Dear Parents,

I am Stuart Appelbe, my involvement at the club is as a Parent, U12 coach (2019/20 season) and, following completion of the FA course, I am also the club’s Child Welfare Officer.

Please take time to read this letter in full as it sets out what we mean by “Safeguarding Children”, your responsibilities, what you can expect from the club and the measures we have in place. It also has some important actions that I would like you to take responsibility for.

As Child Welfare Officer, my responsibilities are to: promote best practice; play a key role in dealing with poor practice; report incidents to the appropriate authorities; seek guidance from the FA in relation to any safeguarding issues or concerns; and monitoring and assisting the club’s approach to getting the right people involved, including administering the references and criminal records checks.

**Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility,** as parents and supporters you have a key role in protecting our (not just your) children. Children may be harmed or abused by professionals; volunteers; carers; family members and by other children. We must remember that not all abuse or harm is intentional. “Safeguarding Children” is a broad umbrella that covers:

1. neglect;
2. physical abuse;
3. sexual abuse;
4. emotional abuse; and
5. bullying.

The FA has a three part approach to make sure that children are able to take part in a safe, fun and enjoyable environment.The approach, and what we do as a club is summarised below:

1. **Getting the right people involved** – we obtain references and Criminal Records Checks for people in positions of trust or who may be alone with children. This is limited to the official year group coaches.
2. **Creating a safe environment** – we have a Child Welfare Officer, our coaches attend the FA Safeguarding Children course and we have you as both parents and supporters.
3. **Promoting clear systems**  - policies and procedures are in place within the club, these are available on the web site and starter pack. There is a policy to ensure concerns are dealt with quickly.

The FA advises that Coaches and Assistant Managers in the club have completed a minimum Level 1 Coaching Course, we **do not** require our coaches to do this, as it is several weekends of commitment. If you do have any concerns about the way the coaching is being delivered, please contact me.

It is important that we all understand the boundaries of care between the club and parents. In addition to applying the FA’s three part approach above, we undertake to ensure the children play in a safe environment, with safe equipment. We also undertake to minimise the risk of injury by applying the rules of the game, however, as a contact sport there are clearly risks of injury.

Our coaches are volunteer parents, it is unfair to expect them to take on additional responsibilities. Please be aware that the club does not have a process of signing children in and out of training. This is because you remain responsible for your child while they are at a match, or at training. If you leave your child we assume that you have deemed that they are mature enough to be left alone. A coach may accept a child into their care if you ask them, ensuring that they have your contact details and know any relevant medical conditions. However, we prefer you arrange for one of the other parents to look after your child so that the coaches can focus on coaching.

We do not arrange travel on match days as this requires us to undertake all sorts of administration. It is your responsibility to arrange travel with people you trust. This may include coaches, but it remains your responsibility.

We do not normally enter tournaments that require overnight stays. If we do you should expect a meeting to discuss the procedures for safeguarding the children.

As parents and supporters of our players I ask that you:

1. Familiarise yourself with and comply with the clubs policies and codes of conduct, as these set the tone for everyone’s behaviour at the club.
2. Show your children where the safeguarding contact numbers are on the website, we have put them in a more prominent position and developed a safeguarding page. Please take the time to explain what they are for. Also ensure they can recognise me and understand my role. My picture is on the web site and at the bottom of this letter.
3. Be vigilant at all times in relation to all forms of potential abuse or harm to all club members, not just your own child. Any issues or concerns should be brought to my attention. My contact number is on the web site. As an alternative, you should contact Eddie Embleton.
4. Ensure your child always has the appropriate equipment (shin pads, boots, inhalers, thermal layers in winter) before allowing them to join training or a match.
5. Ensure your child always knows who is supervising them and what to do if you are ever late picking them up. Also ensure that the supervisor has your contact details and any medical knowledge they may require.

Between us all I am confident that the club can continue to provide a fun and safe environment for the children to enjoy football.

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| Best wishes  Stuart Appelbe (Child Welfare Officer)  & James Fox (Chairman) |  |