

STRAKERS

SAFEGUARDING AND LOW LEVEL CONCERNS POLICY & PROCEDURES



LET'S KEEP FOOTBALL SAFE

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document will assist Club Welfare Officers (CWOs) and Wiltshire Football Association (WFA) Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) to manage concerns about a child or an individual's behaviour towards a child.

The information in this document will help CWOs understand the role of WFA DSOs and the expectations of the Football Association Safeguarding Case Management Team (FA SCMT) regarding information requirements. This will promote collaborative working and information sharing for robust and evidenced based decision making with safeguarding thresholds so that cases are managed at the right Level either as:

- a low-level concern and should be dealt with either by the club, or
- one of a more serious nature and possible abuse which must reported to WCFA DSO and referred by them to The FA Safeguarding Case Management Team (SCMT). **See Annexe 1 'How to report an incident'**



2. RECEIVING INFORMATION AND WHAT TO DO NEXT

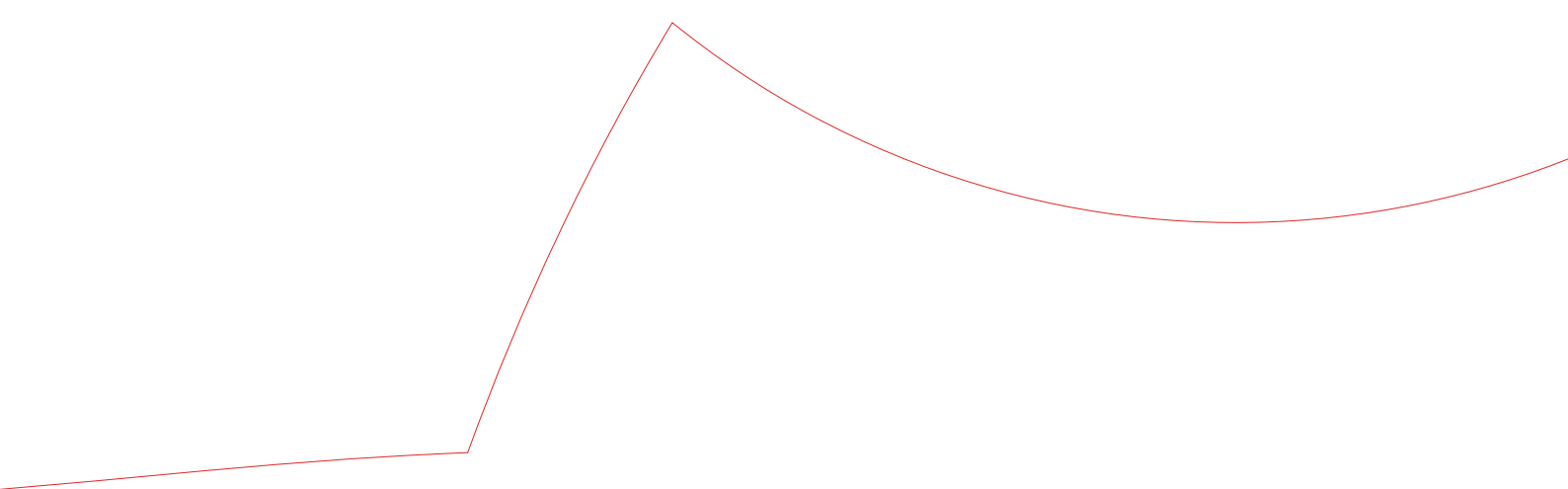
If an individual has concerns about a child, or another individual's behaviour towards a child, those concerns must be reported (usually by a CWO) to WCFA DSO using the **WCFA Safeguarding Report Form** - see **Annex 2** or visit wiltshirefa.com/welfarezone. It is good practice to discuss the case with the DSO in addition to sending a Report Form.

If there is immediate danger to the child, this must be dealt with as a matter of priority by calling emergency services or seeking medical attention. The Safeguarding Report Form should be sent to the WCFA DSO using the safeguarding@wiltshirefa.com mail box. An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent to the referrer.

Basic guidelines for dealing with safeguarding disclosures:

- Stay calm and listen.
- Go slowly.
- Reassure them that they have not done anything wrong.
- Be supportive.
- Gather essential facts.
- Tell what will happen next.
- Report.
- Make notes

More information guidance about listening to children making a disclosure is available from the NSPCC - nspcc.org.uk/listen. See **Annexe 3 NSPCC Let Children Know you are listening**.



3. CONSULTATION AND SUPPORT FOR CLUB WELFARE OFFICERS

WCFA DSOs are available for consultation and advice to any person in football who wants to discuss a safeguarding or Low-Level concern. CWOs are encouraged to seek advice and support in the event of concern, when sending a Safeguarding Report Form or generally about promoting the safeguarding culture in football. DSOs arrange twice yearly safeguarding themed face to face CWO events, bi monthly online drop in sessions and The FA arranges annual Safeguarding weekends.

WCFA supports The FA's Play Safe campaign to raise awareness of the importance of safeguarding in football. For more information visit thefa.com/playsafe

If a CWO is not sure if the concern needs to be reported to WCFA, they should contact the DSO to discuss and agree next steps with progressing a report, gaining further information or the club dealing with the issue as a Low-Level concern. The DSO will record the consultation, decisions and agreed actions and send these to the CWO for clarity. **If the concern is urgent do not delay take action.**

**MAKE
FOOTBALL SAFE.
WE ALL HAVE A
PART TO PLAY.**



For All



In partnership with
NSPCC



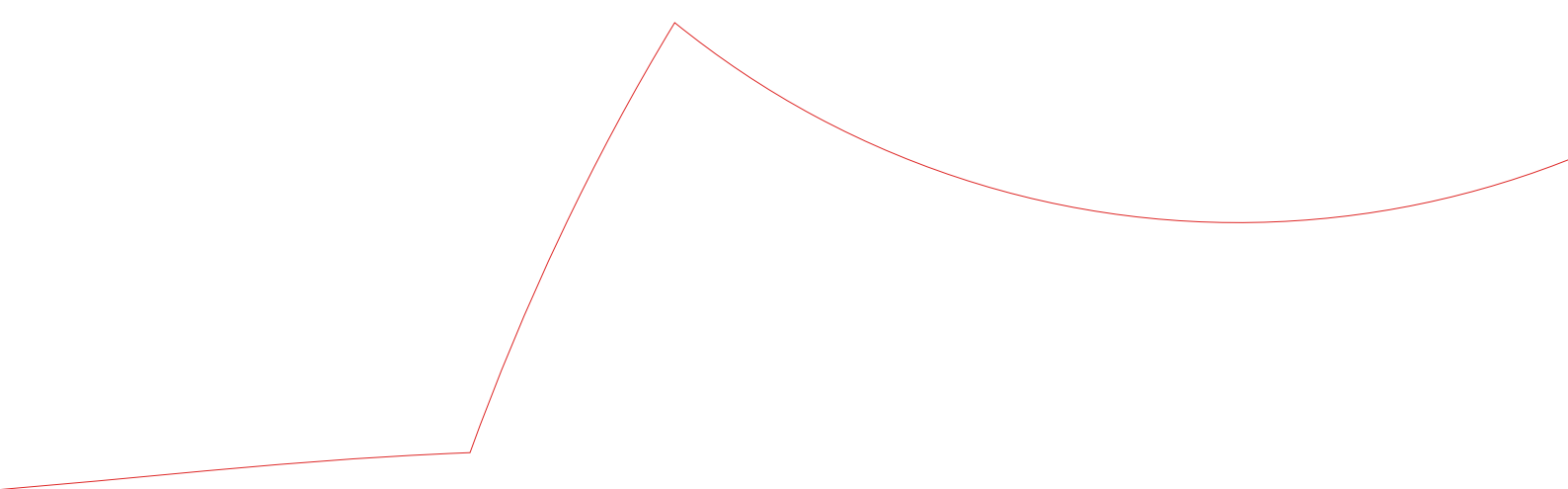
Supported by



4. THE FA SAFEGUARDING CASE MANAGEMENT TEAM AND DSO CONSULTATION

It may not always be clear at the outset whether the concern is a Low-Level or abuse. This may only become apparent once further information has been collected and an assessment made. If the DSO is unsure, they should seek advice from The FA Duty Safeguarding Case Manager (SCM) to establish if the concerns are Low-Level or abuse and what further information may be required in order to make an accurate assessment. The Duty FA SCM will be able to provide advice on next steps for the DSO which may include contacting the Police, LADO or Children's Services, either for advice or to make a referral to that agency.

From the WCFA Safeguarding Report Form and further enquires, WCFA DSOs will determine (in liaison where relevant with agencies and professionals including The FA SCMT) the threshold of the concern as a Safeguarding concern or a Low-Level issue. If the latter, the person making the report will be contacted to explain the Low-Level outcome and e-mail confirmation sent using the WCFA Standard Response to CWOs regarding Low-Level Concerns (**see Annex 4**). This means the club have responsibility to address the concern although WCFA DSOs can offer advice and support alongside any action taken by the Discipline and Investigations Officer.



5. WCFA DSO REFERRALS TO THE FA SCMT

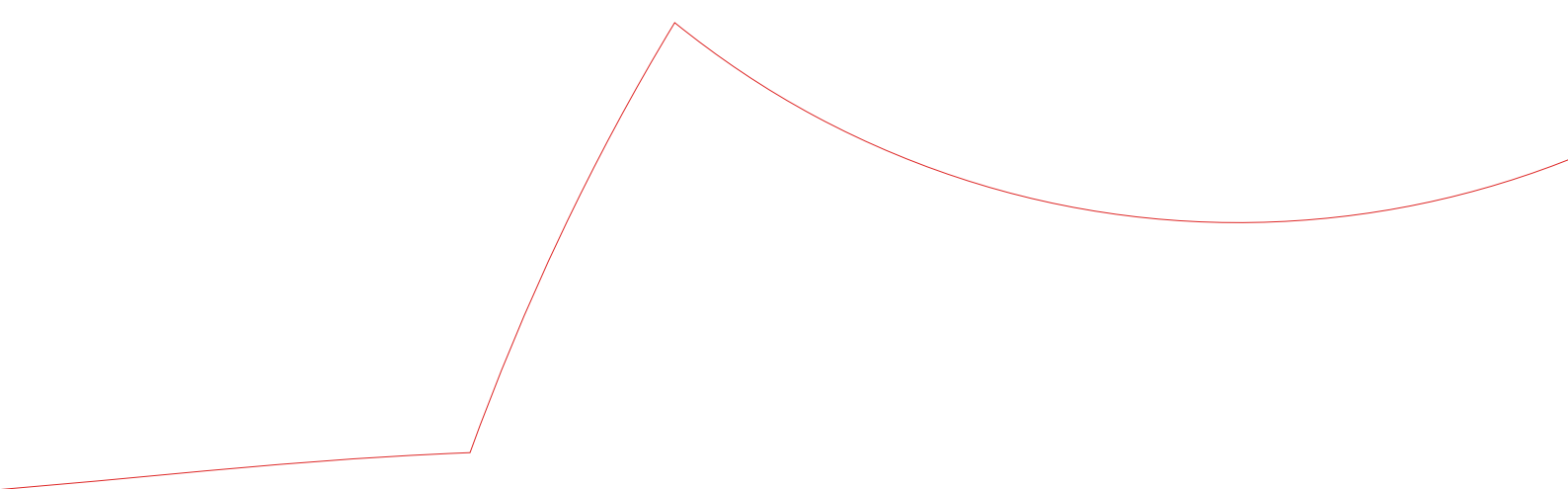
The WCFA DSO makes referrals The FA SCMT using the Electronic Safeguarding Case management system (ELSA) within one working day of the of the concern being reported to the WCFA DSO. **See Annex 5 'Information Checklist for Referrals to FA SCMT'** which is a copy of the ELSA referral form (this shows CWOs and WCFA DSOs what information is required to make an accurate assessment which will lead to a proportionate response). If there are any barriers to completing a referral on ELSA, the WCFA DSO should contact The FA Duty SCM for advice on how to proceed. It is good practice for DSOs the contact FA Duty SCM to discuss referrals as well.

The referral requires completion with as much information as possible about both the alleged perpetrator and the individual who has suffered the abuse. This will mean the WCFA DSO may have to gather further information, before making the referral in order to be able to assess whether the matter is a Low-Level Concern to be managed by the club or WCFA to deal with and if a safeguarding referral to The FA SCMT is required.

The FA Duty SCM is available for consultation if the WCFA DSO requires support with progressing a referral. The FA's Safeguarding 365 Standards require that a referral is made to The FA SCMT within one working day of receipt. However, it may take longer than one day to gather the relevant information so the DSO should contact The FA Duty SCM to discuss the referral as safeguarding measures may be needed while further information is obtained. These expectations set out the importance of CWOs supplying WCFA DSOs with the fullest information when reporting a concern and/or provide further information/clarification if requested by WCFA DSO in a timely manner.

When making an ELSA referral to FA SCMT it is necessary to provide clear and accurate details of the concern, what happened, when and where. The referral should include previous concerns known by WCFA regarding the individual; a summary of the concern together with details of any actions taken.

The statutory agency section of the ELSA referral is mandatory and if any of the statutory agencies have been contacted this must be clearly stated alongside any other action taken. It is important to provide as much information as possible and ensure that all the fields are completed with accuracy. This means that



the names and contact numbers for any Police Officers spoken to as well as crime reference/log numbers should be provided. If the DSO has spoken to the LADO, their name and direct contact telephone number should be provided along with the case reference number.

If a Strategy Meeting or Allegations Management Meeting has been arranged the DSO must ensure that The FA SCMT is notified beforehand. These meetings should not be attended by the DSO without prior consultation with The FA SCMT. Please refer to **Annex 6 The FA's 'Protocol for CFADSOs attending Strategy Meetings'** document for more information.

If the DSO is unsure whether the concerns meet the threshold for an ELSA referral to The FA SCMT, the DSO can contact the Duty SCM for a consultation. The Duty SCM can provide support and advice around the concerns held. In situations where the Duty SCM advises that a referral is not needed, they will provide advice on how the situation can be managed by WCFA DSO.

When referring to or consulting with The FA SCMT, WCFA DSOs will use the information supplied in the WCFA Safeguarding report form (**see Annex 2**) provided by the person in Wiltshire football reporting the concern (usually the CWO). In addition, the DSO will gather further information needed for the ELSA referral to ensure all available information is gathered and identify where further information is required. This will enable WCFA DSO and FA SCMT to accurately assess the concern and determine what action is taken in a timely manner.



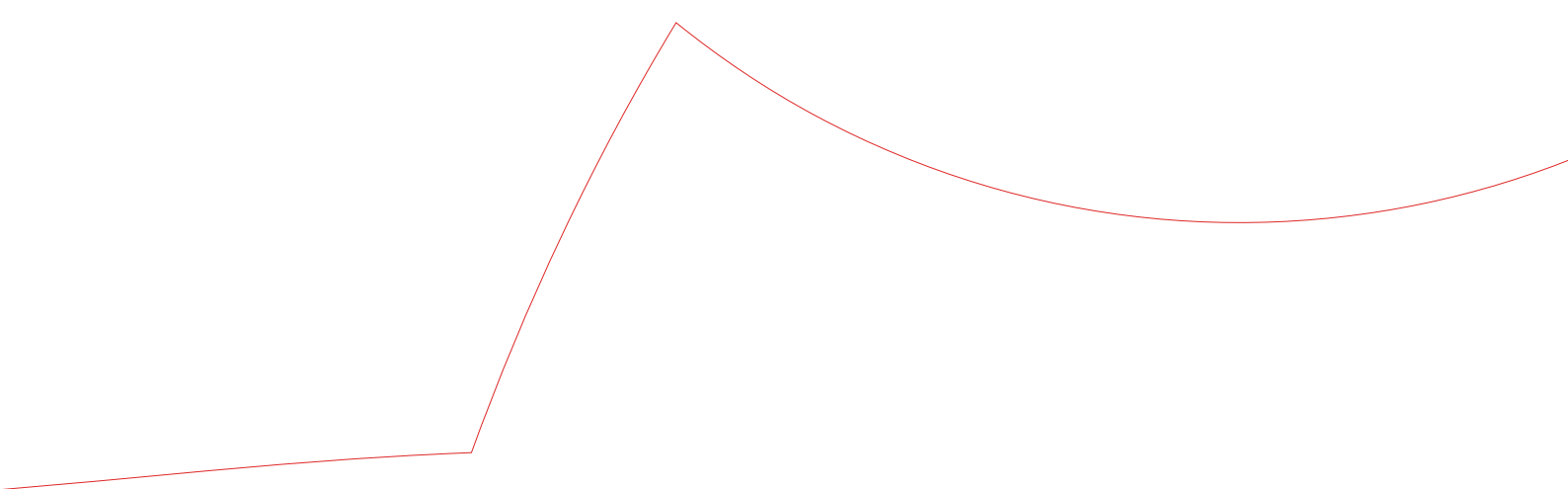
6. WHAT SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE FA SCMT?

All cases referred to a statutory agency must be referred to The FA SCMT. If the case does not meet the statutory agency's thresholds, it may be referred back by The FA SCMT for WCFA DSO to manage. However the information will remain in ELSA intelligence and relied upon should the Level of assessed risk change or other concerns of safeguarding nature arise.

If an individual has been reported to the County FA twice previously in relation to Low- Level concerns, the matter should be referred to SCMT on the third occasion. It should be noted that this means three separate Low- Level concerns, where the WCFA or the club have dealt fully with the previous two incidents. This should not be three reports regarding the same incident. Low-Level concerns are explored in more detail in the next section.

Cases which clearly constitute abuse or where there is active Police or other statutory agency involvement, must be referred to The FA SCMT by submitting an ELSA referral within 24 hours of the DSO becoming aware of the matter. The FA appreciates that this is a short timescale and encourages DSOs to seek consultation with the Duty SCM prior to making the referral so that any potential gaps in the information can be identified at an early stage to minimise delay.

Cases that have statutory involvement will often have a strategy meeting convened by the LADO. A Strategy Meeting (sometimes referred to as a Strategy Discussion or Allegations Management Meeting) is a multi-agency meeting to share information relevant to the allegation made against an individual, and to plan and co-ordinate any child protection investigations necessary by the agencies involved in order to complete an assessment of risk. It is imperative that The FA SCMT is notified of this meeting as soon as possible so that plans for attendance at the meeting can be organised. These meetings should be attended by a FA Safeguarding Case Officer (SCO) in the first instance, although there may be occasions where a SCO is unable to attend. For more information regarding Strategy Meetings please refer to **Annex 6 'The Protocol for CFA DSOs attending Strategy Meetings'**.



7. LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS

It is The FA's policy that County FAs deal with matters related to Low-Level concerns and do not refer these to The FA SCMT (unless it is the third separate incident). The Duty SCM can be contacted for advice and consultation if required.

Anyone witnessing a behaviour indicative of a Low-Level concern or having it referred to them by another person, must refer the information to the CWO in the first instance. The club CWO in turn should contact WCFA DSO to consult and complete a WCFA Safeguarding Report Form (**see Annex 2**) if the concern meets the Safeguarding threshold.

Low-Level concerns should be dealt with by the club and need to be referred to the CWO and the club Committee to be dealt with as quickly as possible. It is important that club rules refer to Low-Level concerns, to enable such issues to be dealt with by the club.

Low-Level concerns should be recorded on WCFA case management systems. The DSO should record the detail related to the Low-Level concern and keep contemporaneous records of the interventions provided to the individual. It is important that there is a record of the actions taken so in the event of further concerns being reported the case history may indicate more robust safeguarding measures are needed and on the third occasion an ELSA referral to The FA SCMT is made.



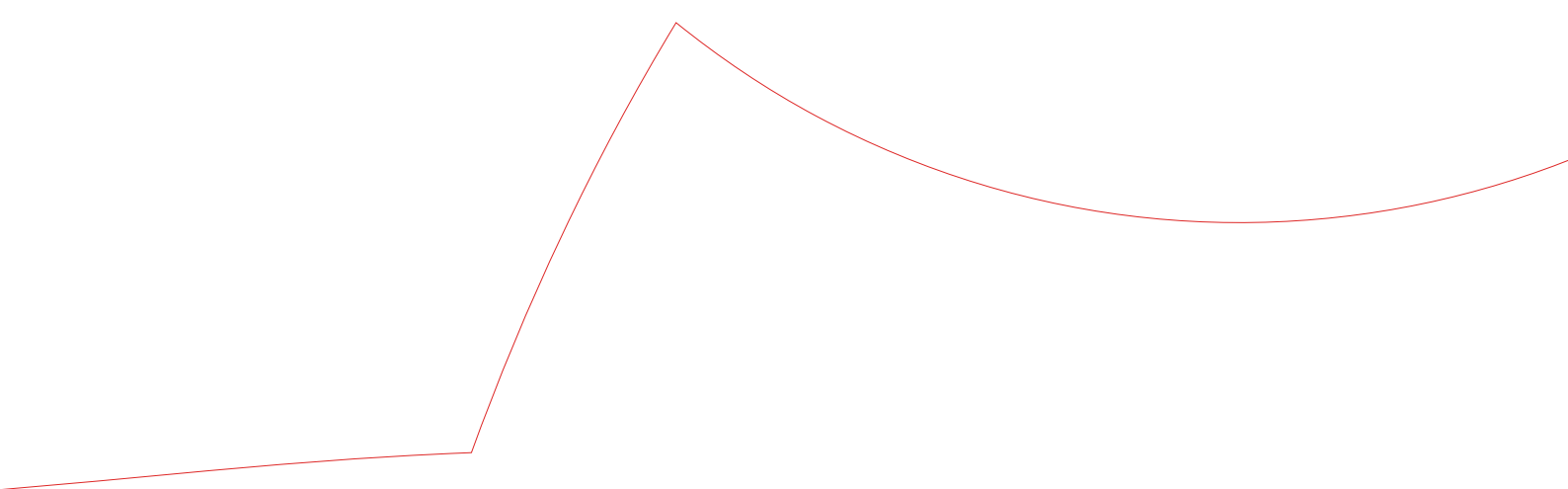
8. WHAT DOES A LOW-LEVEL CONCERN LOOK LIKE?

A Low-Level Concern is a behaviour which falls below the standard required by a club as set out in their codes of conduct. Whilst the behaviour may not be a safeguarding concern, immediately dangerous or intentionally harmful it does set a poor example and if it were to continue, it might lead to harm or put a child in danger. **Annex 7 provides examples of Low-Level concerns.**

Low-Level concerns should not be considered in isolation; it is important to consider the context of the behaviour, the environment, and whether there are any current or previous concerns that may need to be taking into consideration within a contextual safeguarding approach. Is this an isolated concern or are there multiple concerns? For example, a coach is lone coaching, communicating via social media and appears to have favourites. Whilst each of these in isolation could be seen as a Low-Level concern, when considered together, this increases concern about the patterns of behaviours. DSOs are encouraged to seek advice from the Duty SCM as needed.

The examples of Low-Level concerns at Annex 7 are not exhaustive but intended to give an idea of the type of behaviour which constitutes a Low-Level concern. Club codes of conduct should be carefully written and updated regularly to ensure they are relevant and appropriate to the club. Some of the examples of Low-Level concerns as listed in Annex 5 could lead to abusive situations and so need to be carefully considered, such as inappropriate use of social media. Clubs should monitor this very carefully and ensure that all involved are fully aware of what is considered to be appropriate and what is not when using social media, particularly when photographing matches, social events and other club-based activities. See **Safeguarding In The Digital World** for further information here - wiltshirefa.com/welfarezone

To allow Low Low-Level concerns to continue unchallenged may result in an environment developing in which abuse may become 'normalised' and able to take place. Learning from survivors of non-recent sexual abuse in football has shown that often the abuse started as a Low-Level concern which was not addressed.



9. CODES OF CONDUCT

Codes of conduct are written for coaches, match officials, parents, spectators, players and club members. They are relevant to the activities these different groups of individuals involved in the club.

The FA Respect Code of Conduct at Annex 8 has examples of Low-Level concerns that are prohibited and set out the positive behaviour which is expected. They reflect The FA's expectations of members' behaviour and are cross-referenced with club disciplinary processes. The Codes of Conduct make clear the rights of staff and volunteers; for example, access to training, support in reporting Low-Level concerns and fair and equitable treatment by the club.

Club Codes of Conduct should reflect best practice by stating clearly the acceptable behaviours which the club wishes to promote. See FA Downloads, in particular 5.6 Physical Contact and Young People, 5.7 Acceptable Behaviours when working with young people, and 5.8 Managing Challenging Behaviour in Young People here thefa.com/safeguarding



10. CONTACT INFORMATION

WCFA DSOs

Maria.

maria.lai@wiltshirefa.com

07340 272564

Blair.

blair.keltie@wiltshire.com

07342 845529

WILTSHIRE MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB (MASH)

mash@wiltshire.gov.uk

Tel: 0300 4560108 / Out of Hours Tel: 0300 456 0100

➔ wiltshire.gov.uk/children-young-people-protection

SWINDON MASH

swindonmash@swindon.gov.uk

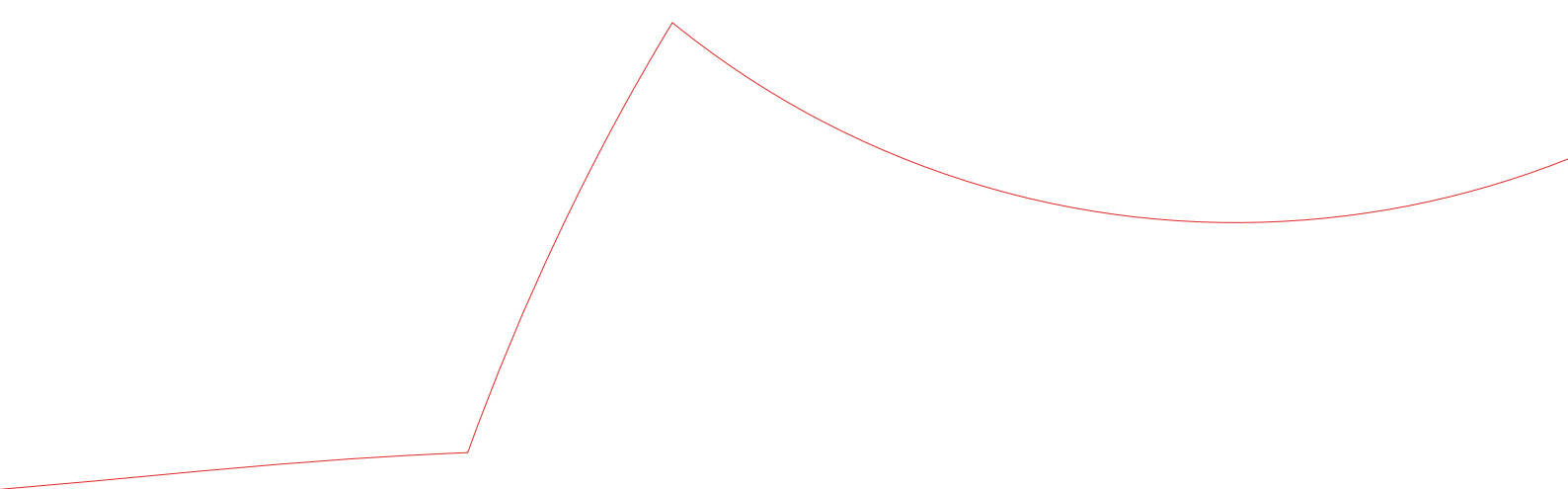
Tel: 01793 466903 / Out of Hours Tel: 01793 436699

➔ swindon.gov.uk/MASH

USEFUL LINKS ➔

- wiltshirefa.com/welfarezone
- thebootroom.thefa.com
- thecpsu.org.uk
- childline.org.uk
- sportengland.org
- ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre
- wiltshirescb.org.uk
- safeguardingpartnership.swindon.gov.uk
- thefa.com/safeguarding
- gov.uk

11. ANNEXES

- ANNEX 1** HOW TO REPORT AN INCIDENT
 - ANNEX 2** WCFA SAFEGUARDING REPORT FORM
 - ANNEX 3** NSPCC LET CHILDREN KNOW YOU ARE LISTENING
 - ANNEX 4** WCFA STANDARD RESPONSE TO CWOS REGARDING LOW LEVEL CONCERNS
 - ANNEX 5** INFORMATION CHECKLIST FOR REFERRALS TO FA SCMT
 - ANNEX 6** THE PROTOCOL FOR CFA DSOS ATTENDING STRATEGY MEETINGS
 - ANNEX 7** EXAMPLES OF LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS
 - ANNEX 8** CODE OF CONDUCTS
- 



HOW TO REPORT AN INCIDENT

WOULD YOU LIKE TO REPORT POOR BEHAVIOUR?

Depending on the nature of the incident different support may be established at Club level, League level or County FA level.

If you have witnessed poor behaviour, the suggested reporting procedure is...

1. In the first incident speak to the team **Coach/Manager**
2. If required the Coach/Manager can elevate the incident to the **Club Secretary or Welfare Officer**
3. The Club Secretary or Welfare Officer can elevate to the **League Officials**
4. If required the league will report the incident to **Wiltshire FA**



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WILTSHIRE FA SAFEGUARDING REPORT FORM

PLAYER NAME:	
PLAYER DOB:	
PLAYER CLUB:	
PLAYER FAN:	

DETAILS OF EVENT

FIXTURE:	
TIME:	
DATE OF INCIDENT:	
LOCATION:	
POLICE INFORMED?	LOG No:

INITIAL DISCLOSURE/INCIDENT DETAILS (What, where, when, who, how)

ACTIONS TAKEN/ PEOPLE CONTACTED

CONCERN CATEGORY:

NEGLECT

PHYSICAL

EMOTIONAL

SEXUAL

BULLYING

ROLE IN FOOTBALL:

COACH

MANAGER

CLUB OFFICIAL

MATCH REFEREE

PLAYERS

RISK LEVEL (IN YOUR OPINION)

LOW

MEDIUM

HIGH

Please state the reason for your opinion:

IF A CHILD IS AT RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM CONTACT THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY ON 999

REPORTED BY/DATE	CLUB	ROLE	FAN

Let children know you're listening

A **safeguarding resource** to help you show children and young people that, whatever they want to share, you're ready to listen.

There are three simple directions to remember...

➤ **Show you care, help them open up**

Give them your full attention and keep your body language open and encouraging. Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important. Phrases like “you’ve shown such courage today” help.

➤ **Take your time, slow down**

Respect pauses and don't interrupt them – let them go at their own pace. Recognise and respond to their body language. And remember that it may take several conversations for them to share what's happened to them.

➤ **Show you understand, reflect back**

Make it clear you're interested in what they're telling you. Reflect back what they've said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it's their experience.



+ Find out more

For more training and resources to help protect children visit
nspcc.org.uk/listen

ANNEXE 4: WCFA STANDARD RESPONSE TO CWOS REGARDING LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

Thank you for sending the safeguarding report form to WCFA Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs). We have reviewed the report and determined the incident does not meet WCFA safeguarding thresholds so will be closed and no further actions taken. The matter can be dealt with as a low-level concern by your club and, if relevant, WCFA Discipline and Investigations Officer. We will keep a record of your report on file in the event for further concerns being raised, to identify any patterns that require a safeguarding response from WCFA DSOs. If you require further information about safeguarding children and adults at risk please refer to WCFA's Welfare Zone - wiltshirefa.com/welfarezone

If you need any advice about how to manage any of the issues raised within your club please contact us to discuss.

ANNEXE 5: INFORMATION CHECKLIST FOR REFERRALS TO FA SCMT

CONFIDENTIAL

Date submitted on ELSA					
Name of Club					
Address					
Tel number					
Victim's Name and address	DoB:	Gender:	Ethnicity:	FAN:	
Parents/Carers name and contact details					FAN:
Referrer's Name					
Contact details inc telephone/mobile, e-mail and any other relevant information					FAN:
Role in Club					

Name of Individual against whom allegation has been made		DoB:	Gender:	Ethnicity	FAN:
Address telephone numbers, mobile, e-mail					
Role in Club					
Employment Details					
Relationship to victim e.g. Coach					
Any other relevant information:					
Professional Network					
LADO Name and contact details					
Police name and contact details, collar number Incident log/Crime number/ref					
Children's Services name and contact details					
Case Summary					
<p>The incident/concern</p> <p>(What, where, when, who, how)</p> <p>Where named, the role of individuals</p> <p>Do not refer to attachments - summarise any additional information</p>					
Risk - Based on the information provided, your opinion of the level of risk to the child	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH		

Please detail explicitly your reasoning for this:			
Individuals involved			
Club Officials			
Name:		Contact Details:	
Name:		Contact Details:	
Name:		Contact Details:	
Name:		Contact Details:	
Strategy Meeting dates NB The FA SCMT should be notified prior to any strategy meeting	Minutes requested	Minutes received	
Actions taken			

ANNEXE 6: PROTOCOL FOR ATTENDANCE BY COUNTY FA DSOS AT STRATEGY MEETINGS CONTENTS

1. Introduction and protocol summary 1-2
2. The role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 2
3. The purpose of a Strategy Meeting 2-3
4. The role of the CFADSO when attending a Strategy Meeting 3-4 - Preparing for a Strategy Meeting 4 - Liaising with The Safeguarding Case Management Team (SCMT) prior to the meeting 4-5 - Introductions and confidentiality 5 - Recording and sharing information 5-6 - Outcomes and actions from the meeting 6 - Reporting back to the SCMT 7

Glossary

CFADSO County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer

SCMT The FA's Safeguarding Case Management Team (based at Wembley Stadium)

LADO Local Authority Designated Officer

WT2018 Statutory guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

1. INTRODUCTION AND PROTOCOL SUMMARY

This protocol has been developed to provide CFADSOs with clear guidance on their role and responsibilities when attending a Strategy Meeting on behalf of the SCMT. For the purpose of information sharing and confidentiality, all CFADSOs represent the SCMT and not the County FA when attending Strategy Meetings held in relation to participants involved in affiliated football. This protocol will outline the purpose of a Strategy Meeting, of the LADO's role within this, and the role and responsibilities of the CFADSO when preparing for and attending a Strategy Meeting. It is recognised that CFADSO will often bring additional local knowledge to the strategy meetings.

The Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WT2018) statutory guidance provides the basic structure for all organisations when managing allegations against adults who work with children. The WT2018 guidance outlines that:

'Local authorities should put in place arrangements to provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations and agencies on how to deal with allegations against people who work with

children. Local authorities should also ensure that there are appropriate arrangements in place to liaise effectively with the police and other organisations and agencies to monitor the progress of cases and ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.’ WT2018 also provides local authorities with guidance on the appointment of designated officers to coordinate the management of allegations against people who work with children within their geographical area.

‘County level and unitary local authorities should ensure that allegations against people who work with children are not dealt with in isolation. Any action necessary to address corresponding welfare concerns in relation to the child or children involved should be taken without delay and in a co-ordinated manner. Local authorities should, in addition, have designated a particular officer, or team of officers (either as part of local multiagency arrangements or otherwise), to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people who work with children.’

These individuals are most often referred to as the LADO and for the purpose of the attached guidance will be referenced as such. For further information on WT2018 please go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

2. THE ROLE OF THE LADO

All allegations and concerns must be reported to the LADO within one working day of being made aware of the allegation. The LADO should be alerted to all cases in which an allegation has been made against an individual that they have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they are unsuitable or may pose a risk when working with children (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018).

The role of the LADO is to:

- Provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations on what action needs to be taken to protect a child;
- To liaise with the police, Social Care and any other statutory agency involved;
- To monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are investigated and dealt with as quickly as possible and are consistent with a thorough and fair process.

3. THE PURPOSE OF A STRATEGY MEETING

Following a referral to the LADO, a Strategy Meeting will be organised where the threshold has been met. The purpose of a Strategy Meeting (sometimes referred to as a Strategy Discussion or Allegations

Management Meeting) is a multi-agency meeting to share information relevant to the allegation made against an individual, and to plan and coordinate any child protection investigations necessary by the agencies involved in order to complete an assessment of risk.

Professionals who attend and participate in Strategy Meetings will be asked to draw conclusions about whether the allegation is substantiated or not. There are several possible outcomes following a referral to the LADO:

- Substantiated - there is sufficient identifiable evidence to prove the allegation;
- False - there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- Malicious - there is clear evidence to prove there has been a deliberate act to deceive and the allegation is entirely false;

- Unfounded - there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made; it might also indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw; alternatively, they may not have been aware of all the circumstances;
- Unsubstantiated - this is not the same as a false allegation; it means that there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation; the term therefore does not imply guilty or innocence.

4. THE ROLE OF THE CFADSO WHEN ATTENDING A STRATEGY MEETING

Where the individual has a role in affiliated football, the CFADSO will be required during the meeting to provide as much information as possible about the individual concerned; their role and responsibilities in football as well as details about the alleged victim if the allegation relates directly to a child in affiliated football. This will require close partnership working and information sharing with the allocated Safeguarding Case Officer (SCO) from the SCMT.

As the majority of professionals at the meeting may know little, if anything, about The FA's safeguarding policy and procedures (particularly in relation to the threshold for issuing Interim Suspensions) or about the role of the SCMT in relation to safeguarding, the CFADSO will need to give clarity on the following during the meeting:

- The role of County FAs and the relationship between CFADSOs and the SCMT;
- The FA's safeguarding remit and the process for the SCMT issuing an interim suspension when the threshold has been met following an allegation against a participant;
- The FA's regulatory role and the disciplinary process;
- The safeguarding education and training available for participants in affiliated football.

If the allegation relates to the individual's role in affiliated football, the CFADSO may be the professional responsible for reporting the concerns and will therefore play a crucial role in providing background information to those present at the meeting and in gathering information from those present to enable the SCMT to assess and manage any risk in relation to the participant's ongoing involvement in affiliated football.

The CFADSO should also be aware that, in some cases, the alleged perpetrator may be unaware that the Strategy Meeting is taking place in respect of the allegation made against them. Great care should therefore be taken to ensure that all matters relating to the meeting, including the arrangement of the meeting itself, should remain confidential. If there is any doubt from the CFADSO as to what can and cannot be shared this should be discussed with the SCMT and LADO.

PREPARING FOR A STRATEGY MEETING

As the CFADSO you may be notified of or become aware of a Strategy meeting from either the LADO, Children's Services, the police or from the Safeguarding Case Officer.

If the notification comes from the Safeguarding Case Officer, you will need to agree between you who will inform the Chair/LADO as soon as possible that you will be attending the meeting on behalf of the SCMT, in order to seek agreement for this prior to the meeting. Contact details are usually provided in the first instance by the LADO or the Social Worker involved in the case. If you are unable to attend the meeting on the proposed time and date, you should liaise with the SCO immediately so that alternative arrangements can be made.

The SCO will make efforts to attend the meeting in person where possible or to dial-in via telephone call however, there may be occasions when you are the only FA representative during the meeting. Within grassroots football it is not appropriate for anyone from the participant's club to attend a Strategy Meeting e.g. the Club Welfare Officer. Please do not arrange for anyone else to attend the Strategy Meeting on

your behalf, without prior discussion and agreement from the SCMT. If the LADO makes you aware that they have invited officials from a grassroots club, please inform the SCMT immediately and also advise the LADO that this would not be appropriate and explain the role of the CFADSO and the SCMT in managing allegations and supporting grassroots volunteers within this process.

If you have been notified by the LADO, police or Children's Services of a Strategy Meeting prior to the SCMT being made aware, it is imperative that you inform the SCMT or the allocated SCO as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for someone from the SCMT to attend. If you are aware that a Strategy Meeting is being held but you have not been invited, you should inform the SCO as soon as possible to allow for arrangements to be made with the LADO for you or the SCO to attend.

LIAISING WITH THE SCMT PRIOR TO THE MEETING

If you are attending a Strategy Meeting on behalf of the SCO, it is important that you have a telephone conversation with them or with one of the Safeguarding Team Leaders in advance of any meeting in order to discuss:

- What information you should share during the meeting; ideally you should prepare a written summary for those at the meeting to include as much information as possible about the participant and their role, and the allegation if it has come from within football - this should be discussed with the SCO in advance of the meeting to agree what information to include. If you have not had time to prepare a written summary you should agree verbally with the SCO prior to the meeting what information can be disclosed and what further information is required in advance of the meeting;
- What information you need to obtain from the meeting - this will vary dependent on the circumstances in each case;
- What outcomes you are hoping to obtain from the meeting;
- Timescales for reporting back to the SCO following the meeting.

INTRODUCTIONS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

At the start of a Strategy Meeting, those present will be asked to introduce themselves. Please make a note of all those present including their names, roles and involvement in the case. Should you miss any details, the minute taker should be able to provide these at the end. These details will also be included within the official minutes.

The LADO will remind all attendees about the confidential nature of the meeting; that all discussions should be treated in strict confidence and not shared beyond the terms agreed within the meeting. Should there be any concerns raised about information being disclosed to a non-statutory agency (The FA) during the meeting, the CFADSO should give assurances that any such information will be treated in complete confidence by the SCMT.

Feedback from CFADSOs is that seeking disclosure can be the most difficult part of a meeting.

Please explain your role and relationship with SCMT making clear that you are attending as a representative of the SCMT and not the County FA. It is important that the LADO understands that any information obtained from the meeting (including minutes) will be shared with the SCMT to inform a risk assessment.

Although the LADO will usually agree to minutes being shared with the SCMT, they may not agree to these being disclosed to the individual or may redact information. Please ensure that you seek clarity on this during the meeting.

If the Chair does not agree to the CFADSO attending the entire meeting, the CFADSO should make a note of their objections and attend as much of the meeting as they are permitted to.

RECORDING AND SHARING INFORMATION

During the meeting please take clear notes about what is said and by whom. You will be provided with minutes from the meeting in due course however, your own notes are important for the following reasons:

- It can take several weeks for Strategy Meeting minutes to be distributed;
- The official minutes do not always record verbatim and may only include a summary;
- Occasionally, important information may be accidentally omitted from the minutes or inaccurately recorded therefore if you have taken your own minutes, you can compare them against the official minutes when distributed, to provide feedback to the LADO or dispute in the event of any discrepancies - please read the minutes once received and provide feedback regarding any discrepancies to the LADO soon as possible following receipt (this is usually within 14-working-days).

When sharing information during the meeting the LADO and other attendees may ask you questions or seek clarification about the information you have provided. When all attendees have shared their information, the meeting will consider several matters which include:

- Possible risk to other children the individual may contact - this will be relevant to the individual's role within football, particularly if they have a position of trust role within a youth team;
- Implications of a police investigation - whether The FA will need to await the outcome of a police investigation prior to progressing with a risk assessment;
- Whether the SCMT will be considering an Interim Suspension - this decision will be made by the SCMT following the Strategy Meeting however, you may be required to state whether you are in support of this decision during the meeting based on the risk factors;
- Information sharing and disclosure - what information can be shared, by who and with who - please ensure you seek clarity on what information can be disclosed to the participant as part of The FA's safeguarding investigation;
- Media enquiries - please liaise with the SCO as soon as possible if there is any media interest in the case.

OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS FROM THE MEETING

All professionals in attendance should agree upon clear actions at the end of the meeting. If you disagree with the general view of those present, please ask that your view is recorded. If dissatisfied with the proposed actions given to the SCMT, please challenge appropriately providing rationale as to why you disagree with the recommendation. Actions required could include:

- Police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- Enquiries and assessment by Children's Social Care and/or police Section 47 investigation;
- Referral to the employee to deal with via disciplinary proceedings with training, advice or guidance given;
- Or simply further enquiries to be made before convening a further meeting.

An action plan will be produced stating:

- Proposed actions and responsibility for completing these;
- Timescales for completion of actions;
- Contingency plans;
- Arrangements for review Strategy Meetings;
- Whether any other specific actions are required by any other attendees.

If the LADO asks you to carry out an action that has not been previously discussed or agreed with the SCO for example, referring an individual to the DBS; you should ask to step outside of the meeting so that you can contact them to discuss this. In the event that you cannot speak with the SCO or with anyone from the SCMT, you should inform the meeting that you will notify them as soon as possible as to whether you can

complete the action, leaving a telephone message or email with the SCO/SCMT to respond to as a matter of urgency.

Before leaving the meeting please ensure that you are clear about what actions are required of you and of the SCO, that you have provided your contact details for receipt of the minutes, and that you know the date and venue for the next meeting if applicable.

It may be that in the meeting police and Children Services state that they will be taking no further action with the case closed to the LADO. Should you remain concerned about the risk that the participant poses or may pose to children in football, please express your concern and ask for this to be documented.

Explain that The FA works to the threshold of the balance of probabilities and therefore the SCMT may still complete a risk assessment despite the outcome of the meeting.

REPORTING BACK TO THE SCMT FOLLOWING THE MEETING

Following the meeting please report back to the SCMT as soon as possible. If an Interim Suspension has been recommended by the LADO, please inform the SCO on the same day. In any event you should aim to report back to the SCO verbally and with any written notes from the meeting within 48 hours of the meeting. Ideally notes from the meeting should be typed however, if you are unable to do this within timescales please send a copy of your hand-written notes to be recorded on file whilst this is completed. You should discuss with the SCO, the information shared during the meeting, proposed actions and timeframes with details of who is responsible for each of these. Please also inform the SCO of the date for the next Strategy Meeting and confirm whether you can attend.

ANNEXE 7: EXAMPLES OF LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS

- Spending excessive time alone with children (NB This behaviour could lead to there being serious concerns and any cases involving this type of behaviour should be discussed with The FA SCMT);
- Not adhering to guidance when transporting children including travel abroad.
- Failure to provide effective supervision for coaching sessions which should be properly planned;
- Putting performance over the wellbeing and safety of players;
- Having a win at all costs mentality and failing to be gracious in defeat;
- Lack of respect for other individuals, such as match officials, opposition coaches, players, managers and spectators and failing to accept a match official's decision (this may be dealt with by way of on field disciplinary proceedings but may fall short of being dealt with in this way);
- Having favourites and not treating all children fairly and equitably;
- Allowing rough and dangerous play, bullying, the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour by players;
- Overtraining and exerting undue influence over players;
- Using punishments that humiliate or harm children;
- Not taking time to explain coaching techniques and ensuring they are understood by all players;
- Condoning rule violations by players and not adhering to the laws and spirit of the game;
- Not holding required FA qualifications for the role being carried out;
- Providing one to one coaching without any supervision or the presence of other adults;
- Inappropriate use of social media - any sexualised communication must be referred to The FA SCMT;
- Allowing children to discriminate on the grounds of religion, race, gender, social class or lack of ability;
- Failure to encourage children to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour;
- Engaging in, or tolerating, offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour;
- Failure to challenge low-level concerns by others;
- Failure to record incidents or accidents;
- First aid being administered without others being present other than in an emergency;
- Not informing parent/carer of serious medical incidents and/or not referring to medical professionals;
- Not having access to a telephone to be able to immediately contact emergency services if necessary;
- Not working as part of a team to ensure the safety of children in their care;
- Failing to address the additional needs of disabled players or other vulnerable groups;
- Allowing confidential information to be shared inappropriately;
- Failure to respect and listen to the opinions of children and consider the rights and responsibilities of children;
- Failure to display and promote consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance;
- Smoking, consuming alcohol and/or being under the influence of drugs during coaching sessions/ in regulated activity with children.

Respect for
each other,
Respect for
the game.



Adult Club code of conduct

On and off the pitch, I will:

- Always play the game fairly and in the right spirit.
- Be aware of the impact of bad language; keep spectators and members of the public - including children - in mind.
- Avoid criticising match officials. Accept that they make honest decisions and confronting them will not change it.
- Never verbally abuse a match official, player or spectator based on their appearance, race, religion, gender or sexuality. Doing so could lead to dismissal from the field, suspension and possible police action.
- Never physically assault a match official, player or spectator. Doing so could lead to dismissal from the field, suspension and possible police action.
- Always win, lose or draw with dignity, and be prepared to shake hands with match officials, opposition players and manager at full-time.

I understand:

'If I do not follow the Code, I may expect to:

- Be cautioned, sin binned or sent off by the match officials, depending on the nature of the offence.
- Be asked to apologise to whoever I have offended or abused.
- Be disciplined by my club, including being substituted, dropped, given a formal warning or suspended from training or matches depending on the nature of the offence.
- Be disciplined by the County Football Association, including being fined or suspended for a number of matches depending on the nature of the offence.
- Be handed a permanent exclusion by the FA or County Football Association, if the offence is deemed serious enough.'



RESPECT



Nationwide

Building society with mutual respect

Respect for each other, Respect for the game.



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RESPECT



Building society with mutual respect

Whether you win or lose,
make it a better game.

Treat your team, other players
and Match Officials with
respect so that everyone
has a more enjoyable time,
on and off the pitch.



Play Your Part (Code of Conduct)

Adult Players

Play your part and support The FA's Code of Respect:

On and off the field, I will:

- Stick to the rules and celebrate the spirit of the game
- Always show respect to everyone involved in the game
- Never engage in public criticism of the Match Officials and abide by their final decisions
- Win or lose with dignity. Shake hands at the end of every game
- Be aware of the potential impact of bad language on others
- Never engage in abusive language, bullying or intimidating behaviour

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, I may:

- Be asked to apologise to whoever I've upset
- Receive a formal warning
- Be required to attend a FA education course
- Be dropped, substituted or suspended from training
- Not be selected for the team
- Be asked to leave the club and/or issued a fine



Building society with mutual respect

We ONLY
do
Positive.

Set the standards for a great game.

Use your position to set a
positive example for the people
you're responsible for and lead
a better game for everyone.

Play Your Part (Code of Conduct)

Coaches, Team Managers and Club Officials

Play your part and support The FA's Code of Respect:

On and off the field, I will:

- Always show respect to everyone involved in the game
- Stick to the rules and celebrate the spirit of the game
- Encourage fair play and high standards of behaviour
- Always respect the Referee and encourage players to do the same
- Never enter the field of play without the referee's permission
- Never engage in, or tolerate offensive, insulting or abusive behaviour
- Be aware of the potential impact of bad language on others
- Be gracious in victory and defeat
- Respect the facilities home and away

When working with players, I will:

- Place the well-being, safety and enjoyment of each player above everything
- Never tolerate any form of bullying
- Ensure all activities are suited for the players' ability and age
- Work with others (e.g. officials, doctors, welfare officers, physiotherapists) for each player's best interests

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, I may be:

- Required to meet with the club or league Welfare officer or your CFA Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).
- Suspended by the club from attending matches
- Suspended or fined by the County FA
- Required to leave, lose my position and/or have my license withdrawn

We ONLY
do
Positive.



Building society with mutual respect



Make your impact a positive one.

By managing the game in a positive,
calm and confident way, you'll
encourage everyone to have fun.



Play Your Part (Code of Conduct)

Match Officials

Play your part and support The FA's Code of Respect:

I will:

- Respect the game, the competition and all other participants
- Maintain my integrity and approach each game with a positive mind set
- Be knowledgeable of the laws of the game, regulations and competition rules
- Set a positive personal example, by promoting good behaviour
- Embrace and empathise with the spirit of the game
- Submit accurate and concise reports and misconduct
- Complete and submit accurate and concise reports
- Apply the laws of the game, promoting positive actions and not tolerating actions that do not fit the image of the game

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, I may be:

- Required to meet with The FA, County FA Referee Development Staff or Referees Committee
- Suspended by the County FA



Building society with mutual respect

We ONLY do Positive.

*If we behave positively
during practice and matches,
our children will too.*

*By setting a good example, we'll help
build a supportive environment in which
everyone can enjoy themselves.*

Play Your Part (Code of Conduct)

Spectators and Parents/Carers

**Play your part and support
The FA's Code of Respect:**

- Have fun; it's what we're all here for!
- Celebrate effort and good play from both sides
- Always respect the Referee and coaches and encourage players to do the same
- Stay behind the touchline and within the Designated Spectators' Area (where provided)
- When players make mistakes, offer them encouragement to try again next time
- Never engage in, or tolerate offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour

**I understand that if I do not follow the Code,
I may be:**

- Issued with a verbal warning or asked to leave
- Required to meet with the club committee, league or CFA Welfare Officer
- Obligated to undertake an FA education course
- Requested not to attend future games, be suspended or have my membership removed
- Required to leave the club along with any dependents and/or issued a fine



Building society with mutual respect

**We ONLY
do
Positive.**

Play your best. Be your best.

Make sure you and everyone
around you has a good time
on and off the pitch.

Play Your Part (Code of Conduct)

Young Players

Play your part and support
The FA's Code of Respect:

When playing football, I will:

- Always play my best for the benefit of the team
- Play fairly and be friendly
- Play by the rules and respect the Referee
- Shake hands with the other team - win or lose
- Listen carefully to what my coach tells me
- Understand that a coach has to do what's best for the team
- Talk to someone I trust or the club welfare officer if I'm unhappy about anything at my club
- Encourage my team mates
- Respect the facilities home & away

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, I may:

- Be asked to apologise to whoever I've upset
- Receive a formal warning
- Be dropped, substituted or suspended from training



Building society with mutual respect

We ONLY do Positive.

