

Wolverhampton Wanderers FC

SAFEGUARDING

COVID-19 Response

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Wolves is committed to Safeguarding during this difficult time.

We will continue to act and behave in accordance with our safeguarding policies responsibilities and we are committed to all our children, young people and adults at risk we have a relationship with.

We recognise that there will be some unseen vulnerabilities that our children, young people, their families, our community and Wolves employees may find themselves experiencing.

This document outlines any changes and amendments to procedures during this time.

Lisa Carter – Head of Safeguarding

1. Context

Wolves FC is following Government Guidance regarding social distancing and has taken the decision to close our Academy and pause our Foundation projects however there is still considerable contact with children, young people, players, their families, our partners and the community. We recognise there are many hidden vulnerabilities that people are dealing with including our own employees.

This document is an addendum to existing policies during this time and should be referred to alongside the policies already in place.

2. Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, young person, adult at risk OR a member of staff, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Club's Safeguarding Children and Young People and Safeguarding Adult at Risk Policies.

This includes ensuring that your line manager, Head of Safeguarding is made aware and report via 'my concern' which can be done remotely. If you believe anyone is at an immediate risk, we would expect you to inform the Police by ringing 999.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

3. Head of Safeguarding role and contingency plans

The Club Head of Safeguarding is Lisa Carter. Our Foundation has its own senior lead Laura Nicholls.

You should seek support from Lisa Carter however you will be told if alternative arrangements are in place at any point because of illness. Laura Nicholls would be the next person to engage with. We also have a coach lead Wesley Hughes. Alastair Pursell our Head of Legal and Will Clowes Head of Foundation can also be contacted for advice.

If no one was available, you should access support from Jess Alcott at the Premier League. Contact details can be found at the end of this document.

4. Safeguarding training and induction

Designated Safeguarding Officer training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus.

However, should a DSO require any additional support or safeguarding supervision this can be accessed remotely via the Head of Safeguarding. All existing staff who work with children and adults at risk have had safeguarding training. The Head of Safeguarding will communicate with staff any new local arrangements. Where new staff are already recruited, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction remotely or using the safeguarding induction pack.

5. Safer recruitment/volunteers, reporting and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to gain access to children and adults at risk. When recruiting new staff, the Club will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes in accordance with the recruitment policy. In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact. The Club will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS, Premier League and FA anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or adult at risk.

6. Communication with children and young people

It is important that all staff who interact with children and young people, including online, continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with in accordance with the Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and, as required, the police via the Head of Safeguarding. All staff must ensure that any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Best practise ideas.

- Ideally Staff should only use equipment (laptops, mobile phones etc.) provided by the Club to contact children and young people. Any difficulties should be discussed with the Head of Safeguarding and your manager.
- Arrange a Skype/zoom call (whatever you choose to use) with Parents using text/WhatsApp. Please note agreement and arrangement on Monday.com
- Make sure the call is within 'core work' daytime hours (if there was an issue then more staff/agencies will be contactable)
- Agree with parent/guardian the length of the call – how long likely to last.
- Have an idea of what you will discuss and the points you would like to raise, it is better to be concise and positive than to drift into 'chit chat'
- The child or young person should be in a public room (kitchen/living room ideally) and not bedroom.
- The child/young person should be up and fully dressed (if not end the call and arrange a different time)
- You should be dressed 'for work'
- You should be mindful of where you are sat in your house – kitchen table/living room.
- If no one answers the call – follow up with a text/call and arrange to a new time.
- Remember to remind children and young people that we can't keep things confidential. If you sense a disclosure remind the player and that you will have to share with others if worried about them or someone else.
- Think about what you might say or do if a child or young person gets upset? Agree how you will check in with them later.
- If a call ends abruptly and you are concerned you should share with manager, safeguarding leads and Head of Safeguarding and agree a response.
- After the call is ended (if you haven't already) say goodbye to an adult in the house – if unable follow up with a text/WhatsApp to parents or guardians with the time ended and arrangements for next discussion if appropriate.
- Record discussion (make written notes after) and record using Monday.com and/or My Concern.

You are in many ways entering someone's house and lone working. If you were to see or hear anything that you had concerns about OR if a child or young person made a disclosure to you then we would deal with this in the same way as if it happened face to face.

7. Supporting under 18 players

We recognise that the Academy is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current Covid-19 related circumstances, may affect the mental health of children and young people and their parents/carers. It is therefore essential that regular contact is made with each player. Information should then be discussed and appropriately shared to support emotional wellbeing – this will information will be regularly reviewed and discussed with coaches, player care, head of safeguarding, education, player welfare and support staff.

- All players will have contact from Club staff once a week - we will monitor the situation if any players, parents or family members may display COVID-19 symptoms.
- If any parents are in key worker positions we will be mindful of their situation and where possible ask if we can offer support.
- Virtual meetings will continue to take place to share updates and continued support.
- Head of Safeguarding/Player Care/Education/Psychology may send out activities for players and parents to engage with.
- Weekly calls to be initiated with players and families
- We will continue to share government guidance and encourage our players and their families to follow. If anyone is not following guidance and we believe they are endangering each other and the wider community we will consider sharing this with appropriate agencies.

Where any concerns are raised these MUST be recorded using ‘My Concern’ and appropriate plan put in place to support the player/and /or family.

8. Host Families

No players are currently staying with any host families. We have a ‘keeping in touch’ approach to ensure that our host families are well and can access support from us. If at any point players were to return to any host families, they will fall under the same protocol as a ‘normal’ family household should any Covid-19 systems present themselves.

8. Peer on Peer Abuse

The Club recognises that during the temporary closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of peer on peer abuse and supporting victims. Where the Club receives a report of peer on peer abuse, the Club will follow the principles as outlined within of the Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure. The Club will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on My Concern and appropriate referrals made.

9. Vulnerable children

It is essential that staff are aware of the vulnerable children whom they work with and should pay attention to the plans in place for these vulnerable children during this time. Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans. Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are in the care of the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

10. Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is more than physical violence. It can also include, but is not limited to:

- coercive control and 'gaslighting'
- economic abuse
- online abuse
- verbal abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse

Staying at home can cause anxiety for those who are experiencing or feel at risk of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is unacceptable in any situation, no matter what stresses you are under. We are conscious this issue can affect anyone, and we are mindful when we talk to children, families, adults at risks and colleagues that we have the right information to hand to offer support. If you have concerns or worries that a child is living in a home effected by domestic abuse you must report this to the Head of Safeguarding and record your concerns using My Concern.

Specific advise for employees can be found **here**

If you are an employee of Wolves FC you can contact Zoe Brough, Jen McCaskill or Lisa Carter for support.

11. Contact Details

Lisa Carter	Head of Safeguarding	07833 051063	LisaCarter@wolves.co.uk
Laura Nicholls	Foundation Senior Manager	07807 738659	LauraNicholls@Wolves.co.uk
Wes Hughes	Academy Coach	-	WesleyHughes@wolves.co.uk
Alastair Purssell	Head of Legal	07908 101579	AlastairPurssell@wolves.co.uk
Lisa Carter	Head of Safeguarding	07833 051063	LisaCarter@wolves.co.uk
Zoe Brough	Human Resources Director	07712 062111	ZoeBrough@wolves.co.uk
Jen McCaskill	HR Manager	07908 101627	JenMcCaskill@wolves.co.uk
Jess Addicott	Head of Safeguarding (PL)	-	jaddicott@premierleague.com

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed in line with updated Government Guidance.

Additional Support available during this time and specific to COVID – 19

Specific to Domestic Abuse - If you believe you are being abused, or worried you may commit domestic abuse, please use the following services which can help you. If you suspect that your neighbours or those in your community are victims of domestic abuse, we encourage you to report it to the police. If you are in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police - the police will continue to respond to emergency calls

If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, call 999 and then press 55. This will transfer your call to the relevant police force who will assist you without you having to speak.

The [National Domestic Abuse Helpline](#) website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. They can also be called, for free and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. The website also has a form through which women can book a safe time for a call from the team.

[Women's Aid](#)

Women's Aid has provided additional advice specifically designed for the current coronavirus outbreak, including a live chat service.

[The Men's Advice Line](#) is a confidential helpline for male victims of domestic abuse and those supporting them. It can be contacted on 0808 801 0327.

If you are a member of the LGBT+ community, [Galop](#) runs a specialist helpline on 0800 999 5428 or email help@galop.org.uk.

If you are concerned about how coronavirus may affect your finances and leave you vulnerable to economic abuse, please see the advice provided by [HM Treasury](#) on what support is on offer. The charity [Surviving Economic Abuse](#) has also provided additional guidance and support.

[Hestia](#) provides a free-to-download mobile app, Bright Sky, which provides support and information to anyone who may be in an abusive relationship or those concerned about someone they know.

[Chayn](#) provides online help and resources in several languages, ranging from identifying manipulative situations and how friends can support those being abused.

[SafeLives](#) is providing guidance and support to professionals and those working in the domestic abuse sector, as well as additional advice for those at risk.

Support if you are worried about hurting someone -If you are worried about hurting the ones you love while staying at home, call the [Respect Phonenumber](#) for support and help to manage your behaviour, 0808 8024040.

Support for children and young people and their families (how we support AND how we deliver) specific to COVID-19

<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/coronavirus-supporting-children>

<https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2020/03/27/best-practices-for-securing-your-virtual-classroom/>

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19>

<https://www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk/mcf/news/learning-through-the-lockdown-protecting-your-children-from-digital-harm-during-coronavirus>

<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/covid-19-parenting-tips>

Support and information linked to Adults at Risk

Briefing note on addressing mental health and psychosocial aspects of COVID-19:

<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/other/interim-briefing-note-addressing-mental-health-and-psychosocial-aspects-covid-19-outbreak>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/876996/Easy_read_looking_after_your_feelings_and_body.pdf

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-criminals-exploiting-covid-19-pandemic-with-email-scams-11959433>

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/keeping-safe-financial-abuse/>

Thank you for reading, stay safe

