

Character Mascot

Policy and procedures



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Character Mascot Policy

Date of Policy: April 2020 updated April 2022 April 2023 April 2024

This policy super-cedes any other Character Mascot policy.

Character Mascot Policy Statement

Bristol City Football Club, Bristol City Academy, Bristol City Women's Football Club, PGA - ETC, Bristol City Robins Foundation, Bristol Bears Rugby, Bristol Bears Women, Bristol Bears Academy, Bristol Bears Foundation, Bristol Flyers, Bristol Flyers Foundation, Bristol Sport Foundation, Ashton Gate and Bristol Sport are collectively referred to as "the Company".

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children and Adults at risk are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, all children and Adults at risk have a positive and enjoyable experience of the activities delivered by "the Company". We are committed to ensuring that these activities will be in a safe environment, where children and Adults at risk are protected from abuse whilst under our care.

Principles

The Character (Furry) Mascot (football) Grizzley Bear (rugby) are ambassadors for "the Company" and as such should represent fun, fair play and sportsmanship. The aim is to enhance the spectator's enjoyment of the sporting activity.

The position is voluntary and will give an insight into professional sport.

The Mascot will be supervised by a Mascot coordinator who is an employee of "the Company".

The mascot will be expected to attend an induction and regular "Company" safeguarding training and be familiar with "the Company" Safeguarding policies for both Children and Adults at Risk.

Roles and responsibilities

The Mascot coordinator

The person appointed to this role will liaise with the Senior Safeguarding Officer to coordinate the role and appointment of the mascots. The coordinator will have overall responsibility for the management, support and supervision of any character(furry) mascots who volunteer with "the Company" to:

- Ensure the Mascot has ample notice of bookings and is aware of arrival times.
- Ensure the mascot is fully briefed before each event.
- At the end of an event review and report any concerns.
- Ensure any accidents, incidents are recorded and reported appropriately, in line with “Company” policies and procedures and inform the Senior Safeguarding Officer.
- Store the Mascot costume(s) in an appropriate place checking for wear and tear at regular intervals.
- Ensure appropriate changing facilities are available on or off site, venue dependant.
- Supervise the Mascot at all times.
- Have an enhanced up to date DBS.
- Attend “Company” induction and safeguarding training.

The Mascot

Person specification:

- Be 18 yrs. or older.
- Have an outgoing personality.
- Demonstrate excellent communication skills.
- Be committed to working as part of a team.
- Enjoy working in a busy environment.
- Be confident in a crowd situation.
- Be committed to safe working practice.
- Be prepared to attend “Company” training when required.
- Be prepared to work outside normal office hours.

Whilst this is not a regulated activity a basic DBS check should be completed; two references be taken and a right to work check carried out. (see “the Company” Safer recruitment policy) The county regulating safeguarding board will also be contacted to verify that the person is not subject to a suspension.

This does mean that the mascot **must be accompanied at all times**.

Responsibilities of Mascot

- Enhance spectator experience and represent “the Company” brand.
- Be a positive role model.
- Entertain the crowd before matches and at half-time.
- Attend all home matches and some away fixtures if required.
- Arrive at “the Company” venue at the appropriate time.
- Use the appropriate designated changing area.
- Once in costume, follow the instructions of the mascot co-ordinator at all times.
- Be responsible for own behaviour.
- Only use the mascot costume when representing “the Company” on regulated “Company” business.
- If attending away venues remain in the designated area for your team.
- Attend any post, pre match briefings as required by the mascot coordinator.

Any safeguarding issues must be reported immediately to the safeguarding duty officer via the control room.

Be aware that on match day the ultimate decision for the safety and wellbeing of all is with the Event Safety Officer in the stadium control room. Any instruction must be followed promptly and without question.

Code of Conduct

- Always be accompanied by the Mascot coordinator or in their absence a nominated member of staff with DBS clearance.
- The accompanying member of staff will act as the “eyes and ears” for the mascot and answer any questions on their behalf.
- Follow any instructions given by the co-ordinator or their representative promptly and without question.
- Be responsible for own behaviour.
- Avoid any direct contact with young children and adults at risk. Handshakes and waves are appropriate, hugs should not be initiated.
- Ensure that any contact with children and vulnerable adults is conducted in open environment (see Safeguarding policy for both Children and Adults at Risk).
- Ensure that the mascot’s hands are always visible, any hand contact should be on shoulders only.
- For photographs a wave is appropriate.
- Report any safeguarding concerns to the safeguarding duty officer immediately.
- Maintain a responsible and co-operative attitude upholding “the Company” values and those of fair play and sportsmanship at all times.
- Be punctual at all events, informing the Mascot Co-ordinator as soon as possible should you be unable to attend.
- Be a responsible ambassador for “the Company” at all times.
- Recognise the role of officials within the sporting environment and treat them with respect at all times.
- Promptly comply with any instructions issued by matchday officials.
- Leave the pitch side 15 minutes before the start of the event or when asked to do so by a match official.
- Provide written consent for photographic or video imagery (see appendix 3).
- Attend appropriate “Company” training as required.
- Immediately inform “the Company” lead Safeguarding Officer should you become the subject of any external safeguarding issues or investigation.

The Character Mascot must not:

- Act in an inappropriate manner with any child, children, or adults at risk.
- Influence, incite or condone unacceptable behaviour.
- Criticise or disrespect officials, opponents, coaches or other fans.
- Enter the field of play, interfere with any official, become a nuisance or prevent the smooth running of an event.
- Attempt to influence or question any decision made by a referee or assistant.
- Approach or attempt to communicate with any player, coach or official either from their own team or the opposition.
- Interfere with any pitch equipment including the goals.
- Wear, use or lend the mascot uniform without the permission of “the Company”.
- Engage in any behaviour that is likely to cause offence or distress to any individual or section of the crowd.
- Throw anything into the crowd without the explicit permission of the Event Safety Officer in the stadium control room.

Whilst this not an exhaustive list, mascots need to be aware that should their behaviour be found to be unacceptable, they may be released from the role.

It is important to recognise that sport governing bodies will not tolerate any conduct that is detrimental to the sport, the participants, the spectators, the officials or the community. Detrimental conduct is defined as (but not limited to) vulgarity, lewd acts, harassment, racism, sexism, physical violence, verbal abuse, taunting, or any other anti-social behaviour.

I have read the Character (Furry) Mascot policy and agree to follow the Mascot Code of Conduct.

I have read, signed and agree to “the Company” image consent form.

Signed _____

Date_____



Document review

Date reviewed	Position	Owner
April 2020	Executive Board	M.A.Martin
April 2021	Executive Board	
April 2022	Executive Board	
April 2023	Executive Board	
April 2024	Executive Board	

Appendix 1

Home Team Character Mascot Information

This form should be completed for each Character Mascot and a copy of each one be given to the Senior Safeguarding Officer, with the original, being kept by the Mascot Coordinator.

Mascot Name			
Mascot coordinator:			
Name			
Contact phone nos.			
DBS clearance	Enhanced	Date issued	

Name of volunteer	
E-mail address	
Address	
Postcode	
Tel nos: mobile	
Emergency contact details: Next of kin Address Tel. nos:	

Safeguarding	
Lead contact	
References:	
Date received	1. 2.
DBS:	
Clearance required	Yes/No
Level	Basic/Enhanced
FA	Yes/No
Induction	Date By whom
Role	Date By whom
Code of conduct	Date By whom
Policy signed	Date

Please note that each volunteer should be asked to sign the Character policy, a copy to be kept in the Safeguarding office and a copy given to the volunteer for reference.

Appendix 2.

Mascot Coordinator Information

This form should be completed for each Mascot Co-ordinator and a copy of the completed form placed with the Safeguarding team.

Mascot Name	
Mascot coordinator: Name	
Contact phone nos.	

E-mail address	
Address	
Postcode	
Tel nos:	
mobile	
Emergency contact details:	
Next of kin	
Address	
Tel. nos:	

Safeguarding	
Lead contact	
References:	
Date received	1. 2.
DBS:	
Clearance required	Yes
Level Enhanced	Certificate nos.
	Issue date
FA check	Yes Date
Induction	Date By whom
Role	Date By whom
Code of conduct	Date By whom
Policy signed	Date

Please note that each Mascot Coordinator should be asked to sign the Character policy, a copy to be kept in the Safeguarding office and a copy given to the coordinator for reference.

Appendix 3.



Image consent form

This form should be completed at the start of each new season.

Name_____ I provide consent to allow photographs, film and video recording as outlined below:

Photographic, video or film recorded images may be taken by “the Company”, EFL or Sponsor partner agencies or their designated representatives at:

EVENT	“Company” matches and publicity events
VENUE	The “Company” stadiums or other public venues
DATE	During the season 202 - 202

I agree that the images taken may be used in publicity materials and celebration publications produced by “the Company”, EFL, League Football Interactive(FLi), EFL Community Trust, League Football Education and/or EFL sponsors or any commercial partner or sponsor approved by “the Company”.

I understand that in addition the images may appear on live or recorded televised footage and understand that any image will be safely stored and archived digitally or manually, in line with “The Data Protection Act” and “the Company Safe Storage Policy” and that these may be used at any time for promotional or publicity purposes.

Signed_____

Date_____

Company witness_____

Once completed a copy of this should be given to the Safeguarding team for reference.

30/04/202231/10/202430/04/2022

Appendix 4.

Instructions for Character (Furry) Mascots and Coordinators at events.

This information should be shared with the mascot and any away team mascot in advance of the event.

Date	
Arrival time	
Meeting point	
Home contact name phone nos.	
Away contact name Phone nos.	
Changing area	
Turnstile opening time	
Access to pitch side via	

- On arrival the mascot should meet the coordinator at the designated meeting point.
- The mascot and any helper will be briefed on their role prior to being escorted to the changing area.
- All personal belongings should be stored in a lockable facility until the mascot has completed their duties.

Please note that should the mascot require a helper ONLY ONE PASS will be available

- Once the turnstiles are open the mascot (s) will be able to entertain supporters from the area surrounding the pitch.
- Mascots should remain in their own supporters' area.
- Mascots must leave pitch side 15 mins before the start of the match (unless specifically asked to remain by the coordinator- permission must be given by the Event Safety Officer)

Should mascots be required to be present at half-time the coordinator will brief the mascot prior to the event and organise an appropriate waiting area.

All mascots and their escort must:

- Follow "the Company" standards for Safeguarding
- Treat all match officials with respect

- NOT enter the pitch area, interfere with any other pre-match entertainment or cause any unnecessary aggravation to security personnel

Any issues or concerns should be reported to the Mascot Coordinator who will inform the appropriate staff.

Reference Documentation:

The following “Company“ policies should be read in conjunction with this policy:

Safeguarding Children Policy
Safeguarding Adults Policy
Safer Recruitment Policy
Volunteer Policy
DBS Policy
Dignity at Work Policy
Data Protection Policy
Safe Storage Policy

