



## **Safeguarding Policy**

### **Academy Commitment to Safeguarding**

#### **Statement from the Board:**

Queens Park Rangers Football Club (QPR) Academy is committed to safeguarding the welfare of Adults at Risk and Children. The Club and Trust expects all staff, players, participants, contractors and guests to share this commitment.

The Academy believe that all staff, players, participants, contractors and guests have a responsibility to report any concerns to the Club should they be concerned about the welfare of any child.

The Academy is committed to ensuring that:

- The safety and welfare of children under the care of the Academy is paramount.
- All children that engage with the Academy , regardless of age, culture, social background, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to safety and protection from abuse or harm.
- All suspicions, reports and/or allegations of abuse will be taken seriously & investigated thoroughly which may involve the appropriate local authority teams where necessary.

The club has employed a trained Club-wide Safeguarding Manager who works across the Academy /Club and Trust and designated safeguarding officers who implement, maintain and monitor best practice across the club and Trust.

This Academy safeguarding policy is applicable to the season 2016/17 and will be subject of ongoing review, and a minimum of once a year.

#### **Aims of this policy**

- To safeguard all Children and young people who interact with the Academy
- To demonstrate best practice in the area of safeguarding Children.
- To increase awareness and understanding of safeguarding issues club wide , and within the Academy
- To provide guidance for parents to understand reporting procedures.
- To encourage a partnership between the Academy and parents/carers of children associated with the Academy
- To ensure that coaches, parents and other adults who come in contact with children and young people provide good role models of behaviour.

- To promote high ethical standards throughout the Academy

## **Key Safeguarding Terminology and Definitions:**

**The Club** – refers to Queens Park Rangers Football Club (QPR), its staff and all activities it undertakes. In certain circumstances it may also refer to third parties with an entrusted responsibility for delivering club-supported activity.

**The Trust** - refers to Queens Park Rangers in the Community TRUST, its staff and all activities it undertakes. In certain circumstances it may also refer to third parties with an entrusted responsibility for delivering club-supported activity.

**The Academy** – refers to the Academy department within the club which responsible for nurturing and developing the club's future generations of players. The Academy is based at an independent site external to the club's Loftus Road Stadium.

**The Training Ground** – The club's external training centre at which day to training and administration of the Club's First & U21 teams takes place.

**Staff** – refers to persons employed by and receiving payment for services from the Club . This is irrespective of the length or nature of their contract.

**Volunteers** – Persons who freely offer their skills and expertise or take part in a task, event or enterprise with the club or charity at their own expense in terms of time and/or resources.

**Child** – Defined in the Children's act (1989) as any person under the age of 18.

**Adult at Risk** – An adult (person aged 18 or over) who is receiving one of the following services: Health care; Relevant personal care; Social care work; Assistance in relation to general household matters by reason of age, illness or disability; Relevant assistance in the conduct of their own affairs or Conveying (due to age, illness or disability in prescribed circumstances)

**Safeguarding** – Preventative and reactional measures taken by the Club and Academy to ensure; the risk of harm or mistreatment to the welfare of children is minimised; the health or wellbeing of children is not impaired when engaging in Academy related activities; an environment exists that allows children to be cared for safely and allows for the best possible outcomes for them and provides them with the best life chances possible.

**Welfare** – The health, happiness and fortunes of an individual and the humanitarian aspects of their life including personal need and physical and mental development.

**Significant Harm** - The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children.

Section 47(1) of the Children Act 1989 states that:

Where a local authority... have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in the area and is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the authority shall make, such enquiries as they consider necessary to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare.

**Child Protection** - The process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. It involves measures and structures designed to prevent and respond to abuse and neglect.

**Child abuse** involves acts of commission and omission, which results in harm to the child. The four types of abuse are physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

### **Rules, Regulations and Guidance**

The Academy & Club are governed by the legislation and rules/ regulations set out by several key governing agencies including the Government, Football Association, Premier League and the NSPCC Child protection in Sport Unit. The content of this policy is underpinned by the following legislative documents and policies.

- The Children Act 1989 - HM Government
- Every Child Matters 2003 - HM Government
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 - HM Government
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 - HM Government
- Keeping Children safe in Education 2014 - HM Government
- Human Rights Act 1998 – HM Government
- No Secrets 2000 – Department of Health
- Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport 2005 - NSPCC CPSU
- Premier League Rules: Section S 2014/15 season - The Premier League
- Guide for Safer Working Practice 2014/15 season - The Premier League
- Working together to Safeguard Football - Policy & Procedures 2014 - The Football Association

The Club /Academy recognises its responsibility to maintain regular communication with the Tri-Borough LSCB along with the LSCB of the neighbouring London boroughs, Local Authority children's services, Local Authority Designated Officer and the Police safeguarding teams. The communication of the club with the Local Authorities is centred upon supporting the club with; reporting/monitoring of Safeguarding incidents, sharing of best practice, sharing information/ changes in legislation, sharing of important local area information and workforce best practice and training and development and any other relevant appropriate Safeguarding support.

**Club Safeguarding Manager** Janet Barr

The Club Safeguarding Manager has responsibility to oversee and direct the safe provision of all activities and associated training relating to children and young people. A strategic role providing leadership and guidance on all safeguarding matters and relevant legislation, along with implementing safeguarding awareness and best practice club across the Academy and Club.

Manage the implementation of the club & Academy strategy and action and implementation plan for safeguarding

Ensure club compliance with statutory obligations under relevant legislation and the Premier League s safeguarding Rules.

Work closely with HR and heads of departments to develop and implement safer recruitment and induction practices across the organisation.

Continuously work to maintain, embed and improve the Academy safeguarding provision ensuring the highest standards for safeguarding vulnerable groups.

Manage the development, implementation, promotion and review of the Academy safeguarding children policies, practices and good practice guidelines.

Lead member of staff to manage safeguarding incidents, concerns and allegations.

Lead member of staff to work in partnership with statutory and football authorities, sharing information where appropriate to safeguard vulnerable groups.

Maintain accurate, confidential and up to date records on all safeguarding incidents, concerns and allegations.

Give direction and guidance to staff in respect of safeguarding incidents, concerns and allegations.

Support staff to respond appropriately to concerns about the welfare or safety of vulnerable groups.

Lead and provide direction to Safeguarding Officers.

Ensure that Safeguarding Officers are trained, supported and supervised.

Act as the Academy lead source of safeguarding support, advice and expertise.

Ensure staff understand their individual responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

Develop relationships with statutory and football authorities.

Attend regular safeguarding training and maintain an up to date knowledge base of relevant legislation, regulations and best practice.

Undertake the annual LSCB section 11 audit (Children Act 2004) and present the findings and a relevant action

**Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO)**The DSO's support the Club Safeguarding Manager to pro-actively promote and raise safeguarding awareness and assist with responding appropriately to safeguarding concerns and allegations. There are 3 DSO's within the Academy .

Alex Carroll

Tim Zobbo

Rob Nicholls

## **Safeguarding training**

### **Resources and Training**

The Club will ensure there are qualified and designated individuals who will take the lead on ensuring that the Academy does all it can to meet its statutory and moral obligations.

A safeguarding induction is provided to all staff. This will be delivered by the Club safeguarding manager or designated safeguarding officer. The SM holds a specific Safeguarding Induction with all new staff coming into contact with children. Key elements of the Club safeguarding policy are discussed in more detail and specifically to the individuals' role.

All staff working in direct contact with Children are required to complete the FA's 3 hour Safeguarding Children Awareness workshop and undertake a refresher course, at least once every 3 years. Details of those satisfactorily completing this course are retained by the Human Resources Department.

## **Recruitment**

QPR have a specific safer recruitment policy which sets out in detail the process the Academy will undertake in ensuring staff are suitable to work with children . A copy is available if required.

All staff working in direct contact with Children are required to complete the FA 3 hour Safeguarding Children Awareness workshop and undertake a refresher course every 3 years. Details of this will be retained by the Safeguarding manager.

## **DBS**

Staff in roles that require contact with adults at risk, young people and children will undergo enhanced DBS disclosure, which is an on-going procedure throughout the association with the Academy . Enhanced CRCs will enable the club to undertake more thorough recruitment and selection procedures for positions which involve working with children .

## **RATIOS**

Any Activity undertaken by the Academy will give full consideration to the appropriate number of staff members available depending on the age of the Children involved.

The Foundation phase ( 6- 11 years ) will usually require a ratio of at least 1: 6

Youth development Phase (Under 12 – under 16 years ) will usually require a ratio of at least 1: 8

Professional Development Phase ( under 17 – Under 21 ) will not usually apply , there is a separate policy for under 18s playing within this phase .

#### Image policy

The Academy takes its guidance on the use of images from guidelines issued by the FA and Premier League.

Before taking images of Children, parental consent is sought in writing at the start of the season and /or prior to an event. Parents/Legal Guardians are responsible for informing the Club of any change of circumstances within the season which may affect consent.

- Parents/Legal Guardians will be informed of how the image will be used. The Academy will not allow an image to be used for something other than that for which it was initially agreed.
- All Children featured in Academy publications will be appropriately dressed.
- Where possible, the image will focus on the activity taking place and not a specific Child.
- Where appropriate, images represent the broad range of people participating safely in the event.
- Children who are subject to family, care or legal proceedings, or who are under a court order will not have their images published in any Academy or Club document.
- No images of Children featured in Academy publications will be accompanied by personal details such as their school or home address.
- Recordings of Children for the purposes of legitimate coaching aids are only filmed by Academy staff and are stored safely and securely
- Any instances of inappropriate images in football should be reported to the Safeguarding Manager immediately.

All children at the academy will be expected to sign up and adhere to a policy for safer internet use , a copy of which is attached at appendix A

#### Transport

The Academy have a specific transport policy which is available on request

#### BULLYING

The Academy have a specific anti bullying policy which is available on request

#### HOST FAMILIES

Prior to the commencement of an agreement between the Club and a host family an enhanced DBS plus barred check list is carried out on the designated host parent along with an enhanced check on any other person residing at the address who is over 16 years old .



At present the Academy does not have any accommodation arrangements that fall within the regulations of private fostering .Should such a situation occur the Safeguarding manager will ensure suitable dialogue takes place with the relevant local authority to ensure all statutory requirements are met .

A robust recruitment process is in place and references and references are sought from previous employers and local authorities where applicable. House visits and health and safety risk assessments are also conducted .

Host family evenings are currently being planned which will include a Safeguarding Childrens briefing .

The Academy have a policy for physios and medical staff .

### **Whistleblowing Policy**

Whistleblowing refers to making a protected disclosure under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

There is a club wide whistle blowing policy which applies to The Academy . There is a whistle blowing line for staff to raise any safeguarding concerns ; calls to this number can remain anonymous . Any incidents or concerns raised will be investigated . This number is 020 3198 7086 or 07483 006 924

By encouraging a culture of openness QPR wants to encourage staff to raise issues, which concern them at work. Staff have a right and duty to raise matters of concern they may have about the services being offered by QPR /Academy or serious malpractice associated with them. Staff may be worried that by reporting such issues they will be opening themselves up to victimisation or detriment, or risking their job security. However, all staff are protected by law if they raise concerns in the right way. Provided they are acting in good faith, it does not matter if they are mistaken. This policy is designed to ensure workers raise concerns properly and to ensure that mechanisms exist at QPR issues raised by staff will be addressed quickly and effectively

Although this list is not exhaustive, examples of situations in which a disclosure might be made are:

The committing of a criminal offence.

Improper conduct or unethical behaviour

Attempts to conceal any of the above

### **Contractors**

All external contractors engaged by QPR undergo a suitability test prior to commencing work. This will include evidencing the contractor's Safety Record, Safety Policy, Liability Insurance, Risk assessment and details of Competent Person. On arrival at the club the contractor will receive a site induction from a member of the Facilities team which covers safeguarding children and give details of the club's expected code of behaviour. Contractors are subject to regular inspection from club staff. In the event of a

Contractor carrying out work on an area that is usually occupied by children this work, where possible, will be undertaken when children are not present.

## **Definitions of Poor Practice and Abuse**

**Poor Practice** is unacceptable and will be treated seriously with appropriate action. Any behaviour that contravenes existing Codes of Conduct, infringes an individual's rights and/or reflects a failure to fulfil the highest standards of care is an indication of Poor Practice. A child or young person may not be aware that poor practice or abusive is taking place, as they may deem the behaviour as acceptable.

**What is abuse?** - Abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. It commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and represents an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a child or a vulnerable adult regardless of their age, gender, race, ability, culture or sexual orientation.

## **Signs of abuse**

There are four main forms of abuse identified as follows, should you have any concern that abuse is occurring you should contact the Safeguarding Manager or nominated safeguarding Officer for the relevant department for advice.

### **Physical Abuse:**

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

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Physical abuse can be caused through an act or omission.

### **Sexual Abuse:**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to engage in sexual activity, regardless of 'implied consent.' This includes penetrative (penetration of vagina, anus & mouth) and non-penetrative acts (touching – over or under clothing, any part of the body in a sexual way).

Sexual abuse includes involving children in the watching of sexual acts, and encouraging children to engage in over-sexualised behaviour, and also grooming offences which can also be committed via the internet.

Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by anyone, including a parent or guardian, caregiver, extended family, friend, neighbour, stranger or a person in a position of trust (includes 16/17 year olds).

**Neglect:**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a Child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the Child's health or development. This includes failing to provide adequate nutrition, clothing, shelter, health care and protection from harm. Emotional neglect is the failure to meet the child's ongoing emotional needs for affection and a sense of belonging.

**Emotional Abuse:**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development, including verbal attacks on a child's sense of self, repeated humiliation or rejection. Exposure to violence, drugs, alcohol abuse or severe conflict in the home, forced isolation, restraint or causing a child to be afraid much of the time may also cause emotional harm. Emotional abuse rarely happens only once and it is usually part of a pattern of how the child is being treated over a significant period of time.

**Bullying/ Cyberbullying (strand of emotional abuse)**

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical, verbal and emotional, both face to face and via social media and other online forums. The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, cause them significant harm (including self-harm). All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies.

The Club have a specific anti-bullying policy in place to address concerns of bullying.

This is when a person uses technology i.e. mobile phones or the internet (social networking sites, chat rooms, instant messenger, tweets), to deliberately upset someone. Bullies often feel anonymous from the incident when it takes place online and 'bystanders' can easily become bullies themselves by forwarding the information on.

**Domestic Abuse**

**Domestic Abuse** is a significant indicator of risk of harm to children, whom may suffer directly or indirectly if they live in households where there is domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is likely to have a damaging effect on the health and development of children.

**Concerns around radicalisation and extremism**

The Counter terrorism and Security act places a duty on specified authorities, including sport, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the prevent duty) There is also a duty on local authorities to ensure there is a Channel panel in place. This must include the local authority and senior police officers. The panel will assess to what extent identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The Act requires partners of the Channel Panel to cooperate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and the police in undertaking the initial assessment as to whether a referral is appropriate. There will be training rolled out in this area so that staff across the Academy are aware of signs to be aware of and referral pathways. Liaise with Safeguarding manager if there are any concerns about this.

## Signs and Symptoms

The list below is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that abuse is taking place though they are indicators that abuse may have taken place:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- Disclosure of what appears to be an abusive act.
- Disclosure of unsatisfactory home circumstances i.e. Domestic abuse, drugs and alcohol misuse, mental health concerns of a parent or other person within the home.
- Someone expresses concern about the welfare of the child.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming quiet, withdrawn or sudden outbursts).
- Oversexualised behaviour
- Displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Weight loss for no apparent reason.
- Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.
- Evasive parents/carers

**Remember that: It is not the responsibility of staff (permanent or casual) or volunteers to decide if abuse has taken place, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns, in accordance with this procedure.**

## Responding to Allegations or Suspicions

All staff, volunteers and players have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of children and to take appropriate steps to ensure that suspicions and allegations of abuse are taken seriously and responded to quickly and appropriately. It is not the responsibility of anyone within the club to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place.

Where there is a complaint against a member of Academy staff the one of the following may occur:

- A criminal investigation led by the Police
- A child protection investigation led in a multi-agency approach by the Local Authority
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation led by the club, which may also involve The Football Association or premier League.

- The club will delay an internal disciplinary or misconduct investigation while a criminal or local authority investigation takes place.

If a member of staff suspects abuse is taking place, or a report/allegation of abuse has been disclosed to them, where possible the Safeguarding Manager or a designated Safeguarding Officer should be contacted as early as possible. However it is recognised that an individual may need to respond to a situation immediately and prior to such contact if the nature of the suspicion or report is putting the child concerned in immediate danger. The Safeguarding manager will notify the LADO and consult with the police and local authority childrens social care as appropriate .

The following guidelines offer help and support in responding to abuse or a suspicion of abuse:

Staff should:

- Listen carefully rather than question the child directly.
- Stay calm and not offer their personal opinions/thoughts.
- Be aware that medical or criminal evidence may be relevant.
- Tell the child that you are listening and taking what they say extremely seriously.
- Seek medical attention if necessary
- Take further action – they may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse.
- Inform a safeguarding Officer and/or the Safeguarding Manager of the information or another senior member of staff if these are not available
- Write down **everything** said (in their words as far as possible) and what was done – accuracy and detail is important. Keep this information stored in a secure place. Concerns can be recorded on the Safeguarding reporting form
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