

Safeguarding Governance Framework

Carlisle United



1. Introduction

The club has a priority commitment to safeguarding that creates and reinforces attitudes and behaviours that value children and adults at risk, creates a culture of accountability and drives continuous improvement.

1.1 Purpose

We will develop a robust Safeguarding Governance Framework (SGF) which drives accountability and continual improvement of the Club's safeguarding arrangements.

- Transparent
- Framework is to establish a clear and structured approach to safeguarding at CUFC
- It ensures that all players, staff, volunteers, and spectators (including Children and Vulnerable adults) are protected from harm, abuse, or discrimination. This includes Academy Players
- Details the policies and actions to underpin the purpose

1.2 Scope

This SGF applies to:

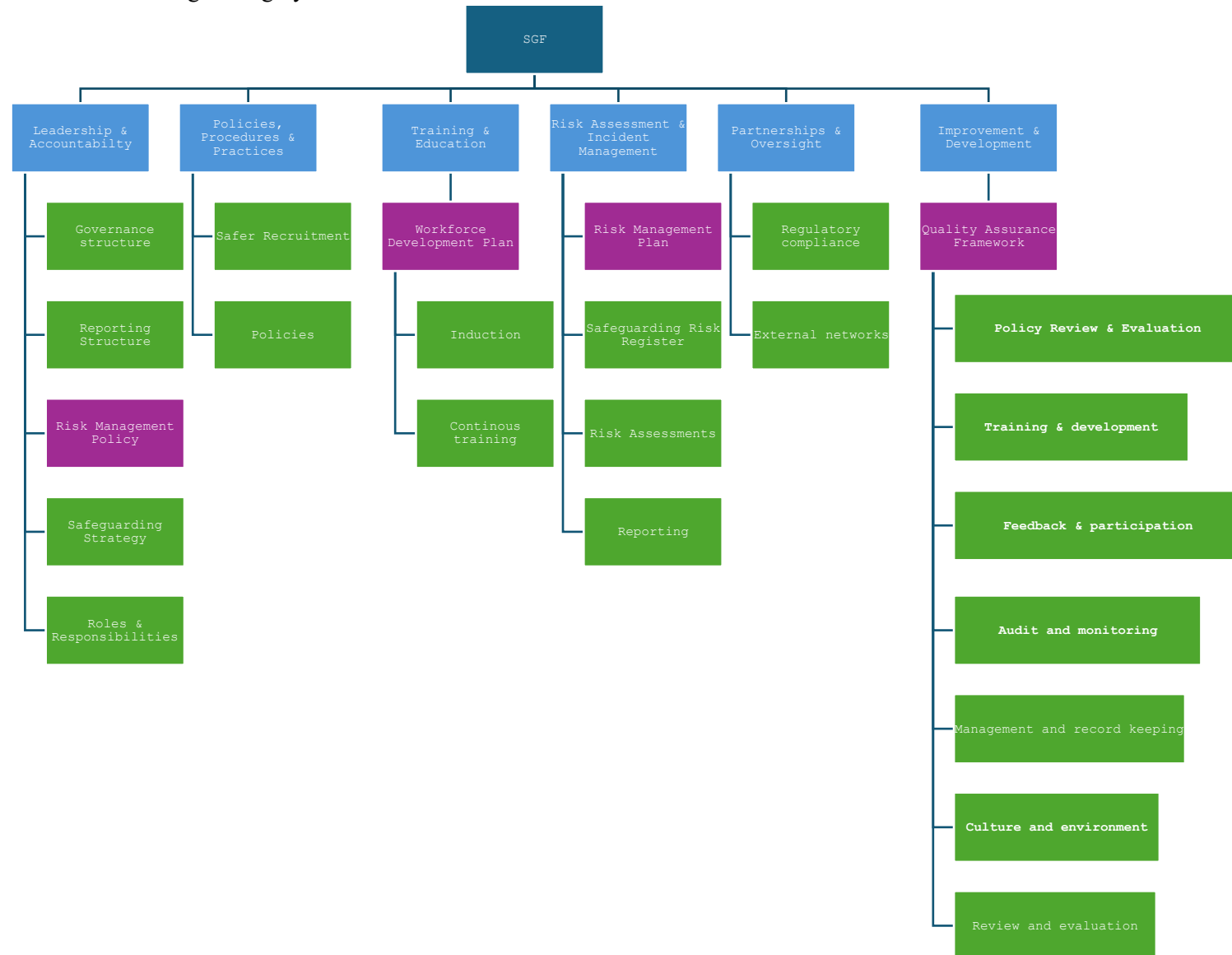
- All Academy age groups, including youth, senior, and Academy players.
- Coaching and support staff.
- Volunteers, Participants (match officials and opposition), and club personnel.
- Spectators, parents, and guardians.
- Any external contractors or visiting teams.

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1.3 Overview of elements of the Safeguarding System





2. Leadership & Accountability

The club has a top-level commitment to safeguarding which promotes practice and behaviours that value children and adults at risk, creates a culture of accountability and drives continual improvement.

2.1 Safeguarding Governance Structure

Board-oversight: A designated board member will champion and oversee safeguarding responsibilities ensuring it is integrated into governance practices as follows:

- have a robust and transparent SGF to drive accountability and continual improvement
- ensure that the rights, safety and wellbeing of children and adults at risk are embedded in organisational values, strategic priorities and delivery plans
- ensure that adequate resources are devoted to implementing effective safeguarding measures;
- ensure that appropriate action is taken when policies and procedures have been breached
- have a Risk Management Policy and effective procedures to proactively identify, mitigate and
- monitor organisational and departmental safeguarding risks
- have a Safeguarding Risk Register and Risk Management Plan
- develop a long-term Safeguarding Strategy and ensure it is approved by Board.
- implement measures to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and make improvements as appropriate through a QAF
- ensure there are effective lines of communication between the Board and the SSM
- ensure that safeguarding is a standing or regular Board meeting agenda item
- Club's Board is kept apprised of incidents/allegations, themes and trends, progress of work to meet strategic safeguarding priorities, current and emerging risks and the effectiveness of risk mitigation measures
- takes responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding measures are consistent with football authority regulations, legislation, statutory guidance and current best practice
- monitors the effectiveness of work to meet strategic safeguarding priorities
- monitors safeguarding risk and the effectiveness of mitigation measures
- assures itself that safeguarding arrangements are effective and informed by risk and learning
- actively champion safeguarding and contributes to raising safeguarding awareness
- Board drive culture, vigilance, and continual learning which ensures Safeguarding is recognised and delivered as a shared responsibility at all levels

Culture

The Club's Board drives a culture of safeguarding vigilance and continual learning:

- Safeguarding is recognised and delivered as a shared responsibility at all levels
- Everyone champions attitudes, behaviours and practises that respect rights and promotes safety and wellbeing
- Everyone demonstrates awareness of, and confidence in, the Club's approach to safeguarding, including confidence in reporting concerns

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SSM Safeguarding Senior Manager: who is a director and Board Safeguarding Champion appointed to actively champion safeguarding and contribute to raising safeguarding awareness:‘

- leads on delivery of the Club’s strategic safeguarding priorities
- primary strategic leadership responsibility for managing and reporting safeguarding concerns and for putting into place and monitoring policies, procedures and daily practice to safeguarding children and adults at risk in the Club
- ensures that the Club’s Board is kept apprised of incidents/allegations, themes and trends, progress of work to meet strategic safeguarding priorities, current and emerging risks and the effectiveness of risk mitigation measures

DSO Designated Safeguarding Officer: the designated person with day-to-day primary responsibility for:

- monitoring policies, reviewing procedures
- daily practice to safeguard children and adults and risk in the organisation
- managing and reporting safeguarding concerns and for putting into place and
- regular meetings between the SSM and the DSO take place regularly and that minutes of these meetings are recorded

Matchday DSO specifically be responsible for overseeing all safeguarding matters on first team matches

Safeguarding Working Group: the Club will operate an **SWG** with :

- clear terms of reference, membership and reporting
- representation from CCO, external, Board and Safeguarding staff and Academy Player Welfare

2.2 Policies and Procedures

Clear policies and procedures will be established for dealing with Safeguarding issues covering:

- Scope
- Actions
- Reporting procedures
- Review

2.3 Roles & Responsibilities

While the Club’s Board is ultimately responsible for ensuring that there are effective safeguarding measures in place, there is a clear expectation that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility

The club will identify and operate specific roles with Job Role descriptions detailing roles and responsibilities.

- Board Champion, Senior Safeguarding Manager (SSM) with the necessary skills and expertise.
- Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Responsible for implementing policies, investigating concerns, and liaising with external authorities. He is under the direction and supervision of the SSM.
- The Club must ensure that the DSO has adequate time and support to fulfil the responsibilities of the role, in the contracted hours.
- Matchday Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Responsible for implementing policies, investigating concerns, and liaising with external authorities on a matchday

The club to ensure that safeguarding supervision, separate from managerial supervision where safeguarding concerns can be discussed and reflected upon, is established for the role of DSO and MDSO:

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- Supported by Matchday Safeguarding Officer (MDSO), Safeguarding Support Officer (SSO).
- Coaches & Staff: Mandatory safeguarding training and adherence to safeguarding policies and protocols.
- Players: Awareness of safeguarding principles, encouraging a culture of respect.

2.4 Reporting Structures

Club to develop the written safeguarding reports to the Board so that the Board is kept apprised of incidents/ allegations, themes and trends, progress of work to meet strategic safeguarding priorities, current and emerging risks and the effectiveness of risk mitigation measures.

Implement clear lines of accountability, reporting procedures, and escalation processes for concerns will be established;

- Clear, accessible pathways for reporting concerns confidentially.
- Defined escalation procedures for safeguarding incidents.
- Regular safeguarding audits and performance evaluations.

2.5 Risk Management Planning

The Club will adopt a risk based approach to managing Safeguarding. This will follow a Risk Management Policy (RMP).

The Risk Management Policy details the procedures to proactively identify, mitigate and monitor organisational and departmental safeguarding risks;

- Board maintain a Safeguarding Risk Register
- Risk Assessment to consider and address key risks
- Review and reflection and learnings

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3. Safeguarding Policies & Procedures

The Club to ensure that all relevant policies and contact information for the safeguarding team are current and readily available via its website.

3.1 Child Protection Policy & Vulnerable Adults at Risk Policy

Outline procedures for protecting children and young people and vulnerable adults from harm:

- Preventing abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children and vulnerable adults.
- Procedures for identifying and addressing safeguarding concerns.
- Guidelines for appropriate interactions and behaviour.

3.2 Safer Recruitment Policy

The club to ensure there is a system in place to ensure that the Club undertakes its own DBS prior to an employee commencing employment or has at least initiated it and checked the FA portal, completed a risk assessment and has a self-declaration in place. The respective staff member should be advised of the risk assessment being in place and aware of risk mitigation measures implemented.

Implement robust vetting, including background checks and safeguarding training:

- The Club to ensure that for all staff appointments to the Academy, a written application is completed and retained.
- Mandatory **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks** for staff and volunteers.
- Interviews and reference checks to ensure candidate suitability.
- Safeguarding training as part of the induction process.

3.3 Whistleblowing Policy

We will have robust care policies and procedures. Safeguarding, complaints and whistleblowing policies and procedures are accessible and widely promoted.

- Encouraging individuals to report concerns without fear of retaliation.
- Providing channels for anonymous reporting.
- Ensuring all reports are investigated promptly and fairly.

3.4 Other Policies

Establish other policies as required which will maintained, monitored, reviewed and shared in line with Risk Management Policy.

3.5 Code of Conduct

Define expectations for players, staff, and spectators in maintaining a safe environment.

- Clear expectations for all employed, commissioned or contracted persons (whether in a paid or voluntary capacity)
- Respectful behaviour in training sessions, matches, and online interactions.
- Zero tolerance for bullying, harassment, or abuse

The Club to develop children and vulnerable adults at risk policies which acknowledge behaviour as a form of communication, includes appropriate sanctions and, prioritises educational and supportive responses.

The Club to develop Codes of Conduct / behaviour expectations for spectators and for employed, commissioned or contracted persons, including host families. This includes on-line behaviour.

3.6 Matchday & Training Safeguarding

The Club to develop a Match Day Safeguarding Policy or procedures document.

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The policy / plan should detail the safeguarding arrangements in place for match days together with relevant Risk Assessments for any activities initiated that may involve children, young people or adults at risk (for example flag-waving, player mascots, fan zone, furry mascot, high profile visitors).

- Risk Assessments for the matchday, training facilities and stadiums
- Procedures for handling emergencies or safeguarding breaches

3.7 Partnerships

The Club to review 'safeguarding' in its contractual agreement with its affiliated CCO to ensure that clear and effective governance arrangements agreed, are specified in a CCO Service Level Agreement.

4. Training & Education

4.1 Induction Program

Ensure all new employees and volunteers understand safeguarding obligations.

4.2 Safeguarding Education Programs

Regularly provide safeguarding training for staff, volunteers, and players.

The club to develop a Workforce Development Plan (WDP):

- Training records should be maintained and measures to assess the effectiveness of the WDP
- Be reviewed regularly and updated to account for risk, themes/ trends, learning, changes to legislation and statutory guidance, football authority requirements and guidance, and stakeholder feedback.

The Club to develop and proactively provide a range of safe and inclusive opportunities, for staff and all relevant stakeholders, to form and express their views and share concerns in feedback, that will enable the Club to strengthen its safeguarding arrangements. Opportunities for staff and relevant stakeholders to participate in the review and evaluation of consultation measures should be provided.

The Club to implement measures which ensure that all staff receive Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. The Club must implement measures to assure itself that the guidance has been received, read and understood by all Academy staff.

Compulsory safeguarding training for staff, coaches, and volunteers.

- Awareness sessions for players regarding respectful interactions.
- Safeguarding workshops for parents and guardians.

4.3 Continuous Learning

Periodic refresher courses and access to up-to-date safeguarding resources.

- Periodic refresher courses to keep safeguarding knowledge updated.
- Online modules on safeguarding best practices.
- Training evaluations to ensure effectiveness.



5. Risk Assessment & Incident Management

5.1 Safeguarding Risk Register

SRR is regularly monitored, reviewed and updated. Outcomes from review, monitoring and risk management should be included in reports to the Board.

5.2 Risk Assessment Protocols

These are detailed in the RMP

Identifying safeguarding risks including those associated with events, tours, and competitions.

The Club to develop documented thresholds which provide clarity on issues to be recorded on the Club's electronic concern management system and safeguarding recording standards.

When developed, these should be made known to staff and incorporated into staff induction and the workforce development plan.

Conduct regular assessments for training sessions, matches, and club activities.

Routine checks of facilities, transport arrangements, and equipment.

5.3 Incident Reporting Procedures

Establish clear procedures for reporting concerns, ensuring swift and appropriate responses.

The Club to ensure that there is a single system approach to the consideration and recording of all safeguarding welfare or wellbeing issues additional need and vulnerabilities.

Clear records of additional needs and vulnerability, the support provided and liaison with partners should be maintained for access by designated staff.

- Clear, accessible reporting mechanisms for safeguarding concerns.
- Confidentiality measures to protect victims and witnesses.
- Defined steps for handling investigations.

Club's Board is kept apprised of incidents/allegations, themes and trends, progress of work to meet strategic safeguarding priorities, current and emerging risks and the effectiveness of risk mitigation measures.

5.4 Crisis Management

- Emergency response protocols for safeguarding incidents.
- Engagement with law enforcement and child protection agencies when required.
- Support services for affected individuals.

5.5.1 Confidentiality Measures

Safeguarding information should be handled with discretion.

The Club to implement a systematic approach to understanding whether children and adults at risk feel safe and to identifying barriers which may increase their vulnerability and prevent them from speaking out.

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6. Partnerships & External Oversight

6.1 External Safeguarding Networks - Collaboration with Authorities

Maintain relationships with football governing bodies, local authorities, and safeguarding professionals. (e.g. FA, LADO, League).

- Links with local child welfare organisations and authorities.
- Participation in safeguarding forums and initiatives.
- Contractual agreements developed must fully satisfy the requirements of the Standards

6.2 Regulatory Compliance

Ensure adherence to national safeguarding laws and FA guidelines.

- Ensuring club policies align with national safeguarding laws.
- Compliance with League and FA safeguarding rules and FIFA regulations.
- Submission of annual safeguarding reports.
- Takes responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding measures are consistent with football authority regulations, legislation, statutory guidance and current best practice;

7. Quality Assurance Framework

The Club will monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and make improvements as appropriate.

The Club to ensure that effective safeguarding due diligence and quality assurance measures are embedded in its activities and partnerships

It will do adopt an approach of continuous improvement using a QAF incorporating:

7.1 Policy Review & Evaluation

- Keep safeguarding policies up to date, adapting and responding to new risks or legislative changes. Review annually Annual safeguarding policy reviews to incorporate best practices.
- Monitors safeguarding risk and the effectiveness of mitigation measures;
- Monitoring the effectiveness of work to meet strategic safeguarding priorities;
- Ensuring contractual agreements developed must fully satisfy the requirements of the Standards.

7.2 Case Learning Protocol

- Follow up action should be taken in respect of the specific case and should be supported and reviewed by the League's safeguarding support team as required.
- The Club to ensure that policies and procedures for safeguarding are consistently implemented and that all staff act in the best interests of, and provide effective protection for, children and adults at risk.
- The Club to undertake a learning reviews in respect of key cases, with support from the League; the Club should consider how this then informs a review of staff learning and development needs in relation to the identification, recording and reporting of safeguarding concerns.

7.3 Feedback Mechanism

Establish platforms for players, staff, and stakeholders to provide safeguarding concerns or suggestions.

7.4 Safeguarding Audits

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Act upon the findings of Safeguarding Audits as a means to identify areas for improvement and taking corrective action.

7.5 Promoting a culture of safety

Promote an environment where safeguarding is a priority at all levels of the club.

The Club to develop and proactively provide a range of safe and inclusive opportunities, for staff and all relevant stakeholders, to form and express their views and share concerns in feedback, that will enable the Club to strengthen its safeguarding arrangements. Opportunities for staff and relevant stakeholders to participate in the review and evaluation of consultation measures should be provided.

- Encouraging open discussions on safeguarding.
- Campaigns on player welfare, equality, and anti-bullying.
- Recognizing clubs and individuals who champion safeguarding initiatives.
- The board- actively champions safeguarding and contributes to raising safeguarding awareness.

8 Review of SGF

The RMP will be reassessed and amended on an ongoing basis by the CEO

The Leadership Group will be briefed each week on Safeguarding matters by the CEO

The 1921 Board will review and approve the SGF annually

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1921 Board approval	November 2025	
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Next review - annual	By 30 June 2026	1921 Board
Signed		Nigel Clibbens Chief Executive