



TRAINING IN THE CONTEXT  
OF COVID-19:  
CLUB GUIDANCE DOCUMENT  
28 AUGUST 2020



## TRAINING GUIDANCE DOCUMENT: INTRODUCTION AND CONTENTS PAGE

This document has been developed by a joint working group of SWCFC and SWPSG coaches (members set out in section 6 of this document). It is for coaches, parents and players, and takes account of both Government and Football Association guidance, and also the specific context and environment for SWCFC and SWPSG.

This is version 2 of the document. Version 1 was published on 26 July. The guidance will be updated and reissued periodically if/as required as guidance changes.

This document (and related supplementary papers) will be available on the SWCFC website: [www.swcfc.club](http://www.swcfc.club) and linked to the SWPSG website: [www.psgfc.co.uk](http://www.psgfc.co.uk)

The Document contains the following sections:

1. Safeguarding and First Aid Guidance
2. Information Pack for Parents (including standalone page for parental signing)
3. Training and Match Protocols – Advice for Coaches
4. Equipment and Venues
5. Risk Assessment – see also related [Annexes on website](#)
6. Further Advice, Links, and Contacts

# **1. Safeguarding and First Aid Guidance**

## Introduction

This document covers the detail for safeguarding and first aid provision for youth football at our two clubs.

## Safeguarding

All coaches and helpers involved in running sessions will hold a valid and current DBS certificate linked to the relevant club (i.e. either SWCFC or SWPSG) on the FA database. No adult will be permitted to take part in any training session without such DBS clearance.

In line with the latest government guidance, sessions will be run on the basis of NSPCC ratios: Ages 4-8 – one adult to six children; Ages 9-12 – one adult to eight children; ages 13-18 – one adult to ten children. These must be a minimum of two adults present with FA-DBS checks linking to SWCFC or SWPSG (as appropriate) at any one time.

Any other adults involved in the running of training sessions, including but not limited to stewarding of spectators, supervision of toilet facilities and cleaning of equipment, will not be allowed to be on their own with any player under the age of 18 or any vulnerable adults.

Children will never be working 1:1 with a coach unless their parent/carer is present and observing social distancing.

## First Aid

All coaches are already provided with a standard first aid kit. This kit will be supplemented with the following items for provision of first aid during the current pandemic:

- Gloves
- Face mask
- Visor
- Disposable apron
- Disinfectant wipes
- Hand sanitiser

Before attending, coaches will carry out their own self-check to ensure they are able to carry out a training session.

On arrival at a session, all players, coaches and helpers should wash their hands thoroughly.

After a long period of inactivity (or low activity), players may be more susceptible to injury. Coaches will therefore ensure proper warm-ups are carried out, the physical intensity of sessions will be gradually increased and the suitability of a session will take into account the individuals involved. Decreasing the risk of injury is important whilst social distancing is in place.

Should a player require first aid **during a session** then only a first aid trained coach or helper may administer first aid. Those carrying out first aid should be equipped with the appropriate personal protective equipment to protect themselves and others if they need to compromise social-distancing guidelines to provide medical assistance. Parents or other untrained helpers should not intervene in first aid provision unless instructed to do so by the coach in charge of the session.

If a player becomes symptomatic during a session, they should immediately be removed from the session and taken home as soon as possible by a member of their household.

At the end of a session, all players, coaches and helpers should wash their hands thoroughly.

#### What we need you to do

Give your informed consent for your child(ren) to participate in training sessions.

Ensure that you and your child(ren) adhere to the government guidelines should you experience symptoms and not put others in danger by attending sessions when ill

Ensure that you and your child(ren) follow the guidelines outlined by the club regarding the safe running of training sessions

## **2. Information Pack for Parents**

*What does this section provide?*

1. a summary of FA guidance for training with social distancing
2. how our teams will approach our return to training
3. what will be expected from parents and players
4. a template for coaches to seek the consent of parents

**NOTE:** Please read this document carefully and encourage your child/player to do so, where appropriate. **Please note, as per the latest FA guidance, before your child attends training you will need to explicitly give written consent to the club and coach, that you are comfortable with the club's COVID-19 planning arrangements. A template for coaches to seek consent of parents is set out on page 7 of this document.**

### **1. FA guidelines at a glance**

You can find the full official guidance from The FA at their website:

[www.theFA.com/about-football-association/covid-19](http://www.theFA.com/about-football-association/covid-19)  
or click [HERE](#) for the FAQ page.

The main points are as follows:

- Football can take place outdoors in groups of up to 30 people, including coaching staff (see also the advice on NSPCC ratios, in *Safeguarding* section above).
- In outdoor competitive training and matches, physical contact is allowed, but for all other activity (e.g. warm-ups/cool-downs) the Government guidance on social distancing should be observed.
- Wherever possible, including breaks in play and during team talks, players and coaches must respect social distancing guidelines, meaning keeping a distance of no less than 2m or 1m with a face mask.
- Players and coaches must practice frequent hand hygiene.
- Players should avoid touching equipment with their hands. Furthermore, spectators must not retrieve the ball if it goes out of play; a player or coach should retrieve the ball using their feet.
- Travel to and from the venue should only be with members of your own household or by a socially-distanced method (e.g. cycling or walking).

- Bring your own water bottle and hand sanitizer, both clearly marked with your name.
- First aid can be administered by parents or by first-aid trained coaches and assistants who are wearing appropriate PPE.
- Supporters, parents and other spectators to remain socially distanced whilst attending any sessions/events. Spectator groups must be restricted to discrete six person gathering limits and spread out, in line with wider government guidance.
- **Do not come to training if you or any members of your household feel unwell, are isolating, or have had a positive COVID-19 test in the last 2 weeks.**

## 2. Our club's approach

- Managers will communicate opportunities for training, to which players must respond if they wish to participate (this may be a booking system arranged by your team). There will also be a register taken by the team that will be kept centrally by the club in case it is needed by the government for NHS Test and Trace.
- First aid will be administered by coaches, initially with social distancing, who will wear appropriate PPE if the injury warrants breaking social distancing for treatment.
- Risk-assessments for each venue will be completed, as will a coaches' checklist for each training session and match. These documents will be available to any participant or guardian.
- There will be a specific arrival and departure strategy communicated by your coach or manager. This will include an area for parents to watch (with social distancing) and in some cases a one-way system for driving or walking. Note that spectators are responsible for keeping to government social distancing guidelines.
- Our facilities in many cases will not be fully open. Please encourage use of the toilet before leaving for training. In some cases we may require parent volunteers to regulate access and to sanitise toilets between uses on behalf of the children.
- FA and UK Government guidelines will be followed at all times. This includes the following further noteworthy restrictions:
  - All equipment will be sanitised according to guidelines.

- Players and coaches are required to carry out self-checks and will not be able to attend if any of the following apply to them:
  - a high temperature (above 37.8°C)
  - a new continuous cough
  - loss of or change in normal sense of taste or smell
  - feeling unwell
- Anyone who becomes unwell during the session will immediately be removed from the training group and should return home as soon as possible.
- No player or coach is required to resume training if they feel uncomfortable or unable to do so.

### 3. Expectations for parents and players

- As with any exercise there are risks to returning to training. Areas of increased risk at this time include:
  - risk of injury by resuming physical training after a period of inactivity
  - risk of contracting viruses, including SARS-CoV-2 (the virus related to COVID-19), due to contact with others
- ***The guidelines outlined here are designed to reduce these risks as much as is practically possible.***
- Please help to keep our players, parents and coaches safe by observing the habits in the two graphics provided. (Note there are separate guidelines for parents and players.)
- **Attached along with this document are two pictorial graphics, from adapted FA material – one for players and one for parents.**

We are excited to get back to the pitch and seeing the players together again. We consider that with responsible management of our new sessions we will be ready for contact football again in time for the start of the 2020-2021 season.

A template for coaches to seek the consent of parents to their children returning to training is set out below. This must be sent, and a confirmation response received, before a player can restart training.

PARENTAL CONSENT – EXAMPLE TEXT FOR CORRESPONDENCE (E.G. EMAIL TO PARENTS)

*COACH/MANAGER STATEMENT...*

As coach/manager of the team, I confirm that I have read this guidance document and will endeavour to keep up-to-date as new guidance is released. I am fully aware of my responsibility to receive prior parental consent, to make risk assessment material available if requested, and to take a register of participants and provide that to the club immediately after each session.

*FOR PARENTS TO CONFIRM...*

I, the parent/guardian of the participant, acknowledge that I have read and understood the guidelines above and I approve their participation in training sessions and matches. The participant has been made aware of their responsibilities. I furthermore give permission for the club to hold our data for NHS Test and Trace use, and will inform the club if these details change.

Participant name:

Parent/Guardian name:

Contact telephone:

Date:

### **3. Training and Match Protocols – Advice for Coaches**

#### **Training**

##### **Prior to Attendance**

- All players (regardless of age) must register with their coach to attend each session.
- All families and players shall be provided with a COVID-19 information pack to sign. This document states that they understand and will abide by the guidelines. Each player or parent (if the player is below 18 years of age) is to sign and return the document to the coach / club.
- Players should have their own labelled (identifiable) water bottle for training, and bring hand sanitizer.
- Planning of all training sessions shall be done with a view to minimal changeover or moving of cones/equipment. Any necessary changes can be conducted safely during the players' water breaks.

##### **Upon Arrival**

- All parents are welcome to attend training sessions providing they adhere to the 2m social distancing guidelines except in the competitive phases of play. An allocated spectator area will be available during all training sessions.
- All players should be greeted by the coaching staff and allocated to a specific coloured zone, within which their individual cone will be allocated as a location to leave water bottles, inhalers etc.
- An introduction to the new training procedures shall be conducted by each coach.
- Each match or training session has a maximum of 30 participants, including coaching staff.
- All players and coaches shall be required to sanitise their hands on arrival and at the close of each training session.

##### **Key Information – can be used as text for speaking to players pre-session**

*The FA guidance requires a safety briefing before competitive matches and training when breaking social distancing. The aim is to remind players of the basic parameters, which they should have already been made aware. The text below provides some material you can use or adapt for this purpose, depending on the situation and the group you are speaking to.*

##### **Revised Covid-19 briefing (training)**

Please remember that we need to keep up social distancing [2m] when we're not actively playing competitive football. That includes before and after drills and during breaks. We've scheduled time for water breaks, and please don't share water or spit out water. Please clean your hands with hand sanitizer after each break.

Please only touch the ball with your hands if needed for throw-ins and if playing as goalkeeper; otherwise use your feet.

If you're injured, the coach(es) will check from a distance at first and then wear a mask if coming closer.

Do you all feel well today?

Please tell your coach(es) if you feel unwell at any time.

Thanks!

### **Revised Covid-19 briefing (match)**

(Recommendation is to gather players - at a distance - at start of match to read aloud in place of handshake)

[*Can I please have your attention as*] I need to remind you of the Covid-19 guidelines for matches.

We're permitted to break social distancing for match play, but please remember to maintain 2m distance between players, officials, and coaches at all other times, including during breaks and on the sidelines. We should also be mindful of this when celebrating after a goal. Please keep your distance! Can I ask you to please sanitize your hands before the game and after each break, and please do not spit water. When you retrieve the ball please use your feet where possible and only touch it with your hands for a throw-in or as the goalkeeper.

Tell your coach or the official if you feel unwell at any time. If needed, first aid will be administered by a coach who will wear a mask if they need to come closer than 2m.

We won't be greeting each other with handshakes today, but we wish you all a good match.

### **Spectators briefing (optional)**

Spectators are permitted and welcome, but please observe social distancing recommended by the government. Please do not retrieve the ball if it goes out of play – a player or match official will do this.

## Playing matches

The intention of both clubs is to begin competitive fixtures when league matches are scheduled to begin and we are confident that we will be in a position to host games and this will be confirmed by the Covid-19 planning committee in due course. Many teams will be keen to include some friendly matches as part of their preparation for the new season. These additions to the guidelines (*August update*) seek to clarify the procedures and requirements for these matches to take place as safely as possible.

### Home fixtures

If you would like to host a friendly match, you should follow the step process below to ensure the safety of all players and spectators attending.

#### Prior the match

- 1) Request a pitch allocation from [stuart.shepherd@swcfc.org.uk](mailto:stuart.shepherd@swcfc.org.uk) (cc: [Andrew.sharon@hotmail.com](mailto:Andrew.sharon@hotmail.com)) with date, kick off time and pitch size required.
- 2) Once the match is confirmed, inform your Covid-19 club officer of the fixture
- 3) Send the 'Draft Note for Visiting Teams' document to the contact for your visiting team (**Annex C** to this guidance document).

#### On the day of the match

- 1) Ensure you arrive at your venue in good time to setup including provision of a specific area for spectators by use of a respect barrier or similar. This area must be kept away from any players and officials – ideally on the opposite side of the pitch.
- 2) Mark out a designated area for both teams to use
- 3) Appoint a parent or other helper to mark off names of players and officials from the visiting team and provide hand sanitiser for all visitors (see document)
- 4) Take your own register of players and officials in attendance and provide this to your Covid-19 club officer after the match.
- 5) Ensure you have an updated first aid kit with the additional PPE provision supplied by the club including hand sanitiser
- 6) Reiterate to players the need to avoid as much contact as possible during play including goal celebrations and handshakes etc.
- 7) Practice and promote social distancing before the match, during any breaks, between substitutes and after the match.

### After the match

- 1) Advise that all players, officials and spectators maintain social distancing whilst leaving the match
- 2) Sanitise all equipment used either through cleaning or prolonged (72 hours + ) storage
- 3) Provide your register to your Covid-19 club officer

### Away fixtures

If you are invited to take part in away fixtures you should follow any specific procedures that are set out by the hosting club. **As a minimum** you should:

- a) Inform your Covid-19 club officer of your fixture and provide them with a contact for the hosting team in case of the need for follow up contact to be made.
- b) Keep a register of all players, coaches and other 'officials' that attend the fixture along with contact details for future test and trace. This list should be [sent to the club COVID 19 officer?] and retained for 21 days as per government guidelines.
- c) Advise parents of all players attending of the FA guidance against car sharing wherever possible.
- d) Ensure you have an updated first aid kit with the additional PPE provision supplied by the club including hand sanitiser
- e) Reiterate to players the need to avoid as much contact as possible during play including goal celebrations and handshakes etc.
- f) Practice and promote social distancing before the match, during any breaks, between substitutes and after the match.

## **4. Equipment and Venues**

### **Aim**

This section offers guidance on the equipment available for training and the venues that accommodate the measures we need to consider with respect to returning to training during the COVID-19 context and in accordance with UK Government, plus FA, guidelines.

### **Responsibilities**

#### COVID-19 Officer

Guidance issued by the FA (17 July) states that 'all clubs must identify a COVID-19 Officer who will be responsible for developing a COVID-19 plan and risk assessment prior to the restart of any activity. The COVID-19 officer should continually monitor how compliance is being observed within the club. The FA has produced guidance on conducting a risk assessment, which includes a template for self-completion. The Covid-19 officer should consider establishing a Covid-19 group to be responsible for producing and implementing the Covid-19 risk assessment and to oversee the safe return to play. Our working group of 9 managers from both our clubs has completed most of these actions, but we have now appointed two COVID-19 officers for SWCFC and two for SWPSG (see details in section 6). The COVID-19 officers are ensuring review of guidance, compliance and data storage for test and trace purposes via NHS.

Data Storage – Information (primarily a register of attendance) should be stored for a minimum of 21 days in line with the Government Recreational Team Sport Framework and collected/processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and in line with GDPR principles. It should be used only for the purpose of NHS test and trace.

### **Coach Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure that the training session is delivered in a safe manner. If it is felt that this is not possible for any reason, then the session should not proceed.

It is the responsibility of the coach coordinating the session to ensure that a register is taken and transferred to the club secretary for tracking purposes. The method for this action will be communicated by the relevant Club Committee.

It is the responsibility of all attending – coaches; manager; helpers; parents or guardians of any players - that they and those attending with them are well enough to be present and not displaying any of the recognised symptoms of COVID-19.

### **Period of application**

This document is put in place to cover the initial period of return to training under the guidance published by the government and will be reviewed on a regular basis, and subject to any updates to government guidance. It is the intention of Committees of SWCFC and SWPSG that this guidance document will be reissued periodically, if/as required.

### **Equipment**

During this initial phase, the level of equipment used by a coach in a training session should be minimised to the following only, to reduce the risk of cross-contamination. This equipment must be provided by the coach/manager running the session to enable clear control of cleaning between sessions.

- **First aid kit, PPE and sanitiser** for coaches use only (i.e. not helpers)
- A **ball** for each expected participant
- Enough **cones** to mark out:
  - Training area and drill pattern as required.
  - Individual areas for storage of any possessions the player has brought.

In regard to the use of bibs, we recommend against using bibs, as the putting on and removal of bibs risks contact with the face increasing the risk of contamination near the eyes. However, if you do choose to use them then suitable precautions must be taken, for example in regard to sterilisation after each use.

In regard to players' personal possessions, the coach/manager will need to request, prior to the day of the session, that players' possessions are kept to a minimum. If possible, this should be just a water bottle, hand sanitizer, additional clothing, and any necessary medications.

The player should enter the training venue ready to play and listening for instructions from the coach/manager.

Parents also need to be informed that it is expected that they will have hand sanitiser for their own children to use before and after the training session.

It is expected that the players understand that they should not throw water around from drink bottles.

## **Sterilisation of equipment**

All equipment used must be cleaned between sessions either with soap and water or sanitising fluid. Therefore, session planning should leave 15-20 minute to enable this to happen if sequential sessions are to be run by the same coach/manager with the same equipment.

If the next session that the equipment is to be used in is within 72 hours, then the equipment must be cleaned before placing in storage and then cleaned again prior to use in the next session to ensure maximum protection.

If the next use of the equipment is beyond 72 hours away, then the equipment may be bagged up and stored **securely** without cleaning, guaranteeing no use in the meantime by anyone. This is due to the guidance that the virus cannot exist beyond this length of time on surfaces. FA guidelines recommend that a record is kept of use and cleaning of shared equipment.

Cleaning procedure should be as follows:

1. First sanitise your hands
2. Collect equipment and clean appropriately
3. Sanitise your hands again once equipment is stored away or in place for the next session
4. At all times, avoid touching your face during these steps

Goal posts should be wiped down before matches, after matches and at half time. This is to be carried out using standard household cleaning and disinfection products. A match ball is also to be sanitised before and after matches and at half-time. Where there are breaks in the game, or training, if throw-ins or handling have occurred the ball should be disinfected.

## **Venue**

During this initial period, the options on training venues have been restricted to ensure we proceed with caution, and also to ensure suitable space is available to hold several sessions in pods and that there is enough space to manage parking as well as arrival and exit from the venue without causing difficulties to adhere to the government guidance of physical distancing.

The venues now available are:

- Herbert's Farm
- Wimbish
- Debden
- Newport
- Radwinter
- Ashdon

As the advice changes, other venues will be reviewed for inclusion on this list. For this to happen, the club(s) need to ensure: 1) an agreement is in place with the relevant venue operator, and 2) a Risk Assessment (RA) has been carried out, written up in the template (see other RA examples), and signed off by one of the club's COVID Planning Officers. This RA will then be published alongside the others on the club website.

Protocols for safe use of toilet facilities are under development, as per FA guidelines, which recommend their availability where possible during training and matches. Safeguarding regulations mandate that exceptions should be made where appropriate, such as in the case of disabled athletes and young children.

### Booking

The use of the venues will be centralised between SWCFC and SW PSG FC to ensure control of the number of sessions. Wimbish and Herbert's Farm should be booked via emailing jointly to: [Stuart.Shepherd@swcfc.org.uk](mailto:Stuart.Shepherd@swcfc.org.uk) and [Andrew.Sharon@hotmail.com](mailto:Andrew.Sharon@hotmail.com) (Andrew Heinrich). Other venue leads are set out below for information. Those venues are not currently available beyond the relevant age group playing there. See table below for more details.

### Venue capacities

Venue	Number of groups/pods	Number of cars	Socially distancing viewing area	Toilets	Book Via Stuart and Andrew?	Lead Person
Wimbish	6	40	One	Yes	Yes	N/A
Herbert's Farm	10	60	One per pitch	Protocols under development	Yes	N/A
Debden	1	25	One	No	N/A	Brian Peggs
Newport Rec	4	30	One per pitch	Yes	N/A	Chris Coates

Radwinter	4	15	One per pitch	No	N/A	Richard Hardy
Ashdon	2	30	One	Yes	N/A	Tony Seward

### Cleaning on exiting

- Ensure all equipment and rubbish is removed
- Sanitise common contact points such as gate locks and door handles after use

### Specific Requirements at Wimbish

As part of the agreement between SWCFC and Wimbish Parish Council, **there are a set of specific requirements for use of Wimbish**, in addition to the general requirements (pre-booking of slots, safe procedures, completing the checklist, providing an attendance register after the session, etc). **These requirements must be followed for us to continue to have use of the facility.**

- The coaches of the last session on a given evening **MUST** clean the toilets at the end of the session, and sign the sheet which is hung up there, with name, date and time.
- A photo of the toilets and also of the completed, signed sheet must then be either emailed or texted that evening to the Parish Committee lead: [Tracy@Coston.me.uk](mailto:Tracy@Coston.me.uk) / 07929 930 385
- If you are in any doubt about whether you are the last group / last coaches for the evening, you must assume you are and follow the procedure.
- Coaches should have cleaning materials with them in case there are none there. The cost of these can be reclaimed from SWCFC using the expenses form on the club website.
- In addition, all equipment must be properly stored in the shed, and not left in the pavilion
- Please note SWTFC also use the facility. Nigel Keating is the lead contact for SWTFC in this regard (and also a SWCFC coach). .

### Payment of Referees

FA guidelines indicate that payment of referees should be by electronic means if possible. It is up to individual coaches to explore the options to pay referees electronically, and agree in each case how best to proceed.

**Venue coordination – please contact jointly (i.e. email both contacts together):**

SWCFC – Stuart Shepherd at: [stuart.shepherd@swcfc.org.uk](mailto:stuart.shepherd@swcfc.org.uk) and; Andrew Heinrich at: [andrew.sharon@hotmail.com](mailto:andrew.sharon@hotmail.com)

## **5. Risk Assessment**

### Risk Assessment of Venues

The clubs have produced and published Risk Assessments for the following six venues:

- Herbert's Farm;
- Wimbish;
- Debden;
- Newport Recreation Ground;
- Radwinter;
- Ashdon

These draw on the template provided by the FA at <http://www.thefa.com/-/media/thefacom-new/files/get-involved/2020/covid-19-risk-assessment-guidance-and-template.ashx>

***The Risk Assessments are published separately on the club website as Annexes to this document.***

### Checklist for Coaches

The list below provides a set of questions all coaches should work through as part of their coaching team before starting a session, to ensure all the relevant bases are covered.

***The Coaches' Checklist is attached separately as Annex B to this document.***

## **6. Further advice, links, and contacts**

You can find the full official guidance from The FA at their website:

[www.theFA.com/about-football-association/covid-19](http://www.theFA.com/about-football-association/covid-19)

or [click HERE for the FAQ page.](#)

Guidance issued 17.07.2020:

<http://www.thefa.com/news/2020/jul/17/grassroots-guidance-for-competitive-football-restart-in-england-170720>

### Club COVID-19 Planning Officers

Saffron Walden Community FC:

[Tony.saward@swcfc.org.uk](mailto:Tony.saward@swcfc.org.uk) [Alex.Dutton@swcfc.org.uk](mailto:Alex.Dutton@swcfc.org.uk)

Saffron Walden PSG:

Veronica Kane-Dickson: [coach.vkd@gmail.com](mailto:coach.vkd@gmail.com)

Matthew Gill: [mkhlrgill@virginmedia.com](mailto:mkhlrgill@virginmedia.com)

### Training Venue Booking Contacts

For SWCFC and SWPSG coaches, if you wish to book a training venue please contact Stuart Shepherd – SWCFC Club Secretary, copying in Andrew Heinrich (SWPSG) at:

[Stuart.Shepherd@swcfc.org.uk](mailto:Stuart.Shepherd@swcfc.org.uk) & [Andrew.sharon@hotmail.com](mailto:Andrew.sharon@hotmail.com)

### Volunteers on the SWCFC/SWPSG COVID-19 Planning Group

Martin Johnson

Matt Clare

Veronica Kane Dickson

Andrew Heinrich

Nigel Keating

Matthew Gill  
Adam O'Sullivan  
Steve Keeler  
Matt Bell  
Tony Saward  
Alex Dutton