



Harpenden Colts Football Club

Our commitment to safeguard children's welfare

HCFC is committed to creating the safest possible environment for children to play football.

Club and team officials, and any other individuals directly or indirectly involved with children playing for HCFC, should all assume responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to the care of the Club, and should commit to providing a safe environment for all members of the Club.

HCFC subscribes to The Football Association's policies and procedures on safeguarding children, set out in the link below:

<http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/policy-downloads>

Reflecting The Football Association's policies, the key principles to which HCFC will adhere are:

- A 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, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation
- 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 and carers is essential.

All those at HCFC with designated responsibilities for providing football for young people are required to pass and maintain an FA approved DBS Enhanced Criminal Record with Children's Barred List Check and attend an FA Safeguarding Children course, managed through and approved by The Football Association.

HCFC supports The Football Association's Whistle Blowing Policy. Any adult or young person with concerns about an adult in a position of trust within football can – as an alternative to contacting an officer at HCFC - 'whistle blow' by contacting The FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 169 1863, by writing to The FA Case Manager at The Football Association, Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London SW1P 9EQ, by emailing Safeguarding@TheFA.com or alternatively by going direct to the Police, Children's Social Care or the NSPCC. HCFC encourages everyone to know about The FA's Whistle Blowing Policy and to utilise it if necessary.

In assuming responsibility among all of our members and volunteers to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people who are left in our care, we have implemented the following specific policies:

- The Chairman of HCFC and HCFC's Welfare Officer (Liz Attenborough) will oversee the application of this policy.
- All volunteers will ensure that any interaction between a volunteer and those under the age of eighteen is such that no reasonable person observing that interaction could construe its nature to be abusive.
- All volunteers will not supply, or attempt to supply, alcohol to those under the age of eighteen.

- All volunteers will take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions, and must co-operate with HCFC representatives in all matters of health and safety, so as to enable compliance with the law.
- All volunteers will conduct themselves appropriately at all times when they are representing HCFC.
- All volunteers will accept that HCFC does not condone the use of any illegal substance or the abuse of any prescribed medication and that, if in the reasonable opinion of HCFC, a volunteer is found to be under the influence of drugs or in possession of drugs or to be selling or to have sold drugs, then the volunteer will have committed a serious breach of this policy.
- Arrangements for the adequate supervision and safety of young people at HCFC events is the responsibility of all members and volunteers.
- No child, or group of children, should be left unattended at any time.
- There should be a minimum of one adult (over eighteen) to every 15 children, and at least two adults for each group in total, to ensure that the group need never be left unattended. Volunteers should avoid leaving children alone with an adult, unless they can be easily observed by others nearby.
- Volunteers should avoid being alone with a child where they cannot be clearly be seen by other adults.
- When in a car, if possible, volunteers should avoid having a child in the front seat. If this is not possible, the child in the front seat should be the son or daughter of the driver. If this is not possible, the driver should ensure that the same child does not sit in the front seat on each occasion.
- If anyone has any doubts or suspicions that any form of abuse is occurring to any child who is part of HCFC, they must report their concerns as detailed in the next section.
- If a child makes any sort of allegation, the following basic principles must be observed:
 - Understand that this may be the only time the child has built up courage to tell someone what has happened
 - Listen to the child, and believe the child
 - Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events
 - Let the child know that you understand how difficult it is to talk about the child's experience
 - Do not react in a way which may add to the child's distress – for example with shock, or anger
 - Do not ask leading questions
 - Do not promise or undertake to keep the conversation confidential
 - Make a contemporaneous written record of the conversation, taking care to note the date, time, setting and who was present, as well as the child's actual words
 - Inform the Chairman of HCFC or HCFC's Welfare Officer straightaway
 - Do not discuss the allegation with any other party, in particular with any party who may be involved
- All reports will be investigated. The HCFC Welfare Officer will be responsible for leading any investigation in accordance with FA and HCFC procedures.