



English Schools' Football Association

Membership Matters

Chairman's Statement

A Reminder:

We are currently updating the ESFA's IT system and we will let you know once changes to your account that apply to the 2020/21 season will be able to be made.

Any changes you make in the meantime will apply ONLY to the current 2019/20 season

I hope that you and your families and friends are staying safe and well in these difficult times. Since our last edition of ESFA Membership Matters, schools have remained closed to all except vulnerable children and those whose parents are key workers. Sporting events extending into the rest of this year have been cancelled and professional football struggles to come to a decision as to if and how it can be resurrected. Staying safe and healthy remains the priority for everyone.

It is always sad when we lose one of our schools' football family and I am especially sad to have to report the passing of Pat Smith MBE, former ESFA Chairman, stalwart of Nottinghamshire CSFA for many years, Executive Officer of the National Council for School Sport, and a man who gave a lifetime of service to providing sport for young people. He will be sorely missed. Stuart Inger has written a lovely tribute to Pat, which is published on the ESFA website [here](#).

Our ESFA "COBRA" Committee has continued to meet weekly by conference call, and the Officers & Trustees have also met regularly. We have discussed a range of issues, including playing this season's national finals when it is safe to do so, arranging a suitable occasion at which we can present international caps to the players in our ESFA U18 boys and U15 girls teams, and how we can plan for the resumption of schools' football across the country.

Given the ongoing uncertainty, however, none of this is easy. The latest government plan is for some year groups in primary schools to possibly return on 1st June, and for Years 10 and 12 to perhaps resume before the end of the school year. This clearly implies that we are a long way from schools being able to function normally. Moreover, it seems that participation in many sports, including football, will only be possible when the final stage of the government's "roadmap" is reached, as evidenced by a vaccine. In the meantime, and as a recent OECD report concluded, disruption will be the "new normal" for schools for the next 18 months. Schools are likely to seek creative and innovative ways to keep youngsters fit and healthy - team sports will almost certainly take a back seat. We may well need to write off the entire 2020-21 schools' football season, and that prospect has featured in our planning.

In that scenario, we will need to take the opportunity to ensure that, when it is able to resume, schools' football does more than just bounce back to the old normal. We must plan for it to bounce forward. Our Player Passport plans, together with the county and district re-structuring process that we have been undertaking, will provide a secure foundation for the ESFA to do exactly that. They will be underpinned and supported by the excellent new website that is close to being launched. As I indicated in the previous edition of Membership Matters, our aim will be to offer unrivalled and regular opportunities to players to enjoy the best footballing and educational experiences possible at inter-school, inter-district, inter-county and international levels. For now, however, we are pausing the roll-out of the Player Passport scheme to the 2021-22 season.

The ESFA headquarters remains closed and staff continue to work from home. We are in the process of placing some staff on furlough leave, with their agreement, and will keep the staffing situation under review as the current situation changes. Planning for next season is well underway, and we will shortly be mailing Competition Entry Forms to schools. If we are unable to run any competitions in 2020-21, we will roll forward entry fees to season 2021-22. The format of inter-district and inter-county competitions next season will be determined when we can be certain when and if the season can commence. We will of course keep Membership fully informed. We also welcome your suggestions, advice, and feedback - if you are developing new ways of working that you can share, please let us know. Similarly, if you have questions or concerns, please get in touch - we will be happy to advise and assist wherever possible. Above all, stay safe, stay well.



ESFA staff furlough

Members will have read in the Chairman's address that the ESFA has placed some of its workforce on furlough leave, following the inevitable reduction in workloads for some post holders. Details of those staff, and where to refer enquiries in their absence, is provided below. Please support those staff furloughed by redirecting your correspondence accordingly: they are not permitted to undertake any work for the ESFA during this period so your co-operation is greatly appreciated

Furloughed Colleague	Period	Cover arrangements
Josh Thornton	25.05.20 - 30.06.20	Darren Alcock
Jack Evans	25.05.20 - 30.06.20	Darren Alcock
Sarah DaCosta	25.05.20 - 30.06.20	Andy Weston/Andrea Chilton
Martin Duffield	25.05.20 - 30.06.20	Andy Weston/Andrea Chilton
Lorna Blakeman	25.05.20 - 30.06.20	Dawn Howard/Andrea Chilton
Kieren Laverick	18.05.20 – 05.06.30	Andy Weston

FA Guidance on digital communication

The FA has issued some updated guidance on working safely with children when relying on digital communications. Find both documents on our website [here](#).

The FA announce temporary changes to DBS checks

New guidance has been issued by the FA regarding FA DBS checks. This guidance will help with affiliation issues for next season but please continue to monitor compliance for your Association through the portal. Click [here](#) for more information.



FA guidance on permitted grassroots football activity during COVID-19

The FA has today issued guidance to all grassroots football and informal football activity outside of the professional game.

Consistent with Government advice, published on Wednesday 13 May, the following outdoor football activity is currently permitted:

- playing football individually e.g. practice of individual skills or fitness activities;
- playing football with your family or other people living in your household;
- an individual can play football with one other person who is not from their household.
- coaching an **adult** player one to one.

All social distancing guidelines must be followed.

Additionally, maintaining a grass or artificial football pitch is permitted, as long as social distancing and appropriate hygiene practices are adopted.

If an individual is symptomatic, living in a household with a possible COVID-19 infection or if you are classified as extremely vulnerable on health grounds, the guidance is that you should remain at home.

The following football activity is **not** permitted at this time, consistent with Government guidelines:

- coaching a child (U18) from a different household one to one. In order to comply with The FA's safeguarding policy, a child must have a parent/carer with them, which doesn't comply with Government social distancing requirements;
- two or more people from one household playing with one person or more from outside their household.

The FA will continue to work with the Government and Sport England in order to provide guidance to grassroots football as the Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy moves to the next phase.



Extended eligibility Council nominations

Due to the ongoing vacancies for Council Members in both the Midlands and the South West, the ESFA have now moved to nominations for these posts under the extended eligibility criteria

We have updated the guidance and nomination form and both of these are now available to download on the ESFA website, [click here for full information](#)

Holding AGMs in lockdown

Most Member Associations would, ordinarily, at this time of the season, be planning to hold their AGM. Whilst there continues to be strict limitations on social interaction during this period of lockdown it will not be possible for physical AGM meetings to take place.

The ESFA has therefore put together some guidance on how you can go about holding AGMs in these unprecedented times.

[Click here for full guidance](#)

Persimmon local community grant

Persimmon Homes have teamed up with Team GB to provide over £1 million to support projects for young people under the age of 18 in England Scotland and Wales. For more information on their local grants and their “Building Futures” competition, click [here](#)



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