

Return to Football (May 2021)

Club Policy & Guidance
17 May 2021



OUR CLUB'S LATEST POSITION (17 May 2021)

Latest Government guidance From 17 May 2021, you can socialise indoors in a group of up to 6 people or 2 households. Up to 30 people can meet outside. Pubs, theatres and other venues can open indoors.

Latest FA guidance was issued on 11 May 2021.
<https://www.thefa.com/news/2021/may/11/step-three-guidance-20210511>

Even though indoor football is permitted, our Club is continuing with outdoor football only. The required measures for indoor football are deemed too onerous to implement.

Home matches to be scheduled to reduce people/traffic flow – avoiding simultaneous kick-off and final whistle times, wherever possible.



Managers Checklist (May 2021)

- ✓ Our policy guidance for the return to football is included in this document. Observe Club policy and guidance.
- ✓ Advise home and away teams, and match officials, that Covid-19 restrictions apply in line with FA guidance - and that full details of our latest Emergency Action Plan, risk assessments and guidance can be found at <https://stonesfieldstrikers.com/documents-and-policies/>
- ✓ Ensure you have a trained “volunteer host” and a “clean team” on matchdays.
- ✓ All visitors and spectators must register for test and trace purposes on arrival. Spectators are permitted subject to social distancing rules and social gathering limits (in groups of 30 outdoors, multiple groups are permitted).
- ✓ Changing rooms will not be available.
- ✓ No dogs are allowed at the playing field (other than assistance dogs).
- ✓ Apply hand sanitiser upon entrance and exit from the site.
- ✓ Players, coaches and officials must adhere to FA Guidance and Codes of Conduct before, during and after activity.
- ✓ Ensure teams come ready to play. Plan for no access to indoor facilities (changing rooms, showers etc.). Toilets, if made available, are to be supervised by a DBS checked adult.
- ✓ Hold a safety briefing before the game for players, coaches, officials and spectators – to reinforce Club protocols and expected behaviours.
- ✓ No picking up or sharing equipment. Shared water bottles and nutritional supplements will not be permitted.
- ✓ Maintain social distancing outside of the competitive match. Avoid congregating and chatting.
- ✓ Spitting is not permitted. Shouting and raising your voice in close proximity should be avoided (FA Code of Behaviour).
- ✓ Notify the Club (Covid-19 Officer) if you or any member of your party are displaying any of the COVID symptoms.
- ✓ **When Away**, request the home team’s risk assessment and COVID procedures. Plan journeys in-line with the [travel guidance](#).



Club EXPECTATIONS

- The health and wellbeing of our Club Coaches and Players is our main priority.
- We expect everyone participating or attending football activity to follow the advice and measures laid out by the Government.
- Managers should respect Club policies, guidance and codes of conduct, and FA rules & guidance, including the FA Code of Behaviour.
- Managers should communicate our Club's safety and hygiene arrangements to players, coaches and observing parents/carers.
- All players, officials, coaches, volunteers and spectators must self-assess for Covid-19.
- We support NHS test and trace by collecting contact details at training and matches.
- All participants and other attendees should follow best practice for safer travel. [Car Sharing guidance](#).

Safeguarding 1

- Parent/Carer consents and acceptance of Club terms and conditions required and collected as part of Club's online signing-on process. Players unable to participate without consents. This includes permission to play and acceptance of our Covid-19 protocols.
- Relevant medical information is collected on registration
- Emergency contact information is collected on registration.
- Respect, Media, Coverage and Data Protection consents collected via online registration.
- Player and Parent/Carer agree to comply with the various Club Rules, Policies & Guidelines (published on the Club website). Importantly: Safeguarding Policy, Codes of Conduct, Handbook, Health & Safety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Social Media use, use of photography/filming, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy, Managing challenging behaviour.

Safeguarding 2

- Club Officers have signed a code of conduct. This is published on the Club website
- Managers/Coaches sign to accept Club (and League) code of conduct.
- The Club Welfare Officer is responsible for all safeguarding issues. The CWO is to be notified of any infringements to Club policies or guidance (in the first instance, in the interests of safeguarding). The CWO may refer cases to the Club's disciplinary committee and/or the FA, as necessary.
- Regular checks that Club policies and procedures are being followed:
 - Safeguarding Policy, Codes of Conduct, Covid-19 protocols, Handbook, Health & Safety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Social Media use, Use of photography/filming, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy, Managing challenging behaviour.

Safeguarding 3

- Player and Parent/Carer agree to comply with the various Club Rules, Policies & Guidelines (published on the Club website). Importantly: Safeguarding Policy, Codes of Conduct, Covid-19 protocols, Handbook, Health & Safety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Social Media use, use of photography/filming, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy, Managing challenging behaviour.
- Managers/Coaches (home and opposition) are responsible for ensuring players, officials and spectators adhere to FA codes of conduct. Individuals will face removal from the activity/venue if behaviour is deemed unacceptable.
- Players trained in line with FA standards by FA licensed coaches. Coaches do not encourage aggressive, dangerous play. Players removed from the field of play (for any football activity) for behaving in a violent or dangerous manor.
- The Club Welfare Officer is responsible for all safeguarding issues. The CWO is to be notified of any infringements to Club policies or guidance (in the first instance, in the interests of safeguarding). The CWO may refer cases to the Club's disciplinary committee and/or the FA, as necessary.

BEFORE Travel To Training Or Matches

- All players, officials, volunteers and spectators must undergo a self-assessment for any Covid-19- symptoms.
 - Manager's and volunteer host(s) to enquire if done and that no-one has symptoms.
- No-one should leave home to participate in football if they, or someone they live with, has any of the following:
 - A high temperature (above 37.8°C);
 - A new, continuous cough;
 - A loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste

TRAVELLING TO TRAINING/MATCHES

- Follow latest Government guidance.
- Avoid travel with someone from outside your household unless you can practise social distancing - for example by cycling. [Car sharing guidance](#).
- Do not travel if you:
 - are experiencing any coronavirus symptoms,
 - are self-isolating as a result of coronavirus symptoms or as a result of being in contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19, or
 - sharing a household with somebody with symptoms, or are clinically extremely vulnerable.
- If you have been asked to isolate by NHS Test and Trace do not exercise outside your own home or garden and do not exercise with others.

BEFORE Entering a Venue

- On match days, a trained volunteer for the host team is on duty at the single entrance of the venue to reinforce the need for ALL attendees to complete a self-assessment, register for contact tracing, and adhere to the protocols for hygiene and distancing across the venue (the playing field and wider areas, toilets and club-house etc.). An information poster highlighting the symptoms and the risk of Covid-19 is placed on entry/sign-in point.
- Parents/Carers and spectators may attend training and matches but ONLY provided the host team has in place the necessary volunteers to ensure protocols are adhered to, including a trained match day host, first aider and a cleaning crew. All spectators must not smoke, vape, spit, chew gum, and should avoid shouting or raising their voices.
- All attendees declare through self-assessment that they, or any member of their household, are not displaying Covid-19 symptoms. Symptomatic individuals denied entry.
- For training sessions, Managers will record attendance AND reinforce protocols of self-assessment checks, hygiene, and distancing.
- Posters clearly depict direction and distancing requirements for all.
- Covid-19 information posters are placed in designated locations within the venue (clubhouse, toilets etc.) for all attendees.
- Best practice Hygiene requirements (handwashing etc.) are being enforced and included in all safety briefings. Players, officials, parents/carers, coaches, volunteers, and visitors have been instructed to wash their hands frequently for at least 20 seconds duration. No handshaking, touching, hugging etc. Best practice Hygiene materials (e.g. hand sanitiser and wipes) are readily available on arrival and departure, and within the clubhouse.
- All officials, parents/carers, coaches, volunteers have been issued with the Club's policy and guidance on the return to competitive training/fixtures, and information on Covid-19 Government guidance.

BEFORE A Training Session or Match Fixture

- Must follow current 'NHS test and trace' protocols, by keeping an attendance register.
- All players, officials, volunteers and spectators must undergo a self-assessment for any Covid-19- symptoms. Use the NHS COVID-19 APP.
- No-one is to attend if:
 - they are experiencing any of the symptoms of Covid-19 or
 - have been in contact with someone displaying symptoms or diagnosed with Covid-19 within the last two weeks.
- Attendees must leave immediately if they develop symptoms during the session/fixture.
- Anyone who is deemed vulnerable in respect of Covid-19 should be reminded to follow the Government's guidance, only returning to football when it's right for them to do so.
- Follow Government guidance for travel, including minimising use of public transport.
- Active participants should arrive changed and ready to take part.
- A designated safe area has been identified (adjacent to the equipment shed) away from other participants/people. Persons showing signs of Covid-19 infection will be removed from the venue by a parent or DBS checked adult to the designated area, away from other participants and sent home with support if required.

BEFORE A Training Session or Match Fixture

- Advise home and away teams, and match officials, that Covid-19 restrictions apply in line with FA guidance - and that full details of our latest Emergency Action Plan, risk assessments and guidance can be found at <https://stonesfieldstrikers.com/documents-and-policies/>
- Self Assessment for Covid-19 symptoms for all persons attending. NHS Covid-19 App used for tracing. Please notify the Club , if you or any member of your party are displaying any of the COVID symptoms.
- Apply hand sanitiser upon entrance and exit from the venue.
- Manager safety briefing before game.
- Spectators are not permitted to smoke/vape, chew gum or shout.
- Maintain social distancing outside of the competitive match. Avoid congregating and chatting.
- Plan journey in-line with the travel guidance.
- Ensure players come ready to play. Plan for no indoor facility access (this includes changing rooms and showers).
- FA Code of Behaviour to be followed - spitting is not permitted. Shouting and raising your voice in close proximity should be avoided.
- Ensure all equipment is clean before use. Sharing of kit or equipment or water bottles and nutritional supplements will not be permitted.

First Aid

- The FA has produced a detailed [First Aid Guidance document](#).
- Managers ensure players warm-up and cool down correctly before and after matches.
- Increase frequency of cleaning and disinfection of all surfaces and equipment
- Injuries during play should be treated as participant health and safety is of utmost importance.
- Injuries during play are to be treated (ideally) by a member of their household or the team Manager/First Aider wearing appropriate PPE. Others will still need to be socially distanced unless a life or limb-threatening injury necessitates compromising guidelines to provide emergency care until the ambulance arrives.
- Managers (first aiders) must ensure that they have appropriate in-date stocks, including icepacks, PPE etc. in their bag.

Someone becomes ill with Covid-19

Symptoms

- The person and/or their parent/carer will be advised to follow NHS Online Guidance regarding self-isolation, arranging for a COVID-19 test and following the Test and Trace protocols for England.
- Covid-19 Officer to be informed, immediately, if anyone becomes unwell with Covid-19 symptoms at the venue.
- Manager must complete the Club's accident/incident form.
- The Club and the opposition club must be informed of the test results. If tested positive, those in close contact will be advised to self-isolate.
- Close contact means:
 - *direct close contacts* - face-to-face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within one metre, including being coughed on, a face-to-face conversation, or unprotected physical contact
 - *proximity contacts* - extended close contact (within one to two metres for more than fifteen minutes) with an infected individual
 - travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person.

During A Session/Fixture

- Personal hygiene measures should be carried out by everyone and hand sanitisers brought and used.
- Competitive match play is permitted, with social distancing in place before and after the session, and in any breaks in play.
- The sharing of kit and equipment must be avoided and participants should bring their own drinks or refreshments, in named containers.
- When the ball goes out of play, it should not be retrieved by non-participants and should be retrieved using the feet rather than the hands where possible.
- Participants must not spit and should avoid shouting or raising their voices when facing each other, as detailed in The FA Covid-19 Code of Behaviour.
- Balls to be disinfected after handling, during breaks in play. Goal posts and corner poles should be wiped down at half time.
- Youth football coaches are encouraged to limit persistent close proximity of participants during training and match play (where young participants may be more likely to cluster around the ball) and provide regular hygiene breaks in activity.



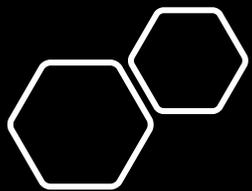
During A Session/Fixture

- Pre-match handshake should not happen. Instead players will be asked to hand-sanitise before kick-off.
- Team talk huddles should not take place. Team talks can take place, as long as social distancing is observed and held outdoors.
- Warm-ups/cool-downs should always observe social distancing.
- Coaches, other team staff and substitutes are allowed, but must also always observe social distancing on touchlines/dug-outs. Social-distancing must also be observed during interactions when a substitution is being made.
- Set plays – free kicks: referees and coaches should encourage players to get on with the game and not unnecessarily prolong set play set-up, such as defensive walls.
- Set plays – corners should also be taken promptly to limit prolonged close marking.
- Goal celebrations should be avoided. Social distancing does not permit handshakes, high-fives or group goal celebrations.
- Interactions with referees and match assistants should only happen with players observing social distancing.



AFTER A Session/Fixture

- Hands should be washed at the earliest opportunity and personal equipment should be wiped down with a disinfectant.
- All equipment to be disinfected including balls, goal posts and corner poles.
- Participants must take their kit home and wash it themselves, or by family members.
- Post activity showers to be taken at home.
- Everyone must continue to maintain social distancing including in any facilities where groups of people congregate (e.g. clubhouses).
- Everyone should leave following the (human) traffic-flow system the Club or facility provider has put place.
- Anyone who becomes infected after training/matches should report this to the Club and the NHS test and trace system.



LEAVING the Venue Clean



Dismantle and/or remove goalposts for safe storage



Before leaving the site, every team should undertake to: -

Remove all rubbish / litter from the pitch and sidelines.

Sweep all mud from corridors and toilet areas.

Ensure all toilets are flushed and sanitised.

Sanitise all hand wash basins.

Pathways adjacent to building should be swept clear of mud.



Any faults or defects should be reported to the Playing Field.

Useful Links

- **GOV.UK information on Coronavirus (COVID-19):**
- <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-the-public-and-sport-providers>
- **HSE information on Coronavirus:**
- <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm>
- **NHS**
- https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMILOzsz9rJ6gIViu7tChIxjgzmEAAYASAAEgKngfD_BwE
- **Football/Sports**
- Detailed FA guidance was issued on 11 May 2021.
- <https://www.thefa.com/news/2021/may/11/step-three-guidance-20210511>
- **Other**
- <https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-11-the-complete-downloads-directory>
- <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/coronavirus>
- <https://www.ukcoaching.org/>