BARCLAYS FA WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE ACADEMIES – GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION

For Parents & Carers

Version: 2.0
Published: JULY 2021
“What clubs deliver across the Barclays FA WSL Academy programme goes way beyond football, providing players with life skills, wellbeing and mental health support, with learning opportunities they wouldn’t get outside the programme.”

Charlotte Healy
FA WSL Academy Manager,
Manchester United Women
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION – Baroness Sue Campbell DBE</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE ROLE OF BARCLAYS FA WSL ACADEMIES IN THE WOMEN’S AND GIRLS’ FOOTBALL STRUCTURE</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BARCLAYS FA WSL ACADEMIES – WHAT DO THEY OFFER?</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT EVERY BARCLAYS FA WSL ACADEMY SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOUR PLAYER’S RIGHTS</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOOKING AFTER THE MENTAL HEALTH OF THE CHILD(REN) IN YOUR CARE</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOR FURTHER INFORMATION</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BARCLAYS FA WSL ACADEMIES AND THEIR MANAGERS</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACADEMIES ARE THE BEDROCK OF AN EXCITING FUTURE

Despite the massive challenges the Covid-19 pandemic has presented, women’s and girls’ football is starting to thrive again. And right now, we’re on the brink of a particularly exciting time, with lots of opportunities to grow all aspects of the game.

In the immediate future is the Tokyo Olympics featuring a GB women’s team, and then next year, the UEFA Women’s EUROs come to England, with nine cities across the nation playing host. Pausing for breath and another Barclays FA Women’s Super League season, it’s then onto the FIFA Women’s World Cup 2023, in Australia/New Zealand.

It all means the infrastructure to support the women’s professional game has to be as efficient and cohesive as possible if we are to develop the talent needed for our international teams to shine.

A key element of that infrastructure is the network of Barclays FA Women’s Super League Academies – all charged with the holistic development of young players, whether they advance to a career in the professional game or not. That’s what the handbook you’re reading is all about – we want every parent/carer of girls in the 15 Academies to be assured that the training their daughters/child(ren) in their care will get is first-class, provided by top-quality coaches and support staff. Crucially, we must also provide reassurance that best-practice safeguarding standards will be observed at all times.

But Academies are only one element of our plans to grow the women’s and girls’ game in England. Our new strategy for the game – Inspiring Positive Change – pledges to create a sustainable future for women’s and girls’ football in England and to develop an inclusive and diverse talent pathway. Major investment in the player pathway over the coming years will ensure a clear signposted route for players from the grassroots to the very top of the game.

At the elite level, professional football is now a genuine career path for talented girls, with ever-growing media interest. The game is on an upward journey and it’s in that spirit that I hope you find the contents of this handbook useful as you support your daughter/ward on their own footballing journey. Of course, if you have any questions, don’t hesitate to speak to your club’s Academy Manager in the first instance.

Baroness Sue Campbell DBE
Director of Women’s Football
Women’s and girls’ football in England has come a long way in a very short space of time. Today it is organised around age groups, each with specific objectives. The chart on the next page shows how everything fits together.

At present, there are 15 clubs with an Academy. All of them support players aged 16-20 inclusive.

The Barclays FA WSL Academies are sponsored by Barclays as part of the brand’s wide-ranging partnership across women’s and girls’ football in England. They operate for a minimum of 36 weeks between the months of July and the following May.

Barclays FA WSL Academies exist for three main reasons:

- To develop every aspect of a player who has the potential to become a professional and have a paid career in the game;
- To create a pathway to the England teams, who are ready to win major tournaments;
- To ensure aspiring professionals’ educational/career needs are met – whether they subsequently have a professional football career or not.

A complete list of Barclays FA WSL Academies and their managers is given on page 18. There is more detail about the services they offer on pages 7 and 8.

“We do not promote a ‘one size fits all’ model with regards to education options in the Academy. We create different routes to meet individual needs to prepare each of the young females most effectively for the future career they would like to have alongside or after football.”

Leandra Little
Academy Education Lead, Liverpool FC
THE STRUCTURE OF WOMEN’S AND GIRLS’ FOOTBALL IN ENGLAND

Barclays FA WSL Academies are a key part of this part of the structure:

- England Pathway
- England Senior Team
- Club Player Pathway
- Barclays FA WSL/FA Women’s Championship
- Football for All

Players
- Early Participation: 5-11

Coaches
- Coaching/Education and Development

Refs
- Refereeing/Education and Development

People, Places and Expert Services
- Safeguarding
- Marketing & Communications
- Technology
- Inclusion
- Facilities
- Workforce

A Sustainable Future for Women’s and Girls’ Football in England
BARCLAYS FA WSL ACADEMIES – WHAT DO THEY OFFER?

Player development and personal development go hand-in-hand at every Barclays FA WSL Academy. That’s because balancing football and education is vital. Every player should be encouraged to follow their career path of choice, which may begin during or after their playing career. There’s more detail on this dual-career approach here.

With this in mind, every player in a Barclays FA WSL Academy has two core support sources:

- **For football:** The club’s Academy Manager (see page 18) and their technical staff.
- **For education:** The designated Academy Education Lead, working alongside the respective Academy’s principal education partner(s) – see chart overleaf – or the institution at which a player chooses to be educated.

**THE ROLE OF TASS**

Both areas are underpinned by the services of TASS (Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme). TASS is a Sport England-funded partnership between talented athletes, education institutions and national governing bodies of sport (e.g. The FA). All parties work together to bring the best out of our country’s most exciting young talents.

The providers of TASS’ services are also shown in the on the next page.

TASS helps athletes – in this case footballers – to get the very best from their sporting and academic careers without having to choose between the two. Different levels of support are provided across the talent pathway – one level is the support provided to Barclays FA WSL Academies, tailored to each club.

To read more about TASS, visit https://www.tass.gov.uk/

Whether it’s a player’s football or educational development, the emphasis is on a programme that’s bespoke to the player. In effect, TASS either fills in service gaps Academies may not be set up to provide, or it provides more facets to existing Academy services. Barclays FA WSL Academies have the freedom to opt-out of TASS’ services if they wish.

**THE ACADEMIC EDUCATION OFFER**

A player’s football ‘education’ at an Academy will include developing technique, skills and tactical awareness. Academically, options can include studying to achieve qualifications (e.g. A Levels, BTEC, Degree, etc.). Work-based learning (e.g. apprenticeships) options are also available if a player is better-suited to them.

Every young person can attend the college/sixth form or university of their choice. However, each Barclays FA WSL Academy is linked to a principal education provider for further education courses, as shown in the chart on page 9.

These education providers have been selected for their flexibility of approach and support of elite performers.

At the end of each educational stage, Academies support a player’s transition. That could be either to the next educational level, or an exit to a career. As far as transition within football is concerned, the Academy will support upward progress at the club, or an exit to another club more appropriate to the player’s ability.

“The opportunity for girls to follow a dual pathway allowing them to continue to progress in football without negating the importance of study is one that can’t and shouldn’t be missed. Schools and colleges find a way to be flexible and adaptable by ensuring a best-fit programme and an appropriate balance of study and football, in that order.”

Ben Starkey
Assistant Principal, Chobham Academy (Principal Education Provider to West Ham United Women’s Academy)
DIPLOMA IN SPORTING EXCELLENCE (DISE)

All Barclays FA WSL Academies are given the opportunity for their players to enrol on the Diploma in Sporting Excellence (DISE).

The DISE programme is a Government-funded education programme designed to directly measure and enhance the skills, experiences, and knowledge that talented young players develop through football. DISE is available to players aged 16-18, with the content being delivered over two years whilst players are carrying out their further education. DISE has recently been recognised by UCAS and completing the programme is the equivalent to achieving two A Levels at grade C (64 UCAS points).

The majority of the DISE programme is made up of players’ training and match time, with a series of workshops forming the remainder of the qualification. Evidence for the qualification is produced naturally within the learners’ Barclays FA WSL Academy environment, as well as being developed in collaboration with Loughborough College tutors. The DISE qualification includes support in the following areas:

• Technical skills, Tactical skills and Physical capability: Primarily delivered through Barclays FA WSL Academy training and competition programme.

• Nutrition and Psychology: Workshop and 1:1 support from qualified specialists.

• Lifestyle, Career, Communication, Health & Safety and Culture, values and behaviour: These are all delivered by the Barclays FA WSL Academy and supplemented with the DISE Player Care Package.

The DISE programme gives players additional knowledge, skills, and experiences that will support them not only within, but also outside their sporting career.

Please note that the DISE programme is only available to players within Barclays FA WSL Academies. The programme can be shaped to the specific needs of each club (e.g. timing of delivery).

In addition, some Barclays FA WSL Academy clubs may not take up the opportunity to be involved in DISE. For the 2021/22 season, DISE is unavailable for learners studying at an independent school. However, if learners are in receipt of a bursary of greater than 50% then they are eligible for the programme.
BARCLAYS FA WSL CLUB ACADEMIES’ PRINCIPAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS AND TASS SERVICE PROVIDERS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLUB</th>
<th>PRINCIPAL EDUCATION PROVIDER</th>
<th>TASS PROVIDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arsenal</td>
<td>Oaklands College</td>
<td>University of Hertfordshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aston Villa</td>
<td>Arthur Terry School and Birmingham Metropolitan College</td>
<td>University of Wolverhampton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham City</td>
<td>Alderbrook School and Solihull College</td>
<td>University of Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighton &amp; Hove Albion</td>
<td>Worthing College and various geographical locations</td>
<td>University of Brighton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol City</td>
<td>South Gloucestershire and Stroud College</td>
<td>University of Gloucestershire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelsea</td>
<td>Various geographical locations</td>
<td>No TASS partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everton</td>
<td>Carmel College</td>
<td>Liverpool John Moores University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipswich Town</td>
<td>St Joseph’s College</td>
<td>University of Essex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester City</td>
<td>Loughborough College</td>
<td>De Montfort University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>Rainhill Sixth Form</td>
<td>Liverpool John Moores University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester City</td>
<td>Connell Sixth Form College</td>
<td>Manchester Metropolitan University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester United</td>
<td>Eccles Sixth Form and Wigan &amp; Leigh College</td>
<td>Manchester Metropolitan University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>John Madejski Academy</td>
<td>Buckinghamshire New University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tottenham Hotspur</td>
<td>Barnet and Southgate College and various geographical locations.</td>
<td>King's College London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Ham United</td>
<td>Chobham Academy</td>
<td>University of East London</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The FA’s licensing criteria for Barclays FA WSL Academies also state that clubs should ensure no Academy players should have to travel for more than 90 minutes from home to the training ground/educational site. You can read the full criteria [here](#).

For further information regarding the balance of education and football, the relevant contacts are listed under ‘For further information’ on [page 17](#).
WHAT EVERY BARCLAYS FA WSL ACADEMY MUST HAVE IN PLACE

LEADERSHIP:
Every Barclays FA WSL Academy should have a defined Academy Manager. He/she is responsible for the leadership and management of the Academy programme and plan. They will also oversee the holistic provision for players and ensure open and ongoing communication with parents/carers.

FOOTBALL COACHING:

- **Coaches:** Every coach involved with a Barclays FA WSL Academy must be an FA-licensed coach and registered to coach and work at the specific Academy.

- **Other technical staff:** Every staff member involved with coaching players must hold one of the following:
  - FA Youth Award Modules 1 and 2; or
  - Blocks 1 and 2 of the ‘new’ FA Level 2 in Coaching Football; or
  - Be booked onto these specific blocks within six months of being appointed to work at the Academy; or
  - Hold a UEFA ‘B’ coaching licence.

- **Specialist coaches:** Every Academy must have a specialist goalkeeping coach. He/she must hold a minimum of The FA Level 2 qualification in goalkeeping coaching, though it is preferable they hold The FA Level 3 equivalent.

- **General staff:** All Barclays FA WSL Academy staff must hold the FA Level 1 Introduction to First Aid in Football, or a valid FA emergency aid qualification. They must also comply with all FA safeguarding requirements. You can find these requirements here.

MEDICAL AND RELATED SUPPORT STAFF:

- **Medical:** Every Barclays FAWSL Academy should have access to a doctor to oversee all aspects of medical care for Academy players. For all matches and training sessions there must be a member of staff with at least the Level 4 Intermediate Trauma Medical Management in Football qualification. Every Academy must have a full set of emergency medical equipment, which will include an automated defibrillator.

- **Physiotherapist:** Every Barclays FA WSL club must ensure a qualified physiotherapist or a sports therapist attends all Academy training sessions and matches. The physiotherapist or sport therapist must have immediate access to the pitch. They must also deliver prehab and rehab programmes and keep comprehensive player medical records.

- **General staff:** All Barclays FA WSL Academy staff must hold the FA Level 1 Introduction to First Aid in Football, or a valid FA emergency aid qualification. They must also comply with all FA safeguarding requirements. You can find these requirements here.

PERFORMANCE SERVICES
As a minimum, each Barclays FA WSL Academy should offer access to strength & conditioning, physiotherapy, and lifestyle support. This support may be provided by club staff or through the club’s partner TASS Provider. In cases where the club provides the minimum performance service requirements, the club can utilise the TASS Provider to deliver psychology and nutrition support.
EDUCATION:

- **A lead person for all education matters:** This person will liaise with education providers and be available if required to support discussion, on the balance of academic study and vocational training, between the Academy, sixth form or college, parent/carer and development player.

- **Induction:** Every Academy player – and their parents/carers – must be given an annual induction programme, supported with all relevant documentation. Such induction should be delivered individually to players who join mid-season.

- **Development plans:** Every Academy player should have a written, up-to-date individual development plan (IDP) in place at all times. The IDP must include educational development targets as well as football-based targets.

- **Reviews:** Every Academy player should have at least three reviews per season on all aspects of their development which is followed up in writing. A parent/carer should be present for all under-18 players.

SAFEGUARDING:

At every level of the game, The FA is committed to keeping football safe and fun. Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility, but within Barclays FA WSL Academies, it’s important to have procedures in place to ensure everyone understands their role in safeguarding players. Therefore, every Barclays FA WSL Academy must have:

- **A Safeguarding Policy** – which should have been communicated to you at your club induction. This will mirror The FA’s Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. As such, it will show how you should report any concerns you have, and to whom. It will also show the process that...
What every Barclays FA WSL Academy must have in place (continued)

the club/Academy will follow when a concern is reported.

- **A lead person for all safeguarding issues** – this person may have different titles at different clubs, e.g. Designated Safeguarding Officer, Welfare Officer, Educational & Welfare Officer. Irrespective of their job title, their role is essentially the same – they are the 'go to' person for all safeguarding concerns. You should be introduced to the safeguarding lead at your club induction.

- **An agreement in place between the club/Academy and you as parent/carer** – this is a formal document which the club/Academy should give you to sign, confirming they have provided you with information such as:
  - The club/Academy safeguarding policy and procedures, including whistle-blowing policy;
  - Policies covering:
    - Anti-bullying;
    - Equality;
    - Social media usage;
  - Codes of Conduct;
  - A form you are required to sign providing consent for the child(ren) in your care to be subject to drug testing as required by The FA Anti-Doping Regulations. For further information about anti-doping, see here.
  - The club/Academy website pages and social media channels;
  - Lead safeguarding person and their contact details;
  - The names and contact details of the appropriately-qualified personnel who will be coaching the child(ren) in your care;
  - Training venue(s), times of training, facilities on offer and kit requirements;
  - How the club/Academy will communicate with you;
  - The club/Academy website pages and social media channels;
  - Names and contact details of the appropriately-qualified personnel who will be coaching the child(ren) in your care. This will be unique to every Academy player.

Next steps could include:

- A professional contract, where a player immediately goes to the first-team squad;
- A professional contract, but the player goes on a loan period to another club;
- An offer for the child(ren) in your care to remain in the Academy as non-professional Higher Education (HE) learner(s), e.g. taking a university course;
- A discussion advising the child(ren) in your care to play at a different level as the next step of their football development. This will often involve going to a different club.

Regardless of the outcome, the club should be actively supporting you and the child(ren) in your care to source and arrange the next step.

Every player is different, but there are a number of things to remember about this period:

- Progress is rarely linear. Very few players go immediately from the Academy to the first team. Most go ‘out to go up’ and may move to another club for a period as part of their journey.
- It is important that players get the chance to play. The next step after an Academy needs to be one with a playing opportunity, not endless time on a bench, or not selected.
- Individual players develop their football skills and understanding at different rates. So try and avoid comparing the child(ren) in your care’s development with her peers, as she may be an early or late developer as a talented player. What’s paramount is every player’s wellbeing and happiness.
- To consider all options requires lots of discussions. Ask questions of all clubs involved. Don’t pre-judge clubs, talk to them and ask questions. Consider how the decision you make affects educational and career aspirations. This may influence the decision you make. Take your time, don’t rush it. Seek support and advice from The FA if you need. The FA cannot recommend one club over another, but will let you know key facts about your options.

EXIT STRATEGY WHEN THE CHILD(REN) IN YOUR CARE ACADEMY TIME IS OVER:

The time the child in your care has at an Academy will vary. For most it will be for the two-year Further Education (FE) study duration, but some players may remain in the Academy post-18. That’s at the discretion of the club.

At the end of your FE study, the club will discuss the next steps with you and the child(ren) in your care. This will be unique to every Academy player.

Other provisions and services the club/Academy should have in place are covered in the next section: ‘Questions you should ask’. Please also refer to The FA’s full licensing criteria for Barclays FA WSL Academies here.
QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK

Below are some questions you have every right to ask as a parent/carer. The key is to ask them – and any other questions you may have – direct to the Academy Manager first, next to the FA Academy Manager centrally, or if the child(ren) in your care is in one of the England squads, to the Technical Leads.

That’s because the right answer may change Academy to Academy and in some cases, player to player.

**GENERAL QUESTIONS:**

- What should I do if I have a complaint? (i.e. a non-safeguarding-related one)
- To whom do I speak to if the child(ren) in my care needs to live closer to the club/Academy?
- To whom do I speak regarding balancing the pressures of being a dual-career player, i.e. balancing education and football?
- What should I do if the child(ren) in my care is unhappy at the club and wants to move clubs?
- How will the child(ren) in my care be supported when she/they leave the Academy?
- Are there any opportunities for me, as a parent, to participate in workshops or other initiatives to support the child(ren) in my care within football?
- What should I expect the child(ren) in my care’s review (see page 12) to comprise and cover?
- What is the role of an intermediary or agent?
- Are all the child(ren) in my care’s coaches Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)-Checked?
- Are all the child(ren) in my care’s coaches FA-trained and appropriately qualified for the level at which they’re working?
- Where can I get a copy of the club/Academy’s safeguarding policy and procedures – as well as policies on anti-bullying, equality and social media usage, alongside guidance on keeping safe online?
- Who is the lead safeguarding person at the club/Academy – and how do I contact them?
- What is the role of the club/Academy lead safeguarding person?
- Are all the child(ren) in my care’s coaches trained to recognise and respond to any safeguarding concerns?
- If I have a concern about the child(ren) in my care, or someone’s behaviour towards them, what should I do?
- What are the club’s Codes of Conduct for staff, players, spectators and referees – and where can I get copies?
- How will you communicate with me and/or the child(ren) in my care?
- If appropriate – how will you support the child(ren) in my care’s specific medical/additional needs?
- What controls do you have in place for the photographing and videoing of my the child(ren) in my care?
- What are your policies and procedures when travelling to away games and/or tournaments – especially if they involve overnight stays?

**IN RELATION TO SAFEGUARDING:**

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. As a parent/carer you have a responsibility to ask the club/Academy the questions below – and get satisfactory answers.

Some of the questions may have been answered if the club/Academy has already provided you with the information outlined in ‘What every Barclays FA WSL Academy must have in place’, which starts on page 10

- Are all the child(ren) in my care’s coaches Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)-Checked?
- Are all the child(ren) in my care’s coaches FA-trained and appropriately qualified for the level at which they’re working?
- Where can I get a copy of the club/Academy’s safeguarding policy and procedures – as well as policies on anti-bullying, equality and social media usage, alongside guidance on keeping safe online?
- Who is the lead safeguarding person at the club/Academy – and how do I contact them?

For more information about how you can play your part in safeguarding your child, please visit the parents/carers’ safeguarding section on The FA website by clicking here.

---

BARCLAYS FA WOMEN’S SUPER LEAGUE ACADEMIES – GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS

VERSION 2.0; JULY 2021
PLAYERS’ RIGHTS

Everybody who plays football – whatever the setting – has the right to feel safe so they can enjoy our great game.

This means the child(ren) in your care has rights too. These are contained in The FA’s safeguarding Guidance Notes 7.1: Understanding Your Rights In Football. You can download these [here](#), but they are also listed alongside.

Ideally, you’ll provide the child(ren) in your care with these guidance notes, or go through them with her.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLAYERS’ RIGHTS:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• You have the right to feel safe on and offline;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You have the right to healthy relationships and appropriate boundaries;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You have the right not to be bullied, harassed or intimidated;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You have the right not to feel uncomfortable or unsafe;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You have the right not to be discriminated against because of your age, gender, gender reassignment, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership, faith, ability or disability, pregnancy and maternity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT A PLAYER CAN DO:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Tell an adult you trust at home, school or college or at football;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• E-mail <a href="mailto:safeguarding@TheFA.com">safeguarding@TheFA.com</a>, or speak to your Designated Safeguarding Officer;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Contact the NSPCC for free <a href="">0808 800 5000</a> or Childline <a href="">0800 1111</a> or visit their website for more information;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If someone is in immediate danger dial <a href="">999</a> to speak to the Police;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Set up privacy settings for your online profiles;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Report inappropriate online behaviour to Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP). See contact details below.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HELPFUL ORGANISATIONS:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Childline: <a href="https://www.childline.org.uk/">https://www.childline.org.uk/ Helpline: 0808 1111</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEOP: <a href="https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/">https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEOP: <a href="https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/14_plus/">ThinkUknow – https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/14_plus/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stonewall: <a href="http://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice">http://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YoungMinds: <a href="https://youngminds.org.uk/">https://youngminds.org.uk/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DisrespectNoBody: <a href="https://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/">https://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LOOKING AFTER THE MENTAL HEALTH OF THE CHILD(REN) IN YOUR CARE

There is much to do, but slowly the stigma around talking about mental health is reducing. The fact is that mental health and physical health are as important as each other. In turn, both require regular attention to complement each other.

For young women in Academies, there can be a lot to balance, all of which can have an effect on mental health. On the one hand, there’s the health benefits of training and playing towards what could be a potential career path. This can bring its own stresses, although there’s also the inherent benefits of being part of a team.

On the other hand, there’s the pressure of schoolwork, exams, other extra-curricular activities such as representative schools’ football and time to socialise etc.

There’s also the pressure to perform on the pitch, maintain a place on the team, and deal with any injuries and setbacks.

The FA has – and will continue to – produce a series of mental health guidance notes for those working inside football (e.g. coaches/managers, referees etc.) – to help themselves and those with whom they work, e.g. players. You can read the guidance that has been produced here:

- Managers/coaches in adult football
- Referees

In every case, the guidance is based around three S’s:
- **Spotting the signs;**
- **Supporting;**
- **Signposting.**

Here’s some tips around each of the above, if any mental health problems arise for the child(ren) in your care – the most common problems being depression and anxiety:

**Spotting the signs:**
This list below isn’t exhaustive and of course, could be an understandable reaction to a life situation, such as a bereavement, relationship break-up or major disappointment.

- Constant level of tiredness;
- Getting no – or reduced – pleasure from playing football;
- Getting no – or reduced – joy from personal and social lives;
- Lowered engagement with friends and/or family;
- Unusual disinterest in hobbies or pastimes;
- Negative changes in demeanour/personality/appearance;
- Noticeable drop in focus/concentration;
- Excessive anxiety about matters that are normally not an issue;
- Deterioration in physical health/fitness;
- Frequent negative interactions/increased negativity/irritation;
- Frequent negative interactions/increased negativity/irritation;
LOOKING AFTER THE MENTAL HEALTH OF THE CHILD(REN) IN YOUR CARE (continued)

Supporting:
As parents and carers, it’s important to let young people know you are always there to listen without judging them, as and when they want to talk to you. But don’t be offended if they initially choose someone else with whom to share their concerns. Knowing you are there when they are ready to share provides a stable source of support for them to tap into.

There are also some supportive, basic self-care tips for the child(ren) in your care to follow. These include:

- Getting enough sleep – at least eight hours a night
- Eating regularly and healthily – three meals a day, with snacks when training;
- Having fun – spend time with friends and family;
- Taking time out – read a book, do yoga, meditate, go for a relaxing swim;
- Talking (ideally to you as their parent/carer, or another trusted family member, or a close friend);
- Visit your GP: GPs have general knowledge in the area of mental health and are also the gateway to specialist mental health services.

In relation to the last bullet point, there are five evidence-based tips to establish, maintain and improve mental health and wellbeing. Here’s a link to find out more:
https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/

Importantly, if you’re worried a young person may be thinking about suicide, you should urgently contact mental health services, the GP or the police in an emergency.

Signposting:
There are three main signposts for you/the child(ren) in your care to follow if a mental health problem has arisen:

- Talk: To you as their parent/carer, or another trusted family member, or a close friend;
- Visit your GP: GPs have general knowledge in the area of mental health and are also the gateway to specialist mental health services.

- Contact a specialist mental health organisation: These include:
  - Mind: www.mind.org.uk
  - Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
  - The Samaritans: www.samaritans.org
  - NHS: www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression
  - ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk
  - The Mix (offers support for under 25s) www.themix.org.uk

In addition, on behalf of all Barclays FA WSL Academies, The FA works in partnership with the ‘If U Care Share’ Foundation. To find out more visit: https://www.ifucareshare.co.uk/

Bespoke support
All Barclays FA WSL Academy players who are part of clubs that opt in to TASS services have the opportunity to receive TASS mental health and wellbeing support through Care First. A network of qualified counsellors is available over the phone 24/7 on 0333 212 8383. This is a completely confidential service available to Barclays FA WSL Academy players.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

The FA’s investment into women’s and girls’ football in England has included wide-ranging support staff. Here are the key FA first-point-of-contacts for parents/carers with a child(ren) in Barclays FA WSL Academies:

Tony Fretwell, Barclays FA WSL Academy Manager  
Tony.Fretwell@TheFA.com

David Faulkner, Women’s Football, Director of Performance  
David.Faulkner@TheFA.com

“Barclays FA WSL Academies are underpinned by a dual career philosophy that promotes and guides each developing player towards independent and lifelong learning. This is achieved through a balanced programme of academic study and vocational training, which meet the needs of the individual at each stage of their development. The qualifications gained provide the platform to pursue a career alongside their football or as and when the needs arises.”

Sean England  
Player Education Manager, The FA
# BARCLAYS FA WSL ACADEMIES AND THEIR MANAGERS

As at start of 2021/22 season

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLUB</th>
<th>ACADEMY MANAGER</th>
<th>EMAIL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arsenal</td>
<td>James Honeyman</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jhoneyman@arsenal.co.uk">jhoneyman@arsenal.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aston Villa</td>
<td>Crissy Torkildsen and Jack Peel</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cristina.torkildsen@avfc.co.uk">cristina.torkildsen@avfc.co.uk</a>, <a href="mailto:jack.peel@avfc.co.uk">jack.peel@avfc.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham City</td>
<td>Paul Cowie</td>
<td><a href="mailto:paul.cowie@bcfc.com">paul.cowie@bcfc.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighton &amp; Hove Albion</td>
<td>Florence Haines</td>
<td><a href="mailto:florence.haines@brightonandhovealbion.com">florence.haines@brightonandhovealbion.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol City</td>
<td>Frances Davis</td>
<td><a href="mailto:frances.davis@bristolcitywfc.co.uk">frances.davis@bristolcitywfc.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelsea</td>
<td>Dean Steninger</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dean.steninger@chelseafc.com">dean.steninger@chelseafc.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everton</td>
<td>Thomas Walsh</td>
<td><a href="mailto:thomas.walsh@evertontfc.com">thomas.walsh@evertontfc.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipswich Town</td>
<td>Joe Sheehan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:joe.sheehan@itfc.co.uk">joe.sheehan@itfc.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester City</td>
<td>Louis Sowe</td>
<td><a href="mailto:louis.sowe@lcfc.co.uk">louis.sowe@lcfc.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>Julie Grundy</td>
<td><a href="mailto:julie.grundy@liverpoolfc.com">julie.grundy@liverpoolfc.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester City</td>
<td>Jayne Ludlow</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jayne.ludlow@mancity.com">jayne.ludlow@mancity.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester United</td>
<td>Charlotte Healy</td>
<td><a href="mailto:charlotte.healy@manutd.co.uk">charlotte.healy@manutd.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Rob Gier</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rgier@readingfc.co.uk">rgier@readingfc.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tottenham Hotspur</td>
<td>Chris Gould</td>
<td><a href="mailto:chris.gould@tottenhamhotspur.com">chris.gould@tottenhamhotspur.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Ham United</td>
<td>Myles Smith</td>
<td><a href="mailto:msmith@westhamunited.co.uk">msmith@westhamunited.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above details were correct at the time of creating this guidance. If you have any problems making contact, please contact the Barclays FA WSL Academy Manager at The FA (see previous page).
“The Barclays FA WSL Academy Programme not only provides players with a direct pathway to our first team, it also allows them to follow their academic aspirations knowing they will be supported throughout. The added support from The FA and TASS provides a holistic athlete-centred approach that develops our players on the pitch and in the classroom – and enables them to reach their full potential.”

Rob Gier
Reading FC Women’s Academy Manager