

Bedford Chess Club Safeguarding Policy

1. Bedford Chess Club is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all players to enjoy chess and be respected by others.
2. This Safeguarding policy sets out the minimum requirements to ensure all players are able to take part in our club activities.

Overview:

3. Bedford Chess Club (hereinafter the 'Club') welcomes to its sessions and other activities all players who are interested in chess, and will strive to ensure that everyone is treated with care and respect.
4. The Club recognises that the welfare and interests of children and vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances. It also aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or identity, or socioeconomic background, all members and visitors:
 - have a positive and enjoyable experience of chess in a safe and sociable environment
 - promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults
 - value, listen to and respect children, young people and vulnerable adults.
5. The Club has adopted a Safeguarding policy as set out in this document. This policy will apply to all members of, and visitors to, the Club when undertaking Club activities. A child (otherwise a junior player) in this context is deemed to be anyone less than eighteen years of age. A copy of the policy will be posted on the Club's website, and a paper copy will be provided on request. It is a condition of membership that all members of the Club abide by and promote this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities:

6. All club members are responsible for ensuring that our high standards are upheld and that Safeguarding is at the forefront of our considerations.
7. Officials - There are some posts, in particular Junior Organiser/ Coach (if a junior club is currently running which is not always the case), which may involve a considerable degree of contact with children or adults in circumstances where there is not always a parent /guardian or carer present. In general, the type of work may involve regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of such people. It is the policy of the Club that it will only appoint to these positions a person for whom an independent suitable reference has been obtained (or is already well known to the club's officials) together with an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.
8. Safeguarding Officer - The Club will also appoint a Safeguarding Officer (and where practical a Deputy Safeguarding Officer), who will both be required to have an Enhanced DBS check and (where considered by the committee to be appropriate) be signed up to the DBS update service. Any Safeguarding, child welfare concerns or allegations, and any comments or questions regarding the policy or advice should be directed to them.
9. The current holders of the posts are: Safeguarding Officer Ravi Arulnandhy - email ravi.arulnandhy@outlook.com and Deputy Safeguarding Officer Peter Gill - email peter.gill00@btinternet.com
10. Any allegations or concerns will be listened to and investigated. If deemed necessary, they will be pursued, by the Club's Safeguarding Officers in accordance with the English Chess Federation's Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines, which are available for viewing on the Federation's website at www.englishchess.org.uk

Junior Players

11. The Club welcomes junior players to its sessions and events. It also allows juniors of an appropriate level to participate in inter-club matches and league matches.
12. The Club and its officials are not able to act 'in loco parentis' at any club session, event or match.
13. Parents/carers/guardians are ultimately responsible for the junior player and need to consider the wellbeing, safety and good behaviour of junior players when deciding on any arrangements.

14. This policy sets out to safeguard the welfare of children attending the Club by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm or abuse.

Parental Supervision

15. Parents/carers/guardians remain responsible for their child when they are attending chess club. Ideally, they should accompany their child to sessions, remain on the club premises and escort their child home. Any alternative arrangements made with other responsible adults should be put in writing and must comply with the guidelines below.
16. Children under the age of 14 must always be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
17. Older secondary school /teenage players between 14 and 18 must have written permission from a parent or other responsible adult to be allowed to attend the club alone and (if appropriate) to travel home alone. Such written permission should be emailed or clearly communicated to the Club Secretary or one of the Safeguarding officers in advance.
18. The Club also, where appropriate, welcomes the participation of children in inter-club matches away from the club venue. Parents/other responsible adults remain responsible for their child and any arrangements made. Ideally, they should accompany their child to away venues and it is advisable that any alternative arrangements concerning transportation or supervising juniors at away venues is put in writing. Clear arrangements and responsibilities should also apply for any visiting juniors and responsibility for this should be made clear to the visiting team captain.

Supervision and the Rule of Three

19. The club adheres to the “rule of three” whenever possible requiring at least two adults or two juniors in a group at all times. If a one-on-one situation is unavoidable, the adult and youth shall stay in an open, public area where they can be seen by others at all times.

Photography & recording of images

20. Recording a child's achievements can be really important. The Club, however, recognises the opportunity for misuse of published material and that there can be circumstances where publicity can be detrimental to a child or their family.
21. Parents and guardians should be aware that photography for publicity purposes may take place, particularly at regional or national events, which may be outside of the Club's Control. The Club's policy is to seek parental consent before photography takes place and for publication.
22. Parents and guardians who have any objection to photography (which does not need any explanation) can register it with the Club Secretary or the Safeguarding team.

Adult Players

24. All adults, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status have the right to be protected from abuse and poor practice and to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment. The Club will seek to ensure that our chess is inclusive and make reasonable adjustments for any ability, disability or impairment.

Recordkeeping

23. Adequate records should be maintained relating to all safeguarding matters, both to demonstrate that appropriate policies are adopted and followed and that any complaints are addressed and resolved expeditiously and with due diligence.

Summary

24. This policy will be reviewed and updated from time to time in line with experience and recommended practice in the area of Safeguarding and child protection.
25. The Club has adopted the ECF's Safeguarding Policy and will follow relevant sections of the policy including procedures for recognising issues, handling allegations, acting on concerns and maintaining proper safeguarding records.

26. The current version of the policy can be found at the link here: <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/ECF-Safeguarding-Policy.pdf>

27. The Club shall abide by any further rules, regulations or guidelines which may be set out from time to time by the Club Committee, the Venue, the Local League Committees, and / or the ECF where these are deemed necessary to support the policy objectives.

This policy shall be reviewed and updated as necessary on an annual basis (at the AGM of Bedford Chess Club).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'APotts', is written over a horizontal line.

Signature of Club Secretary:

Print name: Alexander Potts

Date : 13/10/2025