



# Port Vale Football Club

## Furry Mascot Policy

### “BOOMER”

Version control

Document Title:	Furry Mascot Policy 2021/2022
Document Owner:	Port Vale Football Club – Jon Bloore
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Document review

Last reviewed	Position
Mar 2021	Review and update of Club/Academy and Foundation policy to one umbrella policy.

Version history

Version	Date Released	Originator	Authorised	Comments
1.0	Sept 2018	Unknown	Board	Furry Mascot Policy
1.1	Mar 2021	Jon Bloore	Board	Furry Mascot Policy
1.2	August 2021	Tim Bailey		Revised version

## **1. The purpose and Scope of this Policy statement**

Port Vale Football Club is committed to is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and all participants including adults who might be more vulnerable and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This Policy is for use across the club and is to be observed by all staff, supporters and anyone participating in activities run or associated by the club. The Policy exists to ensure that best practice is promoted and adhered to.

Activities undertaken at the following locations/departments are under the remit of this policy which include:

- Port Vale Football club and the Vale Park Stadium
- Port Vale Foundation Trust
- Port Vale First Team
- Port Vale Academy and youth development
- Port Vale ladies Women
- Port Vale Retail Store

### **“BOOMER”**



“BOOMER” The Furry Mascot is a responsible ambassador for Port Vale Football Club, the role is designed to engage and enhance spectator experience. This role is a paid role within the club and the mascots should represent fun, fair play and sportsmanship. Safer recruitment policy will be followed in the recruitment for this role or undertaken by a Foundation staff member.

### **Mascot Duties**

- Enhance the spectator experience and represent the club Brand as a positive role model.
- Arrival at the club or appropriate ground at the appointed time and at least 1 hour before the match begins.
- When in the mascot uniform follow the instructions of the nominated companion, or staff member who is accompanying them in order to remain safe at all times.
- Each mascot is accountable for his / her own behaviour at all times.
- Ensure the mascot uniform is returned to the club in good condition.
- To only use the mascot uniform when representing club activities.
- If invited to away matches stay in the stadium end appropriate to your team (or follow the guidance provided by club officials).
- To follow instructions given to you by the Club's safeguarding team
- Generally, to attend each home game including weekend and evening matches
- Additional attendance at training may be required at the start of or during the season, or key events identified by the Club (Club Shop events/Kit Launches etc)
- Turn up at the appointed time and demonstrate a commitment to regular attendance.
- Attend pre- and post-match briefings as required
- Provide crowd entertainment on match days before the match and at half time.
- To attend additional training as required e.g., safeguarding training

### **Person Specification**

The individual must:

- Be 18 years of age or older Have an outgoing personality Demonstrate excellent communication skills.
- Be committed to working within the MFC team Be committed to safe working practice.
- Be willing to undertake training appropriate to the role.
- Be willing and available to work outside normal office hours.

### **Recruitment**

Clear information must be provided about the role and person specification. References should be taken up and a full employment history, including clear explanations for any gaps in employment.

The role of the character mascot does fit into the category of 'Regulated Activity' therefore; the post is subject to an enhanced DBS criminal records check. Appointment to this role will be subject to two written references indicating suitability for the role. The Club will also check with

Staffordshire FA's County Welfare Officer to ensure any person recruited to this role is not subject to an FA suspension order.

The successful applicants should receive appropriate induction which will include:

1. A Safeguarding Induction and Health and Safety briefing
2. Details of the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and Match Day Safeguarding Officer
3. An orientation to the club
4. Copies of appropriate safeguarding policies and safeguarding and procedures.
5. Issuing them with this policy and code of conduct.
6. Identifying any training or support needs.

### **Code of Conduct:**

This code of conduct provides clear guidance on acceptable standards of behaviour required by the club.

### **Furry Mascots must:**

1. Ensure that any direct contact with children or vulnerable adults is appropriate and in an open environment.
2. Always be accompanied by a Club nominated companion, steward or member of staff to ensure that the mascot is never be alone with children- the companion will act as the 'eyes and ears' of the mascot and answer any questions.
3. Avoid direct contact with children and young people. Handshakes and waves are very appropriate, hugs should not be initiated.
4. Ensure that hands are always visible, hand contact should be on shoulders only - the mascot assistant can assist in this by prompting 'give us a wave!' for any photographs.
5. Report any concern / allegation or disclosure concerning risk or harm to children to the club Designated Safeguarding Officer or on match day to the Match Day Safeguarding Officer.
6. Follow the Club's policies and procedures for Safeguarding and protecting Children and Adults at Risk.
7. Abide by the relevant Rules and Regulations of the EFL and the Football Association ("the Rules and Regulations").
8. Maintain a responsible and co-operative attitude and uphold the ideals of fair play and sportsmanship.
9. Be punctual at all events demonstrating a commitment to regular attendance and inform the Foundation Operations manager as early as possible if you are unable to attend for any reason.
10. Show a positive and responsible attitude towards everyone involved in football.
11. Be a responsible ambassador of the club.

12. Recognise the referee and their assistants are the symbol of authority and always treat them with respect.
13. Promptly obey any instructions given by the referee, assistant referee or any fourth official.
14. Promptly comply with any instructions given by a steward, security guard or the police.
15. Provide consent for images or video footage taken at the match which may be used for media, publication or promotional purposes.
16. Attend training and learning opportunities as required by the club.
17. Wear the uniform as directed by the club and follow the instructions of the nominated companion, steward or staff member who is accompanying them at all times in order to remain safe.
18. Be responsible and accountable for their own behaviour at all times
19. Leave the pitch side 15 minutes before the start of the match or when asked to do so by any club or match official.
20. Inform the DSO of any change in health status which may affect their ability to perform your duties.
21. Inform the Club's Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately if they become the subject of any external safeguarding concerns or investigation.

**Furry Mascot** *Must Not:*

1. Act in an inappropriate manner with any child, children or vulnerable adult.
2. Hold children for health and safety reasons – the parent/guardian should hold the child and then approach the furry mascot.
3. Sit down when children and young people are present – this avoids the possibility of children sitting on or being taken onto your lap at any time.
4. Approach children – always let them come to you.
5. Influence, incite or condone unacceptable behaviour.
6. Criticise or disrespect officials, opponents, coaches, other Mascots or fans.
7. Enter the field of play, nor must they interfere with any officials, make a nuisance of themselves or prevent the smooth and orderly progress of the match.
8. Attempt to question or influence any decision made by a referee or assistant referee.
9. Approach or attempt to communicate with any player, coach or club official either of their own team or opposing team.
10. Interfere with any pitch equipment including, but not limited to, the goals, the ball, corner flags etc.
11. Wear, use or lend the mascot uniform at any time without the express consent of the club.
12. Engage in any behaviour that is likely to cause offence or distress to any individual or sections of the crowd.

13. Throw anything of substance into the crowd including but not limited to water or other liquids.

This Code of Conduct is extensive but not exhaustive and mascots should be aware that if their behaviour is found to be unacceptable, they may be released from their role.

*Note: It is important to recognise that The Football Authorities; Official Leagues; The Football Association and Port Vale Football Club will not tolerate conduct that is detrimental to the sport, the participants, the spectators, the officials or the community. Such conduct includes (but is not limited to) vulgarity, lewd acts, harassment, racism, sexism, physical violence or threat of physical violence, verbal abuse, taunting, or any other anti-social behaviour.*

### **Safeguarding Contacts**

Any immediate concern or potential risk should be reported to the match day Safeguarding Officer. All concerns should be reported without delay to the:

Dedicated Safeguarding Officer : Tim Bailey e [tim.bailey@port-vale.co.uk](mailto:tim.bailey@port-vale.co.uk)  
Mob 07966 935817.

or

Senior Safeguarding Lead: Collin Garlick e [colin.garlick@port-vale.co.uk](mailto:colin.garlick@port-vale.co.uk)

### **Board Authority and Acceptance of this Policy**

**Signed by:**

Name Board member..... Date:.....

SSM..... Date: .....

**This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or following learning outcomes as a result of a significant incident or when legislation / statutory guidance changes by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**