

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Dragon Academy Ltd (company number 16871720)

Version 1.0 · Approved by Dylan Powell, Director · Designated Safeguarding Lead: Dylan Powell · Next review: by 31 October 2027

1. About Dragon Academy

Dragon Academy runs weekly football sessions for children aged 2 to 13 in Rhondda Cynon Taf (Mondays, Rhondda Sports Centre), Bridgend (Tuesdays, CCYD school sports hall) and Neath Port Talbot (Wednesdays, Ysgol Bae Baglan sports hall). We also run free trials, 1-to-1 coaching, Trophy Series tournaments in school holidays, and the Dragon Players app for families. Our coaches are self-employed. Parents and carers are our customers, but children are the reason we exist.

2. Our commitment

Every child who comes to Dragon Academy has the right to enjoy football safely, free from abuse, neglect, bullying and discrimination. The welfare of the child is always our first concern, ahead of results, convenience or the reputation of Dragon or anyone working for us.

We will:

1. make sure everyone who works with children at Dragon is checked, trained and clear about what is expected of them;
2. follow the **Wales Safeguarding Procedures** and act on every concern, however small;
3. never investigate abuse ourselves, but pass concerns to the local authority or the police and work with them;
4. listen to children, take what they say seriously and involve them in decisions that affect them;
5. work openly with parents and carers, except where telling them could put a child at greater risk;
6. treat every child fairly, whatever their age, disability, sex, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or background, and recognise that some children (for example disabled children, or children with communication needs) can be more vulnerable to abuse and less able to tell someone; and
7. keep accurate, secure records and review this policy regularly.

3. The law and guidance we follow

- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

- **Wales Safeguarding Procedures** (safeguarding.wales), which apply to practitioners in the statutory, voluntary and private sectors in Wales, including Section 5 on allegations about practitioners (revised June 2026)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended, including by section 139 of the Crime and Policing Act 2026, which changed regulated activity from 1 September 2026
- Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Act 2020
- UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit guidance and the Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport

4. The policy pack

This policy is supported by:

No.	Policy
01	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (this document)
02	How to Report a Concern (parents, coaches and children), including Bridgend, RCT and NPT contacts
03	Coach Code of Conduct
04	Photography, Video and Social Media Policy
05	Safer Recruitment and Vetting Policy
06	Managing Allegations Against Coaches
07	Whistleblowing Policy
08	Data Protection and Children's Privacy Policy

Every coach also signs Dragon's Self-Employed Coach Agreement.

5. Roles

Dragon Academy Ltd (the director) is responsible for making sure this policy is in place, followed, resourced and reviewed.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Dylan Powell, will:

- be the first point of contact for any safeguarding concern, from anyone;
- decide on and make referrals to the local authority and the police, and keep a record of them;
- manage concerns and allegations about coaches under policy 06, including referrals to the DBS;
- make sure every coach is vetted and trained before working with children, and keep the vetting register;

- keep safeguarding records secure and confidential;
- complete safeguarding training suitable for a designated lead, and refresh it at least every 2 years (coaches refresh theirs at least every 3 years);
- keep up to date with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and changes in the law; and
- review this policy pack.

The Deputy DSL acts for the DSL when the DSL is unavailable, and is the contact for any concern about the DSL.

Coaches, helpers and volunteers must follow this policy pack and the Coach Code of Conduct, complete the required training, and report every concern to the DSL on the same day.

Parents and carers are asked to read this policy, tell Dragon about anything that affects their child's safety or wellbeing (such as medical needs, additional needs, court orders, or who may collect their child), and raise any concern with the DSL.

6. What abuse and neglect can look like

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures describe a child at risk as a child who is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm, and who needs care and support. Abuse can be:

- **Physical:** hitting, shaking, burning, or deliberately causing injury.
- **Emotional or psychological:** persistent criticism, humiliation, threats, or making a child feel worthless or frightened, including through bullying.
- **Sexual:** forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity, including online, showing children sexual images, or grooming a child.
- **Neglect:** failing to meet a child's basic needs, such as food, clothing, warmth, medical care or supervision.
- **Financial:** for children, this includes their money or belongings being taken or misused.

Children can also be harmed through **exploitation** (sexual or criminal), **domestic abuse** at home, **bullying** (including by other children), **online abuse**, and **discrimination**.

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship or emotional connection with a child, and often with their family, to gain their trust in order to abuse them. Signs that an adult may be grooming a child include: singling a child out for attention or gifts, seeking time alone with them, contacting them privately or online, offering lifts, encouraging secrets, and pushing boundaries. In sport, people who abuse children often use their position as a coach. That is why the Coach Code of Conduct sets firm limits on one-to-one time, messaging, social media and lifts.

Signs that a child may be at risk include: unexplained injuries; a change in behaviour or mood; becoming withdrawn, anxious or aggressive; fear of a particular person; sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond their age; poor hygiene or often being hungry; or a child telling you something directly or hinting at it. None of these proves abuse. Any of them is a reason to tell the DSL.

7. How we keep children safe at sessions

1. **Vetting and training:** no one works with children until they have passed Dragon's checks and training (policy 05).
2. **Supervision:** every session has at least two vetted adults. Dragon follows the NSPCC's recommended minimum adult-to-child ratios, and uses higher ratios where a risk assessment shows the need (for example for the youngest age group, for disabled children or for events away from the usual venue):

Age	Minimum ratio (adults : children)
2 to 3	1 : 4
4 to 8	1 : 6
9 to 12	1 : 8
13	1 : 10

Source: NSPCC, "Supervising children's sport and activities". A minimum of two adults always applies.

3. **Registers:** a register is taken at every session. Coaches know which children have medical needs, additional needs or collection restrictions.
4. **Arrival and collection:** children are handed over to and collected by their parent, carer or a named adult. Coaches never take a child home. If a child is not collected, two coaches stay with the child in a visible place and contact the parent, then the DSL. If no one can be reached, the DSL contacts the local authority or the police for advice.
5. **Missing child:** if a child goes missing at a session, coaches keep the rest of the group supervised, search the venue straight away with venue staff, and tell the parent and the DSL. If the child is not found within 10 minutes, or sooner if there is any concern, call 999.
6. **Toilets and changing:** coaches do not help children with toileting or changing. Parents of children who need help stay on site.
7. **First aid and accidents:** a first aider and first aid kit are available at every session. Every accident and injury is recorded the same day and the parent is told.
8. **Venues:** we follow each venue's rules, fire procedures and lettings conditions.
9. **1-to-1 coaching:** only with the parent or carer present and watching throughout, at an approved venue, booked through Dragon.
10. **Events and tournaments:** each event has a risk assessment, a named lead, enough vetted adults for the ratios above, and a clear arrangement for spectators, toilets, first aid and collection.

8. Online safety and communication

1. Coaches never contact children directly, on any platform, and never connect with children on social media (policy 03).
2. Dragon communicates with families through the Dragon Players app, email, text and Dragon-run parent groups. Messages about a child go to the parent.
3. Dragon's social media and photography follow policy 04.
4. Any concern about online contact with a child is reported to the DSL like any other concern.

9. Responding to a concern

How to Report a Concern (policy 02) sets out the steps, the local authority and police contacts for Bridgend, RCT and NPT, and a record form. In short:

1. **If a child is in immediate danger, call 999.**
2. Listen, stay calm, do not promise to keep a secret, and do not investigate.
3. Write down what you saw or heard, in the child's own words, with the date and time.
4. Tell the DSL the same day. If the DSL is not available, or the concern is about the DSL, tell the Deputy DSL or contact the local authority directly.
5. The DSL decides, with advice from the local authority where needed, whether to make a referral, and records the decision and the reasons.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures say that anyone with concerns that a child is at risk must make sure the concern is reported to social services or the police, and that this "is not a matter of personal choice". Reports go to social services immediately, are confirmed in writing within 1 working day if made by phone, and are chased if there is no response within 7 working days. Organisations like Dragon are expected to report in the same way as the public bodies that have a legal duty to. You never need Dragon's permission to contact the local authority or the police.

10. Concerns about a coach or anyone working for Dragon

Concerns about the behaviour of anyone working with Dragon children, including the DSL, are handled under Managing Allegations Against Coaches (policy 06), which follows Section 5 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. Coaches and others who want to raise a concern about how Dragon is run can use the Whistleblowing Policy (policy 07).

11. Confidentiality and records

Safeguarding information is shared only with those who need to know to protect the child: normally the DSL, the Deputy DSL, the local authority and the police. Records are kept securely, are seen only by the DSL and Deputy DSL, and are kept for the periods in policy 08.

12. Monitoring and review

The DSL reviews this policy pack at least once a year, after any serious incident, and whenever the law or the Wales Safeguarding Procedures change. Every review is dated and recorded. Coaches are told about changes and sign to confirm they have read them.