



The FA Charter Standard League

SAFEGUARDING PROGRAMME FROM 2016



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY & PROCEDURES TEMPLATE

This policy template has been designed so that you can add your league name to the relevant sections. It is not recommended that you make any other changes unless you discuss these first with your County FA Welfare Officer and have them agreed. It is important that you discuss this policy as a committee - ensure that you are clear about your responsibilities as a league and that you adhere to this policy in full. Appointing a Youth League Welfare Officer is an integral requirement of this policy.

Charter Standard Youth League Safeguarding Children Policy

1. Youth League acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care and is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all members. A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any Youth League football activity. We subscribe to The Football Association's (The FA) Safeguarding Children - Policy and Procedures and endorse and adopt the Policy Statement contained in that document.

2. The key principles of The FA Safeguarding Children Policy 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/carers is essential.

We acknowledge that every child or young person who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse.

Youth League recognises that this is the responsibility of every adult involved in our league.

3. Youth League has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. It is noted and accepted that The Football Association's Child Protection Regulation (see The FA Handbook) applies to everyone in football whether in a paid or voluntary capacity. This means whether you are a volunteer, match official, helper on club tours, football coach, club official or medical staff.
4. We endorse and adopt The FA's Responsible Recruitment guidelines for recruiting volunteers and we will:
- Develop a role profile
 - Request identification documents
 - As a minimum meet and chat with the applicant(s) and where possible conduct interviews before appointing
 - Request and follow up with 2 references before appointing
 - Where eligible require an In-date, FA accepted Enhanced Criminal Record Check (CRC) with Barring List Check in line with current FA policy and regulations.

All Youth League members working directly with children and young people on a frequent and unsupervised basis will be required to hold an In-date FA accepted CRC in line with FA guidelines. If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached us to become part of

Youth League guidance will be sought from The Football Association. It is noted and accepted that The FA will consider the relevance and significance of the information obtained via the CRC Process and that all suitability decisions will be made in accordance with legislation and in the best interests of children and young people.

It is accepted that The FA aims to prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children or young people and the opportunity to influence policies or practice with children or young people. This is to prevent direct sexual or physical harm to children and to minimise the risk of 'grooming' within football.

5. Youth League supports The FA's Whistle Blowing Policy. Any adult or young person with concerns about an adult in a position of trust with football can 'whistle blow' by contacting The FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 169 1863, by writing to The FA Case Manager at The Football Association, Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London SW1P 9EQ, by emailing Safeguarding@TheFA.com or

alternatively by going direct to the Police, Children's Social Care or the NSPCC.

Youth League encourages everyone to know about it and utilise it if necessary.

6. Youth League has appointed a Youth League Welfare Officer (YLWO) in line with the FA's role profile and required completion of the Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officers Workshop. The post holder will be involved with Welfare Officer training provided by The FA and/or CFA. The YLWO is the first point of contact for all league committee members regarding concerns about the welfare of any child or young person. The YLWO will liaise directly with the CFA Welfare Officer and will be familiar with the procedures for referring any concerns. They will also play a proactive role in increasing awareness of Respect, poor practice and abuse amongst CWO and their members and league committee members.

7. We acknowledge and endorse The FA's identification of bullying as a category of abuse. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable at our league. If bullying does occur, all players or parents/carers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. Incidents need to be reported to the relevant CWO or YLWO or alternatively in cases of serious bullying we may contact the CFA Welfare Officer.

8. Respect codes of conduct for Players, Parents/Spectators, Officials and Coaches have been implemented by

Youth League. In order to validate these Respect codes of conduct the league has clear actions it will take regarding repeated or serious misconduct at club level and acknowledges the possibility of potential sanctions which may be implemented by the CFA in more serious circumstances. All registering clubs will be required to adopt the Respect codes.

9. Reporting your concerns about the welfare of a child or young person. **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility if you are worried about a child it is important that you report your concerns – no action is not an option.**

- If you are worried about a child then you need to report your concerns to the YLWO.
- If the issue is one of poor practice they will either:
 - deal with the matter themselves or
 - seek advice from the County FA Welfare Officer
- If the concern is more serious – possible child abuse they will where possible contact the County FA Welfare Officer first, then immediately contact the Police or Children's Services
- If the child needs immediate medical treatment take them to a hospital or call an ambulance and tell them this is a child protection concern. Let your County FA Welfare Officer know what action you have taken.

Further advice on Safeguarding Children matters can be obtained from:

League Welfare Officer

Tel:

Email:

County Football Association's Welfare Officer

Tel:

Email:

www.TheFA.com/Safeguarding



APPOINTING A FA CHARTER STANDARD YOUTH LEAGUE WELFARE OFFICER

To become a FA Charter Standard league it is essential that you appoint a Youth League Welfare Officer (YLWO) who has some experience of dealing or working with young people. They will need to meet the 'Person Specification' and 'Fit and Proper Person Checklist' detailed below;

1. Person Specification - Essential

- Experience of dealing or working with young people
- Knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children issues*
- A good communicator in a variety of situations with people from diverse backgrounds
- Committed to and ability to promote **Respect** and safeguarding children
- Empathy when dealing with individuals, sometimes indemanding situations
- Ability to listen and assess situations fairly
- Ability to handle confidential information sensitively and with integrity
- Reasonable level of administration experience and how to deal with confidential documentation
- Willingness to attend any in-service training facilitated by either The FA or the local CFA

Desirable

- Knowledge and understanding of grassroots football
- Access to the internet
- Ability to use Emails

2. Fit and Proper Person Checklist - Essential

- Willing and able to provide relevant references
- Previous experience of dealing or working with children
- Knowledge of and positive attitudes to equal opportunities
- Commitment to treat all children as individuals and with equal concern
- Physical health – appropriate to carry out tasks
- Mental stability, integrity and flexibility
- At least 18 years of age
- Understanding of the need for confidentiality when dealing with issues
- Reasonable level of administration experience and how to deal with confidential documentation

- Completion of The FAs Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officer Workshops
- Willingness to update skills and knowledge and attend inservice training facilitated by The FA or the local CFA

Desirable

- Knowledge of child protection issues
- Knowledge of safeguarding children legislation
- Relevant football knowledge/understanding

* This can be gained through The FAs Safeguarding Children

NB If any person is considered not to be a 'fit' person to work with children, his/her application should be refused.

Where to start

- Ensure that you inform all of your registered clubs about the need to fulfil this position. You may find that one of the Club Welfare Officers (CWO) is willing to take on the YLWO role. If a current member of your committee wishes to take on this role they will need to relinquish their previous committee role.
- Ensure the applicants comply with 1 and 2 as detailed previously
- Give them 'The Role of the YLWO' guidance sheet contained in this pack
- Introduce them to the all of the committee members and advise them as to how the committee operates and when you are next meeting

Advice and support

If you need any additional advice about appointing a YLWO please contact your CFA Welfare Officer

Respect

The YLWO is key to ensuring that **Respect** is understood and communicated to all of your registered clubs. The YLWO will need to work with all of the Club Welfare Officers and needs to attend any information sessions organised by the CFA. Ensuring that the **Respect** codes of conduct are distributed, understood and adhered to is one of the key responsibilities of the Charter Standard league and in particular the YLWO.

Code of Conduct for Volunteer Welfare officers

In taking up the position of YLWO they are also agreeing to abide by the Code of Conduct for Volunteer Welfare Officers which can be found [here](#)

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ROLE OF THE YOUTH LEAGUE WELFARE OFFICER

FA Charter Standard is the FAs quality standard across football and for youth football this includes Safeguarding Children as a priority element. As such, all Youth Leagues must have a nominated Welfare Officer.

In order to assist you with this role we have provided information on:

1. The role of the Youth League Welfare Officer
2. Help and support for you
3. How to make sure everyone knows who you are
4. How to ensure safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility
5. Training requirements for this role
6. Your 5 point checklist

As a FA Charter Standard League Youth League Welfare Officer (YLWO) you have the chance to help to make a real difference. The FAs Charter Standard League Award is a mark of quality and as such tells everyone from league official to player to parent to club official to coach and referee involved, that a certain standard of organisation and behaviour exists within your league. We very much hope that you have taken on board The FAs Respect programme as this is all about creating a fun and safe environment and its core principles will support you in your role. If you have not yet got involved with Respect, then please find out more by visiting www.TheFA.com/Respect

1. The role of the FA Charter Standard YLWO.

Your two key responsibilities are:

1.1. To be clear about the leagues responsibilities when running activities for children and young people. This involves:

- Ensuring these responsibilities are well understood by others
- Supporting clubs to achieve the safeguarding elements of Charter Standard
- Working with your CFA Welfare Officer
- Promoting The FAs Respect programme and helping to develop best-practice processes

1.2. To help league and club personnel understand what their 'duty of care' towards children and young people actually means and entails on a day-to-day basis, working closely with the Club Welfare Officers to achieve this. In order to carry out your responsibilities effectively you need to...

a.) Promote and Support by;

- Knowing who your CFA Welfare Officer is and how to contact them
- Knowing who every Club Welfare Officer (CWO) is and how to contact them
- Ensuring all Club Welfare Officers complete The FA's Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officer Workshops
- Knowing why certain roles require an In-date FA Accepted CRC check and how The FA CRC process works
- Knowing what the **Respect** programme requires of everyone
- Highlighting the benefits of the Safeguarding Children education programme for club officials and parents

b.) Monitoring;

- All your clubs have a Safeguarding Children Policy and an anti bullying and equality policy
- Buy-in to the **Respect** programme (especially the distribution of codes of conduct and adherence to these)
- Repeated incidents of poor behaviour and liaising with your CFA Welfare Officer about these
- individual clubs use of The FA's Safeguarding Children best practice guidelines (e.g. Responsible Recruitment, Travel, Trips and Tournaments, Photography/Film Anti-bullying policy, Safeguarding Children Policy template and Social media Guidance)
- That all CWO are assisting those in their clubs who require an FA CRC check to do so

2. Help and support for you

Contact your CFA Welfare Officer

Contact your County FA Welfare Officer as they will be able to give you further insight to this role and possibly direct you to someone who is currently holding that position locally who you can chat with. If you have enquiries to do specifically with The FA's Criminal Records Check (CRC) process you can

telephone: 0845 210 8080
or email: crb@TheFA.com

Visit www.TheFA.com/Safeguarding

This is The FA homepage for all safeguarding children information and guidance. You will find downloadable policies and procedures as well as best practice guidance.

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

The FAs Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures can be viewed by [clicking here](#) or under the 'Best Practice Downloads' section of www.TheFA.com/footballsafe. This policy has been written specifically for grassroots football.

ROLE OF THE YOUTH LEAGUE WELFARE OFFICER

It provides The FAs Child Protection Policy statement and key principles as well as information on;

- Responsible Recruitment
- Promoting best practice
- Poor Practice and Abuse
- Responsibility for Safeguarding in Football
- Responding to Concerns, Allegations and Disclosures

This policy document is given to every welfare officer who attends the Welfare Officers Workshop – this is mandatory for you as a Charter Standard Youth League Welfare Officer. More information on The FAs Safeguarding Education Programme is detailed below.

Safeguarding Children Education Programme

You should have already completed The FAs Safeguarding Children Workshop. If you haven't, contact your CFA Welfare Officer immediately to get onto one of these workshops – this is a sound and engaging introduction to safeguarding in football and a must for every welfare officer.

Once you've completed this workshop get yourself booked onto a Welfare Officer Workshop. This three hour workshop builds on what you will have covered in the safeguarding children workshop and provides you with the necessary tools to carry out your role as YLWO. It makes helpful use of the Policy and Procedures and explores what leagues and clubs need to have in place to demonstrate best practice in relation to safeguarding children. It looks at the welfare officer role and what help and support is there to assist you.

Further Information

YLWO new to the role have a lot of similar questions about what skills the role requires and what is expected of them. Go to www.TheFA.com/Footballsafes and click on *Becoming a Welfare Officer* Box for more information on the Role of CWO and YLWO.

Code of Conduct for Volunteer Welfare officers

As a YLWO you agree to act as a role model to others in accordance with the roles and responsibilities of your position, in line with FA Rules and Regulations, the Respect codes of conduct for officials and the laws of the game. In taking up the position of YLWO you are agreeing to abide by the Code of Conduct for Volunteer Welfare Officers which can be found [here](#)

3. Make sure everyone knows who you are

Ensuring you are on the committee

This is a good start point and this will allow safeguarding/**Respect** to be on the agenda of committee meetings which is really important. Make sure your name is included in your league handbook and your contact details (think

about what you are willing to have made public).

Arrange to meet

Or initially simply contact your CWOs, so they know who you are and what your role is in supporting them. Arranging a meeting with CWOs at least once a season will allow you to build up a supportive network, share ideas, agree issues that need tackling and offering each other solutions. You might like to ask your CFA Welfare Officer if they can attend a meeting. Find out when league news letters or other communications are sent to clubs - can you put some information into this about your role, dates for CWO meetings or league best practice guidance?

Remember a good YLWO is someone who;

- Always puts children's welfare first
- Is a good communicator
- Has a common-sense approach
- Understands confidentiality
- Is willing to learn and seek advice
- Is over the age of 18

As we all know, there have been some tragic cases resulting from the wrong type of people working with children, both in wider society and within football. Making sure everyone knows how to report concerns about a child's welfare is essential. Knowing how to deal with poor practice issues is also vital. Lots can be done very simply – but football needs the support of Welfare Officers. Working with your CWOs can make a real difference.

4. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility

Working together

If you are going to be successful in your role you need to work together with the members of your committee and your CWOs, helping them to understand what your role is and what safeguarding children really means.

The FA's Safeguarding Children strategy is underpinned by the principle that Safeguarding Children is everyone's responsibility. The appointment of a welfare officer in all clubs and leagues with youth teams is a fundamental part of this strategy which has three main elements:

- Getting only the right people involved
- Creating a safe environment
- Promoting clear systems to deal with any concerns

5. Training requirements for this role

To become a FA Charter Standard YLWO you need to have:

- Completed The FA Safeguarding Children Workshop
- Completed The FAs Welfare Officers Workshop

- Be willing to attend at least one information/update welfare officer network session organised annually by your CFA Welfare Officer

6. Your 5 point checklist

1. Attend The FA Safeguarding Children Workshop if you haven't done so already
2. Attend The FA Welfare Officer Workshop
3. Contact your CFA Welfare Officer
4. Contact the CWOs registered in your league
5. Access The FA's on-line safeguarding information and guidance via the www.TheFA.com **Click here**



The FA Charter Standard League

SAFEGUARDING PROGRAMME

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