

# **STAPLEHURST MONARCHS FOOTBALL CLUB**



CONSTITUTION AND RULES  
2005 / 2006

## **1. NAME**

The Club shall be known as ‘**Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club**’

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

To promote and develop Association Football amongst boys and girls between the ages 7 and 18 and men over that age by means of competitive and friendly matches, social and discussion sessions.

## **3. COLOURS**

The club colours shall be red and white.

## **4. MEMBERSHIP**

- 4.1 shall be at the discretion of the Management Committee for boys between the age of 7 and under 18 years on 1 August each year; and men over that age;
- 4.2 the annual membership and match fees shall be decided at the Annual General Meeting prior to the commencement of the season;
- 4.3 fees must be paid each year at the time of signing on;
- 4.4 the Club shall require each member to complete a formal registration with the Club, which will include the Parent’s / Guardian’s approval and agreement in respect of anaesthetic/urgent treatment consent form (Appendix A);
- 4.5 members shall not sign for, or play for, any other Football Club without the approval of the Management Committee of the Club.

## **5. TEAMS AND AGE GROUPS**

The Club shall aim to maintain a team (or teams); if more than one is allowed per Age Group, in the following age bands at 1 August, depending on the age limits of the League involved, each season, as follows. However, if necessary the normal KCFA ruling shall apply, with individual Manager’s agreement:

- |    |           |   |   |
|----|-----------|---|---|
| a. | Under 9s  | - | Under 9 and over 7  |
| b. | Under 10s | - | Under 10 and over 8   |
| c. | Under 11s | - | Under 11 and over 9   |
| d. | Under 12s | - | Under 12 and over 10  |
| e. | Under 13s | - | Under 13 and over 11  |
| f. | Under 14s | - | Under 14 and over 12  |
| g. | Under 15s | - | Under 15 and over 13  |
| h. | Under 16s | - | Under 16 and over 14  |
| i. | Under 18s | - | Under 18 and over 16 – subject to any minimum age dispensation provided by the organising League. |

## **6. TEAMS IN LEAGUES**

The Club shall aim to maintain teams in the following Leagues:

- a. Invicta Primary League
- b. Maidstone and District Boys Primary Football League
- c. Maidstone Minor Football League
- d. Maidstone and District Football League
- e. Maidstone and Mid-Kent Sunday Football League

## **7. ASSOCIATION**

The Club shall be affiliated to the Football Association and the Kent County Football Association.

## **8. CLUB YEAR**

The Club Year shall run from 1 June to 31 May.

## **9. MANAGEMENT**

9.1 The Club shall be managed by a Committee of the following Officers:  
Chairman, Vic-Chairman, Club Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Social Secretary, Fixture Secretary, Equipment Officer, Child Protection Designated Person and Team Managers.

9.2 Election of Officers

- a. All Officers shall retire annually but shall be eligible for re-election. Nominations shall be made at the Annual General Meeting and, if more names are proposed than the number required to fill the vacancies, the election shall be by ballot.
- b. In addition, the Club shall include a President and Vice-Presidents.

9.3 Powers of the Committee

The Committee shall have power to:

- a. appoint Sub-Committees for special purposes;
- b. co-opt any person to fill any vacancy;
- c. exercise their discretion where Rules are silent.

9.4 Meetings of the Committee

The Committee shall meet at monthly intervals, subject to the Chairman having discretion to cancel a meeting due to insufficient business. No business other than by formal adjournment of the meeting shall be transacted by any Committee Meeting unless a quorum be present and such a quorum shall consist of not less than five of the Committee. Resolutions, etc., will be passed to majority votes, recorded and, in the case of equality of vote, the Chairman shall have the casting vote.

9.5 Absence from Meetings

Any member of the Committee having been absent from three consecutive meetings without satisfactory explanation being received by the Chairman or the Club Secretary, shall cease to be a Member.

#### **10. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting of the Club shall be held as soon as possible after the close of the season, but before the end of June, when the report of the Committee and accounts for the past year, duly audited, shall be presented, the Officers and other Members of the Committee and auditors for the ensuing year elected and all general business transacted.

#### **11. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING**

An Extraordinary General Meeting:

- 11.1 may be called at any time at the discretion of the Committee; and
- 11.2 shall be called within 21 days after the receipt by the Club Secretary of a requisition in writing to that effect signed by at least six Officers. Every such requisition shall specify the business for which the meeting is to be convened and no other business shall be transacted at such a meeting.

#### **12. NOTICE OF A GENERAL MEETING**

A printed notice of every Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting shall be sent to each Officer of the Management Committee at least 48 hours prior to the day fixed for such a meeting.

#### **13. QUORUM AT A GENERAL MEETING**

No business other than the formal adjournment of the meeting shall be transacted at any General Meeting unless a quorum is present and such a quorum shall consist of at least five Officers.

#### **14. STANDING COMMITTEE**

14.1 There shall be a Standing Committee consisting of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Club Secretary and Honorary Treasurer to deal with any urgent matters which may arise between meetings, of whom, three shall constitute a quorum.

14.2 Disputes

Any dispute not settled in Committee shall automatically be referred to the Standing Committee for settlement and their decision shall be final.

#### **15. DISCIPLINARY SUB-COMMITTEE**

15.1 shall consist of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Club Secretary unless any party is involved, when a specially formed Committee will be elected by the Management Committee.

15.2 the Chairman of the Sub-Committee shall report upon all cases considered by them at the next following Management Committee meeting.

## **16. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

### 16.1 Banking Arrangements

The Club may maintain the following accounts at a Bank of its choice:

- a. General Account *for the day to day financial transactions*
- b. any other account(s) which the Club may wish to conduct from time to time for other purposes, (e.g. social events (see Rule 16.5)) but subject to the proviso contained in Rule 16.1.

### 16.2 Honorary Treasurer

The Club shall appoint an Honorary Treasurer who shall be responsible to the Management Committee for the keeping of the Club's accounts and shall provide financial information as is required and is available from the records maintained by him/her.

- a. General Account *for the day to day financial transactions*
- b. any other account(s) which the Club may wish to conduct from time to time for other purposes, (eg. social events (see Rule 16.5)) but subject to the proviso contained in Rule 16.1.

### 16.3 Financial Transactions

- a. the Honorary Treasurer will be responsible for the banking of income;
- b. accounts received for payment will be examined by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, or Club Secretary (in that order of availability) for authorisation of payment.
- c. The Honorary Treasurer will pay approved accounts without undue delay.

### 16.4 Team Managers' Accounts

- a. each Team Manager shall keep, in an agreed form, a record of monies received and paid out on behalf of his team;
- b. each record shall be produced as and when necessary to the Honorary Treasurer for the purpose of incorporating the transactions into the Club records;
- c. no Team Manager shall hold more than £50.00 in cash for more than one month.
- d. Team Managers are authorised to spend up to £25 on any one item without seeking the prior approval of the Management Committee.

### 16.5 Expenditure on Social and Other Events

- a. Officers of the Club who arrange social and other events, and who receive monies in connection with those events shall provide the Honorary Treasurer with a statement of those transactions without delay;

- b. income raised shall be paid to the Honorary Treasurer from time to time for banking in order to maintain the fluidity of the Bank accounts.

#### 16.6 Signing of Cheques

Any two together of Honorary Treasurer, Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Club Secretary are authorised to sign cheques and facilitate other banking arrangements.

#### 16.7 Statement of Accounts

The Honorary Treasurer shall prepare a Statement of Accounts of the Club's and Sponsorship accounts for the year ended 31 May for presentation to the Annual General Meeting of the Club.

### **17. DISCIPLINE AND CONDUCT**

- 17.1 Football is the national game. All those involved with the game at every level and whether as a player, match official, coach, owner or administrator, have a responsibility, above and beyond compliance with the law, to act according to the highest standards of integrity, and to ensure that the reputation of the game is, and remains, high. This code applies to all those involved in football under the auspices of The Football Association.

#### **Community**

Football, at all levels, is a vital part of a community. Football will take into account community feeling when making decisions.

#### **Equality**

Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club is opposed to discrimination of any form and will promote measures to prevent it, in whatever form, from being expressed.

#### **Participants**

Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club recognises the sense of ownership felt by those who participate at all levels of the game. This includes those who play, those who coach or help in any way, and those who officiate, as well as administrators and supporters. Football is committed to appropriate consultation.

#### **Young People**

Football acknowledges the extent of its influence over young people and pledges to set a positive example.

#### **Propriety**

Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club acknowledges that public confidence demands the highest standards of financial and administrative behaviour within the game, and will not tolerate corruption or improper practices.

### **Trust and Respect**

Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club will uphold a relationship of trust and respect between all involved in the game, whether they are individuals, clubs or other organisations.

### **Violence**

Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club rejects the use of violence of any nature by anyone involved in the game.

### **Fairness**

Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club is committed to fairness in its dealings with all involved in the game.

### **Integrity and Fair Play**

Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club is committed to the principle of playing to win consistent with Fair Play.

### **Code of Conduct for Managers/Coaches**

Managers/Coaches are key to the establishment of ethics in Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club. Their concept of ethics and their attitude directly affects the behaviour of players under their supervision. Managers/Coaches are, therefore, expected to pay particular care to the moral aspect of their conduct.

It is natural that winning constitutes a basic concern for managers/coaches. This code is not intended to conflict with that. However, the code calls for managers/coaches to disassociate themselves from a “*win-at-all-costs*” attitude.

Increase responsibility is needed from Managers/Coaches involved in coaching young people. The health, safety, welfare and moral education of young people are a first priority, before the achievement or the reputation of the club, Manager/Coach or parent.

Staplehurst Monarch Football Club is proud to adopt The F A Coaches Association Code of Conduct set out below and this forms the benchmark for all involved in managing/coaching within the club:

1. Managers/Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of each and every person and treat each equally within the context of the sport.
2. Managers/Coaches must place the well-being and safety of each player above all other considerations, including the development of performance.
3. Managers/Coaches must adhere to all guidelines laid down by governing bodies.
4. Manager/Coaches must develop an appropriate working relationship with each player based on mutual trust and respect.
5. Managers/Coaches must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
6. Managers/Coaches must encourage and guide players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.

7. Managers/Coaches must ensure that the activities they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of players.
8. Managers/Coaches should, at the outset, clarify with the players (and, where appropriate, parent) exactly what is expected of them and also what they are entitled to expect from their coach.
9. Managers/Coaches must co-operate fully with other specialists (e.g. other Managers/Coaches, officials, sports scientists, doctors, physiotherapists) in the best interest of the player.
10. Managers/Coaches must always promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone violations of the Laws of the Game, behaviour contrary to the spirit of the Laws of the Game or relevant rules and regulations or the use of prohibited substances or techniques.
11. Managers/Coaches must consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.
12. Managers/Coaches must not use or tolerate inappropriate language.

### **Code of Conduct for Players**

Players are the most important people in the sport. Playing for the team, and for the team to win, is the most fundamental part of the game. But not winning at any cost – Fair Play and respect for all others in the game is fundamentally important.

#### Obligations towards the game

A player should:

1. Make every effort to develop their own sporting abilities, in terms of skill, technique, tactics and stamina.
2. Give maximum effort and strive for the best possible performance during a game, even if his team is in a position where the desired result has already been achieved.
3. Set a positive example for other players.
4. Avoid all forms of gamesmanship and time-wasting.
5. Always have regard for the best interests of the game.
6. Never use inappropriate language.

#### Obligations towards one's own team

A player should:

1. Make every effort consistent with Fair Play and the Laws of the Game to help his own team win.
2. Resist any influence, which might, or might be seen to, bring into question his commitment to the team winning.

#### Respect for the Laws of the Game and competition rules.

A player should:

1. Know and abide by the Laws, rules and spirit of the game, and the competition rules.
2. Accept success and failure, victory and defeat, equally.

### Respect towards Opponents

A player should:

1. Treat opponents with due respect at all times, irrespective of the result of the game.
2. Safeguard the physical fitness of opponents, avoid violence and rough play, and help injured opponents.

### Respect toward the Match Officials

A player should:

1. Accept the decision of the Match Official without protest.
2. Avoid words or actions, which may mislead a Match Official.
3. Show due respect towards Match Officials

### Respect towards Team Officials

A player should:

1. Abide by the instructions of their Manager, Coach and Team Officials, provided they do not contradict the spirit of this Code.
2. Show due respect towards the Team Officials of the opposition.

### Obligations towards the Supporters

A player should:

1. Show due respect to both his own and the opposition supporters.
2. Should not react or become involved with the opposition supporters.

### **Code of Conduct for Team Officials**

This Code applies to all team/club officials (although some items may not apply to all officials).

### Obligations towards the Game

The team official should:

1. Set a positive example for others, particularly young players and supporters.
2. Promote and develop his own team having regard to the interest of the Players, Supporters and reputation of the game.
3. Share knowledge and experience when invited to do so, taking into account the interest of the body that has requested this rather than personal interests.
4. Avoid all forms of gamesmanship
5. Show due respect to match Officials and others involved in the game.
6. Not use or tolerate inappropriate language.

### Obligations towards the Team

The team official should:

1. Make every effort to develop the sporting, technical and tactical levels of the club/team, and to obtain the best results for the team, using all permitted means.
2. Give priority to the interests of the team over individual interests.
3. Resist all illegal or unsporting influences.
4. Show due respect for the interest of the players, coaches and officials, their own club/team and others.

#### Obligations towards the Supporters

The team official should:

1. Show due respect for the interests of supporters.

#### Respect towards the Match Officials

The team official should:

1. Accept the decisions of the match Official without protest.
2. Avoid words or actions, which may mislead a Match Official.

#### **Code of Conduct for Parents / Spectators**

Parents/Spectators have a great influence on children's enjoyment and success in football. All children play football because they first and foremost love the game – its fun. It is important to remember that however good a child becomes at football within Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club, it is important to reinforce the message to parents/spectators that positive encouragement will contribute to:

- 1 Children enjoying football at Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club.
- 2 A sense of personal achievement.
- 3 Self-esteem
- 4 Improving the child's skills and techniques.

A parent's/spectator's expectations and attitudes have significant bearing on a child's attitude towards:

1. Other players
2. Officials
3. Managers
4. Spectators

Parents/spectators within Staplehurst Football Club should always be positive and encouraging towards all of the children not just their own.

Encourage parents/spectators to:

1. Applaud the opposition as well as your own team.
2. Avoid coaching the child during the game.
3. Not to shout and scream.
4. Respect the referee's decision.
5. Give attention to each of the children involved in Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club, not just the most talented.
6. Give encouragement to everyone to participate in Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club.

Parents/spectators within Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club must agree to, and adhere to Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club's Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy.

- 17.2 Any Member or Official found guilty of bringing the Club into disrepute shall be subject to suspension or expulsion from the Club.
- 17.3 A Member shall not be entitled to any repayment of subscriptions either in full or in part if suspended or expelled from the Club.
- 17.4 All fines (including administration costs) levied by the ruling league body or KCFA are to be paid by the offender (Member or Official).
- 17.5 An appeal by an offender against a penalty and/or punishment imposed by the Disciplinary sub-Committee may be made to the Management Committee, excluding the Disciplinary sub-Committee, who shall consider all evidence and explanations offered and may suspend or cancel that penalty and/or punishment or may impose its own penalty and/or punishment in substitution.
- 17.6 The Committee reserves the right and has the power to apply leniency and override Rule 17.5 should a good case for the Offender be presented and accepted by the Club Management Committee.

## **18 CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

All sporting organisations which make provision for children and young people must ensure that:

The welfare of the child is paramount.

All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

All staff (paid/unpaid) working in sport have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

Staff/volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.

### **Policy Statement**

Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989)

### **Policy Aims**

The aim of the Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club.

Allow all staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

## **Promoting Good Practice**

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters the club having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self-esteem. In such instances the club must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

## **Good Practice Guidelines**

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines provided by the Coach Education programme. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Keeping up to date with technical skill, qualifications and insurance sport.
- Involving parent/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents, teachers, coaches or officials work in pairs.
- Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur.
- Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.

- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

**Practices to be avoided.**

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session:

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event.

**Practises never to be sanctioned.**

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Share a room with a child.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults that they can do for themselves.
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

N.B It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the players involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

**Incidents that must be reported/recorded**

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a player.
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner.
- If a player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- If a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

### **Use of photographic/filming equipment at sporting events.**

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. All clubs should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the Club Child Protection Officer.

Videoing as a coaching aid: there is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme and such films should be stored safely.

### **Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers**

Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Pre-selection checks must include the following:

All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self disclosure about any criminal record.

Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau.

Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children. These references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.

Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo).

### **Interview and Induction**

All employees (and volunteers) will be required to undergo an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive formal or informal induction, during which:

A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures).

Their qualifications should be substantiated.

The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.

They should sign up to the organisation's Code of Ethics and Conduct.

Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.

### **Training**

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- Work safely effectively with children.

Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club requires:

- Coaching staff to attend a recognised 3 hour good practice and child protection awareness training workshop, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards good practice and child protection.
- Non-coaching staff and volunteers to complete a recognised awareness training on child protection.
- Relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person.
- Relevant personnel to gain national first aid training (where necessary).
- Attend update training when necessary. Information about meeting training needs can be obtained from Sports Coach UK, the NSPCC, and the Sports Council.
- Responding to allegations or suspicions.

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club, in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

A criminal investigation.

A child protection investigation.

A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

### **Action if there are concerns**

#### **1. Concerns about poor practice:**

If following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; the Club Child Protection Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue.

If the allegation is about poor practice by the Club Child Protection Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the relevant (Sport Governing Body) officer who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

#### **2. Concerns about suspected abuse**

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Club Child Protection Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

The Club Child Protection Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.

The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.

The Club Child Protection Officer should also notify the relevant (Sport Governing Body) officer who in turn will inform the (Sport Governing Body) Child Protection Officer who will deal with any media enquiries.

If the Club Child Protection Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate Manager or in his/her absence the (Sport Governing Body) Child Protection Officer who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

### **Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The Club Child Protection Officer.
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused.
- The person making the allegation.
- Social services/police.
- The Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club, Regional Development Manager and (Sport Governing Body) Child Protection Officer.
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).
- Seek social services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser.

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

### **Internal Enquiries and Suspension**

The Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club Child Protection Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.

Irrespective of the finding of the social services or police inquiries the Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club Disciplinary Committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club Disciplinary Committee must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

### **Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse:**

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need. Use of help lines, support groups and open meeting will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British Association for Counselling Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby, CV21 2PJ, tel: 01788 550899, fax: 01788 562189, email: [bac@bacp.co.uk](mailto:bac@bacp.co.uk), internet: <http://www.bacp.co.uk>.

Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

### **Allegations of previous abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children.)

Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous

criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

#### **Action if bullying is suspected**

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in ‘Responding to suspicions or allegations’ above.

#### **Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in sport:**

Take all signs of bullying very seriously.

Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority.

Create an open environment.

Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.

Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.

Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).

Report any concerns to the Club Child Protection Officer or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring).

#### **Action towards the bully(ies):**

Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).

Inform the bully’s parents.

Insist on the return of “borrowed” items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.

Provide support for the victim’s coach.

Impose sanctions as necessary.

Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.

Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.

Inform all organisation members of action take.

Keep a written record of action taken.

### **3. Concerns outside the immediate sporting environment (e.g. a parent or carer):**

Report your concerns to the Club Child Protection Officer, who should contact social services or the police as soon as possible.

See 4. below for the information social services or the police will need.

If the Club Child Protection Officer is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact social services or the police immediately.

Social Services and the Club Child Protection Officer will decide how to involve the parents/carers.

The Club Child Protection Officer should also report the incident to the Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club Governing Body. The Governing Body should ascertain whether or not the person/s involved in the incident play a role in Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club and act accordingly.

Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis only.

See 4 below regarding information needed for social services.

#### **4. Information for social services or the police about suspected abuse:**

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth of the child.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be give, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contact?
- If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact social services or the police direct, or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111.

## **19 INSURANCE**

The Club shall have and keep in force a Public Liability Insurance Policy which is held by the KCFA.

## **20 EQUIPMENT**

- 20.1 Any Club equipment or property made available to a Member or Official by the Club or Official shall be his/her/their responsibility and any damage or loss incurred shall be made good by the Member or Official involved at the discretion of the Management Committee.
- 20.2 Ownership of Trophies and Assets and Conditions of Possession  
The Club Chairman and Honorary Treasurer, for the time being, are deemed to be Trustees and legal owners of the trophies and properties including the Funds, and shall deal with same according to the instructions of the Management Committee.
- 20.3 Trophies cannot be won outright by a Player.
- 20.4 The Equipment Officer shall carry out an end of season inventory of the Club Assets for the Honorary Treasurer's Annual Report.

## **21 SPONSORSHIP**

Sponsorship is to be sought from businesses in the surrounding area.

## **22 SHORT AND LONG SERVICE AWARDS**

The Club would always wish to honour players with Short and Long Service Awards (of the Club's choice) subject to appropriate funding and conduct of the player concerned, as follows:

### **Short Service Award:**

For any four seasons, for which the player was registered commencing at Under 9, or later.

### **Long Service Award:**

For any six seasons, for which the player was registered commencing at Under 9, or later.

## **23 RULES RELATING TO THE MENS' TEAM(S) ONLY**

23.1 They shall have the same voting rights as any Junior Member (U9-U18).

23.2 They shall be financially self-supporting and present no financial burden to the Club.

23.3 They shall participate in Club events equally with Junior Members.

## **24 TRANSITIONAL BOYS TEAM**

An Under 18 team should continue in an Under 18 League whenever there are sufficient players to do so.

However, where a team has insufficient players eligible by virtue of age, to continue in an Under 18 League in which the Club has competed or would compete, or if it is decided not to continue in that Under 18 League for whatever reason, and the team is entered in a Men's League, then the team may be treated as a transitional boys team for one season only, and with financial arrangements apply as if the team was a boys team.

For the team to be recognised as a transitional boy's team, some or all of the players must have been registered for the full season in the immediately preceding season for the team which is continuing, and this registration must have been with Staplehurst Monarchs FC in an Under 18 League.

A player must be registered within Staplehurst Monarchs FC only for a transitional boy's team and no other Staplehurst Monarchs FC boys team.

A player may be registered with Staplehurst Monarchs FC in a transitional boys team only once.

## **25 ALTERATIONS TO CONSTITUTION AND RULES**

The Rules were approved by the Management Committee in November 1982 and amended at the Extraordinary General Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2003.

Alterations shall only be made to these Rules at the Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary General Meeting specially convened for the purpose called in conformity with Rule 11.

- Approved at the Annual General Meeting held on 24 June 1983
- Revised at the Annual General Meeting held on 28 June 1985
- Revised at the Annual General Meeting held on 26 June 1987
- Revised at the Annual General Meeting held on 28 June 1991
- Revised at the Annual General Meeting held on 3 July 1992
- Revised at the Annual General Meeting held on 22 June 1993
- Revised at the Annual General meeting held on 23 June 1994
- Revised at the Annual General Meeting held on 27 June 1996
- Revised at the Annual General Meeting held on 2 July 2003