



GUIDANCE NOTES NO:

1.7

ABUSE OF TRUST

FOR CLUBS

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FOR ALL

ABUSE OF TRUST

Everyone who works or volunteers with children is responsible and accountable for the way in which they behave towards them. Every child has a right to be treated with respect and dignity.

Harming or abusing a child is never acceptable under any circumstances and must be reported to the relevant statutory agency, in line with The FAs reporting procedures. Poor practice is unacceptable in football and must be treated seriously with appropriate actions taken.

It's expected that all adult-child relationships maintain clear and appropriate boundaries at all times, are supportive, positive and aimed at improving the young person's skills, development and progress. The adult-child relationships should all focus on the respective activity/event.

It is unlawful for someone in a Position of Trust (Sexual Offences Act, 2003) to engage in sexual activity with a child in their care, including where a child is over the age of consent (16 or over). The sexual offences act is currently limited to certain regulated settings and positions. These include education and care settings, clinics, hospitals,

voluntary children's homes, residential family centres and criminal justice settings.

Whilst sport, including football, is not currently captured under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, Affiliated English Football applies the principle of this Act. This is underpinned by our safeguarding regulations, rules and policies. As such the expression "position of trust" shall mean any position where an individual is in a relationship of trust with any person with responsibility and / or authority in relation to that person, and shall include without limitation those who care for, advise, supervise, train, coach, teach, manage, tutor, mentor, assess, develop, guide, treat or provide therapy to children and young people within Affiliated English Football.

No intimate or sexual relationship should take place while the member of staff or volunteer is in a position of trust with a child. In addition, inappropriate, intimate or sexual relationships between an adult and a child aged 16 and 17 may be unlawful, irrespective of gender and sexual orientation.

Therefore, if you engage in an intimate or sexual relationship with a young player it is a breach of The Football Association

Regulations and as such may result in disciplinary action and where appropriate a referral will be made to the statutory agencies, including the Police, and applicable Local Authorities bodies, for example, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Where a position of trust exists, it does not make any difference whether or not the relationship is consensual. The imbalance of power makes it an abuse of the position of trust.



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Taking positive action

- ✓ Maintain a relationship with all participants that are appropriate to your role and reflects positively on the organisation for whom you work or volunteer.
 - ✓ As someone in a position of authority you should not seek or engage in sexual activity or sexualised communication with any under-18s via social media including 16/17-year-olds for whom you are responsible.
 - ✓ If you think a young person's behaviour indicates they are seeking to develop or engage in an inappropriate relationship with you, immediately bring this to the attention of your Designated Safeguarding Officer or line manager. Be careful not to respond to the young person in any way that could be interpreted as encouraging them. Make a written record of your concerns and relevant details.
- ✓ If you suspect an individual with a specified role in football is abusing a position of trust, or may abuse, you should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Make a written record of your concerns and relevant details.
 - ✓ If you feel your concern has not been dealt with appropriately, refer the matter directly to The FA Safeguarding Team via **0800 083 5902** or via email Safeguarding@TheFA.com
 - ✓ Alternatively, you can seek advice from the 24-hour NSPCC Helpline – **0808 800 5000**





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