



# **CULLERCOATS FOOTBALL CLUB**

## **Covid19 Operational Policy** **Return to Competitive Football Training &** **Competitive Football Matches** **(All Age Groups)**

**PHASE 2/3**

Gary Stephenson (Chairperson) / 1 August 2020

## INTRODUCTION

This policy amendment relates to the introduction of Phase 2 (Return to Competitive Football Training) and Phase 3 (Return to Competitive Football Matches). This policy amendment should be read in conjunction with the following Club policy documents:

- Covid19 Operational Policy - Return to Football Training (Senior Section Only – Adult Players), dated 2 June 2020, and
- Covid19 Operational Policy - Return to Football Training (U7 to U18 Players), dated 5 July 2020

On Saturday 18 July 2020, in line with new UK Government Guidelines, the FA issued new guidelines for the return of outdoor competitive grassroots football.

The new guidelines set out the allow grassroots football the opportunity to return to competitive football and prepare for the start of the new season.

Football activity can now take place with necessary modifications in place to mitigate the transmission risk of Covid19.

The FA strongly advised a return to competitive football by way of a phased return, as follows:

- Up to 3 July – When ready, you can begin competitive training, with the overall group size (inclusive of coaches) being limited to 30 people
- From August – Outdoor competition football matches to begin, for example, pre-season fixtures, festivals and small sided football competitions
- From September – Grassroots leagues, men’s National League System, Women’s Football Pyramid tiers 3 to 6 and FA Competitions can commence

Clubs were further directed that a return to competitive football should only happen once clubs and facility providers have completed the necessary risk assessments and comprehensive plans are in place.

Having taken time to consider the new guidelines, the Cullercoats FC Management Team has made the following decisions, in terms of our phased return:

- Phase 2 ‘Full Group’ Competitive Football Training – to commence from Tuesday 4 August 2020, for all age groups
- Phase 3 Competitive Football Matches – to commence from Saturday 8 August 2020, for all age groups, save the senior section, where the first team and reserve will play a competitive training game on Saturday 1 August 2020 (in order to trial the new guidelines and operational plan for use of the changing room facility)

Further feedback from the senior section training game will be provided to Club coaches and parent helpers prior to Saturday 8 August 2020. The use of the changing room facility (save toilet access) will remain prohibited for players under 18 years of age until further notice.

## KEY MEASURES

1. Everyone involved with competitive football training and matches should self-assess for Covid19 symptoms before every training session or match. If you are symptomatic, or living in a household with possible or actual Covid19 infection, you must NOT participate, or attend.
2. The Club will continue to ensure that the Links Avenue football facility is compliant with current Government legislation and guidance related to Covid19. This includes deep cleaning and sanitising of the facility, football equipment and the provision of hand sanitiser and other personal protective equipment (PPE) at all training sessions and matches.
3. The Club will permit the return to competitive training sessions (from Tuesday 4 August 2020) in groups not exceeding 30 people, including players, coaches and staff – we will schedule training appropriately, in order to prevent exceeding these numbers on our training pitches.
4. Competitive matches will be permitted from Saturday 8 August 2020. However, social distancing will be in place before and after the match, and during any breaks in play.
5. All players, coaches, staff and match officials MUST sanitise their hands before and after the game, as well as during scheduled breaks throughout a game or training session.
6. Ball handling MUST be kept to a minimum, with most contact via a boot, and the ball disinfected during breaks in play. Age specific measures must be introduced during training sessions to adhere to this measure.
7. Our Under 18 coaches are encouraged to limit persistent close proximity of players during match play and training sessions.
8. Goal celebrations should be avoided, in order to prevent unnecessary contact between players.
9. Equipment should not be shared between groups and it must only be handled by coaches during training sessions and matches. All equipment must be sanitised prior to use and at the end of each training session, or match. Goalkeepers should sanitise their own gloves before, after, and during breaks in training sessions, or matches.
10. Players under the age of 18 years should arrived changed and ready for training sessions, or matches. They are NOT permitted to use the changing rooms, or

showers. Adult players must follow Government advice on the use of indoor facilities. The Club has limited the number of adult players and coaches permitted to use each specific room within the Links Avenue changing room facility, which includes use of the communal showers (see Appendix 'A').

11. Players must follow the best practice for travel to and from training sessions and matches. This includes minimising the use of public transport, wearing a face mask when having to use the same and only sharing lifts with people from the same household, or 'support bubble'.
12. The Club has mandated the keeping of a team register at every training session (Phase 1). This practice MUST be maintained for all Phase 2 & 3 activities. Attendance registers must be submitted to the Club Secretary team via the 'All Club Correspondence' WhatsApp group.
13. No new player may participate in any training session, or 'trial' game without first completing the Club Covid19 consent form AND being registered within the Club system.
14. Comprehensive First Aid Guidance has been produced by the FA for Phase 2/3. The Club has shared this guidance 'in full' with all coaches, staff and parent helpers via the 'All Club Correspondence' WhatsApp group. This guidance will be further distributed by individual email and a central register will be maintained and MUST be signed by all coaches, staff and parent helpers to confirm they have read and digested the said guidance.

## **APPENDIX 'A'**

Building / Room	Purpose	Maximum Number of People	Additional Measures
Canteen	Purchase of food and refreshments	NONE	All purchases will be made from the canteen window only
Changing Room (Seniors)	Changing before and after games only	8	Pegs to be blocked off with tape – leaving only 8 spaces
Changing Room (Visitors) – front left	Changing before and after games only	5	Pegs to be blocked off with tape – leaving only 8 spaces
Toilet (Male)	General use by players, coaches, staff and visitors	2	One person in cubicle and one other in urinal area at any one time only
Toilet (Female)	General use by players, coaches, staff and visitors	1	Single cubicle to be used as normal – one person only
Referees Room	Changing before and after games only	1	One person allowed access at any one time
Showers	Showering after games only	4	Two persons only on either side of the showers at any one time
<b>Other Rooms</b>	<b>CLOSED</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>NO ENTRY – doors to be locked</b>