



Safer Recruitment of Volunteers at Wickford Town FC Policy.

Responsibility.

The intentions of most people who work with children and young people in football are good. However, Wickford Town recognises responsibilities to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people participating in football by providing a safe and enjoyable environment. Sound recruitment and selection procedures will help to screen out those who are not suitable.

By adopting the points outlined in these guidelines, we will be putting in place the best possible practice to protect children and young people whenever a volunteer is sought to work with them in our club.

When Wickford Town FC recruit's new members, all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people. The Clubs volunteer selection processes must be consistent and fair at all times. While these guidelines have special emphasis on recruiting volunteers to work with children and young people, they could easily be applied to recruitment of all volunteers, as well as paid staff.

Planning.

The first stage of any recruitment process involves planning. Wickford Town's officials will draw up a role profile, which highlights the main areas of a voluntary role. We will decide upon the skills and experience that an individual would need to fulfil the requirements of the role. The club's recruitment has been developed in such a way that we treat every applicant in a fair and consistent manner.

Advertising.

In order to attract new volunteers, it may be necessary to advertise outside the club itself, for example - utilising the club website, newsletter, social media (e.g. Twitter, club Facebook page), Bartlett Park notice board and Beauchamps 3G may also be beneficial.

The advertisement should reflect our club's Safeguarding Children Policy and it should contain the skills and experience required and the duties to be undertaken. However, it should not discriminate in terms of age, race gender or disability.

Application Form.

The Club will use application forms to collect information on each applicant. The FA's Volunteer Application Form has been adapted for Wickford Town's use. Each applicant's information is then collected in a consistent way.

At least two officials will work together to consider all the application forms to ensure that they are scrutinised fairly and equitably. The club will also ask for identification documents to confirm the identity of the applicant – for example: a passport or driving license providing photo ID.

Meeting / Interview.

Members from The Clubs Executive Committee officials will meet with everyone who has applied for the post or offered to volunteer before any decisions about taking them on are made.

A minimum of three officials will be present. The meeting/interview will enable the club to explore further the information provided in the application form. The questions to be asked will be prepared in advance and should provide the applicant with the opportunity to recount previous experiences and give examples of how they have or would handle situations.

Whilst it is important to gain information about an applicant's technical abilities, it is also necessary to explore their attitudes and commitment to child welfare. Below are examples of questions that could be used to discover this information:

Tell us about any previous experience you have working with children or young people.

Give a child-related scenario and ask the applicants what they would do. For example: It is a winter evening and the training session has finished. A parent has not arrived to pick up their child – what would you do?' The applicant would be expected to say that they would stay with the child and contact the parents to find out where they were.

'Is there anything we should know that could affect your suitability to work with children or young people?'

You should also ask applicants to bring along certificates or other proof of any qualifications to the meeting or interview – for example, a coaching certificate or proof of attendance at any safeguarding children courses.

References.

At least two references should be requested from individuals who are not related to the applicant. The FA's Volunteer Reference Form has been adapted for the club to use. One reference should be associated with the applicant's place of work and, if possible, one that demonstrates that the individual has been involved in sport, particularly children's football, previously. References should be followed up; ideally before they begin to work at the club. If we decide to let them volunteer before taking up the role then they must not be left alone with children or young people at any time. If the references raise any concerns, you are advised to contact The FA Safeguarding Children Department for advice and guidance.

Criminal Record Checks (DBS)

DBS are another tool in the recruitment procedure.

A Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced Check with or without Barred List, tells Wickford Town about a person's recorded offences. It can indicate that a person is not a suitable person to work with children – for example:

If they have a history of sexual offending. It may also tell the club that further investigations are required – for example: if the person has a history of drug dealing or racist offending.

Volunteers and others in football should be assured that The Club will take into account the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA), 1974 and only consider offences which we are entitled to in

relation to the ROA Exceptions Order, 1975. The Club will only share information with those who are involved in the recruitment decision. The club will only be told whether or not a person is considered suitable to work with children.

Applications for DBS should be dealt with by the Club Welfare Officer. If an applicant claims to have a DBS Enhanced check, the club will seek advice from ECFA Welfare Department and FA Member Services Department.

Recruitment Decisions.

It's important to consider all the information you receive via the application form, confirmation of identity, the outcome of the take-up of references and whether the person is accepted by the club following their DBS Check. This information should then be considered alongside the outcome of the meeting/ interview to make an informed decision as to whether or not to accept them into the club or league.

Once in post

It's important that once a new volunteer is at the club, follow- up action is taken – for example:

Ensuring that new volunteers are made aware of and sign up to the club's Safeguarding Children policy and procedures, best practice guidelines and codes of conduct

Ensuring that they attend The FA's Safeguarding Children Workshop, or that they update this

A statement of their roles and responsibilities is prepared and that they are agreed to by the new volunteer

Initially, a period of supervision/observation or mentoring could be introduced to support the new volunteer

Summary.

Safeguarding Children is about putting in place the best possible practices and procedures. This will protect not only the child but also the Club and the adults helping out with U18s in football.