

AFC Wimbledon Prevent Policy

Approved by PLC Board 18th April 2024

AFC Wimbledon recognises its statutory and moral duty to promote and secure the welfare of its players, staff, volunteers, and supporters by adopting a risk-based approach to safeguarding, which assures the highest possible level of safety for all and the most positive impact on learning. This includes our obligation under the Prevent Duty (September 2015) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

AFC Wimbledon aims to provide a safe and welcoming learning environment where the welfare of our players and staff is paramount, and in which all staff, volunteers, Academy, and players are respected and valued. The Club ensures safe staff recruitment procedures (including volunteers) built around DBS checks, thorough scrutiny of references and ongoing monitoring and review of practice. We help staff and players alike to equip themselves with the information and awareness necessary on how to keep themselves and others safe. To maintain and explicitly promote those procedures, which help to identify suspected cases of all forms of abuse or neglect, report, and act upon them, in accordance with the Club's managing allegations and whistleblowing policies.

AFC Wimbledon will provide appropriate support to those who have been the victim of abuse or neglect. The Club will contribute to effective partnership working between all those in the wider community involved in providing safeguarding services and the Club itself. This will include having due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. To work with those partners to provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when the additional needs of young people are identified. .

AFC Wimbledon will provide an environment where safeguarding is thoroughly understood, embraced by all members of the Club, and applied with a high degree of consistency. To assure that Academy resources in safeguarding are focused within a risk management approach that serves those groups identified as being relatively vulnerable. The Club will assure compliance to the Equality Act 2010, recognising the potentially relatively high risk of some staff, volunteers, Academy, and players with particular protected characteristics. We will support the Academy's philosophy by promoting positive behavioural attitudes and appropriate British Values, to create an environment in which Academy members and scholars feel safe, confident, and able to discuss any concerns openly with support staff. The Policy will be made readily available on the Club's website and will be updated and approved by the Board on an annual basis.

The Prevent Duty is one of the four elements of CONTEST, the government's counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. From 18 September 2015 the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (Section 26) has placed a further statutory duty on all education providers to "have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

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At AFC Wimbledon we are committed to supporting staff, volunteers, Academy and players through our safeguarding policies and procedures and recognise that this will support the team's contribution to the Prevent Duty. We build our player's resilience to radicalisation by promoting British Values and enabling our learners to challenge extremist views.

AFC Wimbledon has engaged positively with appropriate training to ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to recognise any concerns and to refer them appropriately, as with any other safeguarding concern.

The PLC Board of AFC Wimbledon holds the overall responsibility for ensuring that the Club has policies, procedures, and structures in place to support and promote the safety and well-being of all players and staff in its care, which includes adhering to the Prevent Duty. In practical terms this means;

- The PLC Board of AFC Wimbledon has a specific role should an allegation be made against the Senior Management Team.
- To ensure that the Club has procedures and policies which are consistent with legal guidelines and local needs and complement the Club's responsibility under the Equality Act 2010.
- To consider the Club's Safeguarding Policies on an annual basis and ensure that they are available publicly via the Club's website.
- To ensure that the Club's strategy complies with the Prevent Duty, as set out in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
- To show a commitment to safeguarding by completing the FA's Mandatory Safeguarding and Prevent training, and updating it every three years; thus, satisfying the requirements of the FA.
- To scrutinise the practice in the Academy in relation to the Prevent Action Plan and Risk Assessment.
- To ensure that the Club provides sufficient training for all staff to be able to recognise and refer anyone vulnerable to radicalisation to the appropriate person.
- To ensure that the Club operates 'safer recruitment' practice including DBS checks and the keeping and updating of the Single Central Record
- To ensure that allegations of abuse against members of staff are managed within the local authority procedures and supervised by the Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- To ensure that their behaviour, that of managers and staff, the curriculum and policies exemplify British values.

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The Board have a responsibility to complement, support and oversee the work of the Safeguarding Team. AFC Wimbledon's policy will be consistent with the full Prevent Strategy outlined here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

The full CONTEST strategy outlined by the Government can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-strategy-contest>

As part of the CONTEST strategy, Prevent aims to:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat faced by the UK from those who promote it
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support
- Work with a wide range of sectors (including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, the internet, and health) where there are risks of radicalisation which need to be addressed

AFC Wimbledon will follow relevant definitions laid out in the law of England and Wales and Government Policy.

Terrorism is defined in the Terrorism Act 2000 as: the use or threat which: involves serious violence against a person; involves serious damage to property; endangers a person's life (other than that of the person committing the act); creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or section of the public; or is designed seriously to interfere with or seriously to disrupt an electronic system. The use or threat of such action must be designed to influence the government or an international governmental organisation or to intimidate the public or a section of the public and be undertaken for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial, or ideological cause.

Extremism is defined in the Prevent Strategy as: vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces. Violent extremism defined in the Prevent Strategy as the endorsement of violence to achieve extreme ends.

Radicalisation is defined in the Prevent Strategy as: the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

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The Channel process is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The programme uses a multiagency approach to protect vulnerable people. More information about Channel can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425189/Channel_Duty_Guidance_April_2015.pdf

The Government does not specify what the signs of radicalisation are; it is likely that the most obvious sign of radicalisation will be extreme change in behaviour, and this will vary from case to case. Below is a short list of the possible indicators to look out for. This list is not exhaustive.

- Changes in ideology or faith
- Narrowing of political views
- Adoption of “Them” and “Us” mentality -Isolation from friends and family
- Fervent public expression of strong anger or grievance about perceived injustice.
- Attendance at certain rallies or meetings

On occasions, the Club may welcome guests to speak to our team’s and will be recommended by a trusted source, such as The League Football Education (LFE) or the Football Association (FA). Should an Academy player need access to a laptop, this should be accessible only via a member of staff and must have a member of staff present whilst they are using the internet.

Any member of AFC Wimbledon (player, Academy, volunteer, or staff member) may express concerns about any member of the Club potentially being drawn into violent extremism based on information received or behaviour observed. Within AFC Wimbledon’s Academy, we already have support staff in place, including a Designated Safeguarding Officer. Changes in behaviour are likely to be identified using the current processes and staff will be able to respond appropriately. There may be circumstances where AFC Wimbledon identifies someone who is in need of intervention under the terms of this policy. If this happens, the following steps will followed:

- If a player or member of staff is worried that a person is becoming radicalised or is radicalising others, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer with verbally or via the Club’s safeguarding software.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer will investigate the matter and alert the relevant agencies.
- If a player or member of staff is worried that a member of staff is becoming radicalised or is radicalising others, this must be reported to the Senior

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Safeguarding Manager. They will share this with the Senior Management Team. The Senior Management Team will take control in investigating the matter. -Once any available information and substantive evidence has been gathered, this will be considered in discussion with other members of the safeguarding and senior management team and The PLC Board of AFC Wimbledon where appropriate. The investigation and any evidence found will be recorded using the Club's safeguarding software.

A decision will be made as to the seriousness of the case. Four potential outcomes are likely at this stage:

- No further action is required, and this will be recorded on the staff file and relevant staff and agencies informed.
- There is substance to the case but at this stage only internal action is required. The exact nature of the intervention required will be determined by discussion between the investigating team. Actions and a review date will be agreed. This will be recorded on the staff file. Relevant staff will be informed. At the review, the case will be assessed again, and the appropriate actions taken.
- AFC Wimbledon may choose to refer the person to the Channel process as an action point. This is a voluntary safeguarding process. Should AFC Wimbledon refer someone to the Channel process, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will attend the relevant meetings.
- A referral to the police is required because there are serious and immediate safety issues to the player, staff member or others, and/or there is evidence to suggest a criminal act may be committed or has been committed. This decision will only be taken in the most serious circumstances and only following discussions between the Designated Safeguarding Officer and Senior Management Team.
- If concerns are raised about any of the members of staff involved in the above process, they will be excluded from it.

If there is an opportunity of significant harm or risk to others, AFC Wimbledon will be able to suspend the alleged offender pending an investigation to relieve the potential imminent risk. AFC Wimbledon will handle personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and the specific requirements relating to Prevent as prescribed by Law.

Contact with the Regional Prevent Coordinator is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer and Senior Management Team. The Designated Safeguarding Officer and Senior Management Team will be responsible for coordination with relevant bodies in the event of the Academy having concerns. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will also:

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- Attend any training or conferences required to keep up to date on Prevent matters
- Meet regularly to discuss any matters arising
- Keep the Prevent Policy up to date
- Liaise with the relevant monitoring bodies

Supporters

AFC Wimbledon work closely with the police and the EFL to review security at club stadiums with stadium managers having been briefed by counter terrorism police. As always, AFC Wimbledon continue to work with the police, stadium safety officers and the relevant authorities to ensure appropriate security arrangements are in place to protect supporters. We therefore encourage fans to enjoy all attended fixtures, but please remain alert and if you see anything that gives you cause for concern, tell a steward or member of staff.

In an emergency always call 999.

It is vital that everyone - players, staff, and supporters - remain vigilant and report any concerns to stewards or police. Attacks may be rare and the chance of you being caught up in one is unlikely, but the message is #ActionCountersTerrorism.

Here is what you can do to help keep yourself and others safe:

- Arrive early, allowing more time for security checks.
- Minimise what you carry - fewer bag searches will speed up entry to the ground.
- Remain vigilant, and if you see anything suspicious, tell a steward immediately.
- If you see anything that could pose an immediate threat to safety, call 999.
- In an emergency, listen to the public address instructions and follow them.
- If told to evacuate, do so immediately. Do not wait around to film events on your mobile phone.
- Move away from the stadium as quickly as possible for your safety and to allow clear access for any emergency vehicles.
- Once you are safe, follow the local police force on Twitter **@metpoliceuk** for updates. Remember, the chance of a terrorist incident is small, but being prepared and ready to respond can help.

More information can be found at www.gov.uk/ACT

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Useful Contacts

Club Secretary

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Academy Manager

Micheal Hamilton

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EFL

Mark Derrien

- Mark.derrien@efl.com

Merton Council Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Team: 020 8545 4226/4227

FA Safeguarding

- Tel: 0800 169 1863
- Email: safeguarding@TheFA.com

NSPCC helpline

- Tel: 0808 800 5000

Police

- Tel: 999 or 101