



**STEVENAGE** FOOTBALL CLUB

# Speak Up Policy

**#WEARESTEVENAGE**



# Speak Up Policy

*INTERNAL / EXTERNAL*

<b>Date of Last Review</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2023
<b>Review Undertaken By</b>	Mike Pink – Chief Executive Officer
<b>Policy Overview</b>	
Our Speak Up Policy outlines the Club's protocols for individuals who wish to raise issues of a sensitive nature in a safe and confidential manner.	
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## Introduction

The Club is committed to developing a culture where it is safe and acceptable for everyone involved in Club activities to raise concerns about any unacceptable practice, behaviour, wrongdoing or misconduct. This includes, but is not limited to, offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, Protection of Children Act 1978 s1, and Equality Act 2010 s.26.

Recognising that, through loyalty or fear of repercussion, people may be reluctant to voice worries, this policy has been created to encourage members of the game to speak up, knowing that they will be supported and their concerns will be handled sensitively.

Speaking up will enable safeguarding concerns to be investigated and dealt with for the benefit of all involved and for that of the wider game. Anyone making a disclosure can be confident that the matter will be handled appropriately and with an appropriate level of confidentiality.

### *Scope of this Policy*

This is a Club-wide policy open to everyone associated with the Club.

It enables anyone to raise concerns through channels that they are comfortable with and gives all parties the opportunity to resolve a concern and for any necessary action to be taken.

This policy should NOT be used for any matters presenting an immediate threat to life or property. For emergency assistance, please contact your local authorities or call the relevant emergency phone number.

Neither should it be used for:

- Grievances or whistleblowing relating to your employment ordinarily dealt with under your employer's grievance or whistleblowing policies.
- Contractual or personal disputes, including contractual disputes with agents and clubs.
- Issues relating to club memberships or other internal club disputes, which should be raised with and managed by the club.

## How to Speak Up

Hopefully, you can raise concerns with your coach or line manager. However, where a matter is more serious, you feel that your concerns have not been addressed, or you prefer not to raise it with your coach or line manager, you can contact:

Mike Pink	Senior Safeguarding Manager/CEO	07903 593836	<a href="mailto:mikep@stevenagefc.com">mikep@stevenagefc.com</a>
James Cameron	Club Safeguarding Officer	07852 545325	<a href="mailto:jamesc@stevenagefc.com">jamesc@stevenagefc.com</a>
Jorden Gibson	Academy Safeguarding Officer	01438 368068	<a href="mailto:jordeng@stevenagefc.com">jordeng@stevenagefc.com</a>
Daryl Smith	Foundation Safeguarding Officer	01438 368068	<a href="mailto:daryls@stevenagefc.com">daryls@stevenagefc.com</a>
Robyn Reardon	Academy Welfare Officer	01438 223223	<a href="mailto:robynr@stevenagefc.com">robynr@stevenagefc.com</a>

## **How Will My Concern Be Handled?**

This section of the policy sets out the key principles underpinning how the concern you have reported will be dealt with.

- All disclosures will be dealt with appropriately, fairly and professionally.
- All disclosures will be handled sensitively, securely and with an appropriate level of confidentiality, being shared only on a strictly need-to-know basis. Disclosure outside this small group may be necessary if required by law or an important public interest is at stake, or for the purposes of a full investigation. The aim will be to discuss this with you in advance.
- Concerns can be shared anonymously but you are encouraged to give your identity as it will be difficult, or even impossible, to investigate anonymous reports.
- Your concern will be passed to the person best equipped to deal with it.
- It may be more appropriate for your concern to be referred to an appropriate person at the Club or a statutory agency and if so your disclosure may be passed on, unless you say otherwise.
- We will seek to keep you informed and updated on any investigation and outcome, including next steps and time frames.
- Any instances of victimisation, discrimination or negative repercussions experienced as a result of your disclosure are wholly unacceptable.
- Data provided to us will be processed and handled securely and fairly, in accordance with data protection legislation.

## **What Happens Next?**

The process for dealing with a concern will vary depending on its nature, complexity and seriousness. It may not always be possible or appropriate to investigate. However, as far as practicably possible, we will seek to deal with your concern as below:

- We will acknowledge receipt of your disclosure as soon as possible.
- It will then be directed to the person best placed to deal with it and we will provide you with their name.
- The nominated person may then contact you to:
  - Let you know they have been passed your concern to deal with
  - Provide you with an estimate of how long it will take to handle and assess your concern
  - Ask for further information
  - Advise you of the process for dealing with your concern
- Your disclosure may then undergo an initial review and may be investigated, which could include contacting the individuals relevant to the concern. It is also possible that the matter may not be investigated further. The Club is not obliged to investigate if it believes there is no merit in doing so, or if an investigation is not appropriate or proportionate.
- As far as practicable, we will keep you informed of developments and of the overall finding, although we may not be able to disclose full details of the outcome for reasons of confidentiality, privacy and the legal rights of others involved.

## **Implementation & Enforcement**

The Chief Executive, senior managers and line managers are responsible for the promotion and maintenance of this policy by their staff. The Senior Safeguarding Manager is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy.

Employees are expected to comply with all elements of this policy. Employees not complying with this Policy may be subject to the Club's Disciplinary Procedures as outlined in its **Disciplinary Policy**.