PROVIDING A POSITIVE WELCOME TO YOUR CLUB

FOR PLAYERS & THEIR PARENTS/CARERS

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The FA
FOR ALL

PROVIDING A POSITIVE WELCOME TO YOUR CLUB

The FA encourages clubs to make information easily available for players and parents/carers about the type(s) of football on offer for under-18s and how this is offered. Being open about how teams are run, who is responsible for what can help to avoid unnecessary confusion, upset and even complaints.

How teams are selected, if/where the club goes on tour, which leagues and competitions they participate in, the welfare officers contact details and who's responsible for matchday tactics are all helpful to actively share. Many clubs provide most, if not all of the information that's needed, but for someone new to a club this may not always be as easy to find as you think.

The **CLUB CHECKLIST: WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO** on **page 3** will help you to reflect on the information your club currently makes available, how it does this and what you might want to add. It also provides links to further helpful information available on The FA.com that you may wish to use.

N.B. The FA will be inviting feedback on this toolkit early in 2020 to help shape a new online resource tool where clubs can enter bespoke information and a personalised online resource will be produced.

Communicating proactively with parents/carers allows you to celebrate what's on offer, demonstrate the club ethos and how you support their child(ren) as well as what you expect of them. Why not require players and their parents/carers to acknowledge they have had access to this information and understand what is expected of them. There are two examples of '**USER AGREEMENTS**' (see Appendix 1) which provides guidance about how to do this. Once parents/carers fully understand what your club provides you may find they become more open to volunteering themselves.

Please note: before sharing personal information about your committee members and/or other club officials e.g. coaches/welfare officers make sure you have their permission to do this. Having photos, names and contact details available is really helpful for parents/carers but how you share this must take into account each individuals wishes.

And finally... we recognise there is quite a lot here to consider. Some of the information your club will already provide. The **CLUB CHECKLIST** will give you an idea of what you need to focus on by simply running through the tick boxes. You don't have to do everything at once. as a committee decide the priority areas for your club and take it from there.

TABLE 1 – CLUB CHECKLIST: WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO...

CLUB INFORMATION	DETAILS TO CONSIDER	WHERE THIS INFORMATION IS LOCATED PLEASE COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE				
		CLUB WEBSITE	CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE	WELCOME LETTER OR LEAFLET	PARENT & CARER MEETING	ACTION REQUIRED
WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE OFFER	• Club name					
	• FA Charter Standard status (as appropriate)					
	• The type of football offered e.g. 5v5, 7v7, 9v9, 11v11 boys/girls, disability teams, Wildcats, Little Kickers, Just Play...					
	• The level of leagues your teams play in including disability leagues					
	• Links to adult teams/clubs/academies					
	• Your commitment to The FA respect campaign – 'We only do positive' (are you signed up?)					
WHERE WE ARE	• An overview of site(s) indoor and outdoor used for matches and training across age groups					
	• The type of playing surface(s) used					
	• Pictures of your club grounds/club house are really helpful					
	• Provide a URL link for directions and postcode					
	• Do you have specific wheelchair access?					
	• The type of playing surface(s)					
WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US N.B. Social activities can be detailed in their own section (see below)	• A warm welcome and approachable club officials					
	• A safe place for your child					
	• A club that encourages parents/carers to ask questions					
	• Appropriate club official/coach behaviours (see Appendix 2)					
	• This is a chance for your club to set out their ethos and explain what the club is about e.g. – A child-centred club – An inclusive club – How you pick your teams (attendance at training, always choose the best players for league games or rotation of all players) – The level of coaching offered e.g. Level 1/2 coach for every team – Opportunities for progression into other leagues – A youth forum/council within the club – Support for under-18s in adult teams					

TABLE 1: CONTINUED

CLUB INFORMATION	DETAILS TO CONSIDER	WHERE THIS INFORMATION IS LOCATED PLEASE COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE				
		CLUB WEBSITE	CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE	WELCOME LETTER OR LEAFLET	PARENT & CARER MEETING	ACTION REQUIRED
MEET THE TEAM	• Pictures of the club committee and the coaches are really helpful for parents and players alike					
	• Provide relevant details about your coaches including; name, qualifications, contact info, which team(s) they work with, if they have specialist training in coaching disabled footballers, confirm they have an accepted FA Enhanced DBS check and safeguarding training completed in the last three years					
	• Provide relevant details about your committee members (name, role, safeguarding training completed within the last three years)					
	• Provide name(s) and picture(s) of CWO(s), outline their role, provide their contact details, confirm they have an accepted FA Enhanced DBS check and safeguarding training completed within the last three years (*see Guidance Notes 5.3 via* **http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory**) • Be clear that players can talk to the CWO					
	• Explain how your club manages first aid - every game has a qualified first aider					
	• Other relevant roles you might provide information on may include facilities staff, website monitor, social club/bar staff					
OUR POLICIES AND PROCESSES	• Use The FA Safeguarding Children Club Policy Template provide a link on your Club website or social media page or include in Club Welcome Pack (*see Guidance Notes 1.4 via* **http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory**)					
	• Ensure you provide clarity about how safeguarding concerns can be reported – accessible information for parents/carers and children (*see Guidance Notes 2.1 and 7.1 via* **http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory**)					
	• Share your anti-bullying policy (you can make use of The FA's template (*see Guidance Notes 1.5 via* **http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory**)					
	• Share your social media policy, how you use of photos/film and how you will get parent/carer permission					
	• Be clear about how your club stores and uses player data; share your club's privacy policy					
	• Share your clubs complaints process					
	• Share the Respect codes of conduct					
	• Be clear about what first-aid provision the club has					

TABLE 1: CONTINUED

CLUB INFORMATION	DETAILS TO CONSIDER	WHERE THIS INFORMATION IS LOCATED PLEASE COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE				
		CLUB WEBSITE	CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE	WELCOME LETTER OR LEAFLET	PARENT & CARER MEETING	ACTION REQUIRED
WORKING WITH YOUR CHILD(REN)	• Share the club's codes of conduct for club officials, spectators and players					
	• Child-friendly (age appropriate) information you provide for players e.g. who they can talk to if they have a concern					
	• Provide the ratio of staff to players you work with (*see Guidance Notes 5.5 via* **http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory**)					
	• Share how you plan to manage individual children's needs e.g. any learning difficulties/ medical conditions/SEN (*see Guidance Notes 7.2 via* **http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory**)					
	• Is there a coaching framework which all teams within the club follow or do certain age groups follow certain coaching frameworks?					
	• Do you share regular progress updates with parents/carers on how their child(ren) are doing, what form does it take?					
	• Do you complete an end-of-season review, formal or informal e.g. a chat with parents/ carers and the child?					
	• Do you move players into different teams based on their ability/progression?					
CLUB COMMUNICATIONS	• What's the primary method for communicating with parents e.g. WhatsApp/email and the commitment to open and transparent communications with their child (*see Appendix 3*)					
	• The club's commitment to safe use of social media – expectations of club officials, players and parents across various platforms used (*see Guidance Notes 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 via* **http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory**)					
	• What is and is not shared on your club website/ Facebook page e.g. details about team selection, training sessions, matches/cancellations					
SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND HOLIDAY PROGRAMMES	• Give a brief overview of types of non-football activity e.g. end of season BBQ, awards dinner, tours, bowling					
	• If you run events be clear about the clubs commitment to having appropriate safeguards in place (see Appendix 4)					
	• Do you regularly offer activities during the school holidays?					

TABLE 1: CONTINUED

CLUB INFORMATION	DETAILS TO CONSIDER	WHERE THIS INFORMATION IS LOCATED PLEASE COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE				
		CLUB WEBSITE	CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE	WELCOME LETTER OR LEAFLET	PARENT & CARER MEETING	ACTION REQUIRED
YOUR COMMITMENT TO US	• Be clear about the club's stance on players requirement at training					
	• If you require player(s) and parents to sign up and adhere to the Respect codes of conduct then be clear and consistent about this					
	• Requirement for parents/carers to communicate effectively e.g. notifying the team coach when their child is unable to play/train					
	• Ensure the club's 'joining' process is an acknowledgment by both parties re what's being offered and what's expected by the club					
	• Ensuring players have appropriate kit, especially in poor weather					
	• Ensuring players are on time for training/ matches and are picked up on time					
	• Volunteering expectations of parents e.g. helping set up nets, serve refreshments					
HOW TO JOIN	• Be clear if you offer a specific number of free 'taster sessions'					
	• State the cost per child per season; is this an upfront cost or can it be paid in monthly instalments? What does this fee cover, is it just training and matches and training kit and match day kit needs to be brought separately?					
	• Are there any reduced rates for players if you volunteer at the club or for family membership?					
	• Share the support you offer for low-income families					
	• Share the process for joining e.g. who they need to speak with, what form(s) they need to complete etc					
	• Do you have a waiting list, if so how does this work?					

TABLE 2 – ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS		WHERE THIS INFORMATION IS LOCATED PLEASE COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE				
		CLUB WEBSITE	CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE	WELCOME LETTER OR LEAFLET	PARENT & CARER MEETING	ACTION REQUIRED
BRIEF CLUB HISTORY	• Focus on key highlights					
VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES	• Ensure you advertise current vacancies					
	• Ensure you provide an induction and support available for volunteers					
	• Provide role profiles for recognised positons and expected time commitment					
	• Be clear that you're always looking for volunteer skill sets, including areas you may not have considered so parents/carers feel encouraged to offer their help					
RECENT SUCCESSES	• Have you progressed in the league placings?					
	• Did you have success in the County Cup?					
	• Have you got permission for renovations to your changing rooms?					
	• Have you secured funding for a key project?					
	• Have you started running disability teams?					
	• Have you partnered with another club to access additional football formats?					
BENEFITS	• Access to player insurance					
	• Support from CFA Designated Safeguarding Officer; provide their contact details					

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APPENDIX 1

USER AGREEMENTS

EXAMPLE A _____ Football Club Parent/Carer Agreement

I confirm that I have been provided with the following information about _____ Football Club:

- Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures; including the whistleblowing policy, anti-bullying policy and equality policy ☐
- The Club's Welfare Officer; their role and contact information ☐
- Who will be coaching my child and their contact information ☐
- Training venue(s), times, facilities and kit requirements ☐
- How I will be contacted by the club ☐
- The Club's website/Social media pages ☐
- The Club's Codes of Conduct ☐
- Selection criteria ☐

I accept that it is my responsibility to familiarise myself with all of the information provided by _____ Football Club and agree to sign up and adhere to the club Parent/Carer Code of Conduct. I understand that everyone working to provide football in a fun and safe environment at _____ Football Club is a volunteer who gives their time freely.

Name: _____ Signed: _____

Relationship to child: _____ Date: _____

EXAMPLE B _____ Football Club Parent/Carer Agreement

As a member of _____ Football Club I confirm I have been provided with the necessary information for my child to participate and I am clear about who will be coaching my child, who the Club Welfare Officer is and how to make a complaint or report a concern about a child.

I understand what is expected of my child and myself as members of _____ Football Club and have signed up to and agree to adhere to the Club's Code of Conduct. I recognise that everyone working to provide football in a fun and safe environment at _____ Football Club is a volunteer who gives their time freely.

Name: _____ Signed: _____

Relationship to child: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 2

APPROPRIATE CLUB OFFICIAL/COACH BEHAVIOURS

RELATIONSHIPS OF TRUST

Everyone who works/volunteers with children and young people (anyone under the age of 18) is responsible and accountable for the way in which they behave towards them. Every child has a right to be treated with respect and dignity.

- It's expected that all adult-child relationships maintain clear boundaries at all times, are supportive, positive and aimed at improving the young person's skills, development and progress. The adult-child relationships should all focus on the respective activity/event.
- No intimate or sexual relationship should take place while the member of staff or volunteer is in a position of trust relationship with a player.

In addition, inappropriate, intimate or sexual relationships between an adult and a young player aged 16 and 17 may be unlawful, irrespective of gender and sexual orientation.

The FA's Position

"It is an offence for a person aged 18 or over to involve a child under that age in sexual activity where he or she is in a specified position of trust in relation to that child. This includes those who care for, advise, supervise or train children and young people (Sexual Offences Act 2003)".

The principle of this section of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 is applied by The FA. Therefore, if you engage in an intimate or sexual relationship with a young player it is a breach of The Football Association Regulations and as such may result in disciplinary action and where appropriate a referral will be made to the statutory agencies, including the Police, and applicable Local Authorities bodies, for example, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Where a relationship of trust exists, it does not make any difference whether or not the relationship is consensual. The imbalance of power makes it an abuse of that relationship of trust.

Taking Positive Action

- Maintain a relationship with all participants that are appropriate to your role and reflects positively on the organisation for whom you work or volunteer.
- As someone in a position of authority you should not seek or engage in sexual activity or sexualised communication with any U18s via social media including 16 or 17 year olds for whom you are responsible.
- If you think that a young person's behaviour indicates that they are seeking to develop or engage in an inappropriate relationship with you, immediately bring this to the attention of your Designated Safeguarding
- Officer or line manager. Be careful not to respond to the young person in any way that could be interpreted as encouraging them. Make a written record of your concerns and relevant details.
- If you suspect an individual with a specified role in football is abusing a position of trust, or may abuse, you should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Make a written record of your concerns and relevant details.

- If you feel your concern has not been dealt with appropriately, refer the matter directly to The FA Safeguarding Team via **0800 083 5902** or via email **Safeguarding@TheFA.com**
- Alternatively, you can seek advice from the 24 hour NSPCC Helpline – **0808 800 500.**

PHYSICAL CONTACT

There are a number of principles that must be followed when an activity involves physical contact. Physical contact during sport must always be intended to meet the child's needs not the adults. The adult must only use appropriate physical contact to:

- Develop sports skills or techniques in line with accepted practice;
- Treat an injury in line with any first aid or medical qualification or guidance;
- Prevent an injury or accident occurring;
- Meet the requirements of the sport.

The adult must describe the nature and reason for the physical contact to the child reinforcing the teaching or coaching skill. Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult must ask for the child's permission.

Contact should not involve the genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that may cause the child distress or embarrassment.

Physical contact must always take place in an open or public environment and not take place in secret or out of sight of others.

APPENDIX 3

CLUB COMMUNICATIONS

We will require your contact details as the parent(s)/carer(s) ensuring these are accessible in the case of an emergency and commit to an open and transparent communications about club activity relevant to you and your child. It's your responsibility to ensure your contact details are up to date.

We recognise that whatever way we communicate with your child the safeguarding principles remain the same. Retaining boundaries is just as important online as it is offline. Our club officials are required to communicate appropriately (about relevant football related matters) using open and transparent communications respectfully whether face to face or online.

Please make use of the club's website/social media page(s) for general information.

WE WILL:

- Provide you with the relevant club officials contact details – always providing those of our Club Welfare Officer
- Ask for your signed consent before communicating digitally with your child for the purpose of; venue changes, kit required, changes to meeting or collection times or venues and or cancellations
- Only use group texts, emails or messenger apps and always copy either you as parent/carer or the designated member of the club to all communications with your child.

OUR CLUB OFFICIALS SHOULD NOT:

- Use language that is directly (or could be misinterpreted as being) racist, sexist, derogatory, threatening, abusive or sexualised in tone.
- Share pictures, jokes or other items of a personal nature.
- Respond to digital communications from children other than those directly related to club matters.

OUNLESS A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON IS A DIRECT RELATION, OUR CLUB OFFICIALS SHOULD NOT:

- Accept as a friend, players or referees under the age of 18 on social networking sites of which they are members;
- Share their own personal social networking sites with children or young people involved in youth football;
- Make contact with children or young people known through football outside of the football context on social networking sites;
- Use internet or web-based communications to send personal messages of a non-football nature to a child or young person;
- Engage in any personal communications, 'banter' or comments.

YOU SHOULD:

- Ensure social media privacy and security settings are appropriate for your child's use;
- Kept these settings up to date by reviewing guidance from the provider and or specialists such as Childnet or NSPCC.

APPENDIX 4

RUNNING EVENTS

Club events always have oversight from the clubs committee and our Club Welfare Officer will advise on the appropriate safeguards for the event. There may be a sub-committee specifically responsible for the event planning and delivery who report directly into the main club committee. There will always be an event leader you can contact for information.

THE FOLLOWING ISSUES ARE CONSIDERED (WHERE APPROPRIATE):

- Parent/carer permission;
- Suitable staffing (including ratio of adult to child);
- Parent/carer attendance;
- Venue including accessibility, changing facilities and toilets;
- Medical needs and any additional needs your child may have (there will always be a qualified first aider available);
- Dietary requirements;
- Religious requirements;
- Travel;
- Overnight accommodation – please note club officials are not permitted to share rooms with children;
- Emergency contact arrangements;
- Risk assessment;
- Relevant insurance.

Please note this is not an exhaustive list; if you would like more information about how we plan for events at the club and when travelling away for day trips and overnight trips please contact the Club Welfare Officer. **Add contact details here.**

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