



Membership Matters

A Message from the Chair

We are pleased to welcome Marvin Robinson into the role of ESFA Chair for the 23/24 season. Marvin joined the ESFA's Council in 2017 and took up the role of Vice Chair in 22/23.

September, 2023

Having had the opportunity to represent his school, District, County and the England U18 Schoolboys, winning the Centenary Shield in 1997, Marvin also took part in many ESFA competitions during his school years, giving him some additional insight into schools' football. Marvin's involvement in schools' football and the profound impact it has had on him, through both lived experiences and life-long relationships with teaching mentors served as the fuel that led him back to the ESFA in 2017. During his time on Council, Marvin has served on a range of committees including Representative, Governance, Development and PR & Marketing.



Throughout Marvin's time on Council so far, he has particularly enjoyed the international friendship and learning opportunities from touring with national squads and from hosting colleagues from other countries. He recognises the fortunate position he is in, to both empathise and witness the growth of individuals, through all aspects of participation and the excitement of all the schools involved in National Cup competitions, especially finals, that are a reminder of his time taking part in competitions himself.

Marvin is incredibly proud to be Chair for the 23/24 season and takes the honour extremely seriously. He is determined to ensure that every student can play schools' football in a safe, inclusive environment while being supported in developing not only their talent, but also their values such as leadership, honesty and integrity and their own character traits such as effort, determination and perseverance. These are key life skills that are honed through school sport, in what is an ever-changing and demanding world.

We look forward to hearing from Marvin in the October edition of MM, where he will be sharing a recap of the September Council meeting and introducing himself in his capacity of Chair for this season.

FA Play Safe Weekend (Sat 30th Sep- Sunday 1st Oct)

At the end of this month, English football at every level will unite to promote Play Safe – a national campaign to focus attention of the vital importance of safeguarding in our national game.

Led by The Football Association, the Play Safe campaign is endorsed by the NSPCC and supported by every level of the game, including the Premier League, EFL, Barclays Women's Super League and Barclays Women's Championship, and right across the grassroots game.

We are proud to be supporting Play Safe on our website and social media channels – and also by making an online Play Safe Pledge. Our pledge will see us distribute play safe captain arm bands and pin badges to associations running rep teams and share our own safeguarding messaging across our social media channels and website.

For more information, please click [here](#).

ESFA Safeguarding Support Volunteers

The ESFA is about to relaunch its programme of Safeguarding Support Visits, which is intended to help Associations by checking their safeguarding arrangements and advising on ways in which Members may better protect the children they provide football for, and themselves. We are seeking additional volunteers to conduct these support visits, which can be in your local area, with no more than 4 per season sought. These visits can be conducted whilst you are playing and so may not require any additional travel or further time beyond that which you already give. You can find more details about the SSV programme here <https://schoolsfootball.org/child-welfare/esfa-national-safeguarding-volunteers/>

Anyone interested in learning further about the programme is welcome to join us at our meeting by clicking on the link below on Tuesday 12th Sept at 6.30pm

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Appointment of U18 Match Officials

A reminder to membership that we recommend the use of the letter which can be found [here](#) when appointing match officials under the age of 18.

In Memoriam- Matt Simpson

The English Schools' FA was truly saddened to hear of the passing of Matt Simpson from South Hunsley School, East Riding Schools' FA and Humberside Schools' FA. Mark Arridge shared the following on behalf of Humberside Schools' FA:

“Matt was a stalwart of schools' football. He organised all South Hunsley school football teams, of which many reached National Finals. In addition, he organised and managed all the East Riding School FA District teams and ran their competitions for over 20 years, served as the Chair and CWO on the Humberside Schools' FA Committee and was a stalwart of his local community club. He was always a huge advocate of the ESFA and always spoke passionately about the advocacy and work you all do for schools' football. We are all devastated by this loss. Please keep your thoughts and prayers for his family, friends, colleagues and students who have all been affected by his passing.”



National Child Welfare Officer - Vacancy

Sarah DaCosta, one of our two NCWOs, will leave the ESFA at October half term, having achieved a promoted post at English Athletics. We congratulate Sarah on her appointment and wish her every success in her promotion.

We are now advertising for a replacement for Sarah and the details of the vacancy can be found [here](#). We would very much like to hear from anyone interested in the role, and would ask that you share the opportunity widely amongst your network. Thank you in advance for your support with this, and Martin Duffield will continue his support for our Associations as Sarah moves on.

Playing representative football on Sundays - insurance

Members have been seeking clarification about whether representative football played on Sundays is covered by [ESFA insurance](#). Provided the activity is sanctioned and runs in accordance with the rules of the game as usual, then insurance cover will apply to football played on Sundays.

Girls' Football and Professional Game Academies

Members will be aware that The FA has changed its strategy/structure for the development of the women's game, following the creation of the Emerging Training Centres, which were designed to partially replace RTCs for the purposes of coaching and development, but not for competitive fixtures. The second part of the FA's strategy, to provide competition for talented players, is the creation of PGAs - Professional Game Academies, and these are now operational. A joint statement from The FA and the ESFA, explaining the arrangements for managing talented players, will follow shortly. We are sorry for the delay in getting this information to you: there have been a number of significant changes in the way that the FA are operating this season and the negotiations around the impact on schools' football have been extraordinarily time consuming.

Funding Opportunity for Female Coaches

The ESFA has been made aware of an opportunity for not-for-profit organisations, including community groups, youth groups, and traditional football clubs to support females who are/will support the growth of the women's and girls' grassroots game. Please click [here](#) for further details.

Membership Safeguarding briefing

On Thursday 6th September at we will be holding our bi-annual Safeguarding Briefing for Association Secretaries and Welfare Officers. This meeting will focus on the mandatory requirements for playing representative football in 2023/24, whether as part of ESFA National Competitions or in your local activities. Click the link [here](#) to access the meeting.

Managing Discrimination- FA Guidance

The FA has recently published some guidance on managing discrimination, which you can find [here](#). For any queries regarding this guidance, please contact Joe Marsh on Joe.Marsh@schoolsfa.com

ESFA Honorary Auditors

With thanks to outgoing long serving Lead Honorary Auditor Neil Pont and to John Williamson, and a warm welcome to Gavin Hawkins following his appointment at the AGM, we are now seeking a third Honorary Auditor to join Gavin and Allan Reed. The remit of the HAs can be found [here](#) and expressions of interest to serve in this capacity should be submitted to the existing Honorary Auditors, via the CEO, no later than 30th September. Thank you in advance for considering this important role.

Fundraising idea

With thanks to Matt Linder from Brighton and Hove District Schools' FA, we are pleased to share with you his idea for fundraising, following the work he has done to improve links between the District and their local club, Brighton and Hove Albion. Having already negotiated the use of the club's training ground to facilitate the Association's training sessions and the exploration of coach CPD with the club, this prompted the Association to think how the relationship could further enhance schools' football.

Matt suggests to those Associations that have clubs within the local area to consider asking to use the ground for a quick photoshoot of local school pupils playing a game at the ground then seeking their further support in the possible provision of a club shirt which could be raffled to raise funds. Districts could also consider working together in the local area, to approach clubs in this regard.

Safeguarding messaging - DBS Applications

Membership are reminded of the need to keep their FA DBS in date – a DBS expires after 3 years. We have experienced long delays in the past 6-8 months for new DBS applications to receive clearance. It is important that an early application to renew a DBS is made prior to the expiry date of the current. There are three stages to a DBS application:

1. Complete the online application (Please do not share the ESFA's Pin No and secret word with others)
2. Verification of documents – the 3 documents you use to complete the online application must be visibly seen by an ESFA verifier. (Verifiers are listed on the FADV Portal)
You can either send the original documents to an ESFA verifier directly or you can send a copy of your documents that have been copied and verified by a main post office.
Currently there are 71 applications showing in the ESFA's account on FADV which have never been verified, starting from 05 March – they are deleted from the system after 6 months - this is because applicants have not sent their documents to be verified.
3. Payment of the £10.00 either by a credit/debit card or PayPal – after the verification is complete.

Other Safeguarding Requirements

Staff working with teams must also ensure that their Safeguarding Children certificate is in-date. If your Safeguarding Children was issued prior to JUNE 2022 then it must be renewed after 3 years. If your Safeguarding Children was issued after June 2022 then your Safeguarding needs to be renewed every 2 years.

Other Safeguarding Requirements (Continued)

For those needing to obtain the Safeguarding children qualification:

<https://learn.EnglandFootball.com/courses/safeguarding/safeguarding-children-course>

For those needing to recertificate the safeguarding children qualification:

<https://learn.EnglandFootball.com/courses/safeguarding/safeguarding-children-course-recertification>

Welfare Officer Workshop:

CWO staff also need the FA Welfare Officer Workshop (WOW) – new CWO's will need to register on one of the many courses currently being run by FA Learning and the Associations will be given temporary approval/sanction subject to them completing the WOW.

<https://learn.EnglandFootball.com/courses/safeguarding/welfare-officers-course>

ESFA announce new partnership with Arnold Clark

The English Schools' Football Association is delighted to announce Arnold Clark as the new sponsors of all U16 – U18 National Schools' Cup competitions from September 2023.

This new partnership will see Arnold Clark sponsor 10 ESFA Cup competitions, with the brand supporting thousands of schools' football players on their journey to become National Champions in 2024 onwards. The Arnold Clark Schools' Cup title will cover all U16 – U18 Schools' Cup competitions, including three girls' competitions. Almost 1,800 teams are currently entered into these competitions for the 23/24 season and it seems likely that the ESFA will reach, if not surpass, entry figures from 22/23, which was the biggest season in schools' football history.

For more information on this exciting new partnership you can view the full announcement [here](#)

ESFA National Competition Draws are now live

Early round draws for ESFA National Schools' and Inter County cups are now live. ESFA Inter Association cup draws will go live very shortly after the publication of this edition of Membership matters. You can click the relevant links below to view the draws:

[ESFA National Schools' Cups](#)

[ESFA Inter County Cups](#)

[ESFA Inter Association Cups](#)

Make sure to share your draw with your opponents on social media and tag @schoolsfootball so we can share as much early round coverage as possible.



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