



CULLERCOATS FOOTBALL CLUB SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

1. Cullercoats Football Club acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care and is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all members. A child, or young person is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any club football activity. We subscribe to The Football Association's (The FA) Safeguarding Children – Policy and Procedures and endorse and adopt the Policy Statement contained in that document.
2. The key principles of The FA Safeguarding Children Policy are that:
 - the child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration
 - all children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse, regardless of their age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, faith, or belief
 - 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

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

3. Cullercoats Football 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, neglect, or bullying. It is noted and accepted that the Football Association's Safeguarding Children Regulations (see FA Handbook) applies to everyone in football, whether in a paid, or voluntary capacity. This means whether you are a volunteer, match official, parent helper, football coach, club official, or medical staff.
4. We endorse and adopt The FA's Responsible Recruitment guidelines for recruiting volunteers and we will:
 - specify what the role is and what tasks it involve
 - request identification documents

- as a minimum, meet and chat with the applicant(s) and where possible interview people before appointing them
- ask for and follow up with two references before appointing someone (effective from 1 January 2021)
- where eligible, require an FA accepted Enhanced Criminal Record Check (CRC) with Barring List Check in line with current FA policy and regulations

All current football club members working in eligible roles, with children and young people - such as managers and coaches are required to hold an in-date FA accepted Enhanced CRC with Barring List check as part of responsible recruitment practice.

If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved, or who has approached us to become part of the Club, guidance will be sought from The Football Association (FA). It is noted and accepted that The FA will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained via the CRC process and that all suitability decisions will be made in accordance with legislation and 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 to minimise the risk of 'grooming' within football.

5. The Club supports The FA's Whistle Blowing Policy. Any adult, or young person with concerns about an adult in a position of trust within football can 'whistle blow' by contacting The FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 1691863, by writing to The FA Case Manager at The Football Association, Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London SW1P 9EQ, by emailing 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. The Club has appointed a Safeguarding & 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 the County FA (CFA) 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. 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 and, in cases of serious bullying, the County FA Welfare Officer may be contacted.
8. **Respect** codes of conduct for Players, Parents/ Spectators, Officials and Coaches have been implemented by the Club. In order to validate these **Respect** codes of conduct the Club has clear actions it will take regarding repeated, or serious misconduct at Club level and acknowledges the possibility of potential sanctions which may be implemented by the County FA in more serious circumstances.

9. Reporting your concerns about the welfare of a child, or young person are essential in safeguarding them. **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.**

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

- If the issue is one of poor practice the Club Welfare Officer will either:
 - deal with the matter themselves, or
 - seek advice from the County FA Welfare Officer

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

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

- 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 County FA Welfare Officer directly

 - contact The FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 1691863, or Safeguarding@TheFA.com

 - contact the Police, or Children's Social Care

 - call the NSPCC 24 hour Helpline for advice on 0808 8005000, text 88858, or email help@nspcc.org.uk

NB – The FA's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures are available via – **www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding** – click on 'Raising Awareness – Best Practice Downloads', the Policy and Procedures document is within the resources area.

The policy outlines in detail what to do if you are concerned about the welfare of a child and includes flow diagrams which describe this process. How to make a referral is also covered in the Safeguarding Children workshop. Participants are given the opportunity to discuss how this feels and how best they can prepare themselves to deal with such a situation. For more information on this workshop contact your County Welfare Officer.

10. Further advice on Safeguarding Children matters can be obtained from:

- **Gary Stephenson (Club Safeguarding & Welfare Officer)**

Telephone: 07810 655483

Email: gary.stephenson@cullercoatsfc.co.uk

- **Ray Johnstone (County FA Welfare Officer)**

Telephone: 0191 2700700, or 07736 924862

Email: CountyWO@northumberlandfa.com

- www.TheFA.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding
- Emailing – Safeguarding@TheFA.com
- The FA Safeguarding Children general enquiry line - 0845 210 8080



Gary Stephenson
Safeguarding & Welfare Officer

Dated: 4 January 2021

