

# The Football Association Safeguarding Children Best Practice Guidelines



## Appointing a Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

[TheFA.com/FootballSafe](https://www.thefa.com/footballsafe)

**It is essential that the CWO is perceived as being approachable, having a child-centred approach and having the ability to maintain this perspective when carrying out their role.**

### Where to start

- Make it known amongst all club members, players, parents and carers that the club is seeking to appoint a CWO and provide the relevant information about this role
- Establish whether anyone involved with your club has any professional safeguarding children expertise. You may have a committee member or parent who is, or was, a police officer, teacher or social worker who might be willing to take on the role.

### Ideally

- Get the club chairperson and committee members to understand the need and benefits of appointing a CWO and get their support for the idea
- Involve the club chairperson and committee members. In suggesting possible candidates with the potential to take on this role
- Obtain and make it clear to prospective applicants that the CWO will have the support and backing of the club's committee
- Establish the CWO post on the club committee as a permanent position

### The CWO role as recommended by The FA

- To know who the County Football Association (CFA) Child Protection Officer (CPO) is and how to contact them
- To refer any club safeguarding children or poor practice concerns to the CFA CPO

- To seek advice from The FA/NSPCC Helpline if the CFA CPO is unavailable or in circumstances of safeguarding children urgency
- To seek advice from local Social Services or the Police in an emergency
- To encourage the club to discuss and implement The FA's Safeguarding Children Policy
- To encourage the club to utilise The FA's Safeguarding Children Guidelines on recruiting volunteers and always requesting and following up references
- To encourage the club to discuss and implement The FA's Safeguarding Children Guidelines on the Use of Images and Organising Travel, Trips and Tournaments
- To advocate that CRB Disclosures are to be used as part of the club's safeguarding initiatives and encourage the club to make use of The FA CRB Unit
- To support the club in identifying those who require a CRB Disclosure
- To promote, support and encourage the benefits of the Safeguarding Children Education and Awareness Programme.

### What next

- Before appointing your CWO, ensure that you have considered their appropriateness for this role by checking them against The FA's Safeguarding Children Fit and Proper Person Checklist
- Follow the appointment of volunteers guidance as provided by The FA on [www.FootballSafe@TheFA.com](mailto:www.FootballSafe@TheFA.com) when appointing the CWO

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- Ensure all club members know who the newly appointed CWO is and what their role is.

### **Safeguarding Children Fit and Proper Person Checklist**

#### **Essential**

- Willing and able to provide relevant references
- Willing to update skills and knowledge
- Previous experience of working with children
- Knowledge of, and positive attitudes to, equal opportunities
- Commitment to treat all children as individuals and with equal concern
- Physical health – appropriate to carry out tasks
- Mental stability, integrity and flexibility
- Completion of The FA CRB process and acceptance by The FA of the outcome (Many people with a history of offending will still be considered as appropriate people to work with, and care for, children. The FA CRB Unit or Safeguarding Children website can advise on whether the current methods for checking this process have been satisfactorily completed)
- Attendance at an FA Safeguarding Children Workshop.

#### **Desirable**

- Knowledge of safeguarding children issues\*
- Knowledge of safeguarding children legislation (as appropriate)\*
- Relevant football knowledge and understanding\*.

- \* If an interested individual does not currently have knowledge of safeguarding children issues or safeguarding children legislation this can be addressed initially by The FA's Safeguarding Children Workshop.

**If any person is considered not to be a fit and proper person to work with children, his or her application should be refused.**