

The FA Charter Standard League Programme

Role of the Youth League Welfare Officer



Get **into** Football



The FA Charter Standard League Programme

Role of the Youth League Welfare Officer

Charter Standard is the FAs quality standard across football and for youth football this includes Safeguarding Children as a priority element. As such, all Youth Leagues must have a nominated Welfare Officer.

In order to assist you with this role we have provided information on:

1. The role of the Youth League Welfare Officer
2. Help and support for you
3. How to make sure everyone knows who you are
4. How to ensure safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility
5. Training requirements for this role
6. Your 5 point checklist

As a Charter Standard League Youth League Welfare Officer (YLWO) you have the chance to help to make a real difference. The FAs Charter Standard League Award is a mark of quality and as such tells everyone from league official to player to parent to club official to coach and referee involved, that a certain standard of organisation and behaviour exists within your league.

We very much hope that you have taken on board The FAs **Respect** programme as this is all about creating a fun and safe environment and its core principles will support you in your role. If you have not yet got involved with **Respect**, then please find out more by visiting www.TheFA.com/Respect.

1. The role of the Charter Standard YLWO

Your two key responsibilities are:

1.1. To be clear about the leagues responsibilities when running activities for children and young people. This involves:

- Ensuring these responsibilities are well understood by others
- Supporting clubs to achieve the safeguarding elements of Charter Standard
- Working with your CFA Welfare Officer
- Promoting The FAs **Respect** programme and helping to develop best-practice processes

1.2. To help league and club personnel understand what their 'duty of care' towards children and young people actually means and entails on a day-to-day basis, working closely with the Club Welfare Officers to achieve this.

In order to carry out your responsibilities effectively you need to...

a.) Promote and Support by;

- Knowing who your CFA Welfare Officer is and how to contact them
- Knowing who every Club Welfare Officer (CWO) is and how to contact them
- Encouraging all CWO to complete The FA's Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officers Workshops
- Knowing why certain roles require an Enhanced CRB check and how The FA CRB process works
- Knowing what the **Respect** programme requires of everyone
- Highlighting the benefits of the Safeguarding Children education programme for club officials and parents

b.) Monitoring;

- All your clubs have a Safeguarding Children Policy and an anti bullying policy
- Buy-in to the **Respect** programme (especially the distribution of codes of conduct and adherence to these)
- Repeated incidents of poor behaviour and liaising with your CFA Welfare Officer about these
- Individual clubs use of The FAs Safeguarding Children best practice guidelines (e.g. Responsible Recruitment, Travel, Trips and Tournaments, Anti-bullying policy)
- That all CWO are assisting those in their clubs who require a CRB check to do so via The FA CRB Unit



2. Help and support for you

Contact your CFA Welfare Officer

Contact your County FA Welfare Officer as they will be able to give you further insight to this role and possibly direct you to someone who is currently holding that position locally who you can chat with. If you are unable to contact your CFA Welfare Officer and feel the need to get some feedback you can always email footballsaf@TheFA.com or if you have enquiries to do specifically with the CRB process you can telephone: 0845 210 8080 or email: crb@TheFA.com

Visit www.TheFA.com/Footballsaf

This is The FA homepage for all safeguarding children information and guidance. You will find downloadable policies and procedures as well as best practice guidance.

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

The FAs Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures can be viewed by visiting www.TheFA.com/Footballsaf clicking on 'Downloads' under the Policy and Procedures section and clicking on Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football. This policy has been written specifically for grassroots football. It provides The FAs Child Protection Policy statement and key principles as well as information on;

- Responsible Recruitment
- Promoting best practice
- Poor Practice and Abuse
- Responsibility for Safeguarding in Football
- Responding to Concerns, Allegations and Disclosures

This policy document is given to every welfare officer who attends the Welfare Officers Workshop - this is mandatory for you as a Charter Standard Youth League Welfare Officer. More information on The FAs Safeguarding Education Programme is detailed below.

Safeguarding Children Education Programme

Hopefully you will already have completed The FAs Safeguarding Children Workshop (formerly known as Child protection and best practice). If you haven't, contact your CFA Welfare Officer immediately to get onto one of these workshops - this is a sound and engaging introduction to safeguarding in football and a must for every welfare officer.

Once you've completed this workshop get yourself booked onto a Welfare Officer Workshop. This three hour workshop builds on what you will have covered in the safeguarding children workshop and provides you with the necessary tools to carry out your role as YLWO. It makes helpful use of the Policy and Procedures and explores what leagues and clubs need to have in place to demonstrate best practice in relation to safeguarding children. It looks at the welfare officer role and what help and support is there to assist you.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

CWOs new to the role have a lot of similar questions about what skills the role requires and what is expected of them. Go to www.TheFA.com/Footballsaf and click on 'Welfare Officer FAQs' under the Welfare Officer section.

3. Make sure everyone knows who you are

Ensuring you are on the committee

This is a good start point and this will allow safeguarding/**Respect** to be on the agenda of committee meetings which is really important. Make sure your name is included in your league handbook and your contact details (think about what you are willing to have made public).

Arrange to meet

Or initially simply contact your CWOs, so they know who you are and what your role is in supporting them. Arranging a meeting with CWOs at least once a season will allow you to build up a supportive network, share ideas, agree issues that need tackling and offering each other solutions. You might like to ask your CFA Welfare Officer if they can attend a meeting. Find out when league news letters or other communications are sent to clubs - can you put some information into this about your role, dates for CWO meetings or league best practice guidance?

Remember a good YLWO is someone who;

- Always puts children's welfare first
- Is a good communicator
- Has a common-sense approach
- Understands confidentiality
- Is willing to learn and seek advice
- Is over the age of 18

As we all know, there have been some tragic cases resulting from the wrong type of people working with children, both in wider society and within football. Making sure everyone knows how to report concerns about a child's welfare is essential. Knowing how to deal with poor practice issues is also vital. Lots can be done very simply - but football needs the support of Welfare Officers. Working with your CWOs can make a real difference.

4. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility

Working together

If you are going to be successful in your role you need to work together with the members of your committee and your CWOs, helping them to understand what your role is and what safeguarding children really means.

The FA's Safeguarding Children strategy is underpinned by the principle that Safeguarding Children is everyone's responsibility. The appointment of a welfare officer in all clubs and leagues with youth teams is a fundamental part of this strategy which has three main elements:

- Getting only the right people involved
- Creating a safe environment
- Promoting clear systems to deal with any concerns

5. Training requirements for this role

To become a Charter Standard YLWO you need to have:

- An accepted Enhanced CRB check via The FA CRB Unit
- Completed The FA Safeguarding Children Workshop (formerly known as Child protection and best practice)
- Completed The FAs Welfare Officers Workshop
- Be willing to attend at least one information/update welfare officer network session organised by your CFA Welfare Officer

6. Your 5 point checklist

1. Make sure you have an Enhanced FA CRB check.
For more information either contact your CFA Welfare Officer or email crb@TheFA.com
2. Attend The FA Safeguarding Children Workshop if you haven't done so already
3. Attend The FA Welfare Officer Workshop
4. Contact your CFA Welfare Officer
5. Contact the CWOs registered in your league

