



Safeguarding update for Referees

September 2020

Referees and other match officials have an important role to play in safeguarding children, acting as the eyes and ears of The FA and County FA at every game.

Your reports to your County FA help keep football safe on and off the pitch.

So, thank you for your awareness and any actions you have taken to safeguard children in football.

A reminder about FA DBS (previously CRC)

If you officiate in youth football and are over 16 you must keep your FA DBS in date (less than three years old).

If your FA DBS check needed renewing between 1st March 2020 and 1st October 2020 it will have been extended by The FA by exactly one year. These checks are still valid and there is no need for another DBS check until the new expiry date.

A reminder about safeguarding education

Covid-19 means most County FAs are unable to run face to face Safeguarding Children Workshops. Your County FA will confirm what safeguarding education you need to complete this season, but the table at the bottom of this update will guide you to the correct, free, online course. These are interim arrangements and we will update all referees later in the season about future safeguarding education.

Concerned about something you've seen or heard?

Heard or seen something that concerns you - on or offline - about a child or young person in football? Something doesn't feel right? Just contact your RDO/RDM or the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

Remember a lot of referees are under 18 themselves and have the same rights to be safe as youth players.

Spotting the signs of abuse

The NSPCC have a helpful page on the types abuse and how to spot the signs. [NSPCC Types of abuse](#)

What if a child or young person tells me their concerns?

If a child or young person tells you about abuse or poor practice just listen carefully and explain you have to pass the information on to someone who can help. There's a NSPCC video here about how to respond even if you are feeling anxious or upset about something a child is telling you - so it's worth viewing now! [Listening to a child](#)

Immediate safety?

Concerned about the immediate safety of a child or young person? Contact the Police on 101 or 999.

Need advice and no one around?

The NSPCC can be contacted on 0808 800 5000 Monday to Friday 10am-6pm and weekends 12 noon-4pm or by email Help@NSPCC. Your local Children's services will also have an out of hours number.

Are you under 18?

If you are ever concerned about your own safety or the safety of another child or young person just let your County FA RDO/RDM or the County FA DSO know.

If you feel mistreated or threatened whilst refereeing your own safety is the most important thing. Find a supportive adult and ensure you can leave the venue safely. Avoid doing anything that might make things worse. Report the events as soon as you can to the County FA.

The FA has a leaflet for 16 and 17 year olds called [Know your Rights](#)

Childline can also give you support and guidance if you are feeling worried or unsafe [Childline](#)

Whistle blowing

Whistle blowing is the action taken when a person believes an organisation has not acted properly to address a safeguarding concern. If you feel this has happened email safeguarding@thefa.com

Alternatively, concerns can be reported:

- Directly to the local Police or Children's Social Care services, or
- The Child Protection in Sport Unit at cpsu@nspcc.org.uk, or The NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Safeguarding education

Who?	Season 2020- 2021 only All of the below courses are free. You just need your registered email address and password. The courses will run on most internet enabled devices.
Referees with FA safeguarding education less than three years old.	No action required
Under 16-years-old Referees with no FA safeguarding education	Complete the new free online Safeguarding For All
Referees 16-years and over with no FA safeguarding education	Where County FAs are not running workshops as an interim measure *please complete the new free online Safeguarding For All
Referees with an existing face to face FA 'Safeguarding Children Workshop' over three years old	Please complete the free online ' Safeguarding Recertification ' course.
Referees who have only taken 'The Guide', the old 'Child Protection Workshop' or the online learning 'Introduction to Safeguarding'	As an interim measure * complete the free online Safeguarding For All course.

*The FA is currently reviewing its safeguarding education programme

Officiating in adult-open age disability football?

You can take The FA's free online course [here](#) to find out more about safeguarding adults

Got a safeguarding question?

Contact your County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer or County FA RDO/RDM

The FA Safeguarding Team