

CHILD WELLBEING AND PROTECTION STRATEGY REVIEW SEASON 20/21

INTRODUCTION

I'm delighted to introduce the second of our annual reports to highlight some of the work the Scottish FA and our members have undertaken in relation to our strategy for child wellbeing and protection: *Getting it Right for Every Child in Scottish Football*. The theme for year two was 'Connect & Implement' in recognition of our focus on working collaboratively to implement the policy, procedures and practices that are necessary across Scottish football to promote and protect the wellbeing of children and young people involved.

Our move to online learning and networking has ensured that we have been able to maintain, and indeed increase, our engagement in relation to children's wellbeing and protection across the game this season. These networks have been instrumental in discussing with our members how to implement our written policies and procedures in practice — that is to lift the words off the page and ensure they form the experience of every child or young person involved in football across Scotland.

Our work has taken place against the background of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic across the world with its devastating loss of life and disruption to our daily lives. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of people's wellbeing and protection and in many cases the medium and longer term impact of the pandemic experience is only beginning to be understood fully. Our ambition in this area therefore needs to be as strong as ever. As we move forward into the third of our five year strategy we will place continued emphasis on lifting the words from the page and translating those into everyday experiences and seeking continual improvement to make sure we are doing the best we can for children and young people.

A significant milestone also took place during this season, which saw the publication of the Independent Review of Sexual Abuse in Scottish Football. This report was first commissioned in late 2016 and the recommendations it has made would not have been possible without the strength, bravery and courage of those who took part to share their experiences, views and opinions with the sole purpose of making football as safe as possible for children involved today. The 97 recommendations from the Review form the basis of the work that we take forward to achieve our ambition that children flourish because we put their safety, wellbeing, rights and enjoyment at the heart of Scottish football. So I pay tribute in particular to the people who contributed and made the Review happen:

Thank You.

Alyson Evans
Head of Wellbeing & Protection
Scottish FA



**NOTHING
MATTERS
MORE**

OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

VISION

Children flourish because we put their safety, wellbeing, rights and enjoyment at the heart of every level of Scottish football.

MISSION

Children are the priority.
We lead with confidence taking responsibility to create a culture of safety and wellbeing.
We empower children through active promotion of their rights.



ACCOUNTABLE

We accept responsibility and take ownership of the wellbeing and protection of children in our game. Our collective leadership calls upon integrity, consistency and confidence in our everyday behaviours.



INCLUSIVE

Football is for everyone, irrespective of background. We celebrate what makes us unique and embrace our differences. We create a culture where rights are respected and everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

OUR VALUES

Our values support our efforts to achieve our vision. They set the tone of our work and will be visible in our decisions and actions. All Scottish FA members of staff and Associated Persons, when working or volunteering with children and young people involved in Scottish FA activities, will be...



APPROACHABLE

We are visible, accessible, open and caring. We build respectful and supportive relationships, listening to children's voices, and championing their views in everything we do.



EMPOWERING

We are forward facing and strive to be the best for children and young people. We are brave, challenging ourselves and others to continually strive for the best outcomes for children and young people. We encourage and support children and young people to express their views.

GLOSSARY

CWPO – Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer

ANA – Affiliated National Association

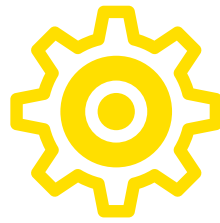
YAs – Youth Ambassadors

Independent Review – the Independent Review of Sexual Abuse in Scottish Football, written by Martin Henry, published by the Scottish FA in February 2021.



**NOTHING
MATTERS
MORE**

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE: SYSTEMS



**EMBED A CONSISTENT CHILD WELLBEING
AND PROTECTION SYSTEM AT EVERY LEVEL
OF SCOTTISH FOOTBALL**

OUR COMMITMENT

Scottish football is a safe environment for children and young people where their wellbeing is promoted



WHAT WE HAVE DELIVERED

- We hosted our annual national network meeting for all our member CWPOs and this year discussed children's rights in Scottish football, with input from the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland and the Scottish FA Youth Ambassadors of Change.
- We produced a protocol for clubs to ensure the safe recruitment, management and monitoring of football scouts.
- We created guidance for clubs on visiting scouts and intermediaries, volunteers under the age of 18 years and on how to involve young people in developing their codes of conduct.
- We launched information for children, young people, parents and carers on the role of an intermediary in Scottish football.
- We created guidance and FAQs and contributed to webinars to ensure wellbeing and protection was at the forefront of the Return to Football after the COVID-19 lockdown.
- We developed awards criteria for clubs who create and promote positive environments, through the Positive Play initiative.

Desmond Coyne, Head of Safeguarding at Heart of Midlothian FC, talks about the work of his club to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people:

"At Heart of Midlothian Football Club, we work closely with the Wellbeing & Protection Team at the Scottish FA. Much of our work is guided by the Policy which has been developed by the Scottish FA and is implemented by us at the club level. We have designed and distributed an age-appropriate easy read leaflet which is given to every young player and their parent or carer at our club.

Children's Wellbeing or Safeguarding is very much a priority for our Club and this is emphasised when we make new staff appointments and we also cover this topic as part of our CPD for coaches.

We value the views of our young players and their families and we hold a Players Council and separately a Parents Council to give them the opportunity to give their opinion or feedback on the work we do at the Club."

113 MEMBER CLUBS

9 AFFILIATED NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS/LEAGUES

We collaborated with and supported the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officers (CWPOs) of our **113** member Clubs and **9** Affiliated National Associations/Leagues to adopt and implement the revised Child Wellbeing and Protection Policy for Scottish football.

WE DELIVERED

12 NETWORK MEETINGS

TO OUR CWPOS

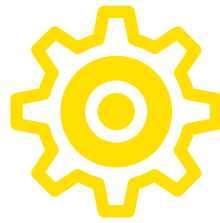


We delivered **12 Network Meetings** to our CWPOs from our member clubs, Affiliated National Associations and Referee Associations, who shared experiences and learning on topics such as returning to football, safe use of social media, children's rights and mental wellbeing.



**NOTHING
MATTERS
MORE**

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE: SYSTEMS



EMBED A CONSISTENT CHILD WELLBEING
AND PROTECTION SYSTEM AT EVERY LEVEL
OF SCOTTISH FOOTBALL

OUR IMPACT

85% of CWPOs reported
feeling supported in their role

90% of CWPOs reported
*feeling confident carrying out
tasks expected of them*

97% of CWPOs reported
*having a clear understanding
of their role and responsibilities*

Barbara Hughes, our Wellbeing and Protection Officer,
talks about how the move to remote working
has changed the way we communicate:

"Moving our network meetings for Child Wellbeing and Protection Officers (CWPOs) online has made the meetings more accessible to all CWPOs. It has given CWPOs the opportunity to increase their network as they will now be at a meeting with CWPOs from across the country rather than their specific region/area. This wider network has allowed CWPOs to hear from more of their peers on what work is taking place across member clubs to implement the Child Wellbeing and Protection Policy.

Through the networks we have raised awareness of the different ways CWPOs can get in touch with the team and the support and advice our team can offer. Over the last year we have seen an increased confidence in CWPOs getting in touch with the team for support and advice as and when is required."



NOTHING
MATTERS
MORE

STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO: PARTICIPATE

PROMOTE CHILDREN'S
RIGHTS AND PARTICIPATION
IN ALL WE DO



OUR COMMITMENT

Children and young people
are active partners in matters
that affect them

WHAT WE HAVE DELIVERED

- We ran a nationwide recruitment campaign for our new Youth Ambassador programme 2021–2023.
- We recruited and trained **16 new YA Mentors**.
- We held a network event with our Child Wellbeing and Protection Officers to provide them with the knowledge and tools to create a children's rights respecting football club.

OUR IMPACT

- 100%** of Youth Ambassadors agreed that *The Scottish FA was good at listening to my views*
- 100%** of Youth Ambassadors agreed that *The Scottish FA took the views and experiences of the Youth Ambassadors seriously*
- 91%** of Youth Ambassadors agreed that *The Scottish FA incorporated the views of the Youth Ambassadors in its work*
- 91%** of Youth Ambassadors agreed that they *made a meaningful contribution to the work of the Scottish FA*
- 91%** of Youth Ambassadors agreed that *the programme helped them develop their skills*

Ann Jane Malloy, Safeguarding Officer, talks about how participation works at Celtic FC:

"At Celtic, we have sought to empower our young female players and to help promote their participation in matters affecting them. We established a forum, which the players named 'Players' Huddle', where representatives of our squads gather and are asked for their views on Academy matters, as well as being able to raise issues affecting them and their squad; they shape what is on the agenda. This allows players to be included in the decision-making process, and know that their opinion matters."



OUR **16** YOUTH AMBASSADORS GRADUATED



Our **16 Youth Ambassadors (YAs)** graduated from the two year programme in May 2021, which moved online from March 2020. The YAs made recommendations to the Scottish FA on topics ranging from social media to ways the Scottish FA could inspire more young people to support the Scotland National Squads.

WE SPOKE TO **95** CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



We spoke to **95 children and young people** from the 7 Scottish FA Performance Schools across Scotland, asking them about their experiences of football throughout the pandemic and what the Scottish FA could do to support them.



NOTHING
MATTERS
MORE

OUR YOUTH AMBASSADORS OF CHANGE

2021 MARKED THE END OF THE SECOND TWO YEAR YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME.

Our Participation Officer, Robin Drummond, talks about the role of the Youth Ambassadors to shape the work of the Scottish FA:

"May 2021 marked the end of our second cohort of Youth Ambassadors and the launch of our recruitment for a new group. Our outgoing group gave excellent input to the Scottish FA across two and a half years with us, and must be commended for their determination not to let the disruptions of covid stop them from representing the voices of young people in our national game. Their experiences of participation in the covid-era have informed our work going forward, to better support the new groups of young people we'll work with."

We asked our Youth Ambassadors about their experience of the programme:



WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME?

"I wanted to take part in the Youth Ambassadors of Change programme to make connections and network with staff inside the Scottish FA. I also wanted to implement change for young people that positively affected Scottish football."

WHAT DID YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME?

"I loved all the opportunities the programme brought. I have done things that I never would have had I not been a Youth Ambassador. I have also met and learned from a lot of people throughout the programme. I've picked up and developed skills along the way."

WHAT PART OF BEING INVOLVED IN THE YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

"The opportunities and experiences gained which were invaluable. But also the connections that were made and feeling like we had a positive input and were being heard."

"Being able to develop my project idea. The support and encouragement I received was outstanding, and being able to see the project through to completion felt like a great achievement."

WHAT CHANGES DO YOU THINK WERE MADE BECAUSE YOU WERE INVOLVED IN THE YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME?

"I feel my voice had the biggest impact when consulted on certain issues. For example, some of us took part in a session to discuss the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child before it was incorporated into Scots Law. That was something which I thought was extremely important and I felt privileged to have my say on it."

"Mental Health Awareness is being increased each and every day, all our opinions mattered and had their impacts and I'm proud of us for that!"

WHICH SKILLS AND QUALITIES DID THE YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME HELP YOU DEVELOP?

"The ambassador programme improved my confidence even further to approach professionals and give my opinions on issues that I might not have influenced or being listened to on before."



NOTHING
MATTERS
MORE

STRATEGIC PRIORITY THREE: LEARN



SUPPORT AND DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE,
SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING OF
CHILD WELLBEING AND PROTECTION

OUR COMMITMENT

Everyone in Scottish football is informed, educated, confident and aware of their responsibilities to children and young people.

WHAT WE HAVE DELIVERED

- We published our Learning and Development Framework, mapping all existing learning courses against the knowledge and skills required by everyone in Scottish football to safeguard children and young people.
- We set up a new Learning and Development Advisory group to help us design and deliver high quality training for staff and volunteers.
- We delivered our first Child Wellbeing in Scottish Football course to The Scottish Football Deaf Association with two British Sign Language interpreters and two electronic note takers.

Daniel Armstrong, CWPO from Queen of the South Football Club, told us how his Club prioritise the learning of children and young people:

*"As a club we are passionate about the learning and development of young people. During the pandemic lockdown, we launched our **Lockdown School is Cool** project. This project focused on placing the school curriculum in a footballing context, creating learning experiences for mathematics, English, performing arts, geography and history amongst other subjects. This gave children who struggled to engage with home learning a helping hand in completing school work and realising how cool school is. On behalf of the club, I sit on the Scottish FA's Learning Development and Advisory Group and I passionately believe in ensuring the game is an inclusive and safe environment, ensuring we as a football club and governing body get it right for every child."*



9245
LEARNERS → **25%**
INCREASE

9245 learners completed our introductory Children's Wellbeing in Scottish Football eLearning course, a **25% increase from 2019/20**.

**FACE TO FACE LEARNING TO OVER
760 LEARNERS OVER
48 TRAINING SESSIONS**

We delivered face to face learning to over **760** learners (a **13% increase** from 2019/20) over **48** training sessions, instilling in our learners the knowledge and skills to keep children and young people safe and promote their wellbeing.



**NOTHING
MATTERS
MORE**

STRATEGIC PRIORITY THREE: LEARN



SUPPORT AND DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE,
SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING OF
CHILD WELLBEING AND PROTECTION

OUR IMPACT

94% of CWPOs report *having the knowledge and skills they need to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people within their Club*

99% of learners agree that they *have gained the knowledge and skills outlined in the learning outcomes*

88% of learners report that *it is likely they will use the training in their role*

Fiona Bolling, our Education Officer, discusses the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the delivery of training:

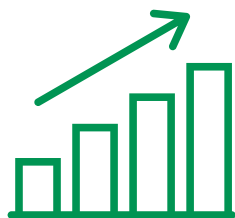
"As a result of the pandemic we have been unable to offer any classroom based, face to face learning since March 2020 and learning has taken place on Zoom instead. The transition from classroom based learning to virtual learning has been extremely positive; we have been able to offer the same courses and in fact have seen an increase in numbers of people taking up learning opportunities. Learners have told us that they have enjoyed the opportunity to network and interact with peers from all over the country; training is interactive and promotes good discussion and is more convenient, particularly if you have work or family commitments. We look forward to offering a blended model of training into next year."



NOTHING
MATTERS
MORE

STRATEGIC PRIORITY FOUR: IMPROVE

RAISE OUR STANDARDS
ON CHILD WELLBEING
AND PROTECTION



OUR COMMITMENT

Scottish football has a robust system of monitoring compliance with wellbeing and protection standards

WHAT WE HAVE DELIVERED

- We implemented our programme of audit and support to ensure that member clubs and ANAs deliver their duties for wellbeing and protection and plan for improvements.
- We launched a new Learning and Development Evaluation Toolkit to help us to understand the impact of our training courses and improve them for future learners.
- We collaborated with our colleagues across Scottish Football through the Scottish Football Working Group, implementing solutions to Independent Review recommendations on:
 - o Scouting and Intermediaries
 - o Values based Appointment and Selection
- We launched our second annual survey for CWPOs, listening and acting on their views to tailor the support we provide to them.
- We carried out our first **8** club support reviews, looking in depth at how Clubs implement the Scottish FA wellbeing and protection criteria and supporting improvements.

Rachel Stewart, Wellbeing and Compliance Co-ordinator at the Scottish Youth Football Association (SYFA) talks about continuous improvement in ANAs and their member clubs:

"At SYFA we strongly believe displaying leadership doesn't only come from knowing what you're doing right, it's about identifying areas which need to be developed, improved and/or implemented. The SYFA have found within the Child Wellbeing and Protection Strategy helpful mechanisms which allow us an organisation to continually review and improve compliance with wellbeing and protection standards. The sportscotland Standards for Child Wellbeing and Protection provide a framework for assessment and through partnership with Children 1st and implementation of their Self-Assessment Tool, our member clubs will be empowered to self-evaluate and continually monitor their own progress."



113

SCOTTISH FA MEMBER CLUBS WERE AUDITED

Through Club Licensing all **113** Scottish FA member clubs were audited against the minimum standards for child wellbeing and protection in Scottish football

18



SELF-ASSESSMENTS

We evaluated **18** self-assessments against the sportscotland Standards for Child Wellbeing and Protection by member clubs applying for a Club License at Silver or Gold level



**NOTHING
MATTERS
MORE**

STRATEGIC PRIORITY FIVE: LEAD

STRENGTHEN LEADERSHIP,
GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY



OUR COMMITMENT

Scottish football demonstrates strong leadership and takes responsibility for the wellbeing and protection of children and young people

WHAT WE HAVE DELIVERED

- We published the Independent Review of Sexual Abuse in Scottish Football in February 2021. The Review was undertaken by Martin Henry and his team and made **97 recommendations** for Scottish football to ensure that football is a safe place for children and young people.
- We spoke to a range of groups inside of and outside of football about the Independent Review and its implications for football, sport and other organisational settings. This included CWPOs from other sports governing bodies (SGB), SGB chief executives and national child protection lead officers.
- We established an Adult Voices Advisory Group to ensure our work is informed by the views of adults with lived experience of abuse in childhood.
- Two of the Scottish FA team began working towards the FIFA Guardians Safeguarding in Sport Diploma, which aims to professionalise the role of safeguarding officers in football and support them in their vital task of ensuring that the game is played in a safe and supportive environment for everyone.

Larry Flanagan, Chair of the Independent Advisory Board (IAB) from September 2021, said about the role of the IAB to support and challenge Scottish football to ensure that the wellbeing and protection of children is at its heart:

"The IAB brings together expertise from a broad range of backgrounds, which creates a particularly strong team. Its role is to oversee the work being done in relation to well-being and protection in football. As it is independent, it is free to speak up on the issues as it sees fit, which is important for everyone."



OUR INDEPENDENT ADVISORY BOARD

MET 5 TIMES



Our Independent Advisory Board (IAB) met **5 times** over the course of the season. The Board is made up of experts from the children's sector and their role is to oversee the work of the Wellbeing and Protection Department.

46 (47%)

RECOMMENDATIONS NOW COMPLETE

We progressed the implementation of Independent Review recommendations, with **46 (47%)** now complete, 36 (37%) in progress and 15 (16%) not yet started.



NOTHING
MATTERS
MORE