



DurhamFA.com

WELFARE OFFICER BULLETIN

JULY 2018

Durham County FA Welfare Officer Bulletin



Contents

- Safeguarding Validation Visits
- Transgender in Children's Football
- Safer Recruitment – getting the right people involved
- Codes of Conduct
- FA Criminal Record Checks (CRCs)



Durham County FA Welfare Officer Bulletin

Safeguarding Validation Visits



Following a review of the content of the Feedback Forms Durham County FA staff provided to clubs after their Validation Visit over the past 18 months the following areas are those which need ongoing review or action by clubs so they can feel confident they are doing things right and in accord with best practice

The areas listed below were certainly not present in every club, nor was any evident at all in some clubs visited; the list is a composite of specific issues identified from all visits

- All persons having a formal role at a club must be listed in their club record on FA Whole Game System (WGS) – so, for example, this includes any coach helpers or assistants
- Ensure that **anyone** at the club working directly with children or young people under the age of 18 years has a valid FA 'accepted' Criminal Record Check showing on their FANumber. Remember that **a CRC** is only cleared through the FA when the details are shown on the applicant's FANumber i.e. 'accepted' and new 'date of issue'.
- A CRC is NOT cleared by the FA just because someone has received their CRC Certificate through the post
- New coaches need to obtain a Level 1 coaching qualification within 12 months of being in post
- Club to operate record check system to ensure relevant certifications remain in-date for those involved with the club – particularly coaches with Safeguarding and First Aid



- Ensure coaches and parents/carers are aware of Safeguarding reporting procedures
- Everyone at the club must be aware of the Club Welfare Officer(s) and their contact details
- Provide everyone at the club with an information sheet or card giving Welfare Officer(s) contact details
- Have Committee Member contact details available on the club website/facebook and in club Welcome Packs; also show on posters on site (where possible)
- Club Officials, Coaches and Parents must be made aware of the FA Whistleblowing Policy/Process <http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/policy-downloads>
- Club Welfare Officer role must be part of the Club Management Committee
- Parents should not be taking arrival activities for the children
- If a team training venue is changed advise Durham County FA by phone or email, for record update on Whole Game System



Durham County FA Welfare Officer Bulletin

Transgender in Children's Football



A question has been asked by a number of clubs in recent months about the FA position regarding Transgender and Transsexual children involved in football. Questions raised relate to whether the FA have a position on this issue – and how best to provide an inclusive and appropriate environment at a club.

Just to clarify between these two terms, Transgender people have a gender identity or gender expression that differs from their assigned sex. Transgender people are sometimes called transsexual if they desire medical assistance to transition from one sex to another.

I therefore provide a link to the FA Trans Policy – and, as you already know children are able to play in mixed teams all the way through to U18s

General Information, video and FAQs can be accessed through this link <http://www.thefa.com/news/2014/nov/25/fa-launches-transgender-policy> and the FA Trans Policy Document itself is at <http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/policies/equality/lgbt-football> ; just scroll down the page then click on the Policy link

With regard to providing an inclusive environment, prime issues involve using gender neutral language which is certainly best practice; so, for example, when giving team awards it is best to adopt language such as 'best player' or 'best match player' as opposed to 'man of the match' etc. and as existing teams can be mixed up to the age of 18 years such language will not be unusual.



Durham County FA Welfare Officer Bulletin

Safer Recruitment – getting the right people involved



Durham County FA continues to stress the importance of having a clear process in place when recruiting players and volunteers into the club

When **new volunteers** come forward to get involved in children's/youth football a club should follow FA Safe Recruitment Guidance to be confident it has done its best to ensure that any new recruit is suitable to undertake a role within the club and likely to be a positive influence within the club.

The Safer Recruitment Guide will help to minimise the number of issues a club may face because of the actions of particular individuals they have accepted as volunteers.

Following the Guide also actively helps in safeguarding children involved in your club as for example the Guide requires FA Enhanced CRC checks to be carried out.

If you follow the Safer Recruitment process you can feel much more confident that you are recruiting properly and not, for example, inheriting a previous club's 'problem'

Allowing people to become involved without application forms, meetings, background checks etc. lays you open to a lot of work and likely stress, when things start to unravel and go wrong because of the lack of knowledge about the volunteer recruited

Many clubs will be recruiting new players and officials including coaches into their clubs.

The guide can be accessed from The FA website by clicking on the following link <http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/best-practice-downloads> and scrolling down and clicking on the document which is found under the heading 'Useful Resources'.

Getting references and especially a reference from a previous club that a coach or assistant coach, for example, has previously been attached to can prove valuable in understanding the reasons why they have decided to move on and seek to become involved with your club – and your club will be better informed to decide about whether an individual will be allowed to join your club.

With regard to **parents/players** approaching your club, whilst the guidance does not really reflect their situation in terms of recruitment, except where a parent subsequently seeks to become a volunteer with the club, your club should similarly seek information about why they are approaching your club and which club(s) if any, they have been associated with in the past. Where they have been with a club previously, contact with the previous club can take place to check the reasons for the player leaving.



Durham County FA Welfare Officer Bulletin

Codes of Conduct



As Welfare Officer you can speak with coaches about arranging Parents Meetings for teams, to go through the expectations of the club with regard to behaviour etc. Codes of Conduct can also be signed up to at those meetings by parents and players. Remember to keep a copy of the signed forms or a signing sheet for your club records. The club will also require coaches and officials to sign up to their respective Codes of Conduct.

Doing this ensures everyone is aware of what is expected of them and that the club will be better placed if ever needing to take action.

The Codes of Conduct form part of the FA Respect programme which can also be promoted at those meetings.

The codes can be accessed here <http://www.durhamfa.com/about/respect> then just scroll down the page to the link



Durham County FA Welfare Officer Bulletin

FA Criminal Record Checks (CRCs)



Remember to review your club officials and coaches CRC status as it is recommended that clubs seek to renew current CRCs of their officials and coaches three months before they lapse – to help ensure there is no gap in CRC clearance showing on a FAN.

This is particularly important for anyone who has had any warnings, reprimands, cautions or convictions at ANY time in their past; even for example, if they had received a police caution in 1966 and they were applying for a new CRC today.

Any offence, at any time, will show on an Enhanced FA CRC Certificate and result in the FA CRC Unit (GBG Disclosures) writing to the individual concerned to ask them to send in their Certificate to the Unit for review before clearance can be confirmed on their FAN.

Further information may also be sought by the Unit as deemed necessary and in these circumstances the process can take a number of weeks – hence the need to start a new application well in advance of the existing CRC Certificate lapsing (also there can be a delay in CRC processing at one of the screening stages which does not help).

I know some of you have to continually chase certain individuals to get their CRC applications completed – in such circumstances, why not provide a list to your Committee Meetings of those who have been approached about renewal but have not responded. You can then ask that the Club Secretary be tasked to write to each individual informing that if an online CRC application is not completed and verified by you as Welfare Officer within 7 days they will be stood down as a coach/manager/official until this is done. This then ensures the club committee follow their Club Safeguarding Policy.



Durham County FA Welfare Officer Bulletin

Registration of an FA Criminal Record Check



Registering a FA CRC with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) remains an option for anyone having completed a new application or who has received their Certificate. That registration process takes only a couple of minutes and is a free service to any volunteer – remember to make note of the Unique Reference Number that you are provided with.

If an individual then wants to obtain 'lifetime CRC's' through the FA, all that is needed after CRC Registration is for the person concerned to link direct to the FA CRC Unit (GBG Disclosures) requesting that service – email fachecks@thefa.com. The one-off cost is £10 and means that your CRC will be automatically updated year on year without further charge and as the cost of CRCs will no doubt rise in future years, registering the Certificate with DBS then the FA is certainly a cost-effective option for those who expect to remain involved in grassroots football for more than 3 years.

Remember to advise your club that just because someone has a FA CRC Certificate in their hands this does NOT mean they have been cleared to be involved in children's/youth football. An individual is ONLY cleared when their FAN shows the new date of issue and the word 'accepted'. The FA CRC Unit/GBG Disclosures should update a FAN within 72 hours of the Certificate being issued to an individual.

If you have any questions about the above please contact the FA CRC Unit who will be happy to advise



DurhamFA.com

Durham County FA Welfare Officer Bulletin

Becoming a CRC Verifier for your club



As Welfare Officer you can register with the FA CRC Unit/GBG Disclosures to become an Online CRC Verifier; just email fachecks@thefa.com and the Unit will sort this with you direct – process usually takes around 7 working days. No cost is involved. You will be sent a club PIN and Password to access the system as a verifier. Applicants at the club will be provided by you with a separate PIN and Password in order to make an online CRC application for you to then verify.

Full guidance about the system is available on the Online Disclosures webpage and both Richard.Hughes@DurhamFA.com and staff at the FA CRC Unit fachecks@thefa.com are available for advice and support.



DurhamFA.com

Durham County Football Association Ltd
'Codeslaw'
Riverside South
Chester-le-Street
Co Durham
DH3 3SJ

Tel: 0191 3872929

Email: Richard.Hughes@DurhamFA.com

Web: www.DurhamFA.com

