



Ballykeel Youth Football Club Safeguarding Children Policy

1. Ballykeel Youth 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.

2. The key principles of 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 and abuse. Ballykeel Youth Football Club recognises that this is the responsibility of every adult involved in our club.

3. Ballykeel Youth 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 and from neglect or bullying. It is noted and accepted that The Football Association's Safeguarding Children Regulations (see The FA Handbook) applies to everyone in football whether in a paid or voluntary capacity. This means whether you are a volunteer, match official, helper on club tours, football coach, club official or medical staff.

4. We endorse and adopt responsible Recruitment guidelines for recruiting volunteers and we will:

- Specify what the role is and what tasks it involves
- 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 2 references before appointing someone
- Where eligible require an Access NI Check. 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 Access NI certificate. If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached us to become part of Football Club guidance will be sought from The Football Association. It is noted and accepted that the club will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained 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 club 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. Football Club has appointed a Club Welfare Officer which requires completion of the Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officers Workshop. The post holder will be involved with Welfare Officer training provided by local Football Authority. 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.

6. We acknowledge and endorse 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 Child Welfare Officer may be contacted.

7. Respect codes of conduct for Players, Parents/Spectators, Officials and Coaches have been implemented by Football 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 Local Football Authority in more serious circumstances.

9. 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. 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
- If the concern is more serious i.e possible child abuse, the Child Welfare officer must immediately contact the Police or Children's Social Care.
- If the child needs immediate medical treatment call an ambulance and tell them this is a child protection concern. The Child Welfare Officer will inform the Club committee.