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**THE UK MINIFOOTBALL ASSOCIATION\***

**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

**February 2017**

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The UK Minifootball Association  
272 Kensington High Street  
London  
W8 6ND

Telephone: 0871 250 0131  
Email: [office@ukminifootball.co.uk](mailto:office@ukminifootball.co.uk)

\*UK Minifootball is a trading name of Treacle and Swiss Limited



The UK Minifootball Association  
Child Protection Policy

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## **1 Child Protection Policy**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Everyone who participates in the UK Minifootball Association (UKMA) is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. The UKMA have a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for young people, coaches or any other persons associated with the UKMA provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

The UKMA is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone in sport accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means to follow procedures to protect children and report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

The aim of the policy is to fulfil statutory obligations and promote good practice, providing children and young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst in the care of the UKMA and to allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to meet statutory obligations laid out in the 'Children's Act 1989' and associated guidance (see 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'An Interagency Guide to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children') in respect of those children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering harm.

**A child/young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 (Children's Act 1989).**

### **1.2 Policy Statement**

The UK Minifootball Association is committed to the following:

- i. The welfare of the child is paramount;
- ii. All children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in small-sided football in a fun and safe environment and receive equal treatment;
- iii. Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings;
- iv. All staff have an equal responsibility to report any suspicion or disclosure which suggests that a child is at risk of harm. All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- v. All UKMA employees who work with children will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and child protection procedures;
- vi. This Child Protection Policy and procedures will be promoted to all affiliated league providers of the UKMA, children and young people participating in UKMA operated games, events and/or competitions and parents/carers of children and young people participating in UKMA operated games, events and/or competitions.
- vii. Working in partnership with parents and children is essential for the protection of children.

### 1.3 Responsible Personnel

All Executive Board members of the UK Minifootball Association and UKMA staff and volunteers (whether in a paid or unpaid capacity) are responsible for child protection.

The **key designated responsible person** of the UK Minifootball Association is:

**National Children's Officer:** Hannah Wallis

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Contact details: [personalassistant@ukminifootball.co.uk](mailto:personalassistant@ukminifootball.co.uk), 0871 250 0131

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The **nominated Board member** is: Andrew Thorley

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Contact details: [office@ukminifootball.co.uk](mailto:office@ukminifootball.co.uk)

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The **Chairman** is: David Windsor-Harris

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Contact details: [office@ukminifootball.co.uk](mailto:office@ukminifootball.co.uk)

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### 1.4 Monitor and review the policy and procedures

The implementation of procedures should be regularly monitored and reviewed. The National Children's Officer (see section 4.) should regularly report progress, challenges, difficulties, achievements gaps and areas where changes are required to the management committee.

The policy should be reviewed every 3 years or earlier if there is a major change in the organisation or in relevant legislation.

## 2. Promoting Good Practice

### 2.1 Introduction

To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in small-sided football everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework such as 'The Coaches Code of Conduct'.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore not the responsibility of employees or participants in minifootball to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is however their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and act if they have concerns about the welfare of the child, as explained in section 5.

### 2.2 Good Practice

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and action:

- i. Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets);
- ii. Make the experience of small-sided football fun and enjoyable: promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying;
- iii. Treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity;
- iv. Always put the welfare of the young person first, before winning;
- v. Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them);

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- vi. Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of manual/physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the young person. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the young person's consent has been given;
- vii. Involve parents/carers wherever possible, (e.g. where young people need to be supervised in changing rooms, encourage parents to take responsibility for their own child.) If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure parents, coaches etc. work in pairs;
- viii. Request written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars;
- ix. Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements (e.g. overnight stays);
- x. Ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff;
- xi. Ensure that at away events adults should not enter a young person's room or invite young people to their rooms;
- xii. Be an excellent role model, this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people;
- xiii. Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism recognising the developmental needs and capacity of the young person and do not risk sacrificing welfare in a desire for club or personal achievements. This means avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will;
- xiv. Secure written parental consent for the club to act in loco parentis, to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises;
- xv. Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given.

### **2.3 Poor Practice**

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel:

- i. Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others;
- ii. Taking young people alone in a car on journeys, however short;
- iii. Taking young people to your home where they will be alone with you;
- iv. Sharing a room with a young person;
- v. Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
- vi. Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form;
- vii. Allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- viii. Making sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun;
- ix. Reducing a young person to tears as a form of control;
- x. Allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
- xi. Do things of a personal nature that the young person can do for themselves.

When a case arises where it is impractical/impossible to avoid a certain situation (e.g. transporting a young person in your car), the tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parent/carer and the young person involved.

If during your care you accidentally hurt a young person, the young person seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions and/or if the young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

### **3. Defining Child Abuse**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

There are five main types of abuse:

- i. Physical Abuse;
- ii. Emotional Abuse;
- iii. Bullying;
- iv. Neglect;
- v. Sexual Abuse.

The abuser may be a family member, someone the young person encounters in residential care or in the community, including sports and leisure activities. Any individual may abuse or neglect a young person directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the young person.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a young person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated may follow the individual into adulthood.

Young people with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.

#### **3.2 Types of Abuse**

- i. Physical Abuse:

Where adults physically hurt or injure a young person (e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning). Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute physical abuse.

This category of abuse can also include when a parent/carer reports non-existent symptoms or illness deliberately causes ill health in a young person they are looking after. This is called Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

In a sports situation, physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training disregard the capacity of the child's immature and growing body;

- ii. Emotional Abuse:

The persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve telling a young person they are useless, worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued in terms of only meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of young people that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause a young person to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the young person frightened or withdrawn.

Ill treatment of children, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse in sport may occur when the young person is constantly criticised, given negative feedback or expected to perform at levels that are above their capability. Other forms of emotional abuse could take the form of name calling and bullying;

iii. Bullying:

Bullying may come from another young person or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. There are four main types of bullying.

It may be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages), emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

In sport bullying may arise when a parent or coach pushes the young person too hard to succeed, or a rival athlete or official uses bullying behaviour;

iv. Neglect:

Neglect occurs when an adult fails to meet the young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Refusal to give love, affection and attention can also be a form of neglect.

Neglect in sport could occur when a coach does not keep the young person safe, or exposing them to undue cold/heat or unnecessary risk of injury;

v. Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse occurs when adults (male and female) use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner are also forms of sexual abuse.

In sport, activities which might involve physical contact with young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also the power of the coach over young athletes, if misused, may lead to abusive situations developing.

### 3.3 Indicators of Abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- i. Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries;
- ii. An injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent;
- iii. The young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them;
- iv. Another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person;
- v. Unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour (e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper);
- vi. Inappropriate sexual awareness;

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- v. Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour;
- vi. Distrust of adult's, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected;
- vii. Difficulty in making friends;
- viii. Being prevented from socialising with others;
- ix. Displaying variations in eating patterns including over eating or loss of appetite;
- x. Losing weight for no apparent reason;
- xi. Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

Signs of bullying include:

- i. Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go to training or competitions;
- ii. An unexplained drop off in performance;
- iii. Physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes;
- iv. A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place. It is not the responsibility of those working in the UKMA to decide that child abuse is occurring. It is their responsibility to act on any concerns.

### **3.4 Children Who May Be Particularly Vulnerable**

Some children may be at increased risk of neglect and or abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse happens, or who have a high level of tolerance in respect of neglect.

To ensure that all children participating in UKMA operated games, competitions or events in general receive equal protection, we will give special consideration and attention to children who are:

- i. Disabled or have special educational needs;
- ii. Living in a known domestic abuse situation;
- iii. Affected by known parental substance misuse;
- iv. Asylum seekers;
- v. Living away from home;
- vi. Vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying;
- vii. Living in temporary accommodation;
- viii. Living transient lifestyles;
- ix. Living in chaotic, neglectful and unsupportive home situations;
- x. Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality;
- xi. Involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking;
- xii. Do not have English as a first language.

Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information, resources and support services in community languages and accessible formats.



### **3.5 Use of Photographic/Filming Equipment at Sporting Events**

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young people. All league operators and UKMA staff members should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the National Children's Officer.

All parents and performers should be made aware when coaches use video equipment as a coaching aid.

To protect children we will:

- i. Seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications);
- ii. Seek parental consent;
- iii. Use only the child's first name with an image;
- iv. Ensure that the child is appropriately dressed;
- v. Encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

For further information, please see the image consent form in **Appendix 1**.

## **4. Role and responsibilities of the National Children's Officer**

### **4.1 Promotion of good practice and the child protection policy and procedures**

The National Children's Officer will:

- i. Provide guidance and/or training in good practice and child protection procedures to all volunteers and staff of the UKMA.
- ii. Actively seek to promote the child protection policy and procedures to all affiliated league providers of the UKMA, children and young people participating in UKMA operated games, events and/or competitions and parents/carers of children and young people operating in games, events and/or competitions.
- iii. Work in partnership with parents and children as the direct point of contact for child protection issues in small-sided football generally and any UKMA associated body, game, event, competition or affiliated league provider.

### **4.2 Monitor and review the policy and procedures**

The National Children's Officer will:

- i. Regularly report progress, challenges, difficulties, achievements gaps and areas where changes are required to the management committee.
- ii. Regularly monitor legislative changes or recommendations which could affect the UKMA child protection policy and procedures, and report these changes and/or recommendations to the management committee.

### **4.3 Responding to suspicions and allegations of abuse**

In the case of suspicions and allegations of abuse, the National Children's Officer will follow the procedures and guidance as defined in section 5. of this document. In particular, the National Children's Officer is responsible for:

- i. Reporting suspicions, allegations or concerns of abuse to social services and contacting the parent/carer as soon as possible following advice from social services.

- ii. Making an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.
- iii. Notifying the Chairman of any case which has been referred to social services so that the Chairman can decide who will deal with any media inquiries and implement any immediate disciplinary proceedings.

#### **4.4 Complaints, grievances, disputes, disciplinary rules and internal appeals procedures**

The roles and responsibilities of the National Children's Officer are further defined under the 'UKMA Complaints, Grievances, Disputes, Disciplinary Rules and Internal Appeals Procedures'. The roles and responsibilities of the National Children's Officer in the context of these complaints, grievances, disputes, disciplinary rules and internal appeals procedures are:

- i. To safeguard the rights of minors in the instigation, commencement, investigation, hearing, appeal and enforcement of any sanctions for complaints, grievances, disputes and/or disciplinary action.
- ii. To be present for all UKMA complaints, grievances, disputes and disciplinary hearings in which a minor is to be in attendance.
- iii. To be given notice of any complaint, grievance, dispute and/or disciplinary action, response and subsequent action, where the complaint, grievance, dispute and/or disciplinary action involves a minor.
- iv. To liaise with the parents or guardians of the minor immediately upon the receipt of the complaint, grievance, dispute or disciplinary action involving a minor.
- v. However, the National Children's Officer is not permitted to give evidence or to take a formal role in any UKMA complaints, grievance, dispute and disciplinary hearing.

#### **4.5 Appointment of the National Children's Officer**

- i. The National Children's Officer is to be appointed by the Chairman.

### **5. Responding to Suspicions and Allegations**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in the UKMA in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young person. This applies both to allegations/suspicions of abuse occurring within the UKMA and to allegations/suspicions that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

This section explains how to respond to allegations/suspicions.

#### **5.2 Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse**

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening, we may suspect it happening because of signs such as those listed in section 3. of this document, it may be reported to us by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

In the last of these cases, it is particularly important to respond appropriately. It takes courage for a young person to disclose if they are being neglected and/or abused. The young person may feel ashamed, their abuser may have threatened them with what may happen if they tell, they may have lost their trust in adults or they may believe or have been told that the abuse is their fault.

If a young person says or indicates that they are being abused, you should:

- allow them to speak freely.
- remain calm and do not overreact so as not to frighten the child – the child may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.
- reassure the child that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell.
- listen to the child, showing that you are taking them seriously. Do not be afraid of silences as this must be very hard for the young person.
- keep questions to a minimum so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. Only ask questions to clarify. Do not ask investigative questions.
- at an appropriate time, inform the child that you have to inform other people about what they have told you. Tell the child this is to help stop the abuse continuing.
- do not automatically offer any physical touch or comfort.
- avoid admonishing the young person for not disclosing this information earlier.
- tell the child what will happen next. The child may agree to go with you to see the National Children's Officer or the next designated person. Otherwise, let them know that someone will see them before the end of the day.
- safety of the child is paramount. If the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue.
- report the incident verbally to the National Children's Officer.
- write up your conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form (see **Appendix 7**).
- seek support if you feel distressed.

In all cases if you are not sure what to do you can gain help from the National Children's Officer or from the NSPCC 24 hour help line.

### **5.3 Recording Information**

To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what is your personal knowledge and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions.

Information should include the following:

- the child's name, age and date of birth.
- the child's home address and telephone number.
- whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's.
- the nature of the allegation, including dates, times and any other relevant information
- a description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size etc. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- details of witnesses to the incidents.
- the child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred.
- have the parents been contacted? If so what has been said?
- has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? If so record detail.

Further information on recording information procedures is provided in **Appendix 2**.

#### 5.4 Reporting the Concern

All suspicions and allegations must be reported appropriately. It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

The UKMA expects its affiliated league providers and staff to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the person in charge and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken.

If the National Children's Officer is not available you should take responsibility and seek advice from the NSPCC helpline, the duty officer at your local social services department or the police. Telephone numbers can be found in your local directory.

A summary of reporting procedures is provided in **Appendix 3**. Where there is a complaint against an employee or volunteer, there may be three types of investigation.

- **Criminal** in which case the police are immediately involved.
- **Child protection** in which case the social services (and possibly) the police will be involved.
- **Disciplinary or misconduct** in which case the UKMA will be involved.

As mentioned previously in this document the UKMA are not child protection experts and it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. All suspicions and allegations must be shared with professional agencies that are responsible for child protection. **(See Appendix 4)**.

Social services have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making inquiries jointly with the police.

**NB: If there is any doubt, you must report the incident: it may be just one of a series of other incidences which together cause concern.**

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by an employee or a volunteer should be reported to the UKMA who will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. This will include the following:

- i. The UKMA will refer the matter to social services department;
- ii. The parent/carer of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department;
- iii. The Chairman should be notified to decide who will deal with any media inquiries and implement any immediate disciplinary proceedings.

Allegations of abuse are sometimes made sometime after the event. Where such allegation is made, you should follow the same procedures and have the matter reported to social services. This is because other children in the sport or outside it may be at risk from the alleged abuser. Anyone who has a previous conviction for offences related to abuse against children is automatically excluded from working with children.

## **5.5 Concerns outside the immediate Sporting Environment (e.g. a parent or carer)**

If a parent or carer wishes to report a concern or voice a complaint related to child protection then this should follow the following procedure:

- i. Report your concerns to the National Children's Officer;
- ii. If the National Children's Officer is not available, the person being told or discovering the abuse should contact their local social services department or the police immediately;
- iii. Social Services and the National Children's Officer will decide how to inform the parents/carers;
- iv. The UKMA, as the governing body of 5, 6, and 7-a-side football, should ascertain whether or not the person/s involved in the incident play a role in the organisation and act accordingly;
- v. Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis.

## **5.6 Internal Inquiries and Suspension**

UKMA staff and volunteers who are concerned about the conduct of another UKMA staff member are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and how this could impact on their colleague's career. All UKMA staff and volunteers must remember that the welfare of the child or young person is paramount. The UKMA's whistle blowing code (**Appendix 5**) will enable UKMA staff or volunteers to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for an enquiry to take place.

- 5.7.1 Allegations against staff should be reported to the Chairman. However, if the allegation is about the Chairman then it should instead be reported to the nominated Board member.
- 5.7.2 The Chairman, or the Executive Board in the case of an allegation against the Chairman, will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.
- 5.7.3 Staff who are subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress.
- 5.7.4 Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the UKMA Complaints, Grievances, Disputes and Disciplinary Committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; especially where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases the UKMA Complaints, Grievances, Disputes and Disciplinary Committee must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on the balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

## **5.7 Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- i. The National Children's Officer;
- ii. The parents of the child;
- iii. The person making the allegation;
- iv. Social Services/police;

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- v. The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Seek social services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser.

All child protection information will be stored and handled in line with 'Data Protection Act 1998' principles. Information is:

- i. Processed for limited purposes;
- ii. Adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- iii. Accurate;
- iv. Kept no longer than necessary;
- v. Processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- vi. Secure.

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. If it is necessary to store child protection information on portable media, such as a CD or flash drive, these items should also be kept in locked storage.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a child or parent to see child protection records, they should refer the request to the National Children's Officer and the Chairman.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent UKMA staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The UKMA's policy on confidentiality and information-sharing is available to parents and children on request.

## **6. Recruiting and Selecting Personnel Working with Children**

### **6.1 Introduction**

It is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children. This applies equally to paid staff and volunteers, both full and part time. To ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children the following steps should be taken when recruiting.

### **6.2 Controlling Access to Children**

- i. All staff and volunteers should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about the applicants past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record;
- ii. Consent should be obtained from the applicant to seek information from the Disclosure and Barring Service;
- iii. Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children should be obtained. These references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact;
- iv. Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo).

### **6.3 Interview and Induction**

All employees and volunteers will be required to undertake an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive a formal or informal induction during which:

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- i. A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full, including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures;
- ii. Their qualifications should be substantiated;
- iii. The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified;
- iv. They should sign up to the organization's Code of Ethics and Conduct;
- v. Child Protection Procedures are explained and training needs identified e.g. basic child protection awareness.

#### 6.4 Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- i. Analyse their own practice against what is deemed good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations;
- ii. Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice and/or abuse;
- iii. Respond to concerns expressed by a child;
- iv. Work safely and effectively with children.

The UKMA requires:

- i. All staff and volunteers who have access to children to undergo a DBS check;
- ii. All employees, volunteers, coaches, welfare officers and team managers to undertake relevant child protection training or undertake a form of home study, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of positive culture towards good practice and child protection;
- iii. All staff and volunteers to receive advisory information outlining good/bad practice and informing them what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person;
- iv. All coaches, trainee coaches and leaders should have an up to date first aid qualification.

#### 7. Declaration

On behalf of the UK Minifootball Association (UKMA) we, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

**Signed:**

.....  
(n.b. One of the signatories should be the National Children's Officer)

**Name:**

**Name:**

.....  
**Position within the UKMA:**

**Position within the UKMA:**

.....  
**Date:**

**Date:**

## **APPENDICES**

These appendices provide further information on the child protection procedures relating to recording information and reporting disclosures/concerns, and the current contact information of professional agencies responsible for child protection.



**Appendix 1:**

Image Consent Form

**Photographic Consent Form (Under 18's)**

At the **UK Minifootball Association** we take the issue of child safety very seriously, and this includes the use of images of children participating in UKMA operated small-sided football games, competitions and/or events and local residents under the age of 18. Including images of minors in **publications** can be motivating for the minors involved, and provide a good opportunity to promote the work of the UKMA.

However, the UKMA has a duty of care towards minors, which means that minors must remain unidentifiable, reducing the risk of inappropriate contact, if images are used in this way.

We ask that parents/legal guardians consent to the UKMA taking and using photographs and images of their children. We will not ordinarily include the full name of the minor alongside an image but may seek individual permission from the parent/guardian to do so on occasion.

Please complete, sign and return this form to the **National Children's Officer** at the UKMA.

I consent to photographs and digital images of the child named below, appearing in UK Minifootball Association printed publications, on [www.ukminifootball.co.uk](http://www.ukminifootball.co.uk).

I understand that the images will be used only for UKMA purposes and that the identity of my child will be protected unless I have agreed to the publication of my child's full name. I also acknowledge that the images may also be used in and distributed by other media, such as CD or DVD, as part of the promotional activities of the UKMA.

**Name of child:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of parent/carer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Queries regarding this form should be addressed to the UK Minifootball Association, 272 Kensington High Street, London, W8 6ND.

## Appendix 2:

### Recording Information Procedure

To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern.

At the time of a disclosure/concern you should complete following procedure:

1. Firstly, in the case of a child or young person disclosing an incident or concern to you, you should reassure the child that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell someone.
2. Allow the child or young person to speak freely.
2. If the child needs urgent medical attention then call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue. If the child does not require urgent medical attention then you should complete a detailed record. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what is personal knowledge and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions.
3. Inform the child that you have to inform other people about what they have told you. Tell the child this is to help stop the abuse continuing.
4. Record the child's full name, age and date of birth.
5. Record the child's home address and telephone number.
6. Record whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's.
7. Detail the nature of the allegation, including dates, times and any other relevant information but do not ask any investigative questions. Only write down what the child freely tells you.
8. Detail a description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size, etc. and any indirect signs such as behavioural changes.
9. Provide details and information of witnesses to the incidents.
10. Record the child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred. (Keep questions to a minimum so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. Only ask questions to clarify.)
11. Check if the parents have been contacted, and if so record what has been said.
12. Check if anyone else has been consulted. If so record details.
13. If anyone has been alleged to be the abuser, record details.
14. Tell the child or young person what will happen next. They may agree to go with you to see the National Children's Officer or the next designated person. Otherwise, you should let them know that someone will see them before the end of the day.
14. Report the incident verbally to the National Children's Officer.
15. Write up your conversation and recorded information as soon as possible on the record of concern form (see **Appendix 7**)

**Appendix 3:**

Reporting Procedures

To ensure that suspicions and/or allegations are reported to the appropriate personnel and dealt with in an efficient and appropriate manner, you should follow the following reporting procedure:

1. Record the information as shown in the procedure as detailed in **Appendix 2**.
2. Report the matter to the National Children's Officer. The National Children's Officer is responsible for reporting the suspicion and/or allegation to social services, contacting the parents/carers following the recommendations of social services and notifying the Chairman where required.
3. If the National Children's Officer is not available you should take responsibility and seek advice from the NSPCC helpline, the duty officer at your local social services department or the police. Telephone numbers can be found in your local directory.
4. Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis.

**NB: If there is any doubt, you must report the incident: it may be just one of a series of other incidences which together cause concern.**

**Appendix 4:**

Professional Agencies Responsible for Child Protection

The UKMA are not child protection experts and it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. All suspicions and allegations must be shared with professional agencies that are responsible for child protection.

The following list provides details of the professional agencies that are responsible for child protection:

<b>Social Services</b>
Social services have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making inquiries jointly with the police.
<b>Police</b>
Most examples of child abuse amount to criminal offences, and the abuser could be reported to the police and prosecuted. The police have a legal duty to follow up any complaint or concern about child abuse, report their concerns to the local authority and/or in serious cases undertake 'Police Protection' by taking the child away for 72 hours to keep the child safe.
<b>Local Authority</b>
<p>The local authority has a legal duty to follow up any complaint or concern about child abuse and get involved with a family where child abuse is suspected.</p> <p>In severe cases, the child will be removed from the family. In some cases, the local authority has a legal duty to continue to support a young person until they are 21 or older if the child was removed from the family because of abuse.</p> <p>Each local authority has a specialised department that deals with child protection areas. In some areas, independent organisations carry out child protection duties on behalf of the local authority.</p> <p>For further details of who to contact about child abuse in your area, please visit your local authorities website.</p>
<b>Local Safeguarding Children Boards</b>
Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB's) are panels made up of various agencies. There is one in every local authority area. The LSCB's role is to set out policies and procedures for child protection in that area.
<b>The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)</b>
The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children doesn't have a legal responsibility to follow up allegations of abuse but the society does have a duty to do so under its Royal Charter. In some areas, the NSPCC may also carry out some child protection work on behalf of the local authority.

## **Appendix 5:**

### Whistle Blowing Code

#### **1. Purpose of the code**

The UK Minifootball Association (UKMA) adheres to the whistle blowing policy and procedures that enable staff to raise concerns relating to:

- i. A crime;
- ii. A miscarriage of justice;
- iii. Illegality;
- iv. Health and safety;
- v. Environmental or property damage;
- vi. Unauthorised use of public funds;
- vii. Concealing or attempting to cover up any of the above.

This code provides additional information to help UKMA staff to understand the role of whistle blowing in the context of poor practice and unacceptable conduct and attitudes toward children.

#### **2. When to use the code**

The whistle blowing procedures and this code may be used by anyone employed by the UKMA in a paid or voluntary capacity who believes they have reason to suspect that the conduct of a UKMA staff member or volunteer towards a child is inappropriate.

#### **3. Reasons for blowing the whistle**

Staff may naturally be cautious to report a concern about another UKMA staff member or volunteer. However, each individual must take responsibility for ensuring that children and young people are fairly treated. If the poor practice is allowed to continue unchecked then it could escalate with serious consequences.

Your actions in reporting any suspicions not only protects children but deters any suggestion that you have colluded with poor practice that you knew was occurring but choose to ignore.

Whistle blowing can also support the member of staff who is the subject of the concern. Their conduct could have resulted from inexperience, a lack of training (which can be addressed by the UKMA) or they may be under stress and be relieved when their conduct is questioned.

Staff who deliberately fail children and show no remorse or desire to improve may not welcome being exposed but their conduct must be confronted for the welfare of the child and the reputation of the UKMA.

#### **4. Barriers to Whistle Blowing**

You may be concerned that you have insufficient evidence to raise a concern, that you will set in motion an unstoppable chain of events, that there will be adverse repercussions upon yourself, that you may suffer harassment or victimisation or that your concern might be misplaced.

The whistle blowing procedures address these issues.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects employees from reprisals for public interest whistle blowing. Your solicitor or the local authority legal services can provide you with information about your legal position.

All concerns will be treated in confidence and, as far as possible, your identity will not be revealed. Absolute confidence though cannot be guaranteed if, as the result of an investigation, you are required to provide a witness statement or attend a court hearing. You can though raise your concerns anonymously. In this case, the UKMA will need to decide whether the credibility of the concern warrants investigation if the source of the concern is not available.

The UKMA will support you and do all we can to protect you from any harassment or adverse repercussions that may arise from whistleblowing. Allegations that prove to be deliberately fabricated and/or malicious will be dealt with through staff disciplinary proceedings. However, no action will be taken against a UKMA staff member who raises a genuine concern that proves to be unfounded.

## **5. Reporting procedure**

It may be helpful if you write down, for your own benefit, what you have observed or heard that is causing you alarm. If you wish to raise a concern against another UKMA staff member or volunteer then you should follow the following reporting procedure:

- i. You may raise your concern verbally or in writing. The concern should be reported directly to the Chairman. However, if the allegation is about the Chairman then it should be reported to the nominated Board member. For further information, please see the UKMA welfare concern form in **Appendix 6**.
- ii. A friend, colleague or legal representative may accompany you to the meeting if you wish;
- iii. Ensure a senior staff member informs you of their proposed action and sets a date for a second meeting. You should receive feedback within 10 working days;
- iv. Ask for clarification about confidentiality and ensure that you have your wishes regarding the protection of your identity recorded;

## **6. Processes and outcome**

The UKMA will make enquiries to establish the facts of the matter and whether any poor practice or conduct has occurred. Staff members may be asked to provide information or advice.

The following processes and outcome may then apply:

- i. External advice, for example, from legal or human resources or children's services may be sought;
- ii. A written record of the conduct, established facts and outcome of the inquiry will be kept;
- iii. The whistle blower will be kept informed of the progress of the inquiry;
- iv. The outcome of the inquiry will be one of the following:
  - No poor practice or wrongdoing is established and the case is closed.
  - The concern has some substance and the subject of the concern will receive advice and support from the UKMA to improve practice.
  - Poor practice or wrongdoing is established and disciplinary proceedings are established.
  - The concern is more serious and an investigation is initiated. This investigation may involve the children's social care or the police.

If, at any stage in the process, there is reason to believe that a child is at risk of serious harm, children's social services will be immediately involved.

**Appendix 6:**

Welfare Concern Form

**The UK Minifootball Association Welfare Concern Form**

Please use this form to record any concern about a child's welfare and give it to the National Children's Officer who is responsible for child protection.

If you suspect the child may be suffering abuse or neglect, or you have received a disclosure of abuse, you must complete the child protection record of concern form instead, and hand it to the National Children's Officer today.

Child's full name

Date of this record

Why are you concerned about this child?

What have you observed and when?

What have you heard and when?

What have you been told and when?

Date and time you handed this form to the designated person

Your name and designation

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Signature

Have you spoken to the child?  Yes  No

What did they say? Use the child's own words

Have you spoken to anyone else about your concern?  Yes  No

Who?

Is this the first time you have been concerned about this child?  Yes  No

Further details



**Appendix 7:**

Record of Concern Form

**The UK Minifootball Association Record of Concern Form**

**Record of concern:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Staff / Team /  
Affiliated League Provider**  
(please delete as appropriate)

Child's details  
Full name  
Address

Telephone  
Date of birth  
Gender:  Male  Female

Is the child looked-after by local authority or are there any other legal family arrangements?  
(for example a residence order)

Ethnicity and culture

Religion

Does the child have any disability or special education need?  Yes  No  
Please specify

Preferred language of child

Is there any language support required to converse with the child?  Yes  No  
Please specify

Does the child know that this form has been completed?  Yes  No  
If not, why not?

If yes, what did the child say?

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Details of those with parental responsibility

Names(s)

Address

Telephone

Relationship to child

Ethnicity, culture and religion of those with parental responsibility if known

Preferred language of those with parental responsibility

Is there any type of language support required?

Do those with parental responsibility have any disability or special need?

How does this disability or special need affect the child?

Details of any siblings

Does the child regularly spend time with other carers, for example, after-team training or after competitions?

Why are you concerned about this child?

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Please provide a description of any incidents/conversation and the dates they occurs. You must make clear what is fact and what is opinion or hearsay. You must not ask the child leading questions or investigate the concern yourself.

What have you observed and when?  
(This relates to anything that you have personally witnessed)

What have you been told and when?  
(Write here anything you have been told by the child or any other person. Be clear about who has said what).

What have you heard and when?  
(This may be third-party information that is relevant but as yet unsubstantiated)

If an allegation has been made, give any details you have about the alleged abuser

Do those with parental responsibility know this form has been completed?  Yes  No  
If not, why not?

If yes, what did they say?

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NOTE: Those with parental responsibility should not be contacted by anyone in the UK Minifootball Association if this could place the child at risk. Speak to the National Children's Officer.

Does the child have any visible injury, or have they told you they have been injured?

Yes  No

If yes, has any medical advice been sought?

Has any action already been taken in relation into this concern?

Name and position of the person this record was handed to:

Date and time the above person received this record

If this record has been handed into anyone other than the National Children's Officer please explain why

Date and time of this record

Your details

Full name

Position

If you have used additional sheets to complete this record of concern please staple them to this form and write the number of additional sheets here \_\_\_\_\_

Hand this form to the National Children's Officer before you go home. If the National Children's Officer is unavailable, hand it to their deputy, the Chairman or your line manager.

**NB:** If you do not have certain information, such as the child or family's ethnicity, do not delay handing in the form.