



Child Protection Policy

In accordance with the rules of the Football Association, Lancashire Football Association, Bolton Bury and District Football League, Horwich RMI Football Club has always maintained a full set of Club Rules which are issued to each parent and a signed registration/receipt secured. Horwich RMI Football Club are committed fully to the requirements of the FA's Child Protection Policy and Equalities Policy and have appointed an officer, in accordance with the Policies, to act as the first line of approach for any persons who may have cause for complaint as specified.

The FA Child Protection Policy

Every child and young person who plays football shall be able to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. We recognize, however, that child abuse is a very emotive and difficult subject. It is important to understand the feelings involved but not to allow them to interfere with our judgement about any action to take.

The Football Association recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical or emotional harm and from neglect and bullying. It is determined to meet its obligation to ensure that those clubs and organizations providing football opportunities for children and young people do so, to the highest possible standards of care.

Clear practices and procedures, in addition to continuous training opportunities, will ensure that everyone knows exactly what is expected of them in relation to the protection of children and young people within our sport. It is essential that those children and young people attracted to and participating in football are able to do so in a quality, safe and enjoyable environment.

The aims of the FA Child Protection Policy are:

- To develop a positive and pro-active position in order to protect all children and young people who play football enabling them to play in a safe environment.
- To deliver quality assured child protection training and build a network of tutors to facilitate this delivery, in conjunction with, and supported by, the NSPCC.
- To demonstrate best practice in the area of child protection.
- To demonstrate ethics and high standards throughout football.

The key principles underpinning this policy are that:

The child's welfare is, and always must be, the paramount consideration.

All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse, regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual identity.

All suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately working in partnership with children and young people and their parents/careers is essential. Social Services Departments have a statutory responsibility to ensure the welfare of children & young people.

The FA is committed to working together with Social Services Departments and local Child Protection Committees (ACPC) in accordance with their procedures.

The FA's Regulations on child protection as defined in the FA Handbook

1. Any act, statement, conduct or other matter that harms a child or children, or poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children, shall constitute behaviour which is improper and brings the game into disrepute.
2. In these regulations the expression "Offence shall mean one or more of the offences contained in Schedule 1 to the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 and any other criminal offence which reasonably causes the Association to believe that the person accused of the offence poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children.
3. Upon receipt, by the Association of:
 - 3.1. notification that an individual has been charged with an offence or,
 - 3.2. notification that an individual is subject to an investigation by the police, Social Services or any other authority relating to an offence
 - 3.3. any information that causes the Association to reasonably believe that a person poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children, then The Association shall have the power to order that individual to be suspended from all or specific football activity for such period and on such terms and conditions that it thinks fit.
4. In reaching its determination as to whether an order under Regulation 2 should be made, the Association shall give consideration, *inter alia* to the following factors:-
 - 4.1. whether a child is or children are or may be at risk of harm
 - 4.2. whether the matters are of a serious nature
 - 4.3. whether an order is necessary or desirable to allow the conduct of any investigation by the Association or any other authority or body to proceed unimpeded.
5. The period of an order referred to in 2 above shall not be capable of lasting beyond the date upon which any charge under the Rules of the Association or any offence is decided or brought to an end.
6. Where an order is imposed on an individual under regulation 2 above, The Association shall bring and conclude any proceedings under the Rules of the Association against the person relating to the matters as soon as reasonably practicable.
7. Where a person is convicted or is made the subject of a caution in respect of an Offence that shall constitute a breach of the Rules of the Association and the Association shall have the power to order the suspension of the person from all or specific football for such periods (including indefinitely) and on such terms and conditions as it think fit.
8. For the purposes of these regulations, the Association shall act through its Council or any committee or sub-committee thereof, including the Board.
9. Notification in writing of an order referred to above shall be given to the person concerned and/or any club with which he/she is associated, as soon as reasonably practicable.

The Horwich RMI Football Club is committed to creating and preserving the safest possible environment for children to play football.

It is the duty of all Members, Club Officials, Team Managers, Coaches and any other individuals directly or indirectly involved with the youth of this club to be aware of and help prevent the abuse which children can suffer, be it neglect, physical, verbal, sexual or emotional.

Horwich RMI Football Club accepts children's welfare is paramount and all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender or religious belief, have the right to protection from abuse.

Forms of Abuse, Signs to look for.

Possible Indicators of Sexual Abuse

Pain, itching bruising or bleeding to genital area
Stomach Pains
Discomfort when walking
Unexplained sources of money
Inappropriate sexual drawings/language/behaviour

Possible Indicators of Physical Abuse

Aggressive or withdrawn
Fear of one person
Unexplained or untreated injuries
Injuries on unlikely or unusual parts of the body, cigarette burns, bites or belt marks, scalds
Fear of parents being contacted, going home or receiving medical advice
Flinching when touched, refusal to discuss injury
Covering arms or legs

Possible indicators of emotional abuse

Over-reaction to mistakes
Sudden speech disorders
Extremes of emotions
Self mutilation
Poor personal hygiene

Possible indicators of abuse by neglect

Constantly hungry
Inappropriate clothing or dress
Constantly tired, lonely, no friends
Underweight
No parental support or interest
Disheveled appearance

There may not be any signs but you may just feel that something is wrong. If you are worried, it is not your responsibility to decide if it is abuse, but **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ACT ON YOUR CONCERNS AND DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.**

What should I do and what should I not do?

This question is often asked by those dealing with young people. If a child becomes distressed having tripped and banged their knee, should I give them a hug to re-assure them or will everybody think that I am a paedophile?

The answers are simple and are set out below.

As for the example stated above, if you do not show normal adult concern for a youngster in distress then you are depriving them of normal adult caring and concern and acting in breach of the “duty of care” that you have for them.

You should always however, stay within the guidelines listed overleaf.

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS

Treat all players and children with respect and dignity befitting of their age, watch your language, tone of voice and where you put your body.

YOU SHOULD NEVER

Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay.

Allow or engage in inappropriate or intrusive touching of any kind.

Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.

Make sexually suggestive comments to a child even in fun.

Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded, always act.

Invade the privacy of children when they are changing, showering or going to the toilet.

YOU SHOULD AVOID

Doing things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves e.g. help with getting changed.

Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.

Taking children alone on car journeys, however short.

Taking children to your home.

Where these situations are unavoidable, first seek parental consent where possible. If unable to speak to the parents, always inform them of the circumstances as soon as possible.

WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD DISCLOSES ABUSE

Understand that this may be the only time that the child has built up the courage to tell someone what has happened.

Stop what you are doing and respect the child’s privacy

Stay calm and re-assuring

Listen to what they tell you, tell them that whatever the circumstances they are not to blame.

Do not react in a way that may add to the child’s distress e.g. anger or shock

Explain that you cannot promise to keep what the child tells you a secret, you may have to tell someone else.

Do not question the child in depth, do not ask leading questions i.e. questions that need a “yes” or “no” answer

Only ask questions to establish exactly what was done and who did it.

Tell the child that you are pleased they decided to tell someone and that they are absolutely right to do so.

Let the child know that you understand how difficult it is to talk about such experiences.

Inform the Team Manager (unless implicated)

Contact the Horwich RMI Football Club Child Protection Officer, Colin Myers, on 01204 460084 without delay.

Do not contact parents until you have received advice.

Make an accurate record of the time and date and exactly what was said.

CONTACTS

In the first instance, Horwich RMI FC has appointed Colin Myers as the Child Protection Officer who can be contacted on **01204 460084**. Colin has details of all local sources of assistance and advice.

Advice or assistance can be obtained from the Greater Manchester Police Child Protection Unit on **0161 872 5050**.

Social Services will be listed in the local telephone directory.

Child Line, a national charity, operate a twenty four hour helpline – **0800 1111**.

NSPCC also operate a twenty four hour child protection helpline – **0800 800 500**. Their textphone service is **0800 056 0566**

The Football Association has joined forces with NSPCC to operate a helpline – **0800 800 5000**

Barnados operate a helpline – **0208 550 8822**

Samaritans twenty four hour helpline is **0345 909090** or textline **08457 909192**.

This page is primarily designed for help where child abuse is involved, in some instances abuse may also involve a partner as well as children.

Help may be obtained in cases of domestic violence from the Women's Aid National Helpline – **0345 023468**.

Rape Crisis Centre offers assistance in cases of rape or sexual abuse – **0207 837 1600**

Many offences are committed by persons who have not previously been charged with an offence or been the subject of an investigation or intelligence gathering operation before. Statistics show that 80% of offences are committed by individuals who are known to the victim. All of this serves to illustrate why Education is the key part of this initiative.