



**Premier
League**

Foundation Phase – Season 2026/27

Parent/Carer Handbook

Welcome



The Academy system

The Academy experience



Some important rules to know

Communication





Welcome

Joining the Academy system is a wonderful opportunity for any child or young person. On behalf of everyone at the Premier League, we wish your child good luck as they begin their journey. You and your child should expect the quality of coaching, the standard of education and the all-round experience to be outstanding.

We expect all Academy Players to show commitment to and respect for their fellow players of all ages, for their coaches and their Club, and for both the Rules and the spirit of the game. The Premier League operates the Academy system on behalf of its clubs and works closely with the English Football League (EFL), The Football Association (FA) and the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA).

There are many things you will need to know as a parent or carer of an Academy Player. This handbook is designed to provide you with an introduction to the Academy system and information on how it works. There are also videos that help to explain the content of the individual subjects in the handbook, and a programme of workshops which are delivered at events and Academies throughout the season by the Premier League, in partnership with Clubs. The videos can be found on our parents hub.

This handbook contains the essential information you need to know about the system. If you would like any advice outside of your Club environment, the PFA's Youth Advisory Service offers an independent ear for young players and their parents. They can be reached by phone on 0161 236 0575 or email at youthadvisory@thepfa.co.uk. More information on the service and other places to get support including the PFA's Safety Net, can be found in the 'Communication section.'

The Elite Player Performance Plan

What we're creating

Unrivalled development environments

What we're doing

Supporting young people who are aspiring footballers to maximise their potential, on and off the pitch

How we're doing it

Elite player development & personal growth

What we care about

More and better players

A life-enriching experience

The health of our game

The Building Blocks

Talent ID

Player Pathway

Duty of Care

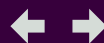
Workforce Development

Governance & Quality Assurance

Innovation & Insights

The Academy system is driven by a strategy called the Elite Player Performance Plan, or EPPP. The EPPP was launched in 2012 as a long-term plan to ensure the Premier League

and Clubs throughout the football pyramid develop more and better Home Grown players. Here's a short summary of what the EPPP means for Academy football:



The Elite Player Performance Plan

What we're creating

Unrivalled development environments

Recognised for producing more and better Home Grown players.

Respected for setting young people up for life.

Always raising the bar.



What we're doing

Supporting young people who are aspiring footballers to maximise their potential, on and off the pitch

They develop positive attitudes for life, and learn what it takes to win.

Breathtaking on the pitch.

Thriving everywhere else.



The Elite Player Performance Plan

How we're doing it

Elite player development

&

Personal growth

We help young people step out of their comfort zones to build unique strengths on the pitch.

Then we support them as they go even further, so they can win at the highest level.

We make sure young people get a good education and build well-rounded life skills.

They are empowered to reach their full potential, so they can succeed — whatever that means for them.



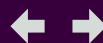
Marcus Rashford MBE

Manchester United Academy graduate, England international, and child rights campaigner



Ed Cook

Burnley and Watford Academy graduate, Loughborough University student, and Premier League Futures participant



The Elite Player Performance Plan

What we care about



More and better players

We embrace potential and empower aspiring footballers to achieve on-pitch excellence.

We create the right opportunities, and pathways to First Team football.



A life-enriching experience

We put the young person's interests first. We support their holistic development, equipping them to balance football with their personal lives.

So that whatever their future holds, they're better off for having been an Academy player.



The health of our game

We want everyone to be proud of our Academies and the environments we create.

We work together to stimulate investment in youth development – it is essential to improving football for the future.

What does success look like?



England leads all nations in the number of quality players developed.



Young Home Grown players break into, and regularly play for, First Teams across the professional game.



England teams top the world rankings and achieve major tournament success.



Time at an Academy is universally recognised as a positive experience.



The academic attainment of Academy players exceeds that of their peers nationally.



Academy graduates go on to achieve success beyond their time in the system.



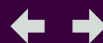
Youth development provides tangible benefits to clubs across all four divisions.



Academies promote equality, embrace diversity, and champion inclusion, allowing everyone to fulfil their potential.



Standards continue to improve across all categories of Academy and investment increases sustainably.





The building blocks that supports the Academy system include:

- Talent identification
- The Player Pathway
- Duty of Care
- Workforce Development
- Governance & Quality Assurance
- Innovation & Insights

This handbook will explain more about some of these areas, what to look out for at your Club and the essential 'need to know' rules, advice and guidance to best support your child through the journey

Your child's opportunity

Being part of an Academy is a great achievement, and something that every young person and their parents and carers can be proud of.

Hopefully, the life enriching experiences that your child will be offered will help them to develop as a person, as well as a player. It is very important to remember that every Academy Player will, at some point, stop playing football in the Professional Club environment. We hope that when that time comes, that they have had a memorable and largely positive journey. For some, they will go on to play professional football, but for others they won't. Regardless of where football takes them, they will have some great experiences ahead and probably some tough ones too, for example time out through injury, not playing as much or being released from an Academy.

It is important that, from the start of a young person's Academy journey, every effort is made to ensure that they don't feel defined by football or their performance, and they are able to maintain interests outside of football. In other words, they have a broader

identity. Tough times will very likely still be tough, but a young person with a broader identity will be able to cope better with these experiences, and they are also likely to perform better on the pitch too.

Some of the ways you can support their personal development is to maintain a healthy balance between the demands of life outside of football, including their education, to have other social and sporting interests away from football, as well as participate in the many opportunities that will come up for them off the pitch along their Academy journey.

So, wherever their journey ends, we hope that your child enjoys it.

The Academy system



Academy Classification

Each Academy is independently audited every year and placed in a category from one to four, this can be found on our parents hub. The Premier League works closely with its Clubs in between these audits to make sure that high standards are maintained and improved where they can be. The different categories of Academies reflect the type of programme provided. The rules that apply to Academies are called the Youth Development Rules.

You can find more detailed information about some of the topics covered in this handbook by reading the rules.

The environment at an Academy will be different depending on their category, but all categories of Academy are required to meet the Rules and standards determined by the League.

Academy Classification	Definition	Performance Pathway
Category One	This is the highest classification awarded to an Academy. It is an elite environment where Academy Players are provided with additional access to coaching and the potential of full-time education from U12. Category One Academies can recruit nationally from U14 provided the Academy Player is guaranteed access to a full-time Education Programme.	U9 to U21
Category Two	This is an elite development environment where Academy Players are typically recruited locally but gain access to additional coaching opportunities and educational support.	U9 to U21
Category Three	This is a development environment where Academy Players are provided with professional coaching and development opportunities.	U9 to U21
Category Four	Academies focus on their coaching and educational support for Academy Players in the Professional Development Phase (U17 to U21) only.	U17 to U21



The Academy experience



The Academy experience

Joining an Academy

Academy Registration

Everyone must complete a registration form and also provide a photo, along with a document to confirm your child's home address and date of birth. Your child remains registered with the Club for a period that depends on their age, and they will join an age group determined by the age they will be on 31st August. The length of their registration will depend on the time of year when the Club asks them to register.

Once your child has signed the form, the Premier League will process their registration. **If you and your child choose to cancel the agreement, you must contact the Premier League within seven days.**

Your child may be coached by and play for the Club during this initial seven day period. This is a very important time period when independent advice is important for Academy Players and their parent/carer.

Academy Induction

The induction is a meeting or series of meetings when your child's Academy will tell you about the provision of their coaching, education and support as well as what they can expect following registration. You will find out about their education and games programmes, and how their education programme will be managed. Induction is an important chance to get to know people at the Academy, and for them to get to know your child. Make the most of the opportunity to ask questions and get to know the staff.

The Performance Pathway

Helping all Academy Players to become independent decision makers is one of the main aims of the Academy system. Alongside on-field training and games, athletic development, performance lifestyle and psychology programmes will be delivered to improve the knowledge, skills and understanding your child will need to become the best they can be both on, and off the field.

We call the development journey of an Academy Player the 'Performance Pathway'. Players can join and leave at different ages or points and can progress into the professional game or another career. Your child's Club's coaches, backed by a wide range of other specialist services, support Academy Players through each phase of the pathway.



Your child is in the Foundation Phase.



Academy Performance Plan

Each Academy has a performance plan which follows the Club's principles, values, playing style and their tactical approach. This plan tells you about the games and education programmes, the sport science and medicine services support as well as coaching on the pitch. Your child's Academy has a team of specialist medical and sport science staff to provide a high level of medical care during training sessions and games. Your child's Academy Manager will introduce your child to these specialist staff at the induction.

Coaching Curriculum

The age group your child is in will affect the coaching contact they will receive. The number of coaching sessions should increase as they progress along the Performance Pathway. A guide for the minimum hours they can expect in the Foundation Phase are in the following table

Category	Category Foundation Phase – U9 to U11
One	Four coaching hours per week rising to eight hours for older Academy Players
Two	Four coaching hours per week rising to six hours for older Academy Players
Three	Four coaching hours per week
Four	Not applicable

Note: These coaching contact times are a guide and your child's coach will adjust their weekly curriculum according to their specific needs and the individual programme that they are on.



Academy Games Programme Principles



Foundation Phase (FP)
U9 – U11

Inspires a love for the game by developing fundamental skills and confidence through a player centered approach.

Youth Development Phase (YDP)
U12 – U16

Enhances tactical awareness, psychological resilience, and technical ability through varied formats and competitions.

Professional Development Phase (PDP)
U17 – U21

Facilitates the transition to first-team football by challenging players through a variety of competitive environments.



Premier League Academy Games Programme

The Games Programme aims to embed a holistic approach to player development, ensuring all players gain experiences that will enhance their love for football whilst developing life skills. The Foundation Phase delivers a diverse range of experiences including best v best and opportunities for players to extend and consolidate their learning.

Foundation Phase games are played locally, usually on Sundays, and include regular tournaments that involve three or more clubs. Matches are small-sided games and take place on age-appropriate pitches.

We deliver a wide range of formats within our event programme to develop game understanding. The 2025/26 season will see the implementation of new events to enhance the current programme, such as the quad fixtures, as well as the continuation of the triangular fixture initiative. This initiative aims to increase the variety and number of fixtures within the current weekend fixture programme. The national festivals and tournaments will continue to be a staple of

the programme and provide Clubs with the opportunity to play other Clubs outside their normal Games Programme, alongside plenty of game time. These events are in addition to the extensive indoor programme over the winter period, which runs from November through to the end of February.

Subject to fitness, your child will participate in at least 50% of match playing time reasonably spread out in any one season. This doesn't mean 50% of every game, every week, but across the total games played in a season. This rule only applies to Premier League Games Programme matches and events, and not to other events such as overseas tours and tournaments.

We strive to enhance, innovate, and add value, by adopting creative formats within a healthy environment. The overall aim is to provide players with the chance to experience environments that will aid their development. Throughout this season, consultation with Clubs has been fundamental in terms of decision making and the shaping of the programme.

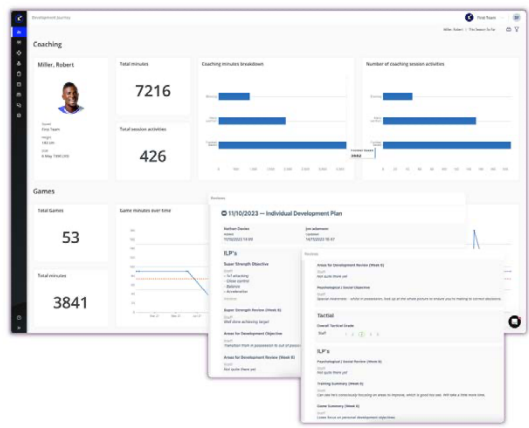


Development Journey

Your child is entitled to regular feedback on their development at the Club. Their Academy will use the Development Journey to record, measure and monitor all aspects of their progress. It is your child's record of achievement and of the time spent not only at the current Club, but also throughout their football career.

The Development Journey stores information which is input using a system called the Football Intelligence Platform (FIP). This information can include the number of games played and the data from those games, the coaching received, educational progress, the sport science data that has been collected (i.e. fitness data) as well as medical data, such as injuries sustained and the rehabilitation undertaken.

A lot of the information that goes into the Development Journey will come from the multidisciplinary reviews that happen four times per season as well as each training session or game that a player is involved in. These reviews cover each of the areas (or disciplines) worked on during each player's time at the Club e.g. games, coaching, education and sport science & medicine. Your child's Development Journey is made available to them by each Club. If your child moves to another Club, they take it with them.



Academy Duty of Care

There are three pillars which underpin and unite our safeguarding, player care, and education provision. They are Prepare, Empower and Protect.

	Prepare	Empower	Protect
Safeguarding	Working together to create supportive environments where Academy Players are safe, valued and respected	Everyone to protect themselves and others	Academy Player safety and welfare
Player Care	Academy Players for the day-to-day challenges they may face, both inside and outside of football	Academy Players to make informed decisions about their wellbeing and future	Academy Player wellbeing – mental, emotional, and physical
Education	Academy Players for a career within and beyond football	Academy Players to become independent decision-makers	Academy Player academic potential and aspirations during their football careers



Safeguarding

The Premier League places great importance on safeguarding children and adults at risk and we believe that everyone has the right to enjoy football in a safe and inclusive environment. We have safeguarding rules in place that Clubs must follow to promote and protect the safety and welfare of children and young people.

Your child's Club safeguards its Academy Players in lots of different ways:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; however, the Club has in place a dedicated full-time Head of Safeguarding and an Academy Safeguarding Officer. The members of staff fulfilling these roles are at the heart of Clubs' development of young talent and can provide you and your child with support and advice. It is important to know who the Club's Safeguarding Team are and how to contact them
- Getting the right people involved. Your child's Club must make sure that they only work with suitable people and organisations who also believe in keeping children and young people safe
- Creating a safer environment. Your child's Club has safeguarding policies, procedures, and guidelines in place which everyone must follow
- Empowerment and education. Your child's Club must make sure that people who work for them know what their responsibilities are by giving them regular training. They have a responsibility to educate and empower children and young people by helping them understand their rights and where they can get help or advice if they need it
- Getting advice and reporting concerns. Clubs must ensure you are aware of where and how you can get advice and report concerns



Working together to protect and empower young people

The Premier League want to help children and young people feel safe, valued, and empowered. We have teamed up with Childline to give information about issues which may be worrying your children, and the support available. Whatever is on their mind, the Premier League and Childline are there to support them.

Visit our website for information: www.premierleague.com/safeguarding.



Our Safeguarding Team can be contacted by emailing safeguarding@premierleague.com or by calling 020 7864 9000 to speak to a member of the Safeguarding Team for advice, to raise a concern or to help you get in touch with your child's Club Safeguarding Team.



Adults can contact the NSPCC helpline by calling 0808 800 5000 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk to get advice or share their concerns about a child, anonymously if they wish. Trained professionals are available between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday.



Childline is a free and confidential service for children and young people up to their 19th birthday. They are available any time, day, or night. Your child can contact them by phone, by email or through their 1-2-1 counsellor chat service. Visit their website for further advice or support www.childline.org.uk.





Visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk for advice on staying safe online. Your child can contact them confidentially if something has happened online which has made them feel unsafe, if you or your child are worried about somebody else, or to report online abuse.

It is important to familiarise yourself with your child's Club policy on the use of social media sites. This policy will outline what is and what is not acceptable.

Player Care

Each Category One, Two or Three Academy has a Head of Player Care who coordinates the personal, social, and emotional development of Academy Players. They work as part of a multi-disciplinary team to ensure your son receives the best support during his Academy journey. The Head of Player Care will work on and will coordinate a series of workshops for your son's personal development as part of the Life Skills and Personal Development programme.

The Life Skills and Personal Development programme, supported by the PFA, aims to improve the holistic development of players during their time in the Premier League and to prepare them for life inside and outside of football, as well as helping their performance on the pitch. The topics covered include:

- Mental and emotional wellbeing
- Physical health
- Preparing for the future
- Communications and media
- Financial education
- Inspirational speakers
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE)
- Sustainability

The Premier League, alongside the PFA and Sporting Chance, work with clubs to develop their action plans and Mental and emotional wellbeing strategies to ensure all Academy players are supported during their experience and beyond.

Our aim is to help players achieve excellence at every level of their journey, ensuring we have a diverse and inclusive culture of continuous learning and that we are working together with Clubs and our partners. To do this, it is very important to capture the voices of the players and their parents and carers on the Academy experience and how we can ensure that we are providing the best possible support for all involved. The Head of Player Care will inform you of the mechanisms in place at your club for you and your son and the Premier League will continue to gather feedback through activities such as at our Games Programme events and Parent Focus Groups.

Education

Your child's Education Programme is a core component of their football development and will help them achieve a productive and fulfilling life, both on and off the field. You and your child should receive regular feedback on their progress. If you have any questions, concerns or queries about your child's education, contact your Club's Head of Education.

The Head of Education at your child's Club oversees the programme and will:

- Liaise with your child's school to ensure that their football commitments do not affect their levels of progress at school
- Where appropriate, make sure your child follows a formal education programme that supports them to achieve their academic potential
- Offer advice on all aspects of the education programme
- Agree any additional support your child might need, for example, if they have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Training Model

There are three education models that your child may follow whilst at the Club. These are called Training Models and the education on each of them is delivered differently. Which model your child follows will depend on the phase they are in on the Performance Pathway and what is right for both their academic development and their football development. The three training models are:

Part-time Training Model (PTTM)

This is the only model available in the Foundation Phase. On the PTTM your child attends the Academy in the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays. Their Academy will keep in regular contact with the school and provide reports to them about their progress. The Club will monitor your child's progress to ensure the football programme is not having a negative effect on their progress at school.

It will be permitted, on a case by case basis, for Academy Players to participate in grassroots football if it is deemed to be in their best interests. These decisions will be made yearly by your child's Club Academy Manager and the time played in grassroots games will not count towards the minimum game time requirements.

Hybrid Training Model (HTM)

On the HTM your child is released from school to attend the Academy for part of their weekly timetable. This model can only be used in the Youth Development Phase and it will depend on your child's age and your child's Club programme if it is available to them. Up to two school days may be used for the HTM, provided that the educational provision is approved by the league and that the Academy player has signed consent from both their parent/guardian and the child's school.

Full-time Training Model (FTTM)

This model can only be used in the Youth Development Phase by Category One Academies that operates a FTTM. To facilitate the FTTM your child will need to reside within the one and a half hour travel restrictions as outlined in the Youth Development Rules.

Time/Distance Regulations

Your child can only be registered with a Club if they live within a limited travel time of the Club's Academy location. As a player registered in the Foundation Phase your child must live within 60 minutes of the Club's Academy. These journey time allowances increase in the next phase (YDP) to 90 minutes. The only exceptions to this is where an Academy Player joins a Category One Academy and is offered the Full-time Training Model (FTTM). This can only be offered for the U14 to U16 age groups, or where the young person is geographically disadvantaged, then he may be registered with his nearest club.



Heading

English football has introduced heading guidelines for players of all levels. The heading in training guidelines can be accessed using the QR code below. The guidance has been prepared using a precautionary approach to protect player welfare, and recommendations vary depending on a player's age.

Youth-heading-guidance-chart.pdf

The Premier League has also developed a specific FAQ document on heading that parents can access through the parent hub.

Medical

The Premier League requires all Clubs to provide high levels of medical care for Players, which includes the provision of Doctors and Physiotherapists. These practitioners are trained to high standards, must hold specialist emergency pitch side first aid qualifications, and have a presence at all games and training sessions.

Concussion

Academy medical teams follow the FA's return to play guidance should a player sustain a concussion. Parents will play an important role in supporting the 'FA graduated return to play protocol' which is available from:

<https://www.englandfootball.com/concussion> Club medical teams will work closely with parents advising them how they can support if required.

Club medical teams

Please note, that everyone within the game follows the principle "If in doubt, sit them out."



Some important rules to know



Some important rules to know

Codes of Conduct

A Code of Conduct is a set of expectations for how we should behave whilst at the Academy, during Games Programme fixtures and at Premier League events. There is a version for Clubs, Academy Players, and their parents or carers. These documents

are very important and must be followed to help create and maintain a safe and fun environment. Your child's Club may have their own versions too. Here are the Premier League Codes of Conduct.

Premier League Player, Parent/Carer Code of Conduct

The Academy Player agrees to:

- Attend the Academy regularly, be on time and do their very best to behave with self-discipline and let the staff know if you will be absent
- Practice the techniques and skills taught by the Academy and do their very best to try them in matches
- Do their very best in their education
- Try to follow a healthy lifestyle such as spending leisure time positively; eating, drinking, relaxing and sleeping sensibly
- Communicate with the Academy staff, and let them know about anything that affects them and their football
- Never, ever bully or abuse anyone, including being violent or discriminatory in any way, at the Academy or away from it, such as online or at school
- Follow the Code of Conduct and rules for their Club and Academy

The parent(s)/carer(s) agree to:

- Support the Academy Player to meet targets, including this Code and any Code of Conduct issued separately by the Club and/or any rules for its Academy
- Support the Academy Player without pressure, praise good work and don't criticise their mistakes. Remember, they are children!
- Be a good role model for the Academy Player and other parents/carers
- Not approach or engage in communication, either directly or indirectly, with another Academy whilst the Academy Player is registered with an Academy, except for when it is permitted by the Youth Development Rules
- Communicate with the Academy staff about any issues of concern and to keep them informed about any matters affecting the Academy Player
- Adhere to any Code of Conduct issued by the Club and/or any rules for its Academy



Club Code of Conduct

The Club agrees to:

- Provide a safe and inclusive environment in which the Academy Player can learn and develop free from abuse, bullying, mistreatment and discrimination in any form;
- Ensure all staff receive regular safeguarding training approved by the Club's Head of Safeguarding and have been subject to safer recruitment procedures;
- Protect the welfare of the Academy Player, including their mental and emotional wellbeing;
- Ensure medical screening, monitoring and support for the Academy Player;
- Provide a structured football learning programme appropriate to the age, ability and growth of the Academy Player;
- Provide participation in football matches arranged or approved by the Premier League as part of the Games Programme;
- Provide trained and qualified coaching and other staff and facilities as determined by the Youth Development Rules;
- Provide guidelines to the Academy Player and parent(s)/carer(s) on the best ways for them to contribute to the Academy Player's football and personal development;
- Provide compensatory education and support (in consultation with the Academy Player's parent(s)/carer(s) and school) for the continued academic and personal development of the Academy Player, appropriate to their educational needs and training model;
- Provide regular communication and reports to the Academy Player and parent(s)/carer(s) on their progress;
- Provide any additional Code(s) of Conduct and/or Rules for its Academy

Games Programme Expectations of Children and Young People Playing

We would like everyone to have a great time at our Games Programme events. You can play your part on and off the pitch, by...

Working together

- With your teammates, and your Club's staff. Listen to each other. Help each other – especially when things get tough
- Follow the rules. Before, during and after games. For example, make sure you wear your Club's kit and your accreditation pass when you're at the venues and the hotel; and always stay with your team unless you've got permission to leave with a safe adult
- Practice being a great leader and setting a good example for others

Showing respect

- For the people – your teammates, the other team, referees, Club and event staff... even when things get tough. If someone says or does something to upset you, tell an adult you trust
- For the places – the venue, transport and hotels. Leave things better than you found them!
- Be kind. On the pitch and off it too. To people you know, and people you don't. Above all – to yourself

Doing your best

- Be yourself. It's probably how you got here
- Keep your head up – even when things don't go your way
- Work hard

If you don't meet any of these expectations, we hope that you will put it right. If not, or for more serious issues, we might need to speak to you, your parents/carers and/or your Club.



Games Programme Spectator Code of Conduct

These expectations have been written by children and young people who are current Academy Players in the Foundation and Youth Development Phases.

They would like all parents, carers and spectators to:

- Be kind, calm, encouraging and supportive
- Be their biggest fan, not their biggest critic
- Be positive in your communication, including your body language
- Praise their effort, even if things aren't going well on the pitch
- Never distract players during matches
- Let the players play, the coaches coach and the referees, referee
- Avoid using upsetting, offensive, discriminatory language or behaviour towards anyone

The Premier League expects spectators to adhere to the following event rules:

- As a condition of entry, you must present your ticket/accreditation and photo identification
- Never pass on your ticket/accreditation to anyone else
- Always wear your spectator wristband
- Never bring prohibited items¹
- Comply with event safety procedures and instructions from event staff

- Refrain from any form of bullying, harassment, abusive or disrespectful language or behaviour
- Refrain from distracting or criticising the children and young people participating – they have the right to take part in a safe, respectful and enjoyable environment
- Respect all decisions made by coaches, referees and match officials
- Remain within designated spectator areas. Spectators are not permitted within the field of play, player accommodation, changing areas or other restricted areas
- Only take photos of children you have parental responsibility for. Filming is not permitted
- Spectators are responsible for the safety and supervision of the children in their care
- Smoking, vaping and consumption of alcohol (including alcohol-free variants) is not permitted

Spectators should report any concerns to our event staff without delay.

The Premier League reserves the right to determine appropriate action for breaches of this code of conduct. This may include being refused entry, ejected from the event and/or prevented from attending future events.

¹ Prohibited items: flares, fireworks, whistles, horns, laser devices, drones, unauthorised professional photography or filming equipment, animals (except service dogs), alcohol, illegal drugs or legal highs, weapons or any article that might be used as a weapon and/or compromise public safety, or any items which may cause disruption to the event.



Anti-Discrimination

Discrimination is sadly still part of our society. We don't want it to play any part within our game. The Premier League has very clear Discrimination Reporting Protocols in place that were informed by youth Academy Players to increase protection from discrimination. They should be briefed on the protocol before every match and at every Premier League Event.

Discrimination can also be reported directly to your Club, for example to the Safeguarding Team, as well as to Kick it Out.



**IF YOU SEE IT
OR HEAR IT,
REPORT IT**

**'It' is discrimination, in all its forms.
Racism. Homophobia, Misogyny. Disablism.**

**If you have seen it or heard it, follow
the QR code to report it to Kick It Out.
Together, we can put an end to it.**



Scouts, Agents and approaches

What is a Scout?

A Scout represents a Club and is responsible for identifying talented young players. They often become trusted people for Academy Players and their families. Scouts must be registered with the Club who is responsible for ensuring high standards of behaviour. You should always confirm a Scout's identity with the Club. If you are concerned about an approach from a Scout, contact your child's Club Head of Safeguarding immediately.

What is an Agent?

Formerly known as an Intermediary – Agents act on behalf of a player or a Club and may represent a player and/or a Club in contractual negotiations and on registration issues. An Approach to a Minor or their legal guardian in relation to any Football Agent Services or Other Services shall not be made before 1 September in the Academic Year in which the Minor reaches the age of 16. Subject to the foregoing, such an Approach to a Minor may only be made once prior written consent has been obtained from the Minor's legal guardian. Agents can be helpful at the right time, but some can break the rules and be unhelpful. If you are concerned about an approach from an Agent, contact your child's Club Head of Safeguarding immediately and also report it to The FA using their email, Intermediaries@thefa.com or by using The FA Intermediaries Hotline and calling 0844 980 8213. You or your child can also seek advice from the PFA's Youth Advisory Service.

Approaches

While registered at an Academy, you or your child are not allowed to contact any other Premier League or EFL Clubs during the agreed registration period either directly or through someone else. Likewise, other Premier League or EFL Clubs (via members of staff, Scouts, or Agents), must not contact you or your child or any person connected

with you or your child, directly, or through someone else. This includes contact by or with another family member, or anyone else connected to you or your child.

Registrations, offers and moving to another Academy

End of Season Procedure

Towards the end of each registration period, your child's Club will confirm in writing its plan for their registration for the next season. If the Club intends to renew their registration, your child must decide whether they want to accept or refuse their Club's offer.

Renewing your Registration

If they are happy to stay registered at the Club, your child does not need to do anything. Their Club will notify the Premier League, and their registration will be retained for a further period, depending on their age.

Declining Extended Registration

If your child chooses to decline the offer of an extended registration period, you or they must tell their Club and the League in writing by the first Saturday in June. After your child receives confirmation from the League, they will then be able to seek registration at another Club, depending on the rules relating to travel distance.

If your child refuses an offer of retention and a new Club wishes to register your child, the new Club will have to pay money called compensation to your child's previous Club. It's also important to know that your child cannot be offered a professional contract until their U16 year or enter into one until they are 17 years old.



Leaving the Academy

Releasing an Academy Player from registration can be a difficult time. Academy Players and parents/carers should remember that involvement in the programme is a tremendous achievement in itself. If your child's Club does not wish to extend their registration then it is expected to provide support by, for example, helping find opportunities for your child to continue their football development elsewhere.

Requesting Cancellation

During your child's registration period, their registration may only be cancelled if everyone agrees (the Club, player, and their parent/carer). If your child has concerns that might lead to them wanting to leave, they should be supported to talk to the Academy Manager.

If all parties agree then a player's registration can be cancelled by completion of a form. If the parties don't agree, then any person involved can also ask the Premier League to provide a binding decision on a termination request by making a written application providing full reasons for the request. Compensation may still be owed to the Club should your child wish to register with a new one.

Inducements

Clubs are not allowed to encourage players to register with them by offering cash or some other benefit in kind to you, your child, or anyone connected to you. This is called inducement and you or your child must not accept anything that is offered. Inducement could be breaking the Premier League's Rules, and the rules cover registration with a new Club, or re-signing with a Club they may already be registered with. Inducements can be anything from cash payments to the payment or reimbursement of accommodation or travel costs. It is of course understood by the League that some expenses are genuine and guidance is available upon request explaining which payments are allowed. If you have any

doubts whether something might be an inducement, you or your child should contact the Premier League before accepting anything. Remember, if you or your child have accepted an inducement, there could be serious consequences, including a potential sanction from the Premier League and/or termination or refusal of your child's registration.

Investigating a Move to Another Club

If your child has had a previous registration where compensation is owing to their former club, your child and the two Clubs may need to attend an exit interview to talk through the circumstances of their proposed move. This is a process that has been agreed by all Clubs and is intended to make sure that no rules have been broken in relation to the move.

As part of the process, you, your child together with the Club that they wish to move to, will also need to sign a declaration that no approach has been made to you or your child prior to the relevant date, nor has any inducement been paid or offered to you or your child or anyone connected with you or your child to encourage them to move Academy. Following this process, you or your child may be asked to provide certain documents and/or other information to the Premier League to ensure that all Rules have been complied with. As an example, phone records and bank statements covering the last year may be requested.

You and your child should be aware that this process can potentially take a few weeks and while it is ongoing, your child will not be able to train with or play for the new Club's Academy. We appreciate that this can be inconvenient and can be a time of uncertainty, but it is an extremely important part of ensuring the integrity of the Academy system and the Premier League Rules. We will endeavour to ensure the process is completed as soon as possible.



Reporting

If you or your child have any concerns about approaches, inducements, or any other breaches of the Youth Development Rules by anyone involved in the system that you don't feel able to report directly to a Club, the Premier League has a confidential reporting service that is constantly monitored (and which can be used anonymously if you wish) where you can share those concerns. If you have anything you wish to report, please email reporting@premierleague.com.

Compensation Formula

Compensation is money paid by your child's new Club to their previous Club to cover training and development costs if they decline an offer of extended registration. Clubs are required to calculate compensation based upon an annual fixed fee which relates to the age group of the Academy Player and the category of Academy the Player was registered with. The full compensation formula can be found within the Premier League Youth Development Rules.

Compensation Formula

Age group	Category One	Category Two	Category Three
U9	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
U10	£10,000	£8,750	£7,500
U11	£15,000	£12,500	£10,000

Academy players and their parents/carers do not pay these fees, do not receive any money, and will have no involvement in these conversations. Compensation does not need to be paid if the player was released from their registration by the Club, at the end of the registration period.



Communication



Communication

Independent Advice

We pride ourselves on the quality of the Academy system and we are committed to ensuring that Academy Players, trialists, parents and carers gain the right advice and support. An important aspect of this

is the independent advice provided, for young people and their parents, by The Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) Youth Advisory Service. The PFA also provide a confidential service for young players called the PFA Safety Net.



Professional Footballers' Association

THE PFA SAFETY NET

Helping young players with the challenges of playing academy football

PFA.OUR-SAFETY.NET

REGISTER TO ACCESS CONFIDENTIAL ADVICE, SUPPORT & VIDEOS



THE PFA INDEPENDENT YOUTH ADVISORY SERVICE

Signing for an academy is an exciting opportunity for any child and their family, but it's also an introduction to the highly competitive, complex nature of football. The Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) is not affiliated with leagues, clubs or governing bodies, so they can provide accurate, free and impartial information about the academy system and what it entails.

The PFA Independent Youth Advisory Service can offer Academy Players, Trialists and their families advice about:

- Premier League & English Football League Youth Development Rules
- Academy Registrations
- Academy Inductions
- Contractual Offers
- Football Association and FIFA Regulations
- Scholarship Offers
- End-of-Season Procedures and Requesting Release
- Compensation, Time and Distance Rules and Regulations
- Player Development, Including Coaching and Education Rules
- Player Welfare
- Intermediary / Agent

The PFA is the union for all current and former footballers and scholars in the Premier League, the Women's Super League, and the English Football Leagues.

The PFA team provide the information, advice and support current, former and future players need to help maximise the opportunities that come with playing professional football.

As the only football organisation that solely prioritises players' needs, the PFA offers a variety of educational, financial and wellbeing support services. The union also protects and enhances players' rights and working conditions and helps footballers navigate personal or professional challenges throughout their playing careers and beyond.



youthadvisory@thepfa.com



0330 236 8850



Complaints

Complaints Procedure

Communication	It is usually in everyone’s interest that issues and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to invoke formal procedures.
Complaints procedure	If you or your child are unable to resolve your complaint through informal discussions, the Academy’s formal complaints process should be followed.
Outcome and appeals	If you or your child are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, follow the appeals or internal escalation process outlined in your child’s Club Academy’s complaints procedure.
Escalation	If you or your child are dissatisfied with the conclusions reached by their Club, including through its appeals/internal escalation process, you or your child may escalate your complaint to the Premier League. The Premier League will respond within seven days and will provide an outcome within 28 days where possible. If these timescales are not achievable, you and your child will be kept informed.

T 0207 864 9000
E youthdevelopment@premierleague.com

There are separate procedures for dealing with safeguarding concerns about Academy Players. These concerns must be reported to the Club’s Head of Safeguarding or Academy Safeguarding Officer without delay. Our Safeguarding Team can be contacted by calling 0207 864 9000 or by emailing safeguarding@premierleague.com to raise a concern or to help you get in touch with the Club’s Safeguarding Team.



The key people

Use your child’s induction to get to know key members of staff at their Club, and to get answers to you or your child’s questions. Make a note of contact details so you can get in touch easily when you need to.

Job Title	Name	Contact Details
Academy Manager		
Academy Coach		
Club Doctor		
Physio		
Academy Coach		
Head of Sports Science and Medicine		
Head of Education		
Head of Academy Coaching		
Academy Safeguarding Officer		
Club Head of Safeguarding		
Head of Player Care		
Premier League Academy Support Manager		

Premier League

Brunel Building
57 North Wharf Road
London W2 1HQ

Premierleague.com

T +44 (0) 20 7864 9000
F +44 (0) 20 7864 9001
E info@premierleague.com