

HALLIFORD COLTS F.C.
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
Adopted from Guildford & Shere League.

“Every child & young person, who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable & safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in football.”

What is child abuse?

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which a child or young person may be harmed, usually by adults and increasingly by peers. These are often people they know and trust. Child abuse refers to the damage done to a child's or young person's physical or emotional health. A child or young person can be abused within or outside their family unit, at school and within the football environment. Situations arise when adults or peers misuse their power over a child or young person and abuse them.

There are five main types of abuse.

Physical Abuse Neglect Sexual Abuse

Emotional Abuse Bullying

Why does this affect us?

There may be a time when a child approaches a person within the Club or within your Team as a trusted adult to discuss their life outside football. It is vital that everyone knows how to react to this in a sensitive and appropriate manner. It may well be that they are or have been subjected to one or more of the above types of abuse.

Physical Abuse includes situations where adults or a young person:

Physically hurts or injures a child or young person (e.g. by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning).

Gives a child or young person alcohol.

Attempts to suffocate or drown a child or young person.

Use excessive and inappropriate training methods.

In the football environment, physical abuse might also occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child's or young person's immature and growing body, (e.g. Over training) and also when coaches encourage a child or young person to take performance enhancing drugs or alcohol.

Neglect includes situations in which:

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

A child or young person is consistently left alone, unsupervised.

In the football environment, neglect might also occur if a manager or coach fails to ensure a child or young person are safe or exposes them to undue extremes of weather or risk of injury, e.g. through unsafe equipment.

Sexual Abuse includes situations in which adults or peers use a child or young person to meet their own sexual need through:

Full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, fondling or anal intercourse.

Showing them pornographic books, photographs or videos or taking photographs for pornographic purposes.

In the football environment, sexual abuse might also occur when inappropriate physical contact takes place e.g. through inappropriate supporting, treatment or touching of children or young people.

Emotional Abuse includes situations in which:

There is a persistent lack of love, affection or attention shown to a child or young person.

A child or young person is overprotected preventing them from socialising.

A child or young person is frequently shouted at or taunted.

In the football environment, emotional abuse might also include situations where parents or coaches subject a child or young person to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations or to attain standards they are clearly not able to reach.

Bullying is not always easy to define, can take many forms and is usually repeated over a period of time. The three main types are: physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from activities). They all will include:

Deliberate hostility and aggression towards a victim.

A victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies.

An outcome which is always painful and distressing for the victim.

Bullying behaviour may also include:

Other forms of violence.

Sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.

Tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation.

Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.

Unwanted physical contact or abusive or offensive comments of a sexual nature.

Emotional and verbal bullying is more common in football than the physical type, it can also be more difficult to cope with and more difficult to prove.

Recognition of Abuse

It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may be occurring or has already taken place. Most people working in a voluntary capacity such as ourselves are not experts at such recognition. It is therefore essential that any concern about the welfare of a child or young person should be dealt with as outlined in this policy.

The points listed below may indicate that a child or young person may be being abused:

- * Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- * Any injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- * The child or young person describing what appears to be an abusive act involving him or her.
- * Someone else – a child, young person or adult expressing concern about the welfare of another child or young person.
- * Unexplained changed in behaviour – e.g. becoming quieter, withdrawn, displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- * Sexual awareness at an inappropriate age.
- * Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour in games.
- * Being mistrustful of adults, or a young person, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- * Having difficulty making friends.

- * Being prevented from socialising with other children or young people.
- * Variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- * Loss of weight for no apparent reason.
- * Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

We must also recognise that the list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the points is not proof that abuse is actually taking place, but their behaviour may sometimes give cause for concern.

If, however, you or a colleague is concerned about the welfare of a child or young person you must act – you cannot assume that someone else will.

Action to take if through your own observation or being informed by a young person you suspect abuse is taking place.

It is very important to stay calm and reassure the young person that they are not to blame and that they are doing the right thing telling you. On no account make any promises to the young person that you will be able to keep this secret or confidential and keep questions to a minimum.

Should the above circumstances apply then it will be necessary to make a written record. This may be required in any subsequent legal action by the Police and Social Services and should include the young persons full details, the nature of the allegation and a description of any visible bruising or other injuries.

If the situation is clearly an urgent case, the child is too frightened to go home or there are serious doubts about the child's safety, then the Police and Social Services must be contacted immediately. The investigation of any Child Abuse case will be carried out jointly by the Police and Social Services. Therefore the first contact in a possible abuse situation should be the Police Child Protection Team.

Always REFER and never investigate any suspicions or allegations about abuse.

The issue of Child Abuse is obviously a very sensitive one and people may be reluctant to become involved. However, if you have any concerns you MUST act. A child's safety could be at risk. If you are concerned about taking the matter further then contact our Child Protection Officer who will advise you.

Police 01784

Advice if through your own observation or being informed by a young person you suspect a case of bullying is taking place.

- * Take the problem seriously.
- * Investigate the incident
- * Talk to the parties separately.
- * Inform both parties parents/carers.
- * Provide support for victim.
- * Encourage bully to change their behaviour.
- * Impose sanctions if behaviour does not change and consider exclusion from Club.
- * Keep all parties informed.
- * The Club to keep a record of such incidents.

Every effort must be made by the Club and teams to ensure bullying is eradicated within football. It is important as bullying can result in children or young people becoming vulnerable and isolated. These particular children or young people could then become a target for adult abusers.

Guidance for Coaches and Volunteers when having care of Children and Young People.

It is possible to reduce situations in which abuse can occur and also help to protect Coaches and Volunteers by promoting good practice. The following guidelines will assist in this aim:

Coaches should respect the rights, dignity and worth of each and every person and treat each equally within the context of the sport.

Coaches should not place unrealistic expectations on players and respect the level of ability they are able to demonstrate.

Coaches and Volunteers should wherever possible not allow themselves to be alone with any one child or young person.

Do not allow a one to one situation to occur especially in these circumstances:

In a changing room.

On a car journey – no matter how short.
When treating injuries.

Always deal with children and young people in an open environment.

If you feel that a child or young person is hurt or distressed or has misinterpreted your actions or something you have done, as soon as possible you should report this incident to the Child Protection Officer and make a brief written note of it. Parents or Carers should be informed of the incident.

Personal Disclosure.

Everyone who is involved in dealing with children within the Club ie Managers , Coaches, First Aiders MUST be CRB checked.