

Child Protection Policy for Baldock Town Youth Football Club

Affiliated to the Hertfordshire County Youth F.A. Founded 1979
Members of Royston Crow YFL, Brigg Sports Mid Herts League July 2006
F.A Charter Standard Development Club

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Introduction

All sporting organisations which make provision for children and young people must ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All volunteers working in sport have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer of the club
- Staff/volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred. However, they should be aware of their responsibility to report concerns if they arise

Policy Statement

- Baldock Town Youth Football Club has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in Baldock Town Youth Football Club from harm.
- All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.
- Baldock Town Youth Football Club will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in Baldock Town Youth Football Club through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by Baldock Town Youth Football Club.
- A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

Policy Aims

The aim of the Baldock Town Youth Football Club Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Baldock Town Youth Football Club
- Allowing all volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues

Promoting Good Practice

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection.

All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters the club having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self-esteem. In such instances the club must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

Good practice guidelines

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets)
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate for coaches or other volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child (or to share a room with them))
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision making process
- Making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines provided by the Coach Education Programme. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills and qualifications in sport
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents, teachers, coaches or officials work in pairs
- Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur
- Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms
- Being an excellent role model in the company of young people
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given
- Requesting written parental consent if club officials or volunteers are required to transport young people in their cars

Practices to be avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session:

- Avoid spending time alone with children away from others
- Avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event

Practices never to be sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Share a room with a child for example when on a touring trip.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature for children which they can do for themselves
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised

N.B. It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the players involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident.

You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a player
- If he/she seems unduly distressed in any manner
- If a player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- If a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done

Use of photographic/filming equipment at sporting events

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sports people in vulnerable positions. All clubs should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the Club Child Protection Officer.

Videoring as a coaching aid: there is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme, their permission should be requested, and such films should be stored safely.

The Football Association has issued detailed guidance on this issue and reference should be made to the FA web site for more information

Recruitment and Training of Volunteers

Baldock Town Youth Football Club recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

Pre-selection checks must include the following:

- All volunteers must complete as CRB enhanced disclosure form.
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo)
- Interview and Induction

All volunteers will be required to undergo an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations.

All volunteers should receive formal or informal induction, during which:

- Their qualifications, if any, should be substantiated
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified
- They should sign up to the Clubs Code of Conduct
- Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.

Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person
- Work safely effectively with children

Baldock Town Youth Football Club requires:

- Coaching staff to attend a recognised Level 1 Coaching Course which will include a good practice and child protection awareness training workshop, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards good practice and child protection
- Non-coaching staff and volunteers to be encouraged to complete a recognised awareness training course on child protection
- Relevant volunteers to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person
- Relevant volunteers should be encouraged to gain a national first aid training certificate
- Attend update training when necessary.

Responding to Allegations or Suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone operating in Baldock Town Youth Football Club to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

Baldock Town Youth Football Club will assure all volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child. Where there is a complaint against an adult there may be three types of investigation:

1. A criminal investigation
2. A child protection investigation
3. A disciplinary or misconduct investigation

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

Action if there are concerns

1. Concerns about poor practice

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; the Club Child Welfare Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue. If the allegation is about poor practice by the Club Child Welfare Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to The Hertfordshire F.A who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

2. Concerns about suspected abuse

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by an adult should be reported to the Club Child Welfare Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. The Club Child Welfare Officer will refer the allegation to the Social Services department who may involve the Police, or will go directly to the Police in an emergency.

The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Social Services department. The Club Child Welfare Officer should also notify the Royston Youth Football League who in turn will inform the Hertfordshire F.A Child Protection Officer who will deal with any media enquiries.

If the Club Child Welfare Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Club Chairman or in his/her absence the Hertfordshire F.A Child Welfare Officer who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The Club Child Welfare Officer
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation
- Social Services / Police
- The Hertfordshire F.A Child Protection Officer
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

The club Child Welfare Officer will seek advice on who should approach the alleged abuser. Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Internal Enquiries and Suspension

The Baldock Town Youth Football Club Child Welfare Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further Police and Social Services inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the Social Services or Police inquiries the Baldock Town Youth Football Club Executive Committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the Police. In such cases, the Baldock Town Youth Football Club Disciplinary Committee must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability; it is more likely than not that the allegation is true.

THE WELFARE OF THE CHILD SHOULD REMAIN OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE THROUGHOUT.

Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child).

Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person.

Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

Action if bullying is suspected

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to Allegations or Suspicions' above. Reference should be made to the Club anti-bullying policy. Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in sport:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately).
- Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority.
- Create an open environment
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when)
- Report any concerns to the Club Child Welfare Officer.

Action towards the bully(ies)

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully (ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s)
- Inform the bully's parents
- Impose sanctions as necessary
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress
- Inform all members of the Executive Committee of action taken
- Keep a written record of action taken

REMEMBER: NON-ACTION IS NOT AN OPTION IN CHILD PROTECTION.

This Policy was formally adopted by the committee of Baldock Town Youth Football Club on:

_____ June 2009 _____ (Date)

It will be reviewed on an annual basis, with the next review taking place on:
_____ June 2010 _____ (Date)

Appendix 1 Code of Conduct for Club Personnel

The essence of good ethical conduct and practice is summarised below. All Club Personnel must:

- Consider the well-being and safety of participants before the development of performance
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with players, based on mutual trust and respect
- Make sure all activities are appropriate to the age, ability and experience of those taking part
- Promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play)
- Display consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance
- Follow all guidelines laid down by The Football Association and the club
- Hold the appropriate, valid qualifications
- Never exert undue influence over performers to obtain personal benefit or reward
- Never condone breaching of rules, use of prohibitive substances or rough play

Appendix 2 Code of Conduct for Parents / Carers

- Encourage your child to learn the rules and play within them
- Discourage unfair play and arguing with officials
- Help your child to recognise good performance, not just results
- Never force your child to take part in sport
- Set a good example by recognising fair play and applauding the good performances of all
- Never punish or belittle a child for losing or making mistakes
- Publicly accept officials' judgements
- Support your child's involvement and help them to enjoy their sport
- Use correct and proper language at all times

Appendix 3 Code of Conduct for Players

- Treat everyone how you would like to be treated - never deliberately upset a team mate or someone in your training group, even if they have made a mistake
- Always listen carefully to what your coach is asking you to do, particularly when they are talking about safety
- Always compete within the rules, and respect officials and their decisions
- Always respect opponents, and applaud good performances whether by your own team or by the opposition
- Never use bad language while training or competing
- Always tell your coach if you have an injury or feel unwell
- Keep to agreed timings for training and competition, or inform your coach / team manager if you are going to be late
- If you have to leave a training session / competition early, make sure that you have told your coach or team manager
- Wear suitable kit for training and competition, as agreed with your coach / team manager
- Do not smoke or take alcohol or drugs of any kind on the club premises or while representing the club at competitions
- If anything happens that you are concerned about, whether it relates to you or to someone else in the club, make sure that you tell your coach or another adult

Appendix 4 Club Child Welfare Officer -Designated Role

The Club Child Welfare Officer will:

- be the club's point of contact for the Football Association and other organisations to liaise with on Child Protection matters
- be the point of contact for all club members regarding any concerns or allegations
- implement the procedures outlined in the club's Child Protection Policy relating to any concerns or allegations, including making referrals to Social Care Services, Police and the Football Association as appropriate
- ensure that the club's register of coaches and volunteers is kept up-to-date
- arrange Child Protection Awareness training for all coaches / volunteers who work with junior club members, and keep records of attendance
- ensure that all coaches / volunteers who work with club members have been CRB-checked (or have completed a self-disclosure form as an interim measure) and that all records are stored securely and maintained in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act (see section on CRB checks)
- ensure that the club's Child Protection Policy and Codes of Conduct continue to be implemented, and are given to all new members/coaches and volunteers
- ensure that an up-to-date register of emergency / alternative contacts for all junior club members is kept, along with information about any medical conditions, and ensure that this is only available on a 'need to know' basis

The club child welfare officer is not responsible for investigating concerns / allegations or for deciding whether abuse has taken place. However, the club child protection officer is responsible for ensuring that concerns / allegations are reported to the relevant authorities

The Club Child welfare Officer should be given the following documents:

- The Club's Child Protection Policy
- The Club's Code of Conduct for Club Personnel
- The Club's Code of Conduct for Parents / Carers
- A register of the clubs' existing coaches and volunteers and the information currently held about them (level of qualification, copies of certificates etc.)
- Information about the details currently held for club members
- A sample reporting of Concerns Form
- A list of contacts for the relevant agencies for reporting concerns, asking advice and arranging training.

Appendix 5 Form for recording allegations or concerns about children

Please use this form as a prompt, recording any additional information on the back or on another sheet of paper.

PLEASE HANDWRITE YOUR NOTES—DO NOT TYPE THEM.

REMEMBER - your job is not to investigate, but to record accurately all information you receive or signs and symptoms you observe.

Baldock Town Youth Football Club
Appendix 5 Form for recording allegations or concerns about children.

Child's details (name, address:-

tel number, age or DOB):-

Child's parents or guardian's details(where known):-

Details of the person reporting the suspicion / Allegation / concern (this may be the child):-

Describe what the suspicion/allegation/concern is here:-

Describe fully any signs; symptoms you or others have observed (include here what the child has told you):-

Where did this occur (as far as you know):-

When did this happen (as far as you know):-

If some earlier signs/symptoms were noticed before today, when and where was this:-

Record details of anyone else who may have been present or have relevant information:-

Signed:-

Date:-

Position in club:-

Telephone Number:-

Baldock Town Youth FC

Permission Form

Everyone involved in our Club recognises the need to ensure the welfare and safety of our players, at all times.

As part of our commitment to ensure their well-being, we will request that photographs, video or other images are only taken with **the consent** of both the players and their parents.

As an accredited FA Charter Development Club, Baldock Town Youth FC commits to promoting and adhering to the FA's policy guidelines on '**The Use of Photographs and Recorded Images**' published by its Child Protection Department in March 2003.

This 'best practice' identifies 'Ten Golden Rules'. For more details visit www.thefa.com/TheFA/GOALChildProtection/Downloads/

1 All children must be appropriately dressed.

2 Photography or recording should focus on the activity not on a particular young person.

3 Images should focus on small groups rather than individuals.

4 Images of a child who is under a court order should never be used.

5 If a young person is named avoid using their photograph.

6 If a photograph is used avoid naming the person or use their first name only.

7 Makes sure parents / carers / players have signed have signed and returned this Permission Form.

8 Use photographs that represent the broad range of youngsters participating in football.

9 All concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported to the appropriate authority.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PLAYER

I am happy for my photograph to be used by Baldock Town YFC. I understand that it will be used to positively promote and celebrate the Club and my involvement with it on the website www.baldocktyfc.co.uk, in Club publications and in local newspapers. I understand that if at any time in the future I change my mind, I must give the Club seven days notice, after which the Club will not be permitted to use my picture.

FULL NAME (in BLOCK CAPS)

TEAM NAME

Or Manager's Name

SIGNATURE Date

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PARENT / GUARDIAN

I am happy for my child's image to be used by the Club to positively promote his/her involvement with the Club.

I also confirm that my child is not the subject of a court order. If I have any concerns about the way in which my child is being portrayed and or his/her image is being used, I will voice my concerns with the Club Chairman, Paul Clark 01462 893538 seeking action.

FULL NAME (in BLOCK CAPS)

SIGNATURE

Date