

LEIGHTON UNITED FC

COVID-19 RETURN TO FOOTBALL PROTOCOL: JUNE 2020



This protocol on a return to grassroots football during the Covid-19 pandemic aims to comply with the most recent guidance issued by the Government, The Football Association, Bedfordshire Football Association, and the Football Foundation on health, social distancing and hygiene relating to group sporting activities. It will be reviewed and revised to comply with further changes in guidance as and when they are issued.

As always, the safety of our players, coaches, parents/guardians/carers, officials, volunteers, spectators, and visitors is paramount. Therefore, the requirements set out in this protocol MUST be followed.

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 Meeting outdoors in a group of more than 6 with people who are not in the same household (or where applicable, support bubble) is not allowed.
- 1.2 The clubhouse will remain closed, except for use of toilets.
- 1.3 Only one person is allowed in a toilet room at any one time.
- 1.4 Social distancing must be observed in passageways leading to toilets.
- 1.5 Hand sanitisers will be provided in all clubhouse toilets in use.
- 1.6 Existing FA and club safeguarding and child welfare policies are unchanged.

2. TRAINING CONSENT FORM

- 2.1 Until the club confirm otherwise, the Covid-19 Training Consent Form must be completed and returned the relevant coach before a player attends any club related training session.

3. TRAINING VENUES

- 3.1 Coaches opting to use an alternative venue for club related training while the club's ground remains closed must inform the Head Coach in advance.
- 3.2 Coaches are then responsible for ensuring the venue and its surface are safe and for fully implementing this protocol.
- 3.3 Mingling with other teams using a venue or the club's ground must be avoided.

4. TRAVELLING TO TRAINING

- 4.1 Travelling should comply with Government guidance. Currently no one should travel with someone from outside their household unless social distancing can be practiced. Therefore, no car sharing.

5. ARRANGING TRAINING

- 5.1 All team related training proposals and session plans must be agreed with the Head Coach ahead of delivering the session.
- 5.2 Coaches have been advised not to restart training until a maximum of 4 weeks before the first scheduled league matches.

- 5.3 Coaches must inform players, parents/guardians/carers about the training venue and arrival time. Parents/guardians/carers must then confirm their child will be attending. Only players about whom the coach has been informed will be able to train.
- 5.4 Due to Government restrictions on participation, players cannot just turn up.
- 5.5 If a player has a pre-existing long-term medical condition, then all appropriate treatments must be provided and administered by the parents/guardians/carers as needed.
- 5.6 If a player has any prior injuries before a training activity, parents/guardians/carers must inform the coach so that the implications and risks to the player can be assessed.
- 5.7 When the club's ground is in use, training slots will be allocated by the Pitch Co-ordinator. The ground will not be available to tams outside of the allocated slots.
- 5.8 When a return to training at Cedars Schools is allowed, the training session schedule will be devised by the Head Coach, in consultation with coaches.
- 5.9 Group sessions/activities must be no more than 6 people – including the coach. Smaller groups are allowed including one-to-one coaching.
- 5.10 It is permissible for coaches to organise a training session that has two or more groups of six, including the coach, provided that each group is kept separate, everyone is social distancing and strict hygiene measures are in place with any equipment.
- 5.11 To comply with FA safeguarding requirements, a group must be observed by another adult (someone over 18 years of age) – the additional adult is not included in the group of six.
- 5.12 It is recommended the coach has their own coaching station, suitably socially distanced.
- 5.13 Designated individual player training areas must be marked out, compliant with social distancing requirements.
- 5.14 Players should also have their own individual kit stations, not in the same place as training areas, for their water bottles, boot bags etc. compliant with social distancing requirements.

6. ARRIVING AND DEPARTING TRAINING

- 6.1 On arrival at a training venue, players must remain in the car or at the entrance until collected by the coach.
- 6.2 Players and coaches to maintain social distancing walking to their designated individual training areas.
- 6.3 At the end of training coaches must ensure that players stay in their designated training area until collected by their parent/guardian/carer. Waiting in car parks or other general access areas must be avoided.
- 6.4 Players should have their own sanitiser.
- 6.5 It is the player's and parent's responsibility to ensure that players effectively wash or sanitise their hands immediately before and after a training session, and during if the coach considers it necessary to maintain effective hygiene.

7. TRAINING SESSIONS

- 7.1 Players must stay within their designated training area, except for visiting their kit station as directed by the coach.
- 7.2 Physical contact with anyone outside of a player's household or support bubble is not permitted.

7.3 No matches, small-sided or full, are allowed.

7.4 Groups of players must not be allowed to interact.

7.5 Coaches should ensure that as far as possible a player does not stray into the training area of another player.

7.6 Players must be told not to head or handle footballs and not to touch equipment. If contact with bare skin accidentally occurs, and especially faces, then the area should be immediately washed or sanitised.

7.7 Players should continue to wear required clothing, footwear (for the playing surface) and shin pads – protective gloves and face coverings are optional.

7.8 Face coverings do not replace social distancing.

7.9 The Head Coach has provided example training routines for coaches in a socially distanced environment.

7.10 Advice on administering first aid will be issued by the club. Coaches should ensure their first aid kit contains an adequate supply of disposable gloves, face masks and hand sanitiser.

7.11 Coaches wash their hands immediately before and after every training session.

7.12 Sharing of water bottles and food is banned, unless the parent/guardian/carer indicates that siblings can share. Coaches will not provide drinks bottles.

7.13 A player who deliberately does not comply with the requirements set out in this protocol should firstly be warned by the coach. If the player continues to disregard the rules, they should be asked to leave the training session, provided it is safe to do so

8. TRAINING EQUIPMENT

8.1 It is recommended the amount of equipment used is kept to a minimum.

8.2 Equipment should only be used as directed by the coach.

8.3 Equipment must not be shared between groups or with other teams, includes footballs, cones, poles etc.

8.4 It is recommended that coaches wear protective gloves when handling equipment.

8.5 All setting out, collecting up and storage of equipment is only to be done by the coach.

8.6 All equipment, including footballs, should be washed in warm soapy water, or effectively sanitised after use and thereafter kept clean.

9. SPECTATORS

9.1 All spectators attending a training session must comply with the social distancing requirements applicable at the time.

9.2 They should keep at least 10m away from the edge of the training session.

If an individual is symptomatic of COVID-19, living in a household with a possible Covid-19 infection or classified as being in a vulnerable group on health grounds, they should remain at home, follow the Government's rules on self-isolation and not participate in training sessions.