

Setting Up A Youth Club Guide 2024/25



Our quick guide will give you a few things you need to consider. Things can get a bit confusing at times as some processes need to be followed in a certain way. If you have questions beyond this guide, then we've added some contacts for you to reach out to along the way!

Where do we start?

Before you even start the process of setting up a club, you'll need to think about the following:

- Do you have enough players for a team that will be committed?
- Do you have somewhere to play your home fixtures and train throughout the winter?
- Do you have two people that are willing to manage the administration side of running a club including working with Kent FA, managing finances, and creating policies?
- Do you have two people that are willing to manage the team and invest time in obtaining the relevant qualifications?
- Are you committed to safeguarding young players and creating the right environment to safeguard all?
- Have you decided on a club name?

Once you are able to answer yes to all of the above, you can start on your journey to your club kicking off for the first time!

When do we need to start thinking about things?

The traditional season generally starts around the first or second week in September, so we will work backwards from there:

January to May - This is a great time to start preparing for the forthcoming season. You may wish to consider the following:

- Advertising for players
- Research and apply to the leagues you wish to enter. Please [click here](#) for a list of Kent FA affiliated leagues. Applications for leagues will close around mid-May, so it is important to get in touch with them before this.
- Obtaining a suitable venue
- Set up and review club policies and procedures.
- Make yourself aware of the safeguarding requirements for youth football and book onto the necessary courses.

June – Affiliation to Kent FA for the forthcoming season opens.

1st July – The new football season officially begins. If you have completed your affiliation prior to this, then it will be on the 1st July that this becomes active. It will last until the 30th June the following year.

July-August – Concentrate on working hard to give the players the best experience. This is a good time for coaches to also educate themselves by accessing any courses that Kent FA are running. Player registration also opens for the forthcoming season within the Club Portal.

Affiliation to Kent FA

Each year, all clubs have to re-affiliate to Kent FA to be able to play in affiliated football. There is no fixed date that this opens, but it is usually the start of June.

To affiliate as a new club, the first step is to [click here](#) and complete the New Club Request form. Once complete this will allow us to create your club on our online platform for football administration and will allow you to complete your affiliation online.

As part of this affiliation, you will be required to inform us of who will be involved at the club, have the option to either upload or purchase the clubs Public Liability Insurance and teams Personal Accident Insurances and have the opportunity to enter Kent FA County Cups. It is available 24 hours a day and you can save your progress and return to it at any point.

Roles at the club

There are four key roles that will need to be fulfilled within a Youth Club. Importantly, these can be held by the same person, but we do not encourage this as it is not always sustainable.

[Click here](#) to get detailed guidance on many different roles that you may look to appoint at the club.

The four roles mentioned below will all need to complete the online Safeguarding for Committee Members course that can be accessed by [clicking here](#)

Chairperson

Chair the committee meetings and AGM, assist the secretary to produce the agendas and head the committee in making decisions for the benefit of the whole club including disciplinary matters.

Main responsibilities:

- Chair committee meetings/AGM
- Agree monthly agenda for committee meetings and the AGM.
- Lead on decision making that will be for the benefit of the club.

Secretary

This role is the first point of contact at the club for any external enquires and the person that Kent FA will send all our communication to, so it is pivotal in making the club run smoothly. It is important the club secretary regularly accesses their emails and logs into the FA system for key updates, messages, and information.

Main responsibilities:

- Attending league meetings
- Affiliating the club to the County FA and league(s)
- Registering players to the league(s)
- Organising the club AGM and other club meetings
- Dealing with discipline cases

Treasurer

The main purpose of this role is to look after the finances of the club.

Main responsibilities:

- Collecting all money due to the organisation
- Paying the bills and recording information
- Keeping up-to-date records of all financial transactions
- Ensuring that funds are spent properly.
- Reporting regularly to the committee on the financial position and presenting a year-end financial report to the AGM

Welfare Officer (Youth)

The importance of this role cannot be underestimated. This person is not just the first point of contact for any safeguarding issues at the club, but should influence a safe, fun, and inclusive environment across the game.

It is important to note that this role requires the following to be completed and maintained.

[Online Safeguarding for Committee Members Course](#) – FREE 45 minutes.

[Online Safeguarding Childrens Course](#) - £30 2 Hours.

[Online Welfare Officer Course](#) - £25 2 Hours.

In date FA Enhanced DBS Check – Please contact safeguarding@kentfa.com if you need to obtain this.

As well as the above, Kent FA recommends the following is also completed.

[Player Welfare Course](#) – FREE 45 Minutes.

Main Responsibilities:

- Liaising with the County FA Safeguarding team, the league welfare officer, other club welfare officers and at times, external organisations that may include the police, NSPCC, Social Services or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).
- Ensure relevant policies are in place and followed.
- Ensure the responsibilities of the role are diligently undertaking, including reporting concerns about safeguarding issues.
- Monitor and log patterns of poor practice and create action plans to address these.
- Ensuring everyone who is required to have an FA DBS check does one keeps it in date.
- Ensuring where required the FA Safeguarding Children Course is completed by team officials.

What safeguards do we need to think about?

Keeping our young players safe is at the absolute heart of what we want from our game. It is important that your club has the relevant policies and procedures in place.


You can find many of the templates that you will need by [clicking here](#)

What DBS' do we need in place?

Firstly, your welfare officer needs to have an in-date FA DBS and be in a position to do checks for your club. This process can be started by contacting safeguarding@kentfa.com

Once your welfare officer is up and running, they will be able to initiate checks for those in your club that need it.

Safeguarding requirements for Youth Teams.

| Roles | SAFEGUARDING REQUIREMENTS FOR CLUBS WITH YOUTH TEAMS | | | |  ENGLAND FOOTBALL |
|--|---|------------------------------|---|------------------------|---|
| | FA DBS Check | Safeguarding Children Course | Safeguarding for Committee Members Course | Welfare Officer Course | First Aid Course |
| Club Secretary | | ● Recommended | ● Mandatory | | |
| Club Chair | | ● Recommended | ● Mandatory | | |
| Club Treasurer | | ● Recommended | ● Mandatory | | |
| Club Welfare Officer (Including Assistants) | ● Mandatory | ● Mandatory | ● Mandatory | ● Mandatory | |
| Other Committee Roles | | ● Recommended | ● Recommended | | |
| Team Manager/Coach (Including Assistants) | ● Mandatory | ● Mandatory | | | <small>(If England Football Accredited, one per team).</small> ○ Mandatory Otherwise Recommended |
| Team Medic/First Aider (Including Assistants) | ● Mandatory | ● Mandatory | | | ● Recommended |

Only teams that have compliant team officials would be able to affiliate. Please note that whilst we expect FA DBS applications to be completed within 4-6 weeks of application, there are times where an application can take longer. We encourage you to factor this in when affiliating.

What leagues are available?

We have a wide variety of leagues across the county. The below table will help you identify appropriate leagues. You can find more information on their websites but it is important to remember that many leagues will close applications for the forthcoming season around mid-May.

| League | U7 | U8 | U9 | U10 | U11 | U12 | U13 | U14 | U15 | U16 | U18 |
|--|--------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Ashford And District Youth League | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM |
| East Kent Youth League | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT PM | SAT PM | SUN PM | SUN PM | SUN PM | SUN PM | SUN PM | SUN PM | SUN PM |
| Faversham & District Youth Football League | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | | |
| Kent Girls/Ladies Football League | | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN |
| Kent Disability Football League | | Monthly Festivals Held on a Sunday Morning | | | | | | | | | |
| Kent Youth League | | | | | | | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN |
| Maidstone Invicta Primary League | SAT AM | SAT AM | SAT AM | SUN AM | SUN AM | | | | | | |
| Express Cabs Maidstone Youth Football League | | | | | | SUN AM | SUN AM | SUN AM | SUN PM | | |
| Maidstone Minor Football League | | | | | | | | | | SUN PM | SUN PM |
| Medway District Youth League | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN |
| North Kent Youth League | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | SUN | | | | | |

Kent Youth League often offers a more advanced standard of football than other youth leagues.

Kent Disability League runs at a central venue once a month, slightly different to most other leagues.

How about finances?

The sustainability of a club relies heavily on ensuring club's finances are in order.

With regards to expenditure, it is important to consider the following:

- Kent FA Affiliation fees including insurances.
- League entry fees. This will vary depending on the league.
- Purchasing balls, cones, nets etc.
- Purchasing Kit. Will you be buying training tops or jackets?
- Facility Hire. Do they require upfront payment for training?
- Referees. The league set these fees, so find out how much they are so you can budget.
- Fines. Unfortunately, it'll be sensible to have a little left over to pay any fines incurred.

Can you make use of the following income sources?

- Subscriptions – These must strike the balance between being affordable for parent but enough to cover expenditure
- Grants – We often have grants available to support the creation of new teams, you can view these [here](#)
- Fundraising
- Sponsorship

I've heard about England Football Accreditation for clubs, what is it?

In 2021, England Football Accreditation succeeded the FA Charter Standard Programme. This new accreditation system is designed to elevate the standards of football by fostering the growth of clubs and leagues, acknowledging their dedication, excellence, and accomplishments. It seeks to commend clubs and leagues that contribute to enhancing football within their respective communities.

Through England Football Accreditation, clubs and leagues are empowered to cultivate enriching experiences and conducive environments where players, coaches, officials, referees, volunteers, and spectators can flourish.

Clubs can apply for England Football Accreditation at any time once affiliated and all the criteria are in place.

To find out ore about England Football Accreditation and the criteria, [click here](#) or contact development@kentfa.com



And lastly, what format of football will we be playing?

The FA have some key recommendations for how our youth game is played. This is simply for the benefit of our young players. You'll need to consider things like:

- How many players per side.
- How long each half lasts.
- The maximum playing time a player can play in one day.
- What are the key learnings at each age group.

This handy guide below should help with these questions!

Key recommendations for the game

Your at-a-glance guide to junior football

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|
|  U7/8s |  U9/10s |  U11/12s |  U13/14s |  U15/16s |  U17/18s |
|  Format: 5 v 5 |  Format: 7 v 7 |  Format: 9 v 9 |  Format: 11 v 11 |  Format: 11 v 11 |  Format: 11 v 11 |
|  Match length: 20 mins E/W |  Match length: 25 mins E/W |  Match length: 30 mins E/W |  Match length: 35 mins E/W |  Match length: 40 mins E/W |  Match length: 45 mins E/W |
|  Player game time: 40 mins/day, 60 mins/comp |  Player game time: 60 mins/day, 90 mins/comp |  Player game time: 80 mins/day, 120 mins/comp |  Player game time: 100 mins/day, 150 mins/comp |  Player game time: 100 mins/day, 150 mins/comp |  Player game time: 120 mins/day, 180 mins/comp |
|  Pitch size: 40yd x 30yd |  Pitch size: 60yd x 40yd |  Pitch size: 80yd x 50yd |  Pitch size: 100yd x 60yd |  Pitch size: 110yd x 70yd |  Pitch size: 110yd x 70yd |
|  Ball size: 3 |  Ball size: 3 for U9s, 4 for U10s |  Ball size: 4 |  Ball size: 4 |  Ball size: 5 |  Ball size: 5 |
|  Goal size: 12ft x 6ft |  Goal size: 12ft x 6ft |  Goal size: 16ft x 7ft |  Goal size: 21ft x 7ft |  Goal size: 24ft x 8ft |  Goal size: 24ft x 8ft |
|  COMPETITIONS Two weeks of trophy events, three times a season |  COMPETITIONS Four weeks of trophy events, three times a season |  COMPETITIONS Six weeks of trophy events, three times a season. U12s as U13/14s |  COMPETITIONS Any varieties including one season-long league table |  COMPETITIONS any varieties including one season-long league table |  COMPETITIONS any varieties including one season-long league table |
|  KEY LEARNINGS – having fun – playing with my friends |  KEY LEARNINGS – acquiring skills – trying my best |  KEY LEARNINGS – being part of a team – game play |  KEY LEARNINGS – taking responsibility – positional awareness |  KEY LEARNINGS – in-game decisions – tactical appreciation |  KEY LEARNINGS – in-game decisions – tactical appreciation |