



## ***CHILD PROTECTION POLICY***

Clifton All Whites Football Club which provides football facilities to both adults and children will ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount;
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- All staff working for Clifton All Whites Football Club (including self employed referees and coaches) have a responsibility to report concerns to a member of the Committee.

It is stated clearly and unequivocally that Clifton All Whites Football Club staff are neither specifically trained to deal with situations of abuse nor are they technically qualified to decide if abuse has occurred.

### **Policy Statement**

Clifton All Whites Football Club will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in football activities on sites used by the club through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by the Committee of Clifton All Whites Football Club. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable will be taken into account.

The Chairman has responsibility to the Committee for matters relating to child protection and the Welfare Officer will oversee the implementation of the policy throughout the club. The coaches will assume the role of child protection officer for their relevant teams and will report through the usual Clifton All Whites Football Club channels on all matters of concern in this sensitive area. A child is defined as under 18 (The Children Act 1989).

### **Policy aims**

The aim of the Clifton All Whites Football Club Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice through the following initiatives:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Clifton All Whites Football Club;
- Allowing all officials of the club to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
- Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with clear and sensible judgment concerning the correct action to take. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, official or volunteer may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where a young person needs protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported to a member of the Committee in line with the guidelines in this document.

### **Good Practice Guidelines:**

All Clifton All Whites Football Club staff is encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within Football:

Good practice means: Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding Private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment i.e. no Secrets).

- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with young players; it is not appropriate to have a close and seemingly intimate relationship with a child.
- Making the football fun, enjoyable and consistently promoting fair play.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly in full view. Care is needed, as it is difficult for example to maintain hand positions when a child is constantly moving. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible (e.g. for the responsibility of their children in the changing rooms). If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents/coaches/officials work in pairs.
- Ensuring that if mixed teams are participating, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff.
- Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people other than social occasions.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults - avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, so if the need arises permission is in place for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs in both the accident book and through the Clifton All Whites Incident Reporting Procedures, (IRP) detailing any treatment given. Practice to be avoided

3

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of a member of the Committee or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session:

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others;

#### **Practice never to be sanctioned**

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Supervise alone children attending training or matches when they are changing or showering;
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves

It may sometimes be necessary for CLUB staff to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the players involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or

undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained to do.

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed.

- If you accidentally hurt a player.
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner.
- If a player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- If a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done

#### **Guidelines for the Use of Photographic Equipment on sites used by Clifton All Whites FC.**

There is always the possibility that some people can use football events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. It is advisable that all staff be vigilant with any concerns to be reported to a member of the Committee and recorded in the incident report book.

#### **Videoing as a coaching aid:**

There is no intention to prevent club coaches using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be aware that this is part of the coaching programme and care should be taken in the storing of such material.

#### **Selecting staff and volunteers**

Clifton All Whites Football Club recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. When undertaking pre selection checks the following should be included:

- All staff should complete an application form. The application form will collect information about applicants' past and a self disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau (introduced in September 2001).
- Evidence of identity (Passport or driving license with Photo).
- **VOLUNTEERS MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO GIVE ANY COACHING INSTRUCTIONS OR ADVICE WITHOUT PRIOR AGREEMENT FROM COACHING STAFF, BUT CAN TAKE PART IN COACHING SESSIONS AS LONG AS AT LEAST ONE CLIFTON ALL WHITES COACH IS IN CLOSE ATTENDANCE.**
- Our coaches will have overall responsibility for training sessions and will therefore use their discretion as to the suitability of any volunteers taking part in such sessions.

#### **Responding to suspicions or allegations**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working for Clifton All Whites Football Club to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. There is a responsibility to act on any concerns through a member of the committee and contact with the appropriate authorities.

Clifton All Whites Football Club's Committee will assure all staff that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation

- A criminal investigation,
- A child protection investigation,
- An internal disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

#### **Poor Practice**

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; after consultation with the committee, they may treat the matter as a misconduct issue.
- If the outcome of any internal inquiry is not to the satisfaction of all persons involved, the committee will refer the incident to the Notts Football Association and any relevant league committees.

### **Suspected Abuse**

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by a member of staff should be reported to the welfare officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- Having made an assessment, the welfare officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police, or if the incident is potentially serious and it is out of social services hours, then the welfare officer will go directly to the police. The parent(s) or carer(s) of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department. The Chairman will also be informed.
- The Chairman will inform the relevant County Football Association Child Protection Officer.
- The committee will deal with any media enquiries.
- If the Chairman is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made direct to the vice Chairman or in his/her absence the club General Secretary who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

### **Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The Chairman/Welfare officer
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation
- Social Services/police
- The appropriate County Association Child Protection Officer;
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child)

The welfare officer should seek social services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser. Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

### **Internal Enquiries and Suspension**

The Chairman and Welfare Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police, social services or internal; investigatory and/or disciplinary inquiries. Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff should be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the committee must reach a decision in consultation with the relevant sources involved based upon the available information. **The welfare of children should always remain paramount.**

### **Allegations of Previous Abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children). Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. To be clear, this is because other children, either within or outside our club may be at risk from this person.

Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

### **Action if Bullying is Suspected**

Bullying especially in youth groups playing football where underperformance by one can result in loss to the team has to be carefully monitored. It can if allowed to go unchecked damage the reputation of the club. Where bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in the Section relating to responding to suspicions or allegations of abuse.

### **Action to Help the Victim and Prevent Bullying**

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide,

seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.

- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully (ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else and
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Inform parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the bullied child of your concerns

#### **Action to be taken against the Bully(ies):**

Talk with the bully (ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully (ies) to understand the consequences of their behavior. Seek an apology to the victim(s).

Inform the bully's parents.

If relevant, insist on the return of borrowed items – boots, gloves or other personal belongings.

Impose sanctions as necessary.

Encourage and support the bully (ies) to change behavior.

Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.

Inform all relevant organisation of action taken.

Keep a written record of action taken.

#### **Remember:**

- Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis only. Ensure the welfare officer follows up with social services.

7

- The welfare officer should also report the incident to the relevant County Football Association Child Protection Officer who should ascertain whether or not the person/s involved in the incident play a role in Football and act accordingly.
- If you do not know who to turn to for advice or are worried about sharing your concerns with a member of the committee, you should contact the social services direct (or the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111)

#### **What to do if there are concerns**

Information passed to the social services or the police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern.

Information should include the following:

- Name of child
- Age of child and date of birth
- Home address and telephone number
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or those of someone else
- What is the nature of the allegation? Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Behavioral signs indirect signs.
- Witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted? If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If it is not the child making the report has the child concerned been spoken to? If so what was said?

Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser?

**DON'T FORGET TO RECORD EVERYTHING THAT IS SAID.**