



TESTWAY YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Points to Consider at Youth Football Matches

Additional Guidance issued by the Management Committee of the
Testway Youth Football League

INTRODUCTION

These notes represent advice from the Management Committee of the Testway Youth Football League (TYFL) as ***Points to Consider*** of 'best practice' for club officials, coaches, players, referees and spectators attending, or participating in, TYFL matches. These notes clarify the expectations the League has of its clubs in providing a safe environment for youth football. They may not be appropriate for all age groups of players, e.g. U-11 groups and younger, but are provided as additional guidance for adults (coaches and parents) in ensuring a COVID safe environment is provided for matches to take place, particularly at venues where there may be several matches taking place.

These *Points to Consider* do not replace instructions you will have been given by your club nor specific guidance that you may receive from your club's COVID officer of expectations for match day behaviours applicable to both home and away fixtures.

FOR THE AVOIDANCE OF DOUBT, GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS, FA GUIDANCE, GUIDANCE TO REFEREES AND LOCAL CLUB ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER THIS DOCUMENT.

BEFORE THE MATCH

Health

- Do not travel to a game if you, or your family, are showing any symptoms of COVID 19, are self-isolating or awaiting the result of a diagnostic test.



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- Should the above be the case, inform your team manager or another official the club. The symptoms of COVID-19 may include,
- i) A temperature of greater than 38°C, ii) loss of sense of taste or smell, iii) a persistent cough, iv) listlessness or fatigue.

Transport

- Avoid, unless absolutely necessary, the use of public transport when travelling to a match.
- If travelling by car, it is advised that you travel only with members of your own household.
 - It is suggested that family members from a second household may travel in the same vehicle, in which case the wearing of facemasks is recommended.
- Players should travel already changed and arrive 'ready to play'. There will be no communal changing facilities available at venues.

Arriving at the ground

- The home club will inform visiting opponents of local arrangements in place with respect to COVID-19 mitigation, e.g. car parking, toilet facilities (if available) and any necessary signage for pathing of spectators. This is particularly important at venues where multiple matches are taking place.
- If food or refreshments are to be provided by the club, arrangements must comply with all relevant Government regulations.
- You may wish to avoid cash transactions in payment.
- Park your vehicle safely with social distancing requirements in mind.
- Clubs are required to retain the details of all attendees at matches for 21 days for *Track & Trace* purposes. Occupants of a single vehicle, or of a family group, may nominate one adult to act as contact for that group.



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- When greeting other match attendees, other families, etc., maintain social distancing.

Prior to the match commencing

- Players from each side should congregate separately in their teams adhering to local club instructions and maintaining social distancing.
- Spectators should avoid unnecessary congregating. Groups should be limited to a maximum of 6 persons. Maintain social distancing between groups.
- The Home Club should identify a suitable area for players and coaches to complete pre-match preparation. The FA advises participants should arrive 'ready to play', but football boots are most likely to be put on immediately before the game. In unfavourable weather take care to maintain social distancing if seeking shelter (e.g. use vehicle if possible).
- Teams should 'warm up' at opposite ends of the pitch.
- The referee will check player's kit whilst maintaining social distancing.
- No items of personal kit should be shared by players of either team.
- Parents. If your child uses an inhaler, take particular care that it should be contained in a plastic bag and handed to the coach, or retained by a parent/accompanying adult.
- Players should have individual refreshments, e.g. a clearly labelled container for drinks. With the younger age groups particularly in mind, it may be better that they are retained by parents/accompanying adults.
- Coaches should pre-sanitise the footballs to be used in practice and the match. At least two match balls should be provided, and must be sanitised before the match. Footballs used in a pre-match warm-up must be pre-sanitised and collected and removed before the kick-off.
- Advise spectators to avoid handling the match ball if returning it to the game. Kicking the ball is acceptable.



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- Clubs must ensure that there is adequate hand sanitiser available at the match venue and all individual matches which may take place there.

PLAYING THE MATCH

- Follow FA Guidance (Refer to FA Guidance “*Re-starting Outdoor Competitive Grassroots Football – Summary*”).
- There will be ‘drinks breaks’ during playing time. Coaches should ensure participants take the opportunity for hand sanitisation at this time.
- Some players may be sensitive to sanitising fluids. These participants may wear gloves during the match, but should sanitise them at the appropriate time.
- At half time, the match ball must be sanitised, or replaced with a sanitised ball.
- Any replacement ball used during the match should be sanitised before use.

SPECTATORS

- Spectator groups should be of no more than six adults, who may be from different households. Different groups should observe social distancing of a minimum of 1 metre (+) and clubs should ensure that these groups are dispersed along the touch line opposite to the coaches and behind the Respect barriers or marker cones.
- Spectators are not permitted to stand behind the goals.

NB. Clubs and spectators should note that FA *Respect* rules continue to apply to all Youth football matches.

- For matches played in stadium grounds, e.g. Cup Finals, spectators must observe the local instructions of the ground authority.
- Spectators are asked to be mindful of Government guidelines for behaviour in social groups. Cheering and encouragement of teams and individuals is natural, but excessive shouting and cheering, in addition to



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Respect guidelines, should also be restrained in recognition of Government COVID guidelines.

- It is important that spectators avoid dropping litter, but particularly ensure that that you check any area where you may have stood and remove any identifiable personal items.

AFTER THE MATCH

- After the final whistle, players, coaches and officials should not shake hands with other participants, but may acknowledge and thank them whilst maintaining social distancing.
- Parents/accompanying adults and other spectators are requested to encourage players to collect any personal equipment and to promptly leave the playing area and return to their vehicle, observing social distancing.
- Coaches should gather up club equipment and complete any post-match administration with match officials and other coaches.
- The home club will arrange for nets to be removed and goal-posts to be dismantled, or if they are permanently fixed, or to sanitise the posts and cross-bars.

POST MATCH CONSIDERATIONS

- Should any attendee (player or spectator) display symptoms of Coronavirus within 14 days of attendance at a match, the host club (or clubs) must be notified. The relevant club will then inform the national 'Track & Trace' authority of the notification. NB. This may have implications for all persons who attended the match.
- Any person affected in this way should also follow Government instructions on how to proceed.



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- The club should make the League aware of the reporting of any such notification, but should not provide detail of the report.

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