

WEST PARK UNITED



PLAYER PROTECTION POLICY AS AMENDED BY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ON 5 DECEMBER 2015

1. POLICY STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES

Policy Statement - West Park United Football Club (hereafter referred to as "The Club") is fully committed to providing every player and official with a safe environment in which they may enjoy participating in grassroots football.

1.1 Background and the rights of the child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (UNCRC) is the international framework within which children's rights and welfare are safeguarded. The rights which form the basis of these guidelines are:

- The right of all children to enjoy all the rights contained in the convention irrespective of the child or their parent's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status (Article 2)
- The right of all children to be protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child" (Article 19)
- The right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts (Article 31)
- The right of the children affected by physical or learning disabilities to enjoy a full and decent life in conditions that ensure dignity promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active life in the community (Article 23)
- The right of all children who are capable of forming a view to express those views in all matters affecting the child (Article 12)

The UNCRC and government guidance makes it clear that all children have a right to be safe when they participate in sport and that those who organise/deliver sport to children have a duty to make sure children are safe and protected from harm in and through sport.

Child protection in all sport is not just about protecting children from others who may seek to harm them through sport. A trusted coach or leader may be the person a child chooses to tell about something that is happening at home or outwith sport. In either case, we all have a responsibility to act on concerns.

Participation in sport also makes an important contribution to a child's development. A child's natural sense of fun and spontaneity can blossom in a positive environment created by sports organisations. Sport provides an excellent opportunity for them to maintain good health, learn new skills, become more confident, build resilience, self-esteem and maximise their own unique potential. This is particularly important for children who are affected by adversity and who may be particularly vulnerable.

2. POLICY PRINCIPLES

The Club is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all players in its care. It recognises the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect players from harm, abuse and exploitation. Club staff and all volunteers will work together to embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of children and young people. This policy outlines the Clubs commitment to protecting players and is based on the following player's rights:

- The right to a safe environment
- The right to a protection against harm or the risk of harm
- The right to a protection against physical abuse
- The right to a protection against verbal abuse
- The right to a protection against emotional abuse
- The right to a protection against sexual abuse
- The right to a protection against bullying
- The right to a protection against neglect
- The right to express opinions and to have those opinions considered in all matters that concern their well being
- The right that all actions concerning the child should be in his/her best interests
- The right to have all suspicions and allegations taken seriously and actioned as appropriate

The Club shall:

- Promote the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in grassroots football safely
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of players
- Promote and implement appropriate guidelines to safeguard the well being of players and protect them from abuse
- Recruit, train, support and supervise its staff and officials to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect players from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves
- Require staff and officials to adopt and abide by this Player Protection Policy and these guidelines
- Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of players in line with this Policy and these guidelines as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures
- Observe guidelines issued by local Child Protection Committees for the protection of children
- Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy and these guidelines

2.1 What are we protecting players against?

The following examples are ways in which children may be abused or harmed, either within or outwith sport.

Child Abuse - In Scotland child abuse is defined as follows:

'Children may be in need of protection where their basic needs are not being met, in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development, and they will be at risk through avoidable acts of commission or omission on the part of their parent(s), sibling(s) or other relative(s), or a carer (i.e. the person while not a parent who has actual custody of the child).'

This definition includes placing children at risk through something a person has done to them or something a person is failing to do for them. For those working in the field of child care and protection the definition gets broken down further into categories of abuse, namely;

- (i) Emotional Abuse
- (ii) Physical Injury
- (iii) Physical Neglect
- (iv) Sexual Abuse

"Any child may be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person(s), by design or neglect, exploits the child, directly or indirectly, in any activity intended to lead to the sexual arousal or other forms of gratification of that person or other person(s) including organised networks. This definition holds whether or not there has been genital contact and whether or not the child is said to have initiated or consented to the behaviour".

This includes forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities whether or not they are aware of or consent to what is happening. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, and non-contact acts such as forcing children to look at or be involved in the production of pornographic material, to watch sexual

activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Some of the aforementioned activities can occur through the internet.

Boys and girls are sexually abused by males and females, including persons to whom they are and are not related and by other young people. This includes people from all walks of life.

Some children may never be able to tell someone they have been sexually abused. Changes in a child's behaviour **may** be a sign something has happened. In some cases there may be no physical or behavioural signs to suggest that a child has been sexually abused.

Examples of Sexual Abuse in Sport

- Exposure to sexually explicit inappropriate language or jokes
- Showing a child pornographic material or using a child to produce such material
- Inappropriate touching
- Sexual intercourse and/or sexual activity with a child under 16

The following signs **may** raise concerns about sexual abuse:

- Lack of trust in adults or over familiarity with adults, fear of a particular adult
- Social isolation – being withdrawn or introverted, poor peer relationship
- Sleep disturbance (nightmares, bed-wetting, fear of sleeping alone)
- Running away from home
- Girls taking over the mothering role
- School problems e.g. falling standards, truancy
- Reluctance or refusal to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for games
- Low self-esteem
- Drug, alcohol or solvent abuse
- Display of sexual knowledge beyond the child's age
- Sexual promiscuity, over-sexualised behaviour, compulsive masturbation
- Eating disorders
- Anxiety, depression, self-harm/mutilation, suicide attempts

Bullying - Bullying may be seen as particularly hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms including children being bullied by adults, their peers and in some cases by members of their families. Bullying can be difficult to identify because it often happens away from others and those who are bullied often do not tell anyone.

Bullying is a significant issue for children and has been the main reason for calls to ChildLine for the last eight consecutive years.

Examples of Bullying in Sport

- Physical e.g. theft, hitting, kicking (in some cases, this might constitute an assault)
- Verbal (including teasing) e.g. racist or sectarian remarks, spreading rumours, threats or name-calling, ridicule or humiliation
- Emotional e.g. isolating a child from the activities or social acceptance of the peer group Harassment e.g. using abusive or insulting behaviour in a manner intended to cause alarm or distress

Signs which **may** raise concerns about bullying include:

- Hesitation or reluctance to come to attend training or activity
- Often last one picked for a team or group activity for no apparent reason, or being picked on when they think your back is turned
- Reluctance to go to certain places or work with a certain individual
- Clothing or personal possessions go missing or get damaged
- Bruising or other injuries
- 'Losing' pocket money repeatedly
- Becoming nervous and withdrawn
- Suddenly prone to lashing out at people, either physically or verbally, when normally quiet

Racism - Children from British minority ethnic communities (and their parents) may have experienced harassment, racial discrimination, and institutional racism. Although not formally recognised as a form of

child abuse, racism can be emotionally harmful to children. Some racist acts also involve acts of physical violence towards individuals or groups.

All organisations working with children, including those where British minority ethnic communities are numerically small, should address institutional racism.

Harassment - An essential characteristic of harassment is that it is unwanted by the recipient. It is for individuals to determine what behaviour is acceptable to him or her and what they regard as offensive.

Children may experience harassment or negative discrimination because of their race or ethnic origin, socio-economic status, culture, age, disability, gender, sexuality or religious beliefs. This can have a detrimental effect on a child.

When an allegation of Child Abuse is made to a club representative against another member of their club

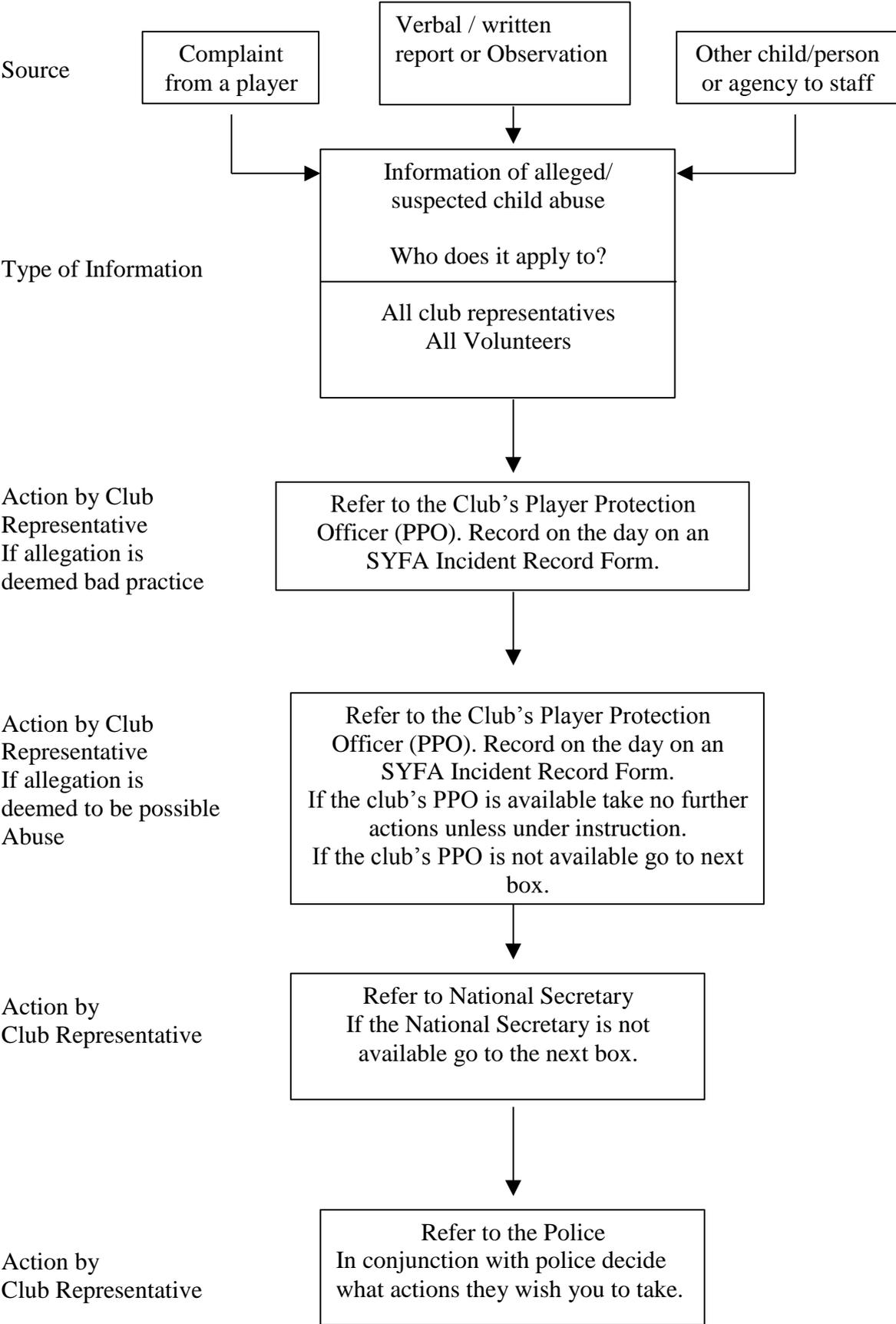


Figure 1

WEST PARK UNITED PLAYER PROTECTION POLICY

This Player Protection Policy was approved by the Management Committee of the Club at the EGM held on 6 December 2015 and agreed to be robustly upheld by the undersigned representatives of the Club

President

Secretary / Treasurer

Vice President

Child Protection Officer

Community Officer

Community Officer

Community Officer

Community Officer

