

The FA's Official Holding Statement

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006 and the Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS)

January 2010

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) (SVGA), was drafted following the death of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman and aims to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. This Act will have an impact on football for Under 18s and The FA has worked hard to ensure the voice of football has been heard and understood by Government.

There is an increasing level of awareness about this Act and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) created by it. There is also natural anxiety.

The FA takes its responsibilities as a National Governing Body seriously and will provide Counties, Leagues and Clubs with a systematic approach to the requirements of the Act. Government guidance for sport was expected in July 2009, this guidance has not yet been finalised. The FA will provide guidance notes, FAQs and training as soon as it has been finalised and approved.

The FA is aware that people are anxious about the cost of the new scheme. The Government will not be charging volunteers to join the new scheme. As at present, The FA will need to levy an administration charge (currently £12 for the CRB). The FA will aim to keep this charge as low as possible.

The FA is aware there is a lot of information in the public domain which is being misinterpreted at times. Therefore, follow the guidance in this statement please rather using information from other sources.

You will not fall foul of the Act by doing so and waiting for further FA information.

Season 2009 – 2010

Most of the Act does not affect children's football until July 2010, so for the season 2009 / 2010 football must:

- Continue with the current CRB process;
- **Ensure new starters working with U18s are CRB checked immediately;**
- Ensure everyone helping in U18 football who does not yet have a CRB check has a check as soon as possible;
- Follow FA guidance on reporting concerns. The FA will then report relevant and significant concerns to the new Independent Safeguarding Authority.
- Leagues and Clubs will receive more information from The FA, telling them what they need to do for the season 2010 / 2011.



In addition, grassroots football clubs, with youth sections, must:

Ensure they have a Club Welfare Officer in place who has an FA CRB check and has completed Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officer training;

Ensure Club Welfare Officers are familiar with The FA's Online Safeguarding Children Service - this is The FA's tool for ensuring Club Welfare Officers can see who has been CRB checked. The system also allows Club Welfare Officers to see who has completed their Safeguarding Children training. Go to www.TheFA.com/footballsafes for access to the Online Safeguarding Children Service. If you need help with accessing this site contact your County Welfare Officer who will be pleased to help.

Contacts for further information

If you are unsure who needs a CRB check please contact your local County Welfare Officer, Premier League CSO or Football League CPO or ring The FA CRB unit on 0845 210 8080.

18th January 2010

