Altofts Juniors AFC

Managing Challenging Behaviour in Young People Policy

OUR COMMITMENT

Altofts Juniors football club is based on mutual respect, support and encouragement to bring out the best in everyone. We aim to promote positive standards of behaviour which are easily understood and require all our members (players, parents/carers and club officials) to sign up to these behaviours. Our club officials have a critical role in establishing high standards of coaching, learning and behaviour. Positive behaviour and self-control are key to creating a happy and effective club environment. Poor behaviour cannot be tolerated because it prevents individual and collective learning, enjoyment, team development and morale. The support of parents/carers is essential in managing and maintaining acceptable behaviour by the club's young participants.

Through our procedures, and on welcoming new members to our club, we will:

Make clear what is considered acceptable practice;

• Communicate the required standards of behaviour; and

• Share the club's process for responding to behaviour that is considered unacceptable.

It is the responsibility of all football club officials to ensure that they read and understand this policy and put our procedures into practice. If there are any questions or queries, please contact our Club Welfare Officer (CWO) or other committee member for guidance.

Parents of under-18 players will all be provided with information about what we expect as a club and our codes of conduct, as well as information on who they should contact should they have concerns

OUR PRINCIPLES

Anyone working with children may need to deal with a child's challenging behaviour. Our procedures aim to provide support and promote safer practice and are based on these six principles:

1. The welfare of the child is paramount.

2. Children must never be subject to any form of treatment that is harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading.

3. A child's specific needs should be discussed with their parent/carer and, where appropriate, the child before activities start. Where appropriate,

4. details of any plan or approach agreed between the coach, parents/carers, the child and the CWO will be recorded and provided to all parties.

5. Every child should be supported to participate. Excluding a child from football activity as a result of their behaviour should only be used in

6. exceptional circumstances and as a last resort, e.g. where the safety of a child or of other children cannot be maintained, or parent/carer engagement has been exhausted.

7. Children should be encouraged to manage their own behaviour where possible.

8. Unacceptable behaviour from parents/ carers should not be tolerated. Our managing unacceptable behaviour procedures must be used alongside our anti-bullying procedures and safeguarding children policy.

ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Some children may exhibit challenging behaviour as a result of a medical or psychological condition. When children are identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require additional supervision, specialist expertise or support, this should be discussed with their parents/carers and, where appropriate, the child to ensure that an appropriate approach is agreed. Additional support and advice can be requested from our CWO, who in turn may seek advice from our County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer and/or external agencies.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Good coaching requires planned sessions for the group that also consider individual player needs. Where club officials identify potential risks, strategies to manage those risks should be agreed in advance of the activity. When assessing the number of adults required to safely manage and support an activity, consideration should be given to the ability to respond effectively to any challenging behaviour whilst ensuring other players and club officials are safeguarded. As a club we will aim to work in partnership with parents/carers and, where necessary, external agencies to ensure, wherever possible, that a child or young person can be supported to participate safely.

AGREEING ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

By joining our club, club officials, members, players, and parents/carers of under-18 players agree to adhere to our codes of conduct. A range of actions can be used to respond to unacceptable behaviour which we have outlined later in this document.

RESPONDING TO UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

The type of behaviour and age of the child will determine the actions used, but we encourage the following to be considered:

• Continuing to praise appropriate behaviour of those positively completing the task/activity;

• Offering extra responsibility to a child to help refocus their energy e.g. leading a part of the activity;

• Increasing the number of coaches/staff/volunteers involved in overseeing the task/activity;

• Reasoning with the child, including advising them about the consequences of their actions;

• De-escalating the situation, for example by talking with the child and distracting them from challenging behaviour; • Using a verbal reprimand (including advice on how to improve);

• Implementing a time out from the current activity;

• Implementing a temporary exclusion from the next task/activity;

• Not selecting the child to play in the next starting line-up but placed on the bench for substitution, alongside explaining to the child why they have not been selected;

• Not selecting the child to play any part in the next match, alongside explaining to the child why they have not been selected;

• Not considering the child to play any part in the next 2/3 matches, alongside

• explaining to the child why they will not be taking part;

• Requiring completion of another task or activity to make amends;

• Using individual agreements with the child and their parents/carers, for the child's future or continued participation;

• As a last resort, if a child continues to present a high level of risk or danger to themselves, or others, considering

• suspension or barring the child from the team and/or club activities;

• Seeking additional/specialist support through working in partnership with other agencies (e.g. the child's school, Children's Social Care);

• In some circumstances, referring the matter to our County FA.

MISCONDUCT DURING MATCHES

Misconduct during matches may result in County FA disciplinary action. If this occurs, our committee will be informed who will liaise with the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer regarding support at disciplinary hearings to ensure the welfare of the child in line with The FA's 'Personal Hearings Guidance' – See FA Guidance Notes 7.3: Personal hearings' guidance for under 18s. If parents/carers or club officials encourage and/or pressurise children to behave unacceptably during matches, the club will take the appropriate actions to deal with the adults and, where appropriate, the children concerned. The following should never be used to manage a child's behaviour:

• Physical punishment or the threat of such.

• Refusal to speak to or interact with the child.

• Being deprived of food, water, access to changing facilities or toilets or other essential facilities.

• Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Physical intervention should be avoided unless necessary to prevent (i) a child injuring themselves or others, (ii) causing serious damage to property, or(iii) when working with children with an impairment that necessitates such intervention. It is important that club officials understand this to protect the child, their own position and the reputation of our club. Physical contact to prevent something happening should always be the result of conscious decision-making and not a reaction. The decision to restrain a child should be firmly based on the safety of the child and must never be made as a punishment or to get children to comply with instructions. If physical intervention is necessary:

• Ensure it is aimed at achieving an outcome in the best interests of the child whose behaviour is of immediate concern;

• Consider your own safety and that of the child(ren);

• Give verbal instructions first;

• Use the minimum reasonable force, for the shortest time possible, to resolve the incident;

• Do not strike a child, pin a child down, act with unnecessary force, or retaliate;

• Avoid contact with intimate parts of the body, the head and neck;

• Do not cover a child's mouth;

• Stay in control of your actions; and

• Consider swapping club officials during the intervention to reduce the tension and stress. Any physical intervention should be recorded as soon as possible after the incident by the club officials involved. This must be passed to the CWO as soon as possible and the parent/ carer informed.

RESPONDING TO HIGH RISK BEHAVIOURS

Where children are identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require physical intervention, this must be discussed with parents/carers and, where necessary, the club will seek advice from, or work in partnership with, external agencies (e.g. Children's Social Care) to ensure that the child or young person can be supported to participate safely. This may include asking for the provision of a suitably trained support worker/volunteer or accessing staff/volunteer training in physical intervention or parent/ carer support.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Issues of behaviour and management of unacceptable behaviour will be discussed with club officials, parents, carers and children in the context of rights and responsibilities so that all parties understand what is expected of them and others. This will be done at the start of the season, in advance of a trip away, when going on tour, or at other intervals as deemed appropriate. We will ensure every under-18 player has a copy of The FA's guidance 'Know your rights in football'.

CODES OF CONDUCT

Our coaches are provided with our codes of conduct to use with under-18 players. However, we recognise that when children are consulted as a group, and specifically asked to draw up rules for their team, they generate very sensible ideas and tend to take greater ownership of those rules as opposed to those provided by the club. We therefore encourage our coaches to discuss with their under-18 players how they wish to make use of our code of conduct and collectively agree on the team's code of conduct.

RECOGNISING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR – GIVING PRAISE

Altofts Juniors football club fully recognises the importance of praise to reinforce positive behaviours and encourages the use of any one, or combination of, the following actions:

• A quiet word or gesture to show approval;

• A word of praise in front of the group;

• Verbal acknowledgement from the club's senior coach or programme lead;

• A reward system – player of the week/ month/season;

• Special mention at club/football programme end of season awards;

• Delegating some special responsibility or privilege e.g. choice of playing position that week/being captain/choosing the practice content;

• A mention to parents – either written or verbal communication; and/or

• An invitation to train with another age group (appropriate to skill/physical abilities and with the consent of the parent/carer)

SIGNED BY:

Tracy Missions

Club Chairwoman

DATE: 24/7/2025

SIGNED BY:

Sarah Webber

Club Welfare Officer

DATE: 24/7/2025