



Association Rules

Season 2016-2017

***Please note; the ESFA handbook was printed prior to the SGM/AGM and therefore, does not contain Association Rule changes that may be approved at those meetings. Any such changes will be circulated to Membership (including schools in national competitions) in September and updated copy of the Association Rules and Competition Rules will be published on the ESFA website.**

ENGLISH SCHOOLS' FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, KG

GENERAL RULES**1. NAME OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The Association shall be called "ENGLISH SCHOOLS' FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION", and be affiliated to The Football Association Limited.

2. OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The objects of the Association shall be:

- (a) The mental, moral and physical development and improvement of schoolchildren and students up to twenty years' of age through the medium of Association Football.
- (b) To help Teachers' Charities and such other charitable purposes to such an extent as shall be recommended to the Trustees by the Annual General Meeting.

3. MEMBERSHIP, VOTING POWERS AND AFFILIATION FEES**(a) MEMBERSHIP**

- (i) Membership of the Association shall be open to Schools' Football Associations in England, subject to the approval of Council. Membership to the Association shall only be confirmed upon those Local District and County Schools' Football Associations who confirm their agreement to take part in a reciprocal disciplinary agreement with their County Football Associations. Local District Associations must communicate any disciplinary matters with their County Schools' Football Association.
- (ii) Local District Associations shall affiliate to their respective County Schools' Association and to the English Schools' FA. Affiliated County SFAs may only take in to affiliated membership those local SFAs already in membership with the English Schools' FA.
- (iii) Schools and colleges will automatically be affiliated to their County Schools' FA. They must also affiliate to their Local District Schools' FA (where one catering for the age group(s) of their pupils exists. Failure to do this would invalidate their County SFA & English Schools' FA affiliation).
- (iv) Where no Local Schools' Football Association is in existence and it is not practical for one to be formed, individual schools will be allowed to seek affiliated membership to their respective County Schools' Football Association for a period no longer than one season, during which time affiliation to a Local Association should be arranged. The period of one year may only be extended with the approval of the local Council Member(s), who will review the situation annually.
- (v) Where a dispute exists over any individual school seeking affiliated membership with a Local Schools' Football Association, subject to the approval of Council, such schools will be allowed to seek affiliated membership to their respective County Schools' Football Association, for a period of no longer than one season, during which time the dispute must be dealt with.
- (vi) **Life Membership**
A Member of Council who has served as Chairman of the Association, shall be awarded Life Membership on retirement from Council. Nominations for life membership may also be submitted by member associations in respect of a person who has given outstanding service at

local, county and/or regional level leading to national level. Any submission must be received by the Chief Executive on or before 31 January in any playing season, for consideration by Council at its next meeting.

(vii) **Honorary Life Members**

Honorary Life Membership of the Association may be conferred upon individuals, who are not members of a Local or County Association, who have served the Association with distinction and credit. Such nominations will be sanctioned and approved by Council.

(viii) **Associate Membership**

Council reserves the right to accept in Associate Membership those Federations of Member Schools' Football Associations which concern themselves only with the supplementary organisation of football for boys of school age.

(ix) **Federation of Member Schools' Football Associations**

(a) A Federation shall be concerned only with County Schools' FAs and Local Schools' FAs in affiliated membership with the English Schools' FA.

(b) No Local Association shall be allowed to affiliate to a Federation unless it is in affiliated membership with its respective County SFA.

(c) No individual school shall be allowed to affiliate to a Federation direct but it must seek affiliation to the English Schools' FA in accord with General Rule 3.

(d) A Federation shall only concern itself with Competitions which are in addition to the programme of Competitions in being and organised by those County Schools' FAs within the geographical area covered by the Federation. Such Competitions should be based on: (i) A County Association XI, (ii) A Local Association XI, (iii) Individual Schools' XI's. Individual Schools and Local Associations wishing to take part in Federation activities can only do so if they have already intimated that they are taking part in the respective Competitions provided by County and Local Schools' Football Associations or have the permission of the County and Local Schools' Football Associations to do so. Such Competitions will need to be registered by the Federation.

(e) The geographical area covered by a Federation must be agreed with the Council of the English Schools' FA and no extension of this area shall take place without the further sanction of the Council of the English Schools' FA.

(b) **VOTING POWERS**

All Member Associations shall be granted the following voting rights:

1 County Associations	3 votes
2 All age ranges	3 votes
3 Secondary only	2 votes
4 Primary and Middle only	1 vote
5 Associate Membership	1 vote
6 Council Members	1 vote

(c) All Affiliations Fees shall be determined annually by Council and notified to all Associations by 1st May for the following season.

4. CONSTITUTION OF ASSOCIATIONS

- (a) Before being accepted as a member all Associations must satisfy the Council that they are properly constituted Associations, are playing football according to the Laws of the Game of the International Football Association Board, provide the Chief Executive with a return, where necessary, setting forth the schools in its membership, and must complete the affiliation form, as instructed, at least seven days before the Annual General Meeting.

The Council shall have the right to refuse to accept the affiliation of any new Association which covers any part of the same areas as that of an Association already affiliated.

No existing Association shall be allowed to extend further into an area covered by another Association without the express permission of the Council.

Membership of a Teachers' Organisation shall not be a condition for the admission or the exclusion, of a teacher (or the schools in which he is engaged) to or from the administration and the activities of an affiliated Association.

All affiliated Associations must agree to abide by the Rules of the ESFA.

- (b) An affiliated Association shall be governed by regularly elected Officers and Management Committee – the election of such to take place at its Annual General Meeting convened for that purpose.
- (c) A Schools' Football Association should have its own Banking Account. Its funds may be used to assist charitable objects or institutions, but shall not be employed to promote the interest of any political or religious organisation.
- (d) A Section of a Schools' Sports Federation/Council/Association, with specific responsibilities for football, maybe accepted into affiliated membership with the English Schools' Football Association, subject to it having no geographical conflict with existing Member Associations and fully recognising the English Schools' Football Association as its Parent Body in all matters appertaining to Schools' Football.
- (e) No Association shall be called upon to render any Report, or disclose any of its business, to any organisation other than ESFA, and its own County Schools' Football Association, except when a general report is given to a Schools' Sports Association.
- (f) No Association, or school affiliated to that Association shall compete in any Competition which is not recognised and registered by Council, or play against any unaffiliated Association, or team, without the sanction of the Council.
- (g) Schools' Football Associations shall not administer Competitions involving schools or Associations outside their own area without prior sanction of the ESFA Council.
- (h) Schools' Football Associations may sanction the participation of schoolchildren of both sexes in matches under their control, where the match restricts players to those under 18 years of age at midnight between 31st August and 1st September in any playing season.
- (i) An Association affiliated to the English Schools' Football Association shall, on request, accept as a member any school or college with full time pupils, and within its geographical area.
- (j) Schools and Colleges in membership with the ESFA must seek permission from the ESFA to participate in non-ESFA activities.
- (k) All District and County Associations who run representative teams MUST have a named Association Welfare Officer who is fully compliant with FA/ESFA Welfare Officer requirements.

5. CONSTITUTION OF COUNCIL**(a) Size of Council**

- (i) The Council of ESFA will be elected annually (see (g) below) and consist of 16 members, with 4 members representing each of the 4 Regions of membership, as defined by Council.
- (ii) If, at the time of election, there are insufficient nominations in any Region for it to fulfil its complement of Council Members, Council shall have the power, at the earliest opportunity, to fill the vacancy (in accordance with (b) below) until the time of the next annual election.
- (iii) In addition, Council shall have the power to appoint annually to its membership, a representative of the Council of The Football Association and an Independent Council Member, as nominated by the Association's Honorary Auditors.

(b) Eligibility of Council Members

Members of Council shall meet one of these following criteria. (Note: The criteria are set out in order of precedence for election purposes so that a nominee that meets criterion 1 will always be elected before a nominee in criterion 2 and so on)

- (i) Teachers in establishments affiliated to the ESFA in the Region which they serve or serving teachers resident in the Region.
- (ii) Teachers who have retired from working in an educational capacity, in the Region which they serve, for no more than 3 years or such retired teachers who are resident in the Region they serve.
- (iii) Teachers who have been retired for more than 3 years and are resident in the Region they serve and are approved by Council.

(c) Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Council shall elect, in May, a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman, from the members of the Council, for the following academic year and shall announce these elections at the AGM in June. A Council Member may not be elected as Chairman for more than 3 consecutive years and may not serve as Chairman again until 3 years after his last Chairmanship.

(d) Officers of the Association

The Officers of the Association shall be

- (i) The Chairman
- (ii) The Vice-Chairman
- (iii) The Chairman of Trustees (see (e) below)
- (iv) The Chief Executive (see (f) below)

The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Chairman of Trustees shall together be empowered to act on behalf of the association in matters of urgency.

(e) Trustees

Three members of Council, who are not paid employees, will serve as Trustees and fulfil all the legal requirements of this office. The Trustees shall elect their own Chairman. Trustees will be nominated by Council and offered for election at the Annual General Meeting.

(f) Staff

Council will have the power to appoint and employ a Chief Executive and other appropriate staff. The Chief Executive will serve on Council as a non-voting member.

(g) Elections

- (i) On receiving formal notice that an elected member of the Council intends to retire, the Chief Executive shall notify membership and invite nominations for the vacancy by a date specified by Council.
- (ii) Nominations to oppose an elected Member of Council for the following season shall be sent to the Chief Executive by March 1st. Membership will

be advised by the Chief Executive that the sitting member is being opposed, and that any additional nominations will be accepted up to April^{1st}.

(h) Disqualification

An individual who is retained in an advisory or paid capacity by a Football Club which employs contracted players shall be disqualified from membership of Council.

6. ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

- (a) If an election is necessary, the voting papers will be sent to every affiliated Association in full membership in the Region in which the election is being held, with the names of the candidates nominated for the Council. Voting powers will be in accordance with General Rule 3.
- (b) All voting papers must be returned to the Chief Executive by a date specified by the Council. The votes shall be counted by a duly appointed panel of scrutineers and the result declared.
- (c) When there are more than two candidates for any seat on the Council, the system of "Preferential Voting" shall be adopted, and the Association shall vote for the candidates in order of preference.
- (d) If an election results in a tie, the names of the candidates heading the poll at the final count shall be re-submitted to the Region for a further postal vote which shall be dealt with by a duly appointed panel of scrutineers and the result declared.
- (e) If a vacancy on Council occurs and no nominations are received to fill that vacancy, then Council may co-opt a teacher or former teacher resident in the area to represent the area at Council for that season, after which the vacancy will be re-advertised.

7. COUNCIL MEETING (Quorum, Committees, Powers)

For the transaction of business as at a Council Meeting, nine members shall form a quorum. The Council may, appoint such Committees or Commissions as it may consider necessary, delegate all or any of the powers to any such Committee or Commission of the Council and make any such regulations for the control of the Association and the game as from time to time may be necessary.

(a) Sub-Committees:

- (i) All sub-committees will be elected from within the Council.
- (ii) All sub-committees, subject to the permission of Council, may co-opt.
- (iii) Quorums for sub-committees shall be established by Council.

(b) Commissions:

The findings of all Commissions set up by Council shall be binding on all parties concerned, subject to the right of Appeal when the findings of an ESFA Appeals Board shall be binding on all parties concerned. Costs or part costs of a Commission or Appeal may be a charge on any School, Local or County Association, or individual (other than a player) involved.

7A. Investment Power

Money to be invested may be applied or invested in the purchase of or at interest upon the security of such shares stocks funds securities land buildings chattels or other investments or property of any nature and in any part of the world and whether involving liabilities or producing income or not as the Council shall in their absolute discretion think fit to the intent that the Council shall have the same powers in all aspects as if they were absolute owners beneficially entitled.

7B. Further Powers

In furtherance of the charitable objects but not further or otherwise the Council shall have the following additional powers:

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- (a) to construct maintain improve or alter any buildings or works (so far as necessary for carrying out the purposes of the Association) on land held on trust for the Association
 - (b) (subject to the restrictions imposed on the Council by sections 36 to 40 of the Charities Act 1993 or otherwise) to sell lease demise let license and generally manage and deal with any land or buildings or interest therein in such manner as the Council shall think fit
 - (c) to borrow money subject to such consents as may be required by law on such terms as to interest repayment or otherwise as the Council may think fit without security or (subject as aforesaid) upon the security of the whole or any part or parts of the assets of the Association and to use such money so borrowed for any purpose for which capital assets of the Association may be used
 - (d) to appeal for and accept donations subscriptions covenants sponsorships and legacies to be held on trust for the purposes of the Association or any of them provided that the Council shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for the charitable objects hereof
 - (e) to make regulations for the management of the Association and for the conduct of the business of the Council and from time to time to amend such regulations
 - (f) to delegate to any person who is in the opinion of the Council qualified for that purpose the management and any land held in trust for the Association provided that all acts and proceedings made by any such person are reported to the Council as soon as possible.
 - (g) to delegate such terms and at such reasonable remuneration as the Council may think to professional investment managers ('the Managers') the exercise of all or any of their powers of investment provided always that
 - (i) the managers shall be persons who are entitled to carry on investment business under the provisions of the Financial Services Act 1986
 - (ii) the delegated powers shall be exercisable only within clear policy guidelines drawn up in advance by the Council and within the powers of investment conferred by these rules
 - (iii) the Managers shall be under a duty to report promptly to the Council any exercise of the delegated powers and in particular to report every transaction within 14 days and to report on the performance of investments managed by them at least every three months
 - (iv) the Council shall be entitled at any time and without notice to review alter or determine the delegation or terms
 - (v) the Council shall be bound to review the arrangement for delegation at intervals not (in the absence of special reasons) exceeding 12 months but so that any failure by the Council to undertake such reviews within the period of 12 months shall not invalidate the delegation
 - (vi) the Council shall be liable for any failure to take reasonable care in choosing the Managers fixing or enforcing the terms upon which the Managers are employed requiring the remedying of any breaches of those terms and otherwise supervising the Managers but otherwise shall not be liable for the acts and defaults of the Managers.
 - (h) to employ any person firm or company not being a member of the Council to manage or assist in managing the day to day running of the affairs of the Association upon such reasonable terms as the Council think fit and to pay a Chief Executive and other such officials or staff not being a trustee as the Council may in their discretion from time to time determine and to enter into agreements and fix such reasonable salaries as the Council may deem proper and to enter into any service agreements which they shall consider to be necessary including power to determine any such employment upon such

terms as the Council may decide and to make all reasonable and necessary provision for the payment of pensions and superannuation to or on behalf of employees and their widows or widowers and dependants

- (i) to apply capital or income in insuring any buildings or other property to their full value
- (j) to arrange for the accounts of the Association to be audited annually by a qualified accountant at the expense of the Association
- (k) to implement decisions of the Council reached informally provided that such decisions are ratified at the next or subsequent meeting of the Council
- (l) to do all such lawful acts or things as shall further the attainment of the objects of the Association and so far as may be necessary to do such acts or things in collaboration with any person, body, institution, authority, or otherwise provided that no part of the assets of the Association shall be used or applied for a non-charitable purpose
- (m) when making grants of any funds to any charitable organisation or charitable institution to accept as a good discharge in respect of any such funds the receipt of the treasurer or secretary or other authorised officer for the time being of such charitable organisation or charitable institution
- (n) in respect of any property subject to the trusts here-of to vest the same in any corporation or any other person or persons being at least two in number (whether or not including one or more of the Council) as nominee or nominees for the Council
- (o) subject to the prior written approval in writing of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales to alter the name of the Association by deed
- (p) to commission promote publish distribute and sell books, plans, pamphlets, facsimiles, photographs, models and other publications of every description provided that the same are in support and furtherance of the objects of the Association.

7C. Custodian Trustee

- (a) The Council shall have power to appoint as custodian trustee any corporation empowered so to act upon such terms as they shall think fit and may transfer the whole or any part of the assets of the Association to or under the control of such custodian trustee provided that the remuneration payable to such corporation shall in no case exceed what is provided for below.
- (b) Any trustee being a corporation appointed to act as a custodian trustee may act on its published terms and conditions in force from time to time provided that this shall not authorise payment for any act done or services rendered by any director or other officer of such corporation in a personal capacity and provided further that such a corporation acting as a custodian trustee shall not be permitted to charge in excess of the remuneration chargeable for the time being by the Public Trustee for acting as custodian trustee

7D. Trustees' Responsibility as Shareholder

The Council shall not be bound to interfere in the management or conduct of the business of any company British or foreign the shares or securities of which comprise the whole or any part of the assets of the Association provided always that where the Council's holding of such shares is sufficient to confer voting control of the company concerned the Council shall nevertheless from time to time obtain such information from the company as would be made available to a non-executive director to satisfy themselves (so far as may be possible from such information) that the affairs of the company are being properly managed and in the absence of any notice to the contrary the Council shall be at liberty to leave the conduct of its business (including the payment or non-payment of dividends) wholly to the directors

7E. Trustee Liability

In the professed execution of these trusts and powers no member of the Council being an individual shall be liable for any loss to the Association arising by reason of any improper investment made in good faith (so long as he shall have sought professional advice before making such investment) or for the negligence or fraud of any agent employed by him or by any other member of the Council in good faith although the employment of such agent was not strictly necessary or expedient (provided reasonable supervision shall have been exercised) or by reason of any mistake or omission made in good faith by any trustee or by reason of any other matter or thing except wilful and individual fraud or wrongdoing or wrongful omission on the part of the trustee who is sought to be made liable

7F. Power to Wind Up Association

If at any time the Council are of the opinion that the purpose of the Association can no longer be effectively carried out by them they shall wind up the Association and after discharging the debts of the Association out of its assets the Council shall transfer the remainder of the assets to such other charitable body or bodies having objects the same as or similar to the Association in such proportions and on such terms as the Council shall in their absolute discretion decide.

8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, AND SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- (a) The AGM of the ESFA shall be held during the month of June. The Financial Year shall end on the 31st December. The Chief Executive shall give twenty eight days' clear notice to all affiliated Associations of the place, the day, and the hour of such meeting. An Agenda specifying the nature of the business to be transacted at that meeting, and printed abstract of the professionally prepared Accounts of the Association, covering all matches and activities for which Council is responsible, shall accompany the notice.
- (b) Notice of any business (other than the declaration of the result of the election of Council, appointment of Auditors, consideration of the Accounts and Balance Sheet, and the Reports of the Council, and not being such as requires a special resolution) to be submitted at the Annual General Meeting, shall be given to the Chief Executive on or before May 1st. First amendments to motions must be received by the Chief Executive not less than fourteen days before the Annual General Meeting. Proposed changes to rules, and resolutions, must be supported in writing by at least one other affiliated Association.
- (c) The Council shall have power at any time to convene a Special General Meeting. The Chief Executive must convene a Special General Meeting at any time on receiving a requisition stating the objects of the Meeting and signed by representatives of not less than FIFTY affiliated Associations in full membership, but no such resolution shall be accepted in order to reverse a decision taken at a properly convened AGM or Special General Meeting held within the last twelve months. An agenda of the business to be transacted at any such Special General Meeting shall accompany the notice convening the Meeting.
- (d) At a General Meeting the voting power shall be vested in the Members of the Council together with representatives from affiliated Associations in accordance with Rule 3 (b) Representatives from fifty Member Associations shall form a quorum. An Association Delegate can only vote for his Local Association and/or his County Association. A Council Member may use his own vote, plus either his Local or County Association vote if he is representing an Association.
- (e) The travelling expenses of one delegate of each Association, actually represented at the General Meeting, or a Council Member, Ex-Council Member, Life Member or Honorary Auditor, shall be paid out of the ESFA General Funds. The accommodation charge for the Hon Auditors, Life

Members and Ex Council Members attending the AGM and not representing an affiliated association, should, at the discretion of the ESFA Trustees, be paid from ESFA General Funds.

- (f) The Association which stages the ESFA Annual General meeting shall receive a grant of £350.
- (g) The annual accounts of the ESFA shall undergo a professional audit. The professional auditors shall be proposed by Council and elected annually at the AGM. They shall attend the AGM and take part, if required, in discussions on financial matters. Three Honorary Auditors shall also be elected annually at the AGM.

9. INTERNATIONAL MATCHES

- (a) The Council shall have power to arrange International Matches, and shall, subject to the permission of the Head Teacher, have first claim upon the services of any player selected to play in any matches arranged by the Council.
- (b) Players selected for International Matches shall not take part in any game during the three days prior to and including the day of assembly of the team for the match i.e. when the team assembles on a Friday, a player may not play after the preceding Tuesday.
- (c) The expenses of one representative from each County Association, which has a player taking part in Home International Matches, shall be defrayed on one occasion during the season in order that the County Association may be represented.

10. COMPETITIONS FINANCE

Financial assistance to the Competitions will be maintained in accordance with Competition Rules, subject to confirmation by the Trustees.

11. TEACHERS, PLAYERS AND FOOTBALL CLUBS EMPLOYING CONTRACT PLAYERS

(a) Teachers

- (i) Any Teacher, Ex-Teacher or Official of a Schools' Football Association making or aiding in making an approach to a player, which offers a contract of employment on behalf of a Football Club which employs Contract Players, shall be disqualified from Membership of an affiliated Association.
- (ii) Teachers are permitted to take part in the activities at Centres of Excellence and Academies which have been properly licensed.

(b) Players

- (i) Whilst a boy is receiving full-time education in accordance with the Education Acts, priority must be given to school or schools' organisations activities in accordance with FA regulations governing players registered within the Programme for Excellence.
- (ii) Players who are under six years of age on 1st September in any playing season shall not be allowed to participate in competitions sanctioned by the English Schools' FA. A child who has not attained the age of ten years at midnight between 31 August and 1 September shall not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play in a match between sides of more than seven players in that playing season.
- (iii) A Child in the age ranges Under 7, Under 8, Under 9, Under 10, Under 11, Under 12, Under 13, Under 14 and Under 15 must not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play in a match where any other player is older or younger by two years or more than that child.

- (iv) Any schoolboy who attends a Club for training or coaching or who plays for that Club, must be registered at a Football Academy or at a licensed Centre of Excellence operated by the Club. The registration of a schoolboy shall be governed by the Academy or Centre of Excellence Regulations of The Football Association.
- (v) A boy who is on the roll of a recognised School, Sixth Form College, Tertiary or Further Education College, other than as a day release Student, shall not enter into a Contract of Employment with a Club in Membership with The Football Association or an affiliated Association, but he may be registered within The Football Association's Programme for Excellence. Students on Day Release Courses are ineligible to take part in ESFA Competitions and Activities.
- (vi) A player who signs as a Trainee is no longer eligible to play in Schools' Football.
- (vii) A player may be suspended from taking part in any game under the auspices of the English Schools' Football Association or its affiliated Associations immediately he commits an offence to any one of sections (iv), (v), and (vii) as outlined above in this rule. It shall be the duty of the local Association to which his school is affiliated to notify the school concerned of such suspension. The Council of the English Schools' FA shall investigate the offence and determine the period of suspension.
- (viii) Schoolboys registered to do so may attend Centres of Excellence and Academies established by Clubs. Such attendance must comply with the rules laid down for such Centres and Academies.

12. PENALTIES FOR BREACH OF ESFA, FA RULES

Players and officials are allowed to take part in Schools' Football on condition that they observe the rules of the ESFA and the relevant Rules, Regulations and Bye-Laws of The Football Associations Ltd., and every affiliated Association is required to observe and enforce such Rules, Regulations and Bye-Laws. Any Association not carrying out this duty shall be liable to disaffiliation by the Council of the ESFA and any officials or players guilty of any breach of such Rules, Regulations and Bye-laws may also be suspended or disqualified. Any appeal against the decision of the ESFA Council shall be made in writing to The Football Association and shall be governed by the rules of The Football Association (Note: this does not apply to competitions organised by ESFA).

13. LONG SERVICE RECOGNITION

- (a) The Chief Executive must receive nominations for Awards by 31 August in any season for processing in that season (nominations must be with the local ESFA Council Member by 31 July).
- (b) Nominations for Long Service Recognition by the ESFA to be submitted to the Chief Executive and then be examined by Council. Nominees for Long Service Recognition Award should have given service to a District or County Schools' Football Association or *English Schools' FA* in order to gain an award. Awards are made at four levels (i) ten year; (ii) twenty five year, (iii) forty year (iv) fifty year.
- (c) Nominations for Golden Service Recognition to be submitted to the Chief Executive for examination by Council. Nominees for the Golden Service Award to have given at least 50 years' service to schools' football.

14. ALTERATION TO RULES

These Rules may be altered at the Annual General Meeting. Notice of motion for alteration must be sent to the Chief Executive as set out in Rule 8b and a copy of

alterations or additions shall be sent to each affiliated Association in accordance with Rule 8a. These Rules may also be altered at a Special General Meeting convened for that purpose. Notice of the Meeting and suggested alterations must be sent by the Chief Executive to each affiliated Association at least twenty-eight days before the Meeting in accordance with Rule 8a.

ESFA SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

Every child or young person who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in football.

The English Schools' Football Association recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. It is determined to meet its obligations to ensure that those Associations and schools providing football opportunities for children and young people do so to the highest possible standard of care

Every child or young person (defined as any person under the age of 18) who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in football.

The ESFA is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all children and young people to participate in the sport to the best of their abilities for as long as they choose to do so.

The Safeguarding Children Policy is supported by The FA's Respect Programme to address verbal abuse and bullying of youngsters by parents and coaches on the sidelines.

The Association's Safeguarding Children Policy principles are that:

- The child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration;
- All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, faith or sexual orientation;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their Parents and Carers is essential

ESFA is committed to working in partnership with the LEA, Police, Children's Services Departments, Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) in accordance with their procedures. This is essential to enable these organisations to carry out their statutory duties to investigate concerns and protect all children and young people.

The ESFA's Safeguarding Children Policy is in response to government legislation and guidance, developed to safeguard the welfare and development of children and young people.

All affiliated Associations are required to endorse and adhere to English Schools FA's Safeguarding Children Policy

All County and Local Association Welfare Officers are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct for volunteer Welfare Officers