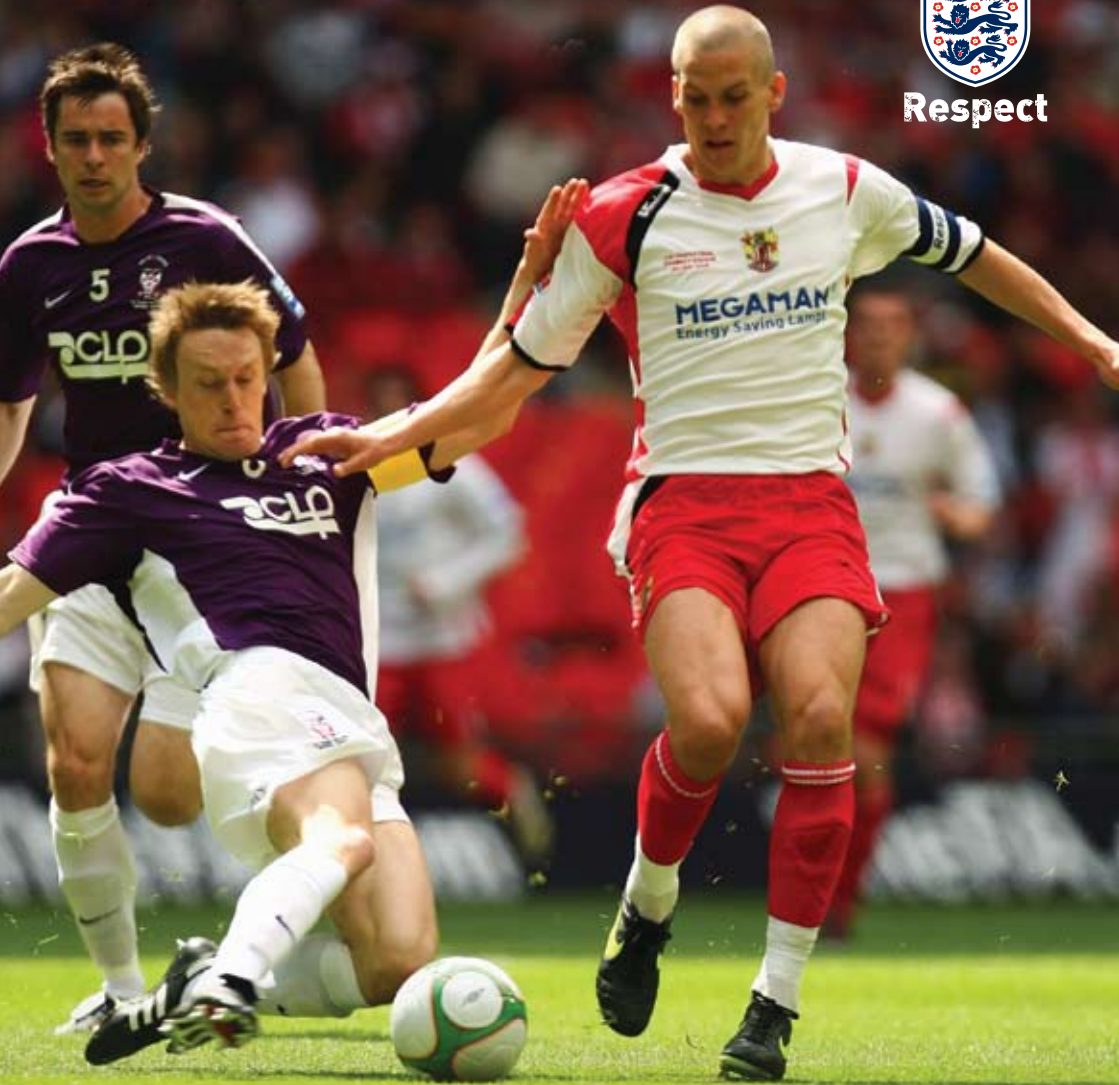




Respect



Clubs at Steps 1-7 of The FA National League System

Your guide to The FA's Respect programme

Who will you be today?



Show some Respect

Thousands of referees drop out of the game every season due to abuse.

[TheFA.com/Respect](https://www.thefa.com/Respect)

Respect



Respect

Contents

What is Respect ?	5
What does Respect cover?	7
Implementing Respect	8
The first season of Respect	22
Respect Codes of Conduct	27



Respect

What is Respect?

The FA is responding to concern from across the game to tackle unacceptable behaviour in football.

The plea came out of the biggest survey yet undertaken of the grassroots game in England. This pinpointed eradicating unacceptable behaviour as the No.1 priority it was an opinion shared by everyone in the game – players, league and club officials, referees and spectators.

The FA is responding in a variety of ways, and one of the main actions is the **Respect** programme. It is not a short-lived campaign but an ongoing commitment to improve behaviour in football. It won't be tackled in one or two seasons as we all have a lot of work to do over the seasons ahead.

One of the main aims of **Respect** is to tackle the mass drop-out of referees from football due to abuse. Thousands of referees drop out of the game every season, mainly due to the abuse they receive on the pitch and from the sidelines. The number of match officials last season hit its lowest-ever level.

Without referees the game simply cannot be played properly.

Sadly, the following is a reflection of the current grassroots game:

- 98% of referees have been verbally abused and 27% have been physically abused. In season 2008-09 over 500 referees were assaulted – 100 of them seriously. This must come to an end.
- Thousands of grassroots matches are played without a qualified match official.



Respect and Steps 1-7

At Steps 1 to 7 of the National League System the challenges are different as the availability of qualified match officials is not a problem. However Respect is still of key importance to you – it can play a part in sustaining and building your fanbase by creating a better environment at games. It will improve standards of behaviour and lower the number of cautions – and therefore fines – imposed on clubs. It may also reduce the suspensions that are imposed upon players and increase their availability for selection. It is also important to appreciate that anyone involved in football at a higher level of the game sets an example – good or bad – for those in the grassroots game.

The overall programme sees us working in partnership with the Premier League, Football League, Football Conference, Professional Footballers' Association, League Managers' Association and the Professional Game Match Officials.

The reason for this Guide is to ensure that football played at the levels between the professional and grassroots games is also fully embraced by **Respect**.

Respect is a long-term commitment to the game we all love, and if we really play our part, we can make a difference.

What does Respect cover?

For clubs at your level, fully engaging with the **Respect** programme means understanding, committing and implementing the following six steps:

1. Improving behaviour standards on and off the pitch and from the sidelines, including spectators.
2. Team captains taking responsibility for their players' actions and behaviour.
3. Understanding what 'match management' by the referee means and entails.
4. A pre-match briefing meeting between referee and managers/captains.
5. Team handshake before kick-off.
6. A full understanding of Law 12, particularly the circumstances which can lead to cautions and/or dismissals.

This Guide covers each of these areas in turn and the practical ways in which they can be implemented. On page 24 you'll see the list of support materials available from The FA.

Making Respect happen at your club

Firstly, The FA will be asking your league to organise a **Respect** information session, which we urge your club to attend.

This will enable the **Respect** message to be consistent – and for any questions to be asked in the presence of all clubs – so there aren't different interpretations by different clubs.

The details covered in the following pages will be distributed at this meeting.

Secondly, you should organise a **Respect** session at your club – along the lines of the league one you'll have attended. This should be attended by anyone and everyone at your club who can play a role in the **Respect** programme – team manager(s), coaches, players, club officials and any other club staff.

Thirdly, you need to communicate your commitment to **Respect** and make everyone aware including spectators of your commitment to maintaining high standards of behaviour. A strong stance by the playing and managerial staff can set an example for your spectators. The manager of a team in particular has the ability to set standards of behaviour that others will follow.



Implementing Respect

One:
Improving behaviour standards on and off the pitch and from the sidelines, including spectators

Codes of Conduct:

Codes of Conduct are the main method being used to improve behaviour standards. They aren't new and are already in use at some clubs (they are mandatory at clubs who have achieved FA Charter Standard status). Some of these Codes are successful, some are forgotten and are not acted upon.

Respect brings them to life.

How? By strengthening the Codes of Conduct with possible consequences if they are broken. There is little point in having a set of rules if no action is taken if and when they are broken.

There are four Codes of Conduct relevant to Steps 1 to 7 of the game, aimed at:

- Adult players
- Coaches, team manager(s) and club officials
- Spectators
- Match officials.

Respect works by placing responsibility for their actions on individuals: break your Code, and bear the consequences.

Codes of Conduct: your club's responsibilities:

Each Respect Code of Conduct explains that action can and will be taken if the Code is broken.

Your club has three main responsibilities around the Codes:

1. To ensure everyone within the club (club members), whatever their role, has read, agreed and signed up to their relevant Code – and understands the actions which could be taken if Codes are broken.
2. To collect and retain the signed agreement forms at the foot of each Code.
3. To deal fairly and consistently with anyone who breaks 'their' Code.

If your club hasn't used Codes of Conduct before – or has Codes without consequences – this needs discussion, so your members understand how the Codes work and what their responsibilities are. Your league or County FA Respect Lead Officer will be able to give you some further guidance in this area.

The four Respect Codes of Conduct relevant to Steps 1 to 7 of the game are included at the end of this document.

Clubs which already have Codes of Conduct:

If you are an FA Charter Standard Club, and/or you already have your own club Codes of Conduct, it is advised that you adopt the new Respect Codes or revise your existing codes to include any elements you may have missed.

It is suggested that it may be helpful to display the Respect Codes of Conduct by displaying the Code in dressing rooms, club houses and in public areas

The important difference is ensuring your club members understand and appreciate what can happen if Codes are broken. That way, there should be no subsequent debate because they didn't understand the consequences of breaking a Code.

Imposing sanctions

The Codes identify a range of sanctions which can be applied in the event of misconduct or poor behaviour.

Whilst your County FA or The FA will deal with reported misconduct, clubs also have a role to play in educating its membership as to what is – and what isn't – acceptable behaviour and taking action when the Codes are broken.

It's important for clubs to be clear about what it expects from its members and to educate people when guidance is required. Should this guidance be disregarded then the management of a Club has the right to implement sanctions against offenders. Such action should:

- Be fair and consistent – treating people in the same way regardless of their position in the club
- Be proportionate to the offence
- Be progressively more serious for repeat offenders
- Follow a process which allows people to know when they have broken a Code of Conduct and provides them with an opportunity to explain their actions.



Two:

Team captains taking responsibility for their players' actions and behaviour

Often problems start at matches when individual players are abusive towards the referee, which escalates into several players confronting the referee at the same time – then it's anarchy.

Respect aims to stop this cycle before it starts. Only the captain can challenge decisions made by the referee and the captain needs to manage his/her team to ensure this is always observed. However, this does not mean the referee will only speak to the captain. Referees remain free to talk to any player if this means they can manage the game better.

The advice to captains is:

As a captain, you have no special status or privileges under the Laws of the Game, but you do have a degree of responsibility for the behaviour of your team.

To promote **Respect** the referee will work with you, as the team captain, to manage the players and the game effectively.

Even if you are some way away from an incident when the referee feels he/she needs you involved in a discussion with a player, the referee will call you over. This will ensure that, as the team captain, you remain the point of contact for the referee.

Referees will also make use of captains to deal with persistent offending from a team-mate where there is a real possibility of further offending resulting in a caution or a dismissal. Captains will also be called forward where additional support is required to calm a player down who is likely to immediately re-offend.

In some cases a referee will proceed directly to a caution if he deems an offence to be serious enough, and is not obliged to call a captain forward for every incident – only those that will assist him/her in the management of the game.

The type of behaviour which often gives rise to problems in matches, and where captains and referees need to work together, can be described as 'harassment and challenging behaviour' towards the referee.



Respect

Here are some examples of each of these types of behaviour:

Harassment:

- Running towards the referee in an aggressive manner.
- Players surrounding the referee to protest a decision.
- Repeatedly asking questions about decisions in an attempt to influence the referee or undermine his/her responsibilities.

Challenging:

- Passing comment to other players about a referee's decision-making.
- Repeatedly moaning at the referee about decisions.
- Gestures that obviously are made in a derogatory manner, such as a shaking of the head or waving of the hand.

Captains have been asked to:

- Ensure they wear a **Respect** captain's armband. These will be provided by your league to your club.
- Together with the opposition captain, make themselves known to the referee before the game. He/she will ask if the captains if they are clear about your responsibilities.
- Ensure all players understand what they can/cannot do in relation to the referee and what is meant by 'unwanted behaviour'. No-one's trying to curb enthusiasm - just instil more discipline. This can only benefit the specific match and football as a whole.
- Ensure the vice-captain (who should be appointed one if there isn't one) is aware of these rules, in case the captain is unavailable for a game, or has to leave the pitch.
- Ensure every player in the team has signed the Respect Code of Conduct.
- Visit www.TheFA.com/Respect for further updates and tips.



Three:
Understanding what ‘match management’ by the referee means and entails:

There is a separate **Respect** information guide for referees, which incorporates the following main information in relation to the above:

As now, the referee must control the game by applying the Laws of the Game, and deal firmly with any open show of dissent by players (e.g. not move away from the incident, but stay and deal with it).

While recognising that players may on occasions make an appeal for a decision (e.g. a throw-in, corner or goal-kick), it is important you distinguish these from an act of dissent which should be punished with a caution.

The referee should use a stepped approach where appropriate to managing players:

1. Quiet word.
2. Free-kick with quiet word.
3. Free-kick with public admonishment (this is the time referees should consider using the captain to emphasise the message).
4. Yellow card.
5. Second Yellow/Red card.

The stepped approach does not negate the fact that the referee has the authority within the Laws of the Game to issue disciplinary sanctions without recourse to the captain.

Four:
A pre-match briefing meeting between the referee and managers/ captains:

The pre-match briefing provides an opportunity for an exchange of team sheets by the manager or a senior member of the coaching staff and for the team captains and the referee to introduce themselves.

The meeting provides an opportunity for the referee to outline the responsibilities of captains and how they might be called upon to assist in the management of players. As the season progresses and players and managers become accustomed to their responsibilities, the referee may

also use these meetings to clarify other interpretations of the Laws of the Game.

Five:
Team handshake before kick-off:
 To set the tone of fair play from the outset, teams should shake hands with each other prior to kick-off, as happens at international and professional clubs levels.

The match referee will ensure the following protocol is applied where possible:

1. The starting 11 from both teams together with the three match officials (excluding fourth official) should take part in the handshake.
2. Each team should line up on the same side of the pitch.
3. The home team, led by their captain, then walks to shake hands with the match officials, and then the away team’s players (see 1 below). Once each home team player has finished shaking hands with the last away team player they disperse to their favoured end to kick-in.
4. Once the last home team player has completed the handshake, the away team then follow their captain passing in front of the match officials to shake hands (see 2 below) before dispersing to the opposite end of the pitch from the home team.
5. Once the handshakes have been completed the match officials then proceed to the centre circle for the coin toss.



Respect



RAY BENNETT
DRIVING SCHOOL
0880 957871

Ver

TheFA.com

TheFA.com

**Six:
A full understanding of Law 12,
particularly the circumstances
which can lead to cautions and/or
dismissals:**

In many ways, Respect is only bringing to the fore some of the aspects already embedded in the spirit of the game – and in the Laws of the Game themselves.

Law 12 (Fouls and Misconduct) is particularly relevant and everyone at your club is urged to re-familiarise themselves with its specific provisions around the offences which can result in yellow and/or red cards.

Referees are being asked to fully implement Law 12 – particularly around shows of dissent – given this underpins the behaviour change the Respect programme is intended to engender.

Specifically, they have been asked to try and eliminate ‘Offensive, Insulting and Abusive’ language or gestures. The FA has reinforced the following points to referees, which all players and club officials need to take on board:

1. Referees need to apply Law 12 sensibly, but deal with wilful, audible language directed at players, officials or spectators firmly.
2. There is a real difference between the player who uses ‘Offensive, Insulting and Abusive’ language which is loud, aggressive and meaningful, as opposed to the player who quietly swears to himself in frustration.
3. There is a need to understand that players become frustrated and sometimes swear to themselves.

It’s worth reiterating the cautionable and sending-off offences under Law 12:

Cautionable offences:

A player is cautioned and shown the yellow card if he commits any of the following seven offences:

1. is guilty of unsporting behaviour
2. shows dissent by word or action
3. persistently infringes the Laws of the Game
4. delays the restart of play
5. fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick or throw-in
6. enters or re-enters the field of play without the referee’s permission
7. deliberately leaves the field of play without the referee’s permission.

A substitute or substituted player is cautioned and shown the yellow card if he commits any of the following three offences:

1. is guilty of unsporting behaviour
2. shows dissent by word or action
3. delays the restart of play.

Sending-off offences

A player, substitute or substituted player is sent off and shown the red card if he commits any of the following seven offences:

1. is guilty of serious foul play
2. is guilty of violent conduct
3. spits at an opponent or any other person
4. denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goalscoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own penalty area)
5. denies an obvious goalscoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player’s goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick
6. uses offensive or insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
7. receives a second caution in the same match.



Respect



The attention of players, managers, coaches, referees and administrators is also drawn to increasing concern expressed as a result of problems both on and near football grounds involving the use of offensive or insulting or abusive language and/or gestures. The award of an indirect free kick in these circumstances, without the offending player being sent off, is not permitted in Law.

There are occasional incidents when a player, substitute player or substituted player makes an obscene or offensive gesture towards a match official, another player, a coach or a spectator. If such an action is seen by the referee or reported to by a neutral assistant referee to the referee, the player must be dealt with under this part of Law 12.

Referees are reminded that racist remarks constitute a dismissal offence in accordance with Law 12(S6) and must be punished accordingly.

An increasing number of complaints have been received from members of the public concerning offensive or insulting or abusive language and/or gestures in football.

The Football Association expects all concerned in the playing, controlling and organising of matches, at all levels, to make every effort to eradicate these problems. Players, managers, coaches, referees and administrators all have a responsibility in ensuring that the image of the national game is not tarnished either by the use or the acceptance of such language. Referees have been reminded to take the necessary and appropriate action when offensive or insulting or abusive language and/or gestures are used.

The first season of Respect

Throughout the first season of Respect (2008-09), its impact was monitored via a research programme. The following are the headline findings:

- In the professional game player behaviour has improved. There have been 44% fewer cases of mass confrontation and a 50% decline in cases of reported harassment of referees. Referees report an improved relationship with players but feel that some managers could set a better example to players and spectators.
- There has been an increase in the volume of dissent cautions in all leagues apart from the Premier League. The Professional Game Match Officials believe this to be a result of more referees dealing with on-field dissent, instead of tolerating it, as in previous seasons.
- The use of a team captains to assist the referee to manage player behaviour is considered to be of value.
- Compared to the same period for season 2007-08 there has been an 8% rise in referee numbers. There are 53% more student referees (Level 9) in training and a 3% increase in Levels 1 – 8 trainees.
- The FA is ahead of its recruitment targets for referees and currently has nearly 26,000 registered referees.
- The number of serious assaults on referees declined by 10% in 2008-09 but disappointingly over 500 referees still reported being subject to physical abuse.
- In the amateur game, cautions for dissent have risen by 3% but there has been a decline in charges for misconduct and the number of dismissals.
- The FA had a considerable impact in youth football with the promotion of adverts and educational courses dealing with the problem of abusive touchline parents. This will continue to be a focus for the work of The FA.
- The use of a Designated Spectators' Area marked by barriers, a painted line or cones is an effective way of improving spectator barriers in youth football.
- The vast majority of those involved in football agree that the Respect programme is definitely needed. It has to be a long-term programme that requires constant reinforcement and reinvention.





Respect support materials

To embed Respect in players:

- Dressing room posters emphasising the penalties for transgressing Law 12.
- Player Codes of Conduct.

To embed Respect in coaches, team manager(s) and club officials:

- Coaches, team manager(s) and club officials' Code of Conduct.

To embed Respect in spectators:

- Full-page advert in your match programme, including the Respect spectator Code of Conduct.
- Posters to display in/at your ground, again including the Respect spectator Code of Conduct.
- Editorial to explain the Respect programme for your match programme and club website.
- Standard press release for you to issue to your local media outlining your commitment to the Respect programme

To obtain any of these materials, please contact dermot.collins@TheFA.com. Dermot is The FA's Respect Manager.



Respect Codes of Conduct



Respect



Adult Players

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour in the game.

Players tell us they want a referee for every match, yet 7,000 match officials drop out each season because of the abuse and intimidation they receive on and off the pitch.

Respect your referee today and you may just get one for every match this season.

Play your part and observe The FA's **Respect Code of Conduct** for players at all times.

On and off the field, I will:

- Adhere to the Laws of The Game
- Display and promote high standards of behaviour
- Promote Fair Play
- Always respect the match officials' decisions
- Never engage in public criticism of the match officials
- Never engage in offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour
- Never engage in bullying, intimidation or harassment
- Speak to my team-mates, the opposition and my coach/manager with respect
- Remember we all make mistakes
- Win or lose with dignity. Shake hands with the opposing team and the referee at the end of every game.

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, any/all of the following actions may be taken by my club, County FA or The FA.

I may:

- Be required to apologise to team-mates, the other team, referee or team manager
- Receive a warning from the coach
- Receive a written warning from the club committee
- Be required to attend an FA education course
- Be dropped or substituted
- Be suspended from training
- Not be selected for the team
- Be required to serve a suspension
- Be fined
- Be required to leave the club.

In addition:

- The FA/County FA could impose a fine and/or suspension on the club.



Coaches, Team Managers and Club Officials

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour in the game.

In the FA's survey of 37,000 grassroots participants, behaviour was the biggest concern in the game. This included the abuse of match officials and the unacceptable behaviour of over competitive parents, spectators and coaches on the sideline.

Play your part and observe the FA's **Respect Code of Conduct** in everything you do.

On and off the field, I will:

- Show respect to others involved in the game including match officials, opposition players, coaches, managers, officials and spectators
- Adhere to the laws and spirit of the game
- Promote Fair Play and high standards of behaviour
- Always respect the match official's decision
- Never enter the field of play without the referee's permission
- Never engage in public criticism of the match officials
- Never engage in, or tolerate, offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour.

On and off the field, I will:

- Place the well-being, safety and enjoyment of each player above everything, including winning
- Explain exactly what I expect of players and what they can expect from me

- Ensure all parents/carers of all players under the age of 18 understand these expectations
- Never engage in or tolerate any form of bullying
- Develop mutual trust and respect with every player to build their self-esteem
- Encourage each player to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance
- Ensure all activities I organise are appropriate for the players' ability level, age and maturity
- Co-operate fully with others in football (e.g. officials, doctors, physiotherapists, welfare officers) for each player's best interests.

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, any/all of the following actions may be taken by my club, County FA or The FA.

I may be:

- Required to meet with the club, league or County Welfare Officer
- Required to meet with the club committee
- Monitored by another club coach
- Required to attend a FA education course
- Suspended by the club from attending matches
- Suspended or fined by the County FA
- Required to leave or be sacked by the club.

In addition:

- My FACA (FA Coaches Association) membership may be withdrawn.



Respect

Respect Code of Conduct

Spectators

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour in the game.

This is just as true for those who watch matches as it is for those who play or officiate.

Getting as many people as possible to positively support your club can only benefit the team – and abusive behaviour from spectators is the main reason cited for people not bringing children to matches. In turn, this means your club could be losing out on future generations of fans. Although football is a passionate game the best fans the world over are those that support their team but appreciate good play regardless of who provides it.

We all know the role the fans can play as a '12th man'. Make sure it's a positive one.

Play your part and observe The FA's **Respect Code of Conduct** for spectators at all times.

I will:

- Never engage in – or tolerate – offensive, insulting or abusive language
- Never engage in threatening or violent behaviour
- Never engage in racist or homophobic abuse
- Never abuse match officials
- Never abuse team officials of either side
- Abide by my club's Ground Regulations.

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, any/all of the following actions may be taken by my club, The FA or the police authorities.

I may:

- Issued with a verbal warning from a club or league official
- Obligated to leave the match venue by the club
- Requested by the club not to attend future games
- The FA could impose a fine and/or suspension on the club
- Subject to criminal proceedings by the Police.



Match Officials

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour in the game.

The behaviour of the match officials has an impact, directly and indirectly, on the conduct of everyone involved in the game - both on the pitch and on the sidelines.

Play your part and observe The FA's **Respect Code of Conduct** for match officials at all time.

I will:

- Be honest and completely impartial at all times
- Apply the Laws of the Game and competition rules fairly and consistently
- Manage the game in a positive, calm and confident manner
- Deal with all instances of violence, aggression, unsporting behaviour, foul play and other misconduct
- Never tolerate offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour from players and officials

- Support my match official colleagues at all times
- Set a positive personal example by promoting good behaviour and showing respect to everyone involved in the game
- Communicate with the players and encourage fair play.
- Respond in a clear, calm and confident manner to any appropriate request for clarification by the team captains
- Prepare physically and mentally for every match
- Complete and submit, accurate and concise reports within the time limit required for games in which I officiate.

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, any/all of the following actions may be taken by my club, County FA or The FA.

I may be:

- Required to meet with The FA/County FA Refereeing Official
- Required to meet with The FA/County FA Refereeing Committee.





Lose Respect
Lose the game

The Football Association
Wembley Stadium,
Wembley,
Middlesex HA9 0WS

Postal address:
The Football Association,
Wembley Stadium,
PO Box 1966,
London SW1P 9EQ

T **+44 (0) 844 980 8200**
F **+44 (0) 844 980 8201**
E **Respect@TheFA.com**



Respect

TheFA.com/Respect