



## **Membership Matters- September 2024**

Welcome to this new look edition of Membership Matters to kick off the 2024-25 schools' football season. We hope all Members have had an enjoyable start to the season and find the information below helpful and interesting. 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**

"I hope that you are looking forward to the new season of schools' football. If you are reading this short introductory paragraph from me, then I consider you to be part of our team that really values the benefits of providing schools' football to children across the country. There are thousands in our team and we are working hard to show our appreciation for each and every one of you and the invaluable work you do to organise schools' and representative football across our districts, counties and regions. Schools' football is both special and unique. Thank you. I hope that you have a great season."



### **Season Highlights in Representative Football**

The 2024-25 season has been a record-breaking one for representative football, with the ESFA's inter-association competitions receiving an unprecedented number of entries from Membership. The ESFA's portfolio of inter-association competitions has seen a 37% increase in entries since the start of the 2022-23 season, underscoring the continued growth of representative football across the country.

Now four years on from the shift from a knockout tournament format, the ESFA Champions' Cup group stage format continues to receive positive feedback. This format allows Districts to compete against a wider range of teams and participate in more fixtures throughout the season. Several Associations, that had previously opted out of national competitions, are now engaging with the new format, which provides additional fixtures and more opportunities for all teams.

This season, around half of the rep teams registered on the ESFA's portal are now taking part in national competitions, which is great for the participating teams. Thanks to those of you who are able to support our national activities.

**Supporting Rep Football:** The ESFA's "Support for Rep Football" campaign, introduced at the start of the 2024-25 season, offers reduced entry fees for new teams for their first two years of national competitions. The campaign also includes a fundraising initiative, where the ESFA matches the efforts of new teams up to £500, further supporting the launch of new representative teams this season. Additionally, the campaign has introduced [Rep Football Mentors](#)—experienced volunteers from across England—aimed at supporting new teams and providing guidance on creating new activities, fostering a sense of community and support within the volunteer network.

**Girls' Representative Football:** The growth of representative girls' football over the last decade has been phenomenal, with a 470% increase in national cup entries for girls. The ESFA continues to adapt and improve girls' representative competitions, adding more flexibility to scheduling Sunday matches and introducing a two-year age band for girls' inter-district competitions, ensuring even more opportunities for participation.

**Volunteering:** The ESFA's Volunteering Campaign has also relaunched for the 2024-25 season, focusing on helping Associations recruit volunteers for a variety of roles. This campaign seeks to support both existing and new Associations in expanding their activities and increasing opportunities for representative football.

**Safeguarding & Governance:** In line with the FA's Play Safe campaign, the ESFA's safeguarding team is providing Associations with respect barriers, high-visibility jackets, and Captain's armbands to promote safety and respect on the field.

A big thank you also goes out to all County Schools' FAs who've worked hard to to adopt the new SCOR-E rule structure.



The ESFA is pleased to present to Members a draft Service Pledge, outlining how we can support you in our shared mission to deliver schools' football. You can find the pledge [here](#). We'd be really pleased to hear your constructive feedback about the pledge and are happy to discuss further as and when you invite the CEO to join your events/meetings this year.

### **ESFA CEO event visits**

A reminder that ESFA CEO, Andrea Chilton, is keen to join you at one of your events or your meetings next season. Drop Andrea a note on [andrea.chilton@schoolsfa.com](mailto:andrea.chilton@schoolsfa.com) if there are particular dates which would work for you.

### **Does your Association need volunteers?**



The ESFA has recently launched a new [volunteer recruitment webpage](#) which gives Associations the opportunity to promote any volunteer vacancies with a view to sharing these opportunities to a much wider audience to help fill gaps within Associations.

Since the launch of the new volunteering campaign across the ESFA's social media channels, the webpage has received over 3,000 views, and we have had plenty of enquiries from individuals looking to volunteer across the country.

If you have any vacancies within your Association or need any additional support from volunteers, please ensure your Association Secretary fills out the form below to submit your vacancies.

Alternatively, please contact [daniel.Smith@schoolsfa.com](mailto:daniel.Smith@schoolsfa.com) to discuss any opportunities you have available.



**Volunteering opportunities**

Do you want to volunteer for your local Association...?

Scan the code to find out more 

<https://schoolsfootball.org/>



## Council and Trustee Vacancies

Following the AGM's approval to appoint external Trustees to the ESFA, three vacancies are now live, with Inclusive Boards appointed to act as our recruiter. They are also searching for co-opted Council Members in accordance with our Constitution. A vacancy to join council for a parent of a schools' footballer is live on our website [here](#). You can find the details on the trustees vacancies [here](#) and council vacancies [here](#).



## **ESFA Council welcomes new members**

The ESFA council consists of representatives from all areas of the England.

The primary responsibility of an ESFA Council Member is;

‘To direct and support matters relating to managing, running and delivering schools’ football along with any other matters as the charity trustees shall determine from time to time’

The ESFA council welcomes two new members for the 2024-25 season, Lisa Nisbet and Samantha Taylor-Whitehead.



It is important that members know who their representative is on the ESFA council, to find out who represents your area, see the representation table via the link [here](#).

### **ESFA Competition rules updated**

The ESFA's General completion rules have been updated for the start of the 24/25 schools' football season to bring our rules in line with the FA's SCORY guidelines.

View the updated rules document on our website [here](#).

### **Changes to U7-U11 Youth Schools' Football**

The ESFA Competitions team want to remind members of the FA's update on the new rule to be introduced to phase out heading in youth football over the next three seasons. The rule changes directly impact those of you involved in running schools' football, you can read more about the rule changes [here](#). Useful resources on when heading is allowed can be found [here](#) and when heading is not allowed [here](#).

### **ESFA International Project Manager vacancy**

The ESFA is pleased to advertise for the volunteer vacancy of Project Manager for the ESFA's international football programme for U15 schoolgirls and U18 schoolboys.

The successful candidate will take operational oversight of the administration of the ESFA's international football programme for U18 schoolboys and U15 schoolgirls,

ensuring all “behind the scenes” services/actions are tracked and effectively communicated.

For more information on the role and how to apply, click [here](#).

### **Insurance documents for 2024/25**

A reminder to members that updated insurance documents for the 2024/25 season can be downloaded via our website [here](#)

