

Child Protection Policy Statement

Aquinas Football Club is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children and young people to practice football.

We do this by:

- Recognising that all children have the right to freedom from abuse.
- Recognising that all children have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Promote the general welfare, health and full development of children.
- Ensuring that all out coaches and volunteers are carefully selected and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of children in their care.
- Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, and providing parents and children with the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have.
- Appointing a Children's Designated Officer who will take specific responsibility for child safety and act as a main point of contact for parents, children and outside agencies.
- Be involved in training made available through the various agencies and strengthen links with these agencies.
- Ensuring access to confidential information is restricted to the Children's Designated Officer or the appropriate external authorities.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of our Child Protection Policy and activities each year at the Annual General Meeting.

This policy applies to all those involved with Aquinas Football Club, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteer drivers, parents and young people.

Procedures to follow if a child protection issue arises

- Record all incidents reported or observed on the provided Incident Form.
- Discuss the incident with the designated person as soon as possible and give a copy of the report to the designated person.
- Do not discuss with anyone, especially the person against whom an allegation may have been made, and ensure confidentiality – only “need to know basis”. We, at Aquinas FC will never promise to keep secrets.

However, information of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a “need to know” basis, with the welfare of the child paramount.

- The designated person will be responsible for progressing any action and storing any report in a safe and secure environment.

On advice – contact child’s parents.

Useful Numbers

- Social Services:028 9266 5181
- NSPCC Helpline:0808 800 5000
- PSNI CARE Unit:028 9065 0222 Ask for your local C.A.R.E Unit
- Childline:0800 1111
- Coaching NI:028 90 686940
- Child Protection in Sport Unit:028 90 351135

Designated Person is Shauna Hegarty

Mobile: 07902241525

Shauna shall be made known to all members, coaches and parents alike as the designated Welfare Officer to whom concerns will be addressed. If the concern is about the designated Welfare Officer please report to Club Chairperson. Children and young people may discuss concerns with any person of their choice.