1. Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Policy owner: Matt Soden | Effective date: 02.11.2026 | Review date: 02.05.2027

1.1 Our commitment

SOCCERFOX is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child who attends our football coaching sessions. A child is anyone under 18. Every child has the right to take part in football in a safe, welcoming environment, free from abuse, neglect, bullying, discrimination and inappropriate conduct.

This policy applies to all sessions, venues, coaching activities, communications and any person acting on behalf of the business. As a solo coach, Matt Soden is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) unless a different named person is formally appointed.

1.2 Safeguarding contact and reporting

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Matt Soden

Telephone/email: matt@soccerfox.co.uk 07446 417 677

Local authority children's social care / MASH details:

- Visit: ECC's website.
- Call ECC's children's line on 0345 603 7627 (Monday to Thursday 8:45 am to 5pm, and Fridays 8:45am to 4:15pm).
- Call ECC's out of hours number: 0345 606 1212 (out of hours and bank holidays).
- Fill out their online form here: https://socialcareportal.essex.gov.uk/s4s/FormDetails/FillForm?formId=1

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) details:

- Call: 03330 139 797
- Email: lado@essex.gov.uk
- Visit: Essex LADO

Police:

- Call: 999 if a child is in immediate danger or a crime is in progress.
- Call:101 for non-emergency police matters where appropriate.

If a concern involves the DSL, or you cannot safely raise it with them, contact children's social care/LADO or the police directly as appropriate. Do not allow a concern to go unreported because the DSL is unavailable.

1.3 Recognising concerns

Concerns may relate to physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation, domestic abuse, online harm, bullying, discriminatory behaviour, peer-on-peer abuse, grooming, unsafe supervision, inappropriate physical contact or any behaviour that causes a child to feel unsafe. A concern does not need to be proven before it is reported.

1.4 Responding to a disclosure or concern

1. Stay calm, listen carefully and take the child seriously. Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you.
2. Do not promise secrecy, investigate the allegation, ask leading questions or confront the person alleged to have caused harm.
3. Explain, in age-appropriate language, that you may need to share information with people who can help keep them safe.

4. Record the child's words as accurately as possible, the date/time, context, any visible injuries or observations, and actions taken. Separate facts from opinions.
5. If a child is in immediate danger or needs urgent medical help, call 999 and take reasonable steps to keep them safe.
6. Contact the appropriate children's social care/MASH, LADO or police service promptly. Follow their advice and record the referral and outcome.
7. Store the record securely with access limited to those who need it. Do not put safeguarding details in ordinary coaching or attendance notes.

1.5 Safe coaching practice

- Treat children fairly and respectfully, without favouritism, humiliation, threats or discriminatory language.
- Plan sessions so children can be observed and supervised. Avoid unnecessary one-to-one isolation; where individual attention is needed, remain visible and follow the safeguarding plan.
- Explain and seek appropriate permission before any physical contact needed for coaching, first aid or immediate safety. Use the least contact necessary and respect a child's objection unless urgent safety needs require action.
- Do not use private or disappearing-message channels to communicate with children. Communicate through parents/guardians or transparent, parent-visible channels.
- Do not offer lifts or transport children alone unless this has been risk-assessed, authorised by the parent/guardian in advance, covered by insurance and consistent with safeguarding guidance. Record any exceptional arrangement.
- Use changing rooms only where relevant and appropriate; do not enter a changing area while children are changing except where necessary for immediate safety, following a clear safeguarding approach.
- Never take, store or share images of children for personal purposes. Follow the separate photography policy and recorded permissions.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times, including outside sessions and online.

1.6 Recruitment, suitability and training

Before delivering sessions, the business will check the qualifications, safeguarding training, first-aid arrangements, insurance and DBS eligibility relevant to the role. DBS checks will be obtained only at a level for which the role is eligible. Where regulated activity criteria apply, the appropriate barred-list check must be considered. A DBS certificate does not replace safe practice, references where appropriate, training or ongoing supervision.

Training/renewal dates: see www.soccerfox.co.uk

1.7 Allegations or concerns about the coach

Any allegation or concern about the coach must be taken seriously and referred promptly to the appropriate LADO and/or children's social care, and to police where appropriate. The coach must not investigate the matter personally or decide that it is unfounded. Follow advice from statutory agencies and preserve relevant records.

1.8 Missing child, late collection or unauthorised collection

If a child is missing, check the immediate safe area, keep the remaining group supervised, contact the parent/guardian and call police if there is a risk of harm or the circumstances warrant it. For collection, release a child only according to the parent's recorded instructions and the child's age/needs. If an unfamiliar person arrives, verify authority before release. Follow the late collection procedure and do not leave a child alone. Note: All sessions for the time being will be held at venues where parents/guardians remain present or in a school setting.

1.9 Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and after any safeguarding incident, change in activity, venue, law or relevant guidance. Review date: 02.05.2027.

2. Health, Safety & Session Safety Statement

2.1 Responsibilities

Matt Soden is responsible for planning sessions safely, checking the venue and equipment, identifying foreseeable hazards, setting appropriate group activities, maintaining suitable first-aid arrangements and responding to incidents.

2.2 Before and during sessions

- Inspect the playing surface, goals, nets, equipment, access routes and surrounding area before use.
- Do not use unsafe, unstable or damaged goals/equipment. Secure portable goals appropriately and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Adjust or stop activities where weather, lightning, heat, cold, poor visibility, surface conditions or other hazards create an unacceptable risk.
- Use age- and ability-appropriate activities, equipment and group organisation. Maintain supervision and clear boundaries.
- Tell players the stop signal, boundaries, behaviour expectations and what to do if injured or separated from the group.
- Ensure drinking-water breaks and suitable rest are available.
- Keep a charged phone and venue address available for emergencies, subject to venue rules and safe practice.
- Maintain first-aid supplies and appropriate training/arrangements for the activities and group.

2.3 Injuries and emergencies

Stop play if a participant is injured or an unsafe condition arises. Do not exceed your first-aid competence. Call 999 for a serious or potentially life-threatening emergency. Arrange for another responsible adult to supervise the group if one is present; as a solo coach, plan in advance how the remaining children will be kept safe if you must attend to an emergency. Contact the parent/guardian as soon as practicable and record the incident.

2.4 Parent responsibilities

Parents/guardians must provide accurate and updated emergency/medical information, tell the coach about relevant changes, ensure the child arrives suitably equipped and on time, and collect the child according to the agreed arrangements. Parents should not send a child to a session if they are too unwell to participate safely.

2.5 Venue-specific risk assessment

Internal record to complete before use: venue and activity; assessment date; hazards; who could be harmed; existing controls; further action; responsible person; completion date; residual risk; review trigger. Review if the venue, group size, equipment, activity or circumstances change.

2.6 Emergency Action Plan

For all venues, an Emergency Action Plan will be completed (in the form below) prior to any activities, regularly revised and updated, and held at the venue by Matt Soden.

Item	Complete for each venue
Venue name and full address	[INSERT]
Exact meeting point for emergency services	[INSERT]
Nearest practical ambulance access / gate	[INSERT]
What3words or other precise access detail (if useful)	[INSERT]
First-aid kit location	[INSERT]
Emergency phone available	[INSERT]

Parent/guardian contact procedure	[INSERT]
Procedure to supervise the rest of the group	[INSERT]
Venue manager / emergency contact	[INSERT]

3. Codes of Conduct

3.1 Player Code of Conduct

Every player is expected to:

- Respect teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, parents and venue staff.
- Listen to instructions and follow safety rules.
- Avoid bullying, fighting, threatening behaviour, discriminatory language and deliberate dangerous play.
- Look after equipment and tell the coach about damage, injury or anything that makes them feel unsafe.
- Include others, play fairly and accept that everyone develops at a different pace.
- Tell a trusted adult or the coach if they are worried about themselves or another player.

3.2 Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

- Treat every child and adult with respect. Do not shout abuse, threaten, bully or discriminate.
- Support a positive learning environment and allow the coach to coach.
- Raise concerns privately and respectfully, using the complaints or safeguarding process where appropriate.
- Provide accurate medical/emergency information and keep contact details current.
- Arrive and collect on time and follow authorised collection arrangements, only where it has been agreed with the coach that you may leave the session.
- Do not photograph or film other children without appropriate permission and compliance with the coach's arrangements.
- Do not post or share abusive, humiliating or identifying content about children or other families.

3.3 Coach Code of Conduct

- Put children's safety, welfare and dignity first.
- Model calm, respectful, inclusive behaviour.
- Never use humiliating, threatening, discriminatory or sexualised language or behaviour.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries and transparent communications.
- Use physical contact only when appropriate, necessary and proportionate, explaining it and respecting the child.
- Follow safeguarding, privacy, photography, health and safety and incident-reporting procedures.
- Be honest about qualifications, experience, checks and insurance.

3.4 Breaches

Depending on seriousness, action may include a reminder, parent meeting, behaviour plan, suspension from a session or ending the booking, consistent with the terms and applicable law. A safeguarding concern must be referred through safeguarding procedures and must not be treated only as a behaviour issue.

4. Complaints Policy

SOCCERFOX aims to provide safe, high-quality coaching and welcomes feedback. Safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately through the safeguarding procedure and should not wait for this complaints process.

4.1 How to complain

Contact: In the first instance, please contact Matt Soden at matt@soccerfox.co.uk or 07446 417 677. Please include what happened, when and where, who was involved, and what outcome you are seeking. Please do not send unnecessary medical or sensitive information by ordinary email. If this isn't appropriate, please contact the Local authority children's social care / MASH, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the Police, using the contact details above.

4.2 Process

8. We will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days, where practicable.
9. We will clarify the issues, review relevant records and seek information fairly from those involved, while protecting children's privacy.
10. We aim to provide a written response within 15 working days. If more time is needed, we will explain why and give an updated timeframe.
11. The response will summarise the issues considered, findings where appropriate, action taken and any next steps, subject to confidentiality and legal obligations.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may escalate their complaint to the Local authority children's social care / MASH, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Police, as appropriate.

4.3 Safeguarding and urgent concerns

If a child may be at risk, contact the DSL immediately. If the concern is about the DSL, or there is immediate danger, contact children's social care/LADO or police directly as appropriate. Do not wait for a complaint response.

4.4 Records and confidentiality

Complaints will be recorded and stored securely, with access limited to those who need it. Information will be shared only where appropriate and lawful. Retention period: where the complaint involves a child, records will be held until that child reaches the age of 25 years. Otherwise, 3 years as standard.

5. Equality, Inclusion & Anti-Bullying Policy

SOCCERFOX aims to make football coaching welcoming and accessible. No child should be treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic or subjected to bullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour.

5.1 Inclusion

- Treat each child as an individual and encourage participation at an appropriate level.
- Invite parents to discuss relevant access needs, disability, communication requirements or reasonable adjustments.
- Consider reasonable adjustments and practical adaptations to activities where required.
- Do not make promises about specialist support that you cannot safely provide; discuss limitations honestly with the family.
- Use respectful language and challenge discriminatory comments or conduct.

5.2 Bullying and discrimination

Bullying may include repeated intimidation, exclusion, threats, physical aggression, online harassment or discriminatory abuse. Take reports seriously, listen to the child, record relevant facts and take proportionate action. Where the conduct suggests abuse, exploitation or a safeguarding risk, use the safeguarding policy and refer externally where appropriate.

5.3 Raising concerns

Contact Matt Soden via matt@soccerfox.co.uk. Concerns can be raised by a child, parent or another person. No child should be penalised for raising a genuine concern. This policy is reviewed annually and after significant incidents.

6. Online Safety, Communications & Photography Policy

6.1 Communications with children

- Where possible, communicate with parents/guardians rather than directly with children.
- Use transparent, appropriate channels and include a parent/guardian in messages where practicable.
- Do not use disappearing messages, secret accounts or private conversations that undermine safeguarding.
- Keep communications relevant to coaching, respectful and at appropriate times.
- Do not request or share intimate images. Any concern about sexualised or exploitative content must be treated as a safeguarding matter.

6.2 Photography and video

Photography or video may be used for a clearly explained coaching purpose only where appropriate permissions and privacy safeguards are in place. Publicity, website and social media use must be a separate, optional choice. A child should not be disadvantaged for declining marketing photography.

- Explain what will be recorded, the purpose, where it may appear, who can access it and how long it will be kept.
- Obtain and record permission from the parent/guardian where appropriate and consider the child's own wishes and understanding.
- Do not photograph children in changing areas, toilets or other private settings.
- Avoid publishing full names alongside identifiable images or other personal details.
- Store files securely, restrict access and delete them when no longer needed.
- Respect a withdrawal of permission for future use and explain that material already distributed may not always be retrievable.

6.3 Parent and spectator recording

Parents must follow venue rules and the coach's instructions on recording. They must not share images of other children without appropriate authority or use footage to harass, shame or identify children. If a concern arises, speak to the coach.

6.4 Social media

The business will not publish children's names, personal details, location patterns or images for promotional purposes without appropriate permission and a clear lawful basis. Comments and direct messages will be monitored as practicable, and inappropriate contact will be blocked/reported where appropriate.

7. Privacy Notice

7.1 Who we are

Data controller: Matt Soden t/a SOCCERFOX

Contact: Matt Soden via matt@soccerfox.co.uk

7.2 Information we collect

- Parent/guardian and child contact and identity details.
- Emergency contact, attendance, collection and booking details.
- Relevant medical or disability information needed to support safe participation.
- Payment and transaction information (via Bookabee).
- Messages, complaints, incident records and safeguarding information where necessary.
- Images or video where separately arranged and appropriately authorised.
- Technical information collected by the website or cookies, if used.

7.3 Why we use information and lawful bases

We use information to manage bookings and deliver sessions, contact parents in an emergency, support safe participation, process payments, meet legal obligations, respond to complaints and protect children. The lawful basis may include contract, legal obligation, legitimate interests or consent depending on the specific purpose.

7.4 Sharing

We may share relevant information with emergency services, safeguarding authorities, insurers, professional advisers, payment processors, booking/software providers or other parties where necessary and lawful. Provider names/categories: Booking system: Bookabee.co. We do not sell any personal data.

7.5 Retention and security

We keep information only as long as needed for the purpose, legal requirements, safeguarding needs and claims management. Retention schedule: All records may be retained until children reach the age of 25 years, in case of complaints. We use appropriate access controls, secure storage and deletion procedures but cannot guarantee absolute security.

7.6 Rights and complaints

Depending on the circumstances, individuals may have rights to access, correct, erase, restrict or object to certain processing, and to data portability. They may withdraw consent where processing relies on consent; this does not make earlier lawful processing unlawful. Contact matt@soccerfox.co.uk to exercise rights. Individuals may complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at ico.org.uk.

7.7 Children, marketing and cookies

We will communicate with parents/guardians as appropriate and explain information use in clear language. Marketing communications will follow applicable electronic marketing rules and provide an opt-out, cookie details and consent choices.

7.8 Review

Last updated: 02.11.2026. This notice will be updated if our processing changes.

8. Booking Terms & Conditions

These draft terms must be adapted to your booking process and reviewed for consumer law compliance before use.

8.1 Provider and service

The coaching service is provided by Matt Soden t/a SOCCERFOX, contactable at matt@soccerfox.co.uk or 07446 417 677. Sessions take place at multiple venues as described on the booking page. The price, session length, dates and group arrangements will be shown before booking.

8.2 Booking and consent

A booking is confirmed when the booking process has been completed, payment made and confirmation received. A parent / guardian must complete the registration and emergency information process before the child participates. The parent/guardian must notify the coach of material changes to medical, emergency or collection information.

8.3 Fees and payment

Fees: As shown for each session online. Payment due: Upon booking. Accepted payment methods: We try to offer a broad range of options, see booking platform for details. Any additional charges must be disclosed before the parent commits to the booking.

8.4 Cancellations, refunds and rescheduling

Parent cancellation process: 48 hours notice required. Missed sessions and late cancellations: We may, at our discretion, offer you a place at a future session. Coach cancellation: when we cancel, we will offer a full refund or a place on a future session, as you prefer. Weather or unsafe conditions: we may cancel or modify a session for safety; we will notify parents via email / text and apply the Coach cancellation policy above. These terms do not remove any statutory rights.

8.5 Attendance and behaviour

Parents should ensure children arrive on time and remain with their children throughout the whole session, except for in-school sessions, according to the published arrangements. Players and parents must follow the Codes of Conduct. We may take proportionate action for serious or repeated misconduct, including suspension or ending a booking, while handling safeguarding concerns under the safeguarding policy.

8.6 Safety and medical information

Parents must provide accurate information relevant to safe participation. Coaching involves ordinary physical activity and some inherent risk; however, nothing in these terms excludes or limits liability where the law does not permit that, including liability for death or personal injury caused by negligence where applicable. Parents should contact us before booking to discuss relevant support needs.

8.8 Complaints and privacy

Complaints are handled under the Complaints Policy. Personal data is handled under the Privacy Notice.

8.9 Changes and governing law

We will notify parents of material changes to sessions or terms. The contract is governed by the law of England and Wales, subject to applicable consumer protections. Effective version/date: 02.11.2026.

9. Parent/Guardian Registration & Consent Form

This is a copy of the Parent/Guardian Registration & Consent Form to be completed prior to any sessions where children attend sessions without parental supervision. Where the parent is in attendance, this may be completed at the first session.

Field	Response
Child's full name	[PARENT TO COMPLETE]
Child's date of birth	[PARENT TO COMPLETE]
Child's home address	[PARENT TO COMPLETE]
Parent/guardian full name	[PARENT TO COMPLETE]
Relationship to child / parental responsibility	[PARENT TO COMPLETE]
Parent/guardian telephone and email	[PARENT TO COMPLETE]
Second emergency contact and relationship	[PARENT TO COMPLETE]
Emergency contact telephone	[PARENT TO COMPLETE]
Authorised collection names and phone numbers	[PARENT TO COMPLETE]
May child leave independently? If yes, from what age/under what conditions?	[PARENT TO COMPLETE — assess individually]
Relevant medical conditions, allergies or medication	[PARENT TO COMPLETE — only relevant details]
Action needed in an emergency	[PARENT TO COMPLETE]
Access needs / reasonable adjustments	[PARENT TO COMPLETE — optional, relevant details]
Parent confirms information is accurate and will be updated	[YES / DATE]
Parent confirms they have read Safeguarding Policy, Codes of Conduct and Terms	[YES / DATE / VERSION]
Parent agrees to participation in the described coaching sessions	[YES / DATE]
Emergency medical assistance	[Explain your procedure and limits; obtain any appropriate acknowledgement]

I confirm that I am the child's parent/guardian or have authority to complete this form.

I have provided accurate information relevant to safe participation and will notify SOCCERFOX of material changes. I have read the policies and understand the session arrangements. I understand that I can contact the coach with questions before the child attends.

Sign.....

Print.....

Date.....

10. Medical & Emergency Information Form

This is a copy of the Medical & Emergency Information Form to be completed prior to any sessions where children attend sessions without parental supervision. Where the parent is in attendance, this may be completed at the first session.

Question	Parent/guardian response
Does the child have a medical condition relevant to football activity?	[DETAILS OR NONE]
Known allergies and symptoms	[DETAILS OR NONE]
Medication needed during sessions and instructions	[DETAILS OR NONE]
Relevant emergency action plan	[DETAILS OR NONE]
Any activity restrictions advised by a health professional?	[DETAILS OR NONE]
Emergency contact name and number	[DETAILS]
Second emergency contact name and number	[DETAILS]
Date information last updated	[DATE]

I confirm the information above is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

I will update the coach if it changes.

I understand this information will be used only as described in the Privacy Notice and where necessary to support safe participation or respond to an emergency.

Sign.....

Print.....

Date.....

11. Photography & Video Permission Choices

This is a copy of the Photography & Video Permission Form to be completed prior to any sessions where children attend sessions without parental supervision. Where the parent is in attendance, this may be completed at the first session. Where no form is completed, by default, no permission is taken to be granted.

Purpose	Parent/guardian choice
Video/images used privately for coaching feedback, technique analysis or progress review	[ ] YES [ ] NO
Images used on the business website or public social media for marketing	[ ] YES [ ] NO
Images used in printed promotional material	[ ] YES [ ] NO

We may, from time to time, take photographs or short videos of our coaching sessions for us on our website, socials or other marketing activities, for print, digital or online.

We will not disclose individual names in any such promotional activities. We will store all media securely. Where permission is granted, it may be removed at any time. In such cases, we will remove any media using those images from all digital channels under our control, but we cannot, of course, ensure their removal from the online space or other means of data sharing.

Child's Name.....

Parent/Guardian's name.....

Sign.....

Print.....

Date.....

Policy version: 02.11.2026 v1