

General Information Appendix

Safety and impairment considerations

An awareness of safety is paramount in all coaching sessions and competitions, irrespective of whether there are disabled players or non-disabled players. Similarly all coaches need to be aware of any personal conditions and impairment-specific issues which may influence what is included in the session or how it is managed. The following includes basic information for coaches about how to provide safe football for all players.

You are encouraged to:

- Reflect on your current practice with regard to safety and to identify the key safety factors.
- Consider the importance of treating each player as a unique individual (as you should in all coaching situations) and assess the impact that an impairment may have on someone.
- Adapt your coaching practice to work effectively and safely with disabled players, assessing the same safety and personal factors as you would for non-disabled players.

There are additional factors to consider when working with disabled players to ensure a safe environment and coaching practice. Remember disabled players will be well aware of their own individual needs and will have their own ways of dealing with personal and safety considerations.

Other factors you might need to consider include the possibility that some disabled players may:

- Tire more quickly and so need shorter work intervals with longer rests.
- Find it harder to concentrate. For example, visually impaired players may find it difficult to remain focused in a noisy sports hall.
- Experience poor balance and co-ordination and so may be prone to injuries.
- Need extra safety considerations for emergency evacuation as well as for access (e.g. there should be visual warnings as well as auditory ones for fire or bomb warnings).

Although the disabled players will probably not need to be told how to look after themselves, it is important for coaches to understand their needs and provide for them during training and competition. Players may need more time and assistance in getting ready for the activity and also more time and assistance after the activity is completed.

Effective Communication

Language, whether written or spoken, is the way a coach communicates coaching points, tactics, facts, information, opinions and attitudes to anyone involved with a club or school. It's important to recognise that the words and terminology you use demonstrate, intentionally or unintentionally, your attitudes to and understanding of different groups in society.

Language is powerful. It can be used to raise people up or put people down; to encourage or to humiliate.

Terminology can create problems but should not be a barrier to including disabled people in your coaching sessions. Do not be afraid of 'using the wrong words'. However, prior to working with disabled people a coach should consider:

- How should you refer to an impairment or a disabled person?
- What is acceptable terminology today?
- What do disabled people prefer?
- How will you deal with someone who says something offensive?

Disabled people have the right to decide the terms they choose to describe themselves and this is why there is not always universal agreement about the correct use of language and terms. It also explains why language changes over time. Words that were in common usage 50 years ago may now be out of date and offensive and have been changed by the people they affect.

Some words and terms that are acceptable now are:

- Wheelchair user.
- Person has the particular syndrome, e.g. Downs Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy.
- Learning Difficulty.
- Disabled person.
- Non-disabled people.
- Person has an impairment, e.g. hearing, speech, visual/partially sighted or learning difficulty.
- Person is blind/deaf.
- Mental health issues.
- Accessible toilets (toilets are not disabled!).

Avoid:

- Able-bodied.
- People with a disability/disabilities.

These examples are for guidance and education only. They should not be taken as literal guidance as each case must be judged in its own context.

Other things you can consider:

- Find out which words and terms are being used.
- Ask other people or contact relevant organisations (use them consistently). If you do say something inappropriate then apologise immediately and learn from this.
- Make sure the language you use is sensitive and appropriate. Make sure the context, tone and intent are sensitive and relevant.
- Acknowledge to yourself that, on occasions, you may use words that cause offence. Learn from this and seek to use language that is equitable for all people.
- If you hear someone saying something inappropriate, you have the duty to deal with it according to your Club or School policy.

Disabled people may have an individual, personal way of referring to their own disability. If you feel uncomfortable with a term, discuss it with the individual, but never assume what is acceptable to one player is acceptable to another, even if they have similar impairments.

Coaching techniques

What is Long-term Player Development?

In any sport, you must look at what is needed to develop the athlete to reach their maximum potential. It is important in a child's development that we introduce basic physical literacy. These fundamental principles of movement will provide the core skills, which must be in place as the athlete develops. While other sports will promote Long-term Athlete Development, in football, we have developed a Long-term Player Development 4-corner Model (LTPD).

What is the 4-corner Model?

Historically, football, when developing its players, has concentrated on the technical and tactical corners. The premise of Long-term Player Development advocates the development of fundamental movement skills, in a multi-sport concept. Football already encourages many of the basic physical literacy skills the young person needs to develop, and these natural football physical outcomes have been enhanced to become the physical corner. In addition to these two corners, The FA also believes that, to develop the whole player at all levels, the coach needs to encourage development in the social corner and the psychological corner. The 4-corner Model applies to all players, regardless of age or ability. The emphasis on the corners may change depending on where the player is within the development pathway.

Considerations when coaching disabled players

- We recognise that each player will have their own needs and dependent on their opportunities may or may not possess the same skills as their non-disabled peers.
- If any player has not been involved in playing football for a length of time, they may lack some of the skills that are highlighted within the 4-corner Model for similar age players who have had the opportunity to participate regularly.
- The 4-corner Model applies to all players, no matter what their age or ability is. The emphasis may change dependent on where the player is within the development pathway.

Examples of Building Blocks for the Player Development Continuum

Technical	Physical	Psychological	Social
16 to 20 years old			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming technically proficient • Executing correct techniques on demand • Contributing to team play, time and space • Producing the techniques required to support defending and attacking strategies • Muscle mass gains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strength improves • Power increases • Lactate training • Recovery time improves • Full potential is progressively achieved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifestyle skills • Developing a stable temperament • Understanding • Communication • Advanced coping strategies are developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing emotional stability • Being socially responsible • Recognising cultural differences • Dealing with conflict • Appreciating others
11 to 16 years old			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving technique • Skill execution • Understanding the role in the team • Attacking principles • Defending principles • Individuals, units and groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adolescent growth spurt • Aerobic development • Changing shape • Early/late maturation • Athleticism changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-concept • Awareness • Responsibility • Goal setting • Confidence • Coping strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting responsibility • Fair play • Peer group features • Values and beliefs • Appropriate behaviours
5 to 11 years old			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic techniques • 'Ball and the Wall' activities • Improving basic skills • Group practice • Games as the teacher • Rotation of positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Agility • B Balance • C Coordination • S Speed • C Catching • P Passing • K Kicking • R Running • J Jumping • T Throwing • Motor control • Mixed activities • Multi-skills • Basic screening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning • Enthusiasm • Imagination • Exploration • Avoiding anxiety and boredom • Progressive introduction to mental skills • Progressive group activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fun and enjoyment • Support from parents and schools • Inclusion and participation • Form relationships • Safe environment • Simple rules and ethics