



Guidance for Grassroots Open Age Adult Football

Supporting Teams with 16/17-year-old players

Cambridgeshire Football Association are aware that many 16 and 17-year-old players look to play in Open Age Adult Football. This is a fantastic opportunity for young players to progress and be challenged both technically and physically, however club officials, managers and players must also recognise that these young players are still legally children.

Clubs can assist the introduction and enjoyment of 16 and 17-year-old players in open age adult teams by:

- managers/coaches welcoming U18s and discussing their expectations of joining the team, including playing time and their role within the team;
- managers/coaches acknowledging with U18s and their parents/carers the potential for adult player behaviours e.g. swearing, banter and alcohol consumption;
- identifying and communicating who oversees club social media channels and the protocols for use;
- ensuring photography/filming of players does not occur in changing areas;
- supporting U18s who request to change discretely to do so;
- supporting U18s who request to shower separately from the other adult players to do so;
- identifying a suitable player (possibly the captain) to ensure the other players on the team remain mindful of the player's age throughout the season;
- ensuring there are no demeaning initiation rituals, also referred to as hazing;
- ensuring U18s receive The FAs guidance - 'Know your rights' and understand how to raise any concern(s) they may have;
- informing match officials when there are U18s in the team;
- appropriately managing travel arrangements for matches for U18s;
- ensuring appropriate accommodation is provided for U18s if the team needs to stay away for competition games/cup finals.

NB – Managers/coaches (assistant managers/coaches) and medical staff with U18 players in their teams must be named on The FAs Whole Game System (WGS), have an in date accepted Enhanced FA DBS Check and have completed The FAs free online Safeguarding Training. The FA will confirm when this training is available.

For further information or guidance on safeguards in Open Age Adult Football please contact Diane Bradshaw, Cambridgeshire FA Designated Safeguarding Officer:

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