

FC HALIFAX TOWN FOUNDATION

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy & Statement

FC Halifax Town Foundation 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 Foundation* acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

All staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners 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 Foundation.
- To safeguard all staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees 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 Foundation 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, work placement students, trustees and partners 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 Foundation will:

1. Ensure that all staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation;
2. Ensure that all staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners understand their responsibility to work to the standards that are detailed in the organisation's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures and work at all times towards maintaining high standards of practice;
3. Ensure that all staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners conduct towards a child/young person, to the FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation named person for child protection;
 - Club Welfare officer: Steve Nichol: 07572 154 200: stevenichol@fchalifaxtown.com
 - Safeguarding Trustee: Sarah Maligranda : sarah.maligranda@yahoo.co.uk
4. Ensure that the named person understands their responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies;
5. Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner. The procedures for

making a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) are followed if concerns about a worker are identified;

6. Provide opportunities for all staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners to develop their skills and knowledge, particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people.
7. We will review our safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures annually to make sure they are still relevant and effective.
8. FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation 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.

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 Foundation.

Child

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

The following definitions are taken from - ***“Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018”***

Abuse

“A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.”

Physical Abuse

“A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.”

Emotional Abuse

“The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.”

Sexual Abuse

"Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children."

Neglect

"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 or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- 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.

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.

Grooming

Grooming is a process when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so that can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked.

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 take place over a short or long period of time – from weeks to years. Grooming can happen very quickly especially online. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

Peer-on-peer abuse

This is abuse perpetrated child on child - often referred to as peer-on-peer abuse. It can happen both inside and outside of school
It includes, but is not limited to:

- physical and sexual abuse
- sexual harassment and violence
- emotional harm
- on and offline bullying
- teenage relationship abuse

It can even include grooming children for sexual and criminal exploitation

Peer-on-peer abuse that involves sexual assault and violence must always result in a multi-agency response. As well as supporting and protecting the victim, professionals need to consider whether the perpetrator could be a victim of abuse too. It is known that children who develop harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced abuse and neglect themselves.

If staff have any concerns regarding peer on peer abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviors between peers.

Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Initiation Ceremonies / Hazing / Rituals

Broadly defined Initiation Ceremonies / Hazing is an act against someone joining or maintaining membership to an organization, the act is humiliating, intimidating, or demeaning and may endanger the health and/or safety of those involved. It may be, but not limited to psychological, sexual, and physical abuse. In some cases the victim may appear to be a willing participant, this does not change the fact that hazing or an initiation ceremony has occurred.

This behaviour ultimately attempts to initiate the victim into the group, in contrast to bullying, which aims to alienate the target. Hazing can take place in a face to face context but also on-line.

Who this policy relates to

All Members of Staff, Volunteers, Work placement students, Trustees and Partners

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners 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 report any safeguarding 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, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners and appropriate to role recognise the need to undertake safeguarding training and refresh this training, at least, 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, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners are responsible for their own knowledge of the following policies and must be aware of the systems that support:

- Anti-bullying policy – where are these policies?
- Behaviour policy
- Player and staff codes of conduct
- Health and safety policy

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation 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.

Process / Procedures

The Safeguarding Policy in Action

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

All children and young people may benefit from early help and support but all staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners 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, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners 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; this could be becoming withdrawal, isolation, loss of interest, anxiety or silence. Or it could be becoming more extrovert, showing sign of aggression -for example.

- 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.

Named Person(s) for Child Protection & Safeguarding Concerns

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation 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 - Steve Nichol
01422 341 222
07572 154 200
stevenichol@fchalifaxtown.com

Trustee with Safeguarding Responsibility:

Sarah Maligranda
sarahmaligranda@yahoo.co.uk

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
- To 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.

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.

All Staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners have a responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk. All staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners must be aware that they cannot compromise a child, young person or adult at risk by failing to share or withhold 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 that you believe them
- Don't make promises you cannot keep
- Ask open questions (not leading questions), 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*. Sign and date this record.
- Respect confidentiality and store documents securely.

Follow the appropriate channels of reporting disclosure:

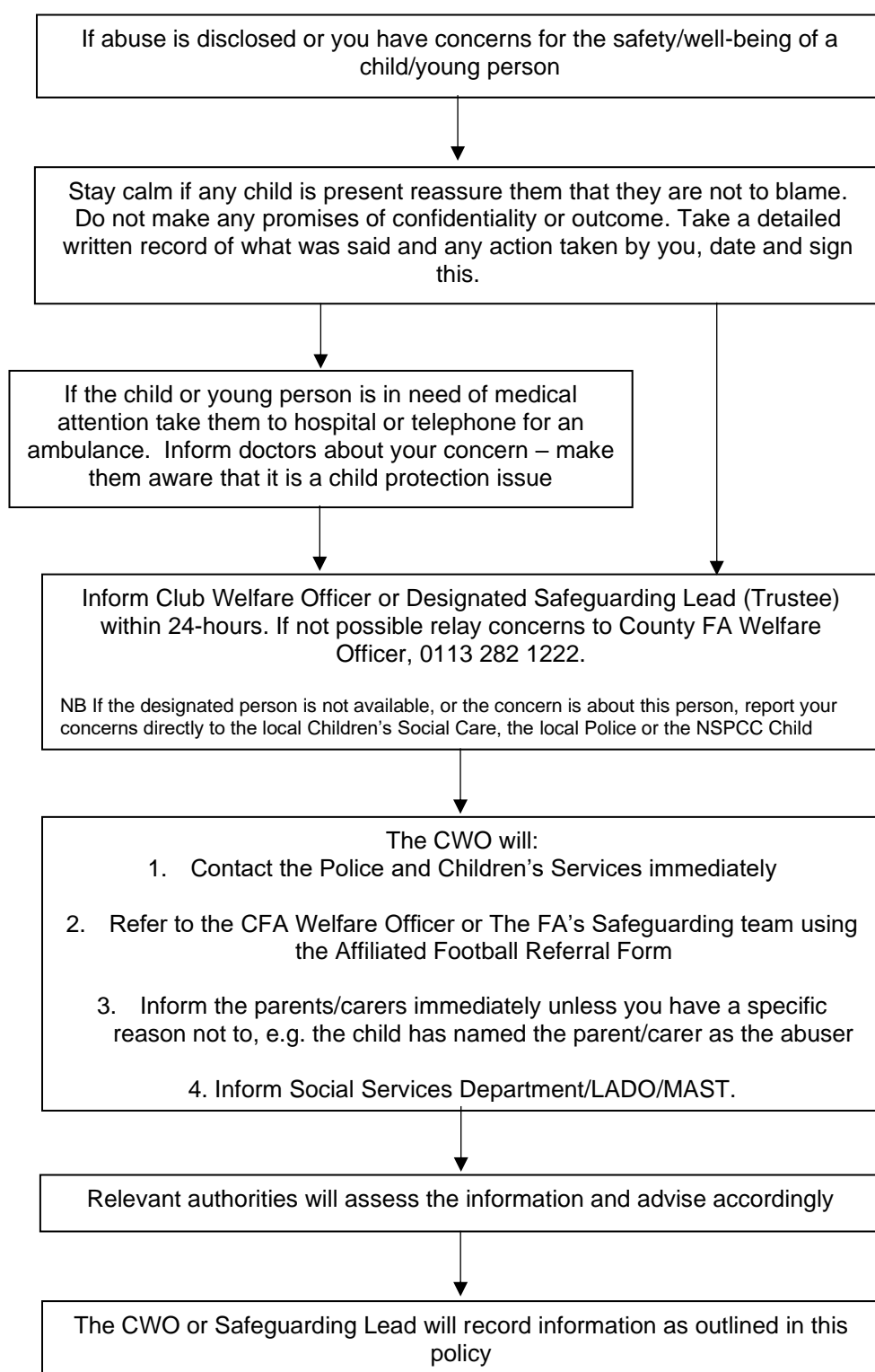
- Make contact with the named person(s) within 24hrs.
- If the named person(s) are not available follow the appropriate channels of reporting disclosures.
 - In normal Working hours Call MAST (Multi-Agency Screening Team): **01422 393 336**
 - Out of hours call the Emergency Duty Team (EDT): **01422 288 000**
 - The NSPCC 24-hour helpline can provide support/direction: **0800 800 5000**
 - If there is an immediate risk to a child or young person Ring the Police **999**

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. The Named Person will contact Calderdale Children's Social Care for advice or to make a referral.
 - In normal Working hours Call MAST (Multi-Agency Screening Team): **01422 393 336**
 - Out of hours call the Emergency Duty Team (EDT): **01422 288 000**
 - The NSPCC 24-hour helpline can provide support/direction: **0800 800 5000**
 - If there is an immediate risk to a child or young person Ring the Police **999**

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 Foundation.

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

Managing Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff or Volunteer

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation 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. 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 Foundation 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 whistle blow by contacting:

Safeguarding@thefa.com

NSPCC Whistleblowing Help Line: 0808 800 5000

NSPCC Whistleblowing email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Safe Recruitment & Supervision of Staff/Volunteers

The checklist below outlines FC Halifax Town Foundation 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 Foundation 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 and this decision and rationale recorded on the appropriate area.

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.
- At least every 12 months there will be review of role to ensure expected standards of delivery are maintained and the role expectations are clear.

Recording and Managing Confidential Information

It is vital to recognise that FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation 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 Foundation 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.

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 ;
- 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. Data will be kept for a maximum of 12 months with all retained data being reviewed at the end of each season.

Professional Boundaries

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation expects staff, volunteers, work placement students, trustees and partners 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 Foundation 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 based on 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:** any personal relationship or friendship between staff/ paid or unpaid and a client/beneficiary who is a current service user is prohibited. This includes relationships / friendships through social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and any other sites. Personal relationships / friendships between a member of staff (paid or unpaid) and a client/beneficiary who is a current service user that were established prior to contact with the FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation should be declared to in writing by email to Chair of FC Halifax Town Foundation.
- **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.

Digital Communications with Children (under 18s)

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation 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 Foundation 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 service users 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.
- Any contact from a child or young person made directly to a member of staff, paid or unpaid, on their personal social media / personal mobile phone should be declined and be declared in writing by email to Chair of FC Halifax Town Foundation.

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.

In the event of late collection at end of a session the following steps should be taken prior to transporting an under 18 year old:

- Establish Contact with parent – arrange alternative transporting arrangements.
- Consult with senior member of staff
- Consider alternative transport options – use of taxi/ public transport

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.

Under 18s in the Senior First Team Environment

When a decision is made to include a young person under the age of 18 in the first team for training or fixtures a duty of care is necessary to ensure their safety. The aim, whilst ensuring the safety, is that the young person can grow their confidence, self-esteem and develop their skills.

The following provisions should be considered in advance.

1. A First Team staff member with an active DBS is a nominated point of contact with primary responsibility for overseeing the young person.
2. For training the nominated First Team staff member will ensure a separate changing and showering facilities are available for players under 18.
3. For fixtures the Club Secretary will coordinate arrangements at the home stadium or with the opposition team to ensure provisions are made around the use of changing rooms and showering. If the fixture includes an overnight stay the young person will be allocated an individual room, the only exception being if two U18s are travelling.
4. The Academy Manager or nominated First Team staff member will communicate with the players and parents/guardians to (a) manage expectations or potential anxiety (b) explain safeguards that will be in place (c) confirm methods of communications, with the younger person and a staff contact to report any concerns (d) travel arrangements (e) outline expectations in terms of their conduct.
5. The nominated First Team staff member will identify a 'Buddy' for the young player with the purpose of supporting the young player in the first team environment. This should be someone the young player should feel comfortable with but also a person who will look out for the young player and guide them throughout their time with the senior squad.
6. The Academy or Safeguarding Manager will ensure all medical information or photography consent is shared with appropriate staff members.
7. Parents/Guardians to sign consent forms prior to travelling to fixtures with the senior squad.

8. The nominated First Team staff member will remind players and staff not to encourage young players U18 to engage in any inappropriate activities such as gambling; the use of alcohol or other inappropriate or illegal substances; or watching or engaging in any inappropriate adult behaviours.
9. All staff should be made aware of U18 players in the senior environment and to ensure all staff recognise the vulnerability of young players and the risks associated with young players in the senior team environment.

All staff that work with young players are in a position of trust. Young players, parents and carers must have confidence that any professional football club working with children will ensure that they provide a professional, trained workforce that understand their roles and responsibilities when working with U18s.

Trips, Tours and Tournaments with Under 18s

Whenever FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation undertakes trips, tours, or tournaments it will ensure the safety of children that it is responsible for. Alongside this, children will have the opportunity to grow their confidence, self-esteem and develop their skills.

The following are core principles will be always followed:

- No child will be permitted to undertake a trip, tour or tournament organised by the FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation unless there is a relevant signed consent from parents/carers on file.
- Prior approval will always be obtained by the CFA when planning to play foreign opposition.
- Ensure that staff of the same sex as the groups are present during the trip, tour, or tournament.
- A qualified first aider will always be present and will carry a fully stocked first aid kit.
- FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation will work with the children and parents to establish and agree rules for the trip, tour or tournament and communicate the consequence of breaking them.
- FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Foundation will ensure that the appropriate insurances are in place to (where necessary) cover (a) public liability (b) travel insurance (c) personal accident (d) vehicle insurance and breakdown cover for transport (e) medical cover abroad.
- Minimum staffing ratio's will be met in accordance with the FA and/or NSPCC guidance including a minimum of two FA DBS checked coaches/adults.

NSPCC Recommended Adults to child ratios:

Age of Children	Ratio of staff
4-8 years	One adult per 6 children
9-12 years	One adult per 8 children
13-18 years	One adult per 10 children

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation will commit to meetings with parents and carers to:

- Introduce staff who will undertake the trip, tour or tournament.
- Confirm roles and responsibilities of those travelling, including the Club staff members with Safeguarding responsibility whilst away. This person will hold the safeguarding qualifications necessary to perform the role.
- Provide information packs and ensure all consent forms and codes of conduct and expectations are outlined and signed.
- Ensure all welfare requirements are known, recorded, and understood for each person with specific requirements and needs (medical, physical, or psychological).
- Confirm a Club point of contact for parents and carers.

- If travelling abroad advise parents/carers of any Visa's and/or vaccinations required. Parents and carers will also be asked to provide details of valid international health insurance for each child.

Accommodation guidance for overnight stays:

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation will ensure the following provisions when booking a trip, tour, or tournament.

- There are ensuite facilities or separate facilities for children and adults.
- Under 18's will not share rooms with adults.
- That varied dietary requirements can be met.
- There is sufficient nighttime security.
- A current fire certificate is in place.

If possible, the club or Foundation will look to send a member of staff to visit the accommodation before booking to ensure it is suitable. If this is not possible thorough research will take place prior to booking.

Safety, security, and safeguarding when staying in accommodation:

- Once at the accommodation staff will check that all windows and doors are safe, check rooms for damage, that they are non-smoking rooms and report anything as per necessary.
- All rooms will be checked to ensure there is no access to alcohol and that movie access is appropriate or entirely restricted.
- All those staying are to be briefed with regards to fire safety and procedures.
- How to contact the adult in charge will be made clear, this will include details of where their room is in location to the children's room (ideally one at each end of a single corridor).
- All belonging including money, passports and valuables will be stored safely.

FC Halifax Town Foundation - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

The aim of this policy is to promote inclusion, value diversity and eliminate discrimination. We will ensure that everyone is treated fairly, with respect and dignity, and that our Foundation is equally accessible to all.

FC Halifax Town Foundation are responsible for setting standards and values that will apply throughout the Foundation at every level, as informed by the FA Charter Standard and underpinned by legislation set out in the Equalities Act 2010.

We will create an inclusive environment to which all are made welcome. Our programmes are for everyone and should be enjoyed by those who want to participate in it.

FC Halifax Town Foundation in all its activities will not discriminate or in anyway treat anyone less favourably on grounds of: Age; Disability; Gender Re-assignment; Pregnancy and Maternity; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Race; Religion or Belief; Sex Equality; Sexual Orientation. These are known as the 'Protected Characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010.

We will apply a zero-tolerance approach to racism and all forms of discrimination including bullying, abuse or victimisation of any individual(s). This includes sexual or racially based harassment or other discriminatory behaviour whether physical or verbal. The Foundation will work to ensure that such behaviour is met with appropriate action in whatever context it occurs.

The Foundation will ensure it treats its people fairly and with respect, in a way that values everyone's efforts and different contributions. We will provide access and opportunities for all members of the community to take part in and enjoy its activities.

We are committed to taking positive action where inequalities exist and through awareness raising events and activities to promote both equality and the eradication of discrimination in football/our settings.

FC Halifax Town Foundation commits itself to the immediate investigation, when brought to its attention, of any concerns or complaints about discriminatory behaviour. Where this is found to be the case appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

This Equality and Diversity Policy is fully supported by the Trustees of FC Halifax Town Foundation who are responsible for its implementation.

Reviewing Policies and Procedures

FC Halifax Town and FC Halifax Town Foundation 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.

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: *Adopted February 2025*