



# Membership Matters

## A Message from the Chair

October 2022

It has been fantastic to see and hear about so much schools' football being played so far this academic year. Whether that be curricular, intra-school, inter-school, inter-district, or inter-county, it is brilliant to see so much football taking place. Not only is this so positive in terms of opportunities to play football and other school sports, it is also really important in supporting attendance at school and the mental health of so many children, which has seen such a decline nationally in the recent past.

I often thank the school staff who regularly go above and beyond in order to provide opportunities for our young people and I often mention how it shapes those individuals who take part. I would like too to spend some time thanking and celebrating some of our wonderful staff at ESFA HQ, who contribute to this 'feel good' factor in the great product the ESFA offers and in raising the confidence and self-esteem of everyone who take part.

If you are a user of social media, you will no doubt see the many posts that regularly highlight and inform our followers of the matches, results, scores, competitions taking place and provide information about forthcoming events. This is largely down to Sarah Kearney and her team, who do an outstanding job in putting together the information that showcases our Membership participating and enjoying their football across the country.

Sarah demonstrates an amazing work ethic where she consistently strives to do well and succeeds admirably. Our audience and followers on social media have regular updates and it is fantastic to see the ESFA 'family' growing, sharing and celebrating all of the amazing work that goes on. Sarah also plays a huge role in ensuring our National Finals go ahead, working alongside Darren Alcock, who will get a mention in a future MM, to ensure the students and staff involved get the best experience possible.

I really cannot do justice the work Sarah does in a few paragraphs, but the time, effort and contribution Sarah makes to the ESFA cannot be underestimated. Sarah, on behalf of our Membership, I thank you for all that you do. I'm sure on reading this, our Membership will post their thanks to you on the many platforms you helped create and update.

I had the pleasure of attending two regional trials recently for this season's international squads and was blown away by the skill, talent, attitude and respect shown by all participants. It was such a great experience that I had many parents/carers comment on how good the atmosphere was and how much everyone took from the process.



(Continued)



# Membership Matters

## A Message from the Chair (Continued)

I have heard many similar stories from the other trials across the country and thank you to all of the regional coordinators, coaches and officials who gave up their time to ensure the trials ran so smoothly. I wish the players who have been selected for the next stage of the trials in November the very best of luck and for those who were unsuccessful at this stage, please keep doing what you do and enjoy your football. The trial process is never a 'closed book' and you may find yourself being invited to future trials.

Please don't forget the AGM part 2 on Thursday 1st December. It will be great to see our Membership attend and I look forward to meeting with you all.

As always, I would like to thank all in Membership for everything you continue to do to provide safe and positive footballing experiences for school children across the country and wish you all the very best for the continuing season.



**Stuart Botham**  
Chair

## Spotlight on: Jacob Blades, PR, Marketing & Communications

### Executive

The 2022/23 season sees me starting my third full season at the ESFA as part of the busy and constantly evolving PR, Marketing and Communications team. Prior to joining the ESFA, I studied Sports Business Management at Coventry University, graduating with a 2:1 bachelor's degree. My degree covered a wide range of areas including Sports Marketing, Business Management and Finance, Football Governance and Event Management, giving me a strong foundation of knowledge for my career going forward.

I first started at the ESFA as part of the internship programme in September 2019, where I joined the PRMC Manager Sarah Kearney, doubling the department size to two. My role during my internship was to manage and grow the Association's social media channels, liaise with sponsors and partners and ensure effective communication was in place to the Association's Members. Unfortunately, this year was cut short due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which brought about its own unique professional challenges, which the senior ESFA staff did an amazing job to overcome.



Since joining the Association on a full-time basis in April 2021, I have assisted with the creation, planning and execution of ESFA campaigns such as Schools' Football Week 2022 and ESFA Hotshots and was at the heart of the ESFA National Final events in 2022 - a real highlight of my time here. Due to the ever-changing and unpredictable nature of the PRMC department's work, it is hard for me to describe a standard week in my life, but I can give you some of our key aims and objectives for October:

- Create and develop a campaign plan and strategy for Schools' Football Week 2023, including creating a content calendar and draft copy for press releases and announcements
- Work with the Commercial Director on securing sponsorship for various ESFA campaigns and competitions
- Liaise with various ESFA sponsors and partners including UCFB, Utilita and VEO to ensure marketing plans are in place for the 22-23 seasons and that they are up to date on the ESFA's activity
- Assist PlayStation's PR company, Ear to the Ground, on launching various PlayStation Schools' Cup campaign aspects including ambassador reveals and the second season of the PlayStation Schools' Cup FIFA Tournament
- Celebrate the success of this season's National Cup competitions with our audience, sharing teams' results and tracking the vast amount of schools' football being played across the country
- Supporting the ESFA's international programme by announcing successful trialists and creating content plans for the upcoming international season
- Working with new partners Pokémon to implement their sponsorship of the ESFA U11 Pokémon Schools' Cup

## Spotlight on: Jacob Blades, continued...

- Start to implement a new Public Affairs strategy with the aim of engaging external organisations, government departments and MPs to support ESFA activity
- Implementation of the ESFA's player engagement strategy to allow children who take part in ESFA activity to be intrinsic in the planning of future events and feel that their perceptions are valued by the ESFA.

As I am sure will resonate with all of you, a strong motivation for the work I do is knowing it directly supports the hundreds of thousands of children playing schools' football up and down the country and giving these players the best and safest experience possible. I am grateful for the amazing staff here at the ESFA for their support in my role and to the ESFA's Members whose hard work makes it all possible. I wish everyone an enjoyable and successful season ahead.

## Pokémon Primary Schools' Cup

This week, we have had the pleasure of formally announcing the ESFA's new partnership with The Pokémon Company International and launching the Pokémon Primary Schools' Cup.

The 22/23 Schools' Football season has kicked off with a brand-new partnership between the ESFA and Pokémon, forming the inaugural season of the Pokémon Primary Schools' Cup. The multi-year partnership will see Pokémon providing opportunities for over 5,000 school teams and over 50,000 players across three competitions for mixed teams, girls' teams and small schools' teams.

The U11 Schools' Cup, U11 Girls' Cup and U11 Small Schools' Cup competitions provide a pathway for teams to progress through three rounds of competition. Beginning in local, District rounds, successful teams then go on to compete in County rounds, then one of four Regional Finals, which take place in the North, Midlands, South East and South West of England. The top 6 teams from each Regional Final will have the opportunity to travel to the National Finals in May, where the National Champions of each competition will be crowned.

Further information on the Pokémon Primary Schools' Cup can be found on the ESFA website [here](#).



## Premier League Charitable Fund (PLCF) partnership

We are delighted to confirm that we have now re-established our link with the PLCF and with their support and that of The FA, will be making arrangements to offer year 3 and 4 festivals in 35 area of England later this season. Keep an eye on the ESFA website and social media channels for further updates on Kickabout.



## Hotshots

The ESFA Hotshots campaign was relaunched back in September and the ESFA has now received over 300 registrations from schools across the country. The project's aim is to get as many young people as possible playing schools' football and to build on the success of the inaugural campaign, which saw over 31,000 young people taking part in 21/22.

Any school can take part in the ESFA Hotshots campaign, and the intra-school activity could be hosted at lunchtime, afterschool or during PE lessons and could take any format that you wish. For example, a group phase followed by a final, or just some straightforward, fun football activity.

The ESFA is able to incentivise this activity, so that each school that signs up and organises intra-school football during the 22/23 season will be entered into a prize draw, with the possibility of winning a £1,500 cash prize from their relevant category.

Please ensure that as many schools' as possible in your area are aware of the ESFA Hotshots campaign so we can have as many young people taking part as possible.

More information and a link for schools' to register their interest can be found [here](#).



## Somerset Football Festivals

The Somerset Schools' FA festival returns for 2023 from Sunday 2nd April- Wednesday 5th April. The festival, which attracts teams from throughout the southwest and from across the country, is a highlight of the Association's football calendar.

The Somerset football festival is a brilliant way for Somerset to celebrate representative football in their area and we would like to encourage as many teams as possible from across the country to get involved. The festival is open to U13, U14 and U15 district teams for both boys and girls and will take place at Millfield School in Somerset. Festival participation costs £270 per player with one coach per team included for free.

The ESFA is delighted to support the Somerset Festival 2023 and encourage as many representative teams as possible to take part.

For more information on the festival and how to get your side involved, please contact Stuart Crisp on [scrisp@bucklersmeadacademy.com](mailto:scrisp@bucklersmeadacademy.com)



### SOMERSET FESTIVAL



SUNDAY 2ND - WEDNESDAY 5TH APRIL 2023  
OPEN TO U13, U14 AND U15  
COST £270 PER PLAYER ONE COACH PER  
TEAM FREE



### SOMERSET GIRLS' FESTIVAL



SUNDAY 2ND - WEDNESDAY 5TH APRIL 2023  
OPEN TO U13, U14 AND U15  
COST £270 PER PLAYER ONE COACH PER  
TEAM FREE

# ESFA Safeguarding Information

## FA DBS Applications

Currently some DBS application are taking up to 8 weeks to clear and some are taking even longer. This is because of the high volume of applications currently being submitted nationally. Association Welfare Officers and staff making applications for a new DBS are strongly advised to start the process early so that clearance is received prior to the expiration of their current DBS.

Associations are also reminded that verifiers of the documents for a DBS application can only do this if they are, in receipt of:

1. The ORIGINAL documents
2. Copies of the ORIGINAL Documents verified by the POST OFFICE

It is not part of the legal process of verification to do this with scanned documents sent via email

Applicants should also check that the date of Group B document(s) comply with the legal requirements: -

### Less than 3 months old

- Bank/ Building Society Statement
- Utility Bill (not mobile phone)
- Credit Card Statement
- Documents from Government Agency / Local Authority giving entitlement

### Less than 12 months old

- Mortgage Statement
- P46/60
- Financial Statement e.g. pension
- Council Tax Statement
- Work Permit/ Visa

If you are unsure please check before you complete the form and send the documents

## Safeguarding Tip of the Month

Add to your parental codes of conduct the expectation that they report any concerns affecting the welfare of children to the Association CWO, and add in the CWO contact details to your parental guides/information pack

It is important that members familiarise themselves with the FA's Whistleblowing policy, [click here to view the FA's Whistleblowing policy](#).

## Welfare Officer Briefing

On Thursday 13th October, The ESFA hosted a Welfare Officers' briefing to help Association Welfare Officers to fully understand the expectations of your role within schools' football, your individual responsibilities and how the ESFA can support you. If you missed this briefing and would like to watch back the recording, [please click here](#).

## The FA's "Play Safe" Messaging

The FA's "Play Safe" Weekend took place from 1st -2nd October with the dominant focus of the campaign being the key role of parents/carers in safeguarding. The two main messages that were conveyed were:

- Are you aware of the vital safeguarding role you play in football?
- Please take the new, short and free safeguarding course specifically developed for parents/carers, to access the course [please click here](#).

It is vitally important that these messages are shared with the parents/carers of your Association's players alongside the array of messaging and resources that the FA's Play Safe campaign. For more information, [please visit the FA's Play Safe webpage here](#).

## Safeguarding 365 Assessment

The ESFA is currently undergoing its FA Safeguarding 365 assessment, conducted by the NSPCC who will report back on their findings shortly after their visit on 2nd November.

## Charity Excellence

Charity Excellence is a free resource that member Associations may wish to use to find funding streams in your local area. They have plenty of free resources that you can utilise to improve the effectiveness of Governance, Management and fundraising effectiveness within your association. For more information on Charity Excellence and the resources available, [please click here.](#)



## FA KPIs

As many of you know, the ESFA earns around half of its income each year from The FA. Last season, the terms of that funding were changed to ring fence the total grant into four areas of work - governance, competition, participation and workforce (FA terminology). The governance grant is used to fund staff posts at HQ, as per the FA agreement, and we are expected to comply with FA safeguarding, discipline and insurance requirements as a result. Likewise, there is an expectation that we begin discussions about player registration during the life of this business plan: at present, this is not the top priority for either party but may become so in future. We are also expected to move, over time, to the full adoption of the schools' version of SCORY which is currently with The FA for consideration.

The remainder of funding is to support our activity. This season, we will be expected to:

- Provide activities through our Membership and by direct delivery from HQ for 39,000 teams, including those who take part in our "Hotshots" intra-school football campaign. We will seek your help in evidencing your activity through the data you provide us with as the sanctioning process evolves
- To engage 12,000 new teams in activity for first time players. This will be achieved through our Development Fund and through our hugely successful Schools' Football Week campaign
- To maintain the volunteer workforce of around 2000 across the country, and to develop the recruitment, retention, recognition and reward strategy to further engage with our volunteers.
- We will also be working on an organisation-wide EDI strategy which underpins these KPIs, given the focus on reaching new audiences for our participants and our volunteering opportunities.



Volunteer Reward & Recognition

## Volunteering in Schools' Football Help us to help you...

As part of the ESFA's ongoing reward and recognition campaign, the Association has set up a new volunteering page on the ESFA website where we will be promoting current vacancies in Associations across the country. These could be anything from coaching, to physios to fixture secretaries or just another pair of hands to help in various areas of Association activity. The below instructions will allow us to advertise these vacancies in your local area and help you recruit the volunteers you need:

### For you to do...

1. Make a list of the volunteering opportunities available in your Association
2. Email your opportunities to [Daniel.smith@schoolsfa.com](mailto:Daniel.smith@schoolsfa.com) - remember to include the type of role, time commitment and a short description
3. Your role will be shared on our new volunteering page on the ESFA website

### For us to do...

1. We will promote all vacancies and opportunities
2. We will encourage potential candidates to contact Associations directly to find out more
3. We will try to find you volunteers you need to grow schools' football in your Association

**Please ensure any volunteers recruited are added as a staff member on the ESFA portal**

We are finalising the website content at the moment, but will share the live site with Membership as soon as it's ready!



## England U15 Schoolgirls' and England U18 Schoolboys' Pro:Direct International Trials

October saw the start of the ESFA International Programme for the 22-23 season, with regional trials for the England U15 Schoolgirls' and England U18 Schoolboys' teams taking place across the country. Selectors have commented on the high standard of play and brilliant attitude on show and we would like to thank all the players who attended the regional trials. The next round of trials for boys and the girls will take place during November with the final trials both taking place at Lilleshall National Sports Centre on Sunday 11th December.

The ESFA would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers who helped run and organise the first stage of International trials and we look forward to the rest of the programme continuing throughout this season.



## October's monthly photo round up



## Follow our social media



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[@SchoolsFootball](https://www.twitter.com/SchoolsFootball)



[English Schools' Football Association](https://www.facebook.com/EnglishSchoolsFootballAssociation)



[ESFA TV](https://www.youtube.com/ESFA-TV)

