

**FC HALIFAX TOWN FOUNDATION**

**SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION**  
**POLICY**

December 2019

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## 1. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND STATEMENT

*FC Halifax Town Community Group* is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. *FC Halifax Town Community Group* acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

Paid staff and volunteers will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Safeguard all children/young people who come into contact with initiatives and programmes delivered by FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group.
- To safeguard all staff, volunteers and partners in carrying out their duties in delivering initiatives and programmes of the football club and community group.
- To set out clear guidelines for the handling of safeguarding concerns to ensure that all disclosures, referrals and monitoring are handled with sensitivity and professionalism in ways that support the child, young person or adult at risk.

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group has incorporated child protection into the organisational approach to safeguarding and the term safeguarding is deemed to include child protection in all policies and procedures.

All staff, volunteers and associates must comply fully with this policy at all times to promote the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk who encounter our activities in any capacity.

**In implementing this child protection policy** FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group **will:**

1. Ensure that all workers understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation;
2. Ensure that all workers understand their responsibility to work to the standards that are detailed in the organisation's safeguarding procedures and work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice;
3. Ensure that all workers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to the FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group named person for child protection;
4. Ensure that the named person understands his/her responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies;
5. Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner the procedures for making a referral to the Designated Local Authority Officer (LADO) are followed if concerns about a worker are identified;
6. Provide opportunities for all workers to develop their skills and knowledge, particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people.
7. We will review our child protection policy and procedures annually to make sure they are still relevant and effective.

8. FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group are committed to policies and action to ensure that those who are employed in paid or voluntary capacity and the people it serves, are not discriminated on the basis of disability, race, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender.
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## **2. Definitions**

The following definitions apply to the care and support provided to those involved in the activities of FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group.

### ***Child***

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years (the Children Act 1989, Education Act 2002).

### ***Abuse***

“Abuse” relates to the mistreatment of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons and may consist of single or repeated acts. Incidents of abuse can be to either one person or more than one person at a time. Abuse and/or harmful behaviours can be either deliberate or the result of negligence, ignorance, lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Somebody may abuse or neglect an individual by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm.

### ***Physical Abuse***

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Providing children with inappropriate drugs or poison or alcohol or fail to prevent access to these substances. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

### ***Emotional Abuse***

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. Frequently taunt, criticise, bully or pressurise children to perform to high expectations or to attain standards that they are clearly not able to reach. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. Showing a persistent lack of love, affection or attention. Showing constant overprotection preventing children from socialising. All forms of abuse are emotionally abusive.

### ***Bullying***

Bullying (including cyber bullying) can cause children to feel frightened, in danger, feel bad or unwanted. It includes situations in which people deliberately:

- Physically abuse e.g. hit, strike, kick or steal.
- Verbally abuse e.g. make racist, sexist or homophobic remarks, threaten or other name calling.
- Emotionally abuse e.g. isolate a player in training or playing, repeatedly undermine and consistently criticise.

Bullying may target children seen as ‘different’ for example from certain cultures or with a disability and can be discriminatory bullying.

### ***Sexual Abuse***

Sexual abuse is where people use children online or offline to meet their own sexual needs such as:

- Forcing enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- The activities may involve inappropriate physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts (touching) or inappropriate medical treatment.
- They may also include non-contact activities, such as pornographic material, sexting or requesting or sharing inappropriate images.
- Inappropriate photography or images of children.

### **Grooming**

Grooming is a process when someone builds relationship with a child to gain their trust for the purpose of sexual abuse. Children can be groomed online or face to face, by stranger, friend or person they meet online. In football a child can be groomed by any adult who can form a relationship with them, for example a coach, a scout or a mentor. Grooming can happen very quickly especially online.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, warmth, health, clothing, shelter.
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision.
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Working Together 2018 describes other types of Safeguarding Concerns including:

Contextual Safeguarding where children may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their families. These threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online. These threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including: exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as; trafficking, online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

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### **3. All Members of Staff**

**FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group** staff (paid or unpaid) have the responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and to pass on welfare concerns following the required procedures. All staff/volunteers must recognise that safeguarding disclosures are confidential.

Under the guidance of the Safeguarding/Welfare Officer all staff members whether paid or unpaid and appropriate to role recognise the need to undertake safeguarding training and refresh this training every three-years. FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group and Trustees will commit resources for induction and continued training of staff appropriate to their role.

Trustees have responsibility to ensure the Safeguarding policy is in place and appropriate to meet the needs of the organisation and ensure the policy is accessible to all trustees, staff members and beneficiaries.

Trustees and Safeguarding or Welfare Officer to ensure the policy is reviewed on a yearly basis and develop and maintain effective links with relevant agencies.

Working alongside relevant agencies (FA, Local Authority, FC Halifax Tow Ltd) the Safeguarding Officer will keep up to date with local arrangements for Safeguarding to ensure the policy remains appropriate.

All members of staff are responsible for their own knowledge of the following policies and must be aware of the systems that support:

- Anti-bullying policy
- Behaviour policy
- Player and staff codes of conduct
- Health and safety policy

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group recognise that involvement in situations where there is a risk or actual harm can be stressful for staff concerned. The organisation will endeavour to put the mechanisms in place when support is needed.

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#### **4. The Safeguarding Policy in Action**

The following information provides guidance on how to identify a safeguarding concern, and how to report a safeguarding concern.

Any child at risk may benefit from early help and support but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled or has specific additional needs;
- Has special educational needs (with or without an Education Health and Care Plan);
- Is a young carer;
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- Is in a family circumstance that presents challenges, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- Has returned home to their family from care;
- Is a privately fostered child;
- Has moved away from their family; living with a host family.

All staff should be familiar with the indicators of abuse and should ensure that they have read the descriptions of different types of abuse.

#### ***Disclosures, Signs and Indicators***

There are numerous ways in which concerns about a child or young person's safety can come to light. For example:

- A child or young person alleges that abuse has taken place or that they feel unsafe;
- A third party or anonymous allegation is received;
- A child or young person reports an incident(s) of alleged abuse which occurred some time ago;
- A report is made regarding the serious misconduct of a worker towards a child or young person.

Whilst abuse might not always be seen taking place there are typical signs of abuse, some are explicit and specific to that type of abuse, others are more general and can happen everyday and have a genuine reason. Signs and indicators may include:

- A child or young person's appearance; kit is not washed, child is unkempt, medication missing, or loss or gain of weight for no apparent reason.
- Behaviour or language inappropriate for age, for example sexually explicit language, drawings or statements.
- Change of behaviour; withdrawal, isolation, loss of interest, anxiety or silence.
- Unexplained bruising, injuries, marks or cuts that could be self harm.

Many children and young people will exhibit some of these indicators at some time and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may well be other

reasons. Your knowledge of a child over a period of time may help you to understand whether there is at least some cause for you to be concerned.

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## 5. A Named Person(s) for Child Protection

**FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group** has an appointed individual who is responsible for dealing with any child protection concerns. In their absence, a deputy will always be available for workers to consult with.

Club Welfare Officer  
Tony Allan  
01422 341 222  
[tonyallan@fchalifaxtown.com](mailto:tonyallan@fchalifaxtown.com)

Steve Nichol  
01422 341 222  
07572 154 200  
[stevenichol@fchalifaxtown.com](mailto:stevenichol@fchalifaxtown.com)

The role and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:

- To ensure that all staff are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person maybe subject to abuse or neglect.
- Ensure that any concern about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- To receive any information relating to concerns allegations against staff and volunteers who have contact with children and young people and liaise with the LADO as required
- The Named Person(s) will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Child Protection policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential.

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## 6. Confidentiality and Reporting

All staff/volunteers have a responsibility to report safeguarding matters following the required channels. This could include suspicions of abuse when changes are observed in a child or young person's behaviour, physical contact or appearance. Alternatively it could be a disclosure of information.

Once reported, safeguarding issues are confidential and staff/volunteers must not discuss them with anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding Team, their line managers and multi-agency support representatives as appropriate.

Staff have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk. All staff must be aware that they cannot compromise a child, young person or adult at risk by keeping secret information that may compromise the safety of that person or another in their care.

### Stage 1

- Remain calm, take it seriously;
- Reassure the child/young person;
- Don't make promises not to tell;
- Ask open questions (not leading questions) but keep questions to a minimum; use them to clarify what you've been told;

- Explain to children and young people that any information they have given will have to be shared with others, if this indicates they and or other children are at risk of harm;
- Make a full record of what was said, seen or heard. Remember the 4 Ws; *who, what, where and when*;
- Respect confidentiality and file documents securely;
- Follow the appropriate channels of reporting disclosures. If the designated person(s) isn't available go straight to Children's Services or the Police. The NSPCC 24-hour helpline can provide support/direction **0800 800 5000**.

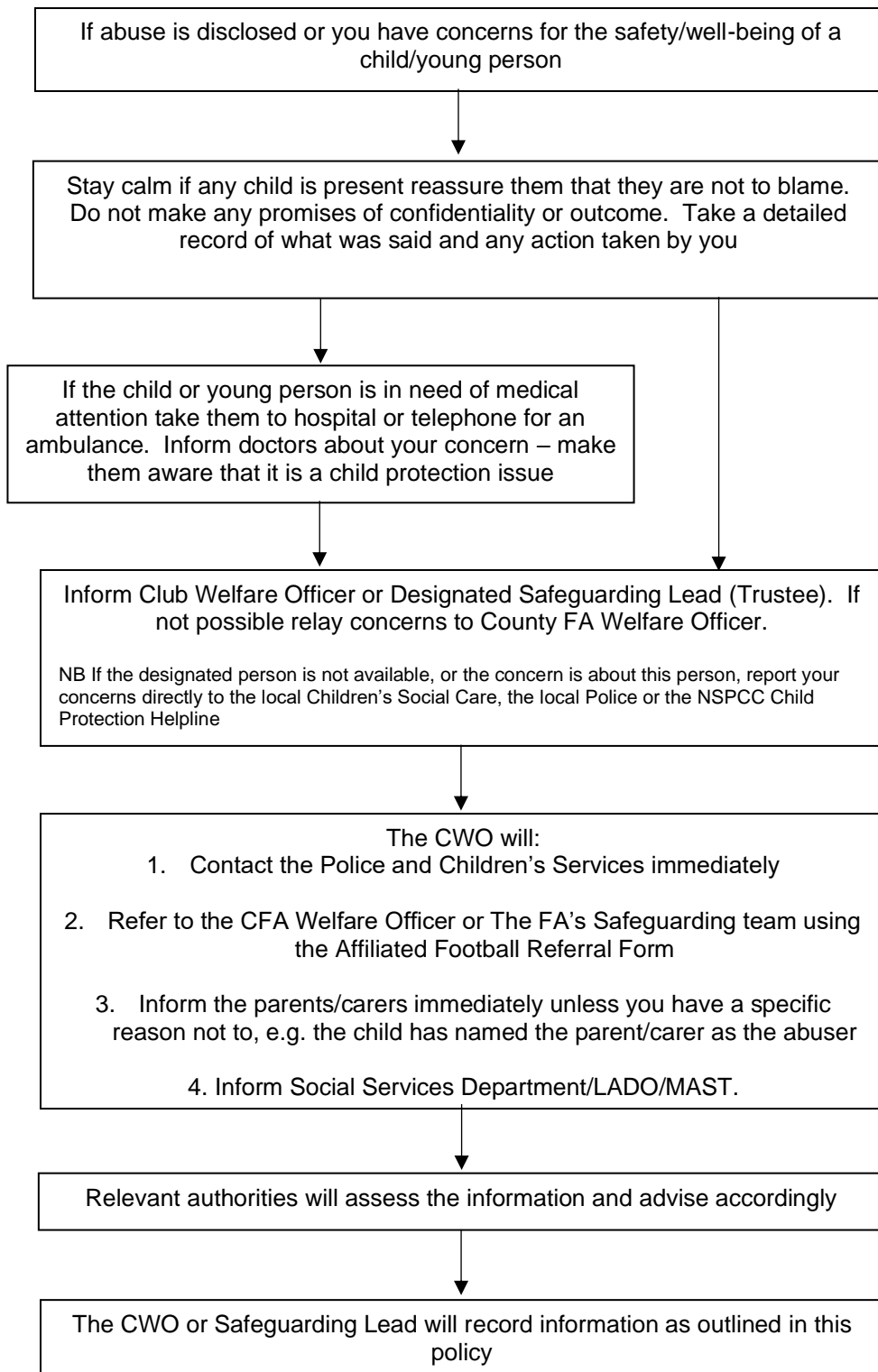
Remember; never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child/young person talks about matters that may be indicative of abuse; it is the responsibility of staff/volunteers to report potential abuse not to investigate it.

## **Stage 2**

- The Named person(s) will take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the Named Person will contact Calderdale Children's Social Care for advice or to make a referral.
- Call MAST (Multi-Agency Screening Team): **01422 393 336** (in normal working hours)
- Out of hours call the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on: **01422 288 000**



### FLOW CHART: Dealing with concerns or disclosures



**If, however, your club is run as a school activity you should follow the school's child protection procedures as normal and then notify the Club Welfare Officer at FC Halifax Town Community Group.**

**\*If, however, the person in charge of the organisation, club, school or academy is the subject of your concern, you should inform the Social Services Department and/or Police.**

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## 7. Managing Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff or Volunteer

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group will ensure that any allegations made against a member(s) of staff or volunteers will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

- Staff/volunteers should listen carefully to what the child says, but not ask detailed questions;
- Staff/volunteers must ensure that the child is safe and away from the person against who the allegation is made;
- The named person for child protection should be informed immediately. In the case of an allegation involving the Named Person for Child Protection, the Safeguarding Deputy Lead should be contacted. If this person isn't available contact the local Social Services Department or Police;
- The named person should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO - based within Calderdale Safeguarding & Quality Assurance Services: 01422 394086) to discuss their intentions to manage the immediate situation, followed by a written referral (where appropriate) to [CP.Admin@calderdale.gov.uk](mailto:CP.Admin@calderdale.gov.uk). Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice and/or in the event of an emergency situation arising, the Police;
- The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The Named Person for Child Protection within the Group (if appropriate) can support the staff member/volunteer during this process but must not complete the report but the member of staff/volunteer must complete the report. This report must be made available on request from either the Police and/or Calderdale Children's Social Care.

Regardless of whether a police and/or Calderdale Children's Social Care investigation follows, FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident. Any actions should be discussed with the LADO to avoid compromising the Police or a child protection investigation.

### **Whistleblowing**

If despite reporting safeguarding concerns you feel that the situation has not changed or you still have cause for concern you should whistleblow by contacting:

**Safeguarding@thefa.com**

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## 8. Safe Recruitment & Supervision of Staff/Volunteers

The checklist below outlines FC Halifax Town Community Group's procedures for the employment and supervision of staff.

### Essential staff/volunteers are:

- Willing and able to provide relevant references;
- Willing to update skills and knowledge;
- Previous experience of working with children;
- Knowledge of, and positive attitudes to, equal opportunities;
- Commitment to treat all children as individuals and with equal concern;
- Physical health – appropriate to carry out tasks;
- Mental stability, integrity and flexibility;
- Completion of the DBS process\*;
- A member of the FA Licensed Coaches Club;
- Completed an FA or equivalent Child Protection workshop;
- Completed an FA or equivalent First Aid workshop.

### Desirable

- Knowledge of child protection issues;\*\*
- Knowledge of child protection legislation (as appropriate);\*\*
- Relevant football knowledge and understanding.\*\*

\*If there are concerns that an employee/volunteer should not be working with children the concern will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

\*\*If an interested individual does not currently have knowledge of child protection issues or child protection legislation this can be addressed initially by FC Halifax Town's Community Group safeguarding policy and FA child protection and best practice workshop. If any person is considered not to be a fit and proper person to work with children, his or her application should be refused.

### Post Appointment Decisions & Staff Supervision

It is important that once a new staff member or volunteer has been recruited follow up action is taken:

- Any qualifications should be substantiated e.g. requesting photocopies of coaching certificates;
- New staff/volunteers are inducted including safeguarding policy and procedures, best practice guidelines and codes of conduct
- Training needs are established and actioned;
- The roles and responsibilities of the new staff member/volunteer are signed up to;
- A period of supervision/observation or mentoring is used to support the new member of staff/volunteer. A three month probation period will be implemented for new staff/volunteers to ensure that they are conducting themselves appropriately and seeking to promote the well-being and safety of children/young people at all times.

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## 9. Recording and Managing Confidential Information

It is vital to recognise that FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group will share information with relevant safeguarding partners in order to support a child or adult at risk.

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. If/when required we will be proactive in sharing information with local agencies as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children at risk.

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group recognises the legal obligations as defined by the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR and will ensure that personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and stored securely.

It is also important to recognise that the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of safeguarding children and individuals at risk.

Any information collected will:

- Be collected for a specific purpose;
- Relevant and limited to what is necessary;
- Accurate and up to date;
- Kept no longer than is necessary for the original purpose;
- Stored and disposed of securely.

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## 10. Photography and Recorded Images

We recognise that:

- Sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation;
- The welfare of the children and young people taking part in our activities is paramount;
- Children, their parents and carers have a right to decide whether their images are taken and how these may be used;
- Consent to take images of children is only meaningful when children, their parents and carers understand how the images will be used and stored, and are fully aware of the potential risks associated with the use and distribution of these images;
- There are potential risks associated with sharing images of children online.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Always asking for written consent from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image (see attached pro-forma);
- Explaining what images will be used for and how they will be stored;
- Never publishing personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information;
- Only using images of children in appropriate clothing;
- Using images that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity;
- Focus on the activity rather than the individual.

Storing images:

We will store photographs and videos of children securely. Hard copies of images will be kept in a locked drawer and electronic images in a protected folder with restricted access.

Images will be kept for no longer than required for the original purpose.

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## 11. Professional Boundaries

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group expects staff to protect the professional integrity of themselves and the organisation. The modelling of good practice through all aspects of our work will be setting a standard within the organisation and beneficiaries. Difficulties can arise when certain poor behaviours or language become acceptable. The following boundaries must be adhered to:

- **Giving and receiving gifts:** FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group does not allow paid or unpaid staff to give or receive gifts from clients or beneficiaries. Exceptions will be made to this boundary at Christmas time on the basis of it being a token gesture and declared by staff. However gifts may be provided by the organisation as part of a planned activity.

- **Appropriate appearance:** staff should dress in ways that is appropriate to the role they undertake. This means that staff members should; (i) wear clothing appropriate to role and compliant with professional standards (ii) wear clothing that is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or provocative and (iii) wear clothing that does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.
- **Staff contact with user groups:** a personal relationship between a member of staff (paid or unpaid) and a client/beneficiary who is a current service user is prohibited. This includes relationships through social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and any other sites.
- **Use of appropriate language:** use language that is directly related to the context, activity and environment. Staff should avoid swearing or the use of language that is (or could be misinterpreted as being) racist, sexist, derogatory, threatening, abusive or sexualised in tone.

If professional boundaries and/or policies are breached this could result in disciplinary procedures.

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## 12. Digital Communications with Children (under 18s)

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group encourages the appropriate use of social media related to the organisations activities and to communicate with players (via their parents/carers when under-16).

Whatever way we communicate with children the safeguarding principles remain the same. Retaining boundaries is just as important online as it is offline.

Staff (paid and unpaid) should make sure communications to children are relevant to your role and focused on the organisation's activities.

### Communication with under 16-year olds

Communication should be directly to parents. If communication groups are formed under 16-year olds can be included alongside parents/carers.

### Communicating directly with 16-17 years olds

Due to the nature of work FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group recognises the need to communicate directly with 16-17-year olds. The following practices should be followed:

- Communication should be via email and mobile phone (text/WhatsApp) communications. WhatsApp groups should be set up as a broadcast group only.
- Signed parental/carer consent should be given prior to email and mobile phone communications with young people. Staff who will be communicating in this way should be named. The purpose for the communication should be made clear.
  - Both parties to only communicate for the purpose of the identified professional role(s) and communication should be specific to related activities only.
  - Email and/or social media (e.g. WhatsApp) communications between the parties should copy in either the parent/carer, other staff member or Welfare Officer.
  - If any inappropriate communication or content is shared between an adult and an under-18-year-old, this must be reported immediately to the Welfare Officer.

### Communicating over social media

DON'T:

- Use digital communications for personal conversation, to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with pupils outside the purposes of their work.

- Respond to digital communications from children other than those directly related to professional matters.
- Not give out their personal contact details or details of any social media or digital identities. Staff SHOULD use specific work email addresses or phone numbers.
- Unless a child or young person is a direct relation, you should not:
- Accept as a friend, players, or referees under the age of 18 on social networking sites of which they are members.
- Share their own personal social networking sites with children or young people involved in youth football.
- Make contact with children or young people known through football outside of the football context on social networking sites.
- Use internet or web-based communications to send personal messages of a non-football nature to a child or young person.
- Engage in any personal communications, 'banter' or comments.

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### **13. Transporting under 18s**

If a staff member is required to transport an under 18-year-old as part of their work then the need for this has to be agreed by the CWO, and a risk assessment must be carried out to manage any known risks.

Staff should never offer to transport under 18-year olds outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk.

Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort.

Staff must make sure that their behaviour and all arrangements for transporting the child ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety. This includes having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven.

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### **14. Reviewing Policies and Procedures**

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Community Group are committed to reviewing our policy annually. The policy will be signed by Trustees and the Safeguarding/Welfare officer and any changes/amendments will be shared with staff/volunteers.

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### **15. Confirmation of Understanding**

I confirm that I have been made fully aware of, and understand the contents of, the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for FC Halifax Town Foundation. Please complete the details below.

Name:

Signature:

Date: