

GUIDE TO THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING SYSTEM



FC BARCELONA



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THIS GUIDE IS A USER MANUAL

This guide is a user manual. It covers the complete child safeguarding system in place at FC Barcelona and explains in practical terms what each tool consists of and how it fits with the others. Like any user manual, reading it is not enough to achieve the objectives: it is necessary to use the various mechanisms in order to obtain results. In this case, the objective is to ensure the safety of all the children and young people who participate in FC Barcelona activities, projects, and programs or visit its facilities. To achieve this, each tool must be applied correctly and in coordination with the others.

To facilitate coordination, it is helpful to have an overview of the safeguarding process. The timing and situation will determine which of the processes need to be activated. One way to understand the structure can be seen in the diagram on the next page.

The **Child Safeguarding Policy (1)** is the general framework containing the rest of the actions and tools. These can be grouped into four large blocks, based on their focus:

- ▶ **People.** Those who take care of the children and young people in each situation and are therefore responsible for ensuring that they are well-treated and for preventing, detecting and acting in harmful situations. To assist them they have a statement defining their **Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities (2)**, which include adhering to the **Code of Conduct (3)**.
- ▶ **Environments and activities.** In order to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people, it is also necessary for them to have safe and protective environments. These are achieved by identifying the risks that exist and complying with the guidelines to reduce and eliminate them by using the **Risk Mapping and Protective Measures (4)**.
- ▶ **Situations that require action.** Despite all precautions, there will be situations of vulnerability, peer conflict and even suspicion or evidence of risk to children and young people, including violence and abuse, both within and beyond our organization. That is why we need the **Action Protocol (5)**, which details the actions that must be taken in each situation. To facilitate action in certain states and regions, there are also **Protection Circuits (6)**, which explain the steps for notifying and coordinating cases with the competent authorities, depending on the circumstances.
- ▶ **Organizational Culture.** It is not enough to have the right people in safe and protective environments with the necessary skills to respond appropriately in different situations. An organization-wide culture must also be created and maintained. This means that the **Recruiting and Employment Standards (7)** must be adapted to ensure that people with the necessary skills are hired and retained and the **Training Structure (8)** must be followed to ensure that these people keep their skills up to date. Once the whole system is in place, **prevention activities with children and young people (9)** can be implemented to provide them with tools to detect harmful situations and to know how and who to ask for help.

(1) Child Safeguarding Policy

People

(2) Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

(3) Code of Conduct

Environments and activities

(4) Risk Mapping and Protective Measures

Organisational culture

(7) Recruiting and Employment Standards

(8) Training Structure

Situations

(5) Action Protocol

(6) Protection Circuits

(9) Prevention Activities with children and young people and their families and guardians

(10) Allocation of resources

(11) Evaluation

(12) Communications



The safeguarding system cannot stand alone, it rests on three fundamental pillars:

- ▶ **Allocation of resources (10)**, time, people and financing. Without specific resources to implement the various processes and activities, the safeguarding system remains a well-meaning but ineffective statement of intent.
- ▶ Regular and rigorous **evaluation (11)** makes it possible to enhance the aspects that work well, identify and correct those that need improvement, and innovate and incorporate advances and best practices. Without data that measure actions and their effectiveness, we cannot know whether we are doing everything we can or where we need to move forward.
- ▶ **Communications (12)** have two dimensions. One is within the safeguarding system, where all the stakeholders –the children and young people themselves, their families and legal guardians and anyone who has contact with them in whatever capacity – must be informed of the existence of the various procedures and tools so that they can activate the protective measures when necessary. But there must also be communication throughout the organizational structure and beyond it: all professionals and persons working in other capacities must know and follow the general guidelines, and the public must be aware of what good treatment and safeguarding is, as a contribution of the organization to society.

Having reviewed this structure, we can start looking at each element separately, with the understanding that no tool works on its own, but rather as part of the whole.



1. THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

WHAT IT IS...

The **Child Safeguarding Policy** is the framework document implementing FC Barcelona's institutional commitment to guarantee the safeguarding of all children and young people who participate in any of its activities or use its sports grounds and facilities.



WHAT IT IS FOR:

- ▶ Setting out clearly the objectives of the Child Safeguarding system at FC Barcelona.
- ▶ Defining the principles of action to ensure the safeguarding and protection of children and young people who participate in FC Barcelona activities, projects or programs and use its sports grounds and facilities.
- ▶ Providing a brief reference to the theoretical framework we are working with and the key concepts used.
- ▶ Serving as a reminder of who the Child Safeguarding Policy and the child safeguarding system as a whole is for, the various aspects it covers and the tools it provides.
- ▶ Explaining the general safeguarding structure that has been set up to implement the safeguarding policy at FC Barcelona.

WHAT IT IS NOT FOR:

- ▶ *Gaining an in-depth understanding of the concepts of violence, safeguarding and protection and the related technical terms.* → For this, reference should be made to the **Basic Manual for Child Safeguarding and Protection**.
- ▶ *Learning about the various procedures in detail.* → There is a separate document for each one.
- ▶ *Knowing how to act in a specific situation.* → In this case, reference should be made to the **Action Protocol** and to the protection circuit of the state or region concerned, when there is one.

BEAR IN MIND:

- ▶ The **Child Safeguarding Policy** is a document that must be consulted on a recurring basis and used in training, especially to ensure that actions are consistent and all its principles are taken into account both in interventions and in the planning of activities, projects and programs.
- ▶ In the evaluation process, the **Child Safeguarding Policy** provides criteria to assess whether the actions taken have followed the general principles. This makes it possible to identify how consistent the organization is in its safeguarding of children and young people.

2. SAFEGUARDING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WHAT THEY ARE...

The **Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities** of each person who has a role in the organization's child safeguarding system are described in this document by differentiating between the various profiles: all persons who have contact with children and young people, regardless of the relationship they have with the organization, the Safeguarding Coaches, the Safeguarding Delegates, the Safeguarding Committee, the children and young people themselves, and their families and legal guardians.

WHAT THEY ARE FOR:

- ▶ Designating the roles and responsibilities of each profile so that they are clear to everyone involved: those that perform them, those that supervise them and those that are affected by the actions taken.
- ▶ Explaining the structure of the safeguarding system with its various levels: all persons who have contact with children and young people in whatever capacity, the Safeguarding Coaches, the Safeguarding Delegates and the Safeguarding Committee.
- ▶ Making clear that the responsibility for the safeguarding of children and young people belongs with the adults who have them in their care, but that children and young people themselves can contribute to their own safeguarding by asking for help if they can (either for themselves or for other children and young people) and by participating in child safeguarding activities.
- ▶ Making explicit the commitments of families and legal guardians: to treat children and young people (their own or of other families) well; to know who the relevant safeguarding officers (Safeguarding Coaches and Safeguarding Delegates) are to be able to ask for help when necessary; and to cooperate with and participate in child safeguarding activities.
- ▶ Providing criteria to evaluate the performance of safeguarding roles and responsibilities, both individually by each professional and on a team or facility basis.

THEY ARE NOT FOR:

- ▶ *Explaining what behaviors are considered appropriate or inappropriate in interactions and relationships with children and young people.* → This is explained in the **Code of Conduct**.
- ▶ *Excusing anyone from safeguarding children and young people.* → We ALL have the basic responsibility for ensuring the well-being of all children and young people and acting when we see a situation that is harmful for them. What varies is the type of action we should take. But no one can say, *"I am not going to do anything in this harmful situation for children or young people because it is not my responsibility to protect them."*

BEAR IN MIND:

- ▶ Everyone, including the children and young people and their families and legal guardians, needs to be familiar with the entire structure. In this way, when a situation arises that requires attention, they will know what their role is and they will be able to refer to the relevant safeguarding officer as appropriate.
- ▶ Children and young people have the right to be well treated by everyone, and they also have the obligation to treat both their peers and adults well.



3. THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PROFESSIONALS AND OTHER PERSONS WHO HAVE CONTACT WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT IT IS...

The **Code of Conduct** sets out both the behaviors that are recommended when interacting with children and young people and the behaviors that must be avoided. It takes the form of a signed document that evidences each signatory's commitment to how they will behave when interacting with children and young people.

WHAT IT IS FOR:

- ▶ Describing the safe and protective behaviors expected of anyone in their interaction or relations with children and young people within the framework of the organization's activities, projects, programs and facilities.
- ▶ Making clear what harmful behaviors must not occur in interactions or relations with children and young people.
- ▶ Serving as a starting point for training, both when people are hired and when their contracts are renewed, and for their continuing training.
- ▶ Providing criteria to evaluate how people behave with children and young people, both individually for each professional and on a team basis..

WHAT IT IS NOT FOR:

- ▶ *Knowing how to act when faced with a specific situation of vulnerability, peer conflict, or mild, moderate or severe risk, including violence and abuse.* → In this case, reference should be made to the **Action Protocol** and to the protection circuit of the region concerned, when there is one.
- ▶ *Learning how to treat children and young people well.* → A person should already know how to treat children and young people well, especially if they have them under their care. This document is only a brief reminder of how this concept is understood at FC Barcelona.

BEAR IN MIND:

- ▶ Anyone who is to have contact with children and young people must have signed a copy of the **Code of Conduct**, which will be kept on file by the Safeguarding Delegates. They will be provided with a separate easily accessible copy in paper or electronic format.
- ▶ In situations where there are doubts, the appropriate officers (Safeguarding Coaches, Safeguarding Delegates or even the Safeguarding Committee) must be consulted before taking any action that is not clear.
- ▶ Anyone, regardless of their relationship with FC Barcelona, who sees another person infringing the **Code of Conduct** is obliged to inform the Safeguarding Delegates at the facility where they have witnessed the situation. Failure to report this is a misdemeanor that carries disciplinary measures.
- ▶ The Code of Conduct is usually signed by adults, but it must also be signed by young people who have other children and young people under their responsibility (for training them, accompanying them, for carrying out internships at their facilities, etc.).



4. RISK MAPPING AND PROTECTIVE MEASURES

WHAT IT IS...

The **Risk Mapping and Protective Measures** document lists in order the risks that may exist for children and young people in the various activities and at the sports grounds and facilities and anywhere else that sport is practiced, providing an explanation of what the potential risks are, an assessment of the severity of each risk and what preventive actions must be taken to reduce or eliminate the risk.

WHAT IT IS FOR:

- ▶ Planning activities and preparing sports grounds and facilities before children and young people use them.
- ▶ Detecting specific risks for particular activities or sports grounds and facilities and taking concrete actions to eliminate them.
- ▶ Regularly reviewing activities and sports grounds and facilities and checking whether preventive actions are being properly applied.
- ▶ Indicating appropriate and inappropriate behaviors related to specific activities and sports grounds and facilities, as an adjunct to the **Code of Conduct**.
- ▶ Facilitating the systematic evaluation of sports grounds and facilities and activities as safe and protective environments, particularly in participatory processes comprising everyone who uses them, including the children and young people.

WHAT IT IS NOT FOR:

- ▶ *Certifying a site as "100% Safe."* → The goal must be to minimize risks as much as possible, but there will never be zero risk at a sports ground or facility or in an activity. That is why the whole safeguarding system exists, because there may be people who cause harmful or risky situations even within a safe and protective environment. In that case, if the system works well, such situations will be detected quickly and effective measures will be put in place to address them.



BEAR IN MIND:

- ▶ When the Child Safeguarding system is first implemented in any new activity, project, program or environment, it is normal to detect risks that had not been addressed before. An action plan must be adopted to gradually incorporate the various protective measures, prioritizing those related to higher risks and continuing with medium and low risks.
- ▶ The risk mapping and protective measures for each particular environment need to be reviewed regularly. At least once a year, both the risk mapping and all of the sports grounds, facilities and activities must be evaluated to incorporate any improvements or changes that may be appropriate.

5. ACTION PROTOCOL

WHAT IT IS...

The **Action Protocol** sets out how we, adults and organizations, are to respond in any situation that causes or may cause harm to a child or young person in our activities, projects, programs or facilities. It covers the following circumstances:

- ▶ Situation of vulnerability (**Action 1**).
- ▶ Situation of peer conflict (**Action 2**).
- ▶ Situation of mild, moderate or severe risk, including violence and abuse. The difference between:
 - Suspicion (**Action 3**) or evidence (**Action 4**) of violence against a child or young person or violation of their rights by someone with a professional or similar relationship with the organization.
 - Suspicion (**Action 5**) or evidence (**Action 6**) of violence against a child or young person or violation of their rights by another child or young person within the organization.
 - Suspicion (**Action 7**) or evidence (**Action 8**) of violence against a child or young person or infringement of their rights by someone outside the organization.



WHAT IT IS FOR:

- ▶ Setting clear action objectives and following both the general principles of safeguarding and those that are specific to these situations at each step.
- ▶ Having a structured view of the various actions that can be taken for each type of situation.
- ▶ Guiding decision-making in situations that cause or may cause harm to children and young people.
- ▶ Keeping in mind three key principles in situations of mild, moderate or severe risk, including violence and abuse:
 - Do not interrogate the child or young person.
 - Do not investigate.
 - Do not decide whether or not something is a criminal offense.
- ▶ Clarifying each person's role and highlighting the importance of involving the Safeguarding Coaches and Safeguarding Delegates in all relevant processes.
- ▶ Giving guidance on identifying resources and contacts BEFORE situations occur in order to ascertain who to contact for each resource and have access to communication channels that are already established with the competent authorities.

WHAT IT IS NOT FOR:

- ▶ *Obtaining the contact details of the reference resources and the competent authorities without any prior work.* → The **Action Protocol** is a framework document, but it cannot include all the necessary contact details for every sports ground, facility and organization. That is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Delegates, who must use the **Action Protocol** to draft their contact lists.
- ▶ *A detailed understanding of the concepts of vulnerability, conflict and risk, or their indicators.* → Although brief and operational definitions are provided, the **Basic Manual for Child Safeguarding and Protection** should be referred to for greater detail.
- ▶ *Considering the Safeguarding Coaches and Safeguarding Delegates solely responsible for performing safeguarding roles.* → All adults have safeguarding responsibilities as indicated in the **Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities** document and in the **Code of Conduct**. Safeguarding Coaches and Safeguarding Delegates have specific responsibilities, but if they are not available, it is necessary to act anyway.

BEAR IN MIND:

- ▶ The **Action Protocol** may be more rigorous than the local legislation of the state or region where activities, projects or programs take place. In any case, the best interests of the child or young person will be the criterion for deciding how to apply it.
- ▶ Everyone involved with children and young people, whatever their relationship with the organization, must be familiar with steps set out in the **Action Protocol** and must know how to take them.



6. PROTECTION CIRCUITS

WHAT THEY ARE...

The **Protection Circuits** list the official protection resources and institutions that are to be called upon in a particular region. They name the competent authorities to which situations of mild, moderate and severe risk, including violence and abuse, must be reported. Although protection circuits do not exist for every region where FC Barcelona and its partner organizations work, they can serve as a starting point for Safeguarding Delegates to prepare the relevant protection circuits for such regions.

WHAT THEY ARE FOR:

- ▶ Being clear about the steps for reporting situations and the order in which to take them.
- ▶ Having a reference to the competent authorities at each step.
- ▶ Drawing up a work plan within the organization to contact and establish a seamless relationship with the competent authorities before there are situations to report.
- ▶ When there is a situation, checking that all relevant stakeholders have been notified.
- ▶ In monitoring a situation, notifying the Safeguarding Committee of the steps taken and directions given by each of the competent authorities.

WHAT THEY ARE NOT FOR:

- ▶ *Gaining an in-depth understanding of the steps to take within the organization in every situation.* → For that, reference should be made to the **Action Protocol**.
- ▶ *Making decisions about different types of situations.* → For that, reference should be made to the **Action Protocol**.

BEAR IN MIND:

- ▶ Each protection circuit provides the basic references for a state or region as a whole. Individual sports, education or social centers must complete it with specific contact details. This requires contacting the various authorities with responsibilities in the area and obtaining the names of contact people, their telephone numbers, physical addresses and main email addresses.
- ▶ Protection authorities may have their own notification, communication or reporting templates and forms. These templates and forms, and guidelines to facilitate the procedures, may be obtained by establishing regular contact with the various agencies and efforts should be made in this direction.
- ▶ Although protection circuits can be used to make a first contact with competent institutions and authorities, this is not the best option. It is better to hold regular presentation and coordination meetings to establish appropriate communication channels. That way, when situations need to be addressed, these channels will make it easier for protection agents to do their work and interventions will be more effective and efficient.



7. RECRUITING AND EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

WHAT THEY ARE...

The **Recruiting and Employment Standards** set out the knowledge, skills and competencies required of candidates when hiring or renewing the contracts of personnel for the organization's teams. They differentiate between people who have children and young people under their care and those who do not. The standards are arranged according to the different stages of the process:

- ▶ Requirements for acceptance in the recruiting process.
- ▶ Recruiting Standards (from shortlisting candidates to reference checks and personal interviews).
- ▶ Employment Standards.
- ▶ Contract Renewal Standards.

WHAT THEY ARE FOR:

- ▶ Recruiting people who, in addition to having the professional skills of each position, possess the skills and competencies related to the safeguarding of children and young people, according to their level of responsibility.
- ▶ Checking that on first employment and on contract renewal people are provided with the necessary guidance, means and resources to perform their duties and fulfil the related safeguarding responsibilities.
- ▶ Renewing the contracts only of those people who meet the safeguarding criteria, in addition to other professional or similar criteria.
- ▶ Including the Safeguarding Delegates in the recruiting, employment and renewal processes to the extent possible. This puts a focus on safeguarding from the beginning, thereby avoiding people and situations that could pose a risk to children and young people and to the organizations employing them.

WHAT THEY ARE NOT FOR:

- ▶ *Candidates to expect to be recruited just because they meet all the safeguarding criteria.* → The **Recruiting and Employment Standards** set out the minimum requirements for a candidate to be considered. In each process, there will be some people that are more qualified than others in the field of safeguarding.
- ▶ *Serving as the only criteria for recruiting people.* → The Recruiting and Employment Standards define the competencies for working with children and young people and safeguarding them without which a person cannot be hired. But a position will also require other competencies (technical, sports, professional, etc.) that will be subject to their own evaluation standards.

BEAR IN MIND:

- ▶ The recruiting and employment standards that relate to child safeguarding must be public at all times, and must appear in job postings and other recruitment documents, for two reasons: 1) transparency, and 2) to help people organize information so that their relevant skills can be easily identified, thus making the process more agile.
- ▶ In general, it is recommended that all other recruiting and employment criteria aside from child safeguarding (technical, sports, professional, etc.) also be public, for the reasons noted above.
- ▶ In the case of contract renewals of people who do not meet all the current criteria because they were not previously required, the organization must make it easier for them to fulfill them in a reasonable time, and offer the necessary support (by providing both internal and external training, personal workspaces and skills development, and specific times for updating and coordination).



8. THE TRAINING PLAN

WHAT IT IS...

The **Training Plan** sets out the competencies required of persons who work with FC Barcelona or its partner organizations. It details, by areas, the technical competencies that everyone must have at each level and what action they must be able to take. It is comprised of the following levels:

- ▶ Basic level: people who are not directly involved with children and young people.
- ▶ General level: people directly involved with children and young people.
- ▶ Medium Level: Safeguarding Coaches.
- ▶ Advanced level: Safeguarding Delegates.

WHAT IT IS FOR:

- ▶ Preparing appropriate training for the various profiles, with specific contents and competencies by areas.
- ▶ Knowing what competencies and actions can be required of different people.
- ▶ Organizing training for people already in the organization, to update their knowledge and competencies to comply with the current safeguarding system.
- ▶ Organizing training for new hires.
- ▶ Reviewing concepts and principles of action in regular coordination, programming and monitoring meetings, as a way to make safeguarding an everyday practice rather than limiting it to situations of harm or risk.
- ▶ Identifying new areas where training is needed (either in safeguarding or other matters) when running training sessions, based on the questions or comments made by participants.

WHAT IT IS NOT FOR:

- ▶ *Knowing how to run sessions at each level.* → For that, reference should be made to the **Practical Guide to the Training of Professionals in Child Safeguarding**.
- ▶ *Expecting specific competencies and actions from people who have not received the necessary training.* → Specific competencies and actions can only honestly be expected of those to whom they have been adequately explained.
- ▶ *Assuming that training is complete once it has been delivered.* → We all need day-to-day practical support to develop the competencies acquired in training. It is not enough to attend a few sessions; we need to practice what we have learned, under supervision, until we are proficient, in our own style.
- ▶ *Considering training that is based exclusively on explaining concepts to be valid.* → The goal is to develop competencies and actions, which means that even the briefest training should be practical, and, if it is for people who have contact with children and young people, regardless of their level, it should also be experiential. Otherwise, there is no certainty that those competencies have been acquired

BEAR IN MIND:

- ▶ The competencies and actions for safeguarding and protecting children and young people are complex, so training needs to be planned on a progressive and regular basis. This means that subsequent sessions after the initial training cannot be merely a repetition of the same content and activities, but must rather progress and innovate in line with the group needs and skills.



9. PREVENTION ACTIVITIES WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE, AND THEIR FAMILIES AND LEGAL GUARDIANS

WHAT THEY ARE...

Prevention activities are educational actions for children and young people, and their families and legal guardians. Their goal is to help children and young people develop the skills to identify when they are in a situation of discomfort or risk and to ask for help, and to be clear about the channels for communication and the people to contact.

WHAT THEY ARE FOR:

- ▶ Teaching children and young people, their families and legal guardians about the safeguarding system.
- ▶ Introducing them to the safeguarding officers: their Safeguarding Coaches and Safeguarding Delegates or reminding them regularly of who they are.
- ▶ Explaining the channels for communication of any situation that may concern them, including situations of risk to themselves or other children and young people.
- ▶ Providing them with experiences and criteria to detect risk situations, through play activities.
- ▶ Developing the ability to ask for help.
- ▶ Fostering respect and good treatment in all areas.
- ▶ Detecting situations of risk, both from the comments made by the children and young people themselves in their activities (or their families and legal guardians in theirs) and by observing any suspicious signs or subsequent disclosure.

WHAT THEY ARE NOT FOR:

- ▶ *Placing the responsibility for safeguarding on children and young people.* → The responsibility for safeguarding always belongs with adults. Children and young people can facilitate their safeguarding by asking for help, but there are situations where they cannot and they still need to be protected and cared for.
- ▶ *Considering the safeguarding work to be complete.* → Adults must continue paying attention to indicators, suspicions and evidence of situations of discomfort and risk in children and young people.
- ▶ *Assuming on the basis of a prevention activity that children and young people now know how to relate to others and ask for help.* → Prevention activities should be made part of regular sports practice. Although these activities help to give a name to situations and provide means of action, safeguarding is carried out on a day-to-day basis by addressing situations (especially conflicts and risk situations) and recalling the guidelines looked at in prevention sessions.

BEAR IN MIND:

- ▶ Although it may seem surprising, prevention activities should be the last type of action taken in the safeguarding system, and only when the whole system is in operation. In these types of activities, children and young people, and their families and legal guardians, are going to learn to give a name to risk situations, and, in some cases, these will be situations that are actually occurring at that time. If they ask for help and do not receive it or they receive it in a disorganized way, the harm done can be greater: they may assume that no one is going to help them and they may suffer a lasting inner block, or they may remain consciously aware of their suffering without being able to do anything about it.
- ▶ It is advisable for one or more safeguarding officers to take part in the prevention activities. Of particular importance is the contribution of the Safeguarding Coaches, who must get to know the children and young people in their care especially well.
- ▶ A variety of materials can be used to prepare the activities. The following are especially recommended:
 - Romeo, F. J., and Horno, P. (2018). Materials for the campaign for the prevention and detection of child sexual abuse in sports *"Child Sexual Abuse Stays Offside"* (that include three *Activity Guides for the prevention of child sexual abuse*, a *Guide for the detection of child sexual abuse in sports* and a document on *Quality Standards to create safe and protective spaces for children and adolescents in sports*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Deportes [Spanish High Council for Sports]. Retrieved from: <https://www.espiralesci.es/materials-for-the-campaign-child-sexual-abuse-stays-offside-prevention-and-detection-of-child-sexual-abuse-in-sports/>

10. ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

WHAT IT IS...

The allocation of resources consists of committing people, working hours, facilities, funding and general means to implement the activities and structures of the safeguarding system.

WHAT IT IS FOR:

- ▶ Enabling the activities necessary to implement the safeguarding system.
- ▶ Having people, times, places and general resources available to address situations when they arise.
- ▶ Making clear that the organization is committed to the well-being of all children and young people at all times, not just in emergencies or when cases arise.
- ▶ At the time of evaluation, assessing the efficient use of resources and being able to make adjustments.

WHAT IT IS NOT FOR:

- ▶ *Expecting results based only on the budget allocated, without considering all the other aspects (competencies, timing, places, etc.).* → Allocating a budget is not enough: people must be recruited based on competencies and receive continuing training. They must be given enough time to perform their safeguarding roles and the support they need for the various processes.
- ▶ *Deciding that if resources are not available the safeguarding system will not be implemented.* → The safeguarding system is a mandatory commitment for FC Barcelona and all its partner organizations. The procedure for obtaining resources may require more effort, but it is critical to ensure that all activities, projects, programs and facilities are safe and protective environments for the children and young people who use them.

BEAR IN MIND:

- ▶ There is no specific document that provides guidance on how resources should be allocated. But there must be a general document with a breakdown of the budget devoted to the child safeguarding system.
- ▶ A child safeguarding system cannot be implemented with zero budget. If there is no funding, there is no real will and the documents are merely a statement of intent with no actual impact. Logically, if the aim is to do something new, to take action that has not been taken before, then someone has to do it and the organization must assume the cost.
- ▶ We cannot weigh people down with safeguarding tasks without releasing them from some of their previous ones. Those who take on safeguarding tasks must be allowed enough time to carry them out properly, and be held accountable afterwards. Imposing new duties without some consideration in return is a risk, because it shows a lack of care precisely for those who are to take care of others.
- ▶ Implementing the safeguarding system involves a high initial investment of people, time and resources until everything is in place. Thereafter, however, its maintenance is far more sustainable.



11. EVALUATION

WHAT IT IS...

Evaluation is a process (or set of processes) used to measure what has been done in relation to the safeguarding system and its various measures and tools, and how the various actions have been performed. The intention is to propose measures for improvement, maintaining achievements and remedying any weaknesses and, of course, verifying that protective actions do not cause further harm (because of poor implementation, secondary victimization of children and young people, etc.). It is necessary to obtain both objective data (figures, specific results, etc.) and subjective data (assessment by the people who have participated in the activities, not only the professionals but also the children and young people, and their families and guardians).

WHAT IT IS FOR:

- ▶ Seeing what has been done and how, over a given period of time.
- ▶ Identifying aspects that are already well established (and only need to be maintained) and highlighting actions that are under development or have not yet been initiated (and need to be taken forward).
- ▶ Measuring the consistency between what the documents say and what is actually being done.
- ▶ Identifying best practices that can be extended to other activities, projects, programs or sports grounds or facilities.
- ▶ Discussing the safeguarding system with all stakeholders to learn about their views, experiences and contributions.
- ▶ Providing guidance for decision-making, particularly in relation to making further progress in implementing the various measures of the safeguarding system.
- ▶ Learning from mistakes. Mistakes are painful, but they are an opportunity to mobilize resources and people to prevent them happening again, if the necessary steps are taken.
- ▶ Improving the safeguarding system itself, adapting the tools to new capabilities and needs.
- ▶ Indirectly, learning about the strengths and weaknesses of the various teams and people and offering the necessary support.
- ▶ Being accountable to children, young people, their families and guardians, and society in general, by reporting on not only what has been achieved but also the tasks that are still outstanding and the commitment to address them.



WHAT IT IS NOT FOR:

- ▶ *Having an evaluation report to keep in a drawer until the next one is done.* → Evaluations must be used to make adjustments and changes on a day-to-day basis.
- ▶ *Focusing just on complacency or destructive criticism.* → A proper evaluation should identify both the positive and negative aspects, offering a balanced view of reality. If the results focus only on the positive or only on the negative, the evaluation loses credibility and effectiveness.

BEAR IN MIND:

- ▶ There are different evaluation methods. Some will be more useful in evaluating certain aspects and others will be more valid for others. The choice must be made based on the aspect to be measured.
- ▶ Evaluations can be external (carried out by professionals and organizations from outside the organization) or internal (carried out by professionals and resources from within the organization). Each option has its advantages and drawbacks, and the choice must be made based on what may be most useful at the time.
- ▶ It is essential to have the participation of all the stakeholders in the safeguarding system: professionals, people with other roles, Safeguarding Coaches, Safeguarding Delegates, the children and young people themselves, and their families and legal guardians.
- ▶ Logically, it is essential to share the results with all the participants, including the children and young people. Failure to provide everyone involved with feedback, both in terms of the shortcomings identified and the measures that the organization undertakes to implement to remedy them, means that it is not a proper evaluation and it will have no value or legitimacy.

12. COMMUNICATIONS AND DISSEMINATION

WHAT IT IS...

Communications and dissemination refers to all the actions taken to publicize and raise awareness about the safeguarding system, both at the general level of FC Barcelona and its partner organizations, and at the specific and practical level of each activity, project, program or facility. These actions take a variety of forms: information campaigns and awareness-raising initiatives through various means (publications, websites, social media, posters, signing, notices at events, etc.).

Communications has two key areas:

- ▶ **Internal communications**, within FC Barcelona and its partner organizations. This is to keep the safeguarding system messages clear and facilitate access and coordination.
- ▶ **External communications**, for society in general. This is to provide a model of good practices and promote the safeguarding of children and young people as a value in the world of sports, education, social intervention and society in general.



WHAT IT IS FOR:

- ▶ Publicizing the official position on safeguarding of FC Barcelona and its partner organizations, by presenting a summary of the main messages.
- ▶ Publicizing the general FC Barcelona safeguarding system by providing easy access to the various safeguarding materials on its website and at its sports grounds, facilities and other venues.
- ▶ Explaining how the safeguarding system works in detail in each activity, project, program and facility, providing clarification in each case according to age, sport, facilities, etc.
- ▶ Giving visibility to the safeguarding officers (the Safeguarding Coaches and Safeguarding Delegates) and how to contact them (physical locations, email addresses, telephone numbers, social media, etc.).
- ▶ Relating the child safeguarding system to the values that shape FC Barcelona's identity.
- ▶ Serving as a role model and exponent of good treatment and safeguarding standards at events with other organizations (competitions, celebrations, gatherings, shared activities, etc.). By demanding that FC Barcelona children and young people be well treated and by publicizing the entire system that is necessary to ensure it, child safeguarding is promoted as a value in sports, education and social areas, encouraging good treatment in other venues, facilities and organizations.
- ▶ Being accountable to children and young people, their families and legal guardians and society in general for the actions taken, especially by making evaluations and processes for improvement public.

WHAT IT IS NOT FOR:

- ▶ *Communicating from a position of arrogance or of "having it all under control."* → In line with the principles of humility and effort, we know that we must keep moving forward every day and that the work of safeguarding and good treatment never ends.
- ▶ *Announcing services that are not provided or making promises that cannot be kept.* → Generating unrealistic expectations can lead to some people losing trust in the institution as a result. That is why it is essential to fine-tune the messages that are being conveyed and to check that the commitments made are being met.

BEAR IN MIND:

- ▶ The complete details of the safeguarding system should not be made public until the system is in full operation. Announcing the various safeguarding resources when they do not yet have all the necessary capabilities can lead to inadequate handling of cases.
- ▶ Communication messages must be adapted to suit different audiences, with appropriate objectives and language (style, wording, visuals, etc.).



CONCLUSION

Safeguarding children and young people can seem complicated on paper. It is true that it takes significant effort to get the whole system up and running and, yet, once good treatment and safeguarding are in place, it all seems logical and obvious. How did we not think of this before?

Just as developing the skills to practice and enjoy a sport takes time, implementing a safeguarding system is also an ongoing

process. A process that can be tough at times, but it is worth it. Because the end result is that the children and young people we work with, accompany, teach and educate, have healthier, more fulfilling experiences. Because they enjoy and grow in our activities, but also in the rest of their lives thanks to our safe and protective presence.

Let's go for it!



FC BARCELONA

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