

BE SURE EVERYONE KNOWS WHO YOU ARE

Being on the committee

Ensuring you are on the committee is a good starting point and should mean safeguarding children and Respect are on the agenda of committee meetings. Make sure your name and contact details are included in your club handbook and/or welcome packs. (Remember to consider what you are willing to have made public).

Meetings and newsletters

Contact the club's coaches and team managers so they know who you are, what your role is and how you may be able to supporting them. They in turn will be able to introduce you to the players. This will begin to build up a rapport and allow everyone to share ideas, agree issues that need tackling and offering each other solutions.

A pre-season meeting with parents and new players is a great way for the club to explain what it has to offer and what it expects from both parents and players. This is an ideal time to explain about Respect codes, the clubs safeguarding procedures such as dropping off and collecting players, having consent for activities/trips, introducing the coaches, asking for support (first aiders, coaches or referees perhaps).

Find out when club newsletters or other communications are sent to parents - you can put some information into this about your role, perhaps introduce other welfare officers that assist you in your club if you have lots of youth teams or reminders about keeping to the Respect codes.

Remember a good CWO is someone who:

- always puts children's welfare first
- is a good communicator
- has a common-sense approach
- is willing to learn, seek advice and work as part of a team
- 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 like you. Helping your club members and supporters to understand how to report a concern can make a real difference.