



## Child Protection & Safety Policy

### Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the rules and expectations that ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people involved or associated with (the Club) is maintained. This document covers all individuals, including administrators, elected officials, coaches, employees, contractors, parents and all volunteers of the Club. It protects our children, our Club, our volunteers and our community

By law, in New Zealand, a child is deemed to be any person below the age of 18 years old.

### Child Protection Policy Statement

The Club recognises the positive role sport plays in the lives of our junior members and acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care.

We are committed to providing a safe environment for all members and ensuring all necessary steps are taken to protect all junior members from harm. We recognise that parents and carers also play an important role in protecting their children and ensuring they get the best possible experience at our Club.

We encourage parents and carers to take an active interest in their child's sport, setting an example for their children to learn how to have fun while being safe.

### Key Principles

The key principles of the Club's Child Protection and Safety Policy are that:

- The child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration
- All children and young people have the right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, faith or beliefs
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents/carers is essential

We acknowledge that every child or young person who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse.

We recognise that this is the responsibility of every adult involved in our Club.

## **Volunteers and Staff**

### **Recruitment**

Club football wouldn't survive without the many volunteers involved. However, we mustn't lose sight that anyone has the potential to harm or abuse junior members or young people. Therefore all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people at the Club. Sound recruitment and selection procedures will help to screen out those not suitable to work in football or at our Club.

We endorse the following guidelines for recruiting volunteers and staff members:

- Specify what the role is and what tasks it involves
- Request identification documents
- As a minimum, meet and discuss with the applicant(s) and when required, interview people before appointing them
- Ask for and follow up with two references from non-family members before appointing someone
- If necessary, request a Police back ground check before appointing someone

### **Background and Disclosure**

Coaches, managers, members, volunteers and any staff members are required to disclose any background information which may prove them unsuitable for working with children.

If a coach, manager, member, volunteer or staff member has anything in their background that, if it became public, could compromise the safety of junior members and damage the reputation of the Club, they're obliged to disclose this to the Club. This is not an aspersion on character. If in doubt, please contact us.

The Club may request the permission of any prospective volunteer or staff member to perform Police vetting. This service is provided by the New Zealand Police to protect society's most vulnerable members from unsuitable individuals.

### **Adult Presence**

Coaches and managers take responsibility for supervising children during training and games. A minimum of two adults per team (usually coach and manager) are to be present at all training and games.

One-on-one coaching is unsupported by the Club unless another adult is present at all times.

The Club encourages parents and carers to support their children by watching them train and play. If the coach or manager is unable to be present, parents and carers are asked to take an active role to supervise their children.

We promote punctuality for drop off and pick up times; setting a positive example and ensuring children are never left alone with an adult.

### **Transport**

Parents and carers are responsible for transporting their own children to and from events.

The Club discourages coaches and managers from transporting children, apart from their own, to and from events. However, we do recognise the exception of a close pre-existing relationship between families.

## **Anti-Bullying**

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, family oriented environment for our members so they can enjoy their football in a fun and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our Club and will not be tolerated. If bullying is witnessed, or suspected, members or parents should feel able to report it to the Child Welfare Officer in the first instance or, alternatively, any elected Club Official for investigation.

Bullying is the use of aggression, force or negativity to influence, intimidate or hurt another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and can devastate a young person and impact many parts of their life.

Bullying can occur in a range of ways:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting another person
- Racial – racial taunts, graffiti or gestures
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Homophobic – because of, or focussing on sexuality
- Physical – pushing, punching, hitting, kicking, spitting or use of any violence
- Electronic – bullying by means of digital devices such as cell phones, internet, social media

## **Codes of Conduct**

Codes of Conduct have been prepared and implemented for all players, coaches, administrators and parents involved at the Club. We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour in our game.

We ask that all Club members, administrators, players and parents respect and abide by these Codes of Conduct at all times.

Action or sanctions against an individual(s) and/or team may be taken should there be a breach of the Club's Codes of Conduct.

## **Health and Safety**

Providing a healthy and safe environment is an important part of the Club's culture. As such, a first aid kit is provided in gear bags supplied to coaches at the beginning of the season and a nominated first aid officer is required for each team.

The first-aid kit is required to be carried to all training sessions and games. The Club encourages the first aid officer to be someone consistently attending events.

There are factors outside of the Club's control that can impact the safety of our members. So in addition to the first-aid kit we recommend the following be kept in mind:

- The football pitch should be checked for obvious dangers such as broken glass, cans or rubbish which is subsequently removed and disposed of safely
- Check the goalposts are stable and secure
- Know the location of the football pitch in case emergency services need to be called

If any health and safety concerns are discovered members or parents should feel able to report them to the Child Welfare Officer or, alternatively, any elected Club Official.

### **Publishing Images**

The Club has sought permission as part of the registration process for junior members to be photographed during the course of the season and that images may be used for promotional purposes in Club magazines, newsletters and online.

The Club will seek written permission from parents or carers before publishing the names of their children in written or online channels.

Further information relating to the use of information obtained by the Club as part of its normal business operations is outlined in the Information Management and Privacy Policy available on the Club's website.

### **Complaints Process**

Most complaints can be dealt with by referring the individual to Club policies and procedures. However, at times there are complaints which cannot be satisfied via these routes. Where a complaint cannot be satisfied a formal complaint can be laid.

Formal complaints can be submitted in writing to the Club's Child Welfare Officer or, alternatively, any elected Club Official.

-The complaint must contain details regarding the date, time, location, nature, parties involved and, where possible, evidence of the offending behaviour

-The complaint will be investigated and a decision made

-If a breach is deemed to have occurred the Child Welfare Officer and Management Committee will proceed accordingly

-Should the complainant be unhappy with the original decision they can appeal to the Management Committee

During the course of a complaint the individual(s) concerned and the nature of the complaint is to be kept suppressed to protect the identities of all parties involved. In addition, no public accusations of wrong doing, or otherwise, are to be made.

### **Whistle Blowing**

Any adult, young person or child with concerns about an individual can 'whistle blow' by contacting the Club's Child Welfare Officer.

The Club Child Welfare Officer is the first point of contact for all Club members regarding concerns about the welfare of any child or young person. The Club's Child Welfare Officer will liaise directly with the Club Chair and Junior Committee Chair and will be familiar with the procedures for referring any concerns. They will also play a proactive role in increasing awareness of the Club's Child Protection and Safety Policy and Codes of Conduct.

### **Disciplinary Process**

If a breach of the Child Protection and Safety Policy is deemed to have occurred the Club have the following avenues of action that can be pursued:

-Issue a Verbal Warning

This consists of a formal meeting between the individual discussing the complaint and ways to improve/prevent future issues.

#### -Issue a Written Warning

This consists of a formal letter advising of a formal warning. These will often, but not always, take place after the issuing of a Verbal Warning.

#### -Exclusion from a specified number of matches or training sessions

This consists of excluding the individual from training sessions or matches as punishment for a breach.

#### -Removal from their position for the remainder of the season

In the case of a serious breach the Club can remove the individual from their position or team within the Club.

#### -Removal from all future positions and roles within the Club

This is considered for the most serious of breaches or for repeated and unrelenting breaches. The individual will be refused all future requests to be involved with the Club be it as a player, member, volunteer, or staff member.

If the Club sees fit, any individual that has breached the Policy may be reported to the relevant governing bodies, or referred to the Police for further investigation.

#### **Contact Information**

The Club has a nominated Child Welfare Officer who sits on the Junior Football Committee. The Junior Committee Chair, Junior-Management Committee Liaison and/or any elected Club Official can also be contacted to discuss any child protection issues.

Child Welfare Officer

Junior Committee Chairperson

Club Chairperson