



Durham County FA

Safeguarding Children Policy

1

Durham County Football Association acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care and is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all members. A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any Affiliated Grassroots Football and any other County FA organised football activities. We subscribe to The Football Association's (The FA) Safeguarding Children – Policy and Procedures and endorse and adopt the Policy Statement contained in that document.

2

The key principles of The FA Safeguarding Children Policy are that:

- the child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration
- all children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, faith or belief
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents/carers are essential.

We acknowledge that every child or young person who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse. Durham County Football Association recognises that this is the responsibility of every person involved in the County FA.

3

Durham County Football Association has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. It is noted and accepted that The Football Association's Safeguarding Children Regulations (see The FA Handbook) applies to everyone in football whether in a paid or voluntary capacity. This means whether you are a volunteer, match official, helper on club tours, football coach, league official, club official or medical staff.

4.

We endorse and adopt The FA's Safer Recruitment guidelines for recruiting staff and volunteers and we will:

- specify what the role is and what tasks it involves
- request identification documents
- as a minimum meet and chat with the applicant(s) and where possible interview people before appointing them
- ask for and follow up with 2 references before appointing someone

- where eligible require an FA accepted Enhanced Criminal Record Check (CRC) with Barring List Check in line with current FA policy and regulations.

All current Durham County FA staff and volunteers working in eligible roles, with children and young people - such as Football Development Officers and volunteers - are required to hold an in-date FA accepted Enhanced CRC with Barring List check as part of Safer Recruitment practice¹.

If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached us to become a member of the Durham County Football Association, guidance will be sought from The Football Association. It is noted and accepted that The FA will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained via the CRC Process and that all suitability decisions will be made in accordance with legislation and in the best interests of children and young people.

It is accepted that The FA aims to prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children or young people and the opportunity to influence policies or practices with children or young people. This is to prevent in particular direct sexual or physical harm to children and to minimise the risk of 'grooming' within football.

5

Durham County Football Association supports The FA's Whistle Blowing Policy. Any adult or young person with concerns about an adult in a position of trust within football can 'whistle blow' by contacting The Durham County Football Association on 0191 3872929, The FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 169 1863, by writing to The FA Case Manager at The Football Association, Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London SW1P 9EQ, by emailing Safeguarding@TheFA.com or alternatively by going direct to the Police, Children's Social Care or the NSPCC.

Durham County Football Association encourages everyone to know about The FA's Whistle Blowing Policy and to utilise it if necessary.

6

Durham County Football Association has appointed a Designated Safeguarding Officer in line with The FA's role profile. The post holder will be involved with Welfare Officer training provided by The FA and/or County FA. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will be the point of contact for Welfare Officers regarding concerns about the welfare of any child or young person. The Club Welfare Officer will liaise directly with the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer and will be familiar with the procedures for referring any concerns. They will also play a proactive role in increasing awareness of **Respect**, poor practice and abuse amongst club members.

7

We acknowledge and endorse The FA's identification of bullying as a category of abuse. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable. If bullying does occur, all players or parents/carers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. Incidents need to be reported to the event/activity organiser in cases of serious bullying the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer may be contacted.

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Safeguarding Codes of Conduct for Football have been implemented by Durham County Football Association. In order to validate these Safeguarding Codes of Conduct the County FA has clear actions it will take regarding repeated or serious misconduct and acknowledges the possibility of potential sanctions which may be implemented by the County FA in more serious circumstances.

9

Report your concerns about the welfare of a child or young person. **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you are worried about a child or young person it is important that you report your concerns – no action is not an option.**

- i. If you are worried about a child or young person then report your concerns to your Club Welfare Officer.
- ii. If the issue is one of poor practice the Club Welfare Officer will either:
 - deal with the matter themselves through club procedures or
 - seek advice from the Durham County Football Association Designated Safeguarding Officer
- iii. If the concerns are more serious – possible child abuse, where possible contact Durham County Football Association Designated Safeguarding Officer first, then immediately contact the Police or Children's Social Care.
- iv. If a child needs immediate medical treatment take them to a hospital or call an ambulance and tell them this is a child protection concern. Let the Durham County Football Association Designated Safeguarding Officer know and your Club Welfare Officer (if applicable) what action you have taken.
- v. If at any time you are not able to contact the Durham County Football Association Designated Safeguarding Officer or the matter is clearly serious then you can either:
 - contact The FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 169 1863 or Safeguarding@TheFA.com
 - contact the Police or Children's Social Care
 - call the NSPCC 24 hour Helpline for advice on 0808 800 5000 or text 88858 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

NB – The FA's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures are available via – www.TheFA.com/footballrules-governance/safeguarding – click on 'Raising Awareness – Best Practice Downloads', the Policy and Procedures document is within the resources area. The policy outlines in detail what to do if you are concerned about the welfare of a child or young person and includes flow diagrams which describe this process. How to make a referral is also covered in the Safeguarding Children workshop. Participants are given the opportunity to discuss how this feels and how best they can prepare themselves to deal with such a situation. For more information on this workshop contact the Durham County Football Association Designated Safeguarding Officer.

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Further advice on Safeguarding Children matters can be obtained from:

- Richard Hughes – Durham County Football Association Designated Safeguarding Officer

T: 01913872928 (Option 3)

E: Richard.Hughes@DurhamFA.com or CountyWO@DurhamFA.com

- www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding
- Emailing – Safeguarding@TheFA.com
- The FA Safeguarding Children general enquiry line 0845 210 8080

ⁱ The FA's policy on disclosure and Barring Service CRCs is subject to change. CRC information and guidance can be found at www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/criminal-records-checks

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