



Tattenhoe Football Club Weather Policy and underpinning guidance

At Tattenhoe FC our number one priority is the **safety of our players**. Sometimes, to keep players safe due to conditions of the pitch or adverse weather – it is necessary to cancel or abandon a football game, training or event.

This weather policy applies to matches and events that Tattenhoe Football Club are hosting. When playing away, risk assessments will be done by the hosting team. If Managers are concerned about taking their team to play in an away game that is going ahead outside of our policy, please speak with club welfare officer / club secretary for support in making a safe decision and consult with the referee.

Whilst Tattenhoe FC will always assess and communicate decisions around games and player safety – it is the **responsibility of parents and carers to ensure that children and young people are dressed appropriately and safely for the weather conditions** when activities go ahead.

Pitch & Weather Conditions Policy

Games will be cancelled for the following reasons:

- Very hot weather: dangerous for players safety
- Frozen and/or Rutted Pitch: dangerous for players safety
- Waterlogged Pitch: dangerous for players safety
- Snow Covered Pitch: pitch markings and match ball need to be seen.
- Fog: When the referee can't see both goals from the centre circle

Our pitches are inspected several times per week and wherever possible pitch closures will be communicated with plenty of notice however sometimes it is impossible to predict how the pitch will be on the day.

Decisions around pitch safety are collaborative between the committee, managers, parish council, pavilion staff and referees.

Every effort is made, and time is volunteered to keep our pitches in excellent condition however it may be necessary to limit use to maintain these standards and during these times league matches will take priority over training and friendlies.

Everyone should keep an eye out for Facebook, emails or text messages / watsapp groups relating to cancellation of matches or training and managers should communicate with players and families as soon as possible.

Hot Weather Policy (please see further below for additional guidance for playing safely in hot weather)

If the temperature at kick off is forecast to be 32C or higher for junior matches, Tattenhoe Football Club will reschedule a match and withdraw approval of a friendly match.

Playing sport in temperatures at 32 degrees or higher for children can be dangerous.

WGBT stands for Wet Bulb Globe Temperature, which is a measure of heat stress on the human body in direct sunlight.

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It takes into account the temperature, humidity, wind speed, sun angle and cloud cover.

Most grassroots football clubs do not have specialist equipment to measure this accurately and we use air temperature and recommend using the MET Office website or app [Weather and climate change - Met Office](#). This website will also provide timely weather warning information.

For more information about the MET office measures temperature see: [How we measure temperature - Met Office](#)

If the temperature at kick off for any junior match is forecast to be 30 or 31C, or 34C or higher for senior matches, a drinks break must be held in each half of the match. The timing of the drinks break is at the discretion of the match official but should occur, where possible, approximately two-thirds of the way through each half. This is due to the players being able to hydrate more appropriately prior to the start of the half, with the drinks break providing a “topup” opportunity before half time or the end of the match.

The committee will check the temperature regularly during the hotter months and will where possible aim to schedule training / matches to a time where the session can be completed by 11am or started after 5pm.

Often the temperature inside the 3G will be much higher than the air temperature – this will be monitored and measured by pavilion staff frequently during hot weather.

Coaches should encourage players to drink fluids prior to, during and after all matches and training sessions to avoid dehydration and for rehydration following strenuous activity.

Coaches should remind parents about the importance of sun cream and providing water bottles.

Cold Weather Policy (please see further below for additional guidance for playing safely in cold weather) Football can be played in very cold / wet conditions and children need to be suitably dressed.

We recognise it is difficult during cold weather for players on the touchline so Managers should endeavour to rotate substitutes where possible, so players are not stood still in cold or wet weather for prolonged periods.

Managers will plan training sessions to ensure players are kept moving. Managers can also shorten the training time and cancel if they feel it is in the best interest of the players.

See above for policy details regarding pitch closures due to ice, snow and when waterlogged and below for guidance about how to make those decisions.

Storm Weather Policy (please see further below for additional guidance for playing safely in storms) If the weather makes playing football unsafe, it should be abandoned.

Decisions around safe playing conditions are collaborative between the committee, managers, parish council, pavilion staff and referees.

In the event of thunder and lightning, or extreme winds and rain, outside activity will stop, and people ushered to an area where players can shelter safely – please see below for further guidance.

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UNDERPINNING GUIDANCE:

This guidance is provided by Tattenhoe Policy to inform and underpin the policy and to support managers, coaches, parents and carers to make safe decisions.

Guidance for playing football in hot weather:

- Children who play sports or are physically active in hot weather can be at risk for heat illnesses including dehydration and heat stroke.
- Children sweat less than adults. This makes it harder for children to cool off and so needs to be managed carefully.
- Where possible, we will provide a shaded area for participants during breaks in matches and training sessions.
- To avoid heat exhaustion, if participants feel unwell during exercise they should immediately stop and rest.
- Further benefit comes if the rest is in a shaded area with some passing breeze (from a fan if necessary) and the person takes extra hydration. Misting or spraying with water can also help.
- Heat stroke is a potentially fatal condition and must be treated immediately. It should be assumed that any collapsed participant is at danger of heat stroke. The best first aid measures are “strip/soak/fan”: a) Strip off any excess clothing. b) Soak with water. c) Fan.
- Ice placed in groin and armpits is also helpful.
- The aim is to reduce body temperature as quickly as possible. The participant should immediately be referred for treatment by a medical professional. It is important to note that heat exhaustion or heat stroke can still occur even in the presence of good hydration.
- During hot weather please make sure children have plenty of sun cream on and a full water bottle.
- Hats can be worn when not playing and coaches should attempt to find shady spots for rest for example in breaks between games during tournaments.
- Communicate with the club secretary / CWO about any concerns.

Guidance for playing football in storms:

- In the event of thunder and lightning, or extreme winds and rain, outside activity will stop, and people ushered to an area where players can shelter safely.
- If the weather makes playing unsafe, it should be abandoned.
- While the odds of being struck by lightning are low, it's wise to plan ahead and protect yourself and players.
- If you hear thunder, you are probably already within range of where a ground flash could occur. If there is less than 30 seconds between hearing thunder and seeing lightning, there is an imminent threat. Get inside as quickly as possible or cover inside a non-convertible car with windows up.
- Avoid water and find a low-lying place that is a safe distance from trees, poles or metal objects.
- Be aware that metal can conduct lightning, e.g. umbrellas or perimeter fencing.



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- If you and your team are caught in an exposed location and cannot get to safety – particularly if you feel your hair stand on end - squat close to the ground with your heels together and hands over your ears / head with your head tucked down towards your knees. DO NOT lie down. Try to touch as little of your body as possible on the ground.
- It IS SAFE to help someone who has been struck by lightning and administer CPR and first aid.
- Prior to training / a match when a storm is forecast – make sure you have identified an area where shelter can be taken safely.
- Because electrical charges can linger in clouds after a thunderstorm has seemingly passed, experts agree you should wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder before resuming outdoor activities.
- Communicate with the club secretary / CWO about any concerns.

Guidance for playing football in cold weather:

- In the cold weather, as a minimum, children should come to training and matches during winter months with a coat/training jacket to wear above their kit. Under kit thermals are also highly recommended.
- Please encourage gloves and hats to be worn during training, however during matches hats will not be allowed except for goal keeper caps (and other head coverings as per the FA policy) [Law 4 - The Players' Equipment \(thefa.com\)](http://thefa.com)
- Younger age groups will be more vulnerable to very cold weather.
- Managers should make sure your team are reminded to wear layers.
- Games will be cancelled for frozen pitches. **All areas** of the pitch should be inspected. If you cannot get a key into the ground, a stud will not be able to penetrate it.
- The referee or person inspecting should wear a set of studded boots when inspecting the field of play, as this will give the best indication of the suitability of the playing surface.
- A surface which does not yield any purchase to studded boots, is dangerous, and the game should not be sanctioned. This includes any part of the surface that does not yield, no matter how small an area.
- A field of play with hard deep frosted ruts and divots (a legacy of a muddy game played the day before) is less likely to be playable than a completely flat field with only crusty surface-frost to contend with.
- The position of the sun and its path as the game progresses must also be taken into consideration. For example, if a field of play is 'just about playable', but the path of the sun means that its rays will disappear behind the trees or over the horizon, then the field of play surface on a cold frosty day, will get worse, not better.
- At local level, if it is clear, that waiting an extra 30 minutes or possibly up to an hour, will allow the sun to melt the frost, then play could be delayed with the agreement of both teams. But this depends very much on the weather forecast, the time of day and the team's agreement. Generally, it is better to make a decision quickly, based on the surface suitability at the time of the scheduled kick-off.
- Players are more likely to get injured on hard surfaces.
- If parents think it's too cold for their children to train - that's okay! No child should feel forced to train if they are likely to find very cold temperatures - we are all different and feel and respond to changes in temps differently.
- Consider making your session shorter if the temp is going to drop really low.
- Players still need reminding to drink water but might feel less thirsty.
- If children are shivering or feeling numb - they need to go inside or home.
- Keep everyone moving!

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- “Winter weather affects ligaments, tendons, and other connective tissues, making them less malleable and more prone to tearing. This is similar to taking a rubber band out of the freezer, which will probably break if you stretch it quickly without letting it come to room temperature first. Playing sports without warming up is dangerous in any season, but the risk of injury is highest in the winter when “cold” muscles and tissues are tighter than ever.”
- If you think cancellation could be possible, warn families in advance as some will need to travel longer distances and may have to make childcare arrangements. If weather is bad and your players parents / carers tend to drop and run – ask them to stay close by in case training has to be stopped during a session.
- It is okay to tell a parent / carer that the player cannot attend training if you think they are not dressed suitably.

Football matches can always be rescheduled – player safety is always the priority.

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