



THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION PARTICIPANTS CODES OF CONDUCT

A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR FOOTBALL

Football is the national game. All those involved with the game at every level and whether as a player, match official, coach, owner or administrator, have a responsibility, above and beyond compliance with the law, to act according to the highest standards of integrity, and to ensure that the reputation of the game is, and remains, high. This Code applies to all those involved in football under the auspices of The Football Association.

Community

Football, at all levels, is a vital part of a community. Football will take into account community feeling when making decisions.

Equality

Football is opposed to discrimination of any form and will promote measures to prevent it, in whatever form, from being expressed.

Participants

Football recognises the sense of ownership felt by those who participate at all levels of the game. This includes those who play, those who coach or help in any way, and those who officiate, as well as administrators and supporters. Football is committed to appropriate consultation.

Young People

Football acknowledges that public confidence demands the highest standards of financial and administrative behaviour within the game, and will not tolerate corruption or improper practices.

Trust and Respect

Football will uphold a relationship of trust and respect between all involved in the game, whether they are individuals, clubs or other organisations.

Violence

Football rejects the use of violence of any nature by anyone involved in the game.

Fairness

Football is committed to fairness in its dealings with all involved in the game.

Integrity and Fair Play

Football is committed to the principle of playing to win consistent with Fair Play.



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS

Players are the most important people in the sport. Playing for the team, and for the team to win, is the most fundamental part of the game. But not winning at any cost – Fair Play and respect for all others in the game is fundamentally important.

This Code focuses on players involved in top-class football. Nevertheless, the key concepts in the Code are valid for players at all levels.

Obligations towards the game

A player should:

1. Make every effort to develop his own sporting abilities, in terms of skill, technique, tactics and stamina.
2. Give maximum effort and strive for the best possible performance during a game, even if his team is in a position where the desired result has already been achieved.
3. Set a positive example for others, particularly young players and supporters.
4. Avoid all forms of gamesmanship, and time-wasting.
5. Always have regard to the best interests of the game, including where publicly expressing an opinion on the game and any particular aspect of it, including others involved in the game.
6. Not use inappropriate language.

Obligations towards one's own team

A player should:

1. Make every effort consistent with Fair Play and the Laws of the Game to help his own team win.
2. Resist any influence which might, or might be seen to, bring into question his commitment to the team winning.

Respect for the Laws of the Game and competition rules

A player should:

1. Know and abide by the Laws, rules and spirit of the game, and the competition rules.
2. Accept success and failure, victory and defeat, equally.
3. Resist any temptation to take banned substances or use banned techniques.

**Respect towards Opponents**

A player should:

1. Treat opponents with due respect at all times, irrespective of the result of the game.
2. Safeguard the physical fitness of opponents, avoid violence and rough play, and help injured opponents.

Respect towards the Match Officials

A player should:

1. Accept the decisions of the Match Official without protest.
2. Avoid words or actions which may mislead a Match Official.
3. Show due respect towards Match Officials.

Respect towards Team Officials

A player should:

1. Abide by the instructions of his Coach and Team Officials, provided they do not contradict the spirit of this code.
2. Show due respect towards the Team Officials of the opposition.

Obligations towards the Supporters

A player should:

1. Show due respect to the interests of supporters.



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COACHES

Coaches are key to the establishment of ethics in football. Their concept of ethics and their attitude directly affects the behaviour of players under their supervision. Coaches are, therefore, expected to pay particular care to the moral aspect of their conduct.

Coaches have to be aware that almost all of their everyday decisions and choices of actions, as well as strategic targets, have ethical implications. It is natural that winning constitutes a basic concern for coaches. This code is not intended to conflict with that. However, the code calls for coaches to disassociate themselves from a “win-at-all-costs” attitude.

Increased responsibility is requested from coaches involved in coaching young people. The health, safety, welfare and moral education of young people are a first priority, before the achievement or the reputation of the club, school, coach or parent.

Set out below is The FA Coaches Association Code of Conduct (which reflects the standards expressed by the National Coaching Foundation and the National Association of Sports Coaches), which forms the benchmark for all involved in coaching:

1. Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of each and every person and treat each equally within the context of the sport.
2. Coaches must place the well-being and safety of each player above all other considerations, including the development of performance.
3. Coaches must adhere to all guidelines laid down by governing bodies.
4. Coaches must develop an appropriate working relationship with each player based on mutual trust and respect.
5. Coaches must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
6. Coaches must encourage and guide players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
7. Coaches must ensure that the activities they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of players.
8. Coaches should, at the outset, clarify with the players (and, where appropriate, parents) exactly what is expected of them and also what they are entitled to expect from their coach.
9. Coaches must co-operate fully with other specialists (e.g. other coaches, officials, sports scientists, doctors, physiotherapists) in the best interests of the player.
10. Coaches must always promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. Fair Play) and never condone violations of the Laws of the Game, behaviour contrary to the spirit of the Laws of the Game or relevant rules and regulations or the use of prohibited substances or techniques.
11. Coaches must consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.
12. Not to use or tolerate inappropriate language.



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MATCH OFFICIALS

(Referees, Assistant Referees, Fourth Officials and Substitute Referees)

Under the Laws of the Game the decisions of a referee on points of fact connected with the play are final as far as the result of the game is concerned.

A referee also has wide-ranging powers defined in Law 5.

The exercising of such power requires a high level of ethics from referees and assistant referees (referred to in this Code together as “referees”).

In addition to the quality of refereeing, the behaviour of the referee has an impact, either directly or indirectly, on the conduct of all others involved in the game. Respect for referees and their decisions is a fundamental part of the game. A Code of Conduct for Match Officials is a proper response to those expectations.

While the Code focuses primarily on referees involved in top-class football, with few exceptions the basic ideas are valid for match officials at all levels, be they on the National List, or registered with County Football Associations and only involved in local football.

These Codes are applicable to match officials at all levels of the game.

Obligations towards the game

The referee has a duty to the game in its widest sense.

One of those duties is to help the game to keep moving, compatible with Fair Play, and to seek to ensure it is attractive and is not subject to unnecessary halts.

The referee should:

1. Make every effort to prepare fully for a match, both physically and mentally. On a physical level, a referee must be able to keep up with the speed of the modern game, and be alert and close enough to take correct decisions from credible locations on the field of play.
2. Not be afraid to take decisions. A referee should be fair and firm and must resist any possible influence from protests on the part of players, team officials or spectators.
3. Show respect towards players and team officials.
4. Be honest and completely impartial at all times, irrespective of the teams, players or team officials involved in the match.
5. Decline to be appointed to a match if not completely physically or mentally fit to referee that match (because of illness, injury, or for family or other reasons).
6. Inform The Football Association and/or County Association and/or league or competition directly responsible if unable to referee a team or teams for any reason.



7. Refrain from requesting hospitality of any kind, or accept any hospitality offered and considered to be excessive.
8. Always have regard to the best interests of the game, including where publicly expressing an opinion on the game or any particular aspect of it, including others involved in the game.
9. Not tolerate inappropriate language from players and/or officials.

Obligations towards the Players

The powers of a referee must be used with wise judgment and care. Authority and a firm approach must be combined with respect.

1. A referee should have regard to protecting the players.
2. A referee should show due respect when speaking with the players, even in the event of infringements.
3. In reports, a referee should set out the true facts and not attempt to justify any decisions.

Obligations towards fellow Referees, Assistant Referees, Fourth Officials and Substitute Referees

It is necessary for the referee's authority to be protected, not only for the sake of the game, but also in the interest of fellow referees, assistant referees, fourth officials and substitute referees. This protection should, however, not influence the over-riding regard for protection of the players.

1. A referee should refrain from publicly expressing any criticism of fellow referees, assistant referees or other match officials.
2. A referee should assist with the development of less experienced referees and assistant referees.
3. An assistant referee should give his total support to the referee, but without undue interference or insistence.



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TEAM OFFICIALS

This Code applies to all team/club officials (although some items may not apply to all officials).

Obligations towards the game

The team official should:

1. Set a positive example for others, particularly young players and supporters.
2. Promote and develop his own team having regard to the interest of the players, supporters and reputation of the national game.
3. Share knowledge and experience when invited to do so, taking into account the interest of the body that has requested this rather than personal interests.
4. Avoid all forms of gamesmanship.
5. Show due respect to Match Officials and others involved in the game.
6. Always have regard to the best interests of the game, including where publicly expressing an opinion of the game and any particular aspect of it, including others involved in the game.
7. Not use or tolerate inappropriate language.

Obligations towards the team

The team official should:

1. Make every effort to develop the sporting, technical and tactical levels of the club/team, and to obtain the best results by the team, using all permitted means.
2. Give priority to the interests of the team over individual interests.
3. Resist all illegal or unsporting influences, including banned substances and techniques.
4. Promote ethical principles.
5. Show due respect to the interests of players, coaches and other officials, at his own club/team and others.

Obligations towards the Supporters

The team official should:

1. Show due respect to the interests of supporters.

Respect towards the Match Officials

A team official should:

1. Accept the decisions of the Match Official without protest.
2. Avoid words or actions which may mislead a Match Official.
3. Show due respect towards Match Officials.



THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION EQUALITY POLICY

The FA is responsible for setting standards and values to apply throughout football at every level. Football belongs to, and should be enjoyed by, anyone who wants to participate in it. The aim of this policy is to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect and that The FA is equally accessible to them all.

The FA's commitment is to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability and to encourage equal opportunities.

This policy is fully supported by the Board of The FA and the Director of Football Governance and Regulation is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

The FA, in all its activities, will not discriminate, or in any way treat anyone less favourably, on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability. The FA will ensure that it treats people fairly and with respect and that it will provide access and opportunities for all members of the community to take part in, and enjoy, its activities.

The FA will not tolerate harassment, bullying, abuse or victimisation of an individual, which for the purposes of this policy and the actions and sanction applicable is regarded as discrimination. This includes sexual or racially based harassment or other discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal. The FA will work to ensure that such behaviour is met with appropriate action in whatever context it occurs.

The FA is committed to the development of a programme of ongoing training and awareness raising events and activities in order to promote the eradication of discrimination within football.

The FA is committed to a policy of equal treatment of all members and requires all members to abide and adhere to this policy and the requirements of the following (but not limited to) equalities legislation – Equality Act 2006, Race Relations Act 1976, Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as well as various amendments to these acts.

The FA commits itself to the immediate investigation of any claims, when it is brought to their attention, of discrimination on the above grounds and where such is found to be the case, a requirement that the practice stop and sanctions imposed as appropriate.



CHILD PROTECTION - SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

General

1. Any act, statement, conduct or other matter which harms a child or children, or poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children, shall constitute behaviour which is improper and brings the game into disrepute.
2. In these Regulations the expression "Offence" shall mean any one or more of the offences contained in Schedule 1 to the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 and any other criminal offence which reasonably causes The Association to believe that the person accused of the offence poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children.
3. Upon receipt by The Association of:-
 - 3.1 notification that an individual has been charged with an Offence; or
 - 3.2 notification that an individual is the subject of an investigation by the Police, social services or any other authority relating to an Offence; or
 - 3.3 any other information which causes The Association reasonably to believe that a person poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children.

Then The Association shall have the power to order that the individual be suspended from all or any specific football activity for such period and on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit.

4. In reaching its determination as to whether an order under Regulation 3 should be made The Association shall give consideration, inter alia, to the following factors:-
 - 4.1 whether a child is or children are or may be at risk of harm;
 - 4.2 whether the matters are of a serious nature;
 - 4.3 whether an order is necessary or desirable to allow the conduct of any investigation by The Association or any other authority or body to proceed unimpeded having regard to the need for any action to be proportionable.
5. The period of an order referred to in 3 above shall not be capable of lasting beyond the date upon which any charge under the Rules of The Association or any Offence is decided or brought to an end.
6. Where an order is imposed on an individual under Regulation 3 above, The Association shall bring and conclude any proceedings under the Rules of The Association against the person relating to the matters as soon as reasonable practicable.



7. Where a person is convicted or is made the subject of a caution in respect of an Offence, that shall constitute a breach of the Rules of The Association and The Association shall have the power to order the suspension of the person from all or any specific football for such period (including indefinitely) and on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit
8. For the purposes of these Regulations, The Association shall act through its Council or any committee or sub-committee thereof, including the Board.
9. Notification in writing or any order referred to above shall be given to the person concerned and/or any club with which he is associated as soon as reasonable practicable.

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CLUB WELFARE OFFICERS

Appointing a Club Welfare Officer

It is essential that the CWO is perceived as being approachable having a child-centred approach and the ability to maintain this perspective when carrying out their role.

Where to start

- Make it known amongst all club members, players, parents and carers that the club is seeking to appoint a CWO and provide the relevant information about this role.
- Establish if anyone involved with your club has any professional child protection expertise. You may have a committee member or parent who is, or was, a police officer, teacher or social worker who might be willing to take on the role.

Ideally

- Get the club chairperson and committee members to understand the need and benefits of appointing a CWO and their support for the idea
- Involve the club chairperson and committee members in making suggestions of those with the potential to take on this role
- Obtain and make it clear to prospective applicants that the CWO will have the support and backing of the club's committee
- Get the CWO post onto the club committee as a permanent position

The CWO role as recommended by The FA

- To know who the County Football Association (CFA) Child Protection Officer (CPO) is and how to contact them
- To refer any club child protection or poor practice concerns to the CFA CPO
- To seek advice from The FA/NSPCC Helpline if the CFA CPO is unavailable or in circumstances of child protection urgency
- To seek advice from local social services or the police in an emergency
- To encourage the club to discuss and implement The FA's child protection policy
- To encourage the club to utilise The FA's child protection and best practice guidelines on recruiting volunteers and always requesting and following up references
- To encourage the club to discuss and implement The FA's child protection and best practice guidelines on the use of images and organising travel, trips and tournaments
- To advocate that CRB Disclosures are to be used as part of the club's safeguarding initiatives and encourage the club to make use of The FA CRB Unit



- To support the club in identifying those who require a CRB Disclosure
- To promote, support and encourage the benefits of the child protection and best practice education and awareness programme.

What next

- Before appointing your CWO ensure that you have considered their appropriateness for this role by checking them against The FA's safeguarding children fit and proper person checklist
- Follow the appointment of volunteers guidance as provided by The FA on www.TheFA.com/Goal when appointing the CWO
- Ensure all club members know who the newly appointed CWO is and what their role is.

Safeguarding children fit and proper person checklist

Essential

- Willing and able to provide relevant references
- Willing to update skills and knowledge
- Previous experience of working with children
- Knowledge of, and positive attitudes to, equal opportunities
- Commitment to treat all children as individuals and with equal concern
- Physical health – appropriate to carry out tasks
- Mental stability, integrity and flexibility
- Completion of The FA CRB process and acceptance by The FA of the outcome (Many people with a history of offending will still be considered as appropriate people to work with, and care for, children. The FA CRB Unit or Goal website can advise on the current methods for checking this process has been satisfactorily completed)
- Attendance at an FA child protection and best practice workshop.

Desirable

- Knowledge of child protection issues*
- Knowledge of child protection legislation (as appropriate)*
- Relevant football knowledge and understanding*.

*If an interested individual does not currently have knowledge of child protection issues or child protection legislation this can be addressed initially by The FA's child protection and best practice workshop.

If any person is considered not to be a fit and proper person to work with children, his or her application should be refused.



THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Safeguarding children is high on The FA's agenda.

The goal is to have someone at every club in the country aware of child protection and best practice, whether it's a Premiership Academy or a Sunday morning park side.

Safeguarding children is about doing things the right way, doing things properly. It's about allowing children to enjoy the game without abuse of any kind. That means bullying, physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect.

The FA believes football can have a powerful positive influence on children. But that means everyone involved in football must take on the responsibility of looking after those children that want to play the game.

Safeguarding children through training, learning, best practise and CRB checks

Telephone 0800 085 0506

TheFA.com/Goal