



Dear Secretary,

Open-age Adult Football Clubs' Safeguarding Responsibilities

Happy New Year and all good wishes to you for 2020. May we all take this opportunity to say a big thank you to you and your colleagues for all the hard work you put in to ensure your club runs effectively and provides football, week in and week out. We wish you an enjoyable rest of 2019-20 season.

We are writing to ensure clubs, at all levels of the game, are clear about their specific safeguarding responsibilities in open-age adult football.

Affiliated Footballs Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures is embedded across youth football and there is information, support and guidance for clubs with under 18 teams to help them to provide children and young people with fun, safe and inclusive football.

The purpose of this letter is to support open-age adult football clubs to fully understand their safeguarding responsibilities for under 18s, and adults in disability teams.

For the avoidance of doubt every open-age adult club is required to safeguard under 18s and where there are adult disability teams to promote safeguarding adults, across every aspect of the club.

Please read the sections below and take any actions you need to. Some clubs will already have completed the requirements detailed below; others will be working towards ensuring this applies to all aspects of their club.

If you believe you already meet the requirements detailed below please review the safeguards you have in place across all aspects of your open-age adult teams from first team professionals, semi-professionals and amateurs to disability teams, community ventures and reserve teams for both men and women. It's essential that every child (under 18) is afforded the appropriate safeguards at every level of the game and in every team.

Information, guidance, templates and Disclosure and Barring Service FAQs are available via TheFA.com <http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding>

Please note clubs playing within the Premier League should continue to comply with the safeguarding regulations as set out and overseen by the Premier League. Clubs playing within the English Football League (EFL) should continue to comply with the safeguarding criteria as set out and overseen by the EFL.

- **Premier League Clubs** should email safeguarding@premierleague.com for further clarification and or support

- **English Football League Clubs** should email safeguarding@efl.com for further clarification and or support

With respect to the rest of the football pyramid, all clubs playing within the leagues below should ensure they are compliant with the steps outlined in Table 1, and where applicable Table 2. Please use the relevant e-mail addresses below for any queries.

- **NLS Steps 1-4** should email **(to be confirmed)** for further clarification and or support
- **Barclays FA Women’s Super League and Women’s Championship Clubs** should email BarclaysFAWSLandFAWC@thefa.com for further clarification and or support

The relevant parent County FA will provide further communication and support for the leagues listed below and for all grassroots clubs. Clubs in these parts of the football pyramid must ensure they are compliant with the steps outlined in Table 1 and where applicable Table 2.

- **NLS Steps 5-7** should contact their parent County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer for further clarification and or support
- **Women’s Pyramid Tiers 3 to 7** should contact their parent County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer for further clarification and or support
- **Grassroots clubs** should contact their local County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer for further clarification and or support.

Table 1

Clubs with under 18s in open-age adult teams (including disability teams) are required to:

<p>1. Adopt and adhere to Affiliated Footballs Safeguarding Children Policy http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-1-footballs-safeguarding-framework View section 1: 1.4 Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures Club Template</p>
<p>2. Identify which teams have 16 and/or 17 year old players</p>
<p>3. Identify the coaches/managers (including assistant coaches/managers) and medics for these teams and list them on The FA’s Whole Game System alongside the registered team. This can be done by the club secretary, assistant secretary or if the club has a youth team by the Club Welfare Officer (Youth Teams).</p>
<p>4. Support coaches/managers (including assistant coaches/managers) and medics working with 16 and/or 17 year olds to complete an FA DBS Check http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-3-safer-recruitment-and-dbs-checks View section 3: 3.1 Safer recruitment of volunteers 3.5 Eligibility of roles 3.7 DBS FAQs</p>

5. Provide 16 and 17 year old players with safeguarding information

<http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-7-children-and-young-people-under-18s>

View section 7:

7.1 Know your rights in football

In support of the roll out of the Affiliated Football Safeguarding Adults Policy, clubs with open-age adult disability teams, need to take the following simple steps to safeguard adults. If this applies to any teams in your club, please read on.

Table 2

Clubs with open-age adult disability teams are also asked to:

1. Adopt and share with members the Affiliated Football 'Safeguarding Adults Policy'
NB 'easy read' versions are available for adults with learning disabilities

<http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-10-safeguarding-adults>

View section 10:

10.5 Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures

2. Appoint a Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams) and upload their name to The FA's Whole Game System

<http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-10-safeguarding-adults>

View section 10:

10.2 Appointing Club and League Welfare Officers

10.3 Adding a Club Welfare Officer to WGS

3. Encourage volunteers and staff to complete the newly launched free, online FA Safeguarding Adults course

<http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-10-safeguarding-adults>

View: 10.4 How to access online course

4. Identify and list coaches/managers (including assistant coaches/managers) on The FA's Whole Game System alongside the registered team.

Please note - The FA is currently considering with the government's Disclosure and Barring Service the circumstances in which DBS Checks may be required for people working with adults (over-18s) in open-age disability football. Further guidance will be provided in due course.

Thank you for supporting football to safeguard adults children safe across every level of the game. If you have any questions, please ensure you refer to the relevant contact points detailed on P1-2, for your part of the game.

Best wishes for a positive and successful New Year.

Sue Ravenlaw



Head of Safeguarding

Laurence Jones



Head of National League System

James Kendall



Director of Football Development

Kelly Simmons

**Director of Women's
Professional Game**

Cc Designated Safeguarding Officer/Club Welfare Officer