

FIFA GUARDIANS™

Child safeguarding toolkit for Member Associations

Accessible Version (disabled friendly)

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President's foreword

Millions of children around the world are involved in football. Many play, whether in organised matches or kickabouts, some take an early interest in coaching and refereeing, and almost all follow a favourite team, learning valuable life lessons such as loyalty and team work, through thick and thin. However, they are involved in the game, what these children all have in common is the right to enjoy football in a safe environment, in a culture of respect and understanding.

FIFA's vision is to promote the game of football, protect its integrity and bring the game to all. In realising this vision, we are and will keep on leading the game in a way that ensures that involvement in football, in any form, is a positive experience for all children. We are and will work together with all the member associations (MAs) and confederations, support and guide them when needed, foster cooperation between them, listen and follow their good practice examples, which are numerous.

With this toolkit, FIFA has established guiding principles and minimum requirements that will help leaders and organisers in our sport to ensure a safe and nurturing environment for the youngest members of the football family. Such an environment, far from being a privilege, is every child's right.

Secretary General

As highlighted in FIFA Vision 2.0, our organisation is committed to the standards that are demanded of a global sport governing body. For all those under 18, this means ensuring the highest standards are met by implementing effective measures so that football is played in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere for all children, everywhere.

This toolkit is part of FIFA's overall vision to safeguard children, in line with article 3 of the FIFA Statutes to respect all internationally recognised human rights and to promote the protection of these rights. In addition, it aims to support implementation of the FIFA Forward 2.0 Development Programme which obliges MAs and confederations to "take measures to protect and safeguard children and minors from potential abuses and to protect their wellbeing within football" (FIFA Forward 2.0 Regulations, article 8, paragraph 1t).

Proactive efforts by FIFA and its MAs to safeguard children will not only enhance their enjoyment of and performance in football, it will set the foundations to safeguard everyone across the game and promote zero tolerance for any form of abuse or harassment within football.

Through the five principles and five steps outlined in this toolkit, we are setting minimum requirements to ensure the safety and well-being of all children in our game. We will continue to work with our members and partners to ensure the message is heard loud and clear : no form of abuse is justifiable in sports and we each have an obligation to install robust safeguarding measures to prevent it.

Introduction

As the global governing body for football, FIFA is committed to supporting its members to implement best practice to keep children safe and ensure involvement in football is fun for all. While FIFA does not control the day-to-day operations of our members, or their affiliated organisations and clubs who are independently organised, this toolkit sets minimum requirements for all members on child safeguarding.

Accordingly, this document will underpin our work and that of our 211 MAs and the six confederations. It provides a framework to help members consider how they can prevent any risk of harm to children in football and respond appropriately, as called for in the FIFA Forward 2.0 Regulations, article 8, paragraph 1t.

The toolkit recognises that many MAs already have good policies, procedures and training in place and builds on the great work of our partners around the world. It is part of FIFA's overall commitment to safeguard children¹ and will be supplemented with further guidance, templates, knowledge-sharing and training to support MAs, together with the confederations, in developing their own policies, procedures and good practices. FIFA considers this a living document that is to be updated every twenty-four months based on feedback and practical experience from our members.

How was the toolkit developed ?

The content of this toolkit was developed by the FIFA administration together with the FIFA Child Safeguarding Working Group. Special thanks to UNICEF, the Council of Europe, the Scottish Football Association, OFC and Concacaf for their technical support and advice. Consultation and input was also received from the FIFA Development Committee and the OFC Just Play project managers.

It draws on multiple sources from MAs around the world, as well as other organisations' safeguarding policies and guidelines that are listed in the resources.

Who is this toolkit for ?

This is a resource for all stakeholders working to safeguard children in football. Specifically, it is intended for MAs :

- to promote accountability and responsibility for keeping children safe from harm when involved in any football activity;
- to self-assess and inform the development of their safeguarding policies, plans and programmes, including for human resource and training needs;
- to assist coordinators and technical staff with risk assessments and the development of safeguarding plans and programmes;
- to support practitioners, such as coaches, trainers, medical personnel, staff and volunteers, who provide services, training and programmes to children to apply good practice for effective action.

How to get the most out of the toolkit

¹ Reference to **article 3** of the FIFA Statutes : "FIFA is committed to respecting all internationally recognised human rights and shall strive to promote the protection of these rights" and the FIFA Code of Ethics (in particular **article 23**). In addition, the FIFA Forward 2.0 Development Programme obliges member associations and confederations to "take measures to protect and safeguard children and minors from potential abuses and to protect their wellbeing within football" (**FIFA Forward 2.0 Regulations, article 8, paragraph 1t**).

This toolkit is meant to be interactive and assist MAs on their safeguarding journey. If you are using the printed version, you can use the space provided for notes if helpful. If using the PDF version on a computer, take advantage of the active hyperlinks as you move through the document. If your MA is working on this issue for the first time, it may be helpful to start with an understanding of what we mean by safeguarding and child protection, as well as what we mean by abuse, its global prevalence and consequences, as well as some risk and protective factors within sport. These and other important considerations are explained in Appendix 1 “Starting on common ground”.

Child safeguarding is the set of proactive actions MAs can take to promote the well-being of children and keep them safe from harm when involved in football. It is an umbrella term encompassing the prevention of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect of children.

Even if good preventive measures are in place, concerns about a child may still arise. **Child protection** is an essential part of safeguarding and refers to the action taken in response to a *specific* concern for a child or children who may be suffering or is / are at risk of suffering harm or abuse. It requires referral to specialised child protection services, law- enforcement agencies and expert local organisations that are trained to provide advice on and manage cases, if concerns arise.

Getting started : five principles, five steps

This section sets out the five principles and five steps that should underpin each MA’s work to prevent any risk of harm to children in football and to appropriately respond. They are based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which is the world’s most widely ratified human rights treaty. Each of the five steps contain supplementary guidance notes and suggested templates that should be considered by MAs in developing their own safeguarding policies and practices, depending on what stage of the safeguarding journey they are in. The five steps are based on the practical application of the International Safeguards for Children in Sport.

The five principles

In line with the terms and spirit of the UNCRC, safeguarding children in football is based around the following five principles that apply to all stakeholders :

1. We will act in the best interests of children.² Ensuring that children are safeguarded is part of a commitment to enhancing their enjoyment of and performance in football.
2. Children’s rights, as set out in the UNCRC, will be respected and promoted throughout the game of football. Amongst other factors, this means that :
 - a. A “child” or “young person” is anyone under the age of 18 years. While recognising that programmes differ for young children and adolescents, hereinafter the toolkit refers to all individuals under 18 years as “children”, regardless of the age of majority in the country where the child lives.
 - b. Every child has the right to take part in football in a safe and inclusive environment free from all forms of abuse, harassment and exploitation.
 - c. We will put the child before the player, referee, supporter or other role they may have in football.
 - d. We recognise that any form of abuse disrespects the rights of the child and will not be tolerated.

² This means that every action relating to a child or children in football has to take into account their best interests as a primary consideration. The word “action” includes all decisions, conduct, training, services, programmes, etc.

- e. Children have a right to participate and be heard across the game, including by having a say in shaping safeguarding policy and practice, and for their views and opinions to be taken into consideration in all decisions and actions concerning them.
3. The principles and practices in this toolkit will be applied to all children and without discrimination on account of race, skin colour, ethnic, national or social origin, gender, disability, language, religion, political opinion or any other opinion, wealth, birth or any other status, sexual orientation or any other reason.
4. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility, regardless of the country we are from or the role we hold in football. This means that when children are in our care we have a duty to safeguard them, without exception.
5. Specific roles and responsibilities must be defined within MAs and all concerns will be reported and dealt with immediately in accordance with stated procedures, in line with national legislation, and with the best interests of the child as the primary concern.

The five steps towards safeguarding children in football

Some MAs have well developed policies and procedures in place, others are just starting out on their safeguarding journey. Depending on what stage of the journey your MA is in, these five steps, taken together, are intended to help you refocus current efforts and implement minimum requirements to keep children safe in football. The steps are underpinned by recognised best practice to help you develop a long-term system of safeguarding. FIFA strongly recommends that MAs implement these steps working together with their local expert partners and relevant authorities. For those MAs that currently do not have any safeguarding measures in place, the steps should be implemented incrementally and within 24 months of the launch of this toolkit. FIFA will provide MAs with ongoing training and support, together with the respective confederations. In turn, each member should provide FIFA with progress reports on the implemented safeguarding measures on a regular basis as part of its obligation under article 8, paragraph 1t of the FIFA Forward 2.0 Regulations.

Step 1 : How are children involved in our game and what safeguards already exist ?

The first step towards safeguarding children in football is to consider :

- A. The ways in which children are involved in football in your country.
- B. Undertaking an assessment to understand what is already in place to safeguard them. You may not consider certain actions in terms of "safeguarding", but it is likely that you are already undertaking a number of measures to safeguard children in your country.
- C. What agencies and organisations exist within your country to safeguard and protect children and to promote their rights ? These locally based expert agencies and organisations may be able to provide guidance and support you in safeguarding and protecting children involved in football in your country.

Understanding each of these areas in more detail will help you to decide which of the next steps you need to take and how to prioritise them.

A. The involvement of children

Ask yourself :

- **In what ways are children involved in our game ?**

Although not an exhaustive list, this could be playing in youth or adult football at any level, from grassroots to elite football, attending matches as a supporter, refereeing at any level, attending tournaments or youth academies, coaching other young people or adults, acting as a matchday mascot or as a ballboy or ball girl. It is important to consider all the ways children are involved in football at the various levels so that your policies, procedures and safeguarding measures can be developed to safeguard children across football and not only when they are playing.

Notes :

- **Who are the people who interact with the children that you have identified as involved in football and what is the nature of their interaction ?**

This includes staff and volunteers involved in football.

Notes :

B. What measures do you already have in place ?

Ask yourself :

- **Is there a safeguarding policy in place that covers each of the areas where children are involved in the game ? Are there procedures in place to implement this policy ?** Yes, no ?

If not, please refer to steps 2, 3 and 4 below.

Notes :

- **Do you have an understanding of the safeguarding and protection requirements³ and arrangements that are set out in the laws of your country ?**

- Which laws establish your duty to safeguard children in your care or to report concerns ? Note that in some countries, national legislation provides a clear mandatory requirement to report concerns of abuse.
- Are there laws or guidelines around safeguarding and practical supervision, and / or health and safety measures you should have in place for children, for example, the number of children one adult can look after at one time ?

Notes :

- **Which agencies and organisations are in charge of safeguarding and protecting children and / or children’s rights within your country ?** It is important to identify and consider engaging and

establishing partnerships with these agencies and organisations, as they may be able to help and support you in safeguarding children in football in your country.

- What government departments or local agencies exist that have a statutory responsibility for promoting children’s rights and child protection ? ⁴ It is important to remember that a child participating in football falls under the protection measures of domestic laws of the country in which he / she is playing. In this context, statutory responsibility refers to the specialised government departments or agencies that are charged with promoting children’s rights and well-being and investigating concerns and allegations of abuse.
- Where should you report concerns or seek general advice ?
- Is there an independent government organisation for children’s rights in your country that can provide further advice (e.g. a children’s rights commissioner or ombudsman) ?

Notes :

³ “Safeguarding” and “protection” might be described differently in your country, so it is important to check with local experts and understand what laws apply to your work with children. There may, for example, be laws against sexual or physical abuse, or corporal punishment of children.

⁴ For example, the Department of Health and Social Welfare, Department of Children’s Services, or community-based policing units, etc.

- **Do you have links with other sports bodies,⁵ non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or UN entities that could provide you with education, support or guidance in the area of children’s rights and safeguarding ?** In identifying relevant national partners to engage, UNICEF can act as a contact in countries where it has local Field Offices as well as other expert NGOs in this field. They will be able to assist you with local information about the agencies and organisations that can support or help with specific referrals if cases or concerns of abuse arise.

Notes :

Step 1 ACTION : *Having considered the questions above, and before moving on to step 2, the following tool has been designed to help you further assess where you currently stand on the safeguarding journey. Save your results for future monitoring of progress :*

[FIFA organisational assessment tool for MAs](#) LINK

Step 2 : set out and define your safeguarding policy

Every MA that engages directly or indirectly with children has a duty to do all it can to protect children from harm within football and to promote their well-being. A child safeguarding policy provides MAs with a formal approach to managing this duty of care. Safeguarding children is supported by having a good, clear and accessible policy in place so that both adults and children are clear on what is expected of them and others. This step refers to the development of an “organisational policy” within MAs, meaning a policy that should be in place for all aspects of the game, all year round.

As a minimum, your policy should :

- Be approved by your executive committee or council and have an associated action plan.
- Identify a lead officer on child safeguarding.⁶

⁵ Other sports organisations or bodies in your country may have existing approaches to safeguarding that can provide examples of lessons learnt and guidance.

⁶ Safeguarding children in football is everyone’s responsibility, but it is essential to identify a focal point or lead officer, with the support of senior management, to help drive the process and make everyone “safeguarding literate”.

- Have a dedicated safeguarding internal steering group and / or external advisory group⁷ to help the development, implementation and monitoring of your safeguarding measures.
- Be reviewed regularly, following any changes to national legislation or safeguarding practice, or as a consequence of a particular issue or case arising.
- Contain clear definitions, for example what is meant by a child, safeguarding, child protection, and abuse in line with your national legislation. An explanation of key terms can be found in Appendix 1 of this document.
- Contain clear policy statements on the five safeguarding principles noted above.

Step 2 : ACTION : Please refer to the guidelines and templates in the following appendixes to help set out and develop your safeguarding policy :

- Appendix 2 : Sample child safeguarding policy and implementation guide for MAs;
- Appendix 3 : Guidance note for MA internal steering group and / or external advisory group;
- Appendix 4 : Sample role description for MA safeguarding officer.

Good practice when starting policy development and implementation

1. Developing a safeguarding policy requires the skills and expertise of a variety of football and other sports organisations working together with local expert child protection agencies, social services, health, education, law-enforcement professionals and civil society organisations. Set aside resources to establish a working group bringing all relevant stakeholders and local experts together.
2. The child safeguarding policy should be based on an organisational self-assessment and should be accompanied by an action or implementation plan. The head of the MA should endorse the policy and provide appropriate resources and support for its implementation, especially in relation to implementing safeguarding measures and training.
3. Hold all stakeholders accountable for the policy, including within all relevant job descriptions.
4. Use simple, clear language.
5. Ensure that children’s input is taken into account when developing and implementing the policy and action plan.

Step 3 : Develop procedures and guidelines to implement your policy

It is essential to have or develop procedures in the following **three areas**, in order to implement your safeguarding policy.

Note that some MAs have one combined policy document which elaborates its procedures and guidelines. For example :

- Irish Football Association (Northern Ireland) : Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy & Procedures : Guidance for Staff and Volunteers : [Irish Fa Link](#)
- New Zealand Football Policy regarding Working with Children : [NZ Link](#)
- U.S. Soccer, Safe Soccer Framework : [US Soccer Link](#)

⁷ Note that in some MAs around the world there are different boards, task forces, committees or departments that have been established to oversee safeguarding within football, such as a welfare committee or department, child welfare committee, social committee, safeguarding board, advisory group, or similar.

Developing procedures and guidelines to implement your policy

A. How will you respond to concerns about a child ?

As a minimum, this should include clarity on :

- Who within the organisation should a concern be reported to ?
- Who within the organisation is responsible for managing the concern ?
- How should the concern be reported to the responsible person ?
- What process will the responsible person follow, including how the concern is reported to other non-footballing agencies (e.g. statutory authorities / agencies) where appropriate ?
- What should be investigated by the MA and what must be reported to local authorities and expert agencies to ensure the case is managed by competent bodies ?
- Where can staff and volunteers get support when they have, or think they have, a concern about a child ?

Notes :

Step 3A : ACTION : Please refer to FIFA's supplementary guidelines and templates for MAs in Appendix 5 : Guidance for MAs on dealing with concerns and / or allegations of child abuse

B. Selecting, appointing and training people who work with children and young people

As a minimum, this should include :

- clarity about how safeguarding will be included in role descriptions and interviews when recruiting for a role;
- criminal record checks before appointment, where these exist within your country and where applicable to the role, to prevent unsuitable people from working with children;
- reference checks with previous employers or volunteer agencies;
- basic awareness and induction training that specifically includes safeguarding;
- signing of a code of conduct by all staff and volunteers working with children that outlines expected and prohibited behaviour.

Notes

Step 3B : ACTION : Please refer to FIFA's supplementary guidelines and templates for MAs in the following appendixes :

- Appendix 6 : Guidance on safe recruitment and screening procedures for MAs;
- *Basic awareness and induction training on safeguarding* to be developed by FIFA (forthcoming);
- Appendix 7 : Sample code of conduct for MA staff and volunteers.

C. Guidelines for the identification, prevention or minimisation of risk to children involved in football

As a minimum, these guidelines should be developed and implemented by MAs and include :

- o information on the identification of risks to a child involved in football (conducting risk assessments);
- o expected and prohibited behaviours (signing the code of conduct);
- o minimum supervision ratios of adults to children for all activities and a definition of supervision;
- o planning and organisational arrangements, for example for visits and tournaments, including overnight stays and trips away;
- o celebration and communication arrangements, for example the use of images of children and communication via social media;
- o guidance on what to do if a child goes missing;
- o guidance on the safe use of changing rooms and showering facilities;
- o procedures or programmes for addressing any specific issues of risks that children in your country or community may face, for example trafficking, or where women and girls in particular may be at increased risk of some forms of violence and abuse.

Notes :

Step 3C : ACTION : Please refer to FIFA's supplementary guidelines and templates for MAs in the following appendixes :

- Appendix 8 : Risk assessment guide for member associations;
- Appendix 9 : Guidance to MAs on safeguarding and supervision of children;
- Appendix 10 : Guidance on planning and organising tournaments, overnight stays and away trips
- Appendix 11 : Sample missing child policy for MAs;
- Appendix 12 : Guidance on celebration and communication arrangements, including the use of images of children and communication via social media;
- Appendix 13 : Guidance on the safe use of changing rooms and showering facilities.

Innovative approaches for addressing specific risk issues

- In South Africa, Grassroot Soccer uses the power of football to educate, inspire, and mobilise at-risk youth to overcome their greatest health challenges, live healthier, more productive lives, and be agents for change in their communities. As part of this programme, girls-only football leagues and tournaments are being organised to mobilise community support and mixed-team tournaments to engage boys as allies in ending violence against women and girls : [Link](#)

- Addressing child trafficking and modern-day slavery through awareness raising and education : every year, thousands of young people, particularly from Africa, Asia and South America, are told they can be

the next football star in Europe. They are at risk of being sold a false dream by agents and academies who may aim to exploit them for profit and economic gain. If child trafficking through football is a concern in your country, education to raise awareness and address the risks of exploitation can be found [here](#)

Step 4 : Communication and education

Policies, procedures and guidelines will not in themselves safeguard children involved in football. Communication and education are therefore essential to ensure understanding of safeguarding measures and principles and what they mean for everyone in football.

The first step is to map out all the roles in your organisation and to what extent each role involves children. This will help your organisation to determine what level of safeguarding training is needed for the role. For example, adults that are taking children on trips away will need additional training on how to ensure that safeguarding measures are in place to keep them safe while away from home.

As a minimum, education should include :

- Awareness-raising for everyone coming into contact with children and young people in football. This should include how to recognise and respond to concerns and standards of expected behaviour.
- Education for those requiring more specialist knowledge, such as staff who will be managing child-related concerns or recruiting people to work with children.
- Awareness-raising for children and their families, in particular to empower them to prevent, detect and report abuse and ensure that they know whom to speak to if they have any concerns.
- A visible or easily available code of conduct or “charter” for children and parents or guardians on championing childhood.

Step 4 : ACTION : Please refer to FIFA's supplementary guidelines and templates for MAs in the following appendixes :

- Appendix 14 : How to recognise and respond to abuse and standards of expected behaviour.

Awareness-raising for children and their families :

- *Appendix 15 : Sample code of conduct for children;*
- *Appendix 16 : Information / sample code of conduct for parents and guardians;*
- **Note that FIFA's safeguarding training course and materials (forthcoming) can be used to raise awareness.*

Innovative approaches to education and awareness-raising

- The New Zealand Football Association has created an awareness-raising and educational video to promote its policy. It was created with the help of the New Zealand Police and supported by Oranga Tamariki (Ministry for Children). The video can be viewed here : [Link](#)

- *Child Protection in Football : What Every Coach Needs to Know.* This booklet has been developed for coaches working with children between the ages of six and 18 years : [Link](#)

Good practice when starting educational programmes

1. To embed safeguarding measures across football in your country, information should be included in the general educational programme for coaches, referees, managers, etc. The FIFA basic safeguarding awareness course can be used for this purpose.
2. In the development of more detailed courses and education on safeguarding, consult national experts in relevant fields, e.g. sports psychologists, child protection experts, other sports bodies, etc.
3. Educational programmes should include information on, and definitions and examples of types of abuse, and the relevant legal framework in your country.
4. Clarify who your target group is, and prepare tailored educational materials. Safeguarding training should be arranged and tailored to specific roles and responsibilities within football.
5. Consult and include the voices of children in the development of educational programmes in your country.
6. Use new media (webinars, online tutorials) if possible but remember that face-to-face information and training on safeguarding is also really important.
7. Install an accreditation system for training to stimulate the participation of staff.
8. Initiate a "train the trainers" (ToT) programme for roll-out.

The child safeguarding policy, procedures, codes of conduct and all related training and awareness-raising material should be easily available at all times on the MA's website.

Step 5 : How will you monitor, evaluate and review your policies, procedures and guidelines ?

Monitoring and evaluating your policy and how it is implemented is an essential part of keeping children safe. This should include a process for reviewing any concerns that are received, as well as measures for success if your policy, procedures and guidelines are implemented. For example :

- How will you check that everyone is attending the training they are meant to attend, including when new people join ?
- How will you ensure the code(s) of conduct is / are being read, understood and signed ?
- How will you ensure that the code of conduct is being implemented in practice ?
- How will you ensure that children know who to speak to if they are worried or anxious about anything ?
- How will you assess risk on an ongoing basis, both in relation to a particular activity and generally ?
- How will you know if your policy is effective ?

Step 5 : ACTION : *Please refer to FIFA's supplementary guidelines for MAs in Appendix 17 : Guidance on monitoring and evaluation.*

What this toolkit does not do :

- Replace what MAs currently have in place in terms of policies, procedures and training on child safeguarding.
- Affect the regulations in place regarding the recruitment of players into professional football. Existing provisions in the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players remain.
- Address abuse of those over the age of 18. However, proactive efforts by MAs to safeguard children will form a basis to safeguard everyone across the game and will create a culture of respect and zero tolerance for any form of abuse or harassment within football.

- Provide complete guidance for implementation (for example, safeguarding children at tournaments and competitions). While recognising the need for a comprehensive, system-wide approach to safeguarding from national to community-level football, from grassroots to elite levels, the toolkit offers information to help MAs **focus on a set of principles and minimum requirements**. Note that FIFA is currently developing an event-safeguarding programme for FIFA tournaments and events together with experts in this area and will share further guidelines on event-safeguarding in due course.
- Include all current, evidence-supported practices globally. Innovative approaches and programmes to safeguard children in football are currently being adapted and implemented in many countries. The toolkit focuses on the core components that need to be in place, based on the current experience of MAs and other sports organisations around the world. FIFA considers this a living document that is to be regularly updated and reviewed every twenty-four months, based on feedback and practical experience from our members, and evolving best practices in safeguarding across all sports.

List of resources

- Cayman Islands Government, Ministry of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports – Child Abuse Prevention Policy for National Sports Associations
- Concacaf Safeguarding Awareness for Coaches
- Cook Islands Football Association (CIFA) Child Protection Policy, January 2017
- The English Football Association, Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures
- Football Association of Ireland, Child Welfare Policy
- Football Federation Samoa (FFS), Child Protection Policy, January 2017
- INSPIRE : Seven strategies for ending violence against children (WHO, 2016)
- New Zealand Football Association, NZF Policy regarding Working with Children
- Northern Ireland Football Association, Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures : Guidance for staff and volunteers
- NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) materials
- Pro Safe Sport and Council of Europe “Start to Talk” materials
- Safe Soccer USA, Safe Soccer Framework
- The Scottish Football Association, Child Wellbeing and Protection in Scottish Football
- The International Safeguards for Children in Sport
- Terre des hommes, Child Safeguarding Policy
- UEFA Child Safeguarding Policy, 2019
- UNICEF, Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area, *Child Protection in Football : What Every Coach Needs To Know*

Appendix 1 : Starting on common ground

When thinking about our principles and implementing the five steps towards safeguarding children in football, there are some terms that are important to understand.

The following definitions have been adopted in line with the International Safeguards for Children in Sport.

Child : a person under the age of 18 years.

Child abuse : an act or omission that harms a child (in other words, an individual may abuse a child directly, or may be indirectly responsible for abuse because he / she fails to prevent another person from harming that child). It can be physical, emotional, sexual or by neglect. It can take place in person or online. Although typically thought of as an adult mistreating a child, children can also harm other children. This is especially in relation to bullying.

Safeguarding : the action taken to ensure that *all* children are safe from harm when involved in football. It means proactively doing everything possible to minimise risk and prevent abuse of children.

Child protection : refers to the action taken in response to a *specific* concern for a child or children who may be suffering or at risk of suffering harm or abuse. Child protection is an essential part of safeguarding and requires referral to specialised child protection services, law- enforcement agencies and expert local organisations⁸ who are trained to advice on and manage cases, if concerns arise.

It is important to know that the terms “violence against children” and “child abuse” are often used interchangeably. The following have been adapted from key UN documents to further explain what is meant by “different types of abuse”⁹. Legislation in your country will set out and define these.

Physical abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child and includes any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. It mainly involves hitting (“smacking”, “slapping”) children with the hand or with an implement – a whip, stick, belt, shoe, wooden spoon, etc. But it can also involve, for example, punching, kicking, shaking, throwing, scratching, pinching, biting or burning them or breaking their bones.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child’s emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that he / she is worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express his / her views, deliberately silencing him / her, or “making fun” of what he / she says or how he / she communicates. Emotional abuse often occurs as a pattern of deliberate, prolonged, repeated non-physical behaviour within a power-differentiated relationship. Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child’s peers.

⁸ In some contexts, statutory public services may not exist or be operational, in which case it is important to map out and build partnerships with trusted local organisations / NGOs who are trained in this area.

⁹ General Comment No. 13 (2011) “The right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence”; General Comment No. 8 (2006) : “The Right of the Child to Protection from Corporal Punishment and Other Cruel or Degrading Forms of Punishment”; UN Resolution A / RES / 73 / 148 adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2018 on sexual harassment; Protecting children from bullying – Report of the Secretary-General (2018, A / 73 / 265).

Bullying (or cyberbullying if conducted online) is unwanted, repeated and intentional, aggressive behaviour usually among peers, and can involve a real or perceived power imbalance. It can include actions such as making threats, spreading rumours or falsehoods, attacking someone physically or verbally and deliberately excluding someone.

Neglect is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs when those responsible for their care have the means, knowledge and access to services to do so, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter, that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. It also includes failure to protect a child from exposure to danger.

Sexual abuse is the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity. It occurs when adults exploit children sexually for their own gratification. It may involve physical contact, such as assault by penetration (for example, rape) or non-penetrative acts, such as kissing, rubbing and touching children's private body parts.

Sexual abuse does not necessarily involve contact; examples include involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse by gaining their trust (including via social media). In the majority of cases, the perpetrator is a person the child knows and trusts with sexual abuse often perpetrated in isolated, one-on-one situations.

Sexual harassment encompasses a continuum of unacceptable and unwelcome behaviour and practices of a sexual nature that may include, but are not limited to, sexual suggestions or demands, requests for sexual favours and sexual, verbal or physical conduct or gestures, that are or might reasonably be perceived as offensive or humiliating.

The following information may help you understand why safeguarding children is important.

Global prevalence and consequences :

According to the World Health Organization¹⁰, it is estimated that one billion children globally – over half of all children aged between two and 17 years – experience some form of emotional, physical or sexual abuse each year. Research documents that girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse. For example, the prevalence of childhood sexual abuse is estimated at 18% for girls, and 8% for boys. Disabled children are three to four times more likely to experience physical and sexual abuse and neglect than their non-disabled peers. Despite its high prevalence, abuse is often hidden, unseen or under-reported and is most often perpetrated by people children know and trust. Furthermore, if girls and boys do report abuse, they are often stigmatised or not believed, and no action is taken.

Though no global data exists on the extent of abuse in sport, in recent years it has become increasingly evident that sport is not always a safe space for children, and that the same types of abuse sometimes found in homes, schools and communities can also occur in sport programmes. In the world of football, as in other sports, research and recent court cases have revealed that playing football may expose children to abuse, and footballers' own accounts of "historic" (non-recent) sexual abuse point to vulnerabilities within the game.

¹⁰ INSPIRE : seven strategies to end violence against children. WHO, 2016

In terms of its impact, the immediate and long-term consequences of abuse can undermine children's education, health, and well-being, and may impact their productive capacity in later life. Strong global evidence shows that child abuse increases risks of : physical injury; HIV and other sexually transmitted infections; mental health problems; delayed cognitive development; poor school performance and dropping out of schools; early pregnancy; reproductive health problems; and communicable and non-communicable diseases.

What are some of the risk factors for abuse within sport ?

- Potential risk situations : changing rooms, showers, carpooling, overnight stays, away trips;
- Tolerance for bullying, including amongst peers;
- High tolerance of physical violence and injuries;
- Dominance and unequal power relationships, for example between managers or coaches and their athletes;
- Inappropriate adult-child relationships and abuse of positions of trust;
- Discrimination and gender inequality;
- Social tolerance for abusive relationships or behaviour : a key factor that makes children, particularly girls, vulnerable to abuse;
- Reputation and scandal avoidance : leading to incidents being silenced or unreported, sometimes leading to the continuation of the abuse;
- Lack of clear policies and procedures, especially at national and local levels.

What are some of the protective factors against abuse in sport ?

- Organisations have a culture of respect and zero-tolerance towards any form of abuse at all levels.
- There are clear policies and procedures in place that are well known by all, including children, young people, and their families, with a designated contact person.
- Incidents and allegations are taken seriously and followed up.
- Organisations promote a better understanding of the issues through education and awareness and are committed to deterring those who may wish to use sport as a means of gaining access to children for inappropriate reasons.
- Caring and committed staff and volunteers at all levels of the game.

Appendix 2 : Sample child safeguarding policy and implementation guide for MAs

Policy statement

Our association is committed to providing football in a fun, safe and respectful environment for all children. We recognise children's right to be free from all forms of abuse and acknowledge our duty of care to safeguard them.

Purpose of the policy

This policy provides a framework to ensure that children are safeguarded in the delivery of our sport. It will be accompanied by codes of conduct, guidelines and procedures to support implementation. It applies to all those under 18, without discrimination of any kind. We acknowledge that some children can be particularly vulnerable to abuse (e.g. disabled children, or those on elite pathways), and we accept the responsibility to promote their inclusion, safety and well-being across our game.

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to the following people (this is not an exhaustive list) : coaches / instructors; medical staff; managers; administrators and coordinators; volunteers; parents / guardians; peer / youth mentors; implementing partners; consultants / contractors / subcontractors.

It covers the following definitions :

Child : a person under the age of 18 years.

Child abuse : an act or omission that harms a child. Abuse towards a child can be carried out by an adult or by another child. It can be physical, emotional, sexual or by neglect. Abuse can take place in person or online.

Safeguarding : the action taken to ensure that *all* children are safe from harm when involved in football. It means proactively doing everything possible to minimise risk and prevent abuse of children.

Child protection : refers to the action taken in response to a *specific* concern for a child or children who may be suffering or are at risk of suffering harm or abuse. It is an essential part of safeguarding and requires referral to specialised child protection services, law- enforcement agencies and expert local organisations who are trained to advice on and manage cases, if concerns arise.

As part of our policy we will :

- Appoint a safeguarding officer.
- Set up an internal steering group to guide our work and / or an external expert advisory group.
- Map out, identify and establish partnerships with local child protection authorities / agencies and civil society organisations with expertise in this area that can provide help and advice.
- Ensure appropriate and immediate action is taken to address allegations of abuse through referral of concerns to the relevant statutory authorities.¹¹
- Develop an implementation / action plan to promote and install safeguarding measures across the MA.
- Prevent the employment / deployment of unsuitable individuals (staff and volunteers) in football through safe recruitment and screening procedures.
- Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding in football and provide all staff and volunteers with appropriate training when joining the organisation, as well as provide further training and updates on a regular basis (at least annually).
- Require all members of staff and volunteers to sign and comply with the code of conduct.

¹¹ In some contexts, the relevant statutory authorities may not exist, so it is important to map out and build partnerships with expert local organisations / NGOs who are trained and competent in this area.

- Manage concerns of poor practice and breaches of the code of conduct through the relevant competent body of the MA.
- Ensure children are informed of their rights and understand where to go if they have concerns or need help.
- Ensure investigatory, disciplinary and appeals processes are in place to appropriately manage allegations, reports and cases where staff or volunteers have been found to have breached this policy and the code of conduct. Case management and support for victims of abuse (or alleged victims), and those accused, will be undertaken by the relevant authorities. Any internal MA investigation will be put on hold until statutory investigations are complete, so that internal processes do not compromise statutory or criminal investigations.
- Ensure that confidential and accurate records of concerns, allegations, and reports and submitted evidence provided are maintained and securely stored.
- Ensure that we continually evaluate how children are involved in football in our country and review our safeguarding practices on a regular basis, at least annually, to ensure that we learn and improve safeguarding, in keeping with evolving best practices and national legislation. Furthermore, we will proactively consult with children with the guidance of local agencies and partners.

This policy, and its accompanying code of conduct, procedures and guidelines, will be widely promoted and made available on the [insert name of member association] website. Failure by staff and volunteers to comply with this policy will be investigated and may result in dismissal. The implementation / action plan below will be used to help us with the planning and prioritising of our work.

Lead officer : the safeguarding officer of [insert name of member association] is _____.
 Contact : tel. : _____ email : _____

Monitoring :

This policy will be reviewed annually together with expert local organisations / NGOs, or more urgently in the following circumstances :

- changes in national legislation, policies and services related to children’s rights, child protection and safeguarding;
- as a result of any other significant change, or event or specific case arising.

Approved by :

Executive committee or council

(Last reviewed on xxxx 2019)

Suggested MA implementation / action plan for safeguarding

(adapt as necessary to your context or stage of safeguarding)

| Action | Priority level (1-5) with 1 being highest priority | Person / group responsible | Resources required | Comments & notes | Target completion date | Completed Yes / no / <i>in progress</i> |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| MA safeguarding assessment | | | | | | |
| Safeguarding workshop held with key stakeholders, staff and volunteers | | | | | | |
| Policy adopted by executive committee or council | | | | | | |
| Safeguarding officer appointed | | | | | | |
| Advisory group / steering group established | | | | | | |
| Safe recruitment guidelines developed and adopted | | | | | | |
| Procedures and guidelines in place to minimise risks to children – risk assessment tool adopted | | | | | | |
| Process for responding to concerns agreed within the MA and with local partners, which is clearly understood and | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| communicated to all staff and volunteers | | | | | | |
| <p>Communication, training and education plan to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -widely promote the agreed reporting lines -train all staff and volunteers on safeguarding -promote the MA's policy and code of conduct | | | | | | |
| Monitoring and evaluation plan in place | | | | | | |

Appendix 3 : Guidance note for MA internal steering group and / or external advisory group

As an MA works to embed its child safeguarding policy and safeguarding measures across the organisation, it is essential to develop a governance or oversight structure in support of this policy and to appoint a designated child safeguarding officer. This will also help the MA mitigate for potential risks that may surface in the future. Furthermore, ownership by and the ongoing support from senior management are essential to ensure that the safeguarding policy and measures are taken seriously, adopted and properly implemented throughout the organisation. The MA can also establish an internal safeguarding steering group (SSG) or provide oversight through one of its standing committees (e.g. governance committee, social committee, development committee, etc.). Both options require that individuals with safeguarding lead responsibility within the MA are provided with appropriate training and ongoing support.

Where a dedicated SSG is tasked with overseeing child safeguarding within the MA, the group should be cross-organisational and should include colleagues appointed from all relevant divisions and departments that interact directly with children. The SSG should meet regularly, at least on a quarterly basis and more often at the outset, to ensure accountability and to promote, properly implement and regularly review the safeguarding measures in place across the MA. It may also consider any more urgent changes that might be needed as a result of a recent case or changes to legislation or best practices.

In addition, and depending on the country, it is highly recommended to identify and establish an agreement with local child protection and safeguarding agencies and non-governmental organisations with expertise in this area.

Establishing an external advisory group with local expertise will help to ensure that ongoing guidance and support is consistently available to the MA and that country-specific issues or practices that might risk harm to children in football are identified and considered within the MA's safeguarding measures. In addition, the expert advisory group will be able to advise on referrals to support services for children who may be harmed or at risk of being harmed. A key purpose of this expert advisory group will be to advise the MA on its ongoing actions and regularly review child safeguarding measures, as well as provide support to the safeguarding officer and / or SSG in their duties. It can also advise and support the MA's ongoing safeguarding training and capacity-building activities.

The MA should aim to identify and establish positive working relationships and partnerships with local child protection and safeguarding agencies and NGOs as a priority since they are best placed to provide advice and support locally. FIFA will be pleased to assist with this process together with its partners and respective confederation and to signpost and provide introductions wherever possible. When establishing and appointing a network of trusted local partners as part of its expert advisory group, MAs should consider the following criteria :

- a proven good understanding of children's rights, safeguarding and child protection legislation and guidelines in your country (essential);
- a track record in successfully delivering capacity-building / training on safeguarding measures and child protection (essential), and preferably in sport locally (non-essential);
- a national reach and proven record in working with civil society (essential), and a track record of working with other sports organisations (non-essential);
- an understanding of the culture and existing child protection government agencies and systems (essential);
- reference(s) from trusted organisation(s) such as UNICEF and / or international child rights agencies (essential);

Appendix 4 : Sample role description for MA safeguarding officer

MAs should appoint an experienced child safeguarding officer, or at least one person within the MA to act as a safeguarding focal point until a dedicated person can be appointed.¹² The title of and number of people appointed to this role will vary by country.¹³ The key objectives of this role should be :

1. To act as the focal point and lead for all safeguarding matters.
2. To ensure safeguarding training is implemented, to promote safe practices and minimise risks of abuse in football.
3. To map out and establish partnerships with local authorities / agencies and civil society organisations with expertise in this area. FIFA and its partners, such as UNICEF and its local Field Offices, will be able to assist with general guidance and local information about organisations. A full list of UNICEF Field Offices can be found @ https://www.unicef.org/about/structure/index_field.html
4. To manage referrals to statutory authorities / agencies and local organisations if incidents or concerns of abuse arise. The officer should keep an updated list of names and contacts of local authorities / agencies and partner organisations readily available at all times.

He / she will need to work closely with the SSG and / or expert advisory group (where established) in the delivery of their duties to implement the MA's safeguarding policy.

Duties and responsibilities of the safeguarding officer :

- Playing a lead role in developing the association's approach to safeguarding children in football
- Identifying and establishing partnerships with local authorities / agencies and civil society organisations / NGOs with expertise in this area
- Carrying out risk assessments when required and on an ongoing and regular basis, to ensure that football programmes, practices or activities (e.g. training and matchday procedures) consider safeguarding measures
- Ensuring risk assessments are undertaken by other staff and volunteers (and not only by the lead officer), to ensure that practitioners are also proactive in assessing risks and in revising and adopting further safeguarding measures that may be needed
- Ensuring that staff, volunteers and all stakeholders are familiar with the MA's safeguarding policy, code of conduct and safeguarding measures
- Providing or arranging safeguarding training and education for all new staff and volunteers and ensuring that existing personnel receive ongoing training and updates on safeguarding on a regular basis
- Advising management on ongoing training needs and maintaining a central filing system to keep track of the number of staff and volunteers who have completed safeguarding training. Liaising with HR (where established) as necessary

¹² If a person within the MA is appointed to act as a safeguarding focal point but is unfamiliar with this issue, he / she should work closely with the expert advisory group to support him / her in this role. Training will also be made available to support this function.

¹³ MAs around the world have different names and titles for such a role, including Risk Management Coordinators, Safeguarding Officers, Welfare Officers, Child Protection Officers, etc. The titles and number of appointed positions, and their level of responsibility, will vary across countries and contexts.

- Reporting allegations of poor practice¹⁴ and breaches of the MA's code of conduct to the relevant competent body of the MA
- Managing referrals to statutory authorities / agencies and local organisations if cases or concerns of abuse arise
- Acting as the central point of contact for internal and external individuals and agencies on safeguarding matters
- Representing the association at external meetings related to safeguarding
- Taking a lead role in maintaining and reviewing the association's implementation plan, together with the executive committee or council
- Keeping own safeguarding knowledge, best practice solutions and skills up-to-date

Skills and abilities required :

- Policy development, training and delivery of the safeguarding programme
- Child-focused approach
- Advice, support and supervision skills on safeguarding
- Communication skills
- Ability to work professionally, confidentially and consistently in an area where emotionally distressing and sensitive issues and cases may arise

Knowledge required :

- Recognising behaviour that is harmful to children and understanding thresholds of poor practice and abusive behaviour
- Clear and comprehensive understanding of the role and responsibilities of statutory authorities / agencies
- Managing child-protection referrals to relevant authorities / agencies
- Knowledge about country legislation, government guidelines and national frameworks for child safeguarding and protection and children's rights

¹⁴ Poor practice refers to behaviour that disregards the needs of children, thus compromising their well-being and / or safety, but that does not meet the threshold of abuse.

Appendix 5 : Guidance for MAs on dealing with concerns about a child and / or allegations of child abuse

Voicing concerns, suspicions or allegations of poor practice or abuse can cause worry and stress – particularly if it relates to a colleague or volunteer who engages in the MA’s programmes. However, reporting a concern is important in order to prevent a child from suffering harm or being at risk of harm, and to ensure that the concern is dealt with properly and consistently. In some countries, reporting is mandatory. **No action is not an option.**

Any staff member or volunteer who, in good faith, discloses possible wrongdoing(s) or grounds for concern about a child should receive full support from the MA, even if the allegation is subsequently proved to be unfounded. It is important to create a culture within your organisation where it is clearly understood by staff and volunteers that it is acceptable to report concerns and allegations in confidence and not to suppress them for fear of criticism or repercussions for doing so. Such a culture ensures that child abuse cases or risks are not ignored and inadvertently allowed to continue.

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in an association to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns or allegations by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities.

You should discuss, adapt and agree on the below reporting procedures with your local child protection authorities, expert agencies and civil society partners, and, where established, with your appointed expert advisory group :

Staff and volunteers should report any concerns they have to the safeguarding officer using established reporting lines (anonymously online, by email or phone) using the below form as a guide for reporting.

Some staff and volunteers may be more comfortable reporting their concerns directly to their line manager or a senior member of staff within the organisation. In such cases, the line manager should report these cases to the safeguarding officer to ensure that reports and allegations are managed in a consistent manner. Complainants should be encouraged to report allegations and concerns as soon as possible and within 24 hours. Where a case of abuse is suspected, the safeguarding officer will have a list of names and contacts of local authorities, expert agencies and trusted organisations¹⁵ that specialise in child protection who can offer professional help to the alleged victim and family and for cases to be properly investigated.

If the safeguarding officer is not available, and in case of an emergency, you should report the matter directly to the child protection agency in your area and / or to the police. A list of relevant emergency contacts should be available to senior personnel within the MA at all times.

Options in case of a concern :

- Submit a report via the MA’s safeguarding officer who will refer the case to local statutory authorities, agencies and trusted partners who can help. If they are unavailable and it is an emergency :
 - submit the report directly to the child protection agency in your jurisdiction;
 - submit the report directly to the police;
 - [add relevant national helpline numbers here, including those advised by your local child protection agencies as part of your reporting protocol].
- **Ensure that all information submitted by you is reported in strict confidentiality.**

¹⁵ In some contexts, the relevant statutory authorities may not exist, so it is really important to map out and build partnerships with expert local organisations / NGOs who are trained and competent in this area.

If you become aware of repeated poor practice by one of your colleagues, you have a responsibility to also report the matter to the safeguarding officer.

Poor practice reports can be handled internally by the relevant disciplinary or ethics procedures of the MA.

**Poor practice refers to behaviour that disregards the needs of children, thus compromising their well-being and safety, but does not meet the threshold of child abuse.*

Grounds for concern of abuse might exist when there is :

- An account by a person who saw a child being abused.
- Evidence, such as an unexplained physical injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse, such as the child being withdrawn and really quiet when he / she is not usually so.
- Consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical abuse and neglect.
- A specific indication (or disclosure) from a child that he / she has been abused. Remember, children rarely talk if they are being abused and often do not know what to do or where to go for help. It is very difficult for children to speak up about possible abuse, so be vigilant in picking up signs (*see guidance note 14 on how to recognise signs of abuse*).

In football, *incidents of poor practice* might occur when the needs of children are not given the necessary priority, resulting in their well-being and safety being compromised. Examples might include :

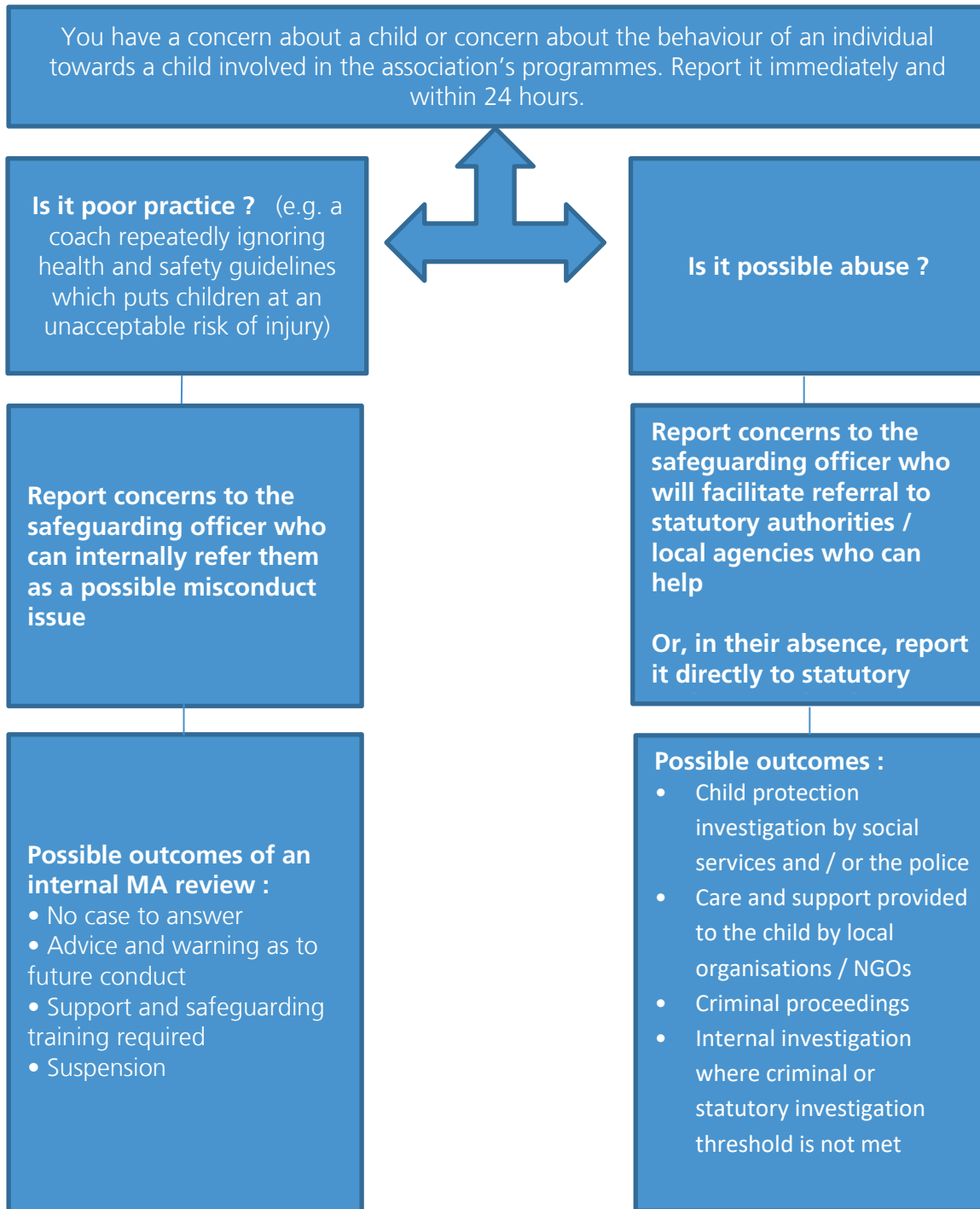
- taking insufficient care to avoid injuries (e.g. by excessive or inappropriate training for the age, maturity, experience and ability of players);
- failing to report behaviour which may compromise the welfare of a child and allowing concerning practices to go unreported;
- constantly showing favouritism towards or ignoring certain children;
- using foul language and prohibited substances in the presence of children;
- repeatedly ignoring health and safety guidelines, or failing to undertake regular risk assessments, which may put children at risk of harm (e.g. not ensuring that equipment, transport or facilities are fit for purpose, safe to use and accessible).

Failure to challenge and report poor practice can lead to an environment where abuse may occur.

REMEMBER : it is not your duty to decide if poor practice or abuse has occurred. It is your responsibility to report any concerns and suspicions you may have to the safeguarding officer or to the appropriate authorities.

This flow chart should act as a guidance tool only. Adapt as necessary to your context in consultation with your local partners and expert advisory group.

DEALING WITH SUSPECTED POOR PRACTICE AND / OR POSSIBLE ABUSE



What may happen after an allegation of abuse has been made ?

This will depend on the country, but it is important to note that allegations of abuse should be responded to after consultation with the relevant statutory authorities or agencies.¹⁶ Any internal MA investigation should be put on hold until statutory investigations are complete, so that internal processes do not compromise the statutory or criminal investigation.

Suspending the staff member or volunteer from his / her duties while an external investigation takes place should be standard practice.

The MA response may then include (this is not in order of importance or an exhaustive list) :

- liaising with child protection services as necessary to ensure support is provided to the child for his / her full care and recovery. If child protection services are not operational, engage with local organisations / NGOs to ensure care and support is provided;
- informing the line manager responsible for the staff member or volunteer;
- informing the general secretary of the association in order to coordinate an internal response, when appropriate;
- contacting the victim and his / her family, if advised to do so by statutory agencies, to inform them that the allegations have been forwarded for investigation;
- informing the staff member or volunteer of the allegation made against him / her and affording them the opportunity to respond.

Dealing with disclosures outside MA programmes

If your concern relates to the behaviour of an individual outside MA football programmes towards a child, you should report your concerns immediately to the statutory authorities or agencies.

When responding to any such disclosure, you should also :

- record information accurately using the form below as this may be used as part of any investigatory proceedings that may follow;
- keep a record of the name of the person or police officer to whom the referral was made;
- ensure that all information provided by you is done so in strict confidentiality.

CONFIDENTIALITY

When dealing with concerns relating to possible abuse, staff and volunteers should apply strict discretion and maintain confidentiality. Information should be shared on a "need-to-know" basis only in order to protect the child to whom the concern or allegations relate. Information can, and must, be shared with statutory authorities or agencies in order to assist them with the investigation process.

What may happen where the concern is not an allegation of abuse but of poor practice ?

Poor practice refers to behaviour that disregards the needs of children, thus compromising their well-being and safety, but does not meet the threshold of abuse.

¹⁶ Statutory authorities or law-enforcement agencies are responsible for investigating child protection concerns and allegations of abuse, not the MA.

The majority of poor practice cases can be dealt with by MAs through the relevant competent body and cooperation from all parties involved. Follow-up by the safeguarding officer is important to ensure that the appropriate course of action has been followed.

Key Points

- There is a responsibility to respond to both football-related and non-football related concerns.
- All concerns and allegations of potential poor practice or abuse should be taken seriously and responded to immediately and appropriately.
- Statutory authorities have the responsibility to investigate abuse, not the MA, but it is everyone's duty to prevent any risk of harm to children and to report any concerns they may have.
- Poor practice cases should be dealt with by MAs through the relevant competent body.

SAMPLE REPORTING FORM

Please fill out as many sections as possible in as much detail as you can. This form is strictly confidential. Carefully record the details and pass on this information to the safeguarding officer. Do not keep a copy for yourself.

| |
|--|
| Your name : |
| Your position : |
| Child's name and age : |
| Child's address (if known) : |
| Name of parents / guardians and address (if known) : |
| Are you reporting a direct disclosure, your own concerns or concerns raised by someone else ? <input type="checkbox"/> Direct disclosure from a child <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting my own concerns <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting concerns raised by someone else <input type="checkbox"/> If reporting concerns raised by someone else, please provide : a) his / her name _____ b) position _____ c) telephone number and email _____ |

Details of concern / suspicion / incident. Please describe.

Time :

Date(s) :

Place or location :

Name of member of staff or volunteer involved in incident (if any) :

Behaviour or physical signs observed :

Any other details :

Details of any conversation with the child or children :

Has the incident been reported to any external authorities or agencies ?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please state name of authority / agency :

Contact person :

Telephone number(s) :

Email address (if available) :

Agreed action or advice given :

Appendix 6 : Guidance on safe recruitment and screening procedures for MAs

Safe recruitment and screening

The range and quality of football programmes for children would not exist without the time, skills and commitment of staff and volunteers.

It is recognised that recruitment can never be entirely “safe” but the aim of safer recruitment is to put in place a number of actions that, together, aim to reduce the chances of employing the “wrong” people to work with children. MAs have the responsibility to ensure that those staff and volunteers providing football opportunities for children are appropriately selected, supported and have the necessary safeguarding knowledge to help them in their roles.

The following recruitment procedures will help select the right people and screen out and discourage those who are not suitable to work with children in football :

1. All roles involving interaction with children should explicitly include reference to safeguarding in the adverts and job descriptions.
2. At least two reference checks should be conducted and documented. References should be requested to demonstrate the applicant’s suitability to work with children.
3. Applicants should explicitly explain any gaps in employment.
4. The decision to request a police check needs to be made wherever there is an obligation or a possibility to do so under local legislation. Often this will simply be where the role requires access to children. Note that some countries have a database of offenders / people who are not suitable to work with children. If this exists in your country, then it should be checked. Also note that a person may have been convicted or prosecuted for a sexual offence after his / her recruitment. Police checks must be completed before the individual starts working in his / her role but also regularly, once he / she has started working in his / her role (at least once every five years).
5. If police checks do not exist in your country, a self-declaration form (or national equivalent) should be signed where a reliable criminal record check is not available (see sample form below). This can include broader questions about whether the individual has ever been subject to a disciplinary investigation. All such checks must be completed *before* the individual starts working in his / her role and at least once every five years, once he / she has started working in his / her role.
6. All new employees must attend and complete the MA’s training on safeguarding children in football within three months of taking up a post.
7. All new employees must read and sign the MA’s code of conduct upon taking up a post.
8. All new employees must complete their induction, which must include an obligation to read all relevant policies and procedures pertinent to safeguarding.

The checklist on the next page can help you think through safer recruitment practises. In some countries, it may be difficult to fully comply with all areas of the checklist – for example, police checks may not be possible. Similarly, obtaining copies of qualifications may be difficult, particularly if applicants have moved several times. Not being able to comply with one aspect of the checklist does not mean that the appointment cannot proceed. An overall assessment of the information available needs to be made.

| Recruitment & selection process | |
|--|---|
| Profile of candidate | Decide what skills and knowledge are needed to safely work with children in football, and include these within the profile |
| Advertisement | Include a clear statement about your association's commitment to safeguarding children |
| Interview questions | <p>Recruitment for those who will work directly with children should include an interview plan that incorporates behavioural-based questions. Sample safeguarding questions for interviews may include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have you worked / volunteered with children in a similar position before ? What did you like about it ? What did you find difficult ? - How have you handled children who did not want to participate in an activity ? - Provide me with three examples of how to work safely with children in football. - How would you handle children who were not listening to your instructions ? - What is your understanding of safeguarding children in football ? |
| Pre-appointment | |
| Reference checks | Two professional references should be directly provided, including one by the candidate's current or most recent employer. Open references (e.g. a candidate directly providing a written reference to you) are not sufficient. |
| Proof of identification | Verify a candidate's identification, preferably by using his / her national passport or national ID card. |
| Qualification and registration checks | Verify that candidates have actually obtained all qualifications or professional registrations claimed in their application by asking to see original certificates. |
| Police check | The decision to request a police check needs to be made based on whether the job entitles access to children, even if such access is occasional (like security or cleaning staff). Note that some countries have a database of offenders / people who are not suitable to work with children. If this exists in your country, then it should be checked. |

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| | <p>If a police check returns with a conviction, then HR colleagues in consultation with the child safeguarding focal point needs to decide whether to proceed with the appointment.</p> <p>Having a conviction does not necessarily mean that the person cannot be appointed; it depends on the offence. However, any conviction for abuse of a child or a sexual offence will lead to an immediate decision not to hire the person.</p> <p>It is recognised that it may be difficult to obtain police checks and references in some countries or contexts, or their reliability may be questionable.</p> <p>No one check will ever be a total guarantee of someone's suitability for working with children.</p> <p>Take a pragmatic view and put in place additional steps when background police checks cannot be obtained, such as a self-declaration form and references from former employers.</p> |
| Self-declaration form | <p>In the absence of a police check, candidates working directly with children should sign a self-declaration form.</p> |

Sample criminal record declaration form

(adapt as necessary to your national context and as necessary to fulfil the requirements of any applicable data protection legislation)

All applicants working directly with children must complete this form in full. Please refer to the guidance notes below before completing the following sections.

Please complete in **black ink**.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Full Name (block capitals) : | |
| Post applied for : | |

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Please answer the following questions : | |
| 1. Have you ever been convicted by the courts or cautioned, reprimanded or given a final warning by the police ? Please give details of any offences or penalties as well as the name of the country and dates in the table below. * | |
| Please tick (✓) as appropriate : Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (Please provide details.) No <input type="checkbox"/> (Proceed to question 2.) | |
| Date and place | Details |
| | |
| *If any circumstances change which would affect your response to this question, you must inform Human Resources where applicable or the recruiting manager of { insert name of member association } about the details without unnecessary delay. | |
| 2. Have you ever been subject to disciplinary proceedings or disqualified from work with children or subject to any other sanctions ? | |
| Please tick (✓) as appropriate : Yes <input type="checkbox"/> (Please provide details.) No <input type="checkbox"/> (Proceed to question 3.) | |
| Date and place | Details |
| | |
| 3. Please sign the following declaration and return this form to [insert name of member association] Human Resources where applicable or the recruiting manager with your application for employment. Failure to complete this declaration will result in your application being withdrawn. | |

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| <p>- I confirm that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete. I understand that any false information could result in my application being rejected or, if appointed, in my dismissal from employment. I understand that any offer of employment made to me may be subject to a further review and I hereby give my consent for [insert name of member association] to carry out the relevant criminal record checks. . I declare that I will notify Human Resources, where applicable, or the recruiting manager of [Insert name of member association] immediately if I am prosecuted or convicted for a criminal offence.</p> | |
| <p>- I declare that I am not currently on any barring list or sex offenders list in any country. I declare that I will notify Human Resources where applicable or the recruiting manager of [insert name of member association] immediately if I do become barred or listed in future.</p> | |
| <p>Signature :</p> | <p>Date :</p> |

Suggested guidance notes for applicants :

Why you need to declare your criminal convictions and other related information

[Insert name of member association] is committed to safeguarding children from abuse, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

We ask you to complete this form as comprehensively and honestly as possible. The only people who will see the information provided will be those directly involved in the recruitment process. At your interview, or in a separate discussion post-interview, we will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place about any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the post you have applied for and the relevance and circumstances of your offence(s).

We will ensure that anyone making appointment decisions has the necessary information and support to assess the relevance and circumstances of any offences.

What will happen if you are offered the post

If you are offered the post, we will ask for evidence of your identity, your right to work in (name of country) and your qualifications. We will also carry out a criminal record check (where applicable in country).

False information

Please note that providing false information could result in your application being rejected or your dismissal from employment if you are appointed.

Retention of information

The information that you provide in the declaration form will be processed in accordance with national data protection legislation. It will only be used for the purpose of determining your application for this position and working directly with children.

Appendix 7 : Sample code of conduct for MA staff and volunteers

Staff and volunteers play an essential role in contributing to the sporting and social development of children in football. As such, they have a duty of care to create a safe, inclusive and positive environment for all. It is important that coaches, managers, medical staff, volunteers, staff, parents and all those involved in football activities or programmes respect the rights and well-being of children in our game. You are confirming your absolute commitment to these values by signing this code of conduct.

As a member of staff or volunteer, I will promote good practice and :

- Make football a fun experience.
- Complete the basic safeguarding awareness training.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child without discrimination on account of age, race, skin colour, ethnic, national or social origin, gender, disability, language, religion, political opinion or any other opinion, wealth, birth or any other status, sexual orientation or any other reason
- Always report any concern of poor practice or abuse immediately to the safeguarding officer or appropriate authorities. I acknowledge that I must report any concerns I may have – no action is not an option.
- Lead by example when it comes to good sportsmanship and be a role model for children – this includes not drinking alcohol, taking drugs or using foul, racist, homophobic or other discriminatory language in the presence of children.
- Respect my position of trust and maintain appropriate boundaries with children.
- Work in an open environment and avoid spending time alone with children away from others.
- Arrive in sufficient time to set up activities and ensure that risk assessments are undertaken as necessary for all activities, programmes, and events involving under-18s.
- Ensure children are safe by supervising appropriately and using safe training methods and techniques.
- Never engage in bullying behaviour.
- Challenge any form of bullying behaviour among and towards children.
- Communicate in a constructive, age-appropriate manner with children, never humiliating them.
- Provide meaningful opportunities that empower children to share in the decision-making process.
- Never condone rule violations, any form of violence or the use of prohibited substances.
- Ensure that confidential information is not divulged unless with the expressed approval of all those concerned or where a case warrants disclosure to relevant authorities.

I will never :

- engage in or allow any verbal, physical or sexually provocative games with or inappropriate¹⁷ touching of children;
- engage in any sexual relationship with any player under 18 years of age, including making sexually suggestive comments to a child;
- groom¹⁸ or exploit a child for personal and financial gain;
- engage in inappropriate use of social media – this includes engaging children in private social media conversation and never posting comments that could compromise their well-being or cause them harm;
- reduce a child to tears or scare or humiliate him / her as a form of control;
- intentionally physically hurt or threaten to hurt a child – hitting and punching may be regulated forms of contact in some (combat) sports but have no place in football.

¹⁷ Contact with buttocks, genitals and breasts must be avoided. Staff and volunteers should never behave in a way that could be interpreted as inappropriate.

¹⁸ In the context of child sexual exploitation and abuse, "grooming" is the short name for using children for sexual purposes. It refers to *the process of establishing / building a relationship of trust* with a child, either in person or through the use of the internet or other digital technologies, to facilitate either online or offline sexual contact.

Failure to abide by this code of conduct will result in appropriate action being taken. This may mean your removal from the activity / event for a period whilst an investigation is taking place and may result in disciplinary and / or legal action.

I (please print name) agree to abide by the above code of conduct.

Association :

Position :

Signature : Date :

Witness (signed by the MA's safeguarding officer) :

Appendix 8 : Risk assessment guide for MAs

This risk assessment guide considers the potential for harm to come to children whilst they are participating in football. In order to help mitigate risks, templates for an organisational-level risk assessment and an activity-by-activity risk assessment follow. Both refer to the possible risk *of abuse and not general health and safety risks (these should be covered under separate health and safety rules set by the association and / or government)*. You can adapt this assessment to your context as necessary.

Explanation of terms used :

- **Potential risk of harm to children** – identified risks of harm to children whilst accessing football activities or programmes.
- **Likelihood of harm happening** – the likelihood of the risk occurring : low, medium or high. Note that if risks are high, the activity should be modified or cancelled.
- **Required policy, guidance and procedure document** – indication of the policy, guide or procedure required to alleviate the risk.
- **Responsibility** – who is responsible ? Indicate where the responsibility for alleviating the risk lies.

| Potential risk of harm to children | Likelihood of harm happening : low / medium / high (L, M, H) | Required policy, guidance or procedure document | Who is responsible for handling this issue ? |
|---|--|--|--|
| PERSONNEL | | | |
| Recruitment of inappropriate people working directly with children | e.g. H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safeguarding policy ▪ Safe recruitment and screening process ▪ Safeguarding training ▪ Sign code of conduct | |
| Lack of training on safeguarding for coaches | e.g. H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safe recruitment and screening process ▪ Training on safeguarding for all coaches ▪ Sign code of conduct | |
| Volunteers' lack knowledge of and training on safeguarding | e.g. H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safe screening process ▪ Safeguarding training ▪ Signing code of conduct | |
| Other adults with access to children – e.g. security, medical staff | e.g. H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safeguarding training ▪ Sign code of conduct | |
| COMPLAINTS & DISCIPLINE | | | |
| Concern about behaviour of some adults towards children | e.g. H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safeguarding training ▪ Clear MA complaints & disciplinary process ▪ Guidance on dealing with concerns about a child | |

| Potential risk of harm to children | Likelihood of harm happening : low / medium / high (L, M, H) | Required policy, guidance or procedure document | Who is responsible for handling this issue ? |
|---|--|---|--|
| Absence of a complaints & disciplinary process within the MA | e.g. H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear MA complaints & disciplinary process ▪ Guidance on dealing with concerns about a child | |
| Complaints not being dealt with seriously | e.g. M | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MA complaints & disciplinary process | |
| REPORTING PROCEDURES | | | |
| Lack of knowledge of organisational and statutory reporting procedures to local authorities / agencies | e.g. H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safeguarding policy ▪ Guidance on dealing with concerns about a child | |
| No safeguarding officer appointed (or focal point) for safeguarding in the MA | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safeguarding policy ▪ Safeguarding officer / focal point role description / terms of reference ▪ Safeguarding training | |
| Not clear who children should talk to or report to if they have concerns | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Put up the name(s) of the focal point and inform children of the person's name and his / her role | |
| FACILITIES AND ACCOMODATION | | | |
| Unauthorised access to children's play & practice areas and to changing rooms, showers, etc. | e.g. H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safeguarding policy ▪ Code of conduct | |
| Children sharing same facilities and accommodation with adults | e.g. H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safeguarding policy ▪ Safe recruitment for all those who work directly with children ▪ Code of conduct ▪ Safeguarding training | |
| TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL | | | |
| Transporting children between venues / training is not safe | e.g. | | |

| Potential risk of harm to children | Likelihood of harm happening : low / medium / high (L, M, H) | Required policy, guidance or procedure document | Who is responsible for handling this issue ? |
|---|--|---|--|
| Safeguarding checks have not been carried out on any drivers | e.g. H | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe recruitment for all those who work directly with children Code of conduct | |
| No guidance for travelling and trips away | e.g. M | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance on planning and organisational arrangements | |
| COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA | | | |
| Inappropriate use of social media and communication by under -18s | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's code of conduct | |
| Inappropriate use of social media and communication by adults with under-18s | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and volunteers' code of conduct Guidance on communication | |
| GENERAL BEHAVIOURAL ISSUES (child to child, or adult to child) | | | |
| General behavioural issues | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code of conduct for adults and children | |

This risk assessment was discussed and completed by (_____) on __ / __ / 2019

Signed :

Name :

Role :

Date :

Risk assessment template (activity level) : to be completed at the start of every new project / activity

| What contact will you have with children / young people through this work / project ? | What potential risks to children / young people can you identify ? | What steps will you take to mitigate these risks ? | Who is responsible for ensuring this action is taken ? | Please confirm date when the action was completed |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| | | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the contact be face to face and / or online / digital • What activities will children be involved in ? • Will the children be photographed, filmed or asked to share their stories ? • Will parents / carers be present or are staff / volunteers acting <i>in loco-parentis</i> ? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any risks inherent in these activities ? • Who will be present ? • Will these people be MA staff / volunteers or third parties ? • What will the environment be like ? • What physical or emotional issues may arise ? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have / will you include in your safeguarding planning ? • Who is your designated safeguarding contact for this activity ? • What support will be available for the children present ? • How will concerns be managed should they arise ? • What safeguarding information will everyone involved receive at the start of the activity ? | | |
| <p>Please confirm that this risk assessment has been copied to the safeguarding officer or focal point in the MA.</p> | | | | <p>Your name and role :</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |

Appendix 9 : Guidance to MAs on safeguarding and supervision of children

In any football activity, it is important to ensure any risks in relation to the location, training facilities and equipment are minimised by using the risk assessment tool together with local health and safety guidelines. In addition, during any football activity, children need to be supervised at all times as the likelihood of accidents happening increases when adequate adult supervision is not in place.

Staffing and supervision ratios can sometimes be difficult to judge. You need to make sure you have enough staff and volunteers to ensure children are safe – and that these adults are suitable to undertake various tasks as needed. It may not always be possible to stick to recommended ratios. However, you should make every effort to achieve the best level of supervision of children at all times.

Recommended adult to child ratios

Check if legislation or government guidelines in your country have nationally recommended supervision ratios. If there is no specific guidance on this in your country, the following adult-to-child ratios are recommended to help keep children safe :

- when working with children between five and eight years of age, a ratio of one adult to 16 children should be adhered to;
- when working with children between nine and 18 years of age, a ratio of one adult to 20 children should be adhered to.

If young people are helping to supervise younger children, only those aged 18 or over should be included as adults when calculating adult to child ratios. *All activities should always be planned to involve at least two adults.*

The following factors should also be taken into consideration in deciding how many adults are required to safely supervise children :

- the number of children involved in the football activity;
- the age, maturity and football experience of the children;
- whether any of the members of staff, volunteers or children have a learning or physical disability or special requirements;
- whether any of the children have challenging behaviour;
- the particular hazards associated with the football activity;
- the particular hazards associated with the environment;
- the level of qualification and experience of the members of staff and volunteers;
- the full programme of football activities.

Important things to remember :

- There should always be at least one adult per group of children of the same sex as the children involved.
- There should always be at least one adult of each sex with mixed groups.
- All activities should be planned to involve at least two adults.
- Adults should avoid being left alone with children.
- All adults working directly with children must be subject to safe recruitment processes, sign the code of conduct and complete the MA's basic safeguarding awareness training.

Appendix 10 : Guidance on planning and organising tournaments, overnight stays and away trips

Travelling to away games and tournaments should be both safe and fun for children.

Parents and carers will often worry when their children are away but careful planning and preparation should help to ease those worries and demonstrate that you have taken into account the various needs of their children and the potential dangers of a trip away.

To help planning and organisational arrangements, the following guidelines have been developed to assist MAs in implementing proper safeguarding measures. Much of this preparation can be done at the start of the year when the calendar of events is being planned.

Essential planning – at the start of the year / season

Hold a meeting with parents or guardians at the start of the season to explain your safeguarding policy and measures, introduce staff, and review the code of conduct. This is a great opportunity to discuss procedures for travelling for away games and tournaments and for parents or guardians to sign consent forms.

Hold a meeting with children for the same purposes.

Make sure you ensure the following :

- Parental (or guardian) consent forms – make sure they are signed and kept safely (see sample below).
- When travelling, there should always be at least one adult per group of children of the same sex as the children involved.
- There should be a qualified first-aider with the team who has read and signed the code of conduct.
- If team doctors and physiotherapists are on the trip, they must always treat a child for illness or injury in a manner that reflects the ethos of their profession. They must also read and sign the code of conduct.
- You have the correct insurances in place.
- A safeguarding officer or approved chaperone(s) is going on the trip.
- The code of conduct is signed by all those travelling (both adults and under-18s).
- Children know whom to contact if they have a concern.

Important considerations

- Draw up a programme, including departure and return dates and times.
- Have a meeting with the parents, guardians and players to run through the trip's programme of events and address any questions or concerns they may have.
- Someone from the MA who is not going away needs to be identified as a point of contact. He / she should have a list of those going on the trip and their contact details.
- Make it clear who the safeguarding officer or approved chaperone(s) for the trip is, ensure that he / she is suited to this role and make sure that everyone in the group is aware of who this person is and what his / her role is on the trip.

Other Important considerations

- Before you leave, work with the players to establish rules for the trip (and what will happen to those who break them). Players should sign the children's code of conduct.
- Ideally, children should not be given or wear shirts or hats with their names on (an ID badge should be sufficient).
- Agree who is sharing accommodation with whom before you go.
- Ensure that you have your staff bedrooms spread out, for example – if the group is over three floors, there should be at least one adult room on each floor. Ideally, the whole team should be on the same floor. Over 18-year-olds should not share rooms with under 18-year-olds.

Essential planning – while away

On arrival :

- Ensure there is no access to alcohol or drugs in the rooms or at any other time.
- Ensure movie access is appropriate and that adult movie channels are not available in the children's rooms.
- Ensure that everyone is aware of fire exits and emergency procedures.
- Have group meetings to review the programme and rules. Ensure children have their ID badge on them at all times.

During the trip :

- Hold daily group meetings and staff meetings. They do not need to be long and should provide the opportunity to discuss any issues or problems and solve them.

On return :

- Ask the children and the staff what they enjoyed and what they would change; this will help with the following year's planning.

Staff and volunteers on away trips have a responsibility to :

- Ensure the safety and well-being of children. This will mean carrying out a risk assessment in advance, including for transport and accommodation.
- Arrive at all departing venues well ahead of children so that they are not left standing alone.
- Arrange a group meeting point prior to boarding the mode of transport (i.e. bus, plane, train).
- Ensure children are given the name and contact of the safeguarding officer or approved chaperone(s) accompanying them on the trip.
- Familiarise the group with the emergency exits in the event of a fire, and agree on a group meeting point – including at the stadium where the match(es) will take place.
- Medical staff (i.e. doctors and physiotherapists) on the trip must always treat a child for illness or injury in a manner that reflects the ethos of their profession. This includes not gaining any individual access to players.

- Avoid spending time alone with a child or young person and ensure that the team doctor or physiotherapist is accompanied by another member of staff when treating players.
- Should a child or young person have to remain in the hotel during the course of the tournament or trip due to injury or illness, try to ensure that two staff members remain behind to look after him / her.
- In the event that a child or young person falls ill, or is seriously injured, and has to remain behind after a tournament or match, ideally two members of staff should remain with the child if possible. Staff have a duty of care to ensure that the child returns safely to his / her home / home country.
- If "time off" is permitted by the head coach, staff and players should sightsee or partake in recreational activities as a group.
- Ensure that all players partake in group excursions, so that no child or young person is left alone in the accommodation. Arrange a "meeting point" for players in the event of a player being separated from the group.
- Have access to mobile phones and be reachable 24 / 7. Staff should have a full list of contact names and numbers of parents and guardians, and vice versa, in case of emergency.
- Ensure you have a clear missing child policy in place that everyone is aware of (see Appendix 11 below).

Checklist to help think through planning and organisation (adapt as necessary)

Purpose of the trip

- Competition
- Training
- Other (specify) : _____
- Combination : _____

Planning

- When
- Where
- Who (staff / volunteers / players)

Communication with parents

- Destination and accommodation details sent (address / telephone)
- Name(s) / number(s) of safeguarding officer and / or approved chaperone(s) shared with parents and players
- Drop-off / pick-up times agreed
- Transport arrangements in place
- Competition details shared
- Kit and equipment list shared
- Consent form signed
- Information regarding medical conditions (including allergies) or impairments and access needs, and medication
- Safeguarding arrangements (reporting concerns, supervision, etc.)

Transport

- Drop-off / pick-up times (agree times with parents, and agree what to do if a parent does not arrive to collect a child at the appointed time)
- Suitability and accessibility requirements
- Drivers checked and signed code of conduct
- Insurance

Accommodation

- Type (hotel, hostel, etc.)
- Pre-event visit and risk assessment done, if possible
- Special diets, food allergies
- Suitability for group, including access needs of attending disabled children (this might include accommodation and meals for a carer or personal assistant)
- Room lists
- Supervising adults' sleeping arrangements

Preparing athletes

- Local culture, language
- Expectations on dress and behaviour
- Food and drink
- Currency
- Telephones and contacts

Supervision and staffing

- Ratio of staff to children agreed
- Male / female staff clear responsibilities

Documentation

- Travel tickets
- Passports, visas
- Accommodation and travel booking documents

Insurance

- Liability
- Accident
- Medical

Emergency procedures

- First aid
- Specific medical information available for players where needed
- Information on local emergency medical services, hospitals, etc.

Arrival

- Check rooms, meal times
- Arrange group meetings
- Confirm procedures with staff
- Rules explained (e.g. curfews)

Parental consent form¹⁹

Parents or guardians of players under the age of 18 are required to sign this form.

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Parent / guardian's name : | |
| Contact number : | |
| Event / tournament name : | |

Parental or guardian consent statement

- I agree to my child's participation in this activity.
- I have answered the questions regarding medical information below, and consent that, in the event of any illness or accident, any necessary treatment can be administered to my child, which may include the use of anaesthetics.
- I understand that, while the adult officials will take every precaution to ensure that accidents do not happen, they cannot necessarily be held responsible for any loss, damage or injury caused to my child.
- I have read the codes of conduct and acknowledge the need for my child to behave responsibly.

Travel arrangements

I agree to the transport arrangements that have been made for my child .

Child's details* (please PRINT clearly)

| | | | |
|----------------|--|-----------|--|
| First Name : | | Surname : | |
| Age : | | DOB : | |
| Home Address : | | | |

Child's medical information

Does your child have :

| | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------|--|
| any allergies ? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | If yes, please specify : | |
| medication ? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | If yes, please specify : | |
| any special needs ? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | If yes, please specify : | |
| a disability requiring specific access needs ? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | If yes, please specify : | |

¹⁹ Adapt as necessary to fulfil the requirements of any applicable data protection legislation

| | | | |
|---------------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| Doctor's name : | | Any other information : | |
| Doctor's tel. no. : | | | |

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, my child does not suffer from any medical condition other than those detailed above and that I will inform the association if this changes.

Parent's signature :

When my child is away, I know the contact person is :

Add name of safeguarding officer or chaperone(s) :

Appendix 11 : Sample missing child policy for MAs

On discovering that a child has gone missing, I will :

- immediately make a search of the surrounding area;
- request help from people around me;
- if I am in a public building, alert the staff of the situation and ask for assistance in searching for the missing child;
- if I am in a place where it is possible to seal off exits and access CCTV footage, request that this is done immediately;
- ensure that people involved in the search are given a description of the child and what he / she is wearing;
- reassure the other children in my care, as I am aware that this could become a distressing situation for them.

If the search is unsuccessful, I will :

- ring the police immediately, providing a description, and keep searching the area;
- advise the parents and / or guardians of the situation as soon as it is reasonably practical to do so.

After the event, I will review my policy and procedure to establish what went wrong and how it can be avoided in future.

Name of safeguarding officer or chaperone(s) on duty :

Date of incident :

Reported to :

Appendix 12 : Guidance on celebration and communication arrangements, including the use of images of children and communication via social media

CELEBRATION & COMMUNICATION : SAFE USE OF IMAGES OF U-18 PLAYERS

Photographs, films and video clips are a great way to publicise football activities and programmes. They can be used to celebrate achievements, promote activities and keep people updated on what is happening. Footage might also be recorded for performance development and analysis reasons. The aim of this guide is not to curb such activity but to ensure that children are protected from those who might seek to take or manipulate photos and video footage in a way that harms children or places them at risk of harm.

MAs should take all reasonable steps to promote the safe use of social media, photography and filming. The following is a model guide to assist MAs in developing their own celebration and communication arrangements, while implementing the safeguarding policy.

PERMISSION

Children and their parents or guardians should be informed that the child may, from time to time, be photographed or filmed whilst participating in football activities or programmes. This could be for the following reasons :

- video footage for performance development;
- media coverage of an event or achievement;
- promotional purposes, e.g. website or publication.

Written consent should be obtained (e.g. through a consent form – see sample below) from parents or guardians before any photography or filming takes place. Depending on your country's legislation, consent may also need to be sought from the child.

SAFE USE OF IMAGES AND GENERAL INFORMATION :

To minimise any risk of harm coming to children, the following information should be considered :

- Unsupervised access or one-to-one photography or video sessions with under-18s should not be allowed. At least one staff member or the child's parents or guardians should attend any one-to-one photography or video session.
- Photographing or filming should not be permitted in changing areas, bathrooms or sleeping areas.
- Information published on websites or social networking sites must never include detailed personal information that could identify a child, e.g. his / her home address, email address or telephone number.
- Children should never be portrayed in a demeaning, tasteless or provocative manner. Ensure all those featured are appropriately dressed (e.g. a minimum of shirt and shorts).

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) AND SOCIAL MEDIA

There are various ways in which to celebrate and communicate using ICT and social media. However, misuse of ICT and social media can also put children at considerable risk.

FOR CHILDREN, THE RISKS INCLUDE :

- inappropriate access to, use or sharing of personal details (e.g. their names, email addresses or phone numbers);
- unwanted contact from adults with wrongful or questionable intent;
- being sent offensive or otherwise inappropriate material;
- online bullying;
- grooming for sexual abuse.

FOR ADULTS, RISKS INCLUDE :

their communication with children being misinterpreted leading to :

- potential investigation (internal disciplinary or by statutory agencies); and
- potential disciplinary action.

As a general principle and good practice, adults should never engage in inappropriate use of social media. This includes : direct messaging with children and posting comments on social media sites that could compromise the well-being of a child, cause him / her harm, or bring the association / club into disrepute.

TEXT / EMAIL

The general principle is that all communication should be made via parents or guardians of children where possible. Where this is not possible,²⁰ consent should be sought from parents / guardians, as well as the child via email rather than text with a minimum of two adults included (copied) in the communication.

CONCERNS

- If at any time the use of an image or information attached to it appears inappropriate, report the misuse of an image to the safeguarding officer.
- Anyone behaving in a way which could reasonably be viewed as inappropriate in relation to filming or photographing children or the use of social media should be reported.
- Where appropriate, concerns should also be reported to the police.

Consent form²¹

This form requires the signature of the parents or guardians of the child.

MAs should take all possible steps to ensure images and videos are used solely for the purposes they are intended. If you become aware that images and videos are being used inappropriately, you should report it immediately. *All images should be stored securely in line with data protection legislation.*

²⁰ For example, where English (or another language) is not the mother tongue of the parents and therefore communication has to be with the child.

²¹ Adapt as necessary to fulfil the requirements of any applicable data protection legislation

To be completed by parent or guardian :

- I give permission for photographs or videos of my child to be used on the association's or club's website, and for printed publications.

- I give permission for photographs or videos of my child to be used on the association's or club's social media pages.

Signature of parent :

Print name of parent :

Date :

Appendix 13 : Guidance on the safe use of changing rooms and showering facilities

It is important to think about how you can effectively meet the needs of all members of the football family, taking into account the facilities that are available, the number of people accessing them and the activities being undertaken. Children are particularly vulnerable in changing areas due to various stages of dress / undress and because they are less supervised than at many other times. The risk of child-to-child problems, such as bullying, is also present when coaches or staff members are not supervising players or mascots. This is especially true in changing rooms. The following guidelines have been designed to help MAs develop their own policies to reduce the risk of misconduct or abuse in changing areas :

1. Where facilities are used by both adults and children at the same time, there must be access to separate changing, showering and toilet areas.
2. Under no circumstances should adults be undressed in front of children in changing rooms.
3. Adult staff and volunteers must not change or shower at the same time as children using the same facilities.
4. For mixed- gender activities, separate facilities must be available for boys and girls.
5. If a child feels uncomfortable changing or showering in public, then no pressure should be placed on him / her to do so. Instead, he / she should be encouraged to do so at home.
6. If disabled children need to use facilities, make sure they are accessible and the disabled child and his / her carer are involved in deciding if and how they should be assisted. Make sure the child is able to consent to the assistance that is offered.
7. The use of mobile phones and / or photographic equipment with video recording capabilities by staff and volunteers and children themselves should be prohibited in general and should not be used under any circumstance in changing rooms.
8. Where no changing facilities are available, children and their parents or guardians should be made aware of this prior to the game and advised to make alternative arrangements and take appropriate additional clothing.
9. Parents should be discouraged from entering changing rooms unless it is truly necessary. In such circumstances, only a parent of the same sex as the children may enter the changing room and he / she should let the coach know about this in advance. At least one member of the coaching staff of the same sex as the children involved should be present with the parent when other children are in the changing room.
10. Adult staff and volunteers, especially those of the opposite sex, should not be in the changing room when children are undressed.

Appendix 14 : How to recognise and respond to abuse and standards of expected behaviour

This information is for awareness-raising purposes and should be used as part of the MA's broader educational efforts on safeguarding. Child abuse can be a very difficult topic for staff and volunteers. It is unlikely that a child will disclose that he / she is being abused or that you will see abuse happening – it is far more likely you will see indications that a child might be experiencing abuse, so it is important to follow some general guidelines. Children suffering abuse often experience more than one type of abuse. The abuse usually happens over a period of time, rather than being a single, isolated incident. Increasingly, abuse can happen online.

There are commonly three stages in the identification of child abuse :

1. questioning the possibility;
2. looking out for signs of abuse; and
3. recording and reporting.

Considering the possibility

The possibility of child abuse should be considered if a child appears to have suffered a suspicious injury for which no reasonable explanation can be offered. This should also be considered if the child seems distressed without obvious reason or displays persistent behavioural problems that he / she never had before. The possibility of child abuse should also be considered if the child displays unusual or fearful responses to certain people like a coach or team doctor or his / her parents or guardians.

Looking out for signs of abuse

Signs of abuse may be physical, behavioural or developmental. The following is a list of some indicators of abuse, but it is not definitive. National legislation or government guidelines in your country may also describe some of these.

Children who are being abused may hint that they are being harmed and sometimes make direct disclosures. Disclosures should always be believed.

| | |
|---|--|
| Physical abuse | |
| <p>Physical indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scratches Bite marks or bruises Burns, especially cigarette burns Untreated injuries Broken bones | <p>Behavioural indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-harm tendencies Constantly trying to run away Aggressive or withdrawn Fear of returning home Unnecessary fear of adults |
| Emotional abuse | |
| <p>Physical indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sudden speech disorders Bed wetting and soiling Signs of self-harm Poor peer relationships | <p>Behavioural indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attention-seeking behaviour Rocking, thumb sucking Fear of change Chronic runaway |
| Neglect | |
| <p>Physical indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constant hunger Exposed to danger, lack of supervision Inadequate / inappropriate clothing Poor hygiene Untreated illnesses | <p>Behavioural indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tiredness, listlessness Poor peer relationships Low self-esteem Compulsive stealing, begging |
| Sexual abuse | |
| <p>Physical indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child may complain of soreness, pain or bleeding in his / her "private parts" Making sexual advances to adults or to other children Pain on urination Difficulty in walking or sitting Anorexic / bulimic Substance / drug abuse | <p>Behavioural indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depression Inappropriate language and / or sexual knowledge for their age Making sexual advances to adults or other children Low self-esteem Afraid of the dark Wariness of being approached by anyone Unnecessary fear of adults |

What to do if a child discloses information directly to you

Children's disclosures must always be taken seriously. Most importantly, you should immediately contact emergency support if the child is in immediate danger.

If a child suggests they want to tell you a "secret" or disclose information that suggests he / she is at risk or has been abused, it is important that you :

- remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief;
- listen carefully to what is being said and offer comfort statements, particularly when a child discloses sexual abuse, for example, "I'm sorry this happened to you", "It's not your fault";
- do not ask detailed, probing or leading questions;
- tell the child that you will take what is said seriously;
- explain what you are going to do (depending on the child's age, this would include asking what type of help is wanted and with whose involvement the child would feel comfortable);
- tell the child that you cannot keep this a secret, but that the information will only be shared in order to keep him / her safe. [Note that in many countries it is mandatory to report child abuse].

NEVER :

- question them except for clarification;
- make promises about confidentiality that you cannot keep;
- assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- be dismissive or show an extreme reaction, e.g. anger, shock, horror, etc.;
- jump to conclusions, speculate or accuse anybody;
- make or pass a judgment on the alleged abuser;
- investigate the disclosure yourself.

REMEMBER

- It is not your responsibility to decide if abuse has occurred.
- IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT IT.

Recording and reporting (see also guidelines on responding to concerns)

Your observations should be accurately recorded and should include dates, times, names, locations, context and any other information that may be relevant. This information is really important and may help any future investigation that can safeguard and protect the child. Please refer to the reporting form in the guidelines on responding to concerns).

Appendix 15 : Sample code of conduct for children

This information can be used to develop a “children’s charter” or “children’s code of conduct”. The purpose is to give age-appropriate information and to have a discussion with children on safeguarding, to empower them so that they know who to speak to in the event that they have any concerns. Allow at least one hour to go through it with them in group work, especially if they have any questions or do not understand something. For younger children, it may need to be further adapted and simplified. Decide who would be the best person to facilitate and lead this discussion – it may be the safeguarding officer or other staff member or a local expert agency or partner. Always ensure that at least two experienced adults or more conduct the session together.

In playing football, I will :

- respect my coach and team-mates;
- play fairly and be gracious in defeat;
- shake hands with the other team and the referee at the end of the match;
- ensure I am on time for training, matches and any other football activity;
- tell the team manager / coach about any injury or medical condition before or during activities;
- not bully or start fights with others (doing hurtful things on purpose), like :
 - using mean words to hurt others or spread rumours about them;
 - excluding someone on purpose;
 - using social media in a bad way – e.g. posting mean comments or photos on social media (Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat or Twitter, etc.) to hurt or upset someone;
 - cursing or swearing at someone;
 - physically fighting and hurting others;
- report bullying if I see it happening to others.

In participating in football, I understand that I have the right to :

- have fun and develop my football skills;
- feel safe and happy;
- be protected from bad behaviour, from adults or other children that make me feel uncomfortable or sad;
- talk and be listened to, especially if I have concerns or do not feel safe;
- know where to go for help or who to talk to if I am scared or worried about something;
- be looked after if there is an accident or injury.

Remember, in facilitating this discussion with children, it is important they know that if they are worried about something, or if they do not feel safe, there are a lot of people who can help. Encourage them to always talk to an adult whom they trust. Within football, this may be the safeguarding officer or other members of staff.

Appendix 16 : Information / sample code of conduct for parents and guardians

Parents and guardians can promote the positive aspects of football by demonstrating good behaviour at all times – this includes encouraging their child’s participation in the game, demonstrating respect for staff and officials and behaving responsibly on the sidelines or during other football activities.

The below information can be used to develop a “parents’ charter” or “parents’ code of conduct” in football. It can be used as a discussion guide during information evenings or events on safeguarding. Parents and guardians should be informed that persistent breaches of the code could result in them being asked to stay away from football activities and may also result in their child being removed from the MA’s programmes.

As a parent / guardian, I will :

- encourage my child to play by the rules and teach my child that he / she can only do his / her best;
- promote my child’s participation in playing football for fun;
- cooperate with and show appreciation and respect for staff, **coaches, referees**, volunteers and other players;
- be realistic and never exert undue pressure or expectations on my child or other children;
- praise effort and participation rather than focusing on performance and results;
- accept decisions made by match officials, behave responsibly on the sidelines and not use aggressive or abusive language with any player or official;
- refrain from engaging in inappropriate use of social media – this includes posting comments on social media sites that may cause harm to others or bring the MAs or its stakeholders into disrepute;
- detail any health concerns and inform the coach / coordinator if my child has been ill or hurt recently;
- complete and return the relevant consent forms pertaining to my child’s participation.

Parents / guardians have the right to :

- know their child is safe and protected from any form of poor practice or abuse;
- be informed of any problems or concerns relating to their child;
- speak to staff and voice any concerns about their child;
- have concerns appropriately dealt with.

Appendix 17 : Guidance on monitoring and evaluation

What does monitoring and evaluation mean in terms of safeguarding within an MA ?

Monitoring is the process of collecting, analysing and using information regularly to track progress towards keeping children safe in football. Evaluation is more of a systematic assessment of an activity, project, policy or operational area of performance (e.g. training) to see if it has achieved its objectives, and to guide future management decisions.

The ongoing monitoring of your policy, recruitment practices, training and other safeguarding measures is a really important part of the overall implementation process.

The below table may help you think about the information needed and different questions to ask as part of monitoring and evaluation efforts. This could be done through a survey, group discussions during a workshop or training, interviews with different stakeholders, consultations with children after a programme has been completed, etc. The most effective method will depend on your context. The safeguarding officer should work with local partners to conduct regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure everyone understands the following :

- What is safeguarding ?
- Why is safeguarding important / why are you doing it ?
- Who is responsible for safeguarding ? (i.e. everybody)

Monitoring and evaluation sample questions

| Safeguards | Possible information to collect |
|--|--|
| Policy | <p>Was the policy developed in a consultative way with relevant authorities, expert agencies, and key stakeholders, including with children (with support from local organisations), and was it adopted by the executive committee or council ?</p> <p>Do you know about the MA's safeguarding policy and what it means for you ?</p> |
| Recruiting, training and communicating | <p>Is there an identified member of staff who is tasked with the responsibility of safeguarding ?</p> <p>Is this person supported in his / her role, including by an expert advisory group and / or a safeguarding steering group or some form of oversight body ?</p> <p>Have all new staff who work directly with children received a background and reference check ?</p> <p>Have all new staff signed the code of conduct for their role ?</p> <p>Do we provide a regular training programme on safeguarding, for example, to all coaches and volunteers ? Is safeguarding training included as part of coach licensing ?</p> <p>How many people have been trained in safeguarding this year ?</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>Is there an up-to-date list of those who have completed the safeguarding course and the dates when they were completed ?</p> <p>Have staff who have not yet completed the course been notified that they must do so ?</p> |
| <p>Minimising risk (see also risk assessment guide for MAs)</p> | <p>Do you know how to minimise risk to children in your role or for a specific event ? For example :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for away trips and tournaments ? - for the appropriate use of social media and photos ? - in youth academies ? - when transporting children ? |
| <p>Reporting and responding to concerns</p> | <p>Would you know what to do if you had a concern about a child ?</p> <p>Do you know who to report your concern to ?</p> <p>Do children know where to go if they have concerns ?</p> <p>Are you clear in understanding that it is not your responsibility to decide if abuse may have occurred but that it is your responsibility to act and report it ?</p> <p>How many cases have been reported this year ?</p> <p>Were they poor practice concerns or abuse ?</p> <p>What were the outcomes and lessons learnt from this ?</p> <p>Is there a confidential process for dealing with all complaints, concerns or allegations ?</p> |
| <p>Advice and support</p> | <p>Do you feel supported in your safeguarding role ?</p> <p>What further information or educational training would be of use ?</p> <p>Has safeguarding training been evaluated to see if it is relevant and useful to specific roles within football ?</p> |

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