

Summary of progress on Clive Sheldon QC's recommendations, March 2021

We welcome all the recommendations, we are embracing them all as part of a refreshed safeguarding strategy for football, that we will publish next season. We will work with football stakeholders including our Survivor Support and Safeguarding Advisory Group to drive this work forwards.

Training at all levels - We welcome these recommendations which build on the strong foundations established by our existing safeguarding course portfolio , with 878,000 attendances on FA safeguarding programmes since 2001		
Recommendation	Current position	Actions
1. FA to encourage all parents to receive tailored safeguarding training, including signs of abuse and grooming and confidence to talk with and listen to children. Recommend FA works with PL & EFL to develop an online course for parents in grassroots and the pro game.	Guidance for parents and carers is on The FAs website and is promoted via grassroots clubs. The PL, EFL and their clubs provide information for parents and carers. For the NSPCC's Parents in Sport Week in 2020-21, we released a film for parents which we shared via FA channels. The FAs free online Playmaker and Safeguarding for All courses are available for parents.	We'll identify the most appropriate partners to work with to have the greatest impact and deliver it for the 2021-22 season onwards.
2. FA to make arrangements for all adult players and young people to receive safeguarding training. Reinforce mandatory relationship education messaging being taught in schools for U18s. FA work with PL & EFL to replicate.	Guidance for youth players is on The FAs website, with signposting to other agencies who provide child-friendly information e.g. NSPCC, NCAs CEOP. In the pro game, the PL & EFL clubs undertake induction training with players, which includes safeguarding information.	Adult players – we'll identify the most effective way of delivering this recommendation for i) adult players ii) young people and the most appropriate partners to work with to have the greatest impact.
3. FA Board and Senior Management Team (SMT) to undertake appropriate and comprehensive training every 3 years.	The FA Board undertakes bespoke safeguarding training and all FA staff, including the SMT complete a mandatory bespoke online course, which is part of our HR induction process for new staff.	We'll continue to deliver regular training - at least every 3 years, for The FA Board, Senior Management Team and FA staff.
4. FA with the PL & EFL should require Board Directors of pro clubs, to receive 3 yearly appropriate and comprehensive training and encourage engagement in strategy and implementation. Require appointment of independent board champion.	Training is required and delivered as part of the PL and EFL safeguarding standards for their clubs, who are also required to demonstrate 'a demonstrable top-level commitment' to safeguarding. A named Board Safeguarding Champion or Lead is part of the PL & EFL standards. A few clubs have appointed independent board champions.	The PL & EFL will continue to require that Pro Club Board Directors do the relevant 3 yearly training and encourage their engagement in the club's safeguarding plans. The PL & EFL will encourage clubs to appointment independent champions.
5. FA should require all those engaging in regulated activity, including managers/coaches (U18 teams) and open age (16-17 players), to receive safeguarding training as part of club affiliation.	Training is mandatory for all coaches undertaking FA qualifications; registered referees; designated safeguarding and welfare officers; grassroots youth club committee members – Chairs, Secretary's, Finance Officers and Welfare Officers. 93% of youth teams in the UK currently have at least one coach with formal safeguarding training. Open age teams with 16-17-year olds are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and are encouraged to complete	We are already driving the requirements for coaches and managers in the 7% of youth teams, who don't already have an FA coaching qualification. The player registration data we gather in the 2021-22 season will enable us to track the open age teams with 16-17-year olds, and the

	safeguarding training.	coaches and managers who need training.
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Child Centred Culture - We welcome these recommendations, to add to the steps we've taken across the game to create more child centred awareness and practice		
Recommendation	Current position	Next steps
6. FA Board should assign one of its members as a Children's Safeguarding Champion	Safeguarding is a responsibility of every member of the FA Board and The FA already has a named Board Safeguarding Champion, as do the 50 County FAs.	The Board Safeguarding Champion will continue to play an important part in supporting safeguarding in the governance of The FA.
7. FA should develop a 5-year strategy with interventions to support the voices of children and regularly evaluate its effectiveness. Coordinate various initiatives and communicate the importance of the views of young players, to help create a safe space for anyone to speak up.	Across the game, we've implemented initiatives, gathered insight from U18s and embedded supporting the voices of children, as part of the Standards that PL & EFL clubs and County FAs are assessed against. All with the intention of striving to ensure that every child feels they have a voice and that if they speak up, they will be heard.	We'll develop this recommendation as a core pillar in a new FA safeguarding strategy to maximise our collective efforts, and we'll gather insight and learning from other sectors as part of this process.
8. FA require Grassroots clubs to make safeguarding policy and Club Welfare Officers (CWO) contact details readily available to parents and U18s and remind them about the Policy and contacts each season. Policies should cover making complaints / referrals. PL & EFL should ensure this also happens in the pro game.	Grassroots clubs are guided to share their club policies and the name and contact details of their CWOs. Questions about the CWO contact details are asked to coaches and parents as part of the annual club safeguarding visits (see 9). With the impact of Covid-19, club safeguarding visits have taken place remotely this season and have included County FAs doing some desktop research to see how visible club policies are. Pro game clubs should already provide this information in line with the PL & EFL standards, which the clubs are independently assessed.	We will build this in to the CFA Safeguarding Standard and monitor it. Pro game clubs will continue to be independently assessed against these standards.
9. FA should on an annual basis widen requirements re 'spot checks' with grassroots clubs to review clubs' policies and practices, including overnight stays; away travel and trips; use of social media; and coaching in digital environment). These should also obtain the views of children. FA should sanction club non-compliance. Include in annual report to FA Board and publish summary.	The FAs Safeguarding Operating Standard is a contractual KPI that is independently assessed, and all 50 County FAs must meet the Standard. This includes continuously tracking the compliance of club officials, against FA requirements, as well as carrying out safeguarding visits to at least 13% of their clubs each season. County FAs check that those coaching, are known on The FA system and talk with parents and coaches, to assess whether they know who the club welfare officer is and are aware of how to report a concern and to whistle blow. Where required, a club action plan is	We'll widen the areas covered in the club safeguarding visits to clubs each season and explore other ways to most effectively monitor this. We'll review the most effective and reliable ways to gain the views of children and will report internally and externally on these developments.

	agreed, and the club has 28 days to implement the agreed actions.	
10. FA with the PL & EFL should ensure that the Safeguarding Officer (SO) in pro club's report on a regular basis to their Club's Board on. The SO at PL and EFL Championship clubs should be a dedicated, full-time, salaried post, with suitable qualifications and experience. In EFL Leagues 1 & 2, the Safeguarding Officer should, as a minimum, be a part-time salaried post, with suitable qualifications and experience, and 50% of their time should be dedicated to safeguarding.	Pro game Safeguarding Officers already provide regular safeguarding updates to their Club Boards. PL clubs and the majority of EFL Championship clubs meet this requirement. EFL League 1 & 2 all have named SOs, although many do have additional responsibilities. The PL and EFL safeguarding standards require that "There are staff with specific strategic and operational responsibilities for safeguarding and safer recruitment". Both the PL & EFL require that there is a club safeguarding lead with the necessary skills and expertise and The PL requires this role to be a Head of Safeguarding who is dedicated full-time to that role as their sole responsibility.	Pro game Safeguarding Officers will continue to report on a regular basis on safeguarding matters, to their Club's Board. The EFL will continue to work with its Clubs to ensure that they work towards meeting these requirements.
11. FA should launch a social media and online campaign post-publication, to direct all involved in football, including parents, to information and advice to minimise risk in football now.	At the time of publication, we'll signpost individuals to support and information about information on safeguarding to keep children safe in football.	We'll determine the most effective ways of delivering further post-publication messaging to minimise risk to children in the game now.

Transparency and Accountability - We welcome the recommendations to regularly publish the progress being made in the safeguarding work across the game and to shine a light on safeguarding across the game each season		
Recommendation	Current position	Next steps
12. FA should publish an annual safeguarding report, including a statement from The FA Chair. Report should include key trends identified in abuse/grooming in football; key developments, education/campaigns & their effectiveness; work done across the game; a summary record of the training undertaken; structure of The FA safeguarding team, how operates and qualifications of its staff.	In 2017, we published "Keeping Football Safe and Enjoyable", as a position statement bringing together information about safeguarding across the whole game. The FA Board, PL, EFL, their Club and the 50 County FA Boards regularly receive reports about the safeguarding work.	We agree to publish an annual safeguarding report, starting at the end of 2021-22 season.
13. FA, PL, EFL and the CFAs devote one day of the year, to a National Day of Safeguarding in Football to maintain the focus. Recommend survivors are involved and contribute their knowledge and insights.	We recognise and support specific safeguarding 'moments' in the calendar each season, most notably the NSPCCs Parents in Sport Week, World Mental Health Day, Anti-Bullying Week, Safeguarding Adults Week and Safer Internet Day.	We'll work with the Survivor Support and Safeguarding Advisory Group and partners across the game to look at this recommendation and how we maximise opportunities to promote safeguarding.