

THE ASSOCIATION'S SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY STATEMENT

Every child or young person, defined as any person under the age of 18, who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in football, thus every club is required to endorse and adhere to The Association's Safeguarding Children Policy.

The FA recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. The FA is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all children and young people to participate in the sport to the best of their abilities for as long as they choose to do so. The Association's Safeguarding Children Policy principles are that:

- the child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration
- all children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents and carers is essential.

The FA is committed to working in partnership with the Police, Social Services Departments, and Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB) in accordance with their procedures. This is essential to enable these organisations to carry out their statutory duties to investigate concerns and protect all children and young people.

The Association's Safeguarding Children Policy is in response to government legislation developed to safeguard the welfare and development of children and young people.

Whistle-blowing

The FA has an explicit Whistle Blowing Policy; this is 'an early warning system.' It is about revealing and raising concerns over misconduct or malpractice within an organisation or within an independent structure associated with it.

Any adult or young person with concerns about a colleague can also use "whistleblowing" by contacting The FA Case Management Team on 0844 980 8200 4787. Alternatively you can go direct to Children's Services, the Police or the NSPCC and report your concerns there.

Appointing Welfare Officers in Youth Clubs and Youth Leagues

The 2010 – 2011 Season sees The FAs affiliations policy come into full effect having been introduced over the past 3 years. Every club and league with youth teams has to appoint a welfare officer. The welfare officer must have an accepted FA CRB check and have attended both the Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officer Workshops.

Having a welfare officer in place will help to ensure that:

- clubs and leagues with youth teams have a named point of contact who can ensure that people understand what their responsibilities are when working with children and young people
- clubs and leagues with youth teams comply with their moral and legal requirements
- responsible recruitment processes are in place, so that clubs and leagues with youth teams can comply with their requirements to ensure that those working in relevant roles with U18's undertake a CRB check¹ and follow The FAs guidance on responsible recruitment

- more people are aware of the benefits of attending The FA's Safeguarding Children workshop
 - children and young people are empowered and involved in decision making in clubs
1. *Those people in roles which bring them in to direct contact with children, e.g. coaches, managers, referees, first aiders and welfare officers.*

For more information about how to appoint a welfare officer and what this role involves either speak with your CFA Welfare Officer or go to - www.thefa.com/TheFA/WhatWeDo/FootballSafe/Downloads and click on 'Appointing a Club Welfare Officer' or 'Appointing a Youth League Welfare Officer'
