

Square FC Child Welfare & Protection Policy

(Originally drafted: 27 April 2006 / Last updated: 6 August 2007)

Introduction:

Square FC provides football on Saturday mornings for children and young people aged 9 to 18. Square FC welcomes all girls and boys, especially those who attend any church or church-based activity in the Dunstable area. All Square FC teams play in the Christian Youth Football League.

Square FC acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care and is committed to promoting football in a safe, friendly and enjoyable environment where sportsmanship and team spirit is actively encouraged.

Policy Statement:

1. Square FC accepts the FA's definition that says a child or young person is 'anyone under the age of 18'. We subscribe to The FA's child protection and best practice policy and procedures and endorse and adopt the policy statement contained in that document.
2. In accord with the key principles of The FA child protection policy, Square FC asserts that:
 - the child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration
 - all children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, ethnicity, family background or any other factors, e.g. ability or disability, culture, language or religious beliefs
 - all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
 - it is essential to work in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents, guardians or carers
3. Square FC acknowledges that every child or young person engaged in *any* club activity (*whether or not this involves playing football*) should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse.
4. Square FC recognises that this responsibility is shared by *every* adult (*including team coaches and managers, match officials, committee members, parents and spectators*) involved in our club activities. It is noted and accepted that The FA's child protection regulation (see The FA Handbook) applies to everyone in football whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
5. Square FC has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. This includes identifying and reporting suspected child abuse even when this happens outside club activities, e.g. if it is happening at home or at school.
6. We endorse and adopt The FA's child protection and best practice guidelines for recruiting volunteers and will:
 - develop a role profile
 - request identification documents
 - as a minimum: meet and chat with the applicant(s) and where possible conduct interviews before appointing
 - request and follow up with two references before appointing
 - where appropriate, require Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Enhanced Disclosure in line with FA guidelines

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7. All Square FC staff and volunteers with direct access to children and young people are required to complete a CRB Enhanced Disclosure *before they start working with the team and, thereafter, at least once every three years.* (This is done via the Churches Agency for Safeguarding, The Methodist Church, Methodist Church House, London NW1 5JR.)
8. If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached us to become part of Square FC guidance will be sought from The FA. It is noted and accepted that The FA will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained and that all decisions will be made in the best interests of children and young people.
9. Square FC accepts that The FA aims to prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children or young people and the opportunity to influence policies or practice with children or young people. This is to prevent direct sexual or physical harm to children and to minimise the risk of 'grooming' within football.
10. Square FC supports The FA's whistle blowing policy. Any adult or young person with concerns about a colleague can 'whistle blow' by contacting The FA Child Protection Manager on 0207 745 4771, by writing to The FA Case Manager at The Football Association, 25 Soho Square, London W1D 4FA or by going direct to the police, social services or the NSPCC. Square FC encourages everyone to know about it and utilise it if necessary.
11. Square FC has appointed a Club Welfare Officer (CWO) in line with The FA's role profile and required completion of the child protection and best practice workshop. The post holder will be involved with designated person's training provided by The FA. The CWO is the first point of contact for all club members and parents or guardians regarding concerns for the welfare of any child or young person. They will liaise directly with the County FA Child Protection Officer (CFA CPO) and will be familiar with the procedures for referring any concerns. They will also play a proactive role in increasing an awareness of poor practice and abuse amongst club members.
12. Square FC acknowledges and endorses The FA's identification of bullying as a category of abuse. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all players, parents or guardians should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. Incidents need to be reported to the CWO, a member of the committee or, in cases of serious bullying contact the CFA CPO.
13. Codes of conduct for players, parents or spectators, match officials and coaches have been implemented by Square FC. The club has clear sanctions to deal with any misconduct at club level and acknowledges the possibility of potential sanctions which may be implemented by leagues or the County FA in more serious circumstances. All prospective members will be informed of these codes.
14. Further advice on child protection matters can be obtained from:
 - the County Football Association's Child Protection Officer, whose details can be found in the County Handbook
 - the joint FA-NSPCC Child Protection 24-Hour Helpline: 0808 800 5000
 - the FA's website: www.TheFA.com/Goal
15. The Square Rangers Club Welfare Officer (CWO) is: Rupert Kaye.
(Tel: 01582 663639 Email: rupertkaye@aol.com)