



## Criteria requirements to authorize & operate a Tier 3 Regional Talent Club 2022-23

FA Rules C144 to C149 apply to all players within The Football Association Girls' Talent Development Programme.

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of The Football Association Girls' Regional Talent Club Programme is to identify and support the development of elite female players within a technical and educational programme to enable them to fulfil their sporting potential.

### 2. Scope

Any club or organisation may not designate any technical or educational programme as a Regional Talent Club unless that Regional Talent Club is licensed by The Football Association under these regulations.

### 3. The License

3.1 Regional Talent Club licences will be awarded by The Football Association in accordance with regulations laid down by The Football Association. Licences are awarded for a maximum of one year starting from 2021-22 season, subject to FA and external funding, and meeting the licence criteria. The Regional Talent Club programme will conclude on 31 May 2023 and the licence will therefore not be renewed after this date. An organisation may only operate 1 Regional Talent Club.

3.2 Public liability insurance is required with a minimum of £10m indemnity. A copy of this cover must be submitted to The Football Association in your licence renewal application by 1st June. Player to player liability is recommended but is not mandatory. The Football Association does not provide Personal Accident Insurance; therefore, it is recommended that Clubs address this independently through other agencies.

3.3 The Regional Talent Club (Tier 3) is to run for a minimum of 30 weeks, ideally 36 weeks between the months of July and May.

The month of June is the official closed season (trial period), where Clubs can recruit players. Clubs must provide an open opportunity for players outside of their current Club to be recruited.

If the Regional Talent Club needs to close for any period, it has to first seek permission from The Football Association.

3.4 The Football Association will institute a programme of visits to monitor the regulations. Each visit to a Regional Talent Club by a Member of The Football Association Women's Ambassador Panel will be reported upon. The Football Association will evaluate the performance of Regional Talent Clubs based on Key Requirement Criteria, and Clubs are expected to fully support any external verification audits carried out.

#### Address

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DE13 9PD

### 3.5 Financial Funding and Monitoring:

Each Regional Talent Club must commit a monetary contribution of £6,000 towards the running and management of the Club. Evidence of the spend will be submitted in a FA cash flow document along with copies of invoices, twice yearly to The Football Association. Failure to do so by the required date will result in non-payment of the grant.

Any amount of the grant which remains unspent by 31 May shall be reported to the FA Girls' Talent Development Sub-Committee who can request that the unspent amount is returned to the FA.

Registration fees and Licence fees will be at the discretion of The Football Association. Any fees required to enter a mixed league will be the responsibility of the Regional Talent Club.

3.6 The FA Girls' Talent Development Sub-Committee have the authority to sanction monthly deductions of up to 15% from the first grant instalment of any Regional Talent Club who does not have a fully approved workforce, until The Football Association can confirm that all staff have been validated.

3.7 The Football Association Women's Football Board has the right to refuse or withdraw a club's licence with immediate effect.

## 4. Safeguarding Children

4.1 All Regional Talent Clubs are required to comply in full with The Football Association's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures and Regulations. It is essential that all Regional Talent Clubs adopt and adhere to a Safeguarding Children Policy and have procedures in place for dealing with safeguarding concerns about a child/young person and concerns of staff poor practice. These safeguards must be embedded across all levels of the Regional Talent Club, including Board level, where there should be a Board Safeguarding Champion to oversee strategic direction of safeguarding. A Board Safeguarding Champion Role Specification can be found in Schedule 1. The Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures must be available to all staff and volunteers during their induction and easily accessible throughout the season.

4.2 All staff and volunteers involved at a Regional Talent Club must be registered on Whole Game System. This must be kept up to date with safeguarding training attendance and completion and Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Any person who is not registered shall not be involved with the Regional Talent Club. For the avoidance of doubt, this requirement shall apply to all persons involved at the Regional Talent Club, including technical, administration, performance services, welfare and ancillary staff and volunteers. Whole Game System may be liable to inspection and verification at any time by The Football Association as appropriate.

4.3 Regional Talent Club staff and volunteers in roles that have direct contact with children shall be required to attend and complete The FA's Safeguarding Children Course and to renew this training every two years.

4.4 The Regional Talent Club must have:

A Club Welfare Officer who has operational responsibility for embedding safeguarding across

#### Address

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DE13 9PD

the Regional Talent Club, responding to and managing safeguarding children concerns as part of the drive to promote the wellbeing of children/young people attending the Regional Talent Club. This includes addressing concerns among player groups about bulletin, personal conduct and use of social media. A Club Welfare Officer Role Specification can be found in Schedule 2. The Club Welfare Officer should not hold a role within the Regional Talent Club that can influence the selection or deselection of a player.

A Club Welfare officer must be trained in safeguarding children issues at least to include satisfactory completion of The Football Association's Safeguarding Children Course and The FA Welfare Officers Course. This training is to be renewed every two years. In addition, Club Welfare Officers must attend safeguarding professional development annually.

- 4.5 The induction process (outlined in 16.1), must include details of the Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure, who the Club Welfare Officer is and how to contact them, the Academy code of conduct, Respect Campaign, Anti Bullying policy, Equality and Diversity policy, How to Raise a Concern and Complaint, as a minimum.

#### Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

- 4.6 Any concern about the welfare of a child/young person or staff poor practice will be managed in line with the Regional Talent Club's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures. It is essential that staff recognise their responsibility to report these concerns to the Club Welfare Officer to assess the risk and respond appropriately.

If players, parent/carers or staff have a concern about any adult in a position of trust, within football, including the club welfare officer, they can contact The FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 169 1863, or by writing to The FA Case Manager at The Football Association, Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London SW1P 9EQ, or by emailing [Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com) or alternatively by going direct to the Police, Children's Social Care or the NSPCC.

## 5. Player Recruitment

- 5.1 The Football Association will be responsible for providing registration forms for the registration of all players at a Regional Talent Club. Age year bands will operate from 1st September to 31st August of the following year. Clubs can charge an annual subscription fee to players, which shall not exceed £200.00 over the course of the season.

Tier 3 Regional Talent Clubs will support and develop players across the following ages and stages. All age groups will be aligned to the whole club player pathway. The Regional Talent Club must register a minimum of three teams and requisite number of players across the following age groups;

The following age groups are mandatory and must be registered.

#### Address

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DE13 9PD

Age Group	Min Players	Max Players	Age Band
U16	15	18	Dual
U14	15	18	Dual
U12	12	15	Dual

FA Regional Talent Clubs may choose to run additional age groups. For the avoidance of doubt, funding from The Football Association should not be used to cover the costs of running any additional squads. FA Regional Talent Clubs may run no more than one team at any of the mandatory age groups. Any FA Regional Talent Clubs wanting to register additional age groups must make a request in writing to The Football Association to gain approval.

If a Regional Talent Club wishes to exceed the maximum number of registered players per team, they must inform The Football Association to gain approval.

5.2 Clubs must adhere to a maximum 90-minutes travelling time from home to the training ground for all age groups.

5.3 Player Registration Agreement

The Football Association will provide clubs with a 'player registration agreement' template for all registered Regional Talent Club players. All players must be registered on The FA Whole Game System to be registered to play with the FA Regional Talent Club programme.

5.3.1 Every Regional Talent Club player is to be given a 1 year player registration agreement, subject to FA and external funding and the Regional Talent Club meeting the required criteria. Players' registrations at their current Club will expire on the 31<sup>ST</sup> May that season.

5.3.2 A player may de-register at any time if returning to grassroots football (i.e. any club outside of the FA Regional Talent Clubs Programme) or advancing to senior football. If the player has left and wishes to re-join the same Regional Talent Club later in the same season they may do so.

5.3.3 A Regional Talent Club must not approach, directly or indirectly, any player registered with another Regional Talent Club from 1<sup>ST</sup> July until 31<sup>ST</sup> May. A player wishing to move to another Regional Talent Club can during the month of June. Only if both Regional Talent Clubs and the player agree can the player move outside of the June window.

End of season procedure for registered players

5.4 All players registered at a Regional Talent Club as at 1<sup>st</sup> May in each season, must be told in writing, by the third Saturday in May whether they:

1. Will receive a player agreement to re-sign for their current club for the next season if they choose to accept it.

a. If a player wishes to accept to re-register, she is required to return her completed

#### Address

St. George's Park  
Newborough Road  
Needwood  
Burton-Upon-Trent  
DE13 9PD

registration to the club by the 1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE. The player is re-registered to the club for the next season. They may not trial for any other club.

- b. If a player does not wish to re-register, she is to return notice in writing to her club by the 1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE. The player is then free to trial at any other club but can also take part in trials at the Club she was playing, however a registration place is no longer guaranteed if this option is taken.
2. Will not receive an offer to re-register at their current club for the next season. From the 1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE the player will be free to be recruited at any other club.

Since the Regional Talent Club programme will conclude on 31<sup>ST</sup> May 2023, the end of season procedure for registered players as set out in paragraph 5.4 is subject to change.

## 5.5 Expiry of Registration

Regional Talent Clubs are required to evidence full and proper consideration of a decision to allow a player's registration to expire. The Football Association has provided Women and Girls Player Pathway De-selection Guidance that includes a Registration Expiry Form to document the process, which will be disseminated to FA Regional Talent Clubs.

Regional Talent Clubs are required to provide individualised transition support for players leaving the Regional Talent Club. This should include, as a minimum:

1. next steps to progress their football in other clubs;
2. introduce the Education Lead where applicable for education options outside of football; and
3. consider any health or wellbeing needs of the player which may be affected by leaving the Regional Talent Club.

Regional Talent Clubs are required to deliver a one to one meeting with the player and the player's parent/carers following the decision to allow the players registration to expire.

- 5.6 An under 16 (Year 2) registered Regional Talent Club player may trial for an Academic course which is part of a Barclays WSL Academy or a football and education related programme for a maximum of 1 week. The registered player must not take part in any other Regional Talent Club fixtures during the trial period. The trial period must not commence until 7 days after the Barclays WSL Academy Club has provided written notice of its intention to approach, which will only be valid if provided to the Regional Talent Club after the 15<sup>th</sup> January.
- 5.7 It is the responsibility of each Regional Talent Club to ensure that any Player signing a registration form for that Club has, where necessary, the required International Transfer Certificate. This should be confirmed during the Whole Game Player Registration process. Clearance is required for any Player aged 10 and over crossing borders including Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Clubs that do not comply with International Clearance will be subject to sanctions from FIFA.
- 5.8 A player is not entitled to be coached by a Regional Talent Club or to participate in games, tours or tournaments, unless the player is registered with that Regional Talent Club or is a registered trialist.
- 5.9 All players registered at the Regional Talent Club must be potentially eligible to play for England.

### Address

St. George's Park  
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DE13 9PD

## 5.10 Trialists

5.10.1 Once a player has been identified by a Regional Talent Club as having potential, they must give seven clear days' notice of approach in writing to the registered Club with which the trialist plays as per Football Association Rule C9o.

5.10.2 A player identified as a trialist must be duly registered to the Regional Talent Club and on the Whole Game System for the entire trial period, until the player has been either fully recruited or transitioned back into a grassroots environment. A trialist can be dual registered to a grassroots club and the Regional Talent Club for the trial period.

5.10.3 A trialist can participate in up to six matches, which can take place at any point in the season before the Regional Talent Club has to decide on recruiting the player. A trialist can be dual registered to a grassroots club. Trialist players must not exceed the maximum daily playing time;

Under 16 and Under 15	100 Minutes
Under 14 and Under 13	80 Minutes
Under 12 and Under 11	70 Minutes
Under 10 and Under 9	60 Minutes

5.10.4 Regional Talent Club Managers, players, parents/carers, and the players' grassroots clubs will work together to manage playing minutes. All trialists will be permitted to play a maximum of two games for the Regional Talent Club within a 7 day period, provided that they do not exceed the maximum daily playing time limits set out above. For the avoidance of doubt, these maximum daily limits apply to all fixtures, including those for the player's grassroots club, and not just those of the Regional Talent Club.

5.10.5 A Regional Talent Club can register a maximum of four triallists per team at any one time and trialists can take place at any point in the season. Trialists will not be counted as part of the squad cap. The Technical Director will be responsible alongside the players parent/carer, grassroots club for the support and management of the player.

## 5.11 Dual Registrations

5.11.1 Regional Talent Clubs can dual register players to provide additional stretching opportunities for those striving in a Regional Talent Club environment, provided that such players are not registered to another Regional Talent Club team within the same division. Players can be dual registered to a mixed grassroots team, providing that the team is not in the same division as the Regional Talent Club.

5.11.2 Dual registered players can only play down one bona fide year in a mixed team. There is no maximum number of players that can be dual registered however it is recommended that there is no more than four per team.

### Address

St. George's Park  
Newborough Road  
Needwood  
Burton-Upon-Trent  
DE13 9PD

5.11.3 Players that are dual registered will be included in the Regional Talent Club squad cap. All dual registered players must not exceed the maximum daily playing time limits set out below. Subject to rule 10.6 below, Regional Talent Club fixtures take priority for all dual registered players unless written permission is given by The Football Association. Regional Talent Club managers, players, parents/carers and the players' grassroots clubs will work together to manage playing minutes. Pathway players must not exceed the maximum daily playing time;

Under 16 and Under 15	100 Minutes
Under 14 and Under 13	80 Minutes
Under 12 and Under 11	70 Minutes
Under 10 and Under 9	60 Minutes

5.11.4 The Technical Director will be responsible alongside the players parent/carer, grassroots club for the support and management of the player.

#### 5.1.2 Playing Out Of Age

5.12.1 At the discretion of the Technical Director, Regional Talent Clubs can decide to play a player out of age. The player must be in the second year of the two-year age band to play up or must be in the first year of the two-year age band to play down. The Technical Director must inform the Women's Leagues Officer with the reason for their decision. This must be used to further enhance the development of the player long term.

5.12.2 Regional Talent Club teams playing in a Charter Standard mixed league can play down a maximum of two years from their chronological age group.

5.12.3 Individual players belonging to a Regional Talent Club playing in Charter Standard mixed leagues can play a maximum of two years down from their chronological age group.

5.12.4 Clubs must complete and return the appropriate playing out of age documents to the Women's Leagues Officer before the player is approved. The player will need to be added to the appropriate team on Whole Game System.

## 6. Contact Time

Regional Talent Clubs (Tier 3) must provide the following training programmes a week:

- U16 and U14 registered players must receive a minimum of four hours practical training per week.
- U12 registered players must receive a minimum of three hours practical training per week.
- Physical Performance must be considered in session plans and delivery.
- Goalkeeping coaches must provide a minimum of 1 hour Goalkeeping specific coaching sessions per week per age band.
- Training programmes should be tailored around each player's circumstances, football needs and educational needs in line with their Individual Development Plan.

#### Address

St. George's Park  
Newborough Road  
Needwood  
Burton-Upon-Trent  
DE13 9PD

## 7. Training Facilities

7.1 The following minimum facilities are required for all weekly practical training sessions in the playing season:

- Adequate washing and changing facilities and toilets with appropriate disposal of sanitary products
- Separate treatment room
- Easy access for qualified medical expertise to enter the facility
- A recognised parent/visitor area for those observing the session or waiting
- A documented Emergency Action Plan. It is best practice to have physical copies available and clearly displayed at the facility where possible
- An accessible defibrillator is best practice

7.2 All technical sessions will take place on a 3G Football Turf/Grass pitch. Regional Talent Clubs will decide for all age groups the size of the coaching area for all technical sessions.

A dedicated goalkeeping area separate from other training areas is best practice.

7.3 All non-pitch based coaching activities (i.e. physical development sessions, gym work etc.) must take place in an appropriate size area dependent on the activity.

7.4 Risk assessments must be carried out for all facilities and events. This process must include annual checks, spot checks and sessional assessments. Proofs of these checks are to be made available if requested by The Football Association.

## 8. Match Day Facilities

8.1 The following minimum facilities are required for FA Organised match day fixtures for under 16 and under 14 age groups:

- Suitable changing, washing and toilet facilities with appropriate disposal of sanitary products for both teams. These must be made available to your opposition a minimum of 1 hour before kickoff.
- Separate treatment room
- Rapid access to qualified medical expertise
- All 3G football turf pitches must be FA or FIFA approved
- A documented Emergency Action Plan. It is best practice to have physical copies available and clearly displayed at the facility where possible.
- An accessible defibrillator is best practice

### Address

St. George's Park  
Newborough Road  
Needwood  
Burton-Upon-Trent  
DE13 9PD

- Dedicated indoor playing space for futsal / foundation fixtures is best practice
  - A RESPECT line (dedicated spectator area) at least 2 meters from the touchline. Each area should run the length of the pitch but not behind the goal posts. The RESPECT line must be on the opposite side of the pitch the Technical coaching staff.
  - Under 16s to play 11v11 on a maximum pitch size of 100 yards x 60 yards (91m x 56m), using a size 5 ball. Other playing formats from the default can be used in the interests of Player Development.
  - U14s to play 11v11 on a maximum pitch size of 90 yards by 55 yards (82m x 50m), using a size 4 ball and 9 v 9 goalposts. (Goal 16\*7 or 21\*7 whichever is available on the site). Other playing formats from the default can be used in the interests of Player Development.
- 8.2 Under 12 age groups will be required to meet the minimum facility requirements and play in the format stated in the rules and regulations of the relevant Charter Standard Mixed League they have entered.
- 8.3 Risk assessments must be carried out for all facilities and events. This process must include annual checks, spot checks and sessional assessments. Proof of these checks is to be made available if requested by The Football Association.
- 9. Workforce**  
Players are unique. The workforce should aim to reflect the needs of players at each age and stage.
- 9.1 The Club shall have in place a policy and procedures for the recruitment of all Club staff and volunteers which includes:
- Recruitment timescales to ensure all Club staff vacancies are filled, subject to being done so in a safe way, including obtaining suitable references, substantiating relevant qualifications, confirming identity and, where appropriate, Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") checks; and
  - The Club's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk, equality and diversity and anti-discrimination and the expectation for all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
- 9.2 In addition to meeting any applicable requirements set out regarding Safeguarding Children, all coaches must be registered and FA licensed to coach and work in Regional Talent Clubs by the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and hold the appropriate qualification to coach at that level, as outlined in the regulations and have the FA Level 1 Introduction to First Aid in Football (IFAiF) or a valid FA Emergency First Aid qualification.
- 9.3 All roles are mandatory unless stated otherwise. Where it is proposed staff undertake roles within the Regional Talent Club that also have a role within a Club competing in the Barclays FA Women's Super League or Women's' Championship, then FA approval is required in order to ensure that arrangements are in place to meet all the requirements of each role. All roles when vacant must be subject to an advertised recruitment process which facilitates external applications.

#### Address

St. George's Park  
Newborough Road  
Needwood  
Burton-Upon-Trent  
DE13 9PD

Consideration for an alternative staffing structure may be granted where there is collaboration with the Regional Talent Club and The Football Association, including the Regional Talent Clubs Manager. The Regional Talent Club must provide in writing evidence (that the structure features in the Club's succession plan) to the Regional Talent Club's Manager for ratification. Where a structure is deemed unsuitable for the pathway, The Football Association reserves the right to deny this request.

9.4 All staff should be attached to the relevant team on The FA Whole Game System. Regional Talent Clubs are responsible for updating staff data in Whole Game System. It is the Regional Talent Clubs responsibility to update The Football Association and Whole Game System with all changes in the workforce in a timely manner.

9.5 Technical Staff

All technical staff (excluding volunteer coaches) must hold one of the following:

FA Youth Award Modules 1 and 2; Blocks 1 and 2 of the 'new' (post Aug 1st 2016) FA Level 2 in Coaching Football, or be booked onto these specific blocks within six months of being appointed within the Regional Talent Club;

The 'new' (post Aug 1st, 2017) FA Level 3 (UEFA B) in Coaching Football. Coaches who have completed the existing FA Level 3 (UEFA B) in Coaching Football must fulfil one of the above requirements, or have completed Block 1 of the 'new' FA Level 3 or be booked on this block within six months of being appointed within the Regional Talent Club.

- One Technical Director who must hold a FA Level 3 (UEFA B) Licence for at least 3 seasons. It is best practice for the Technical Director to hold a FA Youth Award Module 3 or Block 1 of the 'new' FA Level 3 (UEFA B). The Technical Director must be present at all training sessions unless they are split over two sites and attend one fixture each weekend. They must not be Head or Assistant Coach for an age group.

Consideration for an alternative arrangement may be granted where there is collaboration with the Regional Talent Club and The Football Association, including the Women's National Coach Developer. The Regional Talent Club must provide in writing evidence (that the candidate features in the Regional Talent Club's succession plan and demonstrates the appropriate qualities and experience) to the Regional Talent Club's Manager for ratification. Where a candidate is deemed unsuitable for the role, The Football Association reserves the right to deny this request.

- Under 16, Under 14 Head Coaches both must hold a UEFA B Licence.

Consideration for an alternative arrangement may be granted where there is collaboration with the Regional Talent Club and The Football Association, including the Coach Development Officer and/or Women's National Coach Developer. The Regional Talent Club must provide in writing evidence (that the candidate features in the Regional Talent Club's succession plan and demonstrates the appropriate qualities and experience) to the Regional Talent Clubs Manager for ratification. This must include working towards obtaining the appropriate license (evidence must be provided of plans and activity of working directly with a member from the women's coach development team). Where a candidate is deemed unsuitable for the role, The Football Association reserves the right to deny this request.

#### Address

St. George's Park  
Newborough Road  
Needwood  
Burton-Upon-Trent  
DE13 9PD

- Under 16 Assistant Coaches both must hold a minimum of FA Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Football.
- Under 14 Assistant Coach must hold a minimum of FA Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Football. No assistant coach is required unless player registrations for this age group exceed 16.
- Under 12 Head Coaches both must hold a minimum of FA Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Football.
- Under 12 Assistant Coaches both must hold a minimum of FA Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Football. No assistant coach is required unless player registrations for this age group exceed 16.
- All technical staff to hold FA Level 1 Introduction to First Aid in Football (IFAiF) or a valid Emergency Aid qualification.
- One representative who will be present at all under 11 to under 13 teams mixed football matches must hold a FA Level 2 Emergency First Aid in Football (EFAiF) qualification or the FA Basic First Aid for Sport (BFAS) qualification.
- Cover coaches available at short notice that is registered and FA Licenced and meet all the same coach criteria.

9.6 One Goalkeeping coach who must hold a minimum of FA Level 2 in Goalkeeping Coaching. It is best practice for the Goalkeeping coach to hold FA Level 3 in Coaching Goalkeepers. If the Goalkeeping coach holds FA Level 3 (UEFA B) in Coaching Football and the FA Level 3 in Coaching Goalkeepers, then only in this instance would the coach not need to meet the youth award module requirements stated above due to the course content they have already covered.

#### 9.7 All Administrative Staff

- One Club Manager who will take responsibility of all administration and organisation duties. Unless a full-time member of staff, the Club Manager must be contracted to a minimum of 18 hours per week and must attend at least one training session and one home fixture per week. It is best practice for them to hold the FA Level 1 Introduction to First Aid in Football (IFAiF) or a valid Emergency Aid qualification. The Club Manager must not be the same person as the Technical Director. A Regional Talent Club wishing to appoint a Club Manager who doesn't meet this requirement must produce a role profile which must be approved by the Football Association.
- One Financial Lead who will take responsibility of the finances and cash flow for the Regional Talent Club and be the main point of contact for financial discussions with The Football Association.

#### Address

St. George's Park  
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Needwood  
Burton-Upon-Trent  
DE13 9PD

#### 9.8 Performance Services Staff

- Minimum of one HCPC or SST Registered Physiotherapists or Sports Therapists. Sports Therapists must hold a degree in sports therapy or sports rehabilitation and have adequate indemnity insurance. They must have an up to date full Emergency Aid qualification; this should be at least the Level 3 EMAiF (Emergency Medical Management in Football). It is desirable to have completed the UK Anti-Doping (UKAD) Clean Sport Advisor Course.

They must deliver prehab and rehab programmes and keep comprehensive player medical records in line with their professional standards.

There must be a Physiotherapist or Sports Therapist present at all training sessions and all under 16 and under 14 matches (home & away). In the instance that two age groups are playing on adjacent pitches, it may be sufficient for the Physiotherapist or Sports Therapist present to cover both pitches and sets of players, on condition they have immediate access to both pitches.

If matches are at different venues or the access to both pitches is not immediate or 3 matches are occurring at the same time, the Regional Talent Club must procure an additional Physiotherapist or Sports Therapist. This must be documented in the Home Club's MEAP and should be communicated to the Visiting Club prior to their travel to the relevant Match.

- One Physical Performance Coach is desirable. They must hold a BSc in Sports Science or a Sport Science related discipline and hold UK Strength and Conditioning Association (UKSCA) or ASCC accreditation. If accreditation has not been obtained, evidence must be provided to demonstrate an ability to working towards obtaining it, including, but not exclusive to, the attendance of workshops.
  - Foundation Workshop and Certification (Level 1)
  - Weightlifting Workshop
  - Plyometric, Agility and Speed Workshop
  - Planning Effective Programmes Workshop
  - Should have or be able to obtain a relevant professional qualification within 6 months
  - It is mandatory for all Physical Performance Coaches to hold the FA Level 1 Introduction to First Aid in Football (IFAiF) or a valid FA Emergency Aid qualification. It is desirable to hold the NSCA or CSCS accreditation or completed MSc Strength and Conditioning or postgraduate or BASES Accreditation.

The Physical Performance Coaches must lead on the development and implementation of the club's physical performance strategy. The Regional Talent Club (Tier 3) should have established links/partnerships with Higher Education Institutions for physical performance related support to help establish the club's physical performance strategy.

#### 9.9 Other Staff Requirements

- It is best practice to have 2 appropriately qualified coaches with all age group at all times.
- It is best practice to have female coaches with each age group. This will support FA Regional Talent Clubs with female coach development whilst also meeting the requirements of the FA Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures - Travel, Trips and Tournaments.

#### Address

St. George's Park  
Newborough Road  
Needwood  
Burton-Upon-Trent  
DE13 9PD

- The support of FA Level 1 in Coaching Football coaches is encouraged but only as volunteers at the Club and they must not lead at any training session until they have the FA Level 2 in Coaching Football award. To volunteer they must have an Enhanced DBS, have completed The Football Association's Safeguarding Children Workshop, Level 1 Introduction to First Aid in Football (IFAiF) or a valid Emergency Aid qualification and be a Licenced Coaches Club Member.

#### 9.10 Workforce Review and Development

Regional Talent Clubs must have personal development plans in place for all staff working at the Club. A minimum of two staff performance reviews must be held per season by the Technical Lead, and the Club must identify a programme of training and CPD opportunities to offer their workforce, including in respect of safeguarding (as may be prescribed by The Football Association from time to time), equality and diversity, and anti-discrimination.

#### 9.11 Support to Grassroots Clubs and Coaches

Regional Talent Clubs must host one open evening for grassroots clubs and coaches to attend and learn about what the Club delivers. In addition, two guest sessions must be delivered at grassroots club/s by Regional Talent Club staff.

### 10. FA Girls' England Talent Pathway Football

#### 10.1 International Football

Players in The FA Girls' Regional Talent Club Programme selected for any England Women U16 and U17 squads are not permitted to play in English Schools FA camps or fixtures unless permission is given in writing by the England Women U16 and U17 Head Coaches respectively.

#### 10.2 National Development Programme – Under 16 and Under 14 age groups

Players will be identified and selected by FA Talent Technical Coaches for National Development Camps and Hubs. Players eligible will be those registered at Regional Talent Clubs as well as those playing in Advanced Coaching Centre's, Grassroots football, mixed football and County Schools football.

#### 10.3 Under 16 and under 14 players may participate through their Regional Talent Club in the FA Girls' Regional Talent Club Games Programme.

#### 10.4 Under 12 players will participate through their Regional Talent Club in an appropriately identified local Charter Standard Mixed League fixtures programme. This would be organised by the Regional Talent Club who must follow entry procedures. Any proposed alternative arrangements must be authorized by The Football Association.

#### 10.5 Recommended Number of Games

The recommended number of games for each player per season is up to 40. It will be the responsibility of the Technical Director of the Regional Talent Club to monitor the number of games in which the player takes part.

#### 10.6 Priority to School Activity and Educational Trips

#### Address

St. George's Park  
Newborough Road  
Needwood  
Burton-Upon-Trent  
DE13 9PD

It is hoped that conflict will be avoided between Schools, Counties and FA Regional Talent Clubs football. Each Regional Talent Club is asked to provide their programme of fixtures for Under 16s and Under 14s to their County Schools and County FA representatives.

In the event of a fixture taking place on a designated day (2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month), a Regional Talent Club having 3 players or more selected for English Schools, County Schools and Independent schools may request a postponement of its League or Cup fixture provided at least 10 days' notice is given to the Women's Leagues Officer in writing. If 1 player is selected and that player is the only registered goalkeeper, a Club could make a similar request for postponement of its League or Cup fixture. This will only apply to English Schools, County Schools, and Independent Schools fixtures.

- 10.7 County Schools Football Associations, The English Schools Football Association and the Independent Schools Football Association will advise, in writing, squad lists along with the dates of their matches to a Regional Talent Club with which the player is registered, no less than 14 days prior to the match. In the case of matches scheduled outside of the designated days (2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month) player release will be at the discretion of the Regional Talent Club Technical Director who has overall responsibility for managing the players load.

## 11. Competition Programme

The following competition programme will be expected for each age group:

- Under 16: To play in The FA Girls' Youth Cup & Plate Competitions. To enter and participate as a team in competition programme organised by The Football Association or in a bespoke competition programme arranged in partnership with the County FA and The Football Association. Participation in any alternative programmes must be approved by The Football Association. Regional Talent Clubs are only permitted to play against other Regional Talent Clubs, Boys EPPP Academies, Advanced Coaching Centre's (ACC's) and Charter Standard boys or girls' teams who are participating within a Charter Standard mixed league. Regional Talent Clubs that want to play alternative opposition must gain approval from The Football Association.
- Under 14: To enter and participate as a team in competition programme organised by The Football Association or in a bespoke competition programme arranged in partnership with the County FA and The Football Association. Participation in any alternative programmes must be approved by The Football Association. Regional Talent Clubs are only permitted to play against other Regional Talent Clubs, Boys EPPP Academies, Advanced Coaching Centre's (ACC's) and Charter Standard boys or girls' teams who are participating within a Charter Standard mixed league. Regional Talent Clubs that want to play alternative opposition must gain approval from The Football Association.
- Under 12: To enter and participate as a team in a local Charter Standard Mixed League or in a bespoke competition programme arranged in partnership with the County FA and Talent Technical Coach. Any different arrangements must be approved by the Football Association. Regional Talent Clubs are only permitted to play against other Regional Talent Clubs, Boys EPPP Academies, Advanced Coaching Centre's (ACC's) and Charter Standard boys or girls' teams who are participating within a Charter Standard mixed league. Regional Talent Clubs that want to play alternative opposition must gain approval from

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Needwood  
Burton-Upon-Trent  
DE13 9PD

**12. Matches for Under 16 and Under 14:**

- To be organised as coached games and can be played as per The FA Regional Talent Club league.
- The host club to be responsible for appointing qualified match officials, including assistant referees. Match Officials are only eligible to officiate in competitions where the players' age band is at least one year younger than the age of the Referee.
- To play in a Regional Talent Club competition programme
- Under 16 teams to compete in the FA Girls' Youth Cup Competitions

At all FA Regional Talent Club fixtures, team sheets must be available, detailing each player's name, date of birth and shirt number.

**Respect programme**

To adopt all FA Respect League processes at each age group at every game. A Respect line must be present at all Regional Talent Club Fixtures. The Respect Handshake should take place at all Regional Talent Club Fixtures. All Players and Parents should read and sign the appropriate Respect Codes of Conduct.

**13. Matches for Under 12:**

- To follow the Charter Standard Mixed League rules and regulations they are playing in. Otherwise, for matches organised outside a Charter Standard Mixed League:
- Under 12 teams to play 2 x 30 minutes or 3 x 20 minutes – must not exceed 60 minutes
- To have a qualified coach who has FA Level 2 Emergency First Aid in Football (EFAiF) or a valid Basic First Aid For Sport qualification (BFAS) present at all matches
- The FA must be informed of all scheduled matches, and records kept of all fixtures

**14. Matches for 16 Year Olds:**

16 year old players that are registered with a Regional Talent Club and want to play senior football, may play a maximum of two games within a 7 day period, provided that they do not exceed the maximum daily playing time limit for 16 year old players of 100 minutes. Regional Talent Club Technical Directors, players, parents/carers and the relevant senior club will work together to manage playing minutes.

Clubs must complete and return the appropriate playing out of age documents to the Women's Leagues Officer before the player is approved:

**15. Matches for Bona Fide Under 16 Players:**

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DE13 9PD

Bona fide under 16 players (including those that are 15 years old from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2006) that are registered with a Regional Talent Club and want to play WSL Academy football, may play a maximum of two games within a 7 day period, provided that they do not exceed the maximum daily playing time limit for 16 year old players of 100 minutes. Regional Talent Club Technical Directors, players, parents/carers and the relevant WSL Academy will work together to manage playing minutes.

Clubs must complete and return the appropriate documents and registration for the WSL Academy league before the player is approved.

## 16. Player Development

- 16.1 All players and parents at the Regional Talent Club must complete an annual induction programme with multi-disciplinary input and be provided with induction documents. For new players who sign up mid-season an individualised player induction must be provided.
- 16.2 Regional Talent Clubs should refer to the Player and Parent Checklist to ensure that all relevant content has been delivered. The Checklist can be found on the Schedule.
- 16.3 All players at the Regional Talent Club must be given measurable individual targets which are measurable, set by the Head Coach. Three player reviews must take place per season to include multi-disciplinary feedback. Player reviews must be available at the request of The Football Association. The Head Coach must implement for each player an Individual Player Development plan that is age and gender specific, which encompasses the FA 4 Corner Model and is reviewed in the presence of the player, parent/carer and the Head Coach throughout the season and must be followed up in writing.
- 16.4 Regional Talent Clubs must provide transition support for players entering their Club and the Regional Talent Club programme. Clubs should demonstrate collaborative working with players, parents/Carers, schools and the players previous club to enable a smooth and supportive transition.
- 16.5 Regional Talent Clubs must provide transition support for players leaving their Club and the Regional Talent Club programme. Clubs should demonstrate collaborative working with the relevant County Football Associations, Clubs and education providers to provide positive exit routes and work with players and parents to educate them on the exit routes available.
- 16.6 Regional Talent Club must record the details of players that have represented at either National Performance Camp or international age group levels within the last 12 months and must show evidence of how these players on the England Talent Pathway are supported as well as collaborate with National Coaches on player Individual Development Plans.

## 17. Grievance Procedures

In the event of a player or parent/carer having a grievance against a Regional Talent Club or employee of that Regional Talent Club which is FA licensed, the following grievance procedure is to be followed:

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DE13 9PD

- The grievance should be made in writing to the Club Manager in the first instance, stating the nature of the grievance and the player's full name. This should be sent in an envelope marked confidential, stating the nature of the grievance and the player's full name.
- In the event of the grievance being against the Club Manager, the outline of grievance should be sent to the employing body.
- The grievance shall be investigated by the Club Manager or employing body and following the investigation the findings shall be reported to the person lodging the grievance in writing within 7-days of the investigation.
- If the person lodging the grievance is not satisfied with the outcome of the procedure, then it is possible to refer the matter to The Football Association to review the process undertaken and make any suggestions it deems appropriate with a view to resolving the grievance.
- The grievance procedure should be communicated to Regional Talent Club staff and parents.

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DE13 9PD

Schedule 1

**Safeguarding Champion**

Role Specification

- To be an active Board member, providing strategic leadership and championing the safeguarding of children and young people (under the age of 18) in all RTC activities.
- To recognise and champion that all children and young people in football are entitled to the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity.

To ensure the RTC acts in accordance with legislation, statutory guidance and The FA's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures and any associated guidance.

Key responsibilities

- To ensure the RTC always acts in keeping with legislation, statutory guidance and The FA's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures;
- To ensure safeguarding responsibilities and accountabilities are embedded in the RTC Strategy, Business Plan, Budget, Risk Register and Operational Plan;
- To ensure the RTC enables and provides relevant safeguarding training for the Board, staff, volunteers and committee and council members;
- To ensure all staff role profiles have safeguarding responsibilities embedded in them;
- To ensure the Board receives and scrutinises information on progress against key areas of work, including the independent assessment reports, risks and challenges;
- To check and challenge to ensure that the interests of children and young people are paramount in all RTC activities;
- To use the whistle-blowing policy if any concerns are not fully addressed

Key skills and experience required (essential)

- A child-centered belief system and behaviors;
- Experience of demonstrable and effective governance and overseeing a strategic approach;
- Experience of safeguarding or child protection;
- Awareness and understanding of The FA's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Ability to listen effectively;
- Ability to ask probing questions;
- Communication skills;
- Presentation skills;
- Experience of problem-solving;
- Basic IT skills, including Word and email.

Key skills and experience required (desirable)

- Football club or officiating experience;
- Experience of organisational assessments, audits or inspections;
- Experience of being a member of committees or Boards.

I accept this role and the responsibilities and will also sign and comply with the Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Signed Name Date

**Address**

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Burton-Upon-Trent  
DE13 9PD

## Schedule 2

### Club Welfare Officer

#### Role profile

- To manage the Clubs safeguarding work, in line with RTC policy, legislation, FA Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Regulations;]
- Work in partnership with The FA, statutory agencies and other relevant organisations to report and manage concerns effectively and efficiently.

#### Key Responsibilities

- Operationally lead the implementation and delivery of safeguarding policy and procedures within the RTC;
- To link into the General Manager/Technical Director and take a dynamic and strategic approach to safeguarding delivery within the RTC, raising awareness and providing organisational support and direction to colleagues;
- To provide the General Manager/Technical Director/Safeguarding Champion with regular reports on safeguarding activity within the RTC;
- Respond to safeguarding concerns within the RTC by referring to the relevant support agency in line with policy, acting in accordance with The FA's safeguarding regulations, policy and procedures
- Respond to poor practice concerns within the RTC in line with disciplinary policy
- Ensure all safeguarding and poor practice concerns are recorded in a robust system and securely retained in accordance with data protection legislation;
- Maintain strong links with key FA staff and attend safeguarding events and CPD courses to ensure knowledge and skills are maintained and updated;
- To address poor behaviour and raise standards in football, promote safeguarding and creating a culture that celebrates good practice across the RTC
- Co-ordinate safeguarding visits, spot checks/audits on clubs throughout the season to ensure they are compliant with the records they have submitted through the External Verification process;
- Arrange and deliver briefing workshops, in safeguarding topics such as anti-bullying, appropriate use of social media, code of conducts, to staff, parents and players.

#### Key skills and experience required (essential)

- Knowledge of safeguarding children legislation and statutory guidance
- Experience of working in safeguarding or child protection and implementing policy and procedure
- A child-centred approach and the ability to maintain this perspective;
- Clarity about what constitutes poor practice and what is abusive behaviour;
- Experience of writing reports and compiling case file information;
- Ability to deal constructively with people's emotions (e.g. upset, distress, conflict, animosity);
- Capacity to handle confidential data/information sensitively;
- Ability to promote best practice and the importance of a safe and fun environment;
- Demonstrates a working understanding of inclusion, equality and anti-discrimination, safeguarding and best practice;
- Ability to use Microsoft Office including Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

#### Key skills and experience required (desirable)

- Knowledge and understanding of the culture and structure of football;
- Working knowledge of systems such as Whole Game System and Customer Relationship Management (CRM);
- Experience of organization assessment or audit



# HEADING GUIDANCE



## HEADLINES:

- No heading in training in the foundation phase (primary school children)
- Graduated approach to heading for children in the development phase U12-U16
- U18 heading drills should be reduced, to take into consideration the heading exposure in matches
- Don't over inflate the footballs: use the lowest pressure authorised by the Laws of the Game

Age Group	Heading frequency
U7, U8, U9, U10, U11	Heading should not be introduced in training sessions at this age
U12	Heading remains a low priority – 1 session per month & max 5 headers
U13	Heading remains a low priority – 1 session per week & max 5 headers
U14, U15, U16	Heading remains a low priority – 1 session per week & max 10 headers
U18	Heading drills should be reduced as far as possible, taking into consideration the heading exposure in matches

U6	<b>BALL SIZE</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>FORMAT</b>	<b>N/A</b>
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## **Frequency of heading in any one training session**

**Heading should not be introduced in training sessions at this age.**

## **Game context**

**The Foundation Phase DNA aims to provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for young children.**

**Priority at this age is fun, engagement and the mastery of both the body and the ball.**

**In today's modern game, children will play on smaller pitches, with less players and with the retreat line rule to encourage players to play through the thirds.**

**There is now a greater emphasis at all levels to retain and love the ball and you will see very few headers in the game of Mini Soccer.**

**Coaches should use the time they have with players to maximise enjoyment and development of other skills, particularly the fundamentals of working with the ball in their hands and feet.**

**Focus should be on learning to master the ball and the body through fun activities.**

**BALL SIZE 3**

**FORMAT Up to 5v5**

## **Frequency of heading in any one training session**

**Heading should not be introduced in training sessions at this age.**

## **Game context**

**The Foundation Phase DNA aims to provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for young children.**

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**In today's modern game, children will play on smaller pitches, with less players and with the retreat line rule to encourage players to play through the thirds.**

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**Focus should be on learning to master the ball and the body through fun activities.**

U8

**BALL SIZE 3**

**FORMAT**

**Up to 5v5**

## **Frequency of heading in any one training session**

**Heading should not be introduced in training sessions at this age.**

## **Game context**

**The Foundation Phase DNA aims to provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for young children.**

**Priority at this age is fun, engagement and the mastery of both the body and the ball.**

**In today's modern game, children will play on smaller pitches, with less players and with the retreat line rule to encourage players to play through the thirds.**

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**Focus should be on learning to master the ball and the body through fun activities.**

U9

**BALL SIZE 3**

**FORMAT**

**Up to 7v7**

## **Frequency of heading in any one training session**

**Heading should not be introduced in training sessions at this age.**

## **Game context**

**The Foundation Phase DNA aims to provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for young children.**

**Priority at this age is fun, engagement and the mastery of both the body and the ball.**

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**Focus should be on learning to master the ball and the body through fun activities.**

U10

**BALL SIZE** **3**  
from 1/6/2020

**FORMAT**

**Up to 7v7**

## **Frequency of heading in any one training session**

**Heading should not be introduced in training sessions at this age.**

## **Game context**

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**Focus should be on learning to master the ball and the body through fun activities.**

U11

**BALL SIZE 4**

**FORMAT**

**Up to 9v9**

## **Frequency of heading in any one training session**

**Heading should not be introduced in training sessions at this age.**

## **Game context**

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**Priority at this age is fun, engagement and the mastery of both the body and the ball.**

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**Coaches should use the time they have with players to maximise enjoyment and development of other skills, particularly the fundamentals of working with the ball in their hands and feet.**

**Focus should be on learning to master the ball and the body through fun activities.**

## Frequency of heading in any one training session

Heading remains a low priority and our expectation is that heading should not be introduced at this stage.

**However, if coaches feel it necessary to introduce the technique of heading, due to the increased heading activity in the game, we strongly advise a maximum of one session per month with light balls, limited repetition of a maximum of five headers, using self-serve or short distances. These limited sessions should introduce the technique of heading and should always be unopposed.**

## Game context

**The Youth Development Phase DNA continues to provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for young players.**

**The priority as players get older is still fun, engagement and mastery of both the body and the ball.**

**Players at this age are ready to cope with more decision making, which is reflected in the challenges provided in both training and games. This will still be done within an environment that is both supportive and positive.**

**While there may be a small increase in the number of headers seen in the game at this age group, it will remain a low priority when compared to other technical aspects of the game.**

**Coaches should continue to use the time they have with players to maximise the development of other key skills seen more regularly in the game at this age.**

## Frequency of heading in any one training session

Heading remains a low priority and our expectation is that heading should not be introduced at this stage.

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**Coaches should continue to use the time they have with players to maximise the development of other key skills seen more regularly in the game at this age.**

## Frequency of heading in any one training session

Heading remains a low priority.

**Players can be introduced to the basic concepts in training with limited repetition. Coaches should not focus on heading practice more than one session per week and limit the number of headers per player to 10 per session. Coaches should use a variety of distances relative to the game at this age.**

## Game context

**The Youth Development Phase DNA continues to provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for young players.**

**Priority is still fun, engagement and the mastery of both the body and the ball.**

**Players at this age are ready to cope with more decision making, which is reflected in the challenges provided in both training and games. This will still be done within an environment that is both supportive and positive.**

**As players' knowledge of the game and physical strength develops, there will be more visible tactical use of restarts, resulting in an increased number of headers.**

**There are key factors to consider when introducing the technique of heading as part of a balanced programme, which include:**

- **Judge and adjust to the flight of the ball**
- **Attack the ball at optimum point**
- **Head contact and ball contact to control direction and distance of the ball**

**Different types of headers will start to be used, so coaches can introduce position-specific movement patterns.**

## Frequency of heading in any one training session

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- **Attack the ball at optimum point**
- **Head contact and ball contact to control direction and distance of the ball**

**Different types of headers will start to be used, so coaches can introduce position-specific movement patterns.**

## Frequency of heading in any one training session

Heading drills should be reduced as far as possible, taking into consideration the heading exposure in matches.

**As the game begins to replicate the adult game coaches should use a variety of heading situations players will experience during a game. This includes the introduction of contested headers. While you may now use match balls in the session light balls can still be used in training when practising the technique of heading.**

## Game context

**The Youth Development Phase DNA continues to provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for young players.**

**Priority is still fun, engagement and the mastery of both the body and the ball.**

**Players at this age are ready to cope with more decision making, which is reflected in the challenges provided in both training and games. This will still be done within an environment that is both supportive and positive.**

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