



maidstone united

FOOTBALL CLUB

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Every child and young person who plays football should be able to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in football.

It is also everyone's responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children or young people are harmed, usually by adults and increasingly by peers. Often these are people they know or trust. It refers to the damage done to a child's or young person's physical, mental or emotional health. Children or young people can be abused within or outside their family, at school and within the football environment. Abusive situations arise when adults or peers misuse their power over young children or young people.

There are 5 main forms of abuse: -

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning.

Giving children or young people alcohol, cigarettes, inappropriate drugs or poison.

Using excessive and inappropriate training methods.

NEGLECT

Includes situations in which: -

A child's or young person's basic physical needs (e.g. food, warm clothing) are not met

Children or young people consistently left alone and unsupervised.

Failure to ensure children or young people are safe, not exposed to undue extremes of weather or risk of injury e.g. through unsafe equipment.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Where adults/peers use children or young people to meet their own sexual needs

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Persistent lack of love, affection or attention shown to a child or young person.

Overprotecting and preventing them from socialising.

Children or young people being frequently shouted at or taunted.

BULLYING

This is not always easy to define and can take many forms and is usually repeated over a period of time.

There are 3 main types of bullying: -

Physical (hitting, kicking or theft)

Verbal (racist or homophobic remarks, threats and name calling)

Emotional (isolating an individual from activities)

INDICATIONS THAT A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON MAY BE BEING ABUSED

Fear of parents being contacted, going home or receiving medical advice.

Flinching when being touched

Refusal to discuss injury

Covering arms and legs

Unexplained or suspicious injuries particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.

Any injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.

A child or adult expressing concern about the welfare of another child or young person.

Unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.

Sexual awareness, inappropriate for age.

Having difficulties in making friends.

Loss of weight for no apparent reason.

Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

THE RESPONSIBLE FOOTBALL COACH/MANAGER CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Coaches/managers must respect the rights, dignity and worth of each player equally within the context of the sport.
2. Coaches/managers must place the well-being and safety of each player above all other considerations, including the development of performance.
3. Coaches/managers must adhere to all guidelines laid down by the rules of the FA.
4. Coaches/managers must develop an appropriate working relationship with each player based on mutual trust and respect.
5. Coaches/managers must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
6. Coaches/managers must encourage and guide to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
7. Coaches/managers must ensure that the activities they direct are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of players.
8. Coaches/managers should at the outset clarify with the player (and where appropriate their parents/guardians) exactly what is expected of them and also what they can expect from their coach/manager.
9. Coaches/managers must co-operate fully with other specialists (e.g. other coaches, managers, officials, doctors) in the best interests of the player.

10. Coaches/managers must always promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone violations of the laws of the game.
11. Coaches/managers must consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PERSONS INVOLVED WITH TREATMENT OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE IN FOOTBALL

- 1 It is recommended that no child or young person should be treated in any way in a situation where the child or young person is on their own in a treatment room with the door closed.
- 2 It is strongly advised that all treatment procedures should be open i.e. the door remains open, parents/guardians are invited to observe treatment procedures.
- 3 It is recommended that if treating an area of the body which is potentially embarrassing to a child or young person (i.e. the groin area) a suitable consenting adult acting as a chaperone, should be present.
- 4 It is important to maintain medical confidentiality and patient dignity at all times.
- 5 It is recommended that that all treatment procedures are explained fully to the child or young person and verbal consent is given before they are carried out.

GENERAL GUIDELINES IN THE CARE OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

It is possible to reduce situations in which abuse can occur and help protect volunteers by promoting good practice.

Always be public and open when working with children or young people. Avoid situations where a coach/manager and an individual child or young person are completely unobserved.

Where appropriate, parents/guardians should take on the responsibility for their child or young person in the changing room. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure coaches/managers work in pairs.

Where there are mixed teams away from home, they should always be accompanied by a male and female coach/manager.

When working with children or young players of the opposite sex, coaches/managers must agree with a parent/guardian when or if, it is appropriate to enter the changing area.

Everyone should be aware that as a general rule it does not make sense to: -

Spend excessive amounts of time alone with a child/young person

Take children or young people alone on car journeys, however short.

Take children or young people to your home where they will be alone with you.

If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone else within the football club and the child's parent or guardian.

ADULTS SHOULD NEVER: -

Allow or engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay.

Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.

Allow children or young people to use abusive language unchallenged.

Make sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person even in fun

Allow allegations made by a child or young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

Do things of a personal nature for children or young people that they can do for themselves.

It may sometimes be necessary for a manager/coach or volunteer to do things of a personal nature for children particularly if they are very young or have a disability. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and prior consent of the parents/guardian and the child or young person involved.

There is a need to be responsive to a child's or young persons reactions – if a child or young person is fully dependant on you, talk to him/her about what you are doing and give choices where this is possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing or where there is physical contact or lifting or assisting a child or young person to carry out activities.

If you accidentally hurt a child or young person and he/she seems to be distressed in any manner or appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incident as soon as possible to another colleague and make a brief written note of it. Parents/guardians should be informed of the incident.

Actions to take if a child or young person informs you directly that he/she is concerned about someone's behaviour towards them or you become aware, through your own observations or through a third party, of possible abuse occurring within a football setting.

React calmly so as not to frighten them. Tell them they are not to blame and they were right to tell. Take what they tell you seriously.

Ensure their safety. If the child or young person needs immediate medical treatment, take the child or young person to hospital or call an ambulance. Inform doctors of the concerns and ensure that they are aware that this may be a child protection issue.

Avoid leading the child or young person and keep any questions to the absolute minimum necessary to ensure a clear understanding of what has been said.

Reassure the child or young person, but do not make promises of confidentiality or outcome, which may not be feasible in light of subsequent developments.

Parents/guardians should only be contacted after advice from social services.

Make a full record of what has been said, heard or seen as soon as possible.

Report your concerns to the Club Welfare Officer who will take matters further. If the Club Welfare Officer is not available, inform him/her when available.

NON-ACTION IS NOT AN OPTION IN CHILD PROTECTION. YOU MUST ACT. DO NOT ASSUME THAT SOMEBODY ELSE WILL.

Any queries relating to these matters should be made to Maidstone United Football Club's, Club Welfare Officer who's details are on the website.

The KCFA also have a Welfare Officer, Val Hajjalexandrou who can be reached at val.hajjalexandrou@btopenworld.com, telephone 01634 812 032, 07790 049 445.

The Football Association/NSPCC child protection help line number is **0800 1111**. This number is for anyone (including children) to ring for advice in child protection matters, whether football related or not.