



WOMEN'S FOOTBALL CLUBS GUIDANCE: ACCOMMODATION ARRANGEMENTS

Version: 1.0

Published: 9 November 2020

FOR WOMEN'S CLUBS



THE SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE OF ALL CHILDREN IS PARAMOUNT

This guidance document outlines the Football Association's expectations of Clubs in the Women's professional game in respect of any accommodation arrangements for 16 and 17-year-old players who need to live away from home to undertake their training at the Club. This guidance is designed to support Clubs in ensuring appropriate accommodation is provided for those players. These accommodation arrangements must be assessed, agreed and monitored by Clubs, with written records maintained, to ensure young players are safeguarded. Players under the age of 16 **should not** be living away from their parent or legal guardian for footballing reasons.

Clubs must have policies and procedures in place to safeguard players in line with The FA's Safeguarding Policy, Procedure and Regulations. Working in partnership with players and their parents/carers is essential to support effective safeguarding measures. Parents/carers and players should be engaged with decisions made regarding their accommodation options. Everyone involved must be comfortable with and agree to the accommodation arrangement proposed. Every player must have an accommodation plan that is developed in collaboration with the player, parents/carer, club and accommodation provider. A template is available at appendix A.



1. WHAT DO WE MEAN BY AN ACCOMMODATION ARRANGEMENT?

We consider an “accommodation arrangement” to include any of the following:

A. HOST FAMILY

A “host family” is an unrelated, independent family or individual contracted or employed by a Club to provide a safe, welcoming environment for the purpose of accommodating 16 or 17-year-old players who need to live away from home to undertake their training at the Club. That environment should be clean, in good decorative order and have a spare bedroom for use by the player that is not used for any other purpose, such as office work, leisure time, or storage of possessions that the family need access to.

B. CLUB EDUCATION PROVIDER ACCOMMODATION

This accommodation is usually available through the education provider’s facility, typically a residential campus off club site.

C. CLUB ACCOMMODATION

This would include communal accommodation provided by Clubs for use by players that are registered to train/play football for the Club.

If Clubs are using any other forms of accommodation to house players, this should be disclosed to The FA for consideration.



2. HOST FAMILY ARRANGEMENTS

A. SAFER RECRUITMENT OF HOST FAMILIES

Host Family applicants may become known to Clubs through existing networks or through Club advertising. If advertising, Clubs should consider the suitability of the method of advertising given the responsibilities and requirements of Host Families and the age of the players that they will be accommodating. Clubs should be transparent in their recruitment processes, which includes reference requests and checks (e.g. Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service and Local Authority Checks) of all household members aged 18 and above; and the standards of care and competencies required to act as a Host Family.

Prospective Host Families can then make an informed decision about whether they wish to proceed and request an application form. Clubs must **never** divulge personal details about the player during the Host Family recruitment process. Suggested application questions can be found in [appendix B](#).

B. APPLICATION PROCESS

Clubs must use the information provided in the application form to screen potential applicants. Where suitable, Clubs will schedule a, or a series of, home visit/s to meet all household members to understand more about the family structure, routines and commitments, strengths and challenges, and any medical or other personal issues. The prospective Host Family is expected to be open and honest in order to enable an accurate assessment to be completed. This can also help the Club find a suitable player placement.

Clubs should provide an overview of Host Family requirements and processes ([appendix C](#)) and assess the household for health and safety minimum standards ([appendix D](#)).

If the applicants are considered to be suitable, all members of the household will be required to read and agree to uphold the Club's Safeguarding policies and procedures. Where a family member is under 18, the family may instead choose to explain the content of the policies using child-friendly language. All members of the household must attend a Club induction, which includes a safeguarding briefing. At least one adult member of the household must attend safeguarding training/e-learning before the commencement of the Host Family arrangement.

C. PLACING A PLAYER INTO A HOST FAMILY

Before a player is placed with a Host Family, the Club Designated Safeguarding Officer must ensure that the relevant checks have been accepted by The FA and Club.

Where possible the player and their parent/carer should have the opportunity to visit the Host Family and all household members, with the Club Designated Safeguarding Officer. The player with their parent/carers and the Host Family should be given ample time, following this meeting, to decide if they are happy to commence with the arrangement.

If one party does not agree to commence the arrangement, the Club should explore the reasons with that party in order to develop their understanding of all parties involved. This may not be shared with the other parties unless the declining party has provided their consent to do so.

Upon agreement to commence the Host Family arrangement, all parties should be made aware of the expectations, and should set, agree and sign a code of conduct. A template can be found in [appendix E](#) which Clubs should develop as they think appropriate.

All parties, including the players parent/carer, must be given a list of useful contact numbers, including those of the Club Designated Safeguarding Officer, FA Safeguarding Team, Local Authority – Children's Services (including out of hours) national and regional support services and Emergency Services at the commencement of the stay.

Before a new season commences Clubs should contact Host Families to determine if they will be continuing to provide accommodation and record any changes to their circumstances before an existing player is placed with them. If they will be hosting a new player Clubs are expected to repeat the process outlined in this section.

3. CLUB EDUCATION PROVIDER ACCOMMODATION

In using accommodation available through the Club's education provider, Clubs should be satisfied that relevant policies and procedures are in place that meet health and safety, safer recruitment and safeguarding requirements.

In the service level agreement with the education provider, Club's should include compliance measures and request copies of policy, procedure, risk assessments and player care plans where relevant.

Players in this provision must have:

- a suitable bedroom that is not shared, in good decorative order that is appropriately ventilated with heating available. This should be suitably furnished with adequate space for study. This must be lockable;
- suitable toilet and washing facilities that provide privacy and can be locked from the inside;
- protection from access by people not authorised to be onsite (e.g. members of the public, unauthorised guests or contractors);
- personal private space free of any surveillance equipment (e.g. CCTV cameras);
- lockable cupboard to keep personal possessions, money or valuables safe;
- suitable kitchen facilities for the hygienic preparation, serving and consumption of meals;
- access to well-maintained communal space; and
- suitable access to facilities that meet cultural, religious or health needs.



4. CLUB ACCOMMODATION

In sourcing and providing communal accommodation Clubs are responsible for suitability assessing the risk, safely recruiting, training and supervising staff who will have access to the accommodation and will be providing support to the player. The Club is responsible for ensuring the relevant policies and procedures are in place in line with Legislation and statutory guidance. It is recommended that Clubs who use this type of accommodation seek specialist advice.

Clubs must have the following policies and procedure in place as a minimum:

- Safeguarding, including a procedure for players to raise concerns about the accommodation arrangement;
- Safer recruitment;
- Health and safety including fire safety;
- Reporting, managing, and supporting players who sustain an injury or are unwell, use of medication and emergency medical treatment;
- Anti-bullying;
- Behaviour management and discipline;
- Incident management to include procedures to ensure alternative arrangements can be made to accommodate players in the event of emergencies;
- Guests, visitors or contractors requiring access to the property;
- Complaints, including managing allegations against staff, staff discipline and whistleblowing; and
- Substance misuse.

In addition, consideration should be given to the following:

- **Boarding School – National Minimum Standards – Department for Education March 2015.**
- **The Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005** (directly applicable to children under 16 years of age only but useful for best practice).
- **National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering – Department for Education and Skills 2005** (directly applicable to children under 16 years of age only but useful for best practice).

- **Guide to Children’s Homes Regulations – including the Quality Standards – Department for Education March 2015.**
- **Introduction to Children’s Homes – Ofsted July 2018.**
- **Guide to registration for children’s social care services - Ofsted November 2018.**

Players in this provision must have:

- a suitable bedroom that is not shared, in good decorative order that is appropriately ventilated with heating available. This should be suitably furnished with adequate space for study. This must be lockable;
- suitable toilet and washing facilities that provides privacy and can be locked from the inside;
- protection from access by anyone not authorised to be on site (e.g. members of the public, unauthorised guests or contractors)
- personal private space free of any surveillance equipment (e.g. CCTV cameras);
- lockable cupboard to keep personal possessions, money or valuables safe;
- suitable kitchen facilities for the hygienic preparation, serving and consumption of meals;
- access to well-maintained communal space; and
- suitable access to facilities that meet cultural, religious or health needs.

5. MONITORING ACCOMMODATION ARRANGEMENTS

All players living in an accommodation arrangement must be:

- made aware, and encouraged, that where they feel uncomfortable, concerned or anxious about their living arrangements, they must report this to the Club's Designated Safeguarding Officer to action in line with policy and procedure;
- assured that they can raise concerns at any time and do not need to wait to raise these at formal reviews;
- given contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Officer, relevant FA contacts, along with the number of children's services within the local authority (including out of hours) and reminded to call emergency services if they feel they are in immediate danger.

Concerns may include bullying and/or discrimination of any kind; harmful behaviours such as smoking, drinking and/or illegal drug use within the home; visitors to the household that make them feel unsafe; incidents of physical, sexual, emotional abuse; or where the accommodation provider or Host Family have neglected or failed to provide a safe environment.

The Club Designated Safeguarding Officer must regularly check in with a player living in an accommodation arrangement to discuss their well-being, including any concerns arising from their living arrangement. This should be done in person in the club environment. Clubs should also check in with the player's parent/carers. In a player's formal review, their accommodation arrangement must also be discussed. Any safeguarding concerns that arise must be reported and actioned in line with the Club's Safeguarding policy and procedure.

Host Families should also be given the opportunity to raise any concerns with the Club at any time and they will also be subject to a formal review.

The Clubs Designated Safeguarding Officer should be present at any review of the accommodation arrangements and consideration should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Any changes in the Host Family's circumstances since the initial registration or last formal review;
- Any changes to the players circumstances (e.g. review accommodation plan)
- Any comments or feedback from the Player, Player's Parent/Carer, Host Family, accommodation provider and Club Staff including, for example:
 - what they think has gone well
 - what could be improved,
 - what needs to be done to improve and by whom and when;
- Competency to provide accommodation, for example:
 - a safe environment
 - appropriate boundaries
 - effective working and communication with the player's parent/carers and Club);
- Confirmation that all parties agree for the arrangement to continue;
- Review of expectation and code of conduct set at the start of the arrangement to remind all parties of the standard of behaviour expected; and
- A Club recommendation, or otherwise, of continued suitability.

Where standards of living are found to be below expectation, the Club Designated Safeguarding Officer will support the Host Family or accommodation provider to make necessary improvements where this is the appropriate course of action. Where the player is at risk of harm, the player will be removed with immediate effect from the arrangement, with support from appropriate agencies where relevant and parent's/carers. A review in to the continued use of the Host Family or accommodation provision must be conducted and actioned appropriately.

6. PAYMENT OF ACCOMMODATION ARRANGEMENTS

When setting up player accommodation arrangements, Clubs must be transparent about who is expected to be responsible for covering the cost of the arrangement and should be sensitive to how the cost of the arrangement could impact the player's family's finances. Clubs should also try to ensure consistency in their funding approach, where appropriate, across the Club. For example, in some areas of the professional game, the cost of player accommodation is covered by the Club. Clubs should facilitate discussions with the player's family and, where appropriate, the accommodation provider to consider and/or determine:

- if the Club will pay for all, part or none of the cost;
- what any payment covers to avoid any disputes or misunderstandings at a later date, e.g. is the payment inclusive of any accommodation fees, food, bills, laundry, transport;
- any conditions associated with the payment, e.g. will the player or host family need to provide copies of bills or receipts for associated costs;
- how the costs of any potential damage caused by the player, to the property or items within the accommodation, are recovered; and
- if local grants or hardship funds are available to the player's family, e.g. to support families with lower incomes.



7. AND FINALLY

This guidance is for general information only and does not constitute legal advice nor an exhaustive list or summary of applicable legal obligations. It should be read alongside any relevant Government guidance or advice and is not intended to replace the same. Any personal data collected to assess suitability of accommodation arrangements should be processed in accordance with data protection legislation. Information in relation to the requirements for data protection can be found at the Information Commissioner's Office at <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/>. Independent legal advice should be sought on particular circumstances as required. This guidance is accurate at the time of publication but may be updated, amended or supplemented from time to time and the reader is reminded to check for the most up-to-date information.

APPENDIX A

ACCOMMODATION PLAN TEMPLATE

Player details	
Full name	
DOB	
Legal guardian address	
Contact number	
Ethnicity	
Religion	
First language (if not English) Proficiency of English if it is a second language	
Any health conditions and allergies	
Medication/ treatment/ dosage and schedule	
Dietary requirements	
Approved visitors – full names	
Additional information	
Parent/carer details	
Full name	
Relationship to player	
Address	
Languages spoken	
Contact number	
Personal	
Work	
Contact email	
Personal	
Work	
Emergency contact person:	
Name	
Contact number	
Relationship to player	

APPENDIX A

ACCOMMODATION PLAN (CONT'D)

Accommodation details	
Name of host parent or accommodation provider	
Address	
Contact details of host parent/accommodation key contact:	
Telephone	
Email	
Host parent:	
Ethnicity	
Religion	
Languages spoken	
Routines and activities	
Days accommodation required (fulltime or part time)	
How player travels to and from accommodation to parent/carer home	
Wake up times:	
Weekdays/ weekends;	
Mealtimes:	
Likes	
Dislikes	
Laundry:	
Who does it	
When	
Tidy & cleaning bedroom:	
Who does it	
When	
Tidy & cleaning communal spaces:	
Who does it	
When	
Bedtimes/curfews:	
Weekdays	
Weekends	
Restricted activities	

APPENDIX A

ACCOMMODATION PLAN (CONT'D)

Travel arrangements

Method of travel to training: If public identify routes:

Weekday

Weekend

How will this be paid

Emergency contact in case of cancelled service

Club details

Club Manager

Name

Contact details

Telephone

Email

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Name

Contact details

Telephone

Email

Emergency procedure

Out of hours contact names and details for
Club staff

Additional processes

Player reviews:

Who attends

How is information shared with parent/carer if they
can't attend

APPENDIX A

ACCOMMODATION PLAN (CONT'D)

Reporting player sickness:	
Who contacts the Club	
What method of communication	
Misbehaviour of a player including unauthorised absence/non attendance:	
Who to contact	
Reporting sickness or other concerns about a member of the host family:	
Who to contact	
Guests	
Host family – temporary cover	
Payment	
How is this made	
Termination of the Agreement	
Who to contact if provision no longer appropriate	

APPENDIX B

HOST FAMILY APPLICATION INFORMATION TEMPLATE

- Full name, address and date of birth;
- Other household members (including children) full names and date of birth;
- Full name, address and date of birth of partner who does not live permanently at the address but has access to household
- Details of any previous or current support from children or adult care services e.g. social services, early help agencies;
- Details of any care or protections plans in place for any member of the household e.g. child protection/in need plan, safeguarding adults plan, care orders, court proceedings;
- Whether applicant or members of the household have had parental responsibility removed at any time;
- Whether applicant or members of the household have been convicted at any time of any offences, e.g. any offence involving a child?
- Written permission to undertake Reference Requests and Checks – Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (for all within the household aged 18 or over) and Local Authority Checks via children's services which may include any incidents or concerns associated safeguarding of children or adults at risk, anti-social behaviour, environmental health or housing;
- Details of household accommodation; Description of property and suitability of areas specifically reserved for hosting e.g. bedrooms, bathroom, living area, etc., list of pets, area profile, amenities, transport;
- Full names and contact details of two persons who will provide personal references;
- Supporting statement of applicant's experience of providing care and accommodation for children and young people.

APPENDIX C

HOST FAMILY REQUIREMENTS

CLUBS SHOULD INFORM HOST FAMILIES OF THE FOLLOWING DURING THEIR APPLICATION PROCESS:

- The comprehensive nature of the assessments and checks required of all household members over the age of 18 (by the Club and Local Authority);
- Club to Host Family home distance requirement;
- The capabilities the applicant needs to demonstrate their suitability as a Host Family for the Club;
- The Induction, Training, Supervision and Review requirements of Host Families;
- Host Families general duties;
- Host Family & Private Foster carer liability for their own insurance and the need to inform their 'buildings and contents' insurers of the Host Family & Private Fostering arrangements. The Player should be included under the public liability insurance clause (evidence of these to be sought when applicant is successful);
- The status and implications for Host Families as contractor of services to the Club and fees;
- Confirm the details provided in the application;
- Seek original documents to verify the applicant's identity; and
- Inform the applicants of the next stage and likely timescales.

APPENDIX D

HEALTH AND SAFETY MINIMUM STANDARDS

- Locks on all doors and windows, with keys available
- Gas Appliance Certificate
- Electricity certificate
- Smoke alarms fitted and in working order
- Carbon monoxide detectors fitted and in working order
- Fire blanket in the kitchen
- First aid kit
- Fire-resistant bed mattresses
- Adequate escape routes in the event of fire
- Adequate heating
- No weapons in the property
- No illegal drugs in the property
- No dangerous pets in the property - All pets should be clearly stated
- No smoking in the property
- The property is not used for business in the home unless signed off

EXPECTATIONS/CODE OF CONDUCT FOR HOST FAMILIES, PLAYERS AND THEIR PARENTS/CARERS TEMPLATE

- Create and maintain a safe, inclusive, welcoming home environment. Respect each other's differences, such as cultural or religious backgrounds; beliefs and opinions.
- Always treat everyone with respect. Act with integrity and be a positive role model.
- Listen to each other and always communicate respectfully. Do not lose your temper.
- Share information that will help keep each other safe and well, such as allergies and intolerances; health and safeguarding worries and concerns.
- Work together to develop and maintain routines (including bed, meal and study times; curfew times; helping with housework; bedroom cleanliness) that meet the needs of the player and all host family members.
- Respect family rules, such as use of the television and internet (including showing the player where things are and how things work in the home - such as television, WiFi, washing machine).
- Promote healthy lifestyles, including healthy eating; sufficient sleep; and openly discussing concerns, successes and challenges together.
- Respect each other's privacy.
- Always wear appropriate clothing, including at night.
- Put in place parental controls on internet access and television for under 18's.
- Help maintain a clean and tidy home.
- Do not behave or act in a way that can be, or can be interpreted as bullying, abusive or neglectful in any way, including hitting or smacking.
- Do not smoke, drink excessively, take illegal drugs or use bad language.
- Do not allow anyone known to have a criminal record for violence and/or crimes against children or adults at risk to have access to the home.
- The player is not permitted to take on work, paid or unpaid, such as minding the host family's children.
- The player is not permitted to make a copy of the household keys, or given or loaned to another person.
- No money may be loaned or given.
- Do not give or take medication or vitamin supplements (unless written authorisation is in place with a plan overseen by Club Medical).
- Report any concerns or changes to family situation including overnight visitors to the home; planned holidays; significant DIY; any mental or physical changes in themselves or a host family member.
- Always prioritise health and wellbeing, report concerns and disclosures to the Club Designated Safeguarding Officer or the police (999) in an emergency.



FOR ALL

The Football Association
Wembley Stadium
London HA9 0WS
T: +44 (0)800 169 1863
F: +44 (0)800 169 1864
W: TheFA.com