

# Stevenage Sporting Futures Team (SSFT) Safeguarding Policy

<b>Adopted by</b>	September 2018
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<b>Reviewed</b>	August 2024
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<b>Next Review Date</b>	August 2025
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<b>Reviewer Name</b>	JOANNE SZULIKOWSKI
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<b>Reviewer Job Title</b>	Charity Trustee i/c HR and Policies
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<b>Lead DSL</b>	CONNOR MORAN
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<b>Deputy DSL</b>	JULIA BURROWS
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## The Stevenage Sporting Futures Safeguarding Children Policy 2024-25

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**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** – Connor Moran, *Partnership Manager and School Games Organiser*, 01438 747324

**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)** – Julia Burrows, *Competition Lead*, 01438 747324

To contact the Designated Safeguarding Person or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person, please email [dsps@stevenagesportingfutures.co.uk](mailto:dsps@stevenagesportingfutures.co.uk)

### YOUNG PERSONS

We believe that a child/young person(s) welfare, development and right to protection are paramount and should always be upheld within any activity.

We work towards national and local objectives and targets which are aimed at increasing opportunities, equality and access to services and resources which will support the overall well-being and growth of children/young person(s). This follows the key elements set out in the document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (from 1 September 2024).

All staff must read part one of the document and sign the Policies Receipt and Read Acknowledgment form to say they have done so.

Our overall aim is to support the all-round development of child/young person(s) which enables each individual child/young person(s) to reach their own potential and thereby make the most of their educational opportunities which will shape their future learning into adulthood. All the while we will consider the need to be compliant to The Children's Act (1989 and 2004) and consistently ensure all practises adhere to Child Protection in Sport Units' 'Standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport' (2018). Furthermore, we are committed to ensure that all children and young people, regardless of gender, race, ability or otherwise always has an equal opportunity to be safe throughout an activity.

It is not our responsibility to undertake statutory child/young person(s) protection responsibilities, however we do have a responsibility and duty of care to help uphold the safety and well-being of all children/young person(s) we are in contact with and we do this by ensuring safeguarding is our top priority. Our programme will protect children/young person(s) from harm, and we have adopted the child/young person(s) protection procedures recommended by "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, updated 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022".

The document sets out how all agencies and professionals should work together to promote child/young person(s) welfare and protect them from abuse and neglect. The document states:

“All agencies and professionals should.

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children/young person(s)
- share and help to analyse information so that an informed assessment can be made of the child/young person(s) needs and circumstances
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard the child/young person(s) and
- promote his/her welfare; regularly review the outcomes for the child/young person(s) against specific shared objectives; and work co-operatively with parents unless this is inconsistent with the need to ensure the child/young person(s) safety.”

### **Staff members and safer recruitment**

All DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) for work with children and vulnerable persons are to be at an enhanced level for Regulated Activity and will provide a service combining criminal records checking and the barring function. In summary, a person will be considered engaging in regulated activity if, because of their work, they:

- will be responsible, on a regular basis (in a school or college) for teaching, training instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- will carry out paid, or unsupervised unpaid work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children

All Staff members or volunteers who are involved in any way with SSFT will be subject to strict vetting procedures. DBS checks will be undertaken for any individual involved in a child or young person’s care/learning. Subject to school requests, SSFT staff will always display a lanyard with their photo and DBS number while on a school site, which can be quickly identified by school staff and in addition a list of DBS numbers will be provided to all schools for their records. Stevenage Sporting Futures Team have a legal obligation to refer to the DBS any person dismissed or removed from regulated activity because they have harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

The Stevenage Sporting Futures Team have robust and transparent recruitment procedures in place to ensure children, young people and vulnerable adults are safeguarded.

Personal and professional employment references will be obtained from present and previous employers for all new employees and Apprentices. They will also sign a declaration that they have no criminal convictions, which may disqualify them from working with young people. They will be required to provide original documents

including passports, driving licence and birth certificate at the time of interview. Any staff member who is found to be falsifying or not disclosing information which may be relevant would be subject to disciplinary action. This would likely include the termination of any contract with immediate effect.

A probationary period of three months and supervision of the person will be written into their contract, and this will be followed up with regular review meetings to ensure conduct and objectives are being adhered to.

We will ensure that all Stevenage Sporting Futures Team staff and Apprentices are familiar with the procedures and have access to induction training and that policies are regularly reviewed. Staff and Apprentices will have access to child/young person(s) safeguarding protection training before directly working with children and young persons. Staff and Apprentices will attend regular staff meetings and briefings and be updated on all safeguarding matters through regular emails and updated staff noticeboards. The date of this training will be recorded on a central matrix and will be renewed within a 3-year period or when relevant updates or additional information or training becomes available (whichever comes first).

SSFT staff are expected to make a positive contribution towards maintaining an environment of equal opportunity throughout the organisation. They have individual responsibility to adopt the following:

- Do not take unlawful discriminatory actions or decisions contrary to the spirit of this policy.
- Do not discriminate against, harass, abuse, or intimidate anyone on account of their protected characteristics.
- Do not place pressure on any other employee to act in a discriminatory manner.
- Resist pressure to discriminate placed on you by others and report such approaches to an appropriate Manager.
- Co-operate when we investigate, including providing evidence of conduct which may amount to discrimination.
- Co-operate with any measures introduced to develop or monitor equal opportunity.

Discrimination is not just treating one person less favourably than another. It can take place because: -

- someone associates with a person with a protected characteristic.
- someone is believed to possess a protected characteristic (even though they don't)
- something particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic more than others.

We expect staff to treat, and be treated by, other employees and the people our organisation deals with considerately and with respect.

If they or any member of school staff or student feel subject to discrimination, it is made clear to the individual concerned that it is unacceptable. Person-to-person discussion at an early stage may be enough to resolve it without involving anyone else. Should further intervention be required it should be done so within the official



channels for both organisations. In this instance, the **Disciplinary Policy** will be consulted; *please refer to the policy for more information.*

### **Sessional delivery during Curriculum time**

All staff will be expected to sign in and follow the procedures set out for visitors to your schools during any visit. Staff will arrive with sufficient time to set up equipment and be available for the start of the allotted session.

We expect that the group of children undertaking the session will be brought to the hall/outside area at the start of the lesson. It is advised that a member of school staff remain within the session at all times to ensure effective behaviour management and deal with any issues or occurrence of events which would require staff support (e.g first aid or toileting). This is also an opportunity for staff to be upskilled from the SSFT staff as well. However, if this is not the case, then we will refer to our Lone Working Policy and the absence of a school staff may lead to the session/lesson having to be cancelled due to Safeguarding.

The **Lone Working Policy** sets out what staff are expected to do when working alone and SSFT's regulations linked to this; *please refer to the policy for more information.*

Where there is a break between sessions staff members will either remain in the delivery area or will, if pre-agreed, go to the designated staff area.

Throughout the session, SSFT staff will ensure phones are securely out of sight and are switched off for the duration. Staff will adhere to the policies set out for expected behaviour and will report any concerns or issues to the school if appropriate. Similarly, should schools experience a concern or issue regarding sessional delivery, this should also be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for further investigation.

### **COVID-19**

Stevenage Sporting Futures Team adhere to Government policies relating to COVID-19, therefore the following will be put in place when necessary.

- Risk assessments of both the active delivery of the session and the staff members presence within the school will be undertaken. These can be shared with schools prior to attending a session.
- SSFT Staff will collect the information of any staff member and the year group/class name/number which they have delivered a session to. This information will be stored securely for a period of 21 days before this is then disposed of securely
- Staff will notify a school should there be a concern that an infectious person has been delivering within a partner school. Similarly, it is expected that a partner school would convey the same information should there be a case within their school which would affect the SSFT staff member in question.
- Staff will limit contact with partner schools, returning as little as possible to deliver interventions to all year groups concerned.

- Staff will always adhere to social distancing guidelines and will limit physical contact with equipment where possible.
- Equipment used will be fully sanitised before, during (if appropriate and required) and after a session. Where possible, equipment will be cleaned and quarantined for 72 hours before moving to another school setting.
- SSFT staff will respect a schools wish for face coverings to be worn in indoor areas or should this be returned to mandatory by Government and/or Hertfordshire County Council.
- Agencies working on behalf of SSFT, such as Fit Kidz, will adhere to the same principles set out above.

SSFT will continue to monitor the Government guidance and will amend practise accordingly, through COVID-19 adapted risk assessments.

### **Online content**

To ensure there is minimal disruption to service, Stevenage Sporting Futures Team will be using a blended method of delivery, including use of online content and platforms, to allow more pupils to be reached without the need for face-to-face contact.

Where online content is used it will be pre-recorded and available for schools to download from a secure area on the SSFT website [www.stevenagesportingfutures.co.uk](http://www.stevenagesportingfutures.co.uk)

Pupils will not be asked to use online video conferencing (teams, zoom etc) by SSFT unless a school has agreed this will be a method of engaging with pupils for group sessions. Where this is the case, a teacher will always be present during the session and pupils will always be within a group. Password protection will be used to ensure the safety of the meeting wherever possible.

### **Event regulations**

We will adhere to the new regulations set out in the SSFT event guide throughout all events and will facilitate the opportunity for all those taking part to do so. The safety and well-being of children and young persons will be given priority, with support and guidance being integral to induction, training, and supervision; this will include individual responsibilities following any referral made to the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership or Social Services.

Staff will provide the highest level of care ensuring a child's welfare is a primary guide to their actions while maintaining professional standards of conduct with children. Staff and volunteers should never act in such a way that could leave them open to allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour or relationships with a child.

SSFT staff will ensure there is continuing adherence to the government guidance for the safe gathering of pupils and staff together to comply with measures to stop the spread of the coronavirus. In addition, SSFT staff will NOT actively treat any pupils with minor injuries during the event, therefore it is an expectation that accompanying staff bring the necessary equipment to deal with such instances. In the event of a

more serious injury (requiring additional medical intervention), SSFT staff will assist staff from the school to support the child until further help is available.

## **Photography**

Stevenage Sporting Futures Team requires photo consent for all participants in their regulated sessions or events. As stated in the event guide, a participating school should be aware of the photo consent given for each participant brought to an SSFT event. Any participant who is not able to be photographed will be shown by the wearing of a coloured sticker. Photos taken by Stevenage Sporting Futures Team are taken for the sole purpose of promotion and marketing of the activities being undertaken. Where a photo is to be used for purposes beyond this (e.g a evidence for National applications or shared with a partner involved with the event in question), we will explicitly ask for a signed consent to be given, either via email or in paper form direct from parents, before this information is shared.

Photos are stored securely on the SSFT Google shared drive, which is securely password protected and assigned only to the staff of SSFT. No photos are saved directly on laptops.

## **Social Media**

Stevenage Sporting Futures Team operates Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages with the view to promote the work undertaken within and alongside our partner schools throughout an academic year period.

To ensure these accounts are kept securely, staff will ensure that details are logged out and relevant privacy settings set depending on the posts offered.

Photos used will have prior consent gained via the schools involved. Only an individuals' first name will be used in identifiable posts (if applicable), purely for the celebration of achievement and with prior consent from the parent or guardian concerned. The SSFT staff will attempt to blur out any images which show school badges, therefore reducing the risk of an individual identifying the school a specific child goes to.

Posts made on the social media pages will be monitored and inappropriate comments will be dealt with and/or removed by the Stevenage Sporting Futures Team Trustees, whom will decide what is deemed appropriate. Where possible, several members of staff will check a social media post before it is posted.

## **Data**

Stevenage Sporting Futures team ensures that its practises are fully compliant with The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.

Stevenage Sporting Futures Team will collect data for the purpose of reporting on deliverable outcomes to specific funding bodies, including reporting of KPI data to Youth Sports Trust as part of the contract for delivery of the School Games initiative. This data does not collect information on protected characteristics of individual



children, but merely quantitative data used to show achievement of Key performance indicators of the work of Stevenage Sporting Futures Team. In the rare occurrence where pupil names are required (for team sheet purposes) this will be submitted on paper, held securely at the event and shredded by a cross-cut shredder and shredded securely immediately after.

Our website is used for the booking of teams/individuals on to our competition and events programme. A staff member from a school will be asked to submit a request to book a team/teams by entering their name, school name, job title, email address and school phone number. This is to enable staff to have the relevant information to determine who will be attending events (to ensure capacity is not breached) and to allow for contact details to be captured for any further information regarding the event. This data is used for no other purpose and is stored and deleted within the GDPR guidelines.

Stevenage Sporting Futures Team will also be required to collect track and trace data at events, to support the ongoing fight against coronavirus. Data for this will be held for a maximum of 21 days before being securely destroyed.

All relevant staff have due regard to the data protection principles, which allow them to share personal information, in the event of a safeguarding concern being raised. At no other point would data be shared without prior consent from the person upon which it refers, unless it is a safeguarding issue or concern. There is little or no need for anything other than the subjects to be shared outside of the organisation; *please refer to the GDPR policy for further information.*

## **Work Experience**

From time to time, Stevenage Sporting Futures Team are asked to offer work experience placements to students from local Secondary and Further Education establishments. To ensure these students get a full understanding of the work undertaken by the organisation, we often look for the work experience students to attend school-based programmes or events, where they will come into contact with pupils from partner schools. In doing so, at no point would the student be left on their own; we would consistently ensure they are supervised by a member of SSFT staff who have undertaken all the steps set out in the policy above to ensure they are cleared to work within schools or with young people.

DBS checks cannot be requested for children/young people under the age of 16 and/or those who will not be in regular contact with the group of students in question, therefore students will be asked to wear their school ID badge during this time to show a form of identification and that they are a student under the age of 16 in full time education. As stated in the **Lone Working Policy**, those under the age of 16 will never be left on their own and emergency contact details will be collected.

Where the work experience student is 16 years of age or over, the work experience provider should consider whether a DBS enhanced check should be requested for the child/young person in question. It is unlikely that this will be undertaken for any student as they will continue to be supervised consistently regardless of the higher age. This will be reviewed should the young person be on a long-term work



experience and/or have qualifications which allow for them to be able to lead an activity as part of their work experience (such as a National Governing Body Level 2 qualification).

### **Allegations of misconduct by staff**

Any allegations relating to a member of SSFT staff and their contact with a pupil from any given school should in the first instance be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This will be investigated, and the outcome shared with the school in question. Should an allegation be proven to be correct, the member of staff will be dealt with in accordance with the company disciplinary policy. During such time, a member of staff may be suspended from their work with SSFT while the investigation takes place.

The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Any allegations found to be substantiated shall be dealt with in accordance with the SSFT Employee Handbook and its policy.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **General**

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and young persons may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or young person.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child or young person whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional

development. It may involve conveying to them that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on them. It may involve causing children and young persons' frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or their exploitation or corruption.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child / young person, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving them in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child or young person from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, their basic emotional needs.

### **Significant harm**

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm and a child in need and places the duty on the Local Authority (Hertfordshire County Council) to act to safeguard such children.

A child may be at risk of significant harm if they have suffered directly by seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. There are no absolute criteria to establish if significant harm is being inflicted upon a child. A single violent episode may constitute significant harm but more often it is an accumulation of significant events that interrupt, damage or change the child's development.

(Working Together to Safeguard Children Department for Children, Schools & Families 2018, updated 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022)

### **Child sexual exploitation and Grooming**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Young People may be given gifts (groomed) like alcohol, cigarettes, accommodation, or drugs in return for sexual activity. CSE offenders have power over a young person by age, gender, intellect, strength or money. Young people can be groomed online via social media or invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol in return for sex. Victims may be tricked into thinking they are in a loving relationship and often may not know that they are being groomed.

Signs of child sexual exploitation and grooming can include:

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late. Regularly missing school.
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions and having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing. Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour

Professionals working with young people have an important role to play in protecting children from CSE. Stevenage Sporting Futures Team staff are aware of the procedure to follow in the workplace if there are concerns about a young person and all are of the signs of child sexual exploitation.





## Appendix 1                      Guidance for Stevenage Sporting Futures Team Staff

### DO YOU HAVE A CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD/YOUNG PERSON(S)'S SAFETY AND WELLBEING?

You should always bear in mind that it is not your job to investigate an allegation but we do need to use our Professional Curiosity and Professional Judgement to know how to act and report.

If you suspect that a child/young person(s) may be at risk of harm or you begin to have concerns about what you are hearing and seeing, then you should proceed as follows: Do not ever put yourself or a children or young person at risk.

If you feel it is appropriate, tell the child's teacher or supervisor about what you have seen and heard. If you feel threatened in any way, discuss the issue immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person.

If you are satisfied with the explanation, make a record of your discussion and inform the teacher or supervisor you have done so in the same way accidents or unusual behaviour/upsets which occur during a normal activity is recorded and information shared with the teacher or supervisor. This concern must be emailed to the DSPs via the specified email address: [dsp@steveanagesportingfutures.co.uk](mailto:dsp@steveanagesportingfutures.co.uk) Staff must complete the internal Google Form, including a detailed account of their report.

If you continue to be concerned, discuss the matter with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If they assess it is appropriate, he will then report the concerns to The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. Their website also states how to report a concern if one is unsure:

[https://www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk/adults/reporting\\_concerns\\_summary](https://www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk/adults/reporting_concerns_summary)

If you feel a child is being abused

- Call the Police: 101 (non emergency) or 999 (for emergency use only)
- Children's Services (including out of hours): 0300 123 4043
- Family Lives offer a 24/7 free phone number: 0808 800 2222. Gingerbread can offer advice to lone parents on free phone 0800 802 0925 between 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday.
- Youth Connexions Hertfordshire offers a group work programme that is delivered in both school and community settings to enable young people to recognise and develop healthy relationships and thereby be less vulnerable to exploitation.

You must ensure your observations have been recorded in a factually accurate manner as they may be required later. Remember the child/young person(s)'s welfare is always the first priority.

You must always inform a member of the safeguarding team (**DSP and/or DDSP**) at the first opportunity in relation to any concerns you have. In the event of a disclosure of sexual abuse from a child/young person(s), then the following procedure must be undertaken. Parents/carers must not be informed of the allegation to ensure

maximum protection of the child/young person(s). Listen attentively to the child/young person(s).

- You can ask open questions which help professional curiosity, don't promise to keep secrets. At SSFT we used the TED method which allows us to ask Open Ended Questions. An open question such as "how did you get that bruise?" should be used rather than a closed question such as "did you get that bruise playing football?"
- Reassure the child/young person(s).
- Record **exactly** what has been said.
- Record details immediately, sign and date.
- Tell a member of the safeguarding team (**DSP and/or DDSP**) or if unavailable refer directly to Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership or Social Services.

Please ensure you make a written record to include following details:

- Name of the child/young person(s).
- Parent/carer details.
- Child/young person(s)'s Address.
- What is said to have happened or what was said.
- When it occurred.
- Who else was there?
- What was said by those involved?
- Whether there is actual evidence - bruises, bleeding, marked changes in behaviour.
- Who has been told about it?
- Who was concerned?
- Whether the child/young person(s) was able to say what happened.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, whistleblowing channels are open to them. General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: Advice on Whistleblowing; and the NSPCC's what you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 –line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

**SPORTING  
FUTURES TEAM**

Dated: August 2024

Next review date: August 2025

Signed: Jo Szulikowski

Position: Charity Trustee i/c HR and Policies – **Stevenage Sporting Futures Team**



***SPORTING  
FUTURES TEAM***