



BOLTON TOWN FC

Safeguarding Children Policy

Protecting children and young people in football

This policy records how Bolton Town FC safeguards every child and young person involved with the club. It applies to all youth football activity and to every adult acting on the club's behalf.

Policy information	Details
Status	Approved
Version	1.0
Approval date	15 September 2026
Policy owner	Chairperson and Club Welfare Officers
Children's Welfare Officer	Laura Lunt
Affiliation	Manchester FA
Applies to	Committee members, officials, coaches, managers, volunteers, players, parents and carers
Review cycle	At least annually and whenever FA guidance or regulations change

Purpose and commitment

Bolton Town FC acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person and is committed to providing a safe, positive and inclusive football environment. A child is anyone under the age of 18. The club subscribes to The Football Association's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures and will comply with The FA's Safeguarding Children Regulations.

This policy is based on The FA safeguarding policy template for clubs with youth teams. It should be read alongside current FA and Manchester FA guidance, the club's codes of conduct and its related policies.

Safeguarding principles

- The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.
- Every child has the right to be protected from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect, bullying, discrimination, exploitation, grooming and poor practice.
- Protection applies regardless of age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability, disability or background.
- Every concern, suspicion, disclosure or allegation will be taken seriously and responded to promptly and appropriately.
- Children and young people will be listened to and their wishes considered, while recognising that action may still be necessary to protect them or somebody else.
- Safeguarding is the responsibility of every adult involved with Bolton Town FC. Inaction is not an option.
- Effective safeguarding depends on partnership with children, parents, carers, Manchester FA, The FA and statutory services.

Scope

This policy applies to all Bolton Town FC youth teams, training, matches, tournaments, trips, events, online activity and other club-related environments. It applies to paid and voluntary roles, including committee members, coaches, managers, assistants, match officials appointed by the club, first aiders, photographers, drivers, helpers and anyone else acting for the club or having responsibility for children.

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Chairperson and Welfare Officers	Own, approve and review this policy, support its implementation and ensure safeguarding is considered in club decisions.

Club Welfare Officer Children	Laura Lunt is the first point of contact for concerns about a child or young person and liaises with Manchester FA and statutory services where required.
Committee	Provides visible support, ensures resources and training are available and acts appropriately where standards are breached.
Coaches managers and volunteers	Create safe environments, follow this policy and the codes of conduct, maintain professional boundaries and report concerns promptly.
Parents carers and players	Follow club standards, raise concerns through the appropriate route and contribute to a respectful football environment.

Safer recruitment and suitability

Bolton Town FC endorses The FA's safer recruitment guidance. Before appointing somebody to a role involving children, the club will define the role and responsibilities, verify identity, meet and assess the applicant's suitability, obtain and follow up references where required, and complete the checks applicable to the role.

- Anyone in an eligible role must hold an in-date FA-accepted enhanced DBS check with the appropriate barred-list check.
- Required safeguarding and role-specific qualifications must be completed and kept current.
- The club will check qualifications and eligibility through the FA Club Portal and address any gaps promptly.
- Access to children will be appropriately supervised while recruitment checks or required training remain incomplete.
- Concerns about the suitability of a current or prospective volunteer will be referred to Manchester FA for guidance.
- Selection decisions will be lawful, proportionate and made in the best interests of children.

Expected behaviour and professional boundaries

Everyone representing Bolton Town FC must follow the relevant FA Grassroots Code and club standards. Adults must act as positive role models, put children's wellbeing before results and maintain clear professional boundaries.

- Use language, physical contact and coaching practices that are appropriate to the child's age and needs.
- Avoid situations in which an adult is unnecessarily alone with a child and follow appropriate supervision ratios.
- Do not use humiliating, threatening, sexualised, discriminatory or degrading behaviour.

- Do not form secretive or inappropriate relationships with children or use a position of trust for personal benefit.
- Communicate with youth players through transparent routes visible to parents, carers or another responsible adult.
- Do not photograph, film or communicate with children in breach of the club's Social Media Photography and Digital Communications Policy.
- Report lower-level concerns and patterns of poor practice; do not wait for behaviour to become more serious.

Bullying and discrimination

Bolton Town FC recognises bullying as a form of abuse. Bullying, including online bullying, discriminatory bullying, harassment, intimidation and exclusion, is not acceptable. Concerns must be reported to Laura Lunt through the safeguarding route. Serious or repeated cases may be referred to Manchester FA or another appropriate authority.

Until a separate Bolton Town FC anti-bullying policy is approved, the club adopts and applies The FA's current anti-bullying policy and safeguarding guidance.

Listening to children

Children should know that they can speak to a trusted adult and that concerns will be taken seriously. Adults must listen calmly, avoid leading questions, make no promise of secrecy, explain what will happen next and record the child's words accurately as soon as possible.

Reporting a concern

If anyone is worried about a child, they must report the concern without delay. They do not need proof and must not investigate the matter themselves, confront the person involved or discuss it in team groups or on social media.

1. If a child is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical treatment, call 999. Tell emergency services that the matter may involve a child-protection concern.
2. Record what was seen, heard or disclosed using the child's own words where possible. Include relevant dates, times, people and actions, and distinguish fact from opinion.
3. Submit the concern through the safeguarding form on the Bolton Town FC website. During the temporary arrangement, submissions about children are delivered to the club inbox and must be passed confidentially and promptly to Laura Lunt.
4. Laura Lunt will assess the information, preserve appropriate records and seek advice from or refer the matter to the Manchester FA Designated Safeguarding Officer when required.
5. Serious concerns may be referred directly to Manchester FA, The FA Safeguarding Team, the Police, Children's Social Care, CEOP or the NSPCC as appropriate.

Important limits of the website route

The club inbox is not monitored continuously and the website form must not be used for emergencies. Laura Lunt is the sole named Club Welfare Officer for Children. Andrew Wood is the Club Welfare Officer for Adults and is not named as Laura's deputy for children's safeguarding.

If Laura is unavailable or the concern involves her

Where Laura is unavailable, the concern is serious, a delay could increase risk, or the concern involves Laura, the person reporting should contact Manchester FA, The FA Safeguarding Team, the Police, Children's Social Care or the NSPCC directly. Nobody should wait for a club response when urgent action is required.

Contact	Route
Emergency services	999 where a child is in immediate danger
Manchester FA safeguarding	Safeguarding@ManchesterFA.com
The FA Safeguarding Team	0800 169 1863 or Safeguarding@TheFA.com
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000
Police non-emergency	101
Bolton Town FC safeguarding page	www.boltontownfc.co.uk/contact-safeguarding/

Whistleblowing

Any adult or young person who is concerned about an adult in a position of trust may report the concern outside the club. Bolton Town FC supports The FA's whistleblowing arrangements and will not victimise a person for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

Responding to disclosures and allegations

When a child tells an adult

- Stay calm, listen and take the child seriously.
- Do not interrupt, press for unnecessary detail or ask leading questions.
- Do not promise confidentiality; explain that information must be shared with people who can help.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking.
- Do not contact or confront the person who may be responsible.
- Make a clear, factual record and report it immediately through the safeguarding route.

Allegations involving a club official or volunteer

An allegation or concern involving a coach, manager, official, committee member, volunteer or another adult in a position of trust must be passed promptly to Laura Lunt or directly to Manchester FA where appropriate. The club will not conduct an informal fact-finding exercise that could compromise a safeguarding investigation.

The club may take immediate precautionary action to protect children while advice is obtained. This is a neutral safeguarding measure and does not determine guilt. Decisions about suspension, restricted duties, referral or communication will follow FA, Manchester FA and statutory guidance.

Records confidentiality and information sharing

Safeguarding information is sensitive personal data. Records must be accurate, factual, dated, stored securely and accessible only to people who require them for safeguarding purposes. The club will not keep safeguarding records in open team folders, personal messaging groups or broadly accessible email accounts.

- Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis to protect a child, comply with a legal obligation or support an authorised safeguarding process.
- A request for confidentiality cannot prevent information being shared where a child or another person may be at risk.
- The person receiving a concern must preserve original messages and evidence without forwarding harmful material unnecessarily.
- Suspected illegal sexual images of children must not be copied, downloaded or redistributed. Police or specialist advice must be sought.
- Records will be retained and disposed of in line with applicable law, FA guidance and the club's data-protection arrangements.

Photography communication and online safety

The Bolton Town FC Social Media Photography and Digital Communications Policy sets the club's detailed requirements for consent, images, video, messaging, WhatsApp groups, social-media contact, livestreaming and account security. Any online safeguarding concern must also be reported under this policy.

[Bolton Town FC safeguarding information and confidential contact route](#)

Trips transport changing and medical care

Coaches and organisers must plan club activities so that safeguarding arrangements are proportionate to the children involved, the venue, travel, overnight stays, changing facilities, medical needs and foreseeable risks. Current FA guidance must be followed.

- Obtain appropriate parental or carer information and permissions for trips and tournaments.
- Use appropriate adult-to-child supervision and avoid unnecessary one-to-one situations.

- Agree transport arrangements in advance and do not create informal arrangements that leave one adult alone with one child without appropriate safeguards.
- Manage changing rooms and showers in a way that protects dignity, privacy and supervision needs.
- Record medical information, emergency contacts and consent for treatment securely and make them available to the responsible officials.
- Complete and review risk assessments for activities presenting additional safeguarding considerations.

Breaches and concerns about conduct

The club will respond proportionately to breaches of this policy, the relevant code of conduct or safeguarding standards. Possible action includes advice, additional supervision or training, removal from duties, suspension, club disciplinary action and referral to Manchester FA, The FA or statutory services. Safeguarding action takes priority over reputational concerns or competitive interests.

Monitoring and review

The Chairperson and Club Welfare Officers are responsible for reviewing this policy at least annually and whenever relevant FA guidance, safeguarding regulations, club arrangements or legislation changes. The committee will record approval and ensure the policy is accessible to members.

Approval record

Role	Name	Approval status	Date
Chairperson	Suzanne Crook	Approved	15 September 2026
Club Welfare Officer Children	Laura Lunt	Approved	15 September 2026
Club Welfare Officer Adults	Andrew Wood	Approved	15 September 2026

Next scheduled review date: 15 September 2027

Related policies and guidance

[The FA Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures resources](#)

[Manchester FA Safeguarding and Welfare](#)

[The FA Grassroots Code](#)

[Bolton Town FC safeguarding information](#)