



GREENOCK MORTON FOOTBALL CLUB

VULNERABLE ADULTS SUPPORT AND PROTECTION (SAFEGUARDING ADULTS)

Document Control

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Prepared by-John Malcolm, Greenock Morton Football Club

Checked By-Warren Hawke Chief Executive

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Introduction

This policy must be associated with the Clubs SFA approved document relating to Safeguarding Children.

It must be noted that Child within the SFA approved document is up to 18 years of age.

In terms of vulnerable adults the age of an adult is 16 years of age.

For the avoidance of confusion if the person is on the playing staff the age of a child is up to 18 years.

For all other purposes a person ceases to be a child at 16 years.

The term Safeguarding is a generic term used widely in this regard. In Scotland however the Scottish Government prefers the term adult support and protection.

To avoid any further confusion the term safeguarding will be used as it is the most commonly understood term.

Purpose

1.1 Greenock Morton Football Club is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all who use its services. We recognise that we have a particular responsibility to ensure that adults who may be at risk are protected.

1.2 Policy objectives. The objectives of this policy and procedure are to:

- Ensure that adults who may be at risk and who are in contact with the GMFC are protected effectively from abuse/harm.
- Provide a clear framework for action whenever abuse is disclosed or suspected
- Ensure all GMFC staff and volunteers are clear about their responsibilities
- Ensure the MS Society complies with best practice in this area.

1.3 This policy and procedure applies to all GMFC staff and volunteers working within the Club.

1.4 For details of the need for disclosure checks for staff and volunteers working closely with adults at risk please refer to Safeguarding Children policy. The Club Secretary has full details.

2. Definitions

2.1 Adult at risk An 'adult at risk' is an individual aged 16 years or over who:

- Is unable to safeguard themselves, their property, rights or other interests,
- Is at risk of harm.
- Because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, is more vulnerable to being harmed than others who are not affected.

The risk may be because:

- They are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, is more vulnerable to being harmed than others who are not affected.
- The presence of a particular condition does not automatically mean an adult is an 'adult at risk'. Someone can have a disability and be able to safeguard their wellbeing etc.
- It is important to stress that **all three elements** of this definition must be met. It is the whole of an adult's particular circumstances which can combine to make then more susceptible to harm than others.

2.2 The purpose of this definition is to avoid labelling adults as at risk and needing protection solely on the basis of having a specific condition or disability.

2.3 Harm as defined in the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 includes 'all harmful conduct' and in particular includes but is not restricted to:

- Physical
- domestic violence
- neglect and acts of omission
- sexual
- psychological
- financial or material
- organisational/institutional
- discriminatory
- self-neglect
- modern slavery
- self-harm
- gender based violence
- hate crime

The list is not exhaustive and no category of harm is excluded simply because it is not listed. Harm can be accidental or intentional, as a result of self neglect or neglect by a carer or caused by self harm and/or attempted suicide

2.4 While most abuse takes place when people are in physical contact, it can also take place in a virtual environment, such as an online discussion board or chat room.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 All staff and volunteers have a duty to report any concerns about actual or suspected abuse.

3.2 GMFC have established an Adult Safeguarding Responders Group (SRG) is made up of designated managers and staff. This group consists of:

The Chief Executive.

Safety Consultant.

Club Secretary.

A Club Director.

3.3 Safeguarding Responders Group members have a responsibility to:

- respond to internal safeguarding reports in a timely manner
- consider all the issues carefully
- consult with colleagues if appropriate
- ensure all records are kept confidential
- where appropriate, make a referral to the local authority.

3.4 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for this policy and will:

- ensure the regular review and effective working of this policy
- report annually to the Board of GMFC detailing the number and nature of safeguarding incidents, making recommendations for improvements in policy and practice.

4. Policy principles

4.1 The following principles underpin this policy and accompanying procedure

- It is every individual's right to live in a safe environment and to be free from abuse or the threat of abuse.
- It is every individual's right to live an independent life based on self-determination and personal choice and this includes the right to take risks.
- The overall aim of safeguarding is to restore the power back to the adult at risk, so that they can exercise choice and control over their life.
- All staff and volunteers will promote the empowerment and wellbeing of people considered to be at risk or vulnerable
- Safeguarding protected adults is everyone's business: all staff and volunteers will be aware of the policy and procedures for safeguarding adults at risk.
- Staff or volunteers with concerns or suspicions that an adult at risk is being or is at risk of being abused have a duty to report these concerns or suspicions within the Club in a timely way.
- All disclosures and suspicions of abuse will normally be referred to the Police with the individual's consent. In some instances it may be necessary to inform the Police without the consent of the individual.

Details giving rise to concerns or suspicions of abuse will only be shared with the limited number of individuals who need them in order to make decisions about next steps and referrals. Beyond this, all details will remain confidential. Where other GMFC policies and procedures apply to a disclosure of abuse (e.g. grievance, complaints, disciplinary) the welfare and safety of the adult at risk remains paramount.

4.2 Timescales All timescales in this policy refer to calendar days. All timescales will be met as far as is reasonably practicable. Timescales may only be varied where this has been agreed in advance by the Chief Executive.

Safeguarding Adults Procedure

The role of all staff members and volunteers is to recognise, respond, record and report internally.

1. Safer recruitment

1.1 Staff and volunteers in designated roles will be subject to enhanced disclosure checks as per Children's Safeguarding Policy, see Club Secretary

1.2 Staff appointments are all subject to references and self declaration as set out in the Safeguarding Children Policy.

1.3 Candidates for staff and volunteer roles involving regulated activities will be subject to a disclosure check and self declaration as per Safeguarding Children Policy.

1.4 Any new roles that are developed will be risk assessed to check whether they are involved in regulated activity and require a disclosure check.

1.5 Induction for all staff will include an awareness of the Clubs policies to protect adults at risk, with particular reference to their responsibilities.

1.6 Staff and volunteers engaged in regulated activity will have appropriate support and training to ensure they are able to recognise and act on the suspicion or disclosure of abuse.

1. Overview of reporting procedure

2.1 Although rare, no suspicion of abuse or harm should be ignored. Staff or volunteers may become aware of possible abuse when they:

- witness a form of abuse
- are told about abuse by the person who is the victim
- are told about abuse by a visitor, carer, relative or friend
- observe online abuse on forums and discussion boards
- receive a complaint.

2.2 GMFC does not provide an emergency service. If there is an emergency, the staff member or volunteer should inform the adult at risk to call the Police on 999.

2.3 All GMFC staff and volunteers have a duty to report any disclosure, reports or suspicions of abuse or harm without delay by informing The Chief Executive and/or member of the Safety Team or Club Secretary. If a member of staff or volunteer is affected by what they have heard or seen they should contact their line manager for support. Remember the role of all staff members and volunteers is to recognise, respond, record and report internally or externally if deemed appropriate.

2.4 The Police will investigate if there is deemed to be criminal activity. No GMFC staff or volunteer should undertake any kind of investigation where Criminality or suspected Criminality is involved.

3. Responding to disclosure, suspicion or witnessing of abuse

3.1 Where an adult at risk discloses or discusses potential abuse or harm the staff member or volunteer should be able to:

- Recognise: identify that the adult at risk may be describing abuse, even when they may not be explicit.
- Respond: stay calm, listen and show empathy.
- Reassure them that it will be taken seriously and explain that there is a duty to report the issues internally and what may happen next.
- Record: write up notes of the conversation clearly and factually as soon as possible.
- Try to capture as much of the conversation verbatim as possible.
- Report without delay.

3.2 Confidentiality must be maintained. Details giving rise to concerns or suspicions of abuse will only be shared with the limited number of individuals who need them in order to make decisions about next steps and referrals. Beyond this, all details will remain confidential.

3.3 No staff or volunteer should start any investigation or confront or make contact with the alleged perpetrator.

3.4 Deciding to refer. On receiving an internal report the lead safeguarding responder will confer with colleagues on the Safeguarding Responders Group (and possibly seek informal advice from the appropriate local council/police).

3.5 The Safeguarding Responders Group will confirm whether this is a safeguarding issue and requires referral to the Police.

3.6 When considering the internal report and deciding whether to refer a case to the Police if the Safeguarding Responders are in any doubt as to whether to refer or not. They should err on the side of caution and refer to the Police.

3.7 Seeking consent. The lead safeguarding responder will contact the adult at risk to seek their consent to inform the necessary authorities and make the referral.

3.8 Capacity to consent will be assumed unless there is evidence to the contrary. Decisions regarding an individual's capacity must be specific to this decision at this time.

3.9 Where the individual seems unable to give consent, GMFC will inform the Police.

3.10 Where the individual does not wish to give consent, the circumstances of the case will be considered and may very well result in police involvement.

3.11 All referrals will be made by the GMFC Chief Executive within two working days of receiving the disclosure. There may be exceptional circumstances that extend this time.

3.12 The referral should be made by phone and the Chief Executive should ensure it has been received by someone able to act on the information and obtain a reference number from The Police.

3.13 If the Police will not accept a safeguarding referral by telephone then it should be made in the manner requested, be as comprehensive as possible and a copy retained in the individual file relating to the concern. The Police will carry out the enquiries or investigation. Under no circumstances should a volunteer or staff member attempt to investigate any suspicions or disclosures of abuse.

3.14 Concerns about abuse by another adult at risk In cases when a referral is being made and the alleged abuser may also be an adult at risk, they should also be referred to the Police. They may need an assessment in their own right to determine whether they need any specialist services.

3.15 Recording and monitoring The Chief Executive will keep the adult at risk informed of their actions and developments.

3.16 Once the matter is resolved, the Chief Executive will ensure that all notes are collected and stored electronically and the monitoring log is completed.

3.17 Support for staff and volunteers Staff should be reminded counselling support is available.

4. Safeguarding concerns about employees or volunteers

4.1 All staff and volunteers have a duty to report any concerns they have about colleagues (volunteers or staff) who may be involved in abuse or harm, to their line manager/Safety Team/Club Secretary/Chief Executive.

4.2 If there is any concern that the line manager or local member of staff is involved in abuse, the person reporting must contact a member of the Safety Team or a Club Director.

4.3 The Chief Executive will report the concerns to the HR department of Golden Casket who will advise on what action to take. This may include:

- the suspension of the member of staff or volunteer
- a referral of the allegations to the Police for investigation.

4.4 No internal procedure such as a disciplinary investigation will be initiated until after the investigation of abuse or when the leading authority advises it is appropriate.

4.5 Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme referral Following all investigations and any disciplinary or other procedures, it is a legal requirement that a referral must be made to Disclosure Scotland when:

- the Club has withdrawn permission for an individual to work with vulnerable groups (or would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred into another position)
- the Club believes the individual has engaged in activity that causes concern for the safeguarding of vulnerable groups
- there is harm or risk of harm to vulnerable groups or an individual has received a caution or a conviction for a relevant offence.

4.6 Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme record updates If a Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme member (staff or volunteer) leaves the Club, Disclosure Scotland must be notified by the Club Secretary.

4.7 If a member of staff or volunteer involved in regulated work is convicted of a relevant crime or they are being considered for the barred list, the Club will be notified by Disclosure Scotland.

4.8 Staff and volunteers who are barred Staff and volunteers under investigation or reported to Disclosure Scotland will be suspended from all Club activities.

4.9 When a member of staff or volunteer is barred by the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme they may no longer be involved in any regulated activities. It is a legal offence for the Club to allow them to continue working in such a role. In such a situation the staff member or volunteer will be dismissed.

5. Monitoring and reporting

5.1 Safeguarding Responder Group members via The Club Secretary will ensure that all records are kept electronically and stored safely in the safeguarding casework drive.

5.2 Monitoring information which is anonymous will be kept indefinitely. Individual records which include sensitive personal data will be kept securely for six years.