



GILLINGHAM FOOTBALL CLUB LTD

MEMS Priestfield Stadium, Redfern Avenue, Gillingham, Kent ME7 4DD

Tel: 01634 300000 Fax: 01634 850986

www.gillinghamfootballclub.com www.priestfield.com www.bluesrockcafe.com



CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Introduction

Gillingham Football Club acknowledges and accepts, as one of its responsibilities, the well-being and safety of those children and young persons who partake in activities in the name of the Club and Trust. It does so in the belief that placing their welfare at the centre of its concerns provides a solid foundation for the development of young persons and for good Child Protection and Safeguarding practice.

Summary

Gillingham Football Club's objectives for the development of children accessing programme are to:

- Promote and support good outcomes in terms of health, development and educational achievement for all children in turn raising both physical and mental wellbeing
- Enable parents and other members of the child's family to be as involved as is practicable in a working partnership with the relevant departments of Gillingham Football Club
- Recognise the significance of cultural diversity
- Acknowledge its responsibility to set high sporting and social standards of behaviour, be honest and take the feelings of others into account
- Celebrate children's success and recognise achievement, effort and good behaviour
- Provide a disciplined and progressive environment where children will work together taking a pride in themselves and their surroundings

Safeguarding

Gillingham Football Club recognises and accepts its responsibility for the safety and well-being of those children and young people who come within the care of the Club, Trust and its staff. It is also recognised that the Children Services Department, the NSPCC and the Police have a statutory duty to protect children and young persons at risk. The Club accepts that it must work in partnership with these agencies when a safeguarding issue arises.

The aims of Gillingham Football Club are to:

- Develop a positive and pro-active approach to safeguarding in order to best protect all children and young people who play football or engage in associated activities, enabling them to participate and achieve in an enjoyable and safe environment.
- Facilitate the provision of a range of child protection and awareness training for staff in conjunction with, and supported by, the Football Association, the Football League, the Premier League and the NSPCC and in line with guidance from Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs).
- Demonstrate best practice in the area of safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people engaged in activities delivered and supported by Gillingham Football Club. Ensure all staff working with children, young people and vulnerable adults completes the FA Safeguarding Children Course and an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services check (DBS). Every three calendar years.
- Promote ethical work with children and young people
- Work towards achieving the National Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport devised by the Child Protection in Sport Unit of the NSPCC



MAIN CLUB SPONSOR

Chairman: Paul DP Scally
Vice Chairman: Michael J Anderson
Directors: PDP Scally, MJ Anderson (Non-exec),
MJ Quarrington FCA (Non-exec)

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- Support members of staff to help them to work towards achieving the above National Standards.

The key principles underpinning this Policy are that:

- The welfare of children and young people 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, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual identity.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Working in partnership with children, young people and their parents/carers is an essential element of our work.

Gillingham Football Club is committed to working together with Children's Services Department and Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB's) in accordance with their procedures and in line with the most recent HM Government guidance - Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013). Where The Club believes, or is informed by a member of staff that circumstances exist which may harm a child(ren) or young person(s), or poses or may pose a risk of harm to them, The Club will refer the matter to The Club Welfare Officer and if deemed necessary, The Welfare Officer will inform the Football Association (F.A.) Case Management Unit for investigation and action in accordance with the F.A. Disciplinary Procedures for safeguarding children and young people as amended from time to time, or if appropriate, to another statutory agency such as the Police or Children's Services Department for further investigation.

Definitions of Abuse

Physical Abuse

This includes hitting, burning and biting, giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison, attempt to suffocate or drown young children, excessive or inappropriate training regimes and use of drugs to enhance performance or delay puberty.

Neglect

This includes failure to meet a child's basic needs (e.g. for food, warm clothing etc.) leaving children alone or unsupervised and or fail to ensure children/young people are safe or expose them to undue extremes of weather or risk of injury (e.g. through unsafe equipment).

Emotional Abuse

This can include persistent lack of love and affection, children that are constantly threatened or taunted, parents or coaches whose overwhelming ambition exceeds that of the child and persistent disregard of a child's effort or progress.

Sexual Abuse

This includes situations where adults use children to meet their own sexual needs. This includes sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse or fondling, as well as showing pornographic videos or magazines, or taking photos of children for inappropriate use.



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Bullying

It is now recognised that, in some cases of abuse, the abuser may not always be an adult but could be a child. Bullying may be seen as deliberate, hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves.

Key Principles of the Policy:

- The child's welfare is and must always be the paramount consideration
- All children and young people have the right to be protected
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously
- As above in point 1.2 working in partnership with other organisations, the young people and children and their parents and carers are essential

Gillingham Football Club has a clear role to play in safeguarding children and young people by protecting them from, physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. This applies to all staff working for the Club or Trust whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

Safer Recruitment

Gillingham Football Club recognises the importance of Safer Recruitment. All staff whether they are full time, casual or voluntary should undergo the following procedures:

- Attend an interview
- Go through the GFC Induction process
- Provide two references from two different professional sources
- Undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure producing the necessary documents
- Have attended the FA Safeguarding workshop
- GFC will ensure all staff has an opportunity to attend free courses that are provided by the Medway Safeguarding Children Board
- The DBS Certificate has to be renewed every three years

All staff will be required to familiarise themselves with the content of their job descriptions around their responsibilities for safeguarding children.

Any issues relating to concerns raised over disclosures on the DBS will be discussed in terms of the risk that disclosure poses to children by a panel made up of the Safeguarding Officer, Community Director and the Chairman. The owner of the DBS will also be invited to this meeting.

Whistleblowing

Gillingham Football Club is committed to achieving the highest possible standards of service and the highest possible ethical standards in public life and in all of its practices. To achieve these ends, it encourages freedom of speech. It also encourages staff to use internal



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mechanisms for reporting any malpractice or illegal acts or omissions by its employees or ex-employees. More information can be found in the GFC Whistleblowing policy.

Designated Person

Gillingham Football Club in line with the FA policies and procedures has appointed a designated person to deal with first reports of poor practice or abuse. This person will be known as the Safeguarding Officer but will perform the same functions as the FA's Club Welfare Officer. This falls in line with the recommendations from the Football League and the Premier League.

The Safeguarding Officer will receive the first reports of poor practice and or abuse and will liaise with the relevant services to report the concerns be it the Local Authority designated officer, the Police or the County FA Welfare Officer.

Identification and Referral of Child Abuse

The protection of children is the proper concern of everyone in a position to help. All staff and volunteers at the Club or Trust who are involved with children and young persons will be made aware of how to recognize child abuse and make appropriate referrals to the Safeguarding Officer. Training in this will be provided by the Club in the form of the FA/NSPCC accredited "Safeguarding Children" course. All staff will have to renew this every 3 years.

Reporting Procedures

If there are concerns about a child then report this to the Club's Safeguarding Officer.

If the issue is one of poor practice then the Safeguarding Officer will either:

- Deal with the matter internally.
- Seek advice from the CFA Welfare Officer.

If the concern is one of abuse then the Safeguarding Officer will either contact the Police or the Local Authority Designated Officer or both depending on the nature of the concern. The Safeguarding Officer will also contact the relevant CFA Welfare Officer and FA Case Manager if the concern is a football related one

If the allegation is against the Safeguarding officer then all information should be directed to the Chairman of the Football Club who will action as above

The same procedure will be in place if the Safeguarding Officer is absent. If the child needs immediate medical treatment they should be taken to hospital or an ambulance called

If the latter is the case then the ambulance staff should be informed that there is a child protection concern. The Safeguarding Officer should then be informed to take the necessary actions (above).



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Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

All allegations against staff will be taken seriously particularly if they:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

First reports can be made to Department Heads who will inform the Safeguarding Officer or reports can go straight to the Safeguarding Officer.

Once received the Safeguarding Officer will investigate the case and then bring in :

- Referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Referral to the Police if the case is of a serious enough nature
- Suspension of the member of staff or volunteer whilst the investigation happens

The Safeguarding Officer or designated person shall also be responsible for contacting the parents / carers of the child.

Possible outcomes will be as follows:

- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence
- Enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual

The Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for the recording all safeguarding issues and updating records kept about the latter and any referrals made. These records will be kept in a designated locked cabinet and only be accessible to the Safeguarding Officer.

Access to the Gillingham Football Club Safeguarding Policy

The Safeguarding Policy will be accessible via the Gillingham Football Club website and to coaches and staff via the intranet alongside other policies. This will also be available in accessible formats.

Use of Mobile phones / social networking sites and communication to children and young people

- All staff must communicate to children and young people in an appropriate manner.
- Staff wishing to communicate with children and young people outside of GFC activities must do so via parents and carers.
- No mobile phone numbers or E mail addresses should be taken and stored on devices belonging to a member of staff.



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Staff must not use social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter to communicate with children and young people on Gillingham Football Club programmes. If a young person tries to establish a relationship with a member of staff this request must be denied and the Safeguarding Officer informed so that they can liaise with that child's / young person's parents / carers.

Photographic Policy

- GFC will not allow photos or videos to be taken of children or young people unless there is specific parental / carer written consent.
- No personal cameras / phones etc. may be used to record such images.
- When the image is used GFC will not identify the name of the child / young person.

Codes of Conduct

All staff will be asked to sign codes of conduct which sets out the working practices and parameters of their responsibilities and engagement.

Discrimination

Gillingham Football Club will not accept any behaviour and or language which are considered to be discriminatory with prejudice or is oppressive towards any race, gender, culture, age, disability, religion, sexuality or political persuasion

Disabled Children and Vulnerable Adults

Children and young people with a disability are at an increased risk of abuse. This could be due to:

- Lack of peer group support
- Intimate / physical care / invasive medical care meaning that the young person does not know what is appropriate and non-appropriate touch
- Communication difficulties
- Difficulty in resisting and reporting abuse
- Multiple carers
- Dependant on a potential abuser for basic needs
- Having medical conditions that could be used to falsely explain non accidental injuries

Gillingham Football Club will ensure that staff working with disabled children and young adults:

- Learn the child's / young person's communication methods
- Ensure the young person's needs are known
- Ensure care plans are in place
- Give the child or young person the opportunity to make informed choices
- Have clear strategies to deal with difficult behaviour

Gillingham Football Club Safeguarding Officer: Ben Reeves, Rob Peck, Lisa Scott