



NSPCC Independent Assessment of the
Implementation of FA Safeguarding 365
for

Amateur FA

Report

Final Report

Lead Assessor

Ben Potter

Second Assessor

Emma Hill

Date of Assessment

18th October 2022

Date of Report

26th October 2022

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Assessment Outcome Summary

Amateur FA was assessed against the Safeguarding 365 criteria for 2021/2022 on the 18th of October 2022 in person at the Amateur FA offices at Unit 3, Wenlock Road, London N1 7SL.

A summary of the assessment schedule:

Assessment	Date	Outcome
Self - assessment completed	11 th October 2022	Meets the standard
Independent assessment	18 th October 2022	'Meets the Standard'

Following:

- a review of the evidence submission on Smartsheet,
- a one day 'in person' assessment

the NSPCC is satisfied that the Amateur FA **'meets the Standard'**

The outcome of each area of the assessment is as follows:

Standard area	Assessment rating
Governance and Leadership	Meets the Standard
Operational Delivery	Meets the Standard
Listening to the Voice of and Supporting U18s	Meets the Standard
Football Disciplinary	Meets the Standard
Case Management	Meets the Standard
Compliance and Monitoring	Meets the Standard

NSPCC Assessment team

Ben Potter (Lead Assessor) and Emma Hill

Staff & Volunteers interviewed during independent assessment

- Jason Kilby CEO
- Dyahanne Sappleton DSO
- Melanie Armstrong Football Services Manager and Deputy SSL
- James Tiernay Football Development Manager and Deputy SSL
- Samantha Brown Football Development Officer and Deputy DSO
- Daryl Ann Referee Development Officer and Deputy DSO
- Robert Hanison Chair of the board
- John Bakker Board Safeguarding Champion (virtually)

Summary of assessment

Following an analysis of the comprehensive Smartsheet evidence submission and a one day 'in person' assessment, the NSPCC independent assessors are fully satisfied that Amateur Football Association has met the Safeguarding 365 criteria for 2021/2022. In addition to evidencing that all specific criteria were fully met, the assessors identified several areas of good practice.

The Amateur FA should be commended for the work they have done in the following areas.

- The team have worked hard to engage young people using a Youth Advisory Group (YAG) resulting in some fantastic outcomes to try and improve attitudes and behaviours towards U18 players playing in open age football. The team has worked hard to ensure that the voice of 16- and 17-year-olds are heard and valued. They have recently advertised the YAG roles more widely to try and capture the views and thoughts of U18's both in and out of football which will bring them a broader range of experiences and opinions.
- The DSO has excellent links with local DSO's and keeps LADO details up to date, despite having a larger number of potential LADO links than a typical CFA. Much like the rest of the team, the DSO is very passionate about safeguarding and that was evident during discussions with the assessors.
- There is an impressive amount of experience and support provided by the Board, in particular the Board Safeguarding Champion. Not only does the BSC bring impressive academic credentials, but he also brings extensive safeguarding knowledge.

During the assessment it was clear to the assessors that safeguarding is fully embraced by the whole team at the Amateur FA. All members of staff interviewed during the assessment were very aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and how these impact on their specific areas of work. The CEO and Designated Safeguarding Officer answered any technical questions from assessors comprehensively and confidently and demonstrated clearly how safeguarding is a key priority,

The NSPCC would like to congratulate the CEO, DSO, Board and wider staff team for the commitment to safeguarding evidenced during the assessment.

Assessment grading – Amateur FA

Charts and tables supporting report

Below is a summary of each Standard area of the Safeguarding 365 assessment.

The NSPCC grades each area using the following colour codes:

Red	Fails to meet the Standard
Amber	Standard requires developing
Green	Meets the Standard
Blue	Not relevant to this Football Association at this time
Grey	Pending, awaiting additional material by a set date

Amateur FA – Self Assessment grading

Standard Area	Total	Red	Amber	Green	Blue	Pending
Governance and Leadership	13	0	0	13	0	0
Operational Delivery	38	0	0	36	2	0
Listening to the Under 18s	5	0	0	5	0	0
Football Disciplinary	5	0	0	5	0	0
Case Management	9	0	0	5	4	0
Compliance and Monitoring	8	0	0	5	3	0
TOTALS	78	0	0	69	9	0

Amateur FA – Independent Assessment FINAL grading

Standard Area	Total	Red	Amber	Green	Blue	Pending
Governance and Leadership	13	0	0	13	0	0
Operational Delivery	38	0	0	36	2	0
Listening to the Under 18s	5	0	0	5	0	0
Football Disciplinary	5	0	0	5	0	0
Case Management	9	0	0	5	4	0
Compliance and Monitoring	8	0	0	5	3	0
TOTALS	78	0	0	69	9	0

At the conclusion of the assessment the Amateur FA have met all the relevant **69** criteria.

STANDARD AREA 1: Governance and Leadership

Total number of criteria – **13**

Standard overall outcome – **‘Meets the Standard’**

Red	Amber	Green	Blue	Grey	Total
0	0	13	0	0	13

Area 1 – Key achievements/strengths

- There is vast safeguarding experience in strategic roles at the County FA which was very evident during the assessment.
- The Board Safeguarding Champion has considerable safeguarding experience, having previously worked as a social worker, director of boards for local, national and international organisations as well as acting in a safeguarding advisory role for various research projects and reviews. In discussions with the assessors, he spoke about how he sees his role as one that oversees and questions on case management cases and it is clear to see he is a great safeguarding asset to the AFA.
- The new board Chair has been a member of the council for many years. He spoke confidently about safeguarding at the AFA and discussed with the assessors how he started up a welfare committee to help deal with council members mental health and wellbeing.
- The CEO has been in post for just under 5 years and is driven and passionate about embedding safeguarding within the AFA. He is very supportive of his team and has worked hard to create robust procedures and policies.
- Staff, team, board, and safeguarding structures are clearly shown on organograms and there is a robust process in place for deputising.

Area 1 – Criteria requiring action

No criteria requiring action

STANDARD AREA 2: Operational Delivery

Total number of criteria – **38**

Standard overall outcome – **‘Meets the Standard’**

Red	Amber	Green	Blue	Grey	Total
0	0	36	2	0	38

Area 2 – Key achievements/strengths

- The DSO is well established in her role and has a background in safeguarding. There is clear evidence that she continues to prioritise her professional development through undertaking training courses on developing areas of safeguarding and areas of interest. She should be commended for her dedication towards safeguarding in the 2 days a week she is contracted to work and the extra time she puts in around this.
- The DSO regularly delivers CPD to CWO's and has developed her own course 'safeguarding made simple' to ensure key safeguarding content and messages are delivered.
- The DSO has bimonthly networking sessions with CWO's where they suggest topics and content for future training. This means the DSO can tailor future learning to emerging needs.
- Contact with CWO's is consistent and the DSO spoke about how they have communicated to CWO's regarding the open age measures.
- The AFA promotes safeguarding education and requirements through the use of many channels such as twitter, newsletters, websites and the AFA safe award.

Area 2 – Criteria requiring action

No criteria requiring action

STANDARD AREA 3: Listening to the Voice of and Supporting U18s

Total number of criteria – 5

Standard overall outcome – ‘Meets the Standard’

Red	Amber	Green	Blue	Grey	Total
0	0	5	0	0	5

Area 3 – Key achievements/strengths

- There is a very strong approach to youth engagement in the AFA. This is developed by the Youth Advisory Group which was set up by the Football Development manager. The assessors were impressed by the FDT commitment to this work and the priority that it was being given especially since the number of U18 players was relatively low and concentrated to 16- and 17-year-olds.
- The AFA YAG meet regularly, and they routinely share group briefing notes with the board which ensures the youth voice is heard at board level.
- Members of the YAG also sit on the IAG which ensures continuity across areas of the organisation.
- The Football Development Manager spoke passionately about the work he has been doing with the YAG. He discussed how they consulted with the YAG about the use of yellow armbands to identify U18 players. The YAG suggested instead, having banners/boards that are displayed pitch side at matches. They felt that this was more effective and less alienating for individual players. The football development manager was then able to use Power Bi to identify clubs that would benefit from these boards and distribute accordingly.
- The young people’s area on the website (Youth Zone) is comprehensive and contains topical and innovative information, signposting young people to expert resources around mental health and keeping safe online.

Area 3 – Criteria requiring action

No criteria requiring action

STANDARD AREA 4: Football Disciplinary

Total number of criteria - **5**

Standard overall outcome – **‘Meets the Standard’**

Red	Amber	Green	Blue	Grey	Total
0	0	5	0	0	5

Area 4 – Key achievements/strengths

- The AFA have had no young people involved in the disciplinary process over the last 3 years. The Football Services Manager spoke comprehensively about the AFA's process and procedures around this should a case present itself. This was supported with detailed record keeping that would highlight any U18's and trigger a set of resulting actions and procedures meaning that they are not overlooked or missed.

Area 4 – Criteria requiring action

No criteria requiring action

STANDARD AREA 5: Case Management

Total number of criteria – **9**

Standard overall outcome – **‘Meets the Standard’**

Red	Amber	Green	Blue	Grey	Total
0	0	5	4	0	9

Area 5 – Key achievements/strengths

- The DSO has a positive relationship with some of the local LADOs. Due to the nature of the AFA it is not possible to know all LADO's. The DSO maintains LADO contact details and records and updates these quarterly if needed.
- The SSL discusses cases with the DSO regularly and all team members take part in biweekly safeguarding meetings where cases are discussed.
- The AFA have attended safeguarding strategy meetings as required.

Area 5 – Criteria requiring action

No criteria requiring action

STANDARD AREA 6: Compliance and Monitoring

Total number of criteria – **8**

Standard overall outcome – **‘Meets the Standard’**

Red	Amber	Green	Blue	Grey	Total
0	0	5	3	0	8

Area 6 – Key achievements/strengths

- The safeguarding and welfare pages on the website provide information for clubs and leagues about open age clubs responsibilities when young people take part.
- The AFA keep tracking spreadsheets to ensure that all safeguarding criteria are met in open age, adult and disability football.
- The AFA actively work with clubs and leagues to promote the English Football Accreditation process.

Area 6 – Criteria requiring action

No criteria requiring action

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