



NORTHWICH UNITED

WOMEN AND GIRLS

SAFEGUARDING & WELFARE GUIDE

2026/27

ONE CLUB. ONE FUTURE.

Safe football. Strong community.



SAFE • RESPECTED • INCLUDED • EMPOWERED

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01

WELCOME

At Northwich United, safeguarding is part of everything we do on the pitch, off the pitch, behind the scenes and across our community.

We want every player, child, parent, coach, volunteer, official, supporter and visitor to feel safe, respected, listened to and able to enjoy football.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

If something worries you, you do not need to investigate it yourself or be certain before raising a concern.

RESPECT • PROTECT • SUPPORT • BELONG



WHAT SAFEGUARDING MEANS

Safeguarding is about protecting children and adults at risk from abuse, neglect and harm, while promoting their welfare and creating an environment where people can participate safely.

For Northwich United, this means:

- Clear boundaries
- Appropriate conduct
- Safer recruitment
- Effective reporting
- Respectful communication
- Professional behaviour
- An inclusive environment
- Supporting player welfare
- Taking concerns seriously

CREATING A HEALTHY CLUB ENVIRONMENT

Safeguarding works best when it is part of everyday club life.

We are committed to:

- Clear codes of conduct for everyone
- Clear routes for raising concerns
- Sharing information appropriately and only with those who need to know
- Respectful coaching and communication
- Appropriate professional boundaries
- Supporting wellbeing and inclusion
- Safer recruitment and appropriate checks
- Safeguarding training and awareness
- Creating an environment where concerns can be raised without fear

IF SOMEONE TELLS YOU SOMETHING

If a player, child, parent, volunteer or another person tells you something that concerns you:

Stay Calm

Listen carefully and remain calm.

Listen

Allow the person to speak without interrupting unnecessarily.

Take Them Seriously

Never dismiss or minimise what someone tells you.

Reassure

Let them know they have done the right thing by speaking to you.

Don't Promise Secrecy

Explain that you may need to share the information with someone who can help.

Don't Investigate

Do not try to establish the facts yourself or challenge the person's account.

Record

Write down what has been said as soon as possible, keeping the record factual.

Report

Pass the concern to the appropriate safeguarding person or authority.

REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

If you are worried about a child, young person or adult at risk, speak up.

STEP 1 — IMMEDIATE DANGER

If somebody is in immediate danger or requires emergency assistance: Call 999.

STEP 2 — CONTACT NORTHWICH UNITED

Concerns should be raised through the club safeguarding route.

CHIEF WELFARE OFFICER

Michaela Thompson

Email: admin@northwichunited.org.uk

STEP 3 — FOOTBALL SAFEGUARDING

Concerns can also be referred through the appropriate County FA / The FA safeguarding network.

STEP 4 — CONFIDENTIALITY

Only share safeguarding information with people who need to know.

A safeguarding concern may involve:

- A coach, manager, volunteer, official
- A parent/carer, supporter or visitor
- Any other adult connected with the club

Concerns may include:

- Inappropriate behaviour
- Boundary violations
- Bullying or discrimination
- Unsafe practice
- Suspected abuse
- Intimidation
- Inappropriate communication
- Behaviour that causes concern about someone's suitability to work with children

REPORT CONCERNS — DON'T INVESTIGATE THEM YOURSELF.

If the concern involves the Chief Welfare Officer, it should be reported to another appropriate member of the club management team.

Safeguarding starts before someone takes on a role within the club.

Northwich United is committed to appropriate recruitment and safeguarding processes, including:

- Appropriate role descriptions
- Relevant checks for roles
- Safeguarding requirements
- Safeguarding training
- Clear expectations around conduct
- Professional boundaries
- Appropriate supervision and support
- Ongoing accountability



Everyone has a role in creating a safe and positive matchday.

We expect players, coaches, parents, volunteers, officials and supporters to:

- Follow venue and competition procedures
- Follow emergency arrangements
- Treat players and officials with respect
- Keep children appropriately supervised
- Report unsafe or concerning behaviour
- Keep access routes clear
- Follow instructions from venue and club officials
- Respect opposition players, staff and supporters



PHOTOGRAPHY, FILMING & ONLINE SAFETY

Photography and video are an important part of celebrating football and promoting Northwich United.

However, privacy, consent and safeguarding must always come first.

- Follow Northwich United photography and media arrangements
- Respect privacy
- Follow appropriate consent requirements
- Avoid photographing or filming children inappropriately
- Respect requests relating to images
- Avoid sharing images of other children or families without appropriate permission

ONLINE SAFETY

- Use appropriate club communication channels.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Follow Northwich United's online communication procedures.
- Consider safeguarding when communicating with young players.

EQUALITY, RESPECT & INCLUSION

OUR GAME TOO!

Northwich United is committed to creating a respectful and inclusive environment.

Discrimination, bullying, harassment, intimidation and abusive language have no place at our club.

Everyone should be treated fairly and with dignity, including:

- Players
- Coaches
- Managers
- Officials
- Parents and carers
- Volunteers
- Supporters
- Visitors

If you experience or witness discriminatory or inappropriate behaviour, report it.

Don't assume somebody else will deal with it.

PLAYER WELFARE, WELLBEING & INJURIES

Player welfare goes beyond what happens during a football match.

Take changes in a player's:

- Mood
- Behaviour
- Confidence
- Engagement
- Physical wellbeing
- Emotional wellbeing

... seriously.

Players should be encouraged to speak to a trusted adult or appropriate club official if something is worrying them.

INJURIES

Follow club procedures for injury reporting, return to play and medical incidents.

For serious injuries or medical emergencies, seek emergency medical assistance.

CHIEF WELFARE OFFICER

Michaela Thompson

admin@northwichunited.org.uk

CLUB ADDRESS

Winnington Park Recreation Club

Park Road, Winnington

Northwich, Cheshire CW8 4EB

EMERGENCY

Immediate danger or medical emergency: **999**

ONE CLUB. ONE FUTURE.

The Northwich United website provides a central location for our club policies, handbooks and welfare forms.

- **Coaches Handbook**
- **Players Welfare Concern Form**
- **Incident Report Form**
- **Return to Play Form**
- **Injury Report Form**
- **Safeguarding Risk Assessment**
- **Managers & Coaches Conduct**
- **Player Conduct**
- **Parent / Carer Conduct**

These documents should be read alongside current Northwich United procedures and any applicable FA and County FA requirements.

Emergency and child protection contacts.

Police

Emergency 999 | Non-emergency 101

Use 999 whenever someone is in immediate danger or a crime is in progress.

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000 | help@nspcc.org.uk

Advice and support for any adult worried about a child, including anonymous reports.

Childline

0800 1111 | childline.org.uk

Free, confidential support for children and young people, 24 hours a day.

Local Authority Children's Social Care

Cheshire West and Chester Council

Statutory route for concerns about a child's safety or welfare in our area.

NHS 111

111 | nhs.uk

Urgent but non-emergency medical advice and out-of-hours health support.

Always follow the club reporting route first — contact the Chief Welfare Officer unless someone is in immediate danger.

Football safeguarding and wider support.

The FA Safeguarding Team

thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding

National safeguarding standards, guidance and reporting routes for football.

Cheshire FA Designated Safeguarding Officer

Safeguarding@CheshireFA.com | 01606 871166

County FA safeguarding support for clubs, coaches, players and parents.

Report a concern: cheshirefa.com/safeguarding-and-respect

NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

thecpsu.org.uk

Best-practice guidance on keeping children safe in sport.

Kick It Out

kickitout.org

Reporting and support for discrimination in football.

Samaritans

116 123 | samaritans.org

Free, 24-hour emotional support for anyone who is struggling.

Crimestoppers

0800 555 111

Report a crime completely anonymously.

Contact details change — check the current details with the Chief Welfare Officer before sharing or acting on them.