

ANTI BULLYING POLICY



Bullying is unacceptable behaviour. It happens in all environments and many young people are involved at some time – however, bullying can involve people of all ages, not just children and young people. Shrewsbury Town Football Club and its Community Programme are committed to creating a safe environment where students, staff, players, and people of all ages can train, learn, socialise, and talk about their concerns, confident that a responsible adult at the Club/Community Programme (hereafter both referred to under the term of “Club”) will listen and offer help.

It will be made clear to all concerned, including parents of young people that when bullying happens, we will work as a Club in accordance with the policy described below to help both victims and perpetrators. The Club will ensure the safety of the victim and facilitate and support improved behaviour from the bullies.

The Club will encourage individual responsibility, particularly amongst its children and young people, bringing out self-reliance, self-confidence, and self-respect wherever possible, while developing an understanding and respect of others.

AIMS

Through this policy the club aims to:

- Ensure that all in the Club know that bullying is unacceptable behaviour.
- Create a caring environment.
- Encourage for children and young people, strong links between the Club and the home.
- Support the well-being of the adults, children, and young people at the Club, by recognising that success is integral to their moral, physical, and emotional health.

DEFINITIONS

There are many forms of bullying – they may include:

- Deliberate hostility to a victim
- A weaker victim and less powerful than the bully or bullies
- A painful and distressing outcome for the victim



Bullying can be:

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and various forms of violence
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, persistent teasing and rumour spreading
- Emotional: continually ignoring individuals, ridicule and torment.
- Indirect: intimidation, dirty looks, body language.
- Racist remarks and actions: prejudicial actions, racist taunts, graffiti and gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or abuse.
- Online: through social media outlets.
- Related to any of the Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, namely: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; marriage and civil partnership; ethnicity; religion and belief; gender (sex); sexual orientation.

In certain circumstances, acts of bullying may in themselves constitute breaking the law.

In football, outdated hazing activities are not tolerated by this Club. Generally, within the game emotional and verbal bullying is most common.

IDENTIFICATION

Bullying is not easy to identify but staff should be aware of the following warning signs:

- In players, performance both in training and matches drops off and not willingly attending training sessions
- Changes in an individual's attitude
- Person becomes withdrawn
- A child or young person has nightmares and/or schoolwork suffers

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RESPOND TO BULLYING?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to suffer from bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students and staff who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving and SWFC will take necessary steps to assist this change in behaviour including disciplinary action.

Whilst we all have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying, a proactive approach to identify and act upon potential signs of bullying will assist in dealing with issues prior to them being formally raised. The signs and behaviours (below) could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.



Other signs may also manifest themselves not mentioned here:

- Doesn't want to go to sessions by public/school transport
- Insists on being driven to sessions.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to sessions after previously enjoying being part of the community
- Begins to truant.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Begins to perform poorly in work.
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Has possessions which are damaged or unexpectedly go missing
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully);
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable
- Is bullying / harassing other children or siblings;
- Stops eating;
- Is frightened to say what's wrong;
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- Is nervous & jumpy when a cyber-message is received;



PROCEDURE

- Where bullying is once identified or suspected, staff should log the incident using the Safeguarding Incident Form (Appendix 2)
- Inform the respective Line Manager who will deal with the incident, involving, where appropriate, the Academy Manager or Welfare Officer or the Club Designated Safeguarding Officer. A similar referral process applies to the Community Programme. The HR Manager will be involved in any incident involving staff.
- Training and Education sessions will be held with the age group concerned – either adult or younger and with parents where appropriate – involving both the victim and bully who will meet staff separately to help prevent any repetition of the incident.
- Close monitoring will then be undertaken to ensure that the required change in behaviour has been effected.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITY & BEHAVIOUR

No staff member must use sarcastic or derogatory comments. Nor adopt humiliating and dominating behaviour. Those who regularly come into contact with children and young people in their work e.g. Academy coaching staff, should ensure that they are aware that bullying is never acceptable.

A child and young person must be listened to when willing to talk about bullying and feel supported.

INTERVENTION

The aim of intervention is to make the victim feel safe and to encourage better behaviour from the bully.

When staff intervene they are the following main categories of responses:

- Asking and helping the victim to become more assertive perhaps coupled with developing more social skills.
- Using a group approach – no blame attached and a get together on problem solving.
- Education and training sessions using pre-prepared literature from the wide range of organisations which publish helpful online anti bullying material e.g. Barnardos; NSPCC and the UK Safer Internet Centre.
- Punishing the bully e.g. by exposing his/her antics and if a player, leaving him out of games for a stipulated period of time. This is the least favoured route but may have to be taken should circumstances warrant.



CONCLUSION

Action will always be taken by the Club to help eradicate bullying and engender a mutually supportive culture.

The main occurrences are most likely to involve young players in the Academy and Community Programme but there is also risk involving the Community work with Vulnerable Adults e.g. the "Ability Counts" players or similar initiatives and the staff and volunteers are aware of this.

SUPPORT AVAILABLE

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SAFEGUARDING CONCERN FORM

Appendix 2

Accident: Incident: Safeguarding:

Concern:

Club: Academy: Foundation:

Date of concern:

Name, date of birth and details of the person(s) the report is being made about:

Account of incident or concern:

(give clear details relating to what happened, where, when, who was involved, what was said, nature of injury or behaviour, any witnesses etc keep it factual).

Action taken:

Name of person making report:

Signed:

Date:

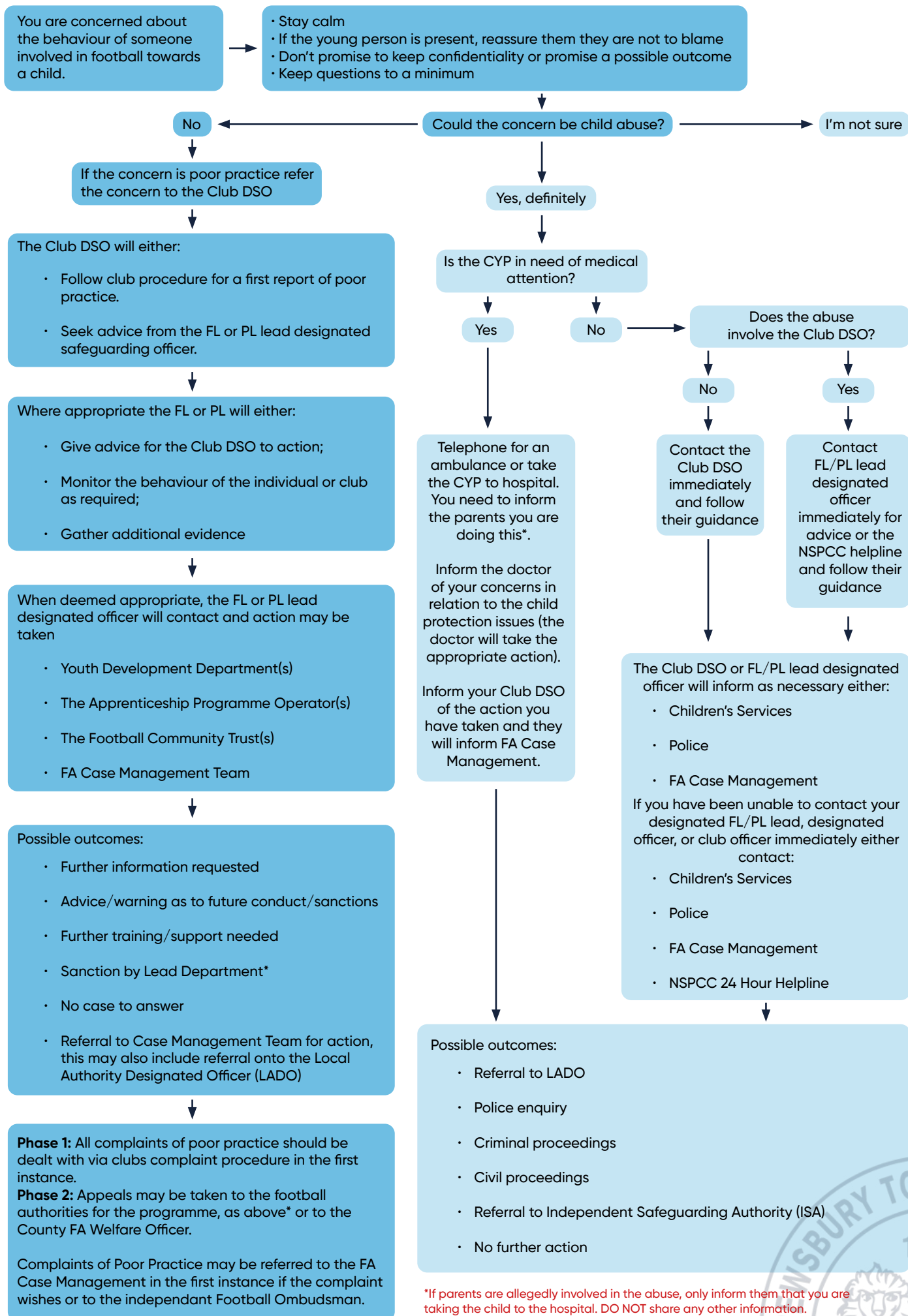
Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Signed:

Date:

Further action taken:





*If parents are allegedly involved in the abuse, only inform them that you are taking the child to the hospital. DO NOT share any other information.

