



**FOR ALL**

**FA**

# **SAFEGUARDING**

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**A Guide For  
Statutory Agencies**



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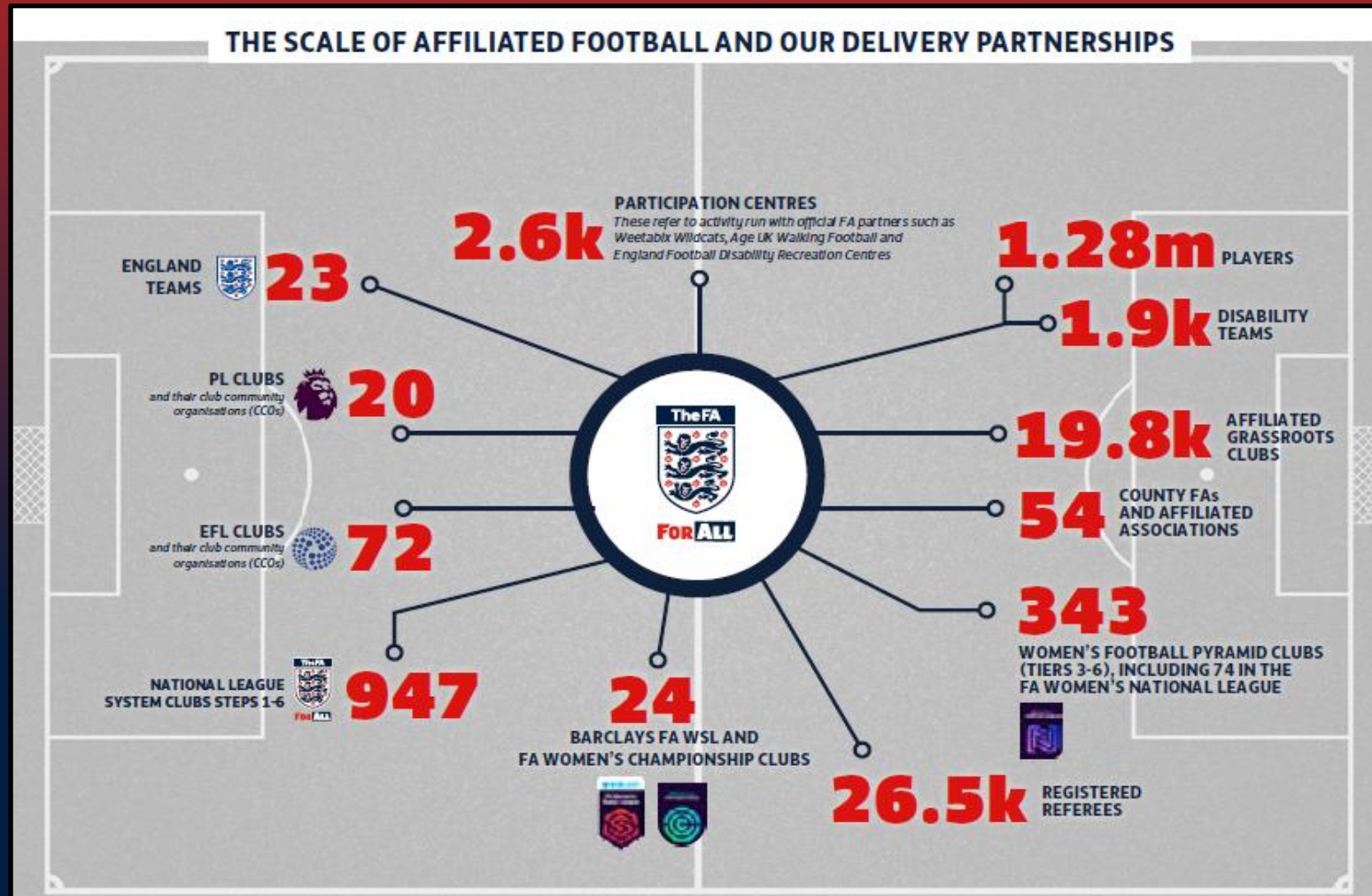
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# AFFILIATED FOOTBALL

FA Safeguarding has jurisdiction over affiliated football only. The scale of affiliated football is shown below:



**THE FA  
SAFEGUARDING  
STRATEGY 2024/28:  
AN EVER SAFER  
CULTURE**



**AN EVER-SAFER CULTURE**

THE FA SAFEGUARDING STRATEGY  
2024-2028

**OUR 2024-28 STRATEGY REFLECTS FOOTBALL'S EXTENSIVE EVERYDAY WORK TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK, ALONGSIDE WORKSTREAMS DESIGNED TO CONTINUOUSLY DEVELOP AND IMPROVE OUR FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH**

## **OUR THREE PRIORITIES**

Priority 1:  
**GOVERNANCE  
AND  
STANDARDS**

Priority 2:  
**EDUCATION AND  
EMPOWERMENT**

Priority 3:  
**MANAGING  
CONCERNS**



# THE FA SAFEGUARDING STRUCTURE

The FA has a full-time team of safeguarding professionals supporting affiliated football and all FA-related activity. This is split into two areas;

## Strategic Safeguarding Team

Within the Strategic Safeguarding Team, the personnel drive preventative measures via policy, education and the sharing of safer working practice. They also support the national network of approximately 8,500 Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSPs).

The DSPs work across men's and women's professional and grassroots football and have a range of job titles. Their role includes taking preventative safeguarding measures, promoting safer working practice and making referrals to the appropriate authorities.



# THE FA SAFEGUARDING STRUCTURE

## The Safeguarding Case Management Team (SCMT)

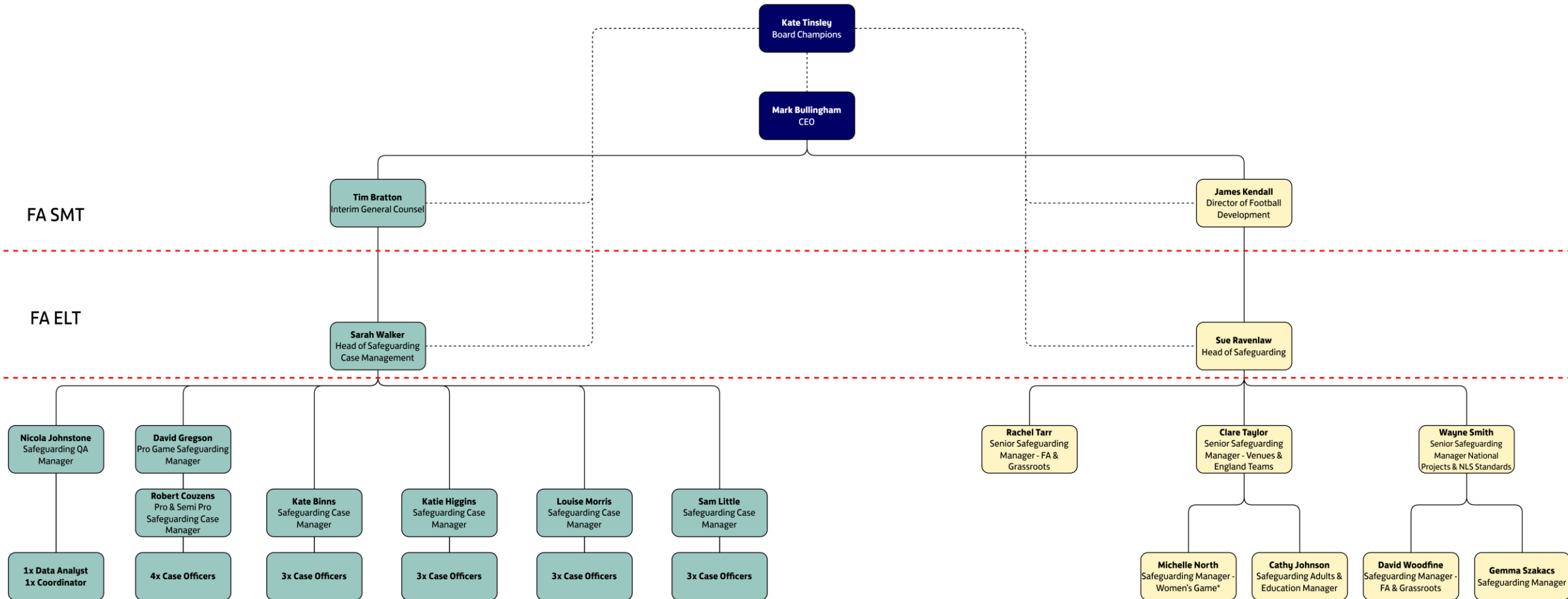
In parallel, the role of The Safeguarding Case Management Team is to investigate and assess all allegations and concerns about individuals who may pose a risk of harm to children and adults at risk in football and put safeguards in place. These include suspensions from football where necessary.

These personnel comprise safeguarding professionals with significant experience in social work, policing, probation service and legal practice in relation to child protection in sport.

The FA's safeguarding teams also work closely with The FA Survivor Group to ensure that those with lived experience are influencing present day safeguarding work, alongside independent safeguarding professionals. Collectively we work to create safe environments in football and if there are concerns, to ensure people know how and where to report them.



# THE FA SAFEGUARDING STRUCTURE



\*Sandy Gill seconded to WPLL

# SCMT REFERRAL THRESHOLD & PROCESS

**A referral should be made to SCMT if any individual now or previously involved in football activity in any capacity has or is alleged to have;**

- Been involved in the harm, abuse or exploitation of a child and/or AAR
- Committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or AAR
- Committed a sexual offence against anyone (adult or child)
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children and/or AAR; or
- Been subject to two previous low-level concerns and a further low-level concern has been raised.

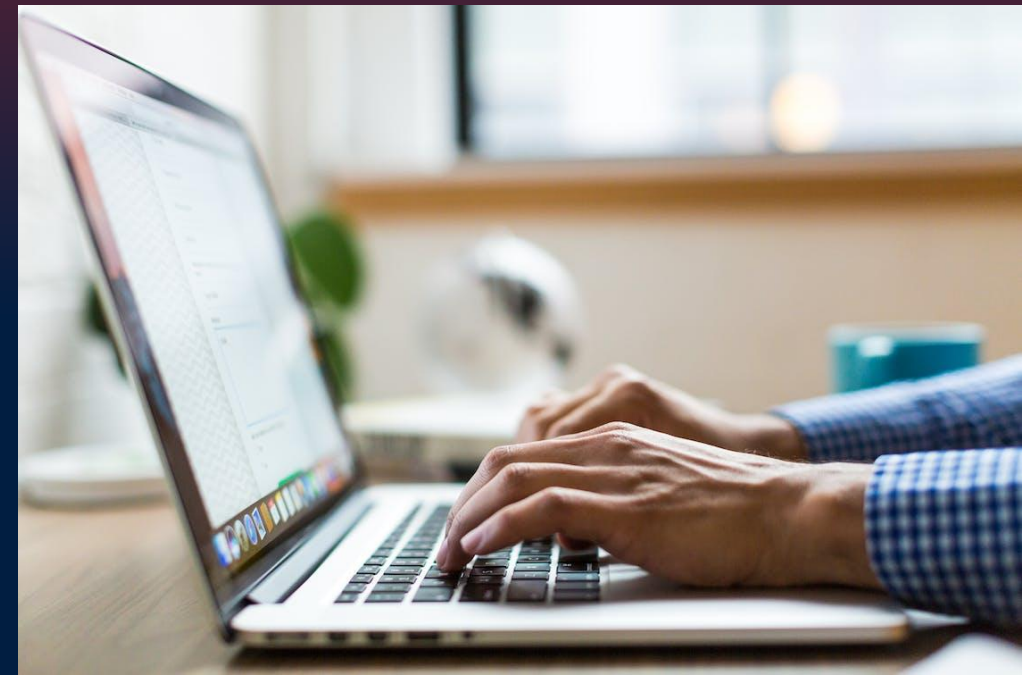


# SCMT REFERRAL THRESHOLD & PROCESS

Whilst there may be additional concerns that call into question an Individual's suitability, the SCMT is responsible for managing cases whereby there is a transferrable risk of harm to children or AAR in football. Low level concerns will be managed by County FAs and only referred to SCMT if there have been two previous low-level concerns and a further concern has been raised.

Statutory Agencies can make a referral to their County FA DSO who will collate the information and refer to SCMT. Contact details for County DSOs can be found on each local County FA Website. If the matter is urgent or you are unable to contact the County DSO, you can refer directly to SCMT at [Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com)

When convening an Allegations Meeting, both County DSOs and The FA SCMT should be informed and invited to attend. Whilst Club Welfare Officers can provide valuable local knowledge and information, this should be sought from them via the County DSO. Club Welfare Officers should not be invited to attend Allegations Meetings as they do not have the necessary authority or relevant training to make decisions in respect of safeguarding actions.



# INITIAL ASSESSMENTS

Initial Assessments are completed on all referrals received by The FA SCMT. The risks, strengths and protective factors are identified, analysed and assessed. A decision is made about whether to issue an Interim Suspension Order. The FA SCMT can issue interim suspensions from:

- Under-18 football;
- All refereeing;
- All football;
- Playing.

Interim Orders are issued under FA Regulation 3 which stipulates that the Association shall have the power to make any interim order upon receipt by the Association of;

3.1 Notification that an Individual has been charged with an Offence

3.2 Notification that an individual is the subject of an investigation by the Police, Children's Services or any other authority relating to an Offence; or

3.3 Any other information which causes The Association reasonably to believe that a person poses or may pose a risk of harm to children.



# INITIAL ASSESSMENTS

The expression “Offence” means any one or more of the offences contained in the Schedules of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 and any other criminal offence which reasonably causes The Association to believe that the person accused of the offence poses or may pose a risk of harm to children).

Alternatively, they can issue an Interim Supervision Deed.

Interim Suspensions are presented to The FA’s Independent Safeguarding Review Panel (SRP) following the expiry of six months from the date of the order being imposed and at six-monthly periods thereafter until a final decision is made.

The SRP is an Independent Panel, who act in accordance with The FA’s Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy and Regulations and make decisions on cases that raise a concern of a safeguarding nature.



# RISK ASSESSMENTS

- Following Investigation, a final risk assessment will be completed for all cases.
- Risk Assessments make a recommendation based on the balance of probabilities of transferable risk of harm to children and/or AAR in football.
- The Risk Assessment will consider information provided in writing from the Police, LADO, Social Care, Probation, County FA, clubs, the individual and other relevant third parties
- The individual is interviewed to obtain a better understanding of the risk a participant may pose.
- The Risk Assessment, together with supporting evidence (as agreed by the LADO where relevant), is then submitted to the SRP for them to make a final decision.

**NB:** This document is presented to the individual before it is presented to SRP for their final representations.



# SRP'S DECISION OPTIONS

- Lift the Interim Suspension;
- Order that the individual attends an FA Safeguarding Children Workshop;
- Order that the individual attends an Independent Risk Assessment;
- Make a requirement for the individual to attend mentoring sessions, whereby professional boundaries are addressed and the Individual is supported to develop their insight;
- Impose a Supervision Deed;
- Impose a Permanent Suspension which could include refereeing and/or playing where applicable.



# APPEALS

An individual and also the FA SCMT may appeal the decisions taken by SRP. This Appeal will be heard by an Appeal Board. The members hearing the Appeal will be different from the ones that had been part of the final decision.

The FA is not a statutory organisation; therefore, decisions need to be proportionate and evidence-based to meet the threshold of The FA's Regulations. As the national governing body of English football any suspensions issued apply across all levels of the game aiming to prevent migration of offenders from professional football into community and/or grassroots football and vice-versa.

More information about The FA's Safeguarding work can be found here:  
<http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding>



**The FA  
Handbook**  
2024/2025





# CONTACT US

Because we are here to help...



**FOR ALL**

The FA Safeguarding Case Management Team (SCMT)

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