



Child Protection

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy and procedure forms part of the Terms and Conditions of service, and applies to all activities of Teddington Athletic Football Club where children and young people under 18 years of age are present, and to all working in the activities of the club, whether as a volunteer, committee representative or otherwise.

This Policy and Procedure is written in line with Surrey Area Child Protection Committee Procedures, specifically 3.19, 3.25, and Module 13 and the Surrey Primary League handbook.

2. OBJECTIVE

The Objective of Teddington Athletic Football Club's Child Protection Policy and procedure is to promote and safeguard the welfare of the boys and girls who attend the football training and play the football matches arranged by the Club.

3. PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

3.1: PROVISION OF FACILITIES:

Policy:

Teddington Athletic Football Club will ensure that the facilities they provide for their members to train and to play matches are a safe environment, which actively promotes safe and respectful behaviour by managers, volunteers and players.

Procedure:

- Prior to any activity/site/programme being commenced, the CPO shall ensure that adequate child protection procedures are in place.
- When a new site is being considered, **the CPO shall ensure a site audit is undertaken to ascertain the layout of premises/site, helpers and supervision required to achieve adequate personal safety of children and young people.** The audit shall be undertaken with a view to recognise any problems in terms of e.g. dropping off and collecting children, children being contained in one area, supervision of helpers, extended sites creating communications concerns etc.
- There may be a need to audit existing site if in the opinion of the Manager, CPO and/or Club Secretary there have been significant changes since the last use of that site.
- If there are any concerns about the safety of a site, these will be discussed with the Club Secretary and relevant manager to see if provisions can be put in place to address the concerns.
- Sites should not be used if concerns cannot be addressed.

3.2: APPOINTMENT OF PERSONNEL;



Policy

Teddington Athletic Football Club will seek to ensure that anyone, paid or unpaid who works with children through the club activities is as safe to do so

Procedure

Personnel Checks: The CPO will ensure that the following process is initiated out of all prospective staff and volunteers at the Club:

- No applicant will start unsupervised sessions until the following process has been completed
- As soon as an adult volunteers to assist in whatever capacity they will be asked to complete consent for a CRB check.
- Complete a questionnaire on the approved format
- Supply a personal referee, nominated by the applicant – a person who is not related to the applicant and who preferably knows of the applicant's character, trustworthiness, and any previous experience of working with/looking after children and young people.

Upon completion of the above the CPO will arrange to interview the individual. This will include:

- The applicant producing proof of identity, preferably a passport
- Discussing any matter that has been revealed by the above checks
- If the results are satisfactory, the applicant will be required to sign an understanding of the Clubs Policy and Procedures
- The applicant will then be able to start unsupervised sessions
- The name of the applicant will be reported to the next Committee meeting
- Where the applicant declines to attend such an interview, the CPO shall write to the individual to explain that their application has been unsuccessful

If the results of the checks or interview are unsatisfactory the CPO will initially discuss this with the Club Secretary and Chair who will:

- Investigate thoroughly with the applicant during interview any discrepancies between the applicants statement and information obtained via the checks
- Decide immediately that an applicant is unsuitable if they are convicted of an offence against a child or a sexual offence against an adult or a child
- Inform the applicant in writing of their decision and the reasons for this
- Report the name of the applicant to the next Committee meeting

The CPO will recheck all volunteers after 3 years service.

3.3: PERSONNEL RECORDS

Policy

The CPO shall maintain a confidential file on each applicant, to which only the applicant, CPO, Club Secretary and Chair have access to.

Procedure

- All files will be stored in a locked filing cabinet
- The CPO shall keep copies of all forms, consents and replies as stated above in the file
- A progress check form indicating progress of the checks and replies will be kept on file
- A record of the interview between the CPO and applicant will be kept on file
- Notes for file – where the CPO receives a phone call or other non-written communication,



the main points shall be recorded and filed with the applicant's records

- The file of an unsuccessful applicant shall be kept for 12 months and then safely destroyed by the CPO
- The file of successful applicants will be kept for 12 months from the date of leaving the Club's service
- Anyone working with the Club has the right to inspect their own confidential records and may do so on request to the CPO who shall not withhold consent unreasonably and will do so within one working day. The CPO may only withhold such agreement and access if to do so might jeopardise a Club, Police or Children's Service investigation relating to child protection matters or might lead to a child's welfare and safety being compromised. The CPO need give no reason for such withholding of consent. S/he will report such a situation to the Committee, purely on the lines that a request was made and declined for reasons to safeguard the welfare of a child.

3.4: PRACTICE SESSIONS AND MATCHES

Policy:

Teddington Athletic Football Club will ensure that Managers and Coaches promote a safe environment in which to train and play matches.

Procedure:

- Managers to attend a training course in child protection
- Managers to attend a first aid course
- No volunteer or manager shall work with less than 3 children on their own
- The clubs ratio of WHAT staff: members shall apply
- Managers and Volunteers shall abide with the Codes of Conduct

- Managers and Volunteers shall actively promote the Code of Conduct for Players

- Every activity shall be undertaken with the possibility in mind that a child may be suffering abuse outside the club and that a disclosure or symptom relating to this may become apparent within a Club activity, or that there will be children present who have not as yet revealed they are being abused. It is important that the environment created for Club activity is as conducive to support of a child in such a situation as is possible.
- For their own protection, but also as good practice and good manners, helpers are advised that children should initiate physical contact with helpers and not vice versa

- If a child needs to be removed from a situation threatening its or others' safety this should be done using only reasonable force and physical contact.

- The club shall ensure that an individual who has qualified as a referee following attendance at the Referees training course referees each match.

- The referee shall not initiate physical contact with any of the players unless to attend immediate first aid or assess the condition of an injured player.

3.5: PHOTOGRAPHY

Policy

The Club will ensure as far as possible that photographs are only taken to formally/promote the Clubs activities or for the private use of children/families.



Procedure

The following rules will apply with regards photography being used at training sessions and on match days:

- All children will be appropriately dressed.
- Photography or recording should focus on the activity, not on a particular young person.
- Images should focus on small groups rather than individuals.
- A child who is under a court order should never be photographed.
- If a photograph is used for promotion of the Clubs activities the Club will not name the children, and seek parental permission for the photograph to be used.
- Parents or carers of all young players must give permission for any images to be taken. A permission form must be signed by a parent/guardian before any photography takes place.
- All people taking photographs or recording footage of players participating at any of the Club's events should register with: Training sessions/Matches: Team Manager
Tournaments/Competitions: Event Organiser.
- Concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported to the CPO. The CPO will inform the local Police and submit a report to the F.A.

4. SAFEGUARDING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

4.1: Policy

Those working on Club activities will ensure that any suspicion, incident, allegation or other manifestation relating to the physical, sexual, neglect or emotional abuse of children is reported in lines with Surrey Area Child protection Committee Procedures.

Procedure

- Disclosure or evidence for concern may occur in any number of ways. This may be by what a child says, about itself or another child/ren, through interception of a written item, through observation of activity or behaviour, through changes in behaviour or attitude. There may also be physical indicators such as bruising, staining, inappropriate sexualised behaviour or knowledge.
- The observing volunteer, will make a verbal report to the trainer/manager, and also will make a written report outlining in adequate detail what was heard, seen, reported, alleged etc. verbatim quotes from a child are important, as is the retention of anything, which gave cause for concern such as a drawing, painting, writing etc. The volunteer will sign and date the report.
- The trainer/manager will countersign the report and as the end of the session will draw the attention of the Club Secretary to the report.
- The Club Secretary will read and countersign the report, with any comments/recommendations, and pass it to the CPO who will read and countersign, adding any comments as appropriate.
- If more than one volunteer has an observation on the same incident on the day in question, a separate report is to be made by each volunteer and treated as above. The trainer/manager will ensure the reports are cross-referenced and dealt with as one.
- After the session's completion, the trainer/manager will afford volunteer(s) opportunity to discuss the matter and will note any matters, which should be taken forward from the discussion. This will also be reported to the Club Secretary in writing.
- Many reports will be minor in nature. It is important to treat them with due seriousness, however, in case there already exists information within the Club concerning a child or a related child.
- After such a report, if the manager, Club Secretary and CPO consider the concern to be serious, the Club Chair will be notified and an immediate meeting convened.
- At such a meeting, which the CPO will Chair, and the Club Secretary minute the evidence



and concerns will be reviewed. Any previous records relevant will also be considered. They will decide how to respond to concerns, and will record his/her decision by a memorandum, copy to the Club Secretary and copy filed in the appropriate restricted files.

The CPO will take an appropriate course of action as follows:

- Immediate contacting of the Police: where a child seems at imminent harm of danger/injury the CPO is authorised to make a complaint to the Police in order to secure immediate action and protection of a child. **NO PROTOCOL SHOULD EVER INHIBIT THIS COURSE OF ACTION IF IT IS TRULY WARRANTED.**
- Immediate Report to Duty Social Worker in Children's Service and/or Police: this covers any situation where in the judgement of the CPO, there is perceived to be an immediate danger to a child or detection of criminal offences against a child or other form of obvious, ongoing/future/recent serious harm. Where the Duty Social Worker cannot be located, the Police should be informed.
- Most situations will not require such immediate action as above. It will be more appropriate for the CPO to contact the Duty Social Worker to refer the concerns and discuss how best to deal with them. They will agree a course of action that the CPO will comply with. This will include who will tell the parents of the referral.
- The point of making referrals as above should not be underestimated. From a child protection viewpoint, the information given to Children's service is a major way of picking up issues as they develop; our piece of information may be only part of a jigsaw, or may complete "a puzzle". It can also assist in promoting a child's welfare.

Feedback and Further Action:

- The CPO will report back the action they have taken to the manager/volunteer, who will also be reassured that they have behaved appropriately.
- The CPO may lack further information once a report has been made to Children's Service, who for reasons of confidentiality may be unable to give specific details of the actions they take. However the CPO should ensure that they have agreed with the Social Worker how the Manager and Volunteers should behave towards the child and parents when they next attend training or a match.

4.2: Allegations against Managers, Volunteers or any other Club Official

Policy

To ensure that all allegations against those working in a position of trust are responded to appropriately in line with Module 13 of Surrey Area Child Protection Committee Procedures.

Procedure:

- The person receiving the allegation will immediately contact the Club Secretary who will at once contact the CPO.
- On receipt of the complaint, the CPO will immediately refer the allegation to the Duty Social Worker, Assessment Team, Children's Service or the Emergency Duty Team if out of hours. If they cannot be contacted the CPO will refer to the Police.
- The CPO and Duty Social Worker, or Police will discuss if the allegation is a child protection matter. If it is, they will discuss and agree the next steps, including who should inform the individual against whom the allegation has been made and when.
- The course of action to be taken from thereon will be decided by the nature of the allegation(s):

a. Possible Criminal Offence: e.g. of sexual abuse, or physical assault, or inappropriate behaviour, the Club Secretary will activate the Disciplinary Procedure and suspend the person in writing from any activity in the Club under the heading of alleged Gross Misconduct.



The suspension will remain in force unless and until the police and/or Children's Services confirm there was no substance to the report. An incident report will be made and kept on the individuals file during the investigation.

The CPO will liaise with the investigating authorities throughout the investigation, including attending all Senior Strategy meetings to which they are invited.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the senior Strategy Meeting will recommend what action, if any, the Club should take. This will range from dismissal if the allegation is founded, and if the individual is prosecuted, to reinstating the individual if the allegation is unfounded.

If legal proceedings result in the conviction of the person for a serious offence involving a child, the Club Secretary shall consider any report of information from the Police and/or Children's Services and shall recommend to the committee the appropriate course of action up to and including instant dismissal.

If the proceedings do not result in a conviction but there is evidence to suggest misconduct, the procedure in b may be invoked.

b. Possible Disciplinary Matter:

If Police/Children's Services decide not to investigate the matter the CPO in discussion with the Club Secretary and Chair need to decide if the allegation constitutes a breach of the high standard of conduct expected of all staff and volunteers.

The CPO will gather as much detail from available sources of information as possible, by way of investigation.

The person against whom such non-criminal allegations are made should have opportunity to give an explanation or answer to any allegation at an interview conducted by the CPO and Chair of the Club. It will be minuted by the Club Secretary who should also be present.

The CPO will only interview any named children with their parent's permission and with a parent or named adult present.

Where appropriate, the RO should consider whether suspension of the volunteer is advisable during the investigation and recommend accordingly to the Club Secretary. This may include a situation, which, though non-criminal, could lead to a decision of gross misconduct.

The CPO will report to the Club Secretary on the outcome of such an investigation and will recommend whether the circumstances constitute grounds either:

To treat the matter as a disciplinary issue, either as misconduct or gross misconduct, with associated rights of appeal.

Or to dismiss the allegations as unfounded.

Or to make such other non-disciplinary recommendations as are appropriate. The Club Secretary shall consider such recommendations and report to the next meeting of the Committee of action taken.

The suspension will remain in force on completion of the CPO's enquiries if the Club Secretary is of the view that the misconduct is so serious as to constitute grounds for immediate termination of voluntary service until the dismissal procedure has been implemented.

The person suspended should be advised by the Club Secretary of a person in the club with whom s/he can communicate during the period of a suspension on matters relating to their



employment, and the person so appointed should be told clearly, as should the person suspended the address to which any communication should be made, whether or not communication includes personal contact, and the hours/times of contact.

The Club Secretary shall write to the person concerned to inform them of the outcome of the investigation and will inform the person of any decision to terminate position or of the date and conditions, if any, of a return to duties, where a disciplinary offence has been committed but is not of a nature as to warrant immediate dismissal.

Under no circumstances is any person suspended to re-enter the club premises or property or attend a session site whilst under suspension. This prohibition includes activities where there are no children/young persons present.

In appropriate circumstances, in consultation with the Chair of the Club, the Club Secretary may effect an instant dismissal if the evidence warrants it. For example, someone caught in the act of committing an offence involving a child on Club property. This will also be reported immediately in the manner detailed above. The personal file of such a worker will have the necessary note of action taken entered in it.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEDDINGTON ATHLETIC COMMITTEE MEMBERS

5.1: Responsibility of the Chair of Teddington Athletic Football Club:

- To ensure that the Committee appoint one of their number as Child Protection Officer (CPO)
- To act in consultation with the Club Secretary and CPO as detailed above

5.2: Responsibilities of the Child Protection Officer:

- Ensuring that this policy and procedure is implemented throughout the Club's activities;
- Ensuring all necessary child protection-related enquiries, procedures and investigations are carried out;
- Reporting results of CRB/screening enquiries to the Club Secretary;
- Preserving a "need to know" level of confidentiality regarding the private information of managers and volunteers;
- Ensuring all records are kept securely;
- The reporting to all meetings of the Committee on the implementation of this policy;
- Ensuring there is adequate induction and training relating to child protection matters;
- Ensuring that each activity carried out by the Club is sound in terms of child protection as regards personnel, practices, premises;
- Undertaking the audit of playing facilities and reporting back to the Committee;
- Reporting to every committee meeting all new applicants results of CRB or other checks; the person's name and whether the checks were satisfactory or not (but without giving detail) and the Club Secretary will confirm this information. The Committee will then decide whether the volunteer can start to work for the Club, which will be recorded in the minutes;
- Report to the Committee any referral to the Police or Duty Social Worker, omitting children's and families' names and the progress/outcome of any investigation.

5.3 Responsibilities of the Club Secretary:

- The Club Secretary of the Club shall ensure active compliance with this policy by all working in the Club, and shall work closely with the CPO to ensure this, affording the CPO every assistance to this end.
- In discussion with the CPO ensure that records are kept of all individuals as detailed above.
- In discussion with the CPO to ensure that all records are kept regarding an allegation and subsequent investigation.
- The Club Secretary will ensure the CPO has as much background, supplementary details



about a child or an incident as possible. The Club Secretary will keep records in such a way as will enable appropriate cross-referencing of reports. The object is that any persistent pattern is identified as soon as possible.

- The Club Secretary may have access to all such records as referred to above.
- All voluntary workers shall have this policy drawn to their attention on joining the Club and it shall be the duty of the Club Secretary, in consultation with the CPO, to ensure that such persons are fully aware of how and where to access the full policy statement, and that the Club Secretary is the person through whom they should route queries concerning the policy.

6. REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

The Committee shall review this policy, its effectiveness and regarding its implementation every two years and the Ro shall ensure with the Club Secretary that the views of all voluntary persons, are sought and reflected in such a review process, and that any statutory authority input is sought as appropriate.