



# Child Protection and Chess: What you need to know

**Important information from Chess Scotland PVG signatories  
Steve Mannion Snr and Dick Heathwood.**

The law of Scotland demands that people working with Children or Vulnerable Adults, whether in paid employment or as volunteers, as with Chess Scotland (CS), must be cleared and registered to do so by obtaining a disclosure record under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme. There are no exceptions. Criminal offences can be committed by an organisation or an individual who fail to heed this law.

Congresses and Clubs must be aware that they cannot use people who are not cleared and registered with CS or their own organisation to work with children without running the risk of prosecution. Affiliated Clubs, Congresses and Associations can obtain advice from the Lead and Additional Signatories to advise them in any aspect of the PVG legislation.

The PVG scheme is replacing the previous Child Protection disclosure process. The old scheme gave organisations the opportunity to establish any criminal convictions of volunteers and paid staff. It was therefore a very useful tool in deciding whether an applicant volunteer or paid employee would be a suitable person to be working with children. The shortcoming was that it was simply a snapshot as at a point in time so the question then arose of whether, and if so how often, a repeat disclosure application should be requested.

The fundamental difference introduced by the PVG scheme is that any organisation which has registered a person as undertaking regulated work will be advised by the authorities if that person's suitability changes. In other words, repeated disclosures would not normally be required and, therefore, the workload required of organisations will be reduced when the scheme is fully implemented in two years time.

One misconception about PVG is to think that when someone has a certificate of

membership they can use that everywhere, a bit like a passport or driving licence. The truth of the matter is that, each time someone applies to undertake regulated work for a different organisation a new form has to be completed and submitted before they can do regulated work; it is a very short form which only takes a few seconds to complete.

CS maintains public lists of volunteers who are authorised to undertake regulated work on behalf of CS. In terms of chess, regulated work is Arbiter, Coach or Chaperon. PVG membership is one component of eligibility for inclusion in a list. If anyone is not on the relevant CS list, they are not authorised by CS to undertake regulated work with children. Any PVG membership which they may have obtained through another organisation is irrelevant (for the reasons already explained).

To date, 64 memberships have been arranged through CS and 18 are still to be processed. Although there is an official three year window in which to complete the transition process, every effort is made to complete the process as quickly as possible for obvious reasons.

The Chess Scotland website has comprehensive coverage of CS policy, procedures and lists of volunteers. There is also a range of relevant websites provided by the government and other authorities. This brief article is therefore simply a summary overview.

If you have any queries on any of these matters contact one of the Volunteer Signatories.

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