



MATCHDAY SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Purpose of the Plan

Southport FC is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of all individuals involved in match day events, including staff, participants, spectators, and players. This safeguarding plan applies to all match days and outlines the specific procedures Southport FC will implement to protect children and adults at risk. Southport FC will ensure a clear, effective, and consistent response to any concerns of possible abuse or harm.

2. Strategic and Tactical Planning

Southport FC will ensure that the Match Day Safety Officer is responsible for safeguarding and welfare during match days. In cases where safeguarding and safety issues occur simultaneously, Southport FC will have clear procedures in place, and an appropriately trained deputy will be on duty for delegation as needed.

Southport FC will deploy suitably qualified staff and volunteers with the required skills, knowledge, and experience in safeguarding matters. This ensures high-quality leadership, robust supervision, and effective support for staff in other key roles.

3. Safety Officer Briefing

On match days, the Southport FC Match Day Safety Officer will deliver a verbal briefing to all Head Stewards and key staff. This briefing will be supplemented by a visual presentation as needed. The dedicated Safeguarding Officer will attend and be introduced to any new personnel or representatives of the visiting club.

4. Match Day Club Welfare / Safeguarding Officer

Southport FC will ensure that the Match Day Safety Officer is responsible for safeguarding and welfare on match days, stationed between the Control Room and the stadium. The officer will be accessible via radio and will coordinate the response to any safeguarding issues.

5. Venue Reporting Structure

Southport FC will implement the following reporting structure for safeguarding concerns:

- All safeguarding concerns will be reported to the Match Day Safety Officer.
- The Match Day Safety Officer will determine the appropriate response and record the concern.
- If the Match Day Safety Officer is unavailable, concerns will be reported to the supervisor or line manager.
- Immediate action will be taken to safeguard children and adults at risk as necessary.

6. Managing Safeguarding Concerns and Incidents

Southport FC will ensure that it is not the responsibility of staff to decide if abuse has occurred. However, all staff members are responsible for acting on any concerns.

If urgent medical attention is required, Southport FC staff will contact the medical team or emergency services immediately and then inform the Match Day Safety Officer.

7. Unaccompanied Children

Southport FC will not permit entry to children under the age of 12 without a responsible adult over the age of 18. Multiple junior tickets can be sold only if all attendees are 12 years and over. The age requirement for unaccompanied minors will be clearly communicated on the Southport FC website and to away teams before ticket sales.

8. Children within Hospitality

Southport FC will enforce the following code of conduct for children in hospitality areas:

- Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.
- Children will not be lifted above balcony railings.
- Running or jumping on balconies is prohibited.

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- Alcohol will not be served to children.
- Children will not be left alone without other adults within the party.

9. Mascots and Ball Persons

Southport FC will only allow children to be mascots or ball persons with parental consent. A signed image/ photography consent form will be required before any images are published. Children will always be accompanied by at least two DBS-checked staff members who have up-to-date safeguarding training.

10. Searching of Children (under 18s)

Southport FC will conduct searches of children only when necessary to ensure safety and security. The Match Day Safety Officer will make the decision to conduct searches. All searches will respect mutual dignity, involve same-gender stewards, and seek parental consent where possible.

11. Dealing with Behavioural Issues

Southport FC staff will use maximum tolerance when dealing with children and vulnerable adults. Physical restraint will only be used as a last resort to prevent harm. If extreme behaviour occurs, the child will be taken to a place of safety within the stadium until collected by a responsible adult.

12. Lost or Missing Children

Southport FC will manage lost or missing children according to standard operating procedures. The Match Day Safety Officer will be informed if the circumstances raise safeguarding concerns, such as parental intoxication or urgent medical needs.

13. Weather Conditions

Southport FC will advise spectators to dress appropriately for weather conditions. Staff will monitor weather-related safety risks, including extreme temperatures, frost, ice, and high winds affecting stadium structures such as gates.

14. Noise

Southport FC recognises that football matches can be noisy. The club will provide guidance to parents on the use of ear defenders or muffs for young children to protect their hearing.

15. Ball Danger

Southport FC will ensure that spectators are aware of the potential risk of being struck by footballs, especially in lower seating areas and behind goals. Spectators will be reminded to remain alert during warm-ups and the match.

16. Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Southport FC takes incidents of violence against women and girls seriously. The club will work with partner agencies, including the police and local authorities, to provide a safe environment. All reports will be acted upon, and safeguards will be implemented immediately.

17. Recording Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse or Poor Practice

Southport FC will require staff to report all safeguarding concerns to the Match Day Safety Officer. Reports will be factual and objective, using the child's own words when possible. Concerns about the Match Day Safety Officer will be escalated to the Board Safeguarding Champion.

Southport FC will maintain communication with all parties involved until the matter is resolved, following the lead of external safeguarding agencies as needed.

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