



ESFA Safeguarding Children Policy

Every child or young person, defined as any person under the age of 18, who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of everyone involved in football thus every Association is required to endorse and adhere to ESFA's Safeguarding Children Policy. ESFA recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by seeking to protect them from abuse and harm.

This means creating a safe and inclusive atmosphere where everyone works together to tackle both bullying and discrimination, ensure safer recruitment, and tackle poor practice which leads to harm and reduces equal opportunities. Best practice in Inclusion, anti-bullying, equality and the respect agenda are all part of making safer cultures and prevention of harm and abuse.

ESFA is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all children to participate in the sport to the best of their abilities for as long as they choose to do so.

The ESFA Safeguarding Children Policy key principles are:

- The child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration
- All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents and carers is essential.
- Sound recruitment and selection procedures will help to screen out those who are not suitable to work in football
- ESFA local Associations with representative teams must appoint a Welfare Officer in line with ESFA affiliation requirements.
- The safeguarding of children whilst under the supervision of a school is the responsibility of that school as outlined in their governance policies. Safeguarding in schools is underpinned by the relevant DfE Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" prevailing at the time of the activity.

ESFA is committed to working in partnership with the Police, Social Care Departments, and Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB) and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in accordance with their procedures. This is essential to enable these organisations to carry out their statutory duties to investigate concerns and protect all children and young people

The ESFA Safeguarding Children Policy is in response to Government legislation and guidance, developed to safeguard the welfare and development of children and young people.

It is noted and accepted that The Football Association's Safeguarding Children Regulations (see The FA Handbook) applies to everyone in football whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

ESFA supports The FA's Whistle Blowing Policy. Any adult or young person with concerns about an adult in a position of trust with football can 'whistle blow' by contacting The FA Safeguarding Team on 0800 169 1863, by writing to The FA Case Manager at The Football Association, Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London SW1P 9EQ, by emailing Safeguarding@TheFA.com or alternatively by going direct to the Police, Children's Social Care or the NSPCC