



KINGDOM HERITAGE ACADEMY

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Football Coaching Academy

Operated by: Kingdom Heritage Academy Ltd (Company No. 17372708)

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Nicola Knuckles

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Joel Knuckles

Ages covered: 18 months to 11 years

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1. Policy statement and purpose

Kingdom Heritage Academy (“the Academy”) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child who takes part in our football sessions, camps and activities. We believe that every child — whatever their age, ability, gender, race, religion, background or family circumstances — has the right to take part in football in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment, and to be protected from harm.

The welfare of the child is, and will always remain, our paramount consideration. We recognise that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility, and that we all have a part to play in noticing concerns early, responding well and helping to keep children safe.

This policy sets out how the Academy meets that commitment. It explains the responsibilities of everyone involved in the Academy, how to recognise and respond to concerns about a child, how we recruit and manage staff safely, and how we work with children as young as 18 months alongside those up to the age of 11.

A “child” means anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This policy applies regardless of the age of the child concerned.

2. Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to everyone acting for or on behalf of the Academy, including:

- the company directors;
- employed and self-employed coaches;
- casual, seasonal and holiday-camp staff;
- volunteers, helpers and work-experience placements;
- anyone else engaged by the Academy who comes into contact with children.

It applies at all of our sessions and activities, whether at our usual venues or elsewhere (for example school premises, leisure centres, tournaments, trips and holiday camps), and to any contact with children online or by phone. All of the above are referred to in this policy as “staff”.

3. Framework and guidance we follow

We are not currently affiliated to a National Governing Body. As the Academy is not affiliated to The Football Association (The FA) or another National Governing Body, we do not sit within an NGB safeguarding structure. Instead, we adopt the **NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport** as our benchmark for good practice, and we use the NSPCC as our external source of safeguarding advice.

We also have regard to the following legislation and statutory guidance, as relevant to our activities:

- **Children Act 1989 and 2004** — the framework for the care and protection of children;
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)** — how organisations should work together to protect children;
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)** — used as a best-practice reference, and directly relevant whenever we deliver on school premises;
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006** — which defines “regulated activity” and underpins our DBS checks;

- **the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** — relevant to our youngest children (see section 4);
- **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the Prevent duty)** — we maintain awareness of the risk of radicalisation;
- **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR** — which do not prevent the sharing of information to keep a child safe;
- **Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003** and other guidance on specific safeguarding issues.

If the Academy becomes affiliated to The FA or another NGB in the future, we will **additionally** adopt that body's safeguarding policy, DBS route and welfare-officer arrangements.

4. Our youngest children and Ofsted registration

The Academy runs sessions for children as young as 18 months. Children below the age of five sit within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) age range, and we take particular care over how these sessions are delivered.

Parents and carers remain present throughout our under-6 sessions. For all of our groups aged 18 months–3 years, 3–4.5 years and 4.5–6 years, a parent or carer stays for the session and remains responsible for their own child at all times. Because a parent or carer is present and retains responsibility, these sessions are **not classed as “childcare”** and do not require the Academy to register with Ofsted or to be inspected against the EYFS.

We keep this position under review. If our delivery model ever changes so that we care for children under the age of eight without a parent or carer present — for example running a drop-off session or holiday camp for this age group for more than two hours — we will review our position and, where required, register with Ofsted (the Early Years Register for children under five, and the Compulsory Childcare Register for children aged five to seven). We will confirm our specific position with Ofsted and our local authority before making any such change.

Even though registration is not currently required, we apply the safeguarding standards in this policy to every child, including our youngest, at all times.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Company directors

The directors of the Academy hold ultimate responsibility for safeguarding. They will:

- ensure this policy is in place, followed, resourced and reviewed at least annually;
- appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a deputy, and make sure they have the time, training and authority to carry out the role;
- ensure safe recruitment procedures are followed for everyone working with children;
- ensure all staff receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role;
- make sure there are clear procedures for handling allegations against staff, and take the lead where an allegation concerns the DSL;
- make this policy available to staff and to parents and carers, including on request in an accessible format.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) — Nicola Knuckles

The DSL is the **first point of contact for any concern about the welfare or safety of a child**. The DSL will:

- receive, consider and record safeguarding concerns raised by staff, children or parents;
- decide on the appropriate action and make referrals to children's social care, the police or the NSPCC where needed;
- liaise with external agencies and keep secure, confidential records;
- act as a source of support and advice for staff, and make sure staff know how to raise a concern;
- keep their own safeguarding knowledge and training up to date, and support the training of others;
- help promote awareness of safeguarding and good practice across the Academy.

Contact: Nicola Knuckles — safeguarding@kingdomheritageacademy.com

Deputy Safeguarding Lead

A Deputy Safeguarding Lead (**Joel Knuckles**) will carry out the DSL's functions when the DSL is unavailable, and is trained to the same level.

All staff, coaches and volunteers

Everyone acting for the Academy will:

- read, understand and follow this policy and the codes of conduct in section 12;
- stay alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns;
- report any concern about a child to the DSL without delay — and never keep a concern to themselves;
- report any concern about the conduct of another member of staff (see section 10);
- model good practice and help create a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

6. Recognising abuse and neglect

All staff should be able to recognise the main categories of abuse. The signs below are possible indicators only — they do not prove that abuse is taking place, and children may show them for other reasons. What matters is that staff stay alert and pass concerns to the DSL. With very young or pre-verbal children in particular, changes in behaviour and unexplained physical signs are especially important to notice.

Physical abuse

Deliberately causing physical harm — for example hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, or otherwise hurting a child. Possible signs: injuries that are unexplained or do not fit the explanation given, frequent or patterned injuries, a reluctance to change clothing, or fear of physical contact.

Emotional abuse

Persistent emotional mistreatment that harms a child's emotional development — for example making a child feel worthless, unloved or frightened. Possible signs: withdrawal, low self-esteem, over-anxiety, or behaviour that seems very immature or very grown-up for the child's age.

Sexual abuse

Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child understands what is happening, and whether contact or non-contact (including online). Possible signs: sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate for the child's age, sudden changes in behaviour, or physical signs such as discomfort.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs. Possible signs: consistently poor hygiene, inadequate clothing for the weather, constant hunger, untreated health problems, or being left without adequate supervision.

7. Wider safeguarding issues

Safeguarding is broader than protecting children from deliberate abuse. Staff should also be aware of the following, and raise any concern with the DSL:

- **Bullying, including cyberbullying** — we treat bullying as a safeguarding matter and do not tolerate it.
- **Child-on-child abuse** — children can abuse other children, including through bullying, physical or sexual harm, or sharing of images. We take all such reports seriously and never dismiss them as “banter” or part of growing up.
- **Online safety** — risks from harmful content, contact and conduct online, including grooming.
- **Child sexual and criminal exploitation (CSE / CCE)** — where a child is manipulated or coerced into sexual or criminal activity, sometimes in exchange for gifts, status or affection.
- **Domestic abuse** — children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse are recognised as victims in their own right.
- **Female genital mutilation (FGM) and so-called “honour”-based abuse** — FGM is illegal and a form of child abuse.
- **Radicalisation and extremism (the Prevent duty)** — we stay alert to signs that a child may be at risk of being drawn into extremism.
- **Children with additional vulnerabilities** — children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), and those facing difficulties at home, can be at greater risk and may find it harder to communicate a concern. Staff give these children particular care and attention.

8. What to do if you are worried about a child

If a child is in immediate danger or needs urgent medical help, call 999 straight away. Otherwise, follow the steps below.

If a child tells you something (a “disclosure”), or you notice something that worries you:

1. Stay calm, listen carefully and take what the child says seriously.
2. Reassure the child that they were right to tell you.
3. Do not investigate or ask leading questions. Only ask open, gentle questions if you need to clarify — “Tell me, Explain to me, Describe to me” (TED).
4. Do not promise to keep a secret. Explain gently that you may need to tell someone whose job it is to help.
5. Report to the DSL as soon as possible — the same day.

6. Make a written record as soon as you can: what was said or seen, in the child's own words where possible, with the date, time and your name. Sign and date it.

It is not your job to decide whether abuse has taken place — only to pass the concern on. Never delay because you are unsure.

9. How concerns are referred

Once the DSL receives a concern, they will decide on the right course of action. This may include monitoring and supporting the child, speaking with parents or carers, or making a referral to an external agency. The DSL may refer to, or seek advice from:

- **the local authority children's social care team / MASH** — 01344 352005 / mash@bracknell-forest.gov.uk;
- **the NSPCC Helpline** — 0808 800 5000 (help@nspcc.org.uk), our external source of safeguarding advice as a non-affiliated club;
- **the police** — 999 in an emergency, or 101 for a non-emergency.

If the concern is about the DSL, it should be reported directly to a company director. **If the concern is about a director**, it should be reported to the NSPCC Helpline, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or children's social care. **Because the Deputy Safeguarding Lead is also a company director**, any concern about either of our safeguarding leads should be taken directly to the LADO, children's social care or the NSPCC, rather than raised internally. Staff do not need permission from anyone at the Academy to make such a report.

10. Concerns and allegations about staff

Everyone working for the Academy holds a position of trust. We take any concern about the behaviour of a member of staff seriously, whether it is a serious allegation or a "low-level" concern that a person's behaviour has been inconsistent with our codes of conduct.

An allegation is where it is thought that a member of staff may have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may be unsuitable to work with children; or
- behaved in a way in their personal life that raises concerns about their suitability to work with children.

If you have such a concern:

- report it immediately to the DSL — or, if it concerns the DSL, the Deputy DSL or a director, report it directly to the LADO, children's social care or the NSPCC;
- do not investigate, interview the person or the child, or discuss it with the person concerned;
- keep the matter confidential and record the facts.

The DSL or director will seek advice from the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** without delay, and will follow their guidance on next steps. This may include contacting children's social care, the police, and the Disclosure and Barring Service. We will also make a referral to the DBS where a person is removed (or would have been) because they posed a risk to children.

Whistleblowing

Anyone who is worried about how a concern is being handled, or who does not feel able to raise it internally, can contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285, or contact children's social care, the LADO or the police directly.

11. Safer recruitment

We aim to deter and prevent unsuitable people from working with children at the Academy. For everyone who works with children we will:

- make clear what the role involves and confirm the person's identity with photographic ID;
- obtain and follow up at least two references before appointment;
- hold an interview or, at minimum, a face-to-face meeting;
- check relevant coaching and first-aid qualifications; and
- require an in-date safeguarding certificate.

DBS checks. Coaching, instructing or supervising children on a regular basis is "regulated activity". Every coach who works with our under-18s in this way must hold an **Enhanced DBS check with a check of the Children's Barred List**, obtained through the Academy. Self-employed coaches can now obtain an enhanced check of this level through a registered platform. Volunteers who are always supervised by a checked member of staff are not in regulated activity themselves, but we still carry out appropriate checks as a matter of good practice. We keep a record of all checks and their renewal dates.

12. Codes of conduct and good practice

Coaches and staff will

- treat every child fairly, with respect and without favouritism;
- use positive, encouraging coaching and never humiliate, shout at or belittle a child;
- work in open, observable spaces and avoid being alone with a child wherever possible;
- avoid unnecessary physical contact — and, where contact is needed (for example to demonstrate a technique or for safety), explain it and keep it appropriate and in view;
- maintain safe adult-child ratios and appropriate supervision;
- never smoke, drink alcohol or use bad language around the children;
- never engage in, or allow, rough or sexually provocative games or inappropriate comments.

Parents, carers and spectators are asked to

- support and encourage children positively, and never pressure or criticise them;
- behave respectfully towards coaches, officials, other parents and children;
- remain present and responsible for their own child during the under-6 sessions.

Children are encouraged to

- play fairly, try their best and enjoy their football;
- treat coaches and other children with respect; and
- tell a coach or their parent if something or someone makes them feel unhappy or unsafe.

13. Working with our youngest children (18 months–6 years)

Because a parent or carer stays for every session in these age groups and remains responsible for their own child:

- intimate care such as nappy-changing and toileting is carried out by the child's own parent or carer, not by Academy staff;
- parents and carers supervise their own child during breaks and are responsible for collecting them at the end;
- we still collect key information at registration — including **emergency contacts, medical conditions, allergies and any medication** — and it is the parent's or carer's responsibility to keep this up to date and to decide whether a session is suitable for their child;
- we make sure the playing environment, equipment and activities are appropriate and safe for very young children.

14. Photography, filming and social media

- We obtain written parental consent before photographing or filming a child, and record where consent has not been given.
- Images will be appropriate, and children will be suitably dressed. We do not publish a child's full name alongside their image.
- Photographs and videos of children are not stored on staff personal devices; approved images are stored securely and only used for agreed purposes.
- Only the Academy's official accounts are used to share images, and only in line with consent.

15. Mobile phones and communication

- Staff do not contact children privately or directly (including by text, direct message or social media). Communication is with parents and carers, through the Academy's official channels.
- Personal mobile phones are not used to take pictures of children; any approved photography uses Academy equipment or agreed arrangements.
- Staff keep communication transparent, professional and open to scrutiny at all times.

16. Health, safety, first aid and medical information

- By booking a taster or joining the Academy, parents and carers agree to disclose any pre-existing medical conditions, allergies and medication for their child, and it remains their responsibility to keep this information current (email info@kingdomheritageacademy.com).
- A suitably qualified first aider and a first-aid kit are available at sessions, and staff hold appropriate first-aid training.
- Accidents, injuries and near-misses are recorded, and parents or carers are informed.
- We carry out risk assessments for our venues and activities, and review them regularly.

17. Confidentiality and information sharing

Information about a safeguarding concern is shared only with those who need to know, in order to keep a child safe. Staff will never promise a child that they will keep a disclosure secret.

Data protection law does not prevent us from sharing information to safeguard a child. Where we need to share information, we aim to do so with consent, but we will share without consent where a child may be at risk of harm. We follow the principles of the Government's "seven golden rules" for information sharing: be transparent, seek advice when unsure, share only what is necessary, proportionate, relevant, timely and secure, and record what we shared and why.

18. Record keeping

We keep clear, accurate and factual written records of any safeguarding concern, including what was seen or said, the date and time, the action taken and the reasons for it. Records are stored securely and confidentially, kept separate from general records, and shared only on a need-to-know basis. If a child moves to another provider, relevant records are transferred securely.

19. Training

- The DSL and Deputy DSL complete safeguarding lead training for sport (for example the NSPCC / CPSU designated-lead course) and refresh it in line with current guidance.
- All staff and volunteers complete safeguarding training as part of induction, covering how to recognise, respond to and record concerns, and refresh it regularly.
- Staff also complete awareness training on online safety and the Prevent duty appropriate to their role.
- We keep a record of all training and renewal dates.

20. Related policies

This policy should be read alongside the Academy's other policies, which include (as applicable): Code of Conduct; Health & Safety; First Aid; Equality and Inclusion; Online Safety / E-Safety; Photography and Social Media; Whistleblowing; Data Protection / Privacy; Complaints; Trips and Events; and Safer Recruitment.

21. Adoption and review

This policy is reviewed at least once a year, and sooner if there is a change in the law, national guidance or the way the Academy operates. It was adopted by the directors of the Academy on the date below.

Signed (on behalf of the directors):



Name: Joel Knuckles

Position: Director

Date: 01/08/2026

22. Key contacts

Print this page and display it where staff and coaches can see it.

Who / what	Contact
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Nicola Knuckles — 07435 098 206 safeguarding@kingdomheritageacademy.com
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Joel Knuckles — 07435 098 222 safeguarding@kingdomheritageacademy.com
Company director (safeguarding)	Joel Knuckles — joel.knuckles@kingdomheritageacademy.com
Local children's social care / MASH	01344 352005 — mash@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	01344 351572 — LADO@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
NSPCC Helpline (advice about a child)	0808 800 5000 — help@nspcc.org.uk
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	0800 028 0285
Childline (for children)	0800 1111
Police	999 emergency / 101 non-emergency
Ofsted	0300 123 1231