

**CHILD  
WELLBEING  
AND  
PROTECTION  
STRATEGY  
2019–2024  
GETTING IT RIGHT  
FOR EVERY CHILD  
IN SCOTTISH  
FOOTBALL**



**NOTHING  
MATTERS  
MORE**

# CHILD WELLBEING AND PROTECTION STRATEGY 2019-2024

GETTING IT RIGHT  
FOR EVERY CHILD IN  
SCOTTISH FOOTBALL



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# INTRODUCTION FROM OUR BOARD

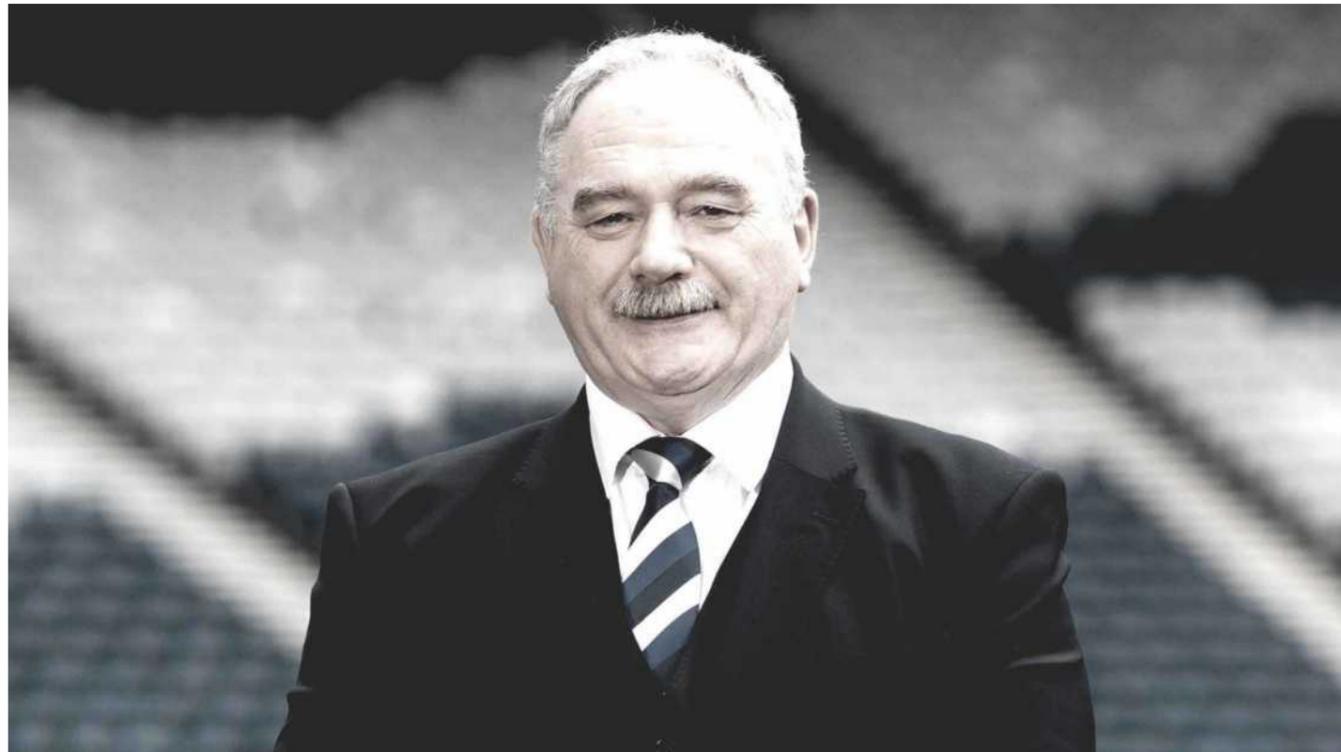
Scottish football has been an integral part of the national conscience for over one hundred years; it is our number one sport. Our ambition is to collectively inspire the nation to love football. The foundation of this is that **football is a safe, inclusive environment for all involved**. Whether someone plays, supports, referees, works or volunteers, football should have a positive impact on their wellbeing.

In 2017 sportscotland launched the Standards for Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport. As the governing body for football in Scotland, the Scottish FA embraced these new standards wholeheartedly. These standards focused our activities to demonstrate how we are improving the safety and wellbeing of children and young people involved across the game.

In 2016 the Scottish FA commissioned an independent review into Sexual Abuse in Scottish Football. The Interim Report, published in 2018, reported that football had not always been a safe place for some of the children and young people involved in our game. 95 recommendations were made, with the prospect of more to come in the final report. These recommendations highlighted that the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in our sport needed to be prioritised at every level of the game. As a Board we are extremely grateful to everyone who took part in the Independent Review and who has therefore provided the **catalyst for the transformational change** that this strategy seeks to achieve.

The Scottish FA Board is pleased to introduce this **five year strategy for Scottish football** and we extend our thanks to all those who took part in its construction. We look forward to receiving and scrutinising updates on its implementation and to fulfilling our leadership role across the game in this essential area of Scottish football.

*Rod Petrie, President, Scottish FA*



# INTRODUCTION FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

As our national sport, we have known for a long time about the positive impact football can have on children and young people. It can impact on all of the national indicators of a child's wellbeing — that she or he is **safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included**. Above all our children and young people should **love being involved in football, enjoying and having fun in whatever way they choose to participate**. **This can only come about if they feel, and are, safe.**

The experiences shared as part of the Independent Review into Sexual Abuse in Scottish Football were sobering. Therefore our pledge to those affected is to implement real and tangible change to the way our culture, systems, leadership and people prioritise the safety and wellbeing of our children and young people. These are **transformational changes, which will take time, leadership and passion** to take forward and I am absolutely determined that those changes happen. We recognise there will be hard work ahead for all involved in Scottish football, but we will achieve our ambitions for children and young people in our game **by working collaboratively at all levels** with our child wellbeing and protection partners.

It is with great pride that we publish our strategy. It has been designed and developed by people across the game, those whose dedication enables our children and young people to not only enjoy Scottish football, but more importantly work hard to make it safe for all of those involved. I am grateful in particular to the people affected by abuse in football who, despite the challenges they faced, gave their time and insight to help shape and define our goals and have indicated a willingness to continue to advise us on our journey.

Our Youth Ambassadors, the voice for children and young people involved in Scottish football, contributed their own unique perspective and together this collaborative approach ensures we are on the right path toward transformational change.

*Ian Maxwell, Chief Executive, Scottish FA*



# CREATING OUR STRATEGY

This is a strategy for all of Scottish football. It is everyone’s responsibility to protect the children and young people who play our national sport.

With that in mind, this strategy was developed in consultation with a range of people and organisations, within and outside of Scottish football, including young people, survivors of abuse, Scottish FA staff and volunteers and children’s sector partners.

The voices and experiences of these individuals, groups and organisations have shaped this strategy and we will continue to work together to deliver it.



# THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

To develop our strategy we have considered the environment it sits within. This image illustrates just some of the legislation, reviews, strategies and policies which have shaped our strategy and will impact the way we deliver it.



## THE NATIONAL VISION AND OUTCOMES FOR SCOTLAND

The Scottish Government’s vision, “To build a more successful and inclusive Scotland” has introduced transformational change in every element of Scottish life, including football. The vision enables cohesion and drives consistency in making improvements, whether services are provided by the public, private, civic or voluntary organisations.

Impact is monitored through the National Performance Framework in a series of outcomes. The National Outcome for Children and Young People “We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our potential” directly informs our strategic approach. It strengthens and links the national vision and outcomes for children so in everything we do we can contribute to their positive outcomes.

## NATIONAL POLICY AND LEGISLATION

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 defines a child in Scotland as someone who has not yet reached 18 years of age. The legislative requirements of the Act introduced a duty on public bodies to promote children’s rights. The launch of the Standards for Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport by sportscotland fulfil this duty and introduce wellbeing and children’s rights into the child protection landscape in sport. Sporting organisations now have a more prescribed role in ensuring children’s wellbeing is improved and their rights are promoted.

The shift toward children as agents in their own lives not only encourages them to participate, it strengthens their confidence, develops respect and reduces opportunities for poor practice and abuse to thrive.



Scotland’s National Performance Framework

# THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

## FAIRNESS AND EQUALITY

The Scottish FA is fully committed to the principles of fairness, dignity and justice. We respect each other, adopt an inclusive approach, address inequalities and remove barriers.

We understand that children's start in life, cycles of poverty and poor health are interlinked. A collaborative transformational approach by organisations will ensure improvements are achieved.

## PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Football makes a significant impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of individuals. Collaboration at a national and local level can strengthen these outcomes.

Local Authority Community Planning Partnerships (CPP), provide opportunities for enhanced local collaboration with Scottish Football. The Scottish FA already collaborates at grassroots level within each of the 32 CPP's, delivering football skills to in excess of 120,000 children in 2,200 primary schools across Scotland. Combined resources and common purpose can only maximise opportunities to realise their potential.

## SOCIAL CHANGE

Football recognises its influence and contribution to social change. Racism, homophobia and sectarianism are ugly areas of our game we want to remove. A rights approach will challenge and strengthen the way improvements are achieved. Transformational change must also address the culture that threatens the safety and dignity of individuals in and beyond our game.

**SCOTLAND'S CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE GROW UP LOVED, SAFE AND RESPECTED SO THAT THEY REALISE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL (NATIONAL OUTCOME FOR SCOTLAND)**



## TECHNOLOGY

In 2018 the Scottish FA launched its new website incorporating a safeguarding element. The SFA has experienced growth across all social media platforms, particularly on Twitter and Instagram, giving a total overall social reach in football of almost 1 million people.

Social Media has transformed the way we communicate. The ecosystem of connective media has enabled us to see, experience, share and collaborate across the world in real time. Over the past 10 years the progression and development of digital technology has created endless opportunities for elite sport. As well as providing a coaching platform, social media has created new opportunities for fans and followers, bringing supporters closer to the national team and players in a two way communication.

The Scottish Government's National Action Plan on Internet Safety for Children and Young People (2017) describes the opportunities that the internet brings to the lives of children and young people for learning, communication and support. The plan also outlines our collective responsibility to protect children and young people from those who might use these technologies to exploit them.

Cyber Crime has impacted on the scale and nature of sexual crimes in Scotland. Sexual crimes that include sexual images and indecent photos of children are rising. Victims and offenders are more likely to be under the age of 16 and know one another.

**32 CPP'S DELIVER FOOTBALL SKILLS TO MORE THAN 120,000 CHILDREN IN 2,200 PRIMARY SCHOOLS ACROSS SCOTLAND**




# OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Our strategy for Child Wellbeing and Protection in Scottish Football establishes a bold and ambitious programme of transformational change in our culture. It has been developed to reflect our commitment to reducing risk and establishing greater safety systems within our game to protect children and nurture their wellbeing.

## OUR APPROACH

- We reflect our values in everything we do.
- We listen to and respect the views of children and young people.
- We develop recruitment and learning systems that support our priorities and values.
- We challenge our senior leaders but are held accountable by them.
- We challenge behaviours or attitudes that are inconsistent with our values.
- We do the right things to keep children and young people safe so they can enjoy their involvement in our sport.



# HOW WE WILL DELIVER OUR STRATEGY

This strategy sets out a step change for how we keep children and young people safe and promote their rights and wellbeing across all of Scottish football. To bring about significant and lasting change we must lift the strategy off the page and put it into action.

## ACTIVE IMPLEMENTATION — MAKING IT HAPPEN

Active implementation provides a framework to consider what is needed to successfully implement a new strategy, policy or approach.

By focusing on the way we do things, not just what we do, active implementation aims to achieve significant and lasting outcomes.

To deliver our mission for children and young people, we will build capacity across Scottish football to deliver a programme of work that is well defined, applied consistently, scaled up and sustainable.

## WORKING TOGETHER

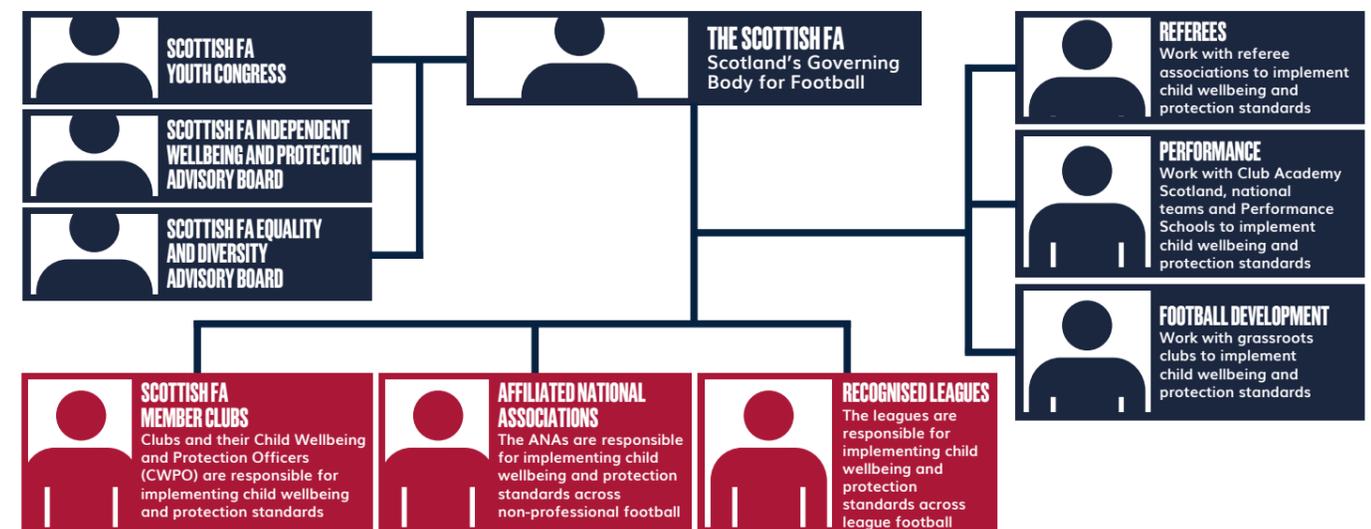
To deliver our strategy we will work collaboratively with our partners, staff and volunteers in our member clubs, recognised leagues and Affiliated National Associations (ANAs). The Child Wellbeing and Protection Officers working at all levels of Scottish football play a key role in leading change for children and young people.



Our Independent Wellbeing and Protection Advisory Board was established in April 2019 and provides advice and guidance to the Wellbeing and Protection Department and the Scottish FA Board on the implementation of this strategy.

Children and young people's voices are at the heart of this strategy. We will work together to make decisions about how we deliver this strategy.

## CHILD WELLBEING AND PROTECTION IN SCOTTISH FOOTBALL



# OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

## VISION

Children flourish because we put their safety, wellbeing, rights and enjoyment at the heart of every level of Scottish football.

## MISSION

Children are the priority. We lead with confidence taking responsibility to create a culture of safety and wellbeing. We empower children through active promotion of their rights.



## ACCOUNTABLE

We accept responsibility and take ownership of the wellbeing and protection of children in our game. Our collective leadership calls upon integrity, consistency and confidence in our everyday behaviours.



## INCLUSIVE

Football is for everyone, irrespective of background. We celebrate what makes us unique and embrace our differences. We create a culture where rights are respected and everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

## OUR VALUES

Our values support our efforts to achieve our vision. They set the tone of our work and will be visible in our decisions and actions.

In everything we do we will be...



## APPROACHABLE

We are visible, accessible, open and caring. We build respectful and supportive relationships, listening to children's voices, and championing their views in everything we do.



## EMPOWERING

We are forward facing and strive to be the best for children and young people. We are brave, challenging ourselves and others to continually strive for the best outcomes for children and young people. We encourage and support children and young people to express their views.

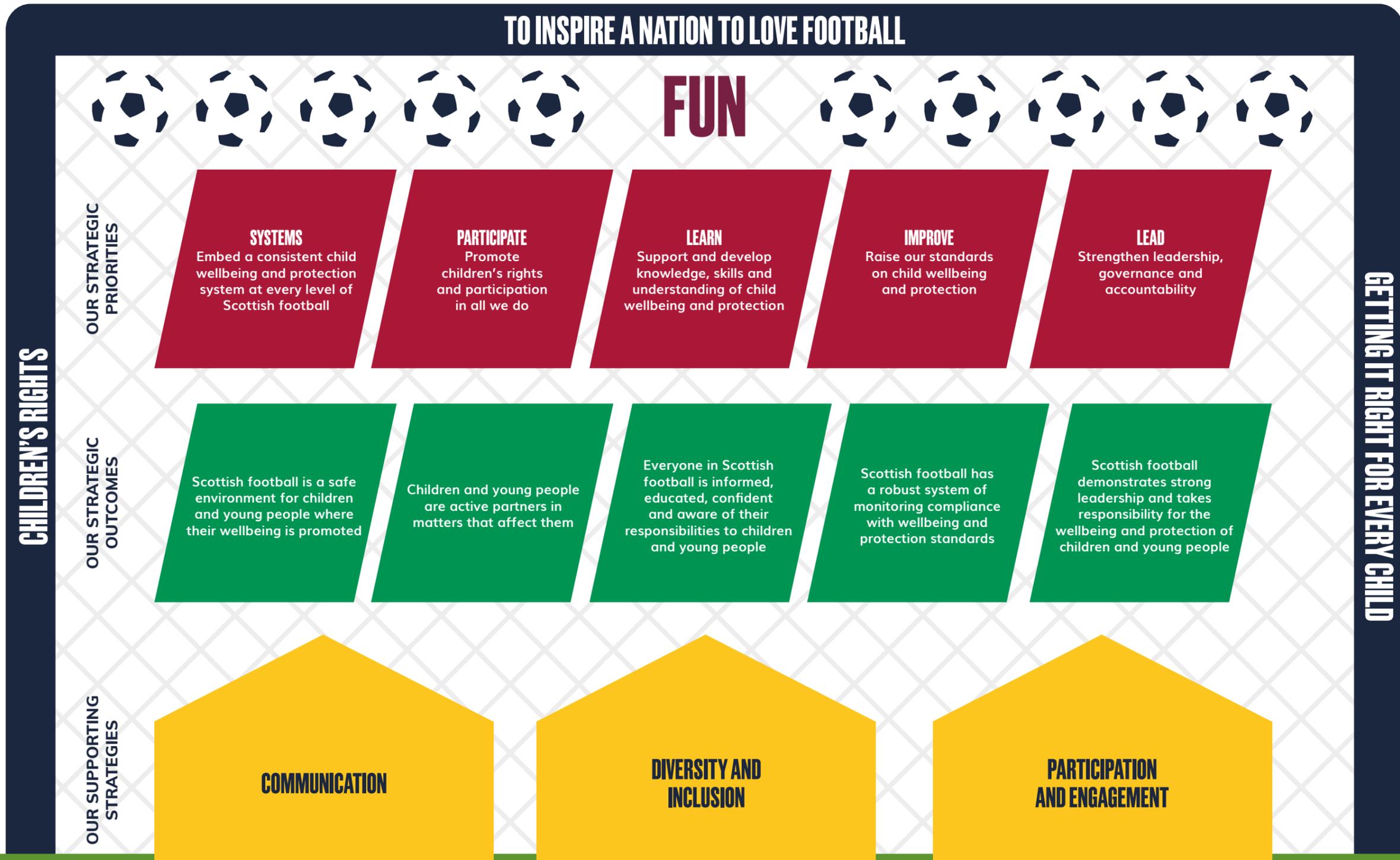
# THE BIG PICTURE

## OUR CROSSBAR

Everyone involved in developing our strategy emphasised the need for children and young people to enjoy football and have fun. Not only is this their right but it reflects the **Safe, Healthy, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included** elements of their wellbeing.

## OUR GOALPOSTS

The goal posts symbolise the important role played by the **Getting it Right for Every Child and Children's Rights** approach to children's wellbeing and protection. This approach ensures that we consider the needs and rights of ALL children and young people involved in our game. This will challenge our thinking, and create a culture of openness, participation, empowerment and prevention. Children must be nurtured to achieve their full potential and our goalposts provide them with those supports.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: SYSTEMS

EMBED A CONSISTENT CHILD WELLBEING AND PROTECTION SYSTEM AT EVERY LEVEL OF SCOTTISH FOOTBALL



## OUTCOME ONE

Scottish football is a safe environment for children and young people where their wellbeing is promoted

### HOW WILL WE DELIVER THIS?

- In collaboration with partners, we will embed our Child Wellbeing and Protection policy and systems framework consistently across Scottish football.

### HOW DO WE KNOW WE ARE GETTING IT RIGHT?

- Increased levels of knowledge and confidence about what to do to keep children and young people safe and how to protect and promote their rights and wellbeing.
- Increase in levels of children and young people who feel safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included through their involvement in Scottish football.
- Increased levels of awareness of the child wellbeing and protection vision, mission and values.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: PARTICIPATE

PROMOTE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND PARTICIPATION IN ALL WE DO



## OUTCOME TWO

Children and young people are active partners in matters that affect them

### HOW WILL WE DELIVER THIS?

- We will work in partnership with children and young people to make decisions together on the issues that affect them.
- We will create a culture where children and young people can exercise their rights across Scottish football.

### HOW DO WE KNOW WE ARE GETTING IT RIGHT?

- Establishment of structures to support children and young people participating across all levels of Scottish football.
- Increase in levels of children and young people who feel that they make a meaningful contribution to decisions that affect them.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: LEARN

## SUPPORT AND DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING OF CHILD WELLBEING AND PROTECTION



### OUTCOME THREE

Everyone in Scottish football is informed, educated, confident and aware of their responsibilities to children and young people

#### HOW WILL WE DELIVER THIS?

- We will create a culture of learning and development across Scottish football, raising awareness of child wellbeing and protection.

#### HOW DO WE KNOW WE ARE GETTING IT RIGHT?

- Increased levels of confidence and knowledge about what to do to keep children safe and how to protect and promote their rights and wellbeing.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: IMPROVE

## RAISE OUR STANDARDS ON CHILD WELLBEING AND PROTECTION



### OUTCOME FOUR

Scottish football has a robust system of monitoring compliance with minimum wellbeing and protection standards

#### HOW WILL WE DELIVER THIS?

- We will implement a child wellbeing and protection quality assurance framework for Scottish football that incorporates self-evaluation, audit and monitoring.

#### HOW DO WE KNOW WE ARE GETTING IT RIGHT?

- Improvement or establishment of systems to support quality assurance.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5: LEAD

## STRENGTHEN LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY



### OUTCOME FIVE

Scottish football demonstrates strong leadership and takes responsibility for the wellbeing and protection of children and young people

#### HOW WILL WE DELIVER THIS?

- We will prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people involved in Scottish football.
- We will reinforce accountability systems for the protection of children and young people, ensuring that they are clearly defined and transparent.

#### HOW DO WE KNOW WE ARE GETTING IT RIGHT?

- Responsibility for child wellbeing and protection is visible and prioritised at all levels of Scottish football.





[WWW.SCOTTISHFA.CO.UK](http://WWW.SCOTTISHFA.CO.UK)  
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