



English Schools' Football Association

Membership Matters

A message from the Chairman

Don't forget...

Schools' Football Week will run from 24 - 30 May 2021

Part 1 of the ESFA AGM will take place on Saturday 3 July 2021

There are some vacancies for Council in the North, Midlands and South West. For more information please click [here](#).

Our late Patron, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, devoted much of his long life to encouraging and supporting causes for young people. In addition to the highly successful award scheme that carries his name, he was also a great advocate for the wide-ranging benefits of team games – self-discipline, resilience, good citizenship, lessons for life, the creation of friendships, and so much more.

Reflecting on the Duke's passing, a schools' football colleague commented to me that the world needs more Philips. I concurred, obviously. However, as our conversation ensued, it became clear that, rather than simply promoting a name, he was referring to the need for more of us to recognise the importance of sport for young people. In the Schools' Football Family, we would all support that sentiment – as society recovers from the pandemic, it is more important than ever.

The ESFA is well-placed to play a full part in that recovery. The current programme of inter-district and inter-county competitions is progressing well. Entry levels for next season's schools' competitions are very encouraging and, crucially, support for our new Champions Cup format for districts and counties continues to grow, so much so that, in response to requests from Membership, we have added an inter-district competition for girls at the Under 14 age group – two years ahead of schedule. I know that some colleagues have reservations about the new format and the Player Passport scheme that underpins it. Change can be daunting, particularly for those of us who have been involved in schools' football for many years. Financial concerns can understandably dominate our thinking. The principle of not charging is a line that some find difficult to cross and some worry about the impact on existing structures. All these concerns, and others, are understandable.

For every problem that you envisage, there will be a solution. Every obstacle that you perceive can be overcome. Principles can be balanced with pragmatism. Structures can be adapted. New districts have been established, and some districts and counties that have not run teams for years have been re-invigorated by the great opportunities that the Champions Cup offers. So, if your district or county has yet to enter, please come on board. The entry deadline has been extended until 17th May.

Prince Philip recognised that schools' football is where education and sport flourish, where we develop knowledge alongside skills and values, where young people can be competitive, considerate, and truly enjoy their sport, and where they can learn how to appreciate the joys of winning and accept with grace the disappointment of losing. These values are timeless, and they will endure with the Champions Cup.

With best wishes

Phil Harding



Child welfare matters

The FA is making changes to the arrangements for its successor to the Safeguarding Children Workshop. Safeguarding training will now all take place on- line, but from 30th June, a fee of £30 will be charged. This is a "lifetime" fee, which allows for unlimited recertification. Contact the ESFA's National Child Welfare Officers for further information.

A reminder too that coaching should never take place with children on a one to one basis. There are strict - justifiably - requirements by The FA for staffing ratios, and further details can be found on the FA's website, on the link below. Please make sure that you are familiar and compliant with these requirements. Again, please contact our National Child Welfare Officers should you wish to discuss this, or any other, safeguarding matter further.

To view information on The FA website, please [click here](#).

ESFA HQ update

We are pleased to welcome two new colleagues to the ESFA this spring.

Jacob Blades, who many of you will know from his internship year, returns to the ESFA as our new PR, Marketing and Communications Assistant. Jacob has now finished his undergraduate degree and returned to Stafford to rejoin the workforce. We are delighted to be able to reward Jake's commitment to the ESFA with a paid role at HQ, and wish him continued success in his role.

We are also due to welcome a new Governance Manager to the ESFA. Starting on 1st June, Chris Parkin will join the ESFA from his current role at the National Governing Body for Bowls. As well as experience in Sport England governance standards, Chris has experience from within a County FA and spent some time working in a school as an IT technician. Chris's experience will be essential in ensuring that the ESFA meets new governance standards required by our expected FA funding contract

Council Vacancies

There will be four Council vacancies across the North, Midlands and South East for the 21/22 season. Full details of the vacancies have been posted on our website and we would like you to consider and then send nominations to Andrea Chilton by midnight on Thursday 10 June.

Full information and relevant paperwork can be found on our website [here](#).

International Programme update

We are delighted that, with persistence and determination, and a significant contribution from our volunteers, 2019/20's international teams will each now have the opportunity to play fully capped international fixtures and receive their international caps in person, hopefully (restrictions permitting) with their parents/carers there to see this proud moment. Last season's U15 girls will play against Wales on 9th May at the new Welsh facility in Wrexham. On 5th June they will go on to play against Scotland at Newcastle University and it is at this fixture that caps will be presented. The match against Wales will be recorded then available to watch from the following day on our YouTube channel, and it is hoped that the Scotland fixture can be live streamed.

The U18 boys' squad from last season is also due to play a fixture against Harrogate Town, over the weekend of 5th/6th June, with the venue to be confirmed. Again, it is hoped that this match can be live streamed, and that the boys will receive their caps after the game.

ESFA U18 Super League final

The first ESFA Super League campaign comes to a head on Wednesday 19th May with the final being hosted at Birmingham City FC's ground St Andrews stadium. The two sides, Park View High School from Durham and John Madejski Academy from Reading have battled through a tough regional group stage and three national knockout rounds for a chance of being crowned the first ESFA Super League Champions.

The match, which kicks off at 2:00pm, will be livestreamed from the ground and available to watch via the ESFA's YouTube Channel, [ESFA TV](#). Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 restrictions, no spectators will be permitted to attend. More information on this upcoming event can be found [here](#).





Schools' Football Week - 24—30 May 2021

We would like to remind you that Schools' Football Week will be returning on from 24-30 May 2021. Unlike previous seasons, we have extended the 'week' into the weekend, to ensure that any representative activity can also be included as part of the impact.

So far, we have had almost 500 schools and associations register activity, but there hasn't been a huge take-up from our own Associations. We hope that you might be able to introduce some activity into your schedules to help support Schools' Football Week this year.

Full information and resources are available on our website - simply [click here](#) to find out more and register your activity.



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