

Safeguarding & Welfare Policy

Reviewed: May 2026

1. Policy Statement

Torquay United is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of:

- Children and young people
- Adults at risk
- Players, volunteers, staff, officials, and spectators

The Club recognises its duty of care to create and maintain a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment where all participants are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, discrimination, harassment, and poor practice.

This policy complies with:

- Football Association (FA) Safeguarding Policies and Procedures
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government)
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Care Act 2014
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR
- National safeguarding guidance relating to adults at risk

The Club adopts a zero-tolerance approach to safeguarding failures.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all:

- Players
- Coaches
- Volunteers
- Team officials
- Matchday staff
- Directors and committee members
- Contractors
- Parents/carers
- Spectators

- Third parties acting on behalf of the Club

The policy applies during:

- Training sessions
 - Matches
 - Travel
 - Tournaments
 - Social events
 - Online communication and social media activity
 - Any activity connected to the Club
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3. Key Safeguarding Principles

Torquay United will:

- Put the welfare of children and adults at risk first.
 - Listen to and respect all individuals.
 - Take all safeguarding concerns seriously.
 - Ensure safeguarding concerns are acted upon immediately.
 - Work in partnership with statutory agencies and the FA.
 - Recruit staff and volunteers safely.
 - Ensure safeguarding responsibilities are clearly understood.
 - Maintain confidentiality appropriately.
 - Provide safeguarding training and awareness.
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4. Designated Safeguarding Contacts

General Manager & Club Safeguarding Lead

Tim Herbert

General Manager – Torquay United Women FC

All safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to Tim Herbert unless doing so would place an individual at further risk or the concern relates directly to him.

Responsibilities include:

- Receiving safeguarding disclosures and concerns
- Recording safeguarding information securely

- Assessing immediate risk
 - Referring concerns to statutory agencies and the FA
 - Coordinating safeguarding responses
 - Monitoring ongoing welfare concerns
 - Escalating serious incidents appropriately
 - Ensuring safeguarding records are retained securely
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5. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Immediate Danger or Emergency

If a child or adult is at immediate risk of harm:

Contact Emergency Services Immediately

- Police / Emergency Services: 999

Then notify:

- Tim Herbert
 - Children's Social Care or Adult Social Care
 - The FA Safeguarding Team where appropriate – The Devon County FA Safeguarding lead is Lorraine Tilley and contactable on 01626 323566 / Lorraine.tilley@devonfa.com
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6. Internal Reporting Procedure

Any safeguarding concern, allegation, disclosure, suspicion, or welfare concern must be reported immediately.

This includes concerns involving:

- Abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual exploitation
- Grooming
- Emotional harm
- Bullying or cyberbullying
- Harassment or discrimination
- Domestic abuse
- Poor practice
- Self-harm or mental health concerns

- Radicalisation
- Adults at risk experiencing abuse or neglect

Reporting Routes

Step 1 – Immediate Reporting

The concern must be reported to:

- Tim Herbert (General Manager & Safeguarding Lead)

If unavailable, or if the concern involves him:

- Report directly to the Football Association Safeguarding Team
 - Report directly to Police or Social Care if risk thresholds are met
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7. External Reporting & Escalation Routes

Football Association Safeguarding Team

Safeguarding concerns involving football activity must be reported to the FA Safeguarding Team where appropriate.

The FA may:

- Provide safeguarding advice
 - Support investigations
 - Implement interim safeguarding measures
 - Suspend individuals where necessary
 - Coordinate with statutory agencies
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Children's Social Care

Referrals must be made where:

- A child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm
- Abuse or neglect is suspected
- There are ongoing welfare concerns

Social Care may:

- Undertake safeguarding assessments
- Convene strategy meetings
- Coordinate child protection responses
- Work jointly with Police and the Club

Adult Social Care

Referrals must be made where:

- An adult at risk is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect
- The adult has care and support needs
- Safeguarding intervention is necessary

Adult safeguarding responses may include:

- Section 42 safeguarding enquiries
 - Risk assessments
 - Multi-agency safeguarding plans
 - Police involvement
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Police

The Police must be contacted immediately where concerns involve:

- Criminal offences
 - Sexual offences
 - Physical assault
 - Immediate danger
 - Exploitation
 - Online abuse
 - Coercive or controlling behaviour
 - Serious threats or intimidation
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8. What Happens After a Concern is Raised

Once a safeguarding concern is received:

Stage 1 – Immediate Safety Assessment

Tim Herbert or the safeguarding lead will:

- Assess immediate risk
 - Ensure medical or emergency support where required
 - Take steps to protect individuals from further harm
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Stage 2 – Recording Information

The following must be recorded:

- Date and time
- Details of concern/disclosure
- Individuals involved
- Observations and actions taken
- Reporting routes used
- Decisions made

Safeguarding records must:

- Be factual and accurate
 - Be stored securely
 - Remain confidential
 - Be shared only on a need-to-know basis
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Stage 3 – Referral & Escalation

Where threshold criteria are met:

- Referrals will be made to Police and/or Social Care immediately.
 - The FA Safeguarding Team will be informed where football-related risks exist.
 - Interim risk management plans may be implemented.
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Stage 4 – Ongoing Risk Management

The Club may implement:

- Suspension from duties
- Supervision arrangements
- Restricted access
- Safeguarding agreements
- Welfare support plans
- Multi-agency liaison

The Club will cooperate fully with:

- Police investigations
- Social Care enquiries

- FA safeguarding investigations
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9. Confidentiality & Information Sharing

Safeguarding information will be handled in accordance with:

- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Safeguarding legislation and guidance

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where:

- A child or adult is at risk
- Criminal offences may have occurred
- Statutory intervention is required

Information will only be shared:

- To safeguard individuals
 - On a lawful and proportionate basis
 - With relevant agencies and professionals
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10. Whistleblowing

Any individual who feels unable to raise concerns internally may:

- Contact the FA Safeguarding Team directly
- Contact Police or Social Care
- Use whistleblowing procedures

No person will suffer detriment for reporting safeguarding concerns in good faith.

11. Safer Recruitment

The Club operates safer recruitment procedures in line with FA guidance, including:

- DBS checks where required
- Identity verification
- Reference checks
- Safeguarding training
- Risk assessments
- Role descriptions outlining safeguarding responsibilities

No individual will undertake regulated activity until safeguarding checks are completed satisfactorily.

12. Training & Awareness

The Club will ensure appropriate safeguarding training for:

- Coaches
- Volunteers
- Matchday staff
- Welfare officers
- Senior management

Safeguarding briefings will be delivered regularly.

13. Online Safety & Social Media

The Club expects all individuals to:

- Use respectful communication
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Avoid inappropriate private messaging
- Report online abuse or safeguarding concerns immediately

Online safeguarding concerns will be treated as seriously as face-to-face concerns.

14. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

The Club is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment free from:

- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Bullying
- Victimisation

Safeguarding responses will be fair, proportionate, and inclusive.

15. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where:

- FA guidance changes

- Legislation changes
- Learning from safeguarding incidents requires updates

The Club Board and General Manager are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.