



# DISABILITY FOOTBALL TOOLKIT





**This toolkit has been produced to supply all Cheshire affiliated disability teams with advice and guidance on developing a disability football session.**

**Cheshire FA have supplied this document in order to support clubs around planning a disability session, recruiting disabled footballers, promoting sessions and ensuring sessions are accessible and inclusive for all abilities.**

**The document looks to identify frequently asked questions and challenges associated with disability football, but it must be understood that this is only provided as guidance rather than policy.**

**If you have any queries in relation to anything mentioned, the Cheshire FA workforce are on hand to support.**

**Should you wish to gain any further information please feel free to either contact the County FA:**

**Cheshire FA  
Hartford House  
Hartford Moss Recreation Centre  
Northwich  
CW8 4BG**

**Disabilityfootball@CheshireFA.com  
01606 871166**





# PLANNING A SESSION



If you are thinking about developing a disability football session you should initially contact Cheshire FA. They will be able to provide information about what disability football sessions are currently being delivered in the local area and provide guidance about any gaps in provision.

## PLAYER RECRUITMENT

Player recruitment is one of the most challenging aspects of disability football especially when establishing a new session.

However, we know disabled people want to be physically active and play football so it is making sure they are aware of what you are offering.

When planning the session think about who you want to attend.

Consider which players you want to target and recruit for your session.

- Is the session (PAN) suitable for all disabilities or is it impairment specific?
- Can both male and female players attend?
- Are you targeting adult or junior players?
- Do you need more than 1 session to cater for everyone?
- Are there any other sessions being delivered locally?



# £ BUDGET

When planning your session make sure your club or organisation can afford to deliver the session.

Take into consideration the cost of facility hire, coaching costs and purchasing equipment.

You will need to ensure the session is sustainable so you should consider how much to charge players to play and take into consideration your costs.

You should contact your local County FA to see if they can provide any financial support or have any funding grants that you can access.

## VENUE

Ensure you use a facility that is safe and accessible for disabled people.

It also needs to be in a location that is accessible for disabled people so they don't have to travel too far and can access public transport if necessary.

Similarly, try to plan the time and day of the session so that people can attend to ensure you get maximum participation.

The venue should feel comfortable so players can enjoy their football and could be the difference in them turning up each week.







## EQUIPMENT

Think about what equipment you will need to deliver the session. Balls, bibs and cones plus any specialist equipment that can make the session more inclusive.

For example if a participant is visually impaired you may require a different coloured football or bell ball.



## PROMOTION

When promoting the session use the same channels as you would for any other session at your club such as Social Media.

Try to promote the session in everyday venues such as the supermarket or doctors, with healthcare professionals and via websites and social media channels.

Target local organisations that are already working with disabled people including specialist support schools, disability charities & sports organisations like Cheshire FA and Active Cheshire.



# COACH SUPPORT

## WHO WILL DELIVER THE SESSION?

It is important to consider who will deliver and lead the football sessions.

Someone who is passionate about developing the session will help drive the session and make it a success.

They should be a good role model with the necessary coaching qualifications and they will need to have completed the following

- ✓ FA Level 1 in Coaching Football or the NEW FA Introduction to Coaching
- ✓ Valid FA Level 1 Introduction into First Aid \*
- ✓ Valid FA Safeguarding Children Workshop \*
- ✓ Valid FA CRC check.

\*Safeguarding and First Aid courses are now online and part of the new Introduction to Coaching course fee.

[Further Course Information](#) →







# DELIVERING INCLUSIVE FOOTBALL

## VOLUNTEERS

It is important to ensure the lead coach has enough support and an appropriate coach to player ratio is followed. This will vary depending on the ability and needs of the players .

Try to recruit a number of volunteers to assist with delivery to make sure the session runs smoothly and players have enough support.

Parents who attend the session may be interested in helping with the session or registering players as they arrive and depart.

We encourage all those volunteers who are going to take a more active role to complete the free online 'FA Playmaker' course. The FA Playmaker course is a pre-requisite for the new Introduction to Coaching course and people with an active role within the game should complete the course.

[Further Course Information](#) →

## COACH MENTOR

Experienced coaches within your club could act as a mentor and provide help and guidance when planning and delivering your sessions.



# INCLUSIVE DELIVERY

Adopting the following principles will help to make your session a quality experience for disabled people;

## WELCOMING PLAYERS

- As with any session try to ensure their first experience is a good one so that the player wants to come back again.

## REASSURING PLAYERS

- Some disabled players will fear standing out or they are not good enough to play.
- Ensure your session is suitable for their needs and encourage and support when necessary.

## INCLUDING PLAYERS

- Some disabled players will feel they are not good enough to take part so ensure all players are included regardless of their ability.

## LISTENING TO PLAYERS

- Listen to players at all times and take on board their comments and feedback to ensure the session is inclusive and accessible for all.

## SHOW PLAYERS

- Encourage players to share their experience and promote it to others to help the session grow.



**DELIVERING INCLUSIVE FOOTBALL**



# DISABILITY PLAYER PATHWAYS

Disability Football continues to grow year on year and provision is expanding both locally and nationally.

There are opportunities for players to play PAN disability football and in some cases impairment specific competition.

An established player pathway exists from grassroots to elite level.

## Cheshire Ability Counts Leagues

In Cheshire, disability football has one league structure called the Cheshire Ability Counts League which provides competitive playing opportunities for U12, U16 and Adult teams. The league is divided into East and West Leagues and divisions are created based on ability levels. The divisions are run on a round robin basis, with teams coming together for fixtures once a month at a central venue.

An annual cup competition is also delivered where teams from both leagues compete for the trophy.

The Cheshire Ability Counts Social League provides footballing opportunities for adults with lower ability and mobility who attend Day Centre's in Cheshire.

The league was Cheshire FA's 'Grassroots Football League' of the year 2019/20.



## AGE BANDS

- U12 - 8-12 years
- U16 - 13-16 years
- Adult - 16 years +



[www.cheshireFA.com](http://www.cheshireFA.com)  
Twitter: @cheshire\_fa





# SAFEGUARDING

## Our commitment to Safeguarding

Football can play an important role in helping people live fulfilling lives. We are committed to creating and maintaining safe, positive and inclusive environments.

We support our clubs in their responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children/adults at risk involved in football. This comes with a duty of care for those providing opportunities to ensure participation is free from abuse and neglect.

## Minimum expectations and standards

We identify all children and adults playing within a PAN Ability session/team as vulnerable. Therefore understanding Safeguarding policies and procedures is a priority.

- FA DBS
- FA Safeguarding Children Workshop
- FA Adults at Risk
- FA Safeguarding for Committee Members Course

## Important considerations

Location can have an impact on participation as stated, but consider how safe the venue will be. Are the toilets/changing facilities open to the wider public? You will need to plan ahead for anyone wishing to go to the toilet, without sending them off alone.

If a player's carer is attending they could escort them, but do not assume carers will be present all the time. Any carers on site do not count towards coach ratios either.



## Policies and procedures

Your club will be required to have a safeguarding children policy. Cheshire FA will be able to support you with a 'Safeguarding Adults at risk' policy and procedures.

This will provide guidance and essential information when working with adults at risk.

## Safeguarding Manager at Cheshire FA

Nadine Crane is the lead for Safeguarding at the Cheshire FA. She is the best person to talk to about any concerns or questions you may have. Our Football Development Officers will also be able to support you. If required, they will signpost you to your local contacts at councils, where specialist teams can provide assistance.

Nadine Crane | Safeguarding Manager  
07717 810 409  
[Safeguarding@CheshireFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@CheshireFA.com)





# CHECKLIST

Use the checklist provided to help monitor the progress of your session and ensure you have considered everything outlined in this toolkit.

TO DO	DATE	COMPLETED
CONTACT COUNTY FA		
BUDGET THE SESSION		
DECIDE WHICH PLAYERS TO RECRUIT		
CONFIRM SESSION DAY & TIME		
PURCHASE EQUIPMENT		
RECRUIT AN FA QUALIFIED COACH		
RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS		
CHECK FACILITY AND CONFIRM BOOKING		
PROMOTE THE SESSION		
AFFILIATE A TEAM WITH CHESHIRE FA		
BEGIN DELIVERY OF SESSION		





# NETWORK

Here is a list of useful contacts who will be able to provide further information to support a disability football session.

- [The FA](#)
- [Cheshire FA](#)
- [Cheshire Ability Counts League](#)
- [Activity Alliance Talk To Me](#)
- [Activity Alliance Impairment Specific](#)
- [Active Cheshire](#)