

Responsible recruitment of volunteers and staff

English Schools' Football wouldn't be able to function without the many thousands of volunteers involved in Associations.

Ensuring that we encourage those individuals that are suitable for the roles schools' football has to offer is essential. Remember that a friendly, well run Association is more likely to be successful in encouraging additional volunteers.

However, we mustn't lose sight of the fact that anyone may have the potential to abuse children and young people. Therefore all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people. Sound recruitment and selection procedures will help to screen out those who are not suitable to work in football.

Planning and advertising

- Draw up a role profile which highlights key responsibilities of the role
- Decide upon the skills and experience that an individual will need
- Draw up a person specification
- Identify the aims of the Association
- Reflect the Association's positive stance on child protection and equal opportunities
- Use application forms to collect information on each applicant, they don't need to be complex but are needed to collect personal details
- Ensure that more than one official looks at each application form
- Ask for identification documents to confirm the identity of the applicant, e.g. passport or driving licence

Interviewing

- Meet with all applicants prior to any recruitment decisions being made.

Even if you have only one candidate in mind, it is important that the committee officials meet with the applicant to discuss the role and ensure they are made aware of the Association's ethos and ask any questions.

- Ensure more than one official is present and information is gathered

The meeting/interview will enable the Association committee to explore further the information provided in the application form. The questions to be asked should be prepared in advance and should provide the applicant with the opportunity to recount previous experiences and give examples of how they have or would handle situations.

It's important to elicit information regarding an applicant's technical capabilities and is also necessary to explore their attitudes and commitment to child welfare.

Listed below are examples of questions that could be used to discover this information:

- Tell us about any previous experience you have working with children or young people
- Give a child related scenario and ask the applicant what they would do e.g. 'it's a winter evening and the training sessions finished. A parent has not arrived to pick up their child – what would you do?'

The applicant would be expected to say they would stay with the child and contact the parents to find out where they were

- Is there anything we should know that could affect your suitability to work with children or young people?

References

Always request at least two references from individuals who are not related to the applicant. One reference should be associated with the applicant's place of work (if they are a teacher, contact the school and try and ensure the applicant has the support of their head teacher in taking on the role.) and if the individual is involved in a grassroots club, it is a good idea to contact them for a reference.

References should be followed up prior to any offer of appointment being made. If the references raise any concerns you are advised to contact Sarah DaCosta on 07960 500723 or sarah.dacosta@schoolsfa.com

Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly CRB) disclosures

All individuals involved in coaching or managing Association representative teams must undergo an FA DBS check. This is a requirement of ESFA affiliation and includes members of teaching profession as well as AOTT's.

DBS checks are another tool in the recruitment procedure. A DBS Enhanced Disclosure tells The FA about a person's recorded offences. It can indicate that a person is not suitable to work with children, for example if they have a history of sexual offending. It may also tell The FA that further investigations are required, for example if the person has a history of drug dealing or racist offending. The FA will take into account the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and only consider offences which are relevant to the care, supervision and training of children.

The FA is not allowed to tell the Association about the actual offending and so applicants can be assured of confidentiality. The FA will however tell the Association whether or not the person is considered suitable to work with children.

Applications for DBS checks should be passed to Martin Duffield. Further information about this process can be obtained from martin.duffield@schoolsfa.com or by looking at the ESFA website.

If an applicant claims to already have an FA CRB Unit Enhanced Disclosure the Association should seek advice from Martin on how to proceed.

Disclosures are now portable and Associations should seek advice from Martin Duffield on the procedures and costs involved.

Appointing staff and volunteers

Associations should consider all the information they receive via the application form, confirmation of identity, the outcome of the take up of references and The FA DBS Enhanced Disclosure. This information should then be considered alongside the outcome of the meeting/interview to make an informed decision as to whether or not to accept the applicant into their club.

Post appointment decisions

It is important that once a new volunteer has been recruited follow up action is taken:

- Any qualifications should be substantiated e.g. requesting photocopies of coaching certificates
- New volunteers are made aware and sign up to the club's Safeguarding Children policy and procedures, best practice guidelines and codes of conduct
- Training needs are established and actioned
- The roles and responsibilities of the new volunteer are signed up to
- A period of supervision/observation or mentoring is used to support the new volunteer
- The FA's Safeguarding Children Workshop is completed.

For further information about ESFA's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures contact martin.duffield@schoolsfa.com or sarah.dacosta@schoolsfa.com