

VERWOOD TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

Lone Working & One-to-One Contact Protocol

Protecting players and volunteers through safe supervision practices

Version	Version 1.0 – April 2026
Date of issue	April 2026
Review due	Annually, or following any significant incident or change in FA guidance
Policy owner	Club Welfare Officer / Club Secretary (as applicable)

1. PURPOSE

This protocol sets out the club's requirements to prevent situations where an adult is alone with a child or young person in a way that cannot be observed by others. It protects players from harm and protects volunteers from unfounded allegations.

2. CORE PRINCIPLE

Important: *Adults must not be alone with a child or young person in a closed or unobservable space. This applies to all club activities including training, matches, travel, administration and online communication.*

3. TRAINING SESSIONS

- All training sessions must be supervised by a minimum of two adults. This includes warm-up, training drills and any informal time before or after the session.
- If a second adult is unavailable at the last minute, the session should be cancelled or parents/carers should be invited to remain present.
- Managers must notify the committee if repeated sessions are taking place with only one adult present so that a solution can be found.
- If an adult needs to speak to a player privately (e.g., about performance or wellbeing), this conversation must take place within sight of others, never in a closed room or vehicle.

4. CHANGING ROOMS

- Adults must not enter a changing room occupied by players unless another adult is present and the players are aware the adult is entering.
- Adults must knock and announce themselves before entering any changing room.
- Players should be given adequate time and privacy to change. Adults should not be present during changing.
- If a player requires assistance (e.g., due to a disability), a parent/carer or second adult must be present.

5. ONE-TO-ONE COACHING

If one-to-one coaching is necessary:

- It must take place in a visible, open location (not behind a building, in a vehicle or in a closed room)
- The parent or carer must be informed in advance and preferably present
- The session must be documented and reported to the Club Welfare Officer

6. ONLINE AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

- **Adults must not send private (1-to-1) messages to under-18 players.** All digital communication with players must be through group chats that include at least two adults and, where possible, parents or carers.
- WhatsApp groups for teams must have at least two adult admins at all times.
- If a player contacts a coach directly online, the coach should redirect the conversation to an appropriate group channel and inform the CWO if the content gives any cause for concern.
- Refer to the club's Social Media Policy for full digital communication guidance.

7. FIRST AID AND INJURY TREATMENT

If a player requires first aid or medical attention:

- A second adult should be present wherever possible
- Parents or carers should be notified as soon as practicable
- The incident must be recorded using the club's incident report procedure
- Adults must not remove a child's clothing for the purposes of treatment without a second adult present and parental notification

8. REPORTING CONCERNS

Any adult who finds themselves in a lone working situation, or witnesses another adult in a 1-to-1 situation with a child, should report this to the Club Welfare Officer immediately. Concerns will be handled confidentially and in accordance with the club's Safeguarding Policy.

9. BREACHES OF THIS PROTOCOL

Any breach of this protocol may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the club's Disciplinary & Complaints Policy and may be referred to Dorset FA or statutory agencies where appropriate.

Key Contacts	
Club Welfare Officer	Clare Nixson – welfare@vtyfc.co.uk / 07758 246452
Dorset FA Safeguarding	safeguarding@dorsetfa.com / 01202 688270
FA Safeguarding Team	safeguarding@thefa.com / 0800 169 1863