

Dear Club Secretary,

I am writing to you today to ensure that all our clubs are aware of the recent disclosures of child abuse in football and what they should do next if they have any concerns.

Everyone at The FA is appalled by the horrific abuse that has been suffered by former footballers. I applaud their immense courage and bravery in coming forward. Our thoughts are with the victims of this abuse and we are clear that we will do everything we can to support them.

I wanted to ensure that you are left in no doubt concerning how seriously The FA is approaching these disclosures. At the moment, and in line with the normal FA safeguarding procedures, we are working closely with the police and relevant authorities and we continue to encourage anyone with information about possible child abuse to report their concerns to the police, The FA or the NSPCC.

I am sure you too are deeply concerned about the recent disclosures and it is of course important to emphasise the diligence with which clubs must approach their safeguarding responsibilities. I am therefore writing to every grassroots club in the country, while my counterparts in the Premier League and EFL are writing to the professional clubs too.

All clubs need to ensure their safeguarding is a priority. Together, we will make sure that the game we all love can be played in a safe, fun environment.

Firstly, I would like your help to ensure that we can offer support to those who need it. Please ensure that those at your club are aware of the specific helpline we have commissioned the NSPCC to provide to help encourage more people to come forward. The number is 0800 023 2642.

Secondly, I ask you too for extra vigilance with regards to safeguarding and your procedures. If you have any concerns, please contact The FA through safeguarding@thefa.com.

We cannot and will not be complacent. Despite the fact that the safeguarding landscape has changed significantly in recent years, we must ensure we all treat the topic with the utmost care. As you know, The FA works collaboratively on prevention and investigations with the Premier League, the EFL and County FAs, along with other football stakeholders. The FA has a team of safeguarding professionals who put in place preventative measures via policy, education, best practice and support for the network of people acting as Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs). That team is here to help you if you need it; as a grassroots club you can also seek advice and guidance directly from your CFA DSO. In addition our specialist Case Management Team comprised of safeguarding professionals manage referrals and concerns, working closely with the statutory agencies in relation to

investigations and put in place safeguards to manage people who pose, or may pose a risk of harm.

This framework sees 8,500 DSOs across the professional and grassroots game and carries out some 55,000 criminal records checks each season. 35,000 coaches and referees also attend The FA's safeguarding awareness course each season and each club of course also implements its own safeguarding policy.

Collectively we will continue to work together to ensure that these measures are robust and that football is played safely across the country.

If you have any concerns please contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Greg Clarke
Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'G Clarke', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.