy will help all youth players to feel comfortable that they can voice concerns about any member of staff. Allegations will be reported to the Club safeguarding leads immediately or to the senior staff where the safeguarding staff are the subject of an allegation.

All allegations will be taken seriously and investigated immediately.

### Purpose

The procedure for dealing with allegations against staff depends on the situation and circumstances surrounding the allegation. This policy must be followed when dealing with allegations but may be adapted to each case. This policy will be used alongside the Club's complaints policy and safeguarding policy. This policy will be used in any case where it is suspected or alleged that a member of staff or a volunteer at the Club has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child (please refer to the Club's safeguarding policy which outlines types of abuse).
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

It is imperative that allegations against staff are dealt with as quickly as possible to:

- Minimise the risk to the child.
- Minimise the impact on the child's learning and development.
- Minimise stress to the employee concerned.
- Ensure a fair and thorough investigation for all parties.

### Procedure

*Reporting an allegation* – The following procedures should be applied when there is an allegation that any person who works with children:

Has behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not have to directly relate to a child but could, for example include arrest for possession of a weapon.

As a parent or carer, has become subject to child protection procedures.

Is closely associated with someone in their personal lives (e.g., partner, member of the family or other household member) who may present a risk of harm to child/ren for whom the members of staff are responsible in their employment/volunteering.

All allegations made against staff should be reported immediately to the Club's Senior Safeguarding Manager. Complaints about the safeguarding lead should be reported to the academy manager or senior staff member who will then contact the designated officer at the EFL or FA.

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a player are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount and must report their concerns immediately.



Club Senior Safeguarding Manager or senior staff will contact the designated officer at the local authority and a discussion will take place to decide whether:

- More information is required; or
- No further actions are needed; or
- A strategy discussion should take place; or
- There should be immediate involvement of the police or social care.

The Club will share available information with the Local authority designated officer about the allegation, the child, and the person against whom the allegation has been made and consider whether a police investigation or a strategy discussion is needed. Representatives from other agencies may be invited to the discussion and could include representatives from health, social care and police.

### **Investigation**

An investigation into the allegation is normally carried out by the safeguarding staff or children's social services if necessary.

Internal investigations must be second to any safeguarding investigation and may need to be delayed until the external investigation is complete.

The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of the investigation:

*Substantiated*: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

*Malicious*: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive

*False*: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

*Unsubstantiated*: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

*Unfounded*: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation.

### **Supporting those involved**

The person(s) who makes the allegation and their parents/carers.

Parents and carers will be notified if their child makes or is involved in an allegation against staff if they do not already know. However, if the police or social services are to be involved, they will be contacted first and will advise as to what information may or may not be disclosed to the parents. There will be a staff member designated to the role of liaising with the parents and child about the case and ensuring that they are fully informed as far as is possible. Parents and carers will be made aware of any progress in the investigation, and where there is no criminal prosecution, the outcome will be explained to them. This may be a disciplinary outcome. During a disciplinary hearing the deliberations and information used for deciding are usually confidential, but parents will be told the outcome in confidence. Social services and the police may be involved and will provide the Club with advice on what type of additional support the child may need.

The person(s) who the allegation is made against.

The member(s) of staff who the allegation has been made against will be informed. They will be suspended from their post pending an investigation, in conjunction with the disciplinary policy. Throughout the investigation, they will be unable to speak with any members of staff, players or parents. Furthermore, they will be also suspended from their work email account and ID pass card. A designated member of staff, mainly line manager, will be able to check in with the member(s) of staff who have been suspended to offer additional support. Support services will be provided, should



they need to speak in confidence regarding the allegation. It is not always necessary to suspend a member of staff, as part of that, it is our duty of care to find a way for them to continue working even in a different role. For example, office based or with additional supervision to mitigate any perceived risk, Dependant on the nature and level of concern, this may be the better option. We will liaise with LADO to discuss if suspension is required unless it is clear.

### **Confidentiality**

The Club will make every effort to guard the privacy of all parties during and after an investigation into an allegation. It is in everyone's best interest to maintain this confidentiality to ensure a fair investigation with minimum impact for all parties. A breach of confidentiality will be taken seriously and may warrant its own investigation.

### **Suspensions**

The Club will not suspend a member of staff without serious consideration and will not do it automatically once an allegation has been made. Depending on the nature of the case, it may be possible that alternative arrangements are made so that the individual can continue working. In the case of suspension, the employee will receive written confirmation within one working day and will be informed of the reason for the suspension.

### **Action on conclusion of the case**

If the allegation is substantiated and the employee is dismissed or resigns, or we cease to use the member of staffs services, the Club will consider whether a referral must be made to the DBS service. If it is decided that the employee may return after a suspension, then provisions will be put in place by the Club to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible. This may involve a phased return for a trial period or the use of another member of staff as a support system in the short term. If the child who made the allegation is still at the Club, they will consider what needs to be done to manage the contact between employee and child.

### **Action in the case of false or malicious allegations**

Where an allegation is proved to be false, safeguarding staff may refer to social services to determine whether the child needs support or has been abused by someone else. The Club's behaviour ladder (Appendix 1) and code of conduct (Appendix 2) sets out the disciplinary action that may be taken against players who are found to have made malicious allegations against Club staff. The safeguarding team may consult the senior club staff when considering what action to take.

If the claim has been made by a person who is not a player, the club may pass the information to the police who may take further action against that person.



### **23. Late Collection of Children Policy**

Late collection of children by parents presents Charlton Athletic Football Club Academy and its coaches with a potentially difficult situation. It is important that everyone understands that while the Club are happy to help in a real emergency, parents/carers cannot assume that it is acceptable to turn up late without notifying your child's Coach.

If parents are unable to collect their child/children on time, they **MUST** contact the relevant person to let them know what the situation is, when their child is likely to be collected and the name of the person who will be collecting them. In the event of parents repeatedly collecting their child late they will be asked by the Coach/Designated Safeguarding Officer to review their collection arrangements.

All parents/carers will be expected to adhere to this policy to help with safeguarding your child. In the unlikely event of a child not being collected from any of the training or match day sites at the expected time and no contact being made with the parents, the following procedure will apply: Two members of staff will remain on the premises with the child at all times. One of these staff members will be a senior member of staff.

- The child will be reassured and comforted.
- The parents / carers will be telephoned on all available contact numbers.
- If the parents / carers are not contactable the emergency contact person will be contacted and asked to collect the child.
- Every effort will be made to contact the parents or the emergency contact.
- If no contact has been made with either the parents or the emergency contact within one hour of the time at which the child was due to be collected, staff will contact Social Services or the Police for advice.

#### **Guidelines for Parents**

Parents of children registered with Charlton Athletic Football Club Academy are asked to provide specific information – via the Registration Form – which includes:

- Home address and telephone numbers of parents / carers.
- Information about who has primary responsibility for the child.
- Names and telephone numbers of adults who are authorised by the parents / carers to collect their child from training and games i.e., childminder, relative, and neighbour.
- Information about any person who has been denied legal access to the child.
- Emergency contact numbers.
- If there are any changes to any of the above, we ask that a Coach, Academy Secretary or the Designated Safeguarding Officer are notified immediately.

#### **Guidelines for Coaching Staff:**

In the event of a parent / carer failing to collect a child at the agreed session finish time, the coach will wait with the child / young person at the sport facility, with another coach.

The Coach will then make all the necessary arrangements to attempt contact with the parent / carer using emergency contact numbers. Coaches will keep a record of all calls, times and outcomes. If all attempts fail, the Coach will then contact the Safeguarding team for further guidance. Where possible, this will be done in an open environment with another Coach present. If the child has not been collected after an hour, we will follow our Child Protection Procedures and contact the Local Social Services or Police. Social Services will aim to find the parent / carer or relative and if unable to do so, the child will be placed into the care of the Local Authority.



Note: Under no circumstances will Coaches / Helpers go to look for the parent, nor take the child home with them.

A full written report of the incident will be recorded by the relevant Coach.

Coaches will:

- Never take the child home or to any other location.
- Never send the child home with another person without permission from a parent or carer.
- Never ask a child to wait in a vehicle or sport facility with you alone.
- Never spend time alone with children away from others.
- Never transport a child on their own to or from an event or activity.
- Never send a child away from the facility alone.



## Appendix 1

BEHAVIOUR	POSSIBLE SANCTION	MONITORING	POSSIBLE INTERVENTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Severe Violence.</li> <li>A physical risk to other players including teammates and opposition.</li> <li>Criminal behaviour both on and off-site including possession of a weapon, theft, bodily harm etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Released from the Academy. (Mutual consent not needed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents contacted by Academy Manager.</li> <li>DSO to file report after gathering evidence.</li> <li>Release papers signed.</li> <li>Senior Safeguarding Manager notified.</li> <li>EFL Notified.</li> <li>School notified.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serious or repeated violence.</li> <li>Swearing at staff or officials.</li> <li>Spitting.</li> <li>Serious verbal, emotional, or physical bullying (repeated).</li> <li>Racism.</li> <li>Inciting violence.</li> <li>Bringing the club into disrepute.</li> <li>Signing with an agent before 16.</li> <li>Serious misuse of social media.</li> </ul> <p><b>Applies to SCHOOL AND ACADEMY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Released from the Academy (<i>Mutual consent not needed</i>).</li> <li>2-week suspension from the Academy (<i>including training and games</i>).</li> <li>Formal written warning*.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents contacted by Academy Manager.</li> <li>DSO to file report after gathering evidence.</li> <li>Same day / next session parental meeting</li> <li>School notified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting of SMT and relevant coaches to discuss 'support' interventions.</li> <li>Follow re-integration policy on return to training (DSO to be present with relevant coach).</li> <li>Coach to monitor player behaviour.</li> <li>Possible mentoring.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inappropriate physical aggression.</li> <li>Dangerous behaviour.</li> <li>Bullying.</li> <li>Repeated suspensions.</li> <li>Persistent disruption during training sessions.</li> <li>Persistent misbehaviour at school.</li> <li>Repeated defiance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Applies to SCHOOL AND ACADEMY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suspension for 2 training sessions.</li> <li>Removal from session.</li> <li>Formal verbal or written warning*.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents contacted by Lead Phase Coach or relevant age – group coach (AM informed).</li> <li>DSO informed – school notified.</li> <li>DSO to gather evidence and record.</li> <li>Senior Safeguarding Manager informed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting of SMT and relevant coaches to discuss 'support' interventions.</li> <li>Follow re-integration policy on return to training (Lead phase coach and age relevant coach to lead)</li> <li>Coach to monitor player behaviour.</li> <li>Possible mentoring.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-attendance at training or games.</li> <li>Persistent lateness.</li> <li>Defiance.</li> <li>Use of foul and abusive language.</li> <li>Refusing instructions.</li> <li>Failure to shake hands with opposition.</li> <li>Misuse of social media.</li> </ul> <p><b>Applies to SCHOOL AND ACADEMY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not selected to play in game(s) if repeated - further sanctions must be discussed.</li> <li>Suspension for 1 training session.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents contacted by Lead Phase Coach or relevant age – group coach (AM informed).</li> <li>DSO informed, follow up with parents and school notified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DSO to schedule meeting with parents / school visit.</li> <li>Possible Intervention involving transport support.</li> <li>Revisit SM Policy.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inappropriately dressed for games.</li> <li>Inappropriate footwear for training and games (Black Boots only).</li> <li>Unclean footwear.</li> <li>Chewing gum.</li> <li>Lack of effort in games and training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not allowed to play in the game.</li> <li>Removed from session.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents contacted by Lead Phase Coach or relevant age group coach (AM informed).</li> <li>Follow up meeting with Lead Phase Coach or relevant age group coach (recorded and sent to DSO).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss at SMT / AMT progress.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incomplete PMA submission.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbal warning (not recorded for 1<sup>st</sup> time).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead coach to remind parents / player investigate why.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss at AMT.</li> </ul>



## Appendix 2

### CHARLTON ATHLETIC ACADEMY

#### Code of Conduct

##### *U9-U18 Parents /Spectators*

- The Club and Team Managers are held responsible for the behaviour of players and spectators before, during and after the game – The Football Association or The Football League will discipline the Club for any incidents that involve players or spectators.
- The decisions of match officials must not be questioned.
- Parents and spectators must not become involved in arguments with match officials, opposing players or supporters.
- Please stay a reasonable distance away from the playing area during both matches and training.
- Please follow paths and roped-off areas at Sparrows Lane. Do not stray on to the playing surfaces and ensure any young children, friend or relatives who are unaware of these rules do the same.
- Parents and spectators may positively comment on play (e.g. “well done”) but please keep quiet about any mistakes that are made! The only coaching that should take place will be the responsibility of the coach and his assistant. Any parent or spectator violating this rule will be asked to leave the immediate vicinity of the pitch. Further violation of this important rule may result in your son being asked to leave the Club.
- Please ensure any facilities that are used are left in the same condition as you found them.
- Parents will not normally be allowed on team coaches. Exceptions to this rule will include:
  - Parents who have travelled from outside the one hour distance allowed by Academies (if room allows)
  - Parents of trialists unaware of the above rule (if room allows)
  - At the discretion of Team Managers, on longer trips, and where room allows, parents may be invited to use the coach. If room is limited then one parent per child may be allowed. Parents should check with their Team Managers at least a day before a game whether they will be allowed on the coach.
- Any questions regarding training or games should be direct towards Assistant Academy Managers in the first instance.
- Your son’s welfare is very important to us, so please advise us of any injuries/knocks/illnesses so we can act accordingly.



- Please help your son(s) to abide by their own Code of Conduct (e.g. ensure they have a towel for training and games, do not buy them the wrong kind of food and drinks before and after training).
- Please encourage your son to take responsibility for looking after his own training equipment and boots (e.g. clean and bring both pairs of boots to training and games).
- No smoking on site and no ball games allowed.
- Please ensure you abide by the following Football Association rules related to Agents:
  1. An Authorised Agent must not, either directly or indirectly, make an approach to, or enter into any agreement with, a Player in relation to any agency activity before:
    - a) the first day in January of the year of the Player's sixteenth birthday, or
    - b) the first day in January of the final year of the Player's full time education.
  2. An Authorised Agent cannot enter into a Representation Contract with a Player under the age of eighteen years of age unless it is countersigned by the Player's parent or legal guardian with parental responsibility.

*\*The use of Social media*

*Please carefully read the Academy's Social Media Policy (2012) and work together with us to 'educate' your son/daughter in using these forms of communication appropriately.*



## Appendix 3

### Charlton Athletic F.C. Academy - COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

1. To provide all the necessary documentation in line with the FA Licensed Coaches Affiliation prior to commencement of service. This includes;  
YD2 Self Certification, DBS Check, BFASS 1st Aid Certificate, FA Safeguarding Workshop training.
2. To maintain up to date records of all the above Certification and notify the Academy secretary of any additional qualifications or training that is undertaken whilst in service.
3. To commit and participate in all 'in house' CPD events scheduled throughout each calendar year.
4. To commit to the Academy's Safeguarding Policy and ethos and to provide a safe and secure environment for all players (and parents where applicable).
5. To realise this 'Safeguarding ethos' in action by ensuring that they are never alone with a young player or group of players. (The 2 coach rule)
6. To ensure that all young players are appropriately dressed before coaches enter a changing facility (full kit or fully dressed).
7. To provide to the best of their ability, and to the standard required by Charlton Athletic F.C., coaching which will develop players of excellence quality.
8. In conjunction with their respective age group co-ordinators to make calculated decisions regarding the signing, or not, of trialists, and the retention of players currently at the club.
9. To be fully prepared for all games and training. (30 minutes before training commences).
10. To ensure all players and parents are informed of details regarding training, games and transport arrangements.
11. To be available, at times convenient to themselves, to be contacted by parents regarding the above.
12. To ensure that all players in their charge also act in an appropriate manner in line with the Players Code of Conduct and Charlton Athletic FC.
13. To promptly communicate with the Academy office any important information (e.g. may arrive late for training due to work commitments).
14. To ensure all kit is laid out before a game and fully accounted for.
15. To, where necessary, organise the setting up of pitches and playing areas.
16. To assist with the completion of match assessment sheets which should arrive in the Academy office by no later than the Tuesday after the game.
17. To keep a register of attendance and notify the age group co-ordinator if any player is missing regularly without a reasonable excuse.
18. To ensure the opposition are made welcome and that their coaches and players (and where possible parents) are given refreshments.
19. To ensure the correct procedure is followed for trialists.
20. To enforce the player and parent code of conduct.
21. To wear, at all times, the club issue clothing.

## Appendix 4

# What to do in response to a concern or allegation

When a child, young person or adult at risk has disclosed concerning information to you

OR

You have witnessed or had reported to you an incident or complaint involving a child, young person or adult at risk, which may be considered abuse or poor practice.

