



GUIDANCE NOTES NO:

**5.9**

# PROVIDING A POSITIVE WELCOME TO YOUR CLUB

**FOR CLUBS**

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# PROVIDING A POSITIVE WELCOME TO YOUR CLUB

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The FA encourages clubs to make information easily available for players and parents/carers about the type(s) of football on offer for under-18s and how this is offered. Being open about how teams are run, who is responsible for what can help to avoid unnecessary confusion, upset and even complaints.

How teams are selected, if/where the club goes on tour, which leagues and competitions they participate in, the welfare officers contact details and who's responsible for matchday tactics are all helpful to actively share. Many clubs provide most, if not all of the information that's needed, but for someone new to a club this may not always be as easy to find as you think.

The **CLUB CHECKLIST: WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO** on **page 3** will help you to reflect on the information your club currently makes available, how it does this and what you might want to add. It also provides links to further helpful information available on The FA.com that you may wish to use.

Communicating proactively with parents/carers allows you to celebrate what's on offer, demonstrate the club ethos and how you support their child(ren) as well as what you expect of them. Why not require players and their parents/carers to acknowledge they have had access to this information and understand what is expected of

them. There are two examples of '**USER AGREEMENTS**' (see Appendix 1) which provides guidance about how to do this. Once parents/carers fully understand what your club provides you may find they become more open to volunteering themselves.

**Please note:** before sharing personal information about your committee members and/or other club officials e.g. coaches/welfare officers make sure you have their permission to do this. Having photos, names and contact details available is really helpful for parents/carers but how you share this must take into account each individuals wishes.

And finally... we recognise there is quite a lot here to consider. Some of the information your club will already provide. The **CLUB CHECKLIST** will give you an idea of what you need to focus on by simply running through the tick boxes. You don't have to do everything at once. as a committee decide the priority areas for your club and take it from there.



# TABLE 1 – CLUB CHECKLIST: WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO...

CLUB INFORMATION	DETAILS TO CONSIDER	WHERE THIS INFORMATION IS LOCATED PLEASE COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE				
		CLUB WEBSITE	CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE	WELCOME LETTER OR LEAFLET	PARENT & CARER MEETING	ACTION REQUIRED
<b>WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE OFFER</b>	• Club name					
	• FA Charter Standard status (as appropriate)					
	• The type of football offered e.g. 5v5, 7v7, 9v9, 11v11 boys/girls, disability teams, Wildcats, Little Kickers, Just Play...					
	• The level of leagues your teams play in including disability leagues					
	• Links to adult teams/clubs/academies					
	• Your commitment to The FA respect campaign – ‘We only do positive’ (are you signed up?)					
<b>WHERE WE ARE</b>	• An overview of site(s) indoor and outdoor used for matches and training across age groups					
	• The type of playing surface(s) used					
	• Pictures of your club grounds/club house are really helpful					
	• Provide a URL link for directions and postcode					
	• Do you have specific wheelchair access?					
<b>WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US</b> <small>N.B. Social activities can be detailed in their own section (see below)</small>	• A warm welcome and approachable club officials					
	• A safe place for your child					
	• To have a Covid-19 Safeguarding Risk Assessment in place for all our activities. (See Guidance Note 1.9 Covid-19 Safeguarding Risk Assessment Guidance and Template via <a href="https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory">https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory</a> )					
	• A club that encourages parents/carers to ask questions					
	• Appropriate club official/coach behaviours					
	• This is a chance for your club to set out their ethos and explain what the club is about e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– A child-centred club</li> <li>– An inclusive club</li> <li>– How you pick your teams (attendance at training, always choose the best players for league games or rotation of all players)</li> <li>– The level of coaching offered e.g. Level 1/2 coach for every team</li> <li>– Opportunities for progression into other leagues</li> <li>– A youth forum/council within the club</li> <li>– Support for under-18s in adult teams</li> </ul>					

**TABLE 1: CONTINUED**

CLUB INFORMATION	DETAILS TO CONSIDER	WHERE THIS INFORMATION IS LOCATED PLEASE COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE				
		CLUB WEBSITE	CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE	WELCOME LETTER OR LEAFLET	PARENT & CARER MEETING	ACTION REQUIRED
<b>MEET THE TEAM</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pictures of the club committee and the coaches are really helpful for parents and players alike</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide relevant details about your coaches including; name, qualifications, contact info, which team(s) they work with, if they have specialist training in coaching disabled footballers, confirm they have an accepted FA Enhanced DBS check and safeguarding training completed in the last three years</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide relevant details about your committee members (name, role, safeguarding training completed within the last three years)</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide name(s) and picture(s) of CWO(s), outline their role, provide their contact details, confirm they have an accepted FA Enhanced DBS check and safeguarding training completed within the last three years (see <i>Guidance Notes 5.3</i> via <a href="http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory">http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory</a>)</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be clear that players can talk to the CWO</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain how your club manages first aid - every game has a qualified first aider</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other relevant roles you might provide information on may include the clubs Covid-19 Officer, facilities staff, website monitor, social club/bar staff</li> </ul>					
<b>OUR POLICIES AND PROCESSES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use The FA Safeguarding Children Club Policy Template provide a link on your Club website or social media page or include in Club Welcome Pack (see <i>Guidance Notes 1.4</i> via <a href="http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory">http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory</a>)</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure you provide clarity about how safeguarding concerns can be reported – accessible information for parents/carers and children (see <i>Guidance Notes 2.1 and 7.1</i> via <a href="http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory">http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory</a>)</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share your anti-bullying policy (you can make use of The FA's template (see <i>Guidance Notes 1.5</i> via <a href="http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory">http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory</a>)</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share your social media policy, how you use of photos/film and how you will get parent/ carer permission</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be clear about how your club stores and uses player data; share your club's privacy policy</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share your clubs complaints process</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share your codes of conduct, be clear about what is considered acceptable behaviour and how you will deal with unacceptable behaviour. Use The FA's guidance on Physical Contact (See <i>Guidance Notes 5.6</i>), Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviour (see <i>Guidance Notes 5.7</i>) and the Managing Challenging Behaviour – Club Template (See <i>Guidance Notes 5.8</i>). There are all available via <a href="https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory">https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory</a></li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be clear about what first-aid provision the club has</li> </ul>					

**TABLE 1: CONTINUED**

CLUB INFORMATION	DETAILS TO CONSIDER	WHERE THIS INFORMATION IS LOCATED PLEASE COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE				
		CLUB WEBSITE	CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE	WELCOME LETTER OR LEAFLET	PARENT & CARER MEETING	ACTION REQUIRED
<b>WORKING WITH YOUR CHILD(REN)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider using the - Managing Challenging Behaviour –Club Template (See <i>Guidance Notes 5.8</i> via <a href="https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory">https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory</a>)</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child-friendly (age appropriate) information you provide for players e.g. who they can talk to if they have a concern</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide the ratio of staff to players you work with (see <i>Guidance Notes 5.5</i> via <a href="http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory">http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory</a>)</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share how you plan to manage individual children’s needs e.g. any learning difficulties/ medical conditions/SEN (see <i>Guidance Notes 7.2</i> via <a href="http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory">http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory</a>)</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a coaching framework which all teams within the club follow or do certain age groups follow certain coaching frameworks?</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you share regular progress updates with parents/carers on how their child(ren) are doing, what form does it take?</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you complete an end-of-season review, formal or informal e.g. a chat with parents/ carers and the child?</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you move players into different teams based on their ability/progression?</li> </ul>					
<b>CLUB COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What’s the primary method for communicating with parents e.g. Text/email and the commitment to open and transparent communications with their child (see <i>Appendix 3</i>)</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The club’s commitment to safe use of social media – expectations of club officials, players and parents across various platforms used (see <i>Guidance Notes 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3</i> via <a href="http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory">http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory</a>)</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is and is not shared on your club website/ Facebook page e.g. details about team selection, training sessions, matches/cancellations</li> </ul>					
<b>SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND HOLIDAY PROGRAMMES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give a brief overview of types of non-football activity e.g. end of season BBQ, awards dinner, tours, bowling</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you run events be clear about the clubs commitment to having appropriate safeguards in place (see <i>Appendix 4</i>)</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you regularly offer activities during the school holidays?</li> </ul>					

**TABLE 1: CONTINUED**

CLUB INFORMATION	DETAILS TO CONSIDER	WHERE THIS INFORMATION IS LOCATED PLEASE COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE				
		CLUB WEBSITE	CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE	WELCOME LETTER OR LEAFLET	PARENT & CARER MEETING	ACTION REQUIRED
<b>YOUR COMMITMENT TO US</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be clear about the club's stance on players requirement at training</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you require player(s) and parents to sign up and adhere to the Respect codes of conduct then be clear and consistent about this</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requirement for parents/carers to communicate effectively e.g. notifying the team coach when their child is unable to play/train</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the club's 'joining' process is an acknowledgment by both parties re what's being offered and what's expected by the club</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring players have appropriate kit, especially in poor weather</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring players are on time for training/ matches and are picked up on time</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring you and your child comply with the current Government Covid-19 guidance</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteering expectations of parents e.g. helping set up nets, serve refreshments</li> </ul>					
<b>HOW TO JOIN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be clear if you offer a specific number of free 'taster sessions'</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State the cost per child per season; is this an upfront cost or can it be paid in monthly instalments? What does this fee cover, is it just training and matches and training kit and match day kit needs to be brought separately?</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there any reduced rates for players if you volunteer at the club or for family membership?</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share the support you offer for low-income families</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share the process for joining e.g. who they need to speak with, what form(s) they need to complete etc</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you have a waiting list, if so how does this work?</li> </ul>					

## TABLE 2 – ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS		WHERE THIS INFORMATION IS LOCATED PLEASE COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE				
		CLUB WEBSITE	CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE	WELCOME LETTER OR LEAFLET	PARENT & CARER MEETING	ACTION REQUIRED
<b>BRIEF CLUB HISTORY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on key highlights</li> </ul>					
<b>VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure you advertise current vacancies</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure you provide an induction and support available for volunteers</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide role profiles for recognised positions and expected time commitment</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be clear that you're always looking for volunteer skill sets, including areas you may not have considered so parents/carers feel encouraged to offer their help</li> </ul>					
<b>RECENT SUCCESSES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you progressed in the league placings?</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did you have success in the County Cup?</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you got permission for renovations to your changing rooms?</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you secured funding for a key project?</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you started running disability teams?</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you partnered with another club to access additional football formats?</li> </ul>					
<b>BENEFITS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to player insurance</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support from CFA Designated Safeguarding Officer; provide their contact details</li> </ul>					



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# APPENDIX 1

## USER AGREEMENTS

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### EXAMPLE A

### Football Club Parent/Carer Agreement

I confirm that I have been provided with the following information about Football Club:

- Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures; including the whistleblowing policy, anti-bullying policy and equality policy
- The Club's Welfare Officer; their role and contact information
- Who will be coaching my child and their contact information
- Training venue(s), times, facilities and kit requirements
- How I will be contacted by the club
- The Club's website/Social media pages
- The Club's Codes of Conduct
- Covid-19 measures
- Selection criteria

I accept that it is my responsibility to familiarise myself with all of the information provided by **Football Club** and agree to sign up and adhere to the club Parent/Carer Code of Conduct. I understand that everyone working to provide football in a fun and safe environment at **Football Club** is a volunteer who gives their time freely.

Name:

Signed:

Relationship to child:

Date:

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**EXAMPLE B****Football Club Parent/Carer Agreement**

As a member of **Football Club** I confirm I have been provided with the necessary information for my child to participate and I am clear about who will be coaching my child, who the Club Welfare Officer is and how to make a complaint or report a concern about a child.

I understand what is expected of my child and myself as members of **Football Club** and have signed up to and agree to adhere to the Club's Code of Conduct. I recognise that everyone working to provide football in a fun and safe environment at **Football Club** is a volunteer who gives their time freely.

**Name:**

**Signed:**

**Relationship to child:**

**Date:**

# APPENDIX 2

## CLUB COMMUNICATIONS

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We will require your contact details as the parent(s)/carer(s) ensuring these are accessible in the case of an emergency and commit to an open and transparent communications about club activity relevant to you and your child. It's your responsibility to ensure your contact details are up to date.

We recognise that whatever way we communicate with your child the safeguarding principles remain the same. Retaining boundaries is just as important online as it is offline. Our club officials are required to communicate appropriately (about relevant football related matters) using open and transparent communications respectfully whether face to face or online.

**Please make use of the club's website/social media page(s) for general information.**

### **WE WILL:**

- Provide you with the relevant club officials contact details – always providing those of our Club Welfare Officer
- Ask for your signed consent before communicating digitally with your child for the purpose of; venue changes, kit required, changes to meeting or collection times or venues and or cancellations
- Only use group texts, emails or messenger apps and always copy either you as parent/ carer or the designated member of the club to all communications with your child.

### **OUR CLUB OFFICIALS SHOULD NOT:**

- Use language that is directly (or could be misinterpreted as being) racist, sexist, derogatory, threatening, abusive or sexualised in tone.
- Share pictures, jokes or other items of a personal nature.
- Respond to digital communications from children other than those directly related to club matters.

### **UNLESS A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON IS A DIRECT RELATION, OUR CLUB OFFICIALS SHOULD NOT:**

- Accept as a friend, players or referees under the age of 18 on social networking sites of which they are members;
- Share their own personal social networking sites with children or young people involved in youth football;
- Make contact with children or young people known through football outside of the football context on social networking sites;
- Use internet or web-based communications to send personal messages of a non-football nature to a child or young person;
- Engage in any personal communications, 'banter' or comments.

### **YOU SHOULD:**

- Ensure social media privacy and security settings are appropriate for your child's use;
- Kept these settings up to date by reviewing guidance from the provider and or specialists such as Childnet or NSPCC.

# APPENDIX 3

## RUNNING EVENTS

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Club events always have oversight from the clubs committee and this includes following the Governments guidance on Covid-19 precautions and having appropriate safeguards in place for the event. There may be a sub-committee specifically responsible for the event planning and delivery who report directly into the main club committee. There will always be an event leader you can contact for information.

### **THE FOLLOWING ISSUES ARE CONSIDERED (WHERE APPROPRIATE):**

- The Governments Covid-19 guidance
- Parent/carer permission;
- Suitable staffing (including ratio of adult to child);
- Parent/carer attendance;
- Venue including accessibility, changing facilities and toilets;
- Medical needs and any additional needs your child may have (there will always be a qualified first aider available);
- Dietary requirements;
- Religious requirements;
- Travel;
- Overnight accommodation – please note club officials are not permitted to share rooms with children;
- Emergency contact arrangements;
- Risk assessment;
- Relevant insurance.

**Please note** this is not an exhaustive list; if you would like more information about how we plan for events at the club and when travelling away for day trips and overnight trips please contact the Club Welfare Officer add contact details here .



**FOR ALL**

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