



Safeguarding Handbook

Safeguarding Leads and Officers

Club Designated Safeguarding Lead

Sara Young

sarayoung@northamptonsaints.co.uk

+44 (0) 7483078369

Foundation Designated Safeguarding Lead

Jordan Letts

Jordan.letts@northamptonsaintsfoundation.org

+44 (0) 7713783505

Academy Safeguarding Officer

Max Dominy

maxdominy@northamptonsaints.co.uk

+TBC

Community Safeguarding Officer

Connor Fleming

connorfleming@northamptonsaints.co.uk

+TBC

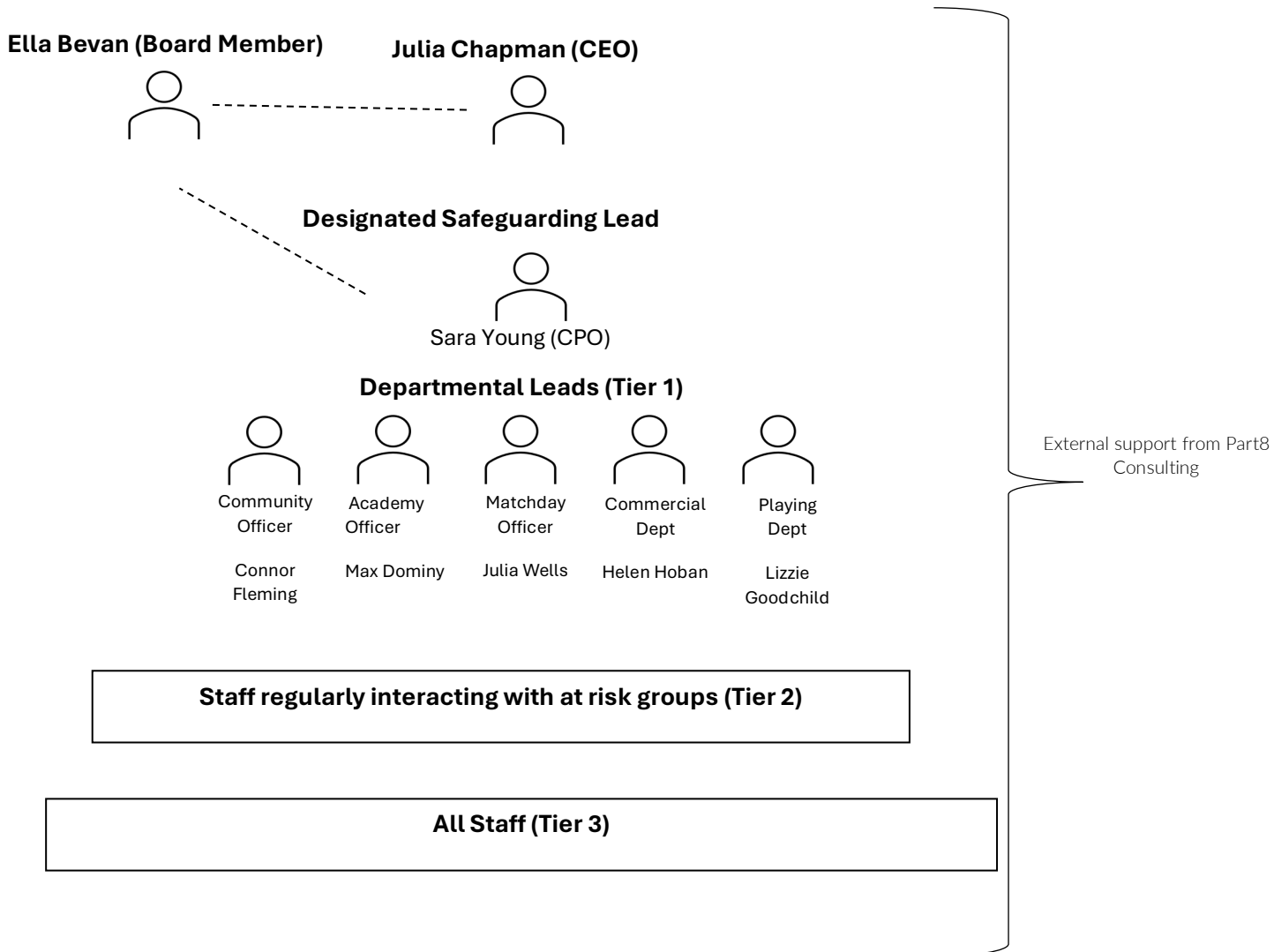
Matchday Safeguarding Officer

Julia Wells

juliawells@northamptonsaints.co.uk

+44 TBC

Safeguarding Hierarchy



Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Everyone who participates in Rugby Union or any other event or activity at cinch stadium at Franklin's Gardens is entitled to do in an enjoyable and safe environment. Northampton Saints believes it has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for children, coaches, spectators and volunteers, it provides them with the highest possible standard of care.

Northampton Saints is committed to devising and implementing policies that accepts its responsibility to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from the risk of harm and abuse. This means that Northampton Saints will follow procedures to protect children and vulnerable adults and report any concerns about their welfare to the Club Safeguarding Lead, Rugby Football Union, and local social services and/or Police where necessary.

The aim of our policy is to promote good practice, provide children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Northampton Saints and to allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues. For these purposes, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18.

Policy Statement

Northampton Saints is committed to the following:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in Rugby Union in a fun and safe environment.
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
- All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All involved in Rugby Union and who work with children, will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and child protection procedures.
- Working in partnership with parents and children is essential for the protection of children.
- To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in Rugby Union, everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework

Northampton Saints aims to give information and guidelines to all who work with children and young people. Many may consider that only rugby coaches need help and advice, but we believe it is essential that all club officials, volunteers and any others who meet children through rugby, have clear guidelines and information to help them and, more importantly, the children whom they come into contact with through rugby.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore NOT the responsibility of employees or participants at Northampton Saints to start to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is, however, their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and act if they have concerns about the welfare of the child.

Good practice

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and action:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g., avoid private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication with no secrets)
- Make the experience of Rugby Union fun and enjoyable – promote fairness, and confront and deal with bullying
- Treat all children equally and with respect and dignity
- Always put the welfare of the child first
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with children (e.g., it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them)
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and with the consent of the child. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the child's consent has been given.
- Involve parents/carers wherever possible, e.g. Where children to be supervised in changing rooms, encouraging parents to take responsibility for their own child. If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure parents, coaches etc. work in pairs.
- Request written parental consent if Northampton Saints officials are required to transport children in their cars
- Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements e.g., overnight stays
- Ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff.
- Ensure that at away events adults should not enter a child's room or invite a child into their rooms.
- Be an excellent role model, this includes not smoking, swearing or drinking alcohol in the company of children.
- Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Recognising the development needs and capacity of the child and do not risk sacrifice welfare in a desire for Northampton Saints' or personal achievements. This means avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Secure written parental consent for Northampton Saints to act in loco parentis, to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises. This includes emergency contact details for parent or guardian.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

Poor practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel:

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Taking children alone in a car on journeys, however short
- Taking children to your home where they will be alone with you
- Sharing a room with a child
- Engaging in rough, or physical or sexually proactive games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching in any form
- Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature that the child can do themselves

Where cases arise where it is impractical/impossible to avoid certain situations e.g., transporting a child in your car, the tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of a parent/carer and the child involved.

If during your care you accidentally hurt a child, the child seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions and/or if the child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incident as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written. Note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

Physical contact in Rugby

Many sports including rugby, by nature, require a degree of physical contact between adults and children. Physical contact can be used appropriately to instruct, encourage, protect or comfort. The aims of guidelines relation to a physical contact are to provide adults and children with appropriate types and context for touching.

Physical contact between adults and children should only be used when the aim is to:

- Develop sports skills or techniques
- Treat an injury
- Prevent an injury
- Meet the requirements of a particular sport

Physical contact should:

- Not involve touching genital areas, buttocks or breasts
- Meet the need of the child and not the need of the adult
- Be fully explained to the child and with the exception of an emergency, permission should be sought
- Not take place in secret or out of sight of others

Records of injuries should be fully recorded and reported to the Club Safeguarding Lead, Foundation Safeguarding Lead, or Academy Safeguarding Officer.

Defining Child Abuse

There are four main types of abuse: **physical, sexual, emotional, bullying, and neglect.**

The abuser may be a family member, someone the child encounters in residential care or in the community, including sports and leisure activities. Any individual may abuse or neglect a child directly or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the child.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a child at any age. The effect can be so damaging that if not treated, may follow the individual into adulthood.

Children with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse has occurred.

Physical Abuse

Where adults physically hurt or injure a child e.g., hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, and drowning. Giving children alcohol or inappropriate drugs would constitute as child abuse.

In a sports situation, physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training disregards the capacity of the child's immature and growing body.

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional ill treatment of a child is likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve telling a child they are useless, worthless, unloved, and inadequate or valued in terms of only meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of children that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause a child to be frightened or feel in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted, which may make the young person frightened or withdrawn. Ill treatment of children, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse in sport may occur when the child is constantly criticised, given negative feedback, or expected to perform at levels that are above their capacity. Other forms of emotional abuse could take the form of name calling and bullying.

Bullying

Bullying may come from another young person or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. There are different types of bullying.

It may be physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g., racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages), emotional (e.g., tormenting, ridiculing,

humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g., unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

In sport, bullying may arise when a parent or coach pushes the child too hard to succeed, or a rival athlete or official uses bullying behaviour.

Neglect

Neglect occurs when an adult fails to meet the child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that it is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development e.g., failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Refusal to give attention can also be a form of neglect.

Neglect in sport could occur when a coach does not keep the child safe or exposing them to undue cold/heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when adults (male or female) use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing children pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner can also constitute forms of sexual abuse.

Sports activities which might involve physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also, the power of the coach over the young athletes, if misused, may lead to abusive situations developing.

Actions required if you identify concerns or signs of abuse

Recognising signs of abuse / bullying in a child can be very difficult unless there are some signs of physical or behavioural change. However, the possibility of abuse may be suspected from something which another person says. It is important to be aware and vigilant and to deal with the facts in an objective manner.

Sometimes the child may be giving an indication that they want to talk, and it is then important to follow a number of principles. It is important that any disclosure is dealt with correctly, so Northampton Saints have created a very simple procedure:

Stay calm and assure the child. For a child to disclose and to talk takes great courage, however they are telling you because they want your help and for the abuse to stop. Don't make promises of confidentiality but explain that you will need to contact other professionals who will be able to give the help which is needed. You must listen to what the child says and not suggest ideas. Keep questions to a minimum and use open questions and record what has been said as soon as possible. It is very important to record the exact words as spoken by the child recording facts and not opinions.

You must report the concern to the Club Safeguard Lead. It is very important that you do not tell anyone else about the complaint until you have discussed the situation with the Club Safeguarding Lead.

Matchday Safeguarding Arrangements

Northampton Saints are a family-oriented club and actively promotes the attendance of younger supporters and recognises that this comes with responsibilities. The Club has a reasonable expectation that young persons under 12 years of age (pre-senior school age) are accompanied by a responsible adult (parent/carer/teacher/rugby coach etc) inside the Ground on match days.

Toilets/washrooms

The Club recognises that toilets/washrooms are a potential risk area for younger spectators – the signs for Stewards and Club officials to watch out for are:

- a young child going to toilets/washrooms unescorted
- an adult, who does not seem to have a connection with a child, going to the toilets/washrooms on several occasions right behind that child
- an unescorted child not using the correct toilets/washrooms (male\female) an upset child after visiting the toilets/washrooms

If a Steward or any Club official becomes suspicious of an adult, they should pass their suspicions to their supervisor and Safety Officer. Club Safeguarding Lead to be notified so appropriate action may be taken.

Child running free

If a child appears to be in distress, a Steward or Club official should approach them, try to find out what is wrong and escort them to the Control Point. If necessary, obtain the assistance of another Steward or a female Club official/spectator.

If a child climbs or stands inappropriately on equipment, chairs, barriers or fences, they should be politely asked to get down and have the reason explained to them. Stewards or Club officials should never place a hand on them or shout at them so they cannot be startled or scared, which could cause them to fall and injure themselves.

Any child playing or misbehaving (such that they are endangering their own safety, or the safety of others, or being a nuisance to other spectators) should be asked to go back to their responsible adult in attendance. If necessary, the responsible adult should be asked to keep the child closely supervised while in the Ground.

If a child appears to be on his/her own (i.e., with no adult supervision) and is causing problems, they should be politely asked to behave themselves (do not behave threateningly or aggressively, and refrain from the use of any language that could be perceived to be foul or abusive). A Steward should be sited to keep watch of the situation, which will usually be sufficient deterrent to stop any problem behaviour. If they persist and are at least 12 years of age they may be asked to leave the Ground and should be escorted to the nearest exit by a

group, including a senior Club official. If they are under 12 years old, attempts should be made to find out their name and contact a parent or guardian, particularly in hours of darkness. Children must not, under any circumstances, be manhandled; they will usually go quietly if escorted by a group of adults. The assistance of another steward, Club official or spectator may help.

If a child turns violent towards a Steward or Club official, the adult may use reasonable non-aggressive actions to protect themselves prior to a decision being made as to next steps.

Stewards and Club officials must never be alone when dealing with an unruly child or when escorting a child from the ground.

Any incident must be recorded on the Control Room Matchday Log and highlighted as child related. Where deemed appropriate a written record of the incident will be produced subsequent to the end of the match. The Club's Safeguarding Lead must be made aware of the situation and can be requested to assist if inside the Ground at the time of the incident.

Lost Child

In the instance of a lost child, please refer to our specific "child separated from their responsible adult" policy which can be found later in this document.

Push Chairs and Prams

Push chairs and prams should not be used in the perimeter of the ground. However, they may be folded and stored at their own risk at one of the three reception area (Carlsberg/Main Reception, Barwell Reception, South Reception).

Terracing

Young persons under the height of 1.2 metres are not permitted to be in the terraced area for their own safety. If a young person under the height of 1.2 metres attends with a valid ticket for the terraced areas, they should not be permitted to enter the ground and terracing, but a supervisor contacted via the control room and efforts made to relocate them in one of the seating areas, this will include their responsible adult if under the age of 12 years.

Small Children/Babies

During the match parents/responsible adults should limit the carrying of small children or babies around the tarmac perimeter between the stands and the advertising tobleron/LEDs to the absolute minimum. This is for risk of being hit by loose balls, or where due to momentum players may stray off the pitch which could result in a collision.

Children Separated From Their Responsible Adult At Events

1. On arrival at events adults with children 14 years or younger will be offered a wrist bracelet for the child.
2. The accompanying adult will be requested to complete contact details for the event and secure the wristbands to the child
3. The adult is also encouraged to take a photo of the child with them on their mobile device.
4. When a child presents as separated, or an adult reports the separated child, the steward/ team member will notify control room and provide a description of the child and full name.
5. The control room will make an announcement Stating:
 - 5.1. "Please would NAME report to the nearest steward/ security officer. Steward/ security officer are dressed in ? High visibility steward jacket and grey saints bobble hat?.
 - 5.2. Under NO circumstances should the announcement include any details that the child is missing.
6. The security officer /steward finding the child will contact control room and report the child is with them and the location.
7. The security officer will accompany the child to the adult's location as directed by the control room.
8. The responsible adult will show the photo of the child taken at the beginning of the event, and the security officer will phone the details on the child's bracelet to confirm the child is handed to the correct adult.
9. When 30 minutes has elapsed from the time of reporting or last known whereabouts of the child, whichever is sooner, the Police **MUST** be called using 999 to report the separated child and requesting assistance and further actions to be taken. Staff will keep a record the police incident number and complete a Report a concern form.
10. Staff will follow the guidance of the police.
11. When a separated child has been located after notifying the police, the Control room will inform the police that the child has been found and reunited with their adult.

WHISTLEBLOWING

Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to our activities. This includes bribery, facilitation of tax evasion, fraud or other criminal activity, miscarriages of justice, health and safety risks, damage to the environment, bullying, harassment, discrimination, and any breach of legal or professional obligations. We hope that in many cases you will be able to raise any concerns with a member of our team directly.

However, if for any reason you feel unable to do so, you can contact us by emailing communications@northamptonsaints.co.uk.

If you do not feel comfortable contacting the Club directly, you can contact Public Concern at Work (Independent whistleblowing charity) who also offer a confidential helpline:

(020) 7404 6609

WHISTLE@PCAW.CO.UK

WWW.PCAW.CO.UK