

Updated 5th November 2021

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to inform all people involved with HYFC the responsibilities the Club has for Child Protection and to enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how procedures should be carried out. The club follows the procedures contained in the Football Association Child Protection Procedures and Practices Handbook, which is a guide for all Football Association coaches/trainers. HYFC acknowledges that coaches are particularly well placed to notice the first signs of child abuse. We understand the importance of the role we have in recognising the early signs and symptoms of child abuse or neglect and are fully aware of the referral procedures.

Child Protection Responsibilities Accepted by HYFC

Katrina Dobson is the club's Child Protection Officer. HYFC has adopted clear and sound policies on confidentiality and will maintain all written evidence about Child Protection issues in a secure and safe place. HYFC will provide accurate information to the Football Association and Hertfordshire Social Services, where necessary.

The club's Child Protection Officer will deal with all confidential information about any Child Protection/Abuse cases.

The Child Protection Officer Key responsibilities of this role are:

1. Ensure that the Football Association's Child Protection procedures are followed within the Club.
2. Ensure that all coaches are aware of these procedures.
3. Decide whether to take further action about particular concerns.
4. Report to the Football Association/Social Services suspected or relevant cases of child abuse or neglect.

Club Procedures

Introduction

A child needing help or guidance could approach any adult member of the coaching staff. Likewise, any member of the coaching staff may be in a position to notice or be concerned about any aspect of Child Protection/Abuse/Neglect.

If any coach is concerned about a child, they must inform the Child Protection Officer, unless the Child Protection Officer is the cause of that concern. In which case, they must inform the Chairman of the club, Mr Chris Tye.

The Child Protection Officer must record information regarding the concerns on the same day. The details must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations made and they must be signed and dated. The Child Protection Officer will decide what action needs to be taken, and whether or not the concerns should be referred to the Football Association/Hertfordshire Social Services.

Concerns will not be discussed with the parents of the child(ren) concerned before the Child Protection Officer has consulted with the authorities.

When to be concerned Coaches should take note of any of the following are observed:

- Any injury that is not typical of bumps or scrapes normally associated with children's activities. Refer to body map if unsure.
- Regular occurrence of unexplained injuries.
- Substantial weight gain or loss.
- Confused or conflicting explanation of how injuries occurred.
- Significant changes in behaviour or attitude.
- Sexual behaviour, which is unusually explicit or inappropriate to the child's age.
- A recounting of an experience by a child in which they have been significantly harmed.

Dealing with a Disclosure

The following points give guidance on how coaches should deal with disclosures made to them:

- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Explain who you will have to tell and why.
- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Allow the child(ren) to talk freely, limit any questions to a minimum. Seek only to clarify and strictly avoid leading the child(ren) or adult who had made the approach by making suggestions or introducing your own ideas into what may have happened.
- If it is an adult making the approach, and it is obvious they are making a significant allegation, stop them and refer them to the Child Protection Officer, to avoid repetition of the details.
- Be especially careful to distinguish between fact and opinion. Note also any noticeable nonverbal behaviour.
- Reassure a child, but do not make promises that you cannot keep.
- Reassure a child that what has happened is not their fault.
- Stress to the child that he/she has done the right thing by telling you.
- Do not enter the child's account by condemning or criticising the perpetrator.

REMEMBER BY FOLLOWING THE CORRECT PROCEDURES, YOU ARE PROTECTING BOTH YOURSELF AND HYFC

If any member of the coaching staff or adults involved within Hares Youth Football Club at any stage has any concerns for their own safety, especially owing to the fact that they have had to make a referral, they should immediately speak to the club's Child Protection Officer, who will promptly deal with the situation and involve the Football Association, Hertfordshire Social Services, or if necessary, the Police.

THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION & NSPCC CHILD PROTECTION HELPLINE CALL 0808 800 5000

This is a 24 hour free and confidential telephone Helpline that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of ill treatment or abuse.

www.nspcc.org.uk

Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) 3 Gilmour Close, Beaumont Leys, Leicester LE4 1EZ Telephone: 0116 234 7200 www.sportprotects.org.uk

Internet Watch Foundation To report potentially illegal material on the internet please contact the IWF Email: report@iwf.org.uk Telephone the hot line: 08456 008844 Fax the hot line: 01223 235921 Online: <http://www.iwf.org.uk/hotline/report.htm>

The IWF was set up to address the issue of illegal material on the internet with particular reference to child pornography.