Keeping children safe and protected is most important to us at Colchester Junior Chess Club.

Please take a moment to look over our Safeguarding policy. Our policy is outlined by the England Chess Federation (ECF) and by the NSPCC to abide by protection laws and, most importantly, to keep our members safe

Our Statement

Colchester Junior Chess Club acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with the best practice of the English Chess Federation (ECF). The ECF is the national governing body for chess in England.

Colchester Junior Chess Club has adopted the ECF Safeguarding Policy (February 2026) and will follow its procedures for recognising safeguarding issues, acting on concerns, handling allegations and maintaining safeguarding records, including its Whistleblowing procedure (Appendix 8). You can find the ECF safeguarding policy and guidance here.

This policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience playing and learning about chess at Colchester Junior Chess Club in a safe and child-centred environment
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in chess activities or participating in team tournaments

We acknowledge that some children, including disabled children or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

Our Policy

What we'll do...

As part of our safeguarding policy, we will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- value, listen to and respect children
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation
- adopt safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures, and code of conduct for our committee members and volunteers
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- the designated adult coach in charge should have DBS clearance
- one of our regular committee members with DBS clearance will remain in the room with all approved visitors and guest coaches
- Parents, caregivers, or adults responsible for players, must escort their children to the club room and return in good time to collect their children. If a child is not collected by the end of the session, a trusted committee member will wait with them until the adult responsible arrives.
- provide effective guidance to volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance, so that all volunteers know our policies, procedures and behaviour codes and follow them confidently and competently
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents or concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual(s) who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- record and store information securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance. More information about this is available from the Information Commissioner's Office
- preventing the involvement of inappropriate persons by safely recruiting and selecting volunteers, while ensuring all necessary checks are carried out
- appoint a nominated safeguard leader and co-deputy leaders who are committee members for safeguarding
- develop and implement an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- share information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their parents via email, website and paper copy if requested.

- make sure that children, young people and their parents know where to go for help if they have a concern
- operate a whistleblowing procedure so that anyone can raise concerns about the conduct of an adult involved with the club, without fear of victimisation

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in Colchester Junior Chess Club. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in exclusion from the organisation.

Whistleblowing

Colchester Junior Chess Club is committed to an open culture in which everyone feels able to raise concerns about the safety or welfare of children without fear. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and it is the duty of all committee members, coaches, volunteers, arbiters and helpers to report any safeguarding concern or allegation without delay.

What this covers

This procedure applies to concerns about the behaviour of any adult involved with the club, including committee members, coaches, volunteers, guest coaches, visitors and tournament officials. Concerns may include:

- suspected abuse, neglect or harm to a child
- behaviour that breaches this policy or the club's code of conduct
- poor practice that could place a child at risk
- any attempt to ignore, conceal or cover up a safeguarding concern

Anyone may raise a concern under this procedure, including parents, carers and children.

How to raise a concern

1. In an emergency, where a child is at immediate risk of harm, call 999.

2. Raise it with the club's Safeguarding/Welfare Officer or a Co-Deputy (contact details at the end of this policy).

3. If your concern is about a Safeguarding/Welfare Officer, or you do not feel able to raise it with them, contact the club's Alternative Safeguarding Contact, Mohammad Rezaul Islam, Secretary (contact details at the end of this policy).

4. If your concern is about the Alternative Safeguarding Contact, raise it with the Safeguarding/Welfare Officer or directly with the ECF Safeguarding Team.

5. If you feel your concern has not been dealt with properly, or you do not feel able to raise it within the club, you can contact any of the following directly:

- ECF Safeguarding Team: safeguarding.officer@englishchess.org.uk
- Essex Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), for concerns about adults working or volunteering with children: Lado@essex.gov.uk / 03330 139 797
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285
- Police: 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency)

Protection for whistleblowers

Anyone who raises a concern in good faith, with a reasonable suspicion, will be supported and protected, even if the concern turns out to be mistaken. Victimisation or harassment of anyone who raises a concern will not be tolerated and will be dealt with under this policy. Knowingly false or malicious reports will be treated as a serious matter.

Confidentiality and anonymity

Concerns will be treated in confidence, and the identity of the person raising the concern will be protected as far as possible. Information may need to be shared with the ECF, the LADO, children's social care or the police where this is necessary to protect a child. Anonymous concerns will be accepted and considered, although anonymity may limit the club's ability to look into the matter.

What happens next

The person receiving the concern will record it in writing as soon as possible, using the ECF form for recording concerns, and store it securely. The club will not carry out its own investigation of an allegation against an adult until advice has been taken from the LADO or police, and any investigation by the police or children's social care will take priority. Where appropriate, the person who raised the concern will be told that it has been acted upon.

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- as required by the local safeguarding partnership and by the ECF and the ECF Safeguarding Policy (February 2026)
- as a result of any other significant change or event.

This policy was last reviewed on 29-Sep-2026

Our Safeguarding/Welfare Officer

Name: Michael Catabay

Email: colchesterjuniorchessclub1@gmail.com

Our Co-Deputy Safeguarding/Welfare Officer

Name: Ella Catabay

Email: maecire18@gmail.com

Our Alternative Safeguarding Contact (for concerns about a Safeguarding/Welfare Officer)

Name: Mohammad Rezaul Islam, Secretary

Email: iamrezaul@gmail.com

In a safeguarding emergency, where a young person is at immediate risk of harm, call 999.