

HELP KEEP OUR GAME SAFE

Safeguarding Resource Pack

We must all have an unwavering commitment to safeguarding in football - its everyone's responsibility to ensure the game is fun and safe for all.



In partnership with
NSPCC

Keeping Football Safe & Enjoyable

Every child or adults at risk who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in football.

Our collective role is to create a fun and safe experience for children and other vulnerable people in football and where concerns come to light, whether they are about someone in football or the person's wider life, then to report these concerns to the appropriate authorities.

Online Learning

Before reading on, please be aware that The FA now hosts the vast majority of its learning online.

This includes all Safeguarding and Welfare courses, which can be viewed and booked onto via the link below.

The Boot Room – Safeguarding Courses

Courses available include:

- The FA Safeguarding for All
- The FA Safeguarding Children Course
- FA Welfare Officers Course
- Safeguarding for Committee Members
- Online Safeguarding Children Re-certification
- Guide to Safeguarding Adults

In addition to these courses, you can now also enrol on the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Course.

[Click here](#) to view and book.



What We Do To Keep You Safe

Educate our parents and players

We encourage all players and parents to look out for the FA's Play Safe campaign launched in 2021, that reminds parents and players of the importance of safeguarding. Please also look on the FA Website Safeguarding Section, where there is a dedicated parents/carers area, where parents can play their part and find helpful tips of how to keep their child safe in football: <https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-8-parents-and-carers>.

Training and Qualifications

All Club and League Welfare Officers have undertaken a number of safeguarding courses to ensure they have the tools to safeguard effectively. These include Safeguarding Children Course, Safeguarding Committee members course and a bespoke Welfare Officer Course. In addition to the courses, they must have a FA accepted DBS.

The main Committee Members for Clubs and Leagues are also required to complete a Safeguarding Committee Course so that they have an awareness of how to ensure Clubs and Leagues promote safe practices.

In future, it will be a requirement that all Team officials including coaches, managers and first aiders, undertake safeguarding training and this is renewed every three years. This also includes Open Age Clubs with Disability Teams asking all volunteers to complete the free, FA Safeguarding Adults course. All safeguarding courses are now online at The FA Boot Room: <https://thebootroom.thefa.com/learning/qualifications/safeguarding-courses>

We also work hard to make sure CFA staff and volunteers continue to improve their safeguarding knowledge and extensive training.

Vetting and Supervision

All staff and volunteers who work in a role that involves regular and direct contact with children or vulnerable people are subject to a DBS.

DBS are completed every three years and failure to comply will lead to suspension.

Coaching

To ensure the safety of all children under their supervision and care it is a requirement that all coaches, managers and volunteers working with teams with young people aged 18 years and below hold a valid in date DBS. These can be obtained through our website www.liverpoolfa.com

To further ensure the safety of young people playing football all England Football Accreditation clubs require all coaches, managers and volunteers to have a valid in date FA Safeguarding Children and Introduction to First Aid in Football (IFAiF) qualification.

A further requirement of England Football Accreditation clubs is that all coaches and managers hold the FA Level 1 in coaching qualification/Introduction to Football Coaching.

Harm & Abuse

Everyone involved in grassroots football has a responsibility and role in keeping children and vulnerable adults safe and to help to protect them from abuse and harm.

Types of abuse are identified below:

Sexual

A child or vulnerable person is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This doesn't have to be physical contact and it can happen online. Sometimes they won't understand that what's happening to them is abuse. They may not even understand that it's wrong. Or they may be afraid to speak out.

Physical

Physical abuse is deliberately hurting a child or vulnerable person causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts. It isn't accidental - people who are physically abused suffer violence such as being hit, kicked, poisoned, burned, slapped or having objects thrown at them.

Grooming

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child or vulnerable person to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Someone can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age.

Don't forget, many of the things mentioned here have the potential to happen online as well in person. If you are concerned about bullying or abuse (including that which might be happening to another person) then please talk to the Club/ League Welfare Officer or the Designated Safeguarding Officer at Liverpool County FA.

Neglect

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child or vulnerable person's basic needs. They may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care. They may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm.

Bullying

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else - such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumors, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere - at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt someone both physically and emotionally.

Emotional

Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child or vulnerable person. It's sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a person's emotional health and development. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare or humiliate someone or isolating or ignoring them.

If you feel a child or vulnerable person is at risk of immediate or significant harm, contact the police or Designated Safeguarding Officer at Liverpool FA or NSPCC - see back page for contact details

Poor Practice

In addition to harm and abuse, we must all be mindful of poor practice when keeping football safe for children and vulnerable adults.

What does Poor Practice look like?

Poor practice is behaviour which falls below the standard required by a club as set out in their codes of conduct. Whilst the behaviour may not be immediately dangerous or intentionally harmful it does set a poor example and if it were to continue, it might lead to harm or put a child in danger. To allow poor practice to continue unchallenged may result in an environment developing in which abuse may be able to take place. It normalises behaviour which is unacceptable and should not be condoned. The list below sets out examples of poor practice for coaches.

Examples of Poor Practice

- Failure to provide effective supervision for coaching sessions, which should be properly planned;
- Putting performance over the wellbeing and safety of players;
- Having a win at all costs mentality and failing to be gracious in defeat;
- Lack of respect for other individuals, such as match officials, opposition coaches, players, managers and spectators and failing to accept a match official's decision (this may be dealt with by way of on field disciplinary proceedings but may fall short of being dealt with in this way);
- Having favourites and not treating all children fairly and equitably;
- Allowing rough and dangerous play, bullying, the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour by players;
- Overtraining and exerting undue influence over players;
- Using punishments that humiliate or harm children;
- Not taking time to explain coaching techniques and ensuring they are understood by all players;
- Condoning rule violations by players and not adhering to the laws and spirit of the game;
- Not holding required FA coaching qualifications for the role being carried out;
- Providing one to one coaching without any supervision or the presence of other adults;
- Inappropriate use of social media;
- Allowing children to discriminate on the grounds of religion, race, gender, social class or lack of ability;
- Failure to encourage children to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour;
- Engaging in, or tolerating, offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour;
- Failure to challenge poor practice in others;
- Allowing allegations of abuse to go unchallenged or unrecorded and failing to report these to the CWO;

- Failure to record incidents or accidents;
- First aid being administered without others being present other than in an emergency;
- Not referring more serious medical incidents to the club first aider;
- Not having access to a telephone to be able to immediately contact emergency services if necessary;
- Not working as part of a team to ensure the safety of children in their care;
- Failing to address the additional needs of disabled players or other vulnerable groups;
- Allowing confidential information to be shared inappropriately;
- Failure to respect and listen to the opinions of children and consider the rights and responsibilities of children;
- Failure to display and promote consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance;
- Smoking and consuming alcohol during coaching sessions;
- Spending excessive time alone with children;
- Taking children to their own home;
- Not adhering to guidance when transporting children including travel abroad.

The above list is not an exhaustive one but it should give an idea of the type of behaviour which constitutes poor practice. The use of Codes of Conduct, helps to counter poor practice.

Codes of Conduct:

Club codes of conduct should reflect best practice by stating clearly the good behaviour which the club wishes to promote; should reflect club expectations of members' behaviour and should be cross-referenced with club disciplinary processes. Codes of conduct should be written for coaches, match officials, parents, spectators, players and club members. They should be pertinent to the activities these different groups of individuals will be involved in within the club. You can find the FA's Codes of Conducts for players, parents/spectators and team officials at : <https://www.thefa.com/get-involved/respect/play-your-part>
For further guidance, please contact your CWO or Designated Safeguarding Officer.



Respect

Parents

Parents have a big responsibility as part of the Respect programme. Respect is working to eradicate touchline abuse in football, and parents can play their part by agreeing to, and signing, their club's Code of Conduct. Parents also have a responsibility for their children's behaviour. The players will also be asked to sign a Code of Conduct, and parents can encourage their children to adhere to the players' code.

Players

Players are asked to sign a Code of Conduct to 'promise' to abide by a set of rules governing their behaviour as a player. Working together with the coach, captain and matchday referee, players have a major role to play to ensure a positive environment on this pitch – and off it. Players are asked to shake hands with the opposition and match officials pre- and post-match in a spirit of fair play.

Discrimination

Discrimination has no place in football. That's the same whether on the pitch or side of the pitch, at the training ground or in the stands. We take any news of discrimination in football extremely seriously. If you tell us about something, we will act promptly and respond appropriately. Everything we are told is treated in strict confidence. You talk, we listen, we act. For more information to report it or understand the process go to: <https://www.thefa.com/get-involved/respect/anti-discrimination> Or visit kickitout.org

Coaches

Coaches have a hugely important role to play in Respect, as they are not only responsible for their own behaviour, but they can also influence that of their players and spectators too. On a matchday, coaches are expected to work with players, parents and other spectators to allow the referee to manage the game without being subjected to abuse.

Referees

Referees need to work in partnership with the clubs they officiate, in particular with the captains on the pitch when managing player behaviour. Vitally, referees can provide post-match feedback regarding the behaviour of players, parents, coaches and other spectators, to help the clubs enforce their Codes of Conduct.

Clubs

Clubs can sign up to and enforce Codes of Conduct for their players, coaches, parents and spectators, which will set the standard for behaviour throughout their club. It is important that clubs take action if Codes are broken to send out a clear message that negative behaviour will not be tolerated.

We all bear a collective responsibility to set a good example and help provide a positive environment in which children and vulnerable people can learn and enjoy the game. Play your part and observe The FA's Respect Code of Conduct.

Safeguarding Expectations

This sets out the expectations of how adults should behave around children and adults at risk, manage and mitigate the risk of harm to participants and report their concerns.

If you are a volunteer and a child, adult at risk or parent discloses a concern:

Ask few questions

Let them talk, don't become an investigator, simply clarify what they have said.

Remove them from further harm

Get to a safe place: seek medical help if required.

Reassure

Take them seriously – they have done the right thing to tell someone and it's not their fault.

Contact the Club/League or County Welfare Officers

If it is a serious concern, contact the police or Children Social Care.

Stay Calm

It will help the immediate situation.

Make a note

Record what has been said if you can, noting the facts and not your opinion

Don't make promises 'not to tell'

If it is serious, you will have to tell someone who can help.

Be patient

We will try to keep you informed when possible but be aware we must act in a way that protects all those involved.

Respect 

www.thefa.com/get-involved/player/respect/respect-resources

Welfare Officers

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. However, having a Welfare Officer WO in place at a Club or League, ensures there is someone who actively champions safeguarding. Therefore, every youth Club (U18) must have a WO who reviews current practices, promotes safeguarding awareness and training, promotes a culture of listening to children and ensure compliance with safer recruitment practices.

We are also now encouraging all Disability Adult teams and Open Age teams with 16 and 17 year olds to have a Welfare Officer as best practice. Please contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer for more information.

Welfare Officers and their Clubs and Leagues have a clear responsibility in making sure parent, carers, players, children and young people know how and who to report concerns about a child's or Adult at Risk's welfare. Find out who your Welfare Officer is by contacting your Club/ League or LCFA Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Over the years The FA has been asked for advice and guidance to help clubs create fun, safe and inclusive environments. They have now collated this information into a 'Best Practice and Guidance Note directory', which offers top tips, templates including Safeguarding Adults and Children's policy templates and a great resource to browse through and see what you and/or your club might benefit from. <https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory>

You can also find the following Guidance notes here that will support you in your role:

- 5.1 Appointing a Welfare Officer
- 5.2 Welfare Officer Code of Conduct
- 5.3 Welfare Officer Roles and Responsibilities

If you every need support, please contact LCFA Designated Safeguarding Officer (Contact details are on the back page)



Referees

Liverpool County FA wants to ensure that you are aware of the support you can access should you have any concerns over your safety and welfare while carrying out your refereeing duties.

Please read the information below and keep the information and contact details safe in case you need them, contact details can be found on the next pages.

Concerned about something you've seen or heard?

Tell an adult you trust if you are concerned about something you have seen or heard, if something doesn't feel right, or if you are worried about comments someone has made to, or about, you via text or social media.

If you are concerned about your own safety, or the safety of another child or young person, let the Designated Safeguarding Officer know as soon as possible to ensure we can support you.

If you or someone else is in immediate risk of harm, then this should be reported to the police. You can also contact Childline for advice.

Disciplinary Matters

It's really important that all matchday disciplinary matters are reported to Liverpool County FA as soon as possible. In most cases this is a simple and speedy process that can be completed online. However, should you need assistance in compiling a report, contact Liverpool County FA's Referee Development Officer. In the unlikely event of a very serious disciplinary matter, you may wish to speak to somebody about it. Our Referee Development Officer or Designated Safeguarding Officer can be contacted for advice and support.

The vast majority of football is played in safe and friendly environments where everyone can enjoy taking part.

However, we appreciate that there may be occasions when you would like additional help and support.

Feel threatened?

In the unlikely event you feel threatened whilst refereeing; your own safety must be your priority. Find a supportive adult and ensure you can leave the venue safely. Avoid doing or saying anything that might make things worse.

At the first opportunity please report these events to our Disciplinary and Designated Safeguarding Officer department. Our Referee Development Officer will contact you when he/she has been informed about the incident.

Inclusion

If you have a disability or impairment preventing you from fully accessing and enjoying refereeing, then please inform us. Football is inclusive and that applies to refereeing too.



Useful Contacts

MERSEYSIDE
POLICE

Police
Immediate threat Tel: 999
Non-Immediate Tel: 101

NSPCC

NSPCC
Tel: 0808 800 5000
www.nspcc.org.uk



Child Exploitation & Online Protection
www.ceop.police.uk

childline

ChildLine
Tel: 0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk/
get-support

NSPCC



NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit
https://the cpsu.org.uk/

Further information about safeguarding in football can be found on the Safeguarding Section of the FA website: <https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding>

It includes information on:
Reporting concerns, Safeguarding training,
Information for parent and carers and
Safeguarding in a digital world.

Safeguarding in Liverpool

It is supported by a network of Club/League Welfare Officers and the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Referees are supported by the Referee Development Officer. Call us on 0151 523 4488

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