Woodbridge Chess Club

woodbridgechessclub@gmail.com

7.12.2023

# Woodbridge Chess Club Safeguarding Guidance and Code of Conduct

Woodbridge Chess Club currently meets at the Cherry Tree public house once a week for social games. It also maintains a number of chess teams. Many of our members are children (anyone under 18) and this document exists to provide basic information for parents and carers, members and guidance for committee members involved in organising teams. This document also outlines our procedures for dealing with issues that might arise.

## Current Committee Members

Sam Gaffney

Dan Such

Tim Wesson

Chris Skirrow

## Guidance for Parents

* All children under the age of 16 should be accompanied by an adult.
* Children over the age of 16 can attend unsupervised with the permission of their parent(s) or carer.
* Committee members cannot take responsibility for your child’s welfare, though we do expect certain behaviour standards from all members and a common-sense approach to any problems that may arise.
* If a problem or concern arises, please raise it with one of the Committee members named above or email the club at woodbridgechessclub@gmail.com.

## Member Code of Conduct

* Maintain high standards of personal conduct when attending the club.
* Please be aware of the people around you and try to keep conversations age appropriate when in the presence of children. In general profanity should be avoided.
* Alcohol may be consumed, but in moderation – drunkenness will not be tolerated.
* Tobacco products should be consumed away from the playing tables when we convene out of doors.
* If you wish to communicate with a child member outside of the club, please discuss this with their parent or carer. Do not approach a child for their phone number or email address.
* If you have an immediate/serious concern about the welfare or safety of a child, then immediately contact the Police or Children’s Social Care.
* If you have any other concerns about a member’s conduct or a child’s wellbeing, please discuss this with one of the committee members named above or email the club.

## Committee Member Code of Conduct

When undertaking a role as a committee member it is expected that appropriate conduct is demonstrated at all times.

Appropriate conduct is important because it:

* Safeguards children and ensures that individuals are aware of what the Woodbridge Chess Club expects of them in terms of their conduct and relationships with other members.
* Builds appropriate relationships of trust with children and their parents at the club.
* Ensures we understand the issues around supporting children in chess and childhood and their expectations of us.
* Protects the reputation of the Woodbridge Chess Club.

As a committee member you are likely to have to initiate communications with members outside of club time to arrange matches and travel to matches:

* Communication concerning children under the age of 16 should always be through the child’s parent or carer.
* Communication with children over the age of 16 should only be directly to the child if written permission has been provided by the child’s parent or carer to woodbridgechessclub@gmail.com.
* Communications from committee members should always be conducted respectfully, and should cease if requested.

If a committee member has concerns – or learns of someone else’s concerns – about a member’s conduct or a child’s wellbeing, they should discuss this further with another committee member, so that a collective decision as to the most appropriate response can be made. If you have an immediate/serious concern about the welfare or safety of a child, then immediately contact the Police or Children’s Social Care.

## Guidance for the Committee in Dealing with Child Safeguarding Issues

If there is an immediate/serious concern about the welfare or safety of a child, the committee should immediately contact the Police or Children’s Social Care.

In less serious cases, the committee should discuss the issue and decide what action is warranted. In many cases, the issue should be raised with the child’s parent or carer. This should be done sensitively and by the committee members collectively by email from the club’s email address. Hopefully the issue can be resolved, but if the parent or carer does not wish to discuss the situation regarding their child this should be respected. Further consideration should then be made as to whether it warrants involving professional services such as the Police or Children’s Social Care.

## Guidance for Dealing with Inappropriate Conduct by a Member or Committee Member

Discussion by the committee (or remaining committee) members should ascertain the nature and severity of the breach (if any) of the code of conduct; an initial suspension pending investigation may be appropriate. In the case of safeguarding issues, the primary concern is for the child. A suspension will help to restore trust in the club for the child and parent and allow time to collect the facts. The act of suspension does not indicate a person’s guilt, it is a neutral act.

A meeting should be held between the committee (or remaining committee) members and a breach (if any) of the code of conduct identified. At this point options include:

* Removal of the suspension and reinstatement to the club.
* A further meeting with the member in question, to discuss their conduct in relation to the code of conduct.
* Referral to the Police (in which case considerations of membership should be postponed until the Police investigation is complete).

After meeting with the member in question, a further meeting to discuss the final outcome should be made. This should consider:

* The readiness of the suspended member to accept responsibility for their actions.
* Their ability to demonstrate an understanding of how they’ve breached the code of conduct.
* Their willingness to behave appropriately in the future.
* The results of any Police investigation.

The outcome should be decided and communicated to the member; options include:

* Removal of the suspension and reinstatement to the club.
* Removal of the suspension and reinstatement to the club with a warning.
* Removal of club membership.

It should be noted that our code of conduct is by no means exhaustive and concerns not outlined above can be considered by the committee where necessary.

Membership for the purposes of this document is an open invitation to attend club events.