



Respect



Respect and clubs with youth teams

Your guide to The FA's Respect programme



Why football needs Respect

The FA is responding to a plea from grassroots football to tackle unacceptable behaviour in football.

Respect aims to tackle the mass drop-out of referees from football due to abuse. Thousands of referees dropped out of the game last season which has led to the number of match officials hitting its lowest ever level.

Respect also aims to bring the fun back to football for young players. Parents and coaches pushing too hard and pressurising impressionable children for three points is having a negative impact on their development and enjoyment of the game.

- 98% of referees have been verbally abused and 27% have been physically abused.
- One in three grassroots matches is now played without a qualified match official.
- 846 grassroots matches were abandoned in 2007/08 due to unacceptable behaviour from players and/or spectators.
- Parents and coaches want role models in the elite game to provide a positive example for young players.
- The No.2 priority from grassroots football is tackling the 'pushy parent' placing too much pressure on their child and their child's team from the sidelines.



Contents

What is Respect ?	6
How do we achieve Respect ?	8
Step 1: Codes of Conduct	8
Step 2: Designated Spectators' Area	12
Step 3: The captain takes responsibility	15
Step 4: The referee manages the game	17
How to introduce Respect to your club	18
Communicating the Respect message to young players	20
Respect education programme	21
Welfare Officers and the Respect programme	22
The first season of Respect	24
Respect Codes of Conduct	27

What is Respect?

Respect is the collective responsibility of everyone involved in football, at all levels, to create a fair, safe and enjoyable environment in which the game can take place. It is the behavioural code for football.

Respect is a continuous FA programme, not a one-off initiative.

What do we want to achieve with Respect?

1. There will be a base of registered referees in England sufficient for the demands of the game at every level.
2. There will be zero tolerance for assaults on referees.
3. There will be an improvement in on-field player discipline, particularly in the area of dissent to referees and in competitions that have an established record of poor discipline.
4. There will be a 'step change' in youth football on what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour from parents and spectators.
5. We will work with coaches to create an enjoyable learning environment for children's football.





How do we achieve Respect?

For clubs, the Respect programme includes four practical steps to improve behaviour – on the pitch and on the sidelines – in and at matches throughout the country:

Step 1: Codes of Conduct

Step 2: Designated Spectators' Area

Step 3: The captain takes responsibility

Step 4: The referee manages the game.

Step one:

Codes of Conduct

Codes of Conduct aren't new and are already in use by some clubs (this is mandatory for FA Charter Standard Clubs). Some are successful, some are forgotten and are not acted upon.

Respect brings them to life.

How? By supporting and strengthening the Codes of Conduct with possible consequences. There is little point in having a set of rules if no action is taken if and when they're broken.

There are Respect Codes of Conduct for:

- Young Players
- Adult Players
- Spectators and Parents/Carers
- Coaches, Team Managers and Club Officials
- Match Officials.

Each Code explains that actions can be taken if the Code is broken. Although your County FA or The FA will deal with cases of reported misconduct, clubs and leagues also have a role to play in dealing with poor behaviour from players, officials or spectators. This can range from education, mentoring, official warnings, suspension or even exclusion from the club. For further guidance on these specific actions speak directly to your league or County FA.

All the Respect Codes of Conduct can be downloaded from www.TheFA.com/Respect - or from the Respect DVD your club should have received.

Respect works on placing responsibility for their actions on individuals: break your Code, and bear the consequences.

Codes of Conduct:

Your club's responsibilities:

Each Respect Code of Conduct explains that action can and will be taken if the Code is broken.

Your club has three main responsibilities around the Codes:

1. To ensure everyone within the club (club members), whatever their role, has read, agreed and signed up to their relevant Code – and understood the actions which could be taken if Codes are broken.
2. To collect and retain the signed agreement forms at the foot of each Code.
3. To deal fairly and consistently with anyone who breaks 'their' Code.

If your club hasn't used Codes of Conduct before – or has Codes without consequences – this needs discussion, so your members understand how the Codes work and what their responsibilities are. Your league or County FA **Respect** Lead Officer will be able to give you some further guidance in this area.

Clubs which already have Codes of Conduct:

If you are an FA Charter Standard Club, and/or you already have your own club Codes of Conduct, it is advised that you adopt the new Respect Codes or revise your existing codes to include any elements you may have missed.

It is suggested that it may be helpful to display the Respect Codes of Conduct by in dressing rooms, pavilions, club houses and if applicable, displaying the Spectator Code publicly or handing down the sidelines.

The important difference is ensuring your club members understand and appreciate what can happen if Codes are broken. That way, there should be no subsequent debate because they didn't understand the consequences of breaking a Code.



Respect



Imposing Sanctions

The Codes identify a range of sanctions which can be applied in the event of misconduct or poor behaviour.

Whilst your County FA or The FA will deal with reported misconduct, clubs also have a role to play in educating its membership as to what is – and what isn't – acceptable behaviour and taking action when the Codes are broken.

It's important for Clubs to be clear about what it expects from its members and to educate people when guidance is required. Should this guidance be disregarded then the management of a Club has the right to implement sanctions against offenders. Such action should:

- Be fair and consistent – treating people in the same way regardless of their position in the club
- Be proportionate to the offence
- Be progressively more serious for repeat offenders
- Follow a process which allows people to know when they have broken a Code of Conduct and provides them with an opportunity to explain their actions.

Step two:

Designated Spectators' Areas

One of the key elements of Respect in youth football is the creation of designated areas for spectators. This area can be marked by an additional line, the use of cones, a roped-off area or use of a temporary spectators' barrier.

The areas literally draw the line which parents and spectators should not cross and research has shown it to have a beneficial impact on the behaviour of spectators and their impact on players and match officials.

If using the Respect barriers endorsed by The FA the ideal arrangement is to mark out a Designated Spectators' Area on one side of the pitch for fans and parents/carers from both sides to stand behind.

This allows the coaches of both teams to stand on the other side of the pitch, meaning players get instructions from just one side of the pitch.

You may prefer an alternative form of marking a Designated Spectators' Area, but you must ensure this is safe for both the spectators and the players. The FA strongly recommends you obtain formal agreement from the facility/pitch provider about which method of marking is most suitable for the pitch, before beginning any work or buying any new equipment.

The safety of the players, officials and spectators is paramount.

To help implement the Designated Spectators' Area, The FA has endorsed a Respect Barrier Kit, which is available from www.respectzone.com and comprises:

- 120 metres of specialised Respect-branded tape (2x 60 metres lengths)
- A complete set of safety poles
- A simple to use and effective reeling system
- Assembly kit comprising of mallet, securing pegs and instructions
- Lightweight carry bag.

The Spectators' Area should start two metres from the touchline on both sides of the pitch. Each area should run the full length of the pitch. It is recognised however that the alignment of some public pitches does not allow for this arrangement in which case other appropriate arrangements should be made.

Although The FA recommends the use of Designated Spectators' Areas as best practice, Youth Leagues can themselves introduce a requirement for the marking and use of Designated Spectators' Areas at club venues within their League rules – although the actual specification of the areas should be determined by local arrangements.

Should a club fail to make acceptable arrangements for a Designated Spectators' Area, a League may consider issuing a sanction against them. This should be fair and proportionate – perhaps starting with a warning by the League. The absence of a Designated Spectators' Area should not result in the cancellation or abandonment of a game.



Respect



Step three:

The captain takes responsibility

Often problems start at matches when individual players are abusive towards the referee, which escalates into several players confronting the referee at the same time – then it's anarchy.

Respect aims to stop this cycle before it starts. Only the captain can challenge decisions made by the referee and the captain needs to manage his/her team to ensure this is always observed.

The advice to captains is:

As a captain, you have no special status or privileges under the Laws of the Game, but you do have a degree of responsibility for the behaviour of your team.

To promote Respect the referee will work with you, as the team captain, to manage the players and the game effectively.

Even if you are some way away from an incident when the referee feels he/she needs you involved in a discussion with a player, the referee will call you over. This will ensure that, as the team captain, you remain the point of contact for the referee.

The type of behaviour which often gives rise to problems in matches, and where captains and referees need to work together, can be described as 'harassment and challenging behaviour' towards the referee.

Here are some examples of each type of behaviour, which are also contained in the captain's leaflet:

Harassment:

- Running towards the referee in an aggressive manner.
- Players surrounding the referee to protest a decision.
- Repeatedly asking questions about decisions in an attempt to influence the referee or undermine his/her responsibilities.

Challenging:

- Passing comment to other players about a referee's decision-making.
- Repeatedly moaning at the referee about decisions.
- Gestures that obviously are made in a derogatory manner, such as a shaking of the head or waving of the hand.

Captains have been asked to:

- Ensure they wear a Respect captain's armband. These will be provided by your league to your club.
- Together with the opposition captain, make themselves known to the referee before the game. He/she will ask if the captains if they are clear about your responsibilities.

- Ensure all players understand what they can/cannot do in relation to the referee and what is meant by 'unwanted behaviour'. No-one's trying to curb enthusiasm – just instil more discipline. This can only benefit the specific match and football as a whole.
- Ensure vice-captains (who should be appointed one if there isn't one) is aware of these rules, in case captains are unavailable for a game, or have to leave the field.
- Ensure every player in the team has signed the Respect Code of Conduct.
- Visit www.TheFA.com/Respect for further updates and tips.

Captains in children's football

- In some cases a youth team may not have an individual that is mature enough to take on this enhanced captaincy role. In such cases a common sense approach should be taken which may involve the referee working with a team manager rather than an on-field captain.

Step four:

The referee manages the game

There is a separate Respect information Guide for referees, which incorporates the following main information in relation to the above:

As the referee, you are expected to work with the team captains to manage the players and the game effectively. You must control the game by applying the Laws of the Game and deal firmly with any open show of dissent by players. (e.g. not move away from the incident, but stay and deal with it).

While recognising that players may on occasions make an appeal for a decision (e.g. a throw-in, corner or goal-kick), it is important you distinguish these from an act of dissent which should be punished with a caution.

You should use a stepped approach, where appropriate, to managing players:

1. Free-kick
2. Free-kick with quiet word
3. Free-kick with public admonishment (this is the time referees should consider using the captain to emphasise the message)
4. Yellow card.

The stepped approach does not negate the fact that as the referee, you have the authority within the Laws of the Game to issue disciplinary sanctions without recourse to the captain(s), including issuing a yellow or red card where the Laws require it.

Even if the captain is some distance from an incident, but you feel you need him/her involved in a discussion with a player, you should call the captain over. This will ensure the captain remains your point of contact during the game.

These guidelines are an additional preventative/supportive tool for referees to manage games effectively. The key is for referees to use captains in a more visible way.

How to introduce Respect at your club

Fundamentally, we need you to accept and understand the four steps to Respect outlined on the previous pages - and then impart them to everyone at your club.

To get everyone on board, we suggest the following actions.

Attend a league information session

If your league decides to sign-up to Respect, your league officials will hold an information session on Respect and the role your club will be expected to play. It's important your club is absolutely clear about what your involvement entails. Your league will hand out Respect resources at this session,

Organise a club Respect session and inform your members

We would recommend you organise an information session for your club members, along the lines of the one you will be asked to attend by your league. You can download a document from www.TheFA.com/Respect with a suggested meeting format - or you will hopefully have received a DVD which also contains this document as a download.

However it's organised, you need to ensure that all the members of your club read, understand and sign the relevant Codes of Conduct.

Members include:

- Club officials, Coaches and Team Managers, including volunteers
- Players (adults and young players, ie under 16)
- Welfare Officers.

Communicate with your spectators and parents/carers of young players

Although not under your direct control, spectators, whether regulars or not, have a key influence on standards of behaviour: their own and others.

The same applies to parents/carers who watch any of your club's youth matches.

You have a responsibility to lead by example and set the standards of behaviour you expect from spectators - and then maintain these standards.

So, depending on the size of your club, you may want to include spectators, parents/carers in your club information session(s).



Communicating the Respect message to young players

If you have under-16 players at your club, then please note that there is a Code of Conduct for Young Players. This differs from the Adult Players' Code of Conduct in language and tone to ensure it is easy to understand.

You will need to ask these players to sign the Code of Conduct before the start of the season. We have suggested all players sign up to the same form to show that it's a team effort as well as an individual promise.

However, if you really want young people to engage fully with the Respect programme, here is a suggested way to embed it in their minds. Perhaps you should repeat it before every training session and/or match, and in time, get them to say it together before they go out?

Referee is in charge
Encourage team-mates
Shout, but don't criticise
Play fairly
Enjoy the game
Captain only speaks to the referee
Try, whatever the score

Other ways of encouraging good behaviour and Respect in young players could include:

- Respect posters in the changing rooms and clubhouse.
- Introduce an award for the 'Respect Player of the Season' at each age group - ie a fair play award. You could even have a Respect Player of the Match each week.
- Introduce an award for the 'Respect Team of the Season' within the club at the end of the season, ie the team with the best disciplinary record.

It's important to let the players know that everyone within the club will have their own Code of Conduct. That means their parents/carers and other supporters, the coaches, team managers and club officials.

Help them understand it's about making everyone responsible for their individual actions and ensuring they not only respect others, but respect the game of football itself.

Respect education programme

Central to The FA's commitment to the Respect programme is the need to build upon the physical measures - such as the Codes of Conduct and Designated Spectators' Area - with an education programme.

The programme will be delivered by The FA's educational arm, FA Learning. The key resource for parents is the FA's online Respect Parents & Carers Guide

For more information on the educational services available go to www.TheFA.com/Respect or call the FA Learning hotline on 0870 850 0424.





Welfare Officers and the Respect programme

Safeguarding children is an integral aspect of the Respect programme. It's about raising awareness that bullying and verbal, emotional and physical abuse will not be tolerated in football.

League and Club Welfare Officers play a key role in this Safeguarding work, and here's how they are being introduced by The Football Association, starting from last season:

From season 2008-09:

All leagues and clubs with youth teams, must have appointed a named Welfare Officer, who has an 'accepted' or as a minimum an 'in progress' enhanced CRB check via The FA CRB Unit.

From season 2009-10:

All leagues and clubs with youth teams, must have appointed a named Welfare Officer, who has an 'accepted' CRB check via The FA CRB Unit and who has completed The FA Safeguarding Children Workshop.

From season 2010-11:

All leagues and clubs with youth teams must have a named Welfare Officer, who has an 'accepted' CRB check via The FA CRB Unit and who has completed The FA Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officer Workshop.

League and Club Welfare Officers should contact their County Welfare Officer to find out about opportunities for Welfare Officer training and meetings.

As Respect is all about creating a fun and safe environment, there are specific ways in which League and Club Welfare Officers can assist the programme's implementation.

The League Welfare Officer should:

- Promote the Respect programme as part of measures to safeguard children in the league.
- Attend the Respect club information session run by the league.
- Ensure Club Welfare Officers are familiar with the Respect programme.
- Monitor behaviour in the league and feedback to The FA.
- Ensure the Respect Codes of Conduct are distributed and used.

The Club Welfare Officer should:

- Promote the Respect programme as part of the measures to create positive football experiences within the club.
- Attend the Respect information session held by the league and any such sessions held by the club.
- Help people to understand the Codes of Conduct and to keep within the Respect Designated Spectators' Area.
- Talk to the County FA Welfare Officer if any incidents of bullying, harassment, discrimination or abuse arise in the club.

For further information on the role of Welfare Officers please go to www.TheFA.com/footballsafes

The first season of Respect

Throughout the first season of Respect (2008-09), its impact was monitored. The following are the headline findings:

- In the professional game player behaviour has improved. There have been 44% fewer cases of mass confrontation and a 50% decline in cases of reported harassment of referees. Referees report an improved relationship with players but feel that some managers could set a better example to players and spectators.
- There has been an increase in the volume of dissent cautions in all leagues apart from the Premier League. The Professional Game Match Officials believe this to be a result of more referees dealing with on-field dissent, instead of tolerating it, as in previous seasons.
- The use of a team captains to assist the referee to manage player behaviour is considered to be of value.
- Compared to the same period for season 2007-08 there has been an 8% rise in referee numbers. There are 53% more student referees (Level 9) in training and a 3% increase in Levels 1 – 8 trainees.
- The FA is ahead of its recruitment targets for referees and currently has over 26,000 registered referees.
- The number of serious assaults on referees declined by 10% in 2008-09 but disappointingly over 500 referees still reported being subject to physical abuse.
- In the amateur game, cautions for dissent have risen by 3% but there has been a decline in charges for misconduct and the number of dismissals.
- The FA had a considerable impact in youth football with the promotion of adverts and educational courses dealing with the problem of abusive touchline parents. This will continue to be a focus for the work of The FA.
- The use of a Designated Spectators' Area marked by barriers, a painted line or cones is an effective way of improving spectator barriers in youth football.
- The vast majority of those involved in football agree that the Respect programme is definitely needed. It has to be a long-term programme that requires constant reinforcement and reinvention.
- The Respect programme is an ongoing commitment by the football authorities to tackle poor behaviour and we will seek to improve this position season on season.





Respect Code of Conduct



Respect



Young Players

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour in the game.

As a player, you have a big part to play. That's why The FA is asking every player to follow a **Respect Code of Conduct**.

When playing football, I will:

- Always play to the best of my ability
- Play fairly – I won't cheat, complain or waste time
- Respect my team-mates, the other team, the referee or my coach/manager
- Play by the rules, as directed by the referee
- Shake hands with the other team and referee at the end of the game
- Listen and respond to what my coach/team manager tells me
- Talk to someone I trust or the club welfare officer if I'm unhappy about anything at my club.

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, any/all of the following actions may be taken by my club, County FA or The FA.

I may:

- Be required to apologise to my team-mates, the other team, referee or team manager
- Receive a formal warning from the coach or the club committee
- Be dropped or substituted
- Be suspended from training
- Be required to leave the club.

In addition:

- My club, County FA or The FA may make my parent or carer aware of any infringements of the Code of Conduct
- The FA/County FA could impose a fine and suspension against my club.



Spectators and parents/carers

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour in the game.

This club is supporting The FA's Respect programme to ensure football can be enjoyed in a safe, positive environment.

Remember children's football is a time for them to develop their technical, physical, tactical and social skills. Winning isn't everything.

Play your part and observe The FA's **Respect Code of Conduct** for players at all times.

I will:

- Remember that children play for FUN
- Applaud effort and good play as well as success
- Always respect the match officials' decisions
- Remain outside the field of play and within the Designated Spectators' Area (where provided)
- Let the coach do their job and not confuse the players by telling them what to do
- Encourage the players to respect the opposition, referee and match officials
- Avoid criticising a player for making a mistake – mistakes are part of learning
- Never engage in, or tolerate, offensive, insulting, or abusive language or behaviour.

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, any/all of the following actions may be taken by my club, County FA or The FA.

I may:

- Be issued with a verbal warning from a club or league official
- Be required to meet with the club, league or CFA Welfare Officer
- Be required to meet with the club committee
- Be obliged to undertake an FA education course
- Be obliged to leave the match venue by the club
- Be requested by the club not to attend future games
- Be suspended or have my club membership removed
- Be required to leave the club along with any dependents.

In addition:

- The FA/County FA could impose a fine and/or suspension on the club.



Match Officials

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour in the game.

The behaviour of the match officials has an impact, directly and indirectly, on the conduct of everyone involved in the game – both on the pitch and on the sidelines.

Play your part and observe The FA's **Respect Code of Conduct** for match officials at all time.

I will:

- Be honest and completely impartial at all times
- Apply the Laws of the Game and competition rules fairly and consistently
- Manage the game in a positive, calm and confident manner
- Deal with all instances of violence, aggression, unsporting behaviour, foul play and other misconduct
- Never tolerate offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour from players and officials

- Support my match official colleagues at all times
- Set a positive personal example by promoting good behaviour and showing respect to everyone involved in the game
- Communicate with the players and encourage fair play
- Respond in a clear, calm and confident manner to any appropriate request for clarification by the team captains
- Prepare physically and mentally for every match
- Complete and submit, accurate and concise reports within the time limit required for games in which I officiate.

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, any/all of the following actions may be taken by my club, County FA or The FA.

I maybe:

- Required to meet with The FA/County FA Refereeing Official
- Required to meet with The FA/County FA Refereeing Committee.



Coaches, Team Managers and Club Officials

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour in the game.

In the FA's survey of 37,000 grassroots participants, behaviour was the biggest concern in the game. This included the abuse of match officials and the unacceptable behaviour of over competitive parents, spectators and coaches on the sideline.

Play your part and observe the FA's **Respect Code of Conduct** in everything you do.

On and off the field, I will:

- Show respect to others involved in the game including match officials, opposition players, coaches, managers, officials and spectators
- Adhere to the laws and spirit of the game
- Promote Fair Play and high standards of behaviour
- Always respect the match official's decision
- Never enter the field of play without the referee's permission
- Never engage in public criticism of the match officials
- Never engage in, or tolerate, offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour.

On and off the field, I will:

- Place the well-being, safety and enjoyment of each player above everything, including winning
- Explain exactly what I expect of players and what they can expect from me

- Ensure all parents/carers of all players under the age of 18 understand these expectations
- Never engage in or tolerate any form of bullying
- Develop mutual trust and respect with every player to build their self-esteem
- Encourage each player to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance
- Ensure all activities I organise are appropriate for the players' ability level, age and maturity
- Co-operate fully with others in football (e.g. officials, doctors, physiotherapists, welfare officers) for each player's best interests.

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, any/all of the following actions may be taken by my club, County FA or The FA.

I may be:

- Required to meet with the club, league or County Welfare Officer
- Required to meet with the club committee
- Monitored by another club coach
- Required to attend a FA education course
- Suspended by the club from attending matches
- Suspended or fined by the County FA
- Required to leave or be sacked by the club.

In addition:

- My FACA (FA Coaches Association) membership may be withdrawn.

Adult Players

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour in the game.

Players tell us they want a referee for every match, yet 7,000 match officials drop out each season because of the abuse and intimidation they receive on and off the pitch.

Respect your referee today and you may just get one for every match this season.

Play your part and observe The FA's **Respect Code of Conduct** for players at all times.

On and off the field, I will:

- Adhere to the Laws of The Game
- Display and promote high standards of behaviour
- Promote Fair Play
- Always respect the match officials' decisions
- Never engage in public criticism of the match officials
- Never engage in offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour
- Never engage in bullying, intimidation or harassment
- Speak to my team-mates, the opposition and my coach/manager with respect
- Remember we all make mistakes
- Win or lose with dignity. Shake hands with the opposing team and the referee at the end of every game.

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, any/all of the following actions may be taken by my club, County FA or The FA.

I may:

- Be required to apologise to team-mates, the other team, referee or team manager
- Receive a warning from the coach
- Receive a written warning from the club committee
- Be required to attend an FA education course
- Be dropped or substituted
- Be suspended from training
- Not be selected for the team
- Be required to serve a suspension
- Be fined
- Be required to leave the club.

In addition:

- The FA/County FA could impose a fine and/or suspension on the club.





Lose Respect
Lose the game

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