

Betley Football Club

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO SAFE GUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Child Safety and Child Protection are very important issues to consider in the setting up and running of a child-focused project such as our Youth Development Programme

Our project has a child protection policy that explains the obligations of volunteers and paid staff to ensure the safety and well being of children in their care. **It should detail how our project will manage child protection and handle complaints and when necessary make referrals to social services.**

Included here is information supplied by the national Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC). This is an Organisational Health Check which helped design a child protection policy for our club. This also gives details of where we can obtain further information.

Reporting Allegations

As the attached guidance states all projects must have one person who is responsible for co-ordinating child protection policy and monitoring its implementation in each project.

That person will normally be responsible for taking any necessary action when abuse is seen or alleged. Scope for abuse will be minimised if projects are run with the safety of all its members in mind and sensible steps are taken in dealings with children. If an allegation is made, or concerns are raised they should **always be brought to the attention of the nominated person for child protection.**

In the event of a complaint projects must take a record that includes:

- Name of the child
- Parent's / carer's details
- The child's address
- Relevant phone numbers
- What is said to have happened or what was seen
- When it occurred
- Who else was there
- What was said by those involved
- Whether there is any actual evidence, e.g. bruises, bleeding, changed behaviour
- Who has been told about it
- Who was concerned
- Was the child able to say what happened
- Whether the parents have been advised

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

Any complaints of suspected or actual child abuse or of children being put at risk must be taken seriously and acted upon immediately. If somebody believes that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, then he/she will need to inform Social services and Local Fund Administrator. It is the project's responsibility to inform their local social services of any suspected abuse.

All workers/volunteers within our project will need to note the definitions overleaf and pass on any concerns to the nominated officer. Abuse takes many forms.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape and buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The Barnardos website contains lots of useful information including a report called "Protecting Children" (Available from www.barnardos.org.uk or the information office on 020 8550 8822)

" Safe from Harm" (Available on www.homeoffice.gov.uk or 020 7273 4000)

"The Protection of Children Act 1999 (Available from www.doh.gov.uk/scg/childprotect or Dept. of Health, PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH)

"Working Together to Safeguard Children" (Available from www.doh.gov.uk/quality5.htm or 0870 600 5522)

*We must not underestimate the importance of a child protection policy and its implementation.
We should seek help where we need to, in order to ensure that our policy is adequate and appropriate.*

Safeguarding Children from Harm – Our organisational health check

Every organisation involved with children and young people has a responsibility for their protection and well being - a duty of care. There are a number of measures that organisations should put in place to safeguard children from harm. Parents are encouraged to check when they are entrusting their children to the care of others that these essential safeguards are in place. How ready is our organisation to answer these questions?

Does our organisation have the following?

A **child protection policy** and a **procedure** for what to do if there are concerns about a child's welfare. This should include having a **designated person** for dealing with concerns or allegations of abuse and step-by-step guidance on what action to take.

A rigorous **recruitment and selection process** for paid staff and for volunteers who work with children. This should include interviews, references and, where appropriate, police checks. From the summer of 2001 checks should be made with the Criminal Records Bureau.

A **written code of behaviour** that outlines good practice when working with children. An environment that allows bullying, shouting, racism, or sexism is not acceptable. There should be clear guidance about what behaviour is inappropriate in a relationship of trust between an adult and a young person. Specific guidance should be given where personal or intimate care tasks are carried out, for example with very young or disabled children.

A **training** plan and regular opportunities for all those in contact with children to learn about child protection and about health and safety. Unless all staff have an awareness of cruelty to children, the harm it can cause and how to act on concerns, policies, however good, will not be acted upon.

A “**Whistleblowing**” policy, that is, an open and well publicised way in which adults and young people can voice concerns about abusive or unethical conduct. It takes courage to challenge inappropriate behaviour by colleagues. When abuse occurs in organisations there is usually someone who had concerns, but may not have felt able to act on them.

Information for young people and for parents about the child protection policy and where to go for help.

Ways of making sure that the safeguards that have been put in place are working. This can be through the day-to-day supervision of staff and volunteers and through periodic monitoring and review.

A **protective culture** that puts children’s interest first. Children must feel confident that if they have concerns someone will listen and take them seriously.

Our organisation has policies on bullying and on health and safety. We will have processes for dealing with complaints and for taking disciplinary action, where necessary.

Organisations that have put these safeguards in place are taking their responsibilities seriously and are doing what they can to minimise the risks of children suffering harm while in their care.

The NSPCC offers a wide range of resources to help prevent cruelty to children. If we need more information send a A4 SAE (with two first class stamps) to Publications and Information Unit, NSPCC National Centre, 42 Curtain Road, London, EC2A 3NH.

Email: infounit@nspcc.org.uk

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

The NSPCC Consultancy service is available to help with the development of child protection policies and procedures. They can be contacted at 3 Gilmore Close, Beaumont Leys, Leicester, LE4 1EZ. We should put our request to them in writing and they will be pleased to respond.

Anyone requiring further advice or guidance should in the first instance contact our Youth Development Manager on 01270 652707 who will advise the correct procedure to follow.