



Membership Matters - January 2025

Welcome to January's edition of Membership Matters. We hope all Members had an enjoyable festive period and are looking forward to the year of schools' football ahead. We ask that you share this email far and wide within your schools' football networks to ensure all members are kept as up to date as possible with ESFA activity and messages.

A welcome message from ESFA Chair, Nick Loftus

Good luck to everyone involved in schools' football for the rest of this season, I hope you all have a successful second half of your season; hopefully, the weather will improve, allowing us to organise even more football opportunities for children in our schools.

Many of you will be taking part in competitions with your school teams as well as District and County representative teams. Each game, regardless of the result, will create lasting memories and valuable learning experiences.

We all recognise the numerous benefits of competitive team sports, and we sincerely thank you for the countless hours you dedicate to organising football and making it accessible to all.

Although it may not always be obvious, I am certain that your efforts are appreciated, invaluable, and play a vital role in shaping young lives.

Best regards,
Nick Loftus



Schools' Football Week

Schools' Football Week (SFW) 2025 will be back in the calendars of schools across England from **Monday 31 March until Sunday 6 April** and for the first time, will run in partnership with Pokémon! Designed as an opportunity for schools, teams and Associations from across the country to embrace schools' football and the

wellbeing benefits it provides to pupils and players, the ESFA and Pokémon will be taking Schools' Football Week to new heights in 2025!

[Register for Schools' Football Week 2025](#)

[Find out more and access free resources](#)



ESFA Trustees

After a competitive recruitment process, we are delighted to confirm the appointment of three new external Trustees who commenced their tenure on 1st January 2025.

As a result of our search for an experienced strategic marketer, Ben Grant joins the Trustees with a background in the military and subsequently with experience as a strategic or special advisor to a number of sports in Scotland. Ben was a recipient of the highest commendation from the UK's internationally respected Centre for Leadership and Excellence, The RMA Sandhurst whilst in the British Army. He has also been awarded the Employer Brand Management Awards Europe Best Social Media strategy Silver award for the Army and was

recognised by SME magazine for the Best Esports Events Strategy in 2023. Ben also enjoyed being a Queen's Batonbearer for Commonwealth Games Scotland, by invitation due to sporting achievements within athletics and for voluntary contributions to sports and communities. Ben is looking forward to helping to raise the profile of the ESFA and to support new income generation ideas.

Our funding, finance and philanthropy appointment is Alma Donohoe. Alma's career has been in investment banking and venture capital, a career she embarked on having followed her degree from Cambridge University with and MBA with distinction from Harvard Business School. Alma has also played football for Crystal Palace and West Ham, having started playing whilst at school in London. She is currently a Treasurer Trustee at Football Beyond Borders, a UK charity which uses the power of football to change lives of young people. Alma's motivation comes partly from her nephew who plays for his school team and has made a fantastic group of friends as well as improving his footballing skills. Alma is looking forward to seeing how she can contribute to new funding/fundraising ideas to support the Association's growth.

Our EDI appointment is Toyin Higgs. Toyin's professional background is founded in supporting young people in education and through Children's Services where she managed complex services and complex cases. Toyin holds an MA in Community Education with professional accreditation in Youth and Community Work and currently consults on EDI matters. Key achievements in her EDI career include leading sports organisations to compliance with EDI expectations of Sport England and was the City Integration Manager for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. Toyin is also a Board Safeguarding Manager in a County FA as well as being a UEFA B licenced coach and an ECB cricket level 2 coach. Toyin is looking forward to supporting the ESFA to develop diversity strategies which help to solve some of our Association's challenges, such as recruiting new volunteers and reaching players who might not otherwise engage.

Safeguarding Support Visit Volunteers

We have a real need for some extra help to expand our safeguarding support visits (SSVs) , so we're getting in touch to see if you could possibly help out an upcoming game or training session and conduct an SSV.

The process simply involves asking the parents/ carers & coaches/ managers attending a match or a training session 4 set questions, and scoring their responses based on how you think they answered them. There is also space for any discussions with players (if they feel comfortable and the training/ game scenario allows). There is also space to ask a few slightly different questions to any committee members (if there are any present).

It takes just a few minutes to chat this through and thereafter, the office team will complete the process through a desk-top review for the Association and from both processes we can help

Associations to better protect the children under their supervision, and the adults who support them. We also use this process to identify good practice to share.

If you think this would be something you would be able to help us with, or have any questions, then please contact Joe Marsh via joe.marsh@schoolsfa.com or 07495 678668. We would be enormously grateful.

Opportunities for ESFA Membership

ESFA Enterprises, a subsidiary company of the English Schools' FA, is advertising a number of vacancies for their upcoming residential summer coaching camps, due to take place in July 2025.

The roles available are:

- Coaches + GK Coaches
- Chartered Physiotherapist
- Sports Therapist
- Deputy Head of Delegation
- Coaching Camp Administrator

Full details of the vacancies, including job descriptions and application forms can be found [here](#).



Vacancies



U14 BOYS' & U15 GIRLS' COACHING CAMP

COACH
CAMP ADMINISTRATOR
DEPUTY HEAD OF DELEGATION
PHYSIOTHERAPIST

U15 GIRLS' COACHING CAMP

SPORTS THERAPIST

Deadline

The deadline for submission is midday on 14th February

ESFA Enterprises is committed to the welfare of children and as such, the postholder will be required to have and retain a clear, in-date FA DBS check and to satisfactorily complete mandatory FA safeguarding training



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