

APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOURS AND POSITION OF TRUST

[Online \(digital\) activity](#)

The position of trust can arise in the context of both online (digital) and face-to-face activity. Working online brings additional vulnerabilities and risks for young people. Being mindful of those risks, selecting appropriate platforms and following applicable codes of conduct and digital guidance is essential.

If you are in a position of trust then you should only text or engage online with a young person as part of a recognised group for specific, legitimate football purposes and only utilise platforms where there is a permanent record of the communication, so it is open to scrutiny and is recoverable. This is opposed to those where the content and images disappear on the social media platform.

It is also your responsibility to be mindful that a young person may seek to add you as a 'friend' to their online social media

contact list. If this happens, it is recommended that you:

- I. politely decline the invitation and explain that this would not be appropriate; and
- II. make a written report of this to your organisation's designated safeguarding person / club welfare officer.

[What should I do?](#)

If you are in a position of trust, then you should:

- √ Maintain a positive, professional, healthy relationship with the young people under your care that is supportive, positive and aimed at improving the young person's skills and progress.
- √ Maintain a relationship with all participants that is appropriate to your role

and reflects positively on the club or organisation you work or volunteer for.

- √ Ensure you read, understand, sign up to and comply with the relevant codes of conduct e.g., The Grassroots Code.
- √ Never engage or seek to engage in sexual activity or sexualised communication or image sharing (including via social media) with any young person. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds for whom you are responsible.
- √ Make your Club Welfare Officer, County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer, or Safeguarding Lead aware if you think that a young person's behaviour indicates they are seeking to develop or engage in an inappropriate relationship with you. 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.

[Dealing with a possible abuse of trust](#)

If you suspect that an abuse of a position of trust has occurred, is occurring or may occur, you must:

√ immediately inform your Club Welfare Officer, County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer or contact Safeguarding@TheFA.com;

√ report the matter directly to the Police; and

√ make a written record of your concerns and relevant details. If you are unable to contact the Club Welfare Officer, County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer, or The FA Safeguarding Case Team, or if you think someone is at risk of immediate harm, you must report it to Children's Social Care.

If you think your concern has not been dealt with appropriately, or there is no safeguarding officer, you can consult with your local authority's Children's Social Care Designated Officer whose duties include responding to concerns about potential breaches of a Position of Trust. To find the contact details, please search on your

local authority's website or go to www.advicelocal.uk.