



Giffnock Soccer Centre

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For Boys & Girls

CHARITY REGISTERED IN SCOTLAND - CHARITY NO. SC041587



SFA Quality Mark Club

GIFFNOCK SOCCER CENTRE

PLAYER PROTECTION POLICY



(copied from <http://www.scottishyouthfa.co.uk/> March 2006)





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1. INTRODUCTION

The provision of football for both players and officials should be free from abuse regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

It is also incumbent on the Association to provide a fun and safe environment for all participating players and officials. Safety must be provided from neglect, verbal and physical abuse, sexual and emotional abuse and bullying. By the implementation of good practice and this policy, we hope to provide a safe, caring environment for both players and officials to flourish.

The SYFA is fully committed to and recognises the importance of the volunteer sector without whom it would be impossible for football to function at grassroots level in Scotland.

Part V of the Police Act 1997 is aimed at helping employers and voluntary organisations assess the suitability of applicants for particular posts and to make safer recruitment decisions in relation to positions of trust by widening access to criminal record information. To this end, the Act provides for the issue of criminal conviction certificates, criminal record certificates, and enhanced criminal record certificates. In Scotland, Disclosure Scotland will issue these certificates. In practice, the certificates will be known as Basic, Standard and Enhanced Disclosures.

The Act also provides for a Code of Practice to be published by Ministers governing the use of all information issued in respect of Standard and Enhanced Disclosures. The Code requires all recipients of such Disclosure information to comply with the Code and to use that information properly and fairly. Where conviction or other information is revealed as part of the Disclosure process, that information must not be used to unfairly discriminate against individuals when considering them for positions.

Employers and others who make use of the Disclosure scheme are expected to have a written policy on the recruitment of such individuals. The Policy may be given to applicants for positions where a Disclosure is requested, and to ensure that any body or individual, at whose request applications for Standard and Enhanced Disclosures are countersigned, has such a written policy.





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The Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 aims to improve safeguards for children by preventing unsuitable people from working with them.

The Act provides for Scottish Ministers to keep the Disqualified from Working with Children List.

The Scottish Youth FA has a legal duty to make a referral to Scottish Ministers if an individual working with players harms a child or puts a child at risk of harm **AND** is dismissed or moved away from access to children as a consequence. In addition, a person working with players who harms a child or puts a child at risk of harm **AND** would have been dismissed if they had not resigned, retired, been made redundant or left at the end of a temporary contract, must also be referred to Scottish Ministers. The Scottish Youth FA will have committed an offence if it fails to make referrals to the list where the criterion for making referrals has been met. The List will include those convicted of an offence against a child, when the court considers them to be unsuitable to work with children.

Those who have been fully listed by the Scottish Ministers will commit a criminal offence if they apply to or work with children. It will be an offence for an organisation to knowingly employ a person to work with children if that person has been fully listed by the Scottish Ministers. The fact that someone is on the List, either fully listed or provisionally listed, will be released as part of a Disclosure Application available from Disclosure Scotland.

The List helps to strengthen the safeguards already in place to protect children.

The Scottish Youth Football Association (SYFA) has designed the policy statement listed at section 3 of this policy, which assists compliance with the Code of Practice and must be implemented by all member clubs, leagues, associations and regions.

2. ABBREVIATIONS

FIFA

Federation of International Football Associations.





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SFA

Scottish Football Association.

SYFA

Scottish Youth Football Association.

VDS

Volunteer Development Scotland.

DEFINITIONS

ABUSE

A deliberate act of ill treatment that can harm or is likely to cause harm to a child's safety, well being and development.

CHILD

Under cover of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 anyone participating under the jurisdiction of the Association who has not reached their eighteenth birthday shall be considered a child for the purposes of this policy.

CHILD CARE POSITION

The Act applies to all individuals (paid and volunteer workers) who work in a child care position. Schedule 2 of the Act defines "child care" positions in a number of ways. A definition that applies to many posts found in voluntary organisations is:

"A child care position is a position whose normal duties include caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children."

Some examples of posts that involve:

training children and young people include sports leader, tutor, music group leader;

supervising children and young people include classroom assistant, life guard, pool attendant, leader of Uniformed organisation; volunteer helper (including a parent helper).

sole charge of children and young people include youth worker, domiciliary care worker, Sunday school teacher.

CLUB

Any football team in membership of the SYFA and includes all





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players and officials.

DISCLOSURE CERTIFICATE

A document (known as a Disclosure) which details convictions and/or other relevant information held by the Police and Government Departments. There are 3 levels of Disclosures, namely: Basic, Standard and Enhanced.

DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND

The organisation with responsibility for issuing Disclosure certificates.

DUTY of CARE

Section 5 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 states that an adult (16 years or over) who has care or control of a child under the age of 16 has the responsibility to "do what is reasonable in all circumstances to safeguard the child's health, development and welfare".

FULLY LISTED

A person will be 'fully listed' when the Scottish Ministers place their name on the List and it is considered that they are unsuitable to work with children.

Those who have been fully listed by the Scottish Ministers will commit a criminal offence if they apply to or work with children.

HARM

Under section 18 of the *Act* harm is defined as "*not just physical harm*". This means that "*harm*" would not only cover the deliberate infliction of physical or mental harm but also where harm resulted, or might have resulted, from a degree of carelessness or neglect which amounted to misconduct.

It is not possible to give a definitive list of the types of behaviour that are considered to be harmful and/or potentially harmful to a child or young person. A child can be harmed (for example) because of sexual and/or physical assault or abuse, neglect, intentional inappropriate restraint, on-going harassment and bullying and/or a failure to attend to essential Health & Safety requirements.

LEAGUE/ASSOCIATION





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A group of teams at the same age level(s) constitutionally formed into an administrative body for the purpose of issuing of fixtures and dealing with disciplinary matters affecting or relating to the group of teams. Leagues can administer groups of teams at various age levels.

LIST – THE DISQUALIFIED FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN LIST

The **List** is a list of persons who are considered to be unsuitable to work with children because they have harmed a child or considered to have placed a child at risk of harm. Individuals who are fully listed will be disqualified from working with children and young people under the age of 18 years. The List is maintained by the Scottish Ministers.

LISTED (OR FULLY LISTED)

An individual will be fully listed where Scottish Ministers are satisfied that:

The individual/organisation which made the referral reasonably considered the individual to have harmed a child or placed a child at risk of harm; and

It is concluded, after due process, that the individual is unsuitable to work with children.

Individuals who are listed are disqualified from working with children and young people under the age of 18 years.

NEGLECT

Failing to provide for, or to secure for a child the basic needs of food, warmth, clothing, emotional security, physical safety and well-being

OFFICIAL

Any person who whether registered for a member club or not, acts on behalf of a member club by being in the dressing room, enters the field of play on behalf of a member club, acts as an assistant referee on behalf of a member club, is in a member club's technical area, or assists in the running of





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said club. A club official may only be a member of 1 club.

PARENT

Mother, father or legal guardian.

PLAYER

A player participating in Association Football under the jurisdiction of the Scottish Youth Football Association.

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) ACT 2003

The Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 aims to improve safeguards for children by preventing unsuitable people from working with them.

PROTECTIVE SUSPENSION

A suspension placed on an official who has been the subject of an allegation of child abuse. This suspension is designed to protect the child and the official concerned and will not be part of the disciplinary procedures. Advice will be sought from the police before placing an official under a Protective Suspension.

PROVISIONAL LISTING

Provisional listing **does not** disqualify the individual from working with children and young people in a child care position for the period of time that they are provisionally listed. Disclosure checks for child care positions will show that the person is provisionally on the List. Both the person who is the subject of the referral and any organisation known to be "employing" that person in a child care position (either as a paid or volunteer worker) will be notified of the provisional listing and the outcome of the decision process. Provisional listing will not normally last longer than 6 months (though there are some circumstances where this time period can be extended).

SELF DISCLOSURE FORM

All Disclosure Scotland - Disclosure Application Forms must be accompanied by a fully completed SYFA Self-Disclosure Form. The Player Protection Panel may instruct officials, at any time, to submit or resubmit a fully completed SYFA Self-Disclosure Form. A form is included within the Appendix at the end of this policy or can be downloaded from the SYFA website.





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All SYFA Self-Disclosure Forms must be sent to the SYFA Protection Officer at Hampden Park within an envelope clearly marked PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL. Those on the List (other than provisionally) will commit a criminal offence if they apply to or work with children.

The SYFA Player Protection Panel will be the ONLY committee to view and/or use this SYFA Self-Disclosure Form. All officials who do not submit a fully completed SYFA Self-Disclosure Form will be debarred from membership. All officials who submit a SYFA Self-Disclosure Form and provide false information and/or omit information will be debarred from membership.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

The Scottish Youth Football Association plus its standing committees, regions, member leagues/associations, member clubs and officials are fully committed to providing every player and official with a safe environment in which they may enjoy participating in grassroots football.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

Within the SYFA the key principles of this policy are as follows:

All players have:

The right to a safe environment.

The right to protection against harm or the risk of harm.

The right to protection against physical abuse.

The right to protection against verbal abuse.

The right to protection against emotional abuse.

The right to protection against sexual abuse.

The right to protection against bullying.

The right to protection against neglect.

The right to express opinions and to have those opinions considered in all matters that concern their well being.

The right that all actions concerning the child should be in his/her best interests.

The right to have all suspicions and allegations taken seriously and actioned as appropriate.

The SYFA shall:





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Support all member leagues/associations or clubs with the implementation of this policy.

Ensure that the policy is reviewed on a regular basis.

Appoint Player Protection Officers

Appoint a Player Protection Panel

Assist member leagues, associations and clubs to appoint Player Protection Officers.

Refer any individual working with children, whether paid or unpaid, to the list when they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm and have been dismissed or moved away from contact with children as a consequence.

4. GOOD PRACTICE/CODE OF CONDUCT

By the introduction of good practice throughout the SYFA it is possible to reduce the risk of child abuse taking place.

A) GOOD PRACTICE/CODE OF CONDUCT FOR NORMAL ACTIVITIES

BEHAVIOUR THAT IS CONSIDERED TO BE GOOD PRACTICE

Take all reasonable steps, where possible, to protect all players and officials from harm or the risk of harm during all activities

Always act in the best interests of all players and club officials. In emergency situations take note of all risks before making decisions.

Always treat all players and officials with respect and dignity irrespective of their age, race, religious belief, gender, sexual orientation, disability or social background.

Always make sure that any allegations or suspicions are recorded and acted upon

Always report all incidents of abuse or concerns to the relevant protection officer and submit a written record of said incidents or concerns

Always strive to have a minimum of two club officials in





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attendance during all club activities

Always have a trained first aider/physiotherapist with a fully stocked first aid kit on hand during all club activities

Always wait until all players have left the changing room before officials shower and change.

Always be punctual for all football activities

Always take notice of player's reactions to your tone of voice and manner. If giving criticism do so in a positive and constructive manner.

Always be open and honest with players and parents.

Always encourage full participation in all activities whilst at the same time acknowledging the limitations that may prevent this because of a player's special needs.

BEHAVIOUR THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED

Avoid spending too much unnecessary time alone with a player

Avoid using or allowing players to use inappropriate language or behaviour

Avoid sexually suggestive comments being made by players or officials even as a joke

Avoid players and officials engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay

Avoid doing things of a personal nature for a player that a player can do for themselves such as going to the toilet or changing clothes. If assisting a player in the toilet, the official must never enter the toilet cubical. Seek the consent of parents and players where physical assistance is absolutely necessary.

Avoid being present whilst players are showering and changing unless it is necessary in the interests of health and





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safety or the players are particularly young or vulnerable. In these circumstances it would be best practice to have at least two officials present and, if appropriate, to leave the door open. Officials must always wait until all players have left the changing room before showering and changing.

Avoid meeting with players away from organised club activities without a parent or other club official being involved

Avoid making arrangements to meet a player in their home without the player's parent or guardian being present

Avoid a player traveling alone with a club official irrespective of the length or duration of the journey. If possible make sure your pick up or drop off points are with at least two players. If a single player has to be transported the club should seek the consent of the players parent or guardian. If under exceptional circumstances a single player has to be transported, make sure the official involved advises another club official or reports the incident to the clubs Player Protection Officer

Avoid players being unsupervised during club activities

Avoid officials taking any club activities on his/her own

Avoid Officials placing themselves in vulnerable situations

BEHAVIOR THAT WILL NEVER BE SANCTIONED

Harming a player or putting a player at risk of harm

Sexually abusing a player

Physically assaulting a player or official

Supplying banned substances to players or officials

Extortion and bullying

Harassment and intimidation e.g. racial harassment. Allowing players or officials to refer to another club member's religion, gender, disability or sexuality in a derogatory manner





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Allow officials to shower or change with players. Always wait until all players have left the changing room

Allow players to touch officials or other players in an intrusive or sexual manner. Any such incidents must be reported to another club official and the player involved informed that this behaviour is unacceptable

Allow allegations made by a player to go unreported. If there is an attempt to cover up you may be implicated by your silence.

Allow players or officials to be under the influence of alcohol or any banned substances during football activities.

B) GOOD PRACTICE/CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CLUB OUTINGS

BEHAVIOUR THAT IS CONSIDERED TO BE GOOD PRACTICE

Implement all points listed at 4A

Make sure all outings are planned with health and safety of uppermost importance

Inform all parents timeously in writing of the times of departure, pick up points, time of return, drop off points and emergency telephone contact numbers

Make sure all players and parents timeously complete and return a consent form

Make sure all outings are properly supervised e.g. a ratio of one official to six players with a minimum of three officials in attendance

Make sure all outings are properly supervised e.g. if the group consists of male and female players they must be accompanied by both male and female officials

C) GOOD PRACTICE/CODE OF CONDUCT FOR





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OVERNIGHT STAYS

BEHAVIOUR THAT IS CONSIDERED TO BE GOOD PRACTICE

Implement all points listed at 4A and 4B

Make sure all overnight stays are planned with health and safety of uppermost importance

Inform all parents timeously in writing of the date and time of departure, pick up points, date and time of return, drop off points and emergency contact details

Make sure all players and parents timeously complete and return a consent form

Make sure all overnight stays are properly supervised e.g. a ratio of one official to six players with a minimum of three officials in attendance

Make all players aware of the availability of telephones to contact home

BEHAVIOUR THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED

Players visiting any adult's room unless under emergency circumstances. In such circumstances the room door should be left open if it is appropriate to do so

Allowing officials to check players' rooms unaccompanied. A minimum of 2 officials are required

Allowing officials to enter a player's room unless in the interests of health and safety or in an emergency. In such circumstances the room door should be left open if it is appropriate to do so

BEHAVIOR THAT WILL NEVER BE SANCTIONED

An official sharing a room with a child unless he is the parent or guardian of the child.





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Allowing officials to supervise or have any responsibility for players while under the influence of alcohol or any banned substances

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure the safety of all players, all concerned must function as a unit with defined roles

The role of the player's parent / guardian is as follows:

All parents / guardians must take all measures necessary to protect their children from harm or the risk of harm

All parents / guardians must take all measures necessary to ensure that they are satisfied with the club and the club's officials that their child proposes to join.

All parents / guardians must sign the relevant SYFA / SFA registration form.

All parents / guardians must make arrangements to ensure that their children are safely transported to and from all club activities. This is the parents' responsibility.

All parents / guardians must know who the club protection officer is and their contact details.

Only parents / guardians who are officials of a club and have regular and/or unsupervised contact with the clubs' players will be Disclosure Scotland checked

The role of the club official is as follows:

Take all reasonable steps, where possible, to protect all players and officials from harm or the risk of harm during all activities

All officials e.g. managers, coaches, first aiders, physiotherapists, that have regular and/or unsupervised contact with children must complete a Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Application Form, submit it to the relevant SYFA Protection Officer or additional league signatory who will on





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approval send it directly to the National Secretary.

All Disclosure Scotland - Disclosure Application Forms must be accompanied by a fully completed SYFA Self-Disclosure Form. The Player Protection Panel may instruct officials, at any time, to submit or resubmit a fully completed SYFA Self-Disclosure Form. A form is included within the Appendix at the end of this policy or can be downloaded from the SYFA website.

All SYFA Self-Disclosure Forms must be sent to the SYFA Protection Officer at Hampden Park within an envelope clearly marked PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL. Those on the List (other than provisionally) will commit a criminal offence if they apply to or work with children.

The SYFA Player Protection Panel will be the ONLY committee to view and/or use this SYFA Self-Disclosure Form. All officials who do not submit a fully completed SYFA Self-Disclosure Form will be debarred from membership. All officials who submit a SYFA Self-Disclosure Form and provide false information and/or omit information will be debarred from membership.

An official in membership of the association who is charged with any criminal offence by the Procurator Fiscal must immediately report this charge to their club secretary and the National Secretary in writing. Any official who does not report a charge will have their membership of the association immediately terminated.

All appointments, changes or resignation of club officials must be immediately notified to the National Secretary in writing.

All officials must be fully conversant with any club Protection Policies and the SYFA Protection Policies.

All officials must be fully conversant with their club's Constitution and Rules and the SYFA Constitution and Rules.

All officials must protect all players from all forms of abuse.

All officials have a duty to report any allegations or concerns about other adults / officials.

All officials must display high standards in respect of





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behaviour and appearance. They should project an image of health, cleanliness and efficiency in respect of the function for which they have responsibility.

All officials must observe the SYFA registration procedures in respect of age group and maturity of their players.

All officials must promote the FIFA initiative on fair play.

All officials should attempt to have coaching qualifications appropriate to the ability of players they are coaching subject to the Constitution of the SYFA.

Note: All persons involved in grassroots football have responsibilities to report any suspected or alleged cases of abuse to the relevant Protection Officer. It is not the official's responsibility to decide whether or not a player has been abused.

The role of the club is as follows:

Take all reasonable steps, where possible, to protect all players and officials from harm or the risk of harm during all activities

All clubs on seeking membership of the SYFA must complete the official membership application form signing the declaration to enable all club officials to be Disclosure Scotland checked. The names, addresses and dates of birth of all club officials shall be submitted by the club when seeking membership and upon annual renewal. All club officials will be subject to Disclosure Scotland checking procedures and must adhere to the terms of the Scottish Youth FA Player Protection Policy. Any official who does not agree to be Disclosure Scotland checked or is deemed unsuitable by the SYFA Player Protection Panel will not be eligible for membership of the club or the SYFA.

All appointments, changes or resignation of club officials must be immediately notified to the National Secretary in writing.

A club official in membership of the association who is charged with any criminal offence by the Procurator Fiscal must immediately





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report this charge to their club secretary and the National Secretary in writing. A club official who does not report a charge will have their membership of the association immediately terminated.

All clubs, including community clubs, **MUST** appoint a Player Protection Officer for protection issues. All club members, players and player's parents to be advised of the official responsible for Protection within the club plus his/her contact details.

All clubs must include or refer to the SYFA Player Protection Policy within their Constitution.

All clubs must ensure that they carry out relevant checks on ALL club officials before they are offered membership of the club e.g. identification - they are who they say they are

All clubs must ensure ALL club officials complete a Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Application Form plus a SYFA Self-Declaration Form, submit them to the relevant SYFA Protection Officer who will on approval send them directly to the National Secretary complete with any Disclosure Application fee.

All clubs must request Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Application Forms plus SYFA Self-Declaration Forms for ALL officials. Forms can be obtained from the local SYFA Protection Officer or the National Secretary.

All clubs must make sure all of its officials are fully conversant with their club's Protection Policies and the SYFA Player Protection Policy.

All clubs must make sure all of its officials are fully conversant with their club's Constitution and Rules and the SYFA Constitution and Rules.

All clubs must protect all players and officials from all forms of abuse.

All clubs must accept that all officials must report concerns in respect of any suspected abuse.





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All clubs must be committed to eradicating bad practice.

All clubs must implement all proposals or amendments in respect of player protection policies.

In cases of reported abuse, maintain total confidentiality. Information must only be shared on a need to know basis i.e. with people who need to know to ensure the child's health, welfare and development.

Note: All persons involved in grassroots football have responsibilities to report any suspected or alleged cases of abuse to the relevant Protection Officer. It is not the official's responsibility to decide whether or not a player has been abused.

The role of the SYFA League or Association is as follows:

Take all reasonable steps, where possible, to protect all players and officials from harm or the risk of harm during all activities

All leagues / associations on seeking membership of the SYFA must complete the official membership application form signing the declaration to enable all league / association officials to be Disclosure Scotland checked. The names, addresses and dates of birth of all league / association officials shall be submitted by the league / association when seeking membership and upon annual renewal. All league / association officials will be subject to Disclosure Scotland checking procedures and must adhere to the terms of the Scottish Youth FA Player Protection Policy. Any official who does not agree to be Disclosure Scotland checked or is deemed unsuitable by the SYFA Player Protection Panel will not be eligible for membership of the league / association or the SYFA.

All appointments, changes or resignation of league / association officials must be immediately notified to the National Secretary in writing.

A league / association official in membership of the association who





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is charged with any criminal offence by the Procurator Fiscal must immediately report this charge to their league / association secretary and the National Secretary in writing. A league / association official who does not report a charge will have their membership of the association immediately terminated.

All leagues / associations must ensure ALL officials complete a Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Application Form plus a SYFA Self-Declaration Form, submit them to the relevant SYFA Protection Officer who will on approval send them directly to the National Secretary complete with any Disclosure Application fee.

To review and approve all Club Membership Application Forms and advise the National Secretary in writing of any officials who the League considers should be Disclosure Scotland checked as a matter of urgency.

To report any alleged incidents of abuse to the National Secretary or in his absence the National Protection Officer at Hampden Park.

In the absence of the National Secretary or the National Protection Officer, to report any alleged incidents of abuse to the Police.

The League / Association must appoint a minimum of one Player Protection Officer.

In cases of reported abuse, maintain total confidentiality. Information must only be shared on a need to know basis i.e. with people who need to know to ensure the child's health, welfare and development.

All Leagues / Associations must request Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Application Forms plus SYFA Self-Declaration Forms on behalf of their member clubs. Forms can be obtained from the local SYFA Protection Officer or the National Secretary.

Note: All persons involved in grassroots football have responsibilities to report any suspected or alleged cases of abuse to the relevant Protection Officer. It is





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not the official's responsibility to decide whether or not a player has been abused.

The role of the Player Protection Officer is as follows:

Take all reasonable steps, where possible, to protect all players and officials from harm or the risk of harm during all activities

They must ensure all Club Officials or any person acting on behalf of member clubs are named on the SYFA Club Membership Application Form. Refer to your League Secretary for SYFA Club Membership Application Forms.

They must ensure all League / Association Officials or any person acting on behalf of a member league or association are named on the SYFA League / Association Membership Application Form. Refer to your League Secretary for SYFA League Membership Application Forms.

All appointments, changes or resignation of Player Protection Officer must be immediately notified to the National Secretary in writing.

A Player Protection Officer in membership of the association who is charged with any criminal offence by the Procurator Fiscal must immediately report this charge to their club, league or association secretary and the National Secretary in writing. A Player Protection Officer who does not report a charge will have their membership of the association immediately terminated.

They must ensure all completed information that has to be retained is sent directly to the National Secretary to be stored in a completely safe and confidential manner. It is a criminal offence to disclose any information to any third party. The only exception is the reporting of abuse to either the National Secretary or the police.

They must check that all forms are completed properly, they must witness identification documentation and send all fully completed Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Application Forms plus SYFA Self-Declaration Forms to the SYFA Protection Officer at Hampden Park. They must make sure any officials





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highlighted as top priority by either their club, league or associations are prioritised for Disclosure Scotland checking.

All Player Protection Officers must request Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Application Forms plus SYFA Self-Declaration Forms on behalf of their members. Forms can be obtained from the local SYFA Protection Officer or the National Secretary.

To receive and advise on reported incidents by a club, player or official.

To initiate action ensuring all appropriate persons have been contacted.

To report any alleged incidents of abuse to the National Secretary or in his absence the National Protection Officer at Hampden Park.

Note: All persons involved in grassroots football have responsibilities to report any suspected or alleged cases of abuse to the relevant Protection Officer. It is not the official's responsibility to decide whether or not a player has been abused.

The role of the SYFA and its standing committees is as follows:

Take all reasonable steps, where possible, to protect all players and officials from harm or the risk of harm during all activities

To ensure ALL Regional officials and members of ALL Standing Committees complete and submit directly to the National Secretary a fully completed Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Application Form plus SYFA Self-Declaration Form complete with Disclosure Application fee.

To make a Player Protection Policy available to all member clubs, club officials, leagues, associations and regional committees. Provide support and guidance as and when required.





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To make sure ALL officials are Disclosure Scotland checked.

To make sure any officials highlighted as top priority by either their club, league or association are prioritised for Disclosure Scotland checking.

In cases of reported abuse, maintain total confidentiality. Information must only be shared on a need to know basis i.e. with people who need to know to ensure the child's health, welfare and development.

To report any alleged incidents of abuse to the National Secretary or in his absence the National Protection Officer at Hampden Park.

To keep records, in a totally safe and secure environment, of all officials about whom allegations are / have been made.

To maintain a list, in a totally safe and secure environment, of all expelled persons.

To hold an annual review of this policy although it may be reviewed as circumstances dictate.

Note: All persons involved in grassroots football have responsibilities to report any suspected or alleged cases of abuse to the relevant Protection Officer. It is not the official's responsibility to decide whether or not a player has been abused.

The role of the SYFA Executive is as follows:

To refer officials to the Scottish Ministers in order that they be added to the Disqualified from Working with Children List

The Scottish Youth FA will have a duty to make a referral to Scottish Ministers if an individual working with players harms a child or puts a child at risk of harm **AND** is dismissed or moved away from access to children as a consequence. In addition, a person working with players who harms a child or puts a child at risk of harm **AND** would have been dismissed if they had not resigned, retired, been made redundant or left at the end of a temporary contract, must also be referred to





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Scottish Ministers. The Scottish Youth FA will have committed an offence for failing to make referrals. The List will include those convicted of an offence against a child, when the court considers them to be unsuitable to work with children.

The role of the SYFA Player Protection Panels is as follows:

Take all reasonable steps, where possible, to protect all players and officials from harm or the risk of harm during all activities

To make decisions on membership of the SYFA for officials and clubs.

To keep records, in a totally safe and secure environment, of all officials about whom allegations are / have been made.

To maintain a register, in a totally safe and secure environment, of all expelled persons.

To inform all relevant parties of any decisions taken by the Player Protection Panel in respect of membership. All decisions of the Player Protection Panel shall be final and binding on all parties concerned.

6. IDENTIFYING ABUSE

Most people who look after children do not pose a risk to them. Those who do pose a risk will seek entry to organisations that allow them access to and have power or authority over children. Sadly, some adults are very skilled at making friends with children with the intention of harming them.

This situation can arise anywhere – in the family, at school, at a football club or during other children’s group activities. In fact in the majority of cases children are abused in the family home or by a close family friend.

There are many different forms of abuse but they fall into the following main categories:





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Please note: The signs of abuse described in the following paragraphs is not an exhaustive list and that advice must always be obtained where there is concern about a child's appearance and/or behaviour.

Sexual abuse

Please Note: It is very important to note that abuse can occur even if the child is not aware of or even consents to what is happening.

Both male and female players can be sexually abused in the following ways:

full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex and fondling
showing players pornographic books, videos or internet downloads

asking players to take part in making videos or taking pornographic photographs

telling stories or jokes of a sexually explicit nature

any person exposing themselves in front of children

What to look for:

- Adults who do not implement the SYFA Protection Policies e.g. befriending players in one to one situations, ignore allegations of abuse or do not report allegations made
- Pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in genital area
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or running
- Unexplained sources of money
- Inappropriate drawings, language or behaviour
- Aggressive, withdrawn behaviour or fear of one person

Physical abuse

Physical abuse can be in the form of injuries sustained through hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning.

In football situations, physical abuse may also be deemed to occur if the nature and intensity of training exceeds the





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capacity of the player's body or causes injury due to fatigue or overuse.

The use of alcohol or banned substances to enhance performance must also be treated as abuse.

It is a fact that in football the more naturally gifted players are asked to train and play more matches than others less gifted. To help prevent injuries and encourage players to practise the number of games played by any player must be carefully monitored.

What to look for:

- Unexplained or untreated injuries
- Injuries on unlikely parts of the body
- Cigarette burns, bites, belt marks and scalds
- Fear of parents being contacted, going home or receiving medical advice
- Flinching when touched
- Refusal to discuss injury
- Covering arms and legs

Neglect

Neglect occurs where adults:

- Fail to meet a child's basic physical needs e.g. food, warmth and clothing
- Regularly leave children alone and unsupervised
- Fail or refuse to give children love, affection or attention
- Neglect might also occur during organised activities if young people are placed in an unsafe environment, are exposed to extreme weather conditions or are at risk from being injured

What to look for:

- Poor personal hygiene
- Constantly hungry
- Inappropriate clothing or dress
- Constantly tired





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- Lonely with no friends
- Underweight
- No parental support or interest (where parents rarely take responsibility for their own child)
- Disheveled appearance
- Where arrangements for children are continually changed

Emotional abuse

This form of abuse includes:

- Persistent lack of love or affection
- Frequently shouting at players
- Frequent use of foul, abusive or insulting language towards players
- Taunting players
- Over protection which can lead to poor social skills
- Emotional abuse may include situations where parents, officials or organisers subject players to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressures to perform to high expectations

What to look for:

- Over reaction to mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders
- Extremes of emotions
- Self mutilation

Bullying

Bullying can mean different things including actions which some adults may dismiss as trivial or unimportant. It is estimated that as many as one in four children of primary school age and one in ten children of secondary school age are bullied.

Bullying can best be described as:

Being called names
Being teased
Being pushed, pulled, punched or kicked





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Being hit or attacked
Having possessions taken
Being ignored or left out
Being forced to hand over money
Being attacked because of religion, gender, colour or sexual orientation

What to look for:

- Children appearing with damaged or missing clothes, without money they should have
- Children appearing with scratches and bruises
- Schoolwork appears to be suffering for no obvious reason
- The child decides to change the way he or she goes to school
- The child is reluctant to go to school or regularly complains of feeling unwell
- The child seems different – more emotional, easily upset or made angry

7. DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST AN SYFA OFFICIAL

Incidents of abuse may become known in a number of ways:

A child or young person alleges that abuse has taken place or that they feel unsafe;

A third party or anonymous allegation is received;

A child or young person's appearance, behaviour, play or statements cause suspicion of abuse and/or neglect;

A child or young person reports an incident(s) of alleged abuse, which occurred some time ago;

A report is made regarding the serious misconduct of an official towards a child or young person.

You may have witnessed an incident or have suspicion about an incident

Where there are grounds for concern that a child or young person could be at risk of abuse or neglect the key tasks for any official are **observing, reporting, recording** and **co-operating** with the SYFA and child protection agencies.





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There are three actions that must be taken when dealing with alleged complaints of abuse

1. Observe
2. Report
3. Record and co-operate

Action 1 – Observe

ALL SYFA OFFICIALS SHOULD

Stay calm – do not rush into inappropriate action

Reassure the child – that he/she is not to blame and tell them that it was right to tell someone about their worries.

Most importantly – listen attentively and show that you take them seriously.

As soon as possible report all information regarding alleged abuse to the National Secretary or in his absence the National Protection Officer at Hampden Park.

Not worry that you may be making things worse by reporting your concerns. Few things are worse than allowing a child to be further abused. Many children are devastated by the experience of abuse and in the most serious cases may be seriously harmed or have their life threatened.

ALL SYFA OFFICIALS SHOULD NOT

Panic

Make promises you cannot keep

Make the child repeat the story – only take initial details

Delay

Take sole responsibility for further action. It is **never** the responsibility of the SYFA or any SYFA official to:

Investigate suspected or alleged abuse and/or neglect;

Evaluate the grounds for concern; or

Examine the child, as this is the role of the police;





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or

Seek proof before making a referral to the child protection agencies.

Action 2 – Report

After action 1 has been completed you must **report without delay** to the following:

1. Your organisation's Player Protection Officer
If the allegations concern your Player Protection Officer you should report the matter directly to the National Secretary or in his absence the National Protection Officer.
2. The National Secretary or in his absence the National Protection Officer at Hampden Park.

On receiving any allegations, the National Secretary or in his absence the National Protection Officer should contact immediately the Police and/or Social Work and act on any advice given. In particular, the Police and/or Social Work should be asked whether or not it is appropriate for the organisation to approach the official implicated in the allegation as part of the organisation's internal enquiry.

Advice must be obtained from the police as to who informs the parents about any allegations.

Action 3 - Record

The individual who first received/witnessed the allegation should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. An **SYFA Player Protection Incident Record Form** is included within the Appendix at the end of this policy or can be downloaded from the SYFA website.

If a form is not available, the following must be recorded:

1. The child's name, address and date of birth.
2. Date and time of the alleged incident(s) and/or nature of the allegation(s).
3. Your observations e.g. describe the behaviour and emotional state of the child.





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4. Any visible bruising or other injuries but never examine the child as this is the role of the police
5. The child's account of what allegedly happened.
6. Any action that you have taken e.g. any comments you made to the child and whether the matter has been reported.
7. Record whether the person writing the report is expressing their own concerns or passing on those of someone else.
8. What the child says keeping conversation to the minimum required. Do attempt to establish the basic facts using open-ended non-leading questions making a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.

It is important that all facts are properly recorded and accurate because if the allegations are proved it may result in legal action. Keep a copy of the report in a secure and confidential manner to refer to if required by the authorities.

The persons listed at Action 2 above can support the individual during this process but must not complete the report for the individual.

On receipt of a report of alleged abuse, the National Secretary or in his absence the National Protection Officer should add any steps that s/he has also undertaken (e.g. contact with the Police and/or Social Work) and summarise any advice given by the child protection agencies.

The individual and the National Secretary or in his absence the National Protection Officer should sign and date the report. A copy of the report should be passed to the Police and/or Social Work. The original report should be stored in a secure place such as a locked cabinet.

Where the Police have advised that it is appropriate to inform the official that an allegation has been made against them, the official should be told this and the organisation may place the official under a Protective Suspension whilst an internal review is carried out.

It is important that any internal review carried out by the organisation does not compromise the work of the child





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protection agencies or involve questioning the child or young person about the nature of the abuse that is being alleged. This is always the concern of the child protection agencies.

The National Secretary or in his absence the National Protection Officer should refer the report to the Player Protection Panel for their actions.

8. SELECTION/APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Those who have been fully listed by the Scottish Ministers will commit a criminal offence if they apply to or work with children.

It will be an offence for an organisation to knowingly employ a person to work with children if that person has been fully listed by the Scottish Ministers.

The fact that someone is on the List, either fully listed or provisionally listed, will be released as part of a Disclosure Application.

The List helps to strengthen the safeguards already in place to protect children.

All decisions of the Player Protection Panel shall be final and binding on all parties concerned.

The selection/application process for any official seeking membership of a club shall be as follows:

1. The applicant should make verbal application to a member club. He/she should outline his/her coaching experience, experience in relation to working with children, other clubs he/she has been involved with and the reasons he/she wishes to join the club.
2. If satisfied with the applicant, the club should ask the applicant to fill in a membership application form, refer to SYFA sample form, giving the names and contact details of two separate individuals who are prepared to supply references plus details of any previous clubs.





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3. On receipt of a fully completed membership application form, the club should hold a committee meeting and interview the person to determine if he/she is suitable to become an official of the club.
4. The club should hold a committee meeting and discuss the application for membership.
5. The club must seek advice on suitability from any previous clubs that the applicant has been a member.
6. The club should write to each of the referees and examine their replies.
7. If satisfied with the applicant, the applicant must confirm his / her identity before being accepted into provisional membership of the club.
8. On acceptance into provisional membership the club must ensure that the officials complete a Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Application Form.
9. All Disclosure Scotland - Disclosure Application Forms must be accompanied by a fully completed SYFA Self-Disclosure Form. The Player Protection Panel may instruct officials, at any time, to submit or resubmit a fully completed SYFA Self-Disclosure Form. A form is included within the Appendix at the end of this policy or can be downloaded from the SYFA website.
All SYFA Self-Disclosure Forms must be sent to the SYFA Protection Officer at Hampden Park within an envelope clearly marked PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL. Those on the List (other than provisionally) will commit a criminal offence if they apply to or work with children.
The SYFA Player Protection Panel will be the ONLY committee to view and/or use this SYFA Self-Disclosure Form. All officials who do not submit a fully completed SYFA Self-Disclosure Form will be debarred from membership. All officials who submit a SYFA Self-Disclosure Form and provide false information and/or omit information will be debarred from membership.
10. All Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Certificates will be





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returned to the National Secretary and submitted to the SYFA Player Protection Panel if required for a final decision on suitability for membership.

11. The club, league or association will be advised of the Player Protection Panel's decision regarding officials being accepted or rejected for membership. Full membership of the club will only be awarded after final SYFA Protection Panel clearance is obtained. The SYFA Player Protection Panel's decision shall be final and binding.
12. If accepted into membership of the club they should serve a probation period as decided by the club. During this probationary period the club should monitor and appraise the new member's suitability for continued membership of the club.

The selection/application process for any club seeking membership shall be as follows:

1. The club seeking membership must in the first instance hold an annual general meeting to elect a club committee from members who have been granted provisional membership. All club officials will be subject to Disclosure Scotland Checking procedures and must adhere to the terms of the Scottish Youth FA Player Protection Policy. Any official who does not agree to be Disclosure Scotland checked or is deemed unsuitable by the SYFA Player Protection Panel will not be eligible for membership of the club or the SYFA.

Those who have been fully listed by the Scottish Ministers will commit a criminal offence if they apply to or work with children.

It will be an offence for an organisation to knowingly employ a person to work with children if that person has been fully listed by the Scottish Ministers.

The fact that someone is on the List, either fully listed or provisionally listed, will be released as part of a Disclosure Application available from Disclosure





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2. The club should seek membership of a member league or association and will be given an SYFA membership form. Said form to be returned to the league or association fully completed accompanied by
 - a) the relevant insurance documentation/fees
 - b) SYFA membership fee
 - c) Scottish Cup entry fee if required
 - d) A4 stamped addressed envelope with relevant postage addressed to :
The National Secretary, SYFA, Hampden Park, Glasgow G42 9BF
 - e) A4 stamped self-addressed envelope with relevant postage for the return of 25 Y Forms and other documentation.

3. On acceptance into membership of a league or association, ALL officials must complete a Disclosure Scotland - Disclosure Application Form that must be accompanied by a fully completed SYFA Self-Disclosure Form. The Player Protection Panel may instruct officials, at any time, to submit or resubmit a fully completed SYFA Self-Disclosure Form. A form is included within the Appendix at the end of this policy or can be downloaded from the SYFA website. The forms should be submitted to the relevant SYFA Protection Officer who will on approval send it directly to the National Secretary complete with any Disclosure Application fee. All envelopes must be clearly marked PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.

4. The league or association on accepting the club into membership must then sign the league/association declaration on the SYFA application form and forward to the National Secretary using the envelope provided by the club ensuring all documentation and fees are included. If documentation is not correct all documentation will be returned to the Club. All Leagues / Associations MUST not sign application forms that have not been fully completed.



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5. On receipt of fully completed Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Application Form and SYFA Self-Disclosure Form the National Secretary will check all names against the Club Membership Application Form and if correct submit all club officials for formal checking to Disclosure Scotland.
6. All Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Certificates will be returned to the National Secretary and submitted to the SYFA Player Protection Panel if required for a final decision on suitability for membership.
7. The club, league or association will be advised of the Player Protection Panel's decision regarding officials being accepted or rejected for membership.

The selection/application process for all SYFA Player Protection Officers / Additional Signatories shall be as follows:

1. Their club, league or association must be in membership of the SYFA.
2. The official wishing to become SYFA Player Protection Officer / Additional Signatory will be subject to Disclosure Scotland Checking procedures and must adhere to the terms of the Scottish Youth FA Player Protection Policy. Any official who does not agree to be Disclosure Scotland checked will not be eligible for membership of the club or the SYFA.

Those who have been fully listed by the Scottish Ministers will commit a criminal offence if they apply to or work with children.

It will be an offence for an organisation to knowingly employ a person to work with children if that person has been fully listed by the Scottish Ministers.

The fact that someone is on the List, either fully listed or provisionally listed, will be released as part of a Disclosure Application available from Disclosure Scotland.





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3. The official wishing to become SYFA Player Protection Officer / Additional Signatory will have to attend a meeting with the National Secretary for identification purposes and interview.
4. All Disclosure Scotland Disclosure Certificates will be returned to the National Secretary and submitted to the SYFA Player Protection Panel if required for a final decision on suitability for membership and the position of SYFA Player Protection Officer / Additional Signatory.
5. The club, league or association will be advised of the Player Protection Panel's decision regarding officials being accepted or rejected for the position of SYFA Player Protection Officer / Additional Signatory
6. Any official who Disclosure Scotland / SYFA consider unsuitable for the position of SYFA Player Protection Officer / Additional Signatory will be instructed to re-apply for membership of the SYFA.

