

# **AFC Portchester Youth Child Safeguarding**

## **1. Safeguarding Policy Statement**

AFC Portchester Youth Football Club (“the Club”) recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people (defined as any person under the age of 18) involved in football which it organises or which it supervises and is committed to working to provide them with a safe environment. The Club subscribes to The Football Association’s Child Protection Best Practice Policy and Procedures, Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football and endorse and adopt the Policy Statement contained in that document namely:-

“Every child or young person, defined as any person under the age of 18, who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and should be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in football. The FA recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. The FA is, therefore, committed to working to provide a safe environment for all children and young people to participate in the sport to the best of their abilities so long as they choose to do so”.

## **2. Key Principles**

The key principles of this Safeguarding Children Policy and that of the FA are that:-

- The child’s welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration
- All children and young people have the right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents/carers is essential

## **3. Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge that every child or young person who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse. The Club recognises that this is the responsibility of every adult involved in football organised or supervised by the Club.

## **4. Role**

The Club has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. It is noted and accepted that the Football Association regulations apply to all persons involved in football whether in a paid or voluntary capacity. This means whether you are a volunteer, match official, helper on club tours, coach, club official or medical staff.

The Club endorses and will apply the Football Association regulations and will treat any infraction of those regulations as misconduct which will be the subject of the disciplinary procedures set out in the League Rules in addition to any other procedures which may be undertaken by any other body or authority.

The Club also endorses and adopts the FA's Safeguarding Children and Best Practice Guidelines for recruiting volunteers and will:-

- Develop a role profile
- Request identification documents
- As a minimum, meet and discuss with the applicants and where possible will conduct interviews before appointing
- Request and follow up with 2 references before appointing
- Require an FA CRB Unit Enhanced Disclosure where appropriate in line with FA Guidelines
- All current Club officials with direct access to children and young people will be required to complete a CRB Enhanced Disclosure via the FA CRB Unit.

If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached the Club to become one of its officials, guidance will be sought from the Football Association. It is noted and accepted that the FA will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained via the FA CRB Unit and that all decisions will be made in the best interests of children and young people.

It is accepted that the FA aims to prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children or young people and the opportunity to influence policies or practice with children or young people. This is to prevent direct sexual or physical harm to children and young people and to minimise the risk of “grooming” within football.

## **5. Whistle Blowing**

The Club supports the FA’s whistle blowing policy. Any adult or young person with concerns about a adult in a position of trust with football can ‘whistle blow’ by contacting The FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 169 1863, by writing to The FA Case Manager at The Football Association, Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London SW1P 9EQ, by emailing [Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com) or alternatively by going direct to the Police, Children’s Social Care or the NSPCC.

The Club encourages everyone to know about The FA’s Whistle Blowing Policy and to utilise it if necessary.

## **6. Club Welfare Officer**

The Club has appointed a Club Welfare Officer in line with The FA’s role profile and required completion of the Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officers Workshop. The post holder will be involved with Welfare Officer training provided by The FA and/or County FA. The Club Welfare Officer is the first point of contact for all club members regarding concerns about the welfare of any child or young person. The Club Welfare Officer will liaise directly with Hampshire FA (HFA) Welfare Officer and will be familiar with the procedures for referring any concerns. They will also play a proactive role in increasing awareness of **Respect**, poor practice and abuse amongst club members.

## **7. Bullying**

We acknowledge and endorse The FA’s identification of bullying as a category of abuse. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all players or parents/carers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. Incidents need to be reported to the Club

Welfare Officer in cases of serious bullying the HFA Welfare Officer may be contacted.

## **8. Codes of Conduct**

Codes of Conduct for coaches, players, officials and parents/carers have been implemented by the Club and can be found on the Club website. Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct constitutes misconduct which may be the subject of disciplinary sanction in accordance with the FA/league rules.

## **9. Reporting Concerns**

Reporting your concerns about the welfare of a child or young person.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility if you are worried about a child it is important that you report your concerns – no action is not an option.

i. If you are worried about a child then you need to report your concerns to the Club Welfare Officer.

ii. If the issue is one of poor practice the Club Welfare Officer will either:

- deal with the matter themselves or
- seek advice from the HFA Welfare Officer

iii. If the concern is more serious – possible child abuse, where possible, contact the HFA Welfare Officer first, then immediately contact the Police or Children's Social Care.

iv. If the child needs immediate medical treatment take them to a hospital or call an ambulance and tell them this is a child protection concern. Let your Club Welfare Officer know what action you have taken, they in turn will inform the HFA Welfare Officer.

v. If at any time you are not able to contact your Club Welfare Officer or the matter is clearly serious then you can either:

- contact your HFA Welfare Officer directly
- contact The FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 169 1863  
or [Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com)
- contact the Police or Children's Social Care
- call the NSPCC 24 hour Helpline for advice on 0808 800 5000 or text 88858  
or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## **10. Further Advice**

Further advice on Safeguarding Children matters can be obtained from:-

- The NSPCC Child Protection 24 hour Helpline 0808 800 5000
- [www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding](http://www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding)
- [www.TheFA.com/goal](http://www.TheFA.com/goal)
- The FA Child Protection team
- Emailing – [Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com)
- The FA Safeguarding Children general enquiry line 0845 210 8080

Reviewed 02 April 2021