



Coleraine F.C. Youths

- Stronger Together -

Child Protection Policy Statement

Coleraine Football Club (CFC) Youths believe that Children and Young people have a right to enjoy the positive aspects of football and to participate in an environment which protects them from abuse and harm. Children have the right to be safe, and we will ensure this is fundamental in all we do.

CFC Youths wishes to ensure all children and young people enjoy football in a positive environment where they feel supported and encouraged by their peers. We aim to ensure children and young people have fun and achieve to the best of their ability regardless of cultural identity or religious beliefs.

CFC Youths has a moral and legal responsibility to protect children and young people who participate in the game from abuse and harm, and exposure to poor practice (Annex A).

CFC Youths aims to be proactive and put all necessary measures in place to ensure children are kept safe. This will include:

- ensuring staff and volunteers are properly checked when recruited; and
- providing guidelines and/or relevant training for people who come into contact with children to ensure they know what is required of them to keep children safe.

CFC Youths are committed to good practice including:

- adopting Safeguarding guidelines through Codes of Conducts for Club Officials, Managers & Coaches, Volunteers, Parents and Children (Annex B);
- appointing one or more Child Welfare Officer(s) who will carry out Roles and Responsibilities as per guidance from IFA (Annex C);
- being aware of signs relating to children being abused (Annex D);
- sharing information about concerns as and when required with parents and other relevant agencies;
- providing information as required to the Management Committee; and
- keeping Safeguarding policies under regular review (minimum of every 3 years).

*This policy relates to children/young people up to eighteen years of age



Annex A

What is Poor Practice?

Poor practice refers to inappropriate behaviour towards any child or young person in a football setting which should be taken seriously and responded to through the club's reporting procedures.

The majority of poor practice cases can be dealt with at club level through prompt communication, cooperation from all parties involved and a common sense approach.

All cases should be recorded by the club's Child Welfare Officer using the Irish FA's template Child Protection and Poor Practice Referral Form (below).

Cases of serious poor practice should be referred onto your Association Child Welfare Officer who will decide if the case meets the threshold of a referral to the Irish FA's Child Welfare Department. In such cases, the Irish FA's Child Welfare Department will assume responsibility for investigating each case and will take the appropriate course of action.

How to Recognise Poor Practice

Poor practice refers to behaviour that disregards the need of children and young people, thus compromising their welfare.

Examples of Poor Practice

- taking insufficient care to avoid injuries e.g. exposing children and young people to insensitive or inappropriate training methods;
- either showing favouritism towards or ignoring certain children or young people;
- placing children or young people in compromising or embarrassing situations i.e. young referees or players sharing a changing room with adults;
- not adhering to the Club's or IFA's Code of Conduct and Health and Safety procedures;
- failing to report behaviour which compromises the welfare of a child or young person e.g. abuse or bullying; and
- using aggressive or abusive language towards a young person, or in their presence.

This list is not exhaustive.



Child Protection and Poor Practice Referral Form

This form should be completed in the event of a child or young person, or a fellow staff member or volunteer or other adult, disclosing alleged abuse.

CHILD PROTECTION AND POOR PRACTICE REFERRAL FORM

Completed by	<input type="text"/>		
Position	<input type="text"/>	Date	<input type="text"/>
Name of accused person	<input type="text"/>		
Relationship (to alleged victim)	<input type="text"/>		
Gender	<input type="text"/>		
Address	<input type="text"/>		
Tel	<input type="text"/>	Postcode	<input type="text"/>
Age	<input type="text"/>	D.O.B.	<input type="text"/>
Name of alleged victim	<input type="text"/>		
Age	<input type="text"/>	D.O.B.	<input type="text"/>
Gender	<input type="text"/>		
Child's Address	<input type="text"/>		
		Postcode	<input type="text"/>
Parent(s) / Guardian(s) name(s)	<input type="text"/>		
Parent(s) / Guardian(s) address(es)	<input type="text"/>		
Tel	<input type="text"/>	Postcode	<input type="text"/>



Name of person who reported concern

Address

Tel

Postcode

Relationship to alleged victim

Relationship to accused

Details of incident (including the location)

Details of incident

Time of incident

Your observations (include exactly what the child said and what you said during the disclosure.

Remember, do not lead the child – record actual details as given by the child. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.)



Annex B

Code of Conduct for Club Officials

This Code applies to all club Officials (although some items may not apply to all Officials according to their specific roles within the club) including officials of Coleraine Football Club Youths.

Obligations to the game:

- set a positive example for others, particularly young players and supporters
- promote and develop the various club teams having regard to the interest of the players, supporters and reputation of the national game
- share knowledge and experience when invited to do so, taking into account the interest of the body that has requested this rather than personal interests
- avoid all forms of gamesmanship
- show due respect to Match Officials and others involved in the game
- always have regard for the best interests of the game, including where publicly expressing an opinion of the game and any particular aspect of it, including others involved in the game
- do not use or tolerate inappropriate language.

Obligations to the club/team:

- make every effort to develop the sporting, technical and tactical levels of the club/team, and to obtain the best results for the team, using all permitted means
- give priority to the interests of the club/team over individual interests
- resist all illegal or unsporting influences, including banned substances and techniques
- promote ethical principles
- show due respect for the interests of the players, coaches and officials, their own club/team and others
- must not disseminate information that is confidential in any way
- shall not through his/her acts or omissions bring the Club into disrepute or assist or encourage others to do so.

Obligations to the supporters:

- Show due respect for the interests of supporters.

Respect to match officials:

- accept the decisions of the Match Official without protest
- avoid words or actions which may mislead a Match Official
- show due respect towards Match Officials.

Use of Social Media:

- comply with the requirements laid down in the Coleraine Football Club Social Media policy.



Code of Conduct for Managers & Coaches

Managers and coaches at every level of football within Coleraine Football Club have a duty of care towards their staff and players. In respect of children and young players there are additional vulnerabilities and dangers and for that reason there are separate sections in this Code of Conduct dealing with policies and guidelines surrounding children and young players.

Managers and coaches are the key to the establishment of ethics in football. Their concept of ethics and their attitude directly affects the behaviour of players under their supervision. Managers and coaches are, therefore, expected to pay particular care to the moral aspect of their conduct.

Managers and coaches have to be aware that many of their decisions and choices of actions, as well as strategic targets, have ethical implications. It is natural that winning constitutes a basic concern for managers and coaches. This code is not intended to conflict with that. However, the code calls for managers and coaches to disassociate themselves from a 'win-at-all costs' attitude. They should therefore comply with the following:

- respect the rights, dignity and worth of each and every person and treat each equally within the context of the sport
- refrain from engaging in, or tolerating, offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour
- place the well-being and safety of each player above all other considerations, including the development of performance
- adhere to all guidelines laid down by governing bodies
- develop an appropriate working relationship with each player based on mutual trust and respect
- do not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward
- encourage and guide players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance
- ensure that the activities they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of players
- at the outset, clarify with the players (and where appropriate parent) exactly what is expected of them and also what they are entitled to expect from their manager or coach
- co-operate fully with other specialists (e.g. other coaches, officials, sports scientists, doctors, and physiotherapists) in the best interests of the player
- always promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone violations of the Laws of the Game, behaviour contrary to the spirit of the Laws of the Game or relevant rules and regulations or the use of prohibited substances or techniques
- consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance; only official club team wear/emblems should be worn when representing the club



- comply with the requirements laid down in the Coleraine Football Club Social Media policy
- shall not through his/her acts or omissions bring the Club into disrepute or assist or encourage others to do so.
- the coach shall coach solely for the club or as authorised by the club
- managers and coaches should refrain from smoking/vaping during matches



Codes of Conduct for Coaches/Volunteers

All coaches and volunteers are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect children/young people in their care and themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within Coleraine Football Club and Coleraine Football Club Youths:

As a coach/volunteer within Coleraine Football Club, Coleraine Football Club Youths I, the undersigned, agree to the following charter:

- I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the club/centre
- I will develop an appropriate working relationship with children/young people based on mutual trust and respect. I will not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward
- show due respect for the interests of the players, coaches and officials, their own club/team and others
- I will always promote the positive aspects of football (e.g. fair play) and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances
- I shall not through my acts or omissions bring the Club/organisation into disrepute or assist or encourage others to do so.

Additionally, for those volunteers/coaches working with/in close proximity to children/young players:

- I will be an excellent role model. This includes not smoking, drinking alcohol, using foul/racial/sectarian language or taking drugs in the company of children/young people
- I will always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment, e.g. no secrets)
- I will always put the welfare of each child/young person before winning or achieving goals
- I will maintain a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child/young person.
- I will make football, enjoyable and promoting fair play
- I will ensure that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it is provided openly and according to agreed guidelines. If physical support is needed, I will talk aloud to the child/young person explaining what I am doing and why as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when a child/young person is constantly moving. I agree that children/young people should always be consulted before they are touched and their agreement gained. Parental/guardian views about manual support will always be carefully considered



- I will involve parents/guardians wherever possible (e.g. for the responsibility of their children in the changing rooms) provided they have been successfully vetted, are of the appropriate gender and work in pairs
- I will give enthusiastic and constructive feedback, encouraging achievements rather than using negative criticism
- I will recognise the developmental needs and capacity of children/young people, including those with a disability – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- I will keep a written record or inform the Head Coach/Committee of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given
- Bullying is not acceptable behaviour towards anyone, whether coach/volunteer, parent/guardian or child/young player. Anyone found to be bullying others will be dealt with seriously, both in relation to the behaviour exhibited and the reasons for the behaviour
- I will never condone rule violations, rough play or the use of prohibited substances
- I will protect myself from false accusations by not spending excessive amounts of time alone with children/young people away from others, by never taking children/young people to my home and by not administering First Aid involving the removing of children's clothing unless in the presence of others
- I will hold an up to date and nationally recognised coaching qualification and hold appropriate insurance cover
- I will make football fun
- comply with the requirements laid down in the Coleraine Football Club Social Media policy
- shall not through his/her acts or omissions bring the Club into disrepute or assist or encourage others to do so.

Practices I will avoid:

- Avoid spending any time alone with children/young people away from others.

Practices never to be sanctioned by coaches/volunteers:

The following will never be sanctioned. I will never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- share a room/tent/changing room/bath or shower with a child/young person
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- allow children/young people to use foul, abusive, sectarian or racial language unchallenged
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child/young person, even in fun
- reduce a child/young person to tears as a form of control
- allow allegations made by a child/young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon



- undertake personal care for children/young people
- invite or allow children/young people to stay with me at my home.

Coaches/volunteers have the right to:

- access ongoing training and information on all aspects of leading/managing football for children/young people, particularly on safeguarding
- support in the reporting of suspected abuse
- access to professional support services
- fair and equitable treatment by the governing body/club
- be protected from abuse by children/young people, other adult members and parents/guardians.



Code of Conduct for Children/Young Players

Coleraine Football Club and Coleraine Football Club Youths is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all members. The club believes that it is important that staff/coaches/volunteers and parents/guardians associated with the club/centre should, at all times, show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others. Therefore, everyone is encouraged to be open at all times and to share any concerns or complaints that they may have about any aspect of the club with any director, official, manager or coach.

Coleraine Football Club and Coleraine Football Club Youths believes that the organisation should offer a positive experience for children/young people where they can learn new things in a safe and positive environment. As a member of Coleraine Football Club or Coleraine Football Club Youths, you are expected to abide by the following code of practice.

Children/young players are expected to:

- be loyal and give their team mates a second chance
- be friendly and particularly welcoming to new members
- be supportive and committed to other team mates, offer comfort when required
- not get involved in inappropriate peer pressure and push others into something they do not want to do
- be responsible for their own kit
- wear appropriate footwear/shin pads
- bring their own water bottle/fluid
- keep within the defined boundary of the playing/coaching area
- behave and listen to all instructions from the coach/volunteers
- take care of equipment owned by the club
- refrain from the use of bad language or racial/sectarian references
- refrain from bullying or persistent use of rough and dangerous play
- show respect to other players, staff/coaches/volunteers and parents/guardians
- report inappropriate behaviour
- play fairly
- respect officials and accept decisions
- be gracious in defeat
- respect opponents and not cheat
- not use violence
- arrive on time
- be collected on time
- comply with the requirements laid down in the Coleraine Football Club Social Media policy
- shall not through his/her acts or omissions bring the Club into disrepute or assist or encourage others to do so.



Children/young people have the right to:

- be safe and happy in football
- be listened to
- be respected and treated fairly
- privacy
- enjoy football in a protective environment
- be referred to professional help if needed
- be protected from inappropriate behaviour/abuse by other club members or outside sources
- participate on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability
- experience competition and the desire to win
- be believed when asking for help.

Any breach of the Code of Conduct for Children/Young Players will be addressed by the immediate coach/volunteer and reported verbally and in writing to the designated Child Protection Officer. If a child/young player continues to breach the Code of Conduct after an initial verbal warning from the immediate coach/volunteer, the following disciplinary action should take place:

- First Official Warning will be reported to the parent/guardian, both verbally (if practicable) and in writing. Sanction can be up to a two-week suspension.
- Second Official (final) will be reported to parent/guardian, both verbally (if practicable) and in writing. Sanction should be a minimum suspension of one month up to a maximum of six months.
- All youth members and their parents should be aware that persistent misbehaviour will result in dismissal from Coleraine Football Club Youths.

In more serious or extreme cases there may be no requirement for warnings and the accused person suspended forthwith. However, the matter should be referred to the Junior Academy Director. The matter will be investigated by a Disciplinary Sub - Committee made up of the Junior Academy Director and 3 uninvolved committee members with a written record kept of the findings. They will adjudicate on the issue and inform the parents/guardians in writing of their decision.

Should the parents/guardians wish to appeal the decision of the Disciplinary Sub - Committee's they must do so in writing, to the General Manager, within seven days of receiving official notification from the Disciplinary Sub - Committee.



Code of Conduct for Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians are expected to

- positively reinforce their child and show an interest in their football. Support their child's involvement and help them to enjoy football
- not place their child under pressure or push them into activities they do not want to do
- complete and return the Registration/Consent Form pertaining to their child's participation;
- deliver and collect the child punctually to and from coaching sessions/matches punctually
- ensure their child is properly and adequately attired for the weather conditions
- ensure that proper footwear and protective equipment are worn at all times. Any child/young person not in possession of the fundamental requirements should not be permitted to participate
- detail any health concerns pertaining to the child on the consent form, in particular breathing or chest conditions. Any changes in the state of the child's health should be reported to the coach prior to coaching sessions
- inform the coach/coordinator if their child has been ill or hurt recently
- inform the coach prior to departure from the field of play if the child is to be collected early from a coaching session
- encourage their child to play by the rules and teach them that they can only do their best. Help your child to recognise good performance, not just results
- acknowledge the importance and role of the club/centre coaches who provide their time free to ensure children's participation in the club
- encourage their child to play by the rules and teach them that they can only do their best
- show appreciation and support the coaches
- be realistic
- ensure their child's hygiene and nutritional needs are met
- accept the referee/game supervisor's judgement
- behave responsibly on the side-lines; do not embarrass your child
- encourage children to show respect
- promote their child's participation in playing football for fun
- comply with the requirements laid down in the Coleraine Football Club Social Media policy
- shall not through his/her acts or omissions bring the Club into disrepute or assist or encourage others to do so.

Parents/Guardians have the right to

- know their child is safe
- be informed of problems or concerns relating to their children



- be informed if their child is injured
- have their consent sought for issues such as trips
- speak to the coach/co-coordinator and voice their genuine concerns about the standard of coaching.

Any misdemeanours and breach of this code of conduct will be dealt with immediately by the coach/volunteer. Persistent concerns or breaches will result in the parent/guardian being asked not to attend the club if their attendance is detrimental to the child's/young person's welfare. The ultimate action should a parent/guardian continue to breach the code of behaviour may mean the coach/coordinator regrettably asking the child/young person to leave the club.

If the coach decides that it is in the interests of the other children/young person, parents/guardians or Coleraine Football Club then he will report the matter to the Junior Academy Director who will enquire into the matter and inform the coach, the parent/guardian and the Committee of his findings and action taken.

Should the parents/guardians wish to appeal any decisions they must do so in writing, to the General Manager, within 7 days of receiving official notification of suspension or expulsion. The decision made by the Senior Club will be final and binding on all parties concerned and there will be no further appeals from it.



Annex C

The club **Child Welfare Officer** plays a fundamental role in the creation of a child-centred ethos that promotes the positive aspects of football.

This can be achieved by communicating to every adult in the club that they have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and young people to protect them from inappropriate behaviour and to promote a culture of safety and FUN.

To do this, a club Child Welfare Officer requires certain knowledge and skills - some of which are a pre-requisite for the role, and others that can be obtained through training and experience. The Club Welfare Officer should be the first point of contact for anyone who feels the need to raise concerns about poor practice and/or abuse.

Roles and responsibilities of Club Welfare Officer

- **Work with others in the club to ensure a positive child centred environment**
- Assist the club to fulfil its responsibilities to safeguard all children in the club
- Assist the club to implement its safeguarding children plan
- Make themselves known to and be the first point of contact for staff, volunteers, parents, children and young people
- Ensure all club members, volunteers, coaches, players and parents are aware of and adhere to the club code of conduct
- Maintain contact details for Health and Social Care Trust, PSNI and any other relevant safeguarding body (see below)
- Ensure all club volunteers who are responsible for supervising children have completed necessary vetting checks prior to taking up their role and update them within the specified timescale



- Ensure all club volunteers have participated in the Irish FA's Safeguarding Children and Young People training and participate in refresher training when required
- Maintain accurate and up to date records of all club volunteers including coaching qualifications, vetting check outcome, safeguarding training dates and complaints
- Sit on the clubs management committee
- Ensure the Irish FA is provided with safeguarding compliance requests including but not limited to contact details of the Club Welfare Officer and alternative point of contact, preferably a Chairperson

There are multiple Child Welfare Officers within CFC Youths.

Small sided games (up to and including U12s)

U13s – U18s – Craig McGowan

For general, non-emergency queries please send in writing to

safeguarding@colerainefcyouths.com

This will then be forwarded to the relevant person.

If the concern is in relation to any of the Child Welfare Officers please contact the Junior Academy Director, David Platt, the Club's General Manager Stevie McCann

or email colerainefcyouths@gmail.com

Useful Numbers



Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts

Each trust will have a Gateway team to deal with reports of abuse and provide local contacts for ongoing professional liaison for advice on concerns.

Gateway Numbers (9am – 5pm)

Northern HSC Trust	Tel: 03001234333
South Eastern HSC Trust	Tel: 03001000300
Southern HSC Trust	Tel: 08007837745
Belfast HSC Trust	Tel: 028 90 507000
Western HSC Trust	Tel: 028 71 314090

Regional Emergency Social Work service is available at evenings and weekends including 24 hour cover over public holidays at **028 9504 9999**.

PSNI Central Referral Unit	Tel: 02890 259299
PSNI Child Abuse and Rape Enquiry Unit	Tel: 02890 351135
PSNI General Enquiry	Tel: 101
In event of an emergency	Tel: 999
Child Protection in Sport Unit	Tel: 02890 351135

Paul.stephenson@nspcc.org.uk
www.thecpsu.org.uk

NSPCC	Tel: 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk
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ChildLine	Tel: 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
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Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre

Tel: 020 7238 2391

www.ceop.gov.uk

Volunteer Development Agency

Tel: 02890 236100

www.volunteering-ni-org

Access NI

Tel: 02890 25910

www.accessni.gov.uk

Further useful websites

www.there4me.com a confidential advice website for teenagers

www.parentsadvicecentre.org

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.bullying.co.uk

Annex D

What is Child Abuse?

www.colerainefcyouths.com



Child abuse is a term used to describe what happens when a person, or group of people, harm a child or young person under the age of 18.

Abuse can happen anywhere and can be carried out by anyone including strangers and people known to the young person. Most perpetrators are adults whom the abused child/young person knows and trusts.

There are 5 categories of abuse:

- Physical
- Neglect
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Exploitation

Signs of Abuse

- Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas
- Repeated injuries
- Black eyes
- Injuries to the mouth
- Torn or blood stained clothing
- Bites
- Fractures
- Inconsistent stories
- Excuses re injuries
- Changes in behaviour
- Becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- Difficulty making friends
- Changes in attendance pattern
- Sudden drop in performance
- Inappropriate sexual awareness

This list is not exhaustive.

Disclosure of Abuse



Research indicates children and young people are most likely to disclose safeguarding concerns to an adult whom they trust and can rely on. Children and young people being subjected to harm just want an ear to listen to them, to believe them and for the abuse to stop.

Should a child or young person voice concerns about the behaviour of another adult, or peer towards them, you must:

- Remain calm and deal with the disclosure in a sensitive and competent way
- Listen to the child – do not question the child unless for clarification
- Take the matter seriously but don't jump to conclusions – the child has chosen to tell you something of significant importance
- Be honest with the child – explain it is not possible to keep this information a secret
- Speak to parents/guardians before making a report BUT only if it is safe to do so
- Give the child an idea of what will happen next
- Carefully record details – these must be factual, accurate, exact words of child if possible and include date, time and location of disclosure. The report should be signed by the author and the Child Protection and Poor Practice Referrals forms should be completed and forwarded to the IFA Welfare department for information and monitoring,
- If the child is in imminent danger contact HSCT or PSNI and act on their advice
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you