



## MILBORNE PORT FC RETURN TO FOOTBALL PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

The UK Government has now given approval for competitive grassroots football and training sessions to restart following the COVID-19 pandemic and the FA have now produced detailed guidance on how clubs must proceed. The current guidance applies to children's, youth and adult football which is played outside. At the present time indoor football is still not permitted.

Anyone who is deemed vulnerable in respect of COVID-19 must follow the Government's guidance, only returning to football when it is right for them to do so.

This plan covers how Milborne Port FC are going to adhere to FA and UK Government guidance and may need amending as UK Government guidelines change. The plan relates to how we as a club are going to ensure the facilities and equipment we use are safe to use and will not act as a means of transferring the virus between those carrying the infection to others. The plan also covers what players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents etc are going to do prior to, during and after attending matches or training. The plan also includes how we as a club are going to communicate with all interested parties.

This plan should be read in conjunction with Milborne Port FC 'Return to Competitive Football Risk Assessment'. The FA guidance can be found on the Somerset FA website at <http://www.somersetfa.com/news/2020/jul/18/guidance-for-restarting-competitive-football>.

### FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Changing Rooms – Changing Rooms and showers are an area of increased risk of transmission and will remain closed. Players and officials must arrive changed and ready to play.

Equipment – All equipment (training cones, goalposts, flags etc) must be thoroughly cleaned prior to and after use. The equipment must be stored away so that it is not used by members of the public. The sharing of equipment must be avoided where possible. Where equipment is shared, equipment must be cleaned before use by another person.

Football Kits (adult players) – Football kits must be worn home by the players and washed rather than passing the kits to the usual kit washers. Cleaned kits shall be returned to the coach if a different player will require it for the next match (handling of the kit shall be minimised and handled with gloves whenever possible). Each person must wash or sanitise their hands before and after handling the kit.

Catering – No Catering shall be provided with the kitchen and cricket pavilion facilities remaining closed

Toilets – The pavilion will be remaining closed and therefore the toilets within the pavilion toilets will not be accessible. The toilets at the rear of the cricket pavilion will be available.

Non-Essential Items – All non-essential items that may be difficult to clean shall be removed and locked away.

Signage – Clear signage is required to ensure social distancing is maintained and congestion is avoided.

Water bottles – Club water bottles shall not be used. Water bottles shall be brought from the players home and must not be shared between players.

Medications – Medication e.g. Asthma puffers must not be shared between players.

Although hand sanitiser will be available at the Recreation Ground, participants are encouraged to bring their own.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Players – Adult players must provide written consent to the club or coach that they are comfortable with the club's COVID-19 arrangements for competitive training/matches. This shall be done via the Player Registration form. If a player's consent is not provided to the COVID-19 Officer before the training/match then they cannot take part.

Parents/Carers – If Parents/Carers choose for their child to take part in competitive training/matches they will need to provide written consent to the club or coach. Parents must be comfortable with the club's COVID-19 planning arrangements before doing so. If parent's consent is not provided to the COVID-19 Officer before the training/match then their child cannot take part.

Additional Medical needs – If an opponent/official has additional medical needs these must be advised by the opponents Manager/official 1 week before the match so that adequate arrangements can be discussed.

## **PRIOR TO TRAINING/MATCHES**

In line with UK Government guidelines, all participants (players, coaches, club and match officials, volunteers, spectators etc) should check for symptoms of COVID-19 (high temperature, new continuous cough or loss of/change to their sense of smell or taste). If an individual has symptoms or is living in a household with a possible COVID-19 infection they **MUST NOT** attend training or matches but stay at home and follow Government guidance.

In competitive football the COVID-19 Officer must ensure that a Safety Briefing is provided before the commencement of any fixture. This briefing will remind all players and officials about their responsibilities in complying with the FA Code of Behaviour.

All participants should follow UK Government guidance regarding travelling. If participants have to travel with people outside of their household or support bubble they should wear a face covering. Car windows should be opened whenever possible.

Matches shall take place such that there is only one match at the facility at any time. If necessary, times shall be staggered to enable fixtures to be completed on the correct day. This shall be arranged with the League, opposition and the Referee.

To limit the chance of infection, the handling of cash shall be minimised. Managers shall find out how the match referee wants to be paid but the club encourages back payments (until the Matchday App is in operation).

## **DURING TRAINING/MATCHES**

Competitive football involving up to 30 people (including coaches) can now take part in an outside setting. Social distancing guidelines should be followed before and after sessions and during any breaks. Any spectators must be restricted to discrete six person gathering limits and spread out in line with Government guidelines.

Players shall adhere to social distancing guidelines during warm up and team talks for matches. Coaches and substitutes must always observe social distancing on the touchline/dugouts and when substitutions are being made.

Pre-match handshakes and handshakes during substitutions are not allowed.

Referees shall encourage set plays such as free kicks and corners to be taken quickly to limit prolonged close marking

Goal celebrations must be controlled, adhering to social distancing where possible.

Social distancing shall be observed during interactions between players and referees. When the ball goes out of play it should not be retrieved by non-participants and should be retrieved using the feet rather than hands where possible. Where there are breaks in the game, or training, if throw ins or handling has occurred the ball shall be disinfected. Everyone should refrain from spitting. If players need to sneeze or cough, they are encouraged to do so into a tissue or upper sleeve and advised to avoid touching their face. Tissues must be disposed of in a sealed bin as soon as possible.

### **AFTER TRAINING/MATCHES**

Hands should be washed at the earliest opportunity and personal equipment should be wiped down with a disinfectant.

Coaches shall maintain a record of regular cleaning of club or team equipment that players use, and review the risk assessment between sessions, learning from any changes that are needed. These records shall be provided to the COVID-19 Officer within 24 hours.

Players, spectators and officials shall leave the venue in a timely manner, ensuring that they do not congregate but adhere to Government social distancing guidelines.

Anyone who becomes infected after training/matches should report this to the NHS Track and Trace System.

### **TRACK AND TRACE**

ALL people attending Football Club activities (training, matches, meetings etc) must provide their name, address and contact telephone number so that they can be tracked in the event of an attendee getting COVID-19 symptoms. This information will be retained by the Club Secretary for 21 days and then destroyed. The information will be retained in accordance with GDPR Rules.

### **FIRST AID GUIDANCE**

COVID-19 is a virus spread through droplets from the respiratory tract. This is more likely to happen when in close proximity (2 metres or less), or face to face with an infected person. Droplets containing the virus can be produced from coughing, sneezing and forceful breathing.

Any player who has had COVID-19 symptoms should be cleared by their doctor before returning to football. Those players who have had symptoms lasting more than 7 days during their illness, even if asymptomatic at the time of returning to football should have full medical clearance before returning to football.

If someone develops symptoms consistent with COVID-19 during a training session/match the player shall be separated from the rest of the participants and it must be determined whether urgent medical attention is required. If they are a child they shall be taken home, or to seek medical attention if required by a member of their household and follow guidance for symptoms of COVID-19. If they have to wait for a member of their household, they shall be isolated in the 'Referee's room in the pavilion along with a trusted adult. This adult shall wear appropriate PPE (gloves, apron, face mask and goggles). If they are an adult and symptoms are mild they shall be advised to return home and follow Government guidance. If the symptoms are moderate-severe, it is advised they do not drive but get support from a household member to return home. They should then seek medical attention as appropriate. If other players/coaches present have followed the social distancing protocols, they do not need to follow any specific advice unless they develop symptoms. If they develop symptoms they would need to isolate as per Government Guidance.

Delivering first aid during training/matches will likely include the need for the First Aider to compromise Government advised social distancing guidance and come into contact with a potentially injured player. In the event of this happening, the First Aider shall be equipped with the appropriate PPE (hands shall be thoroughly cleaned before putting on and after taking off PPE). The First Aider must update themselves on any changes in first aid procedures required as a result of the pandemic.

ALL FIRST AIDERS MUST FAMILIARISE THEMSELVES WITH THE FA GUIDANCE “FIRST AID GUIDANCE FOR RETURNING TO OUTDOOR COMPETITIVE GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL”

### **MANAGEMENT OF THE RETURN TO COMPETITIVE FOOTBALL**

The Football Association (FA) have advised that all clubs must have a COVID-19 Officer and suggest that a COVID-19 Group is set up to produce, implement and oversee the safe return to play.

The COVID-19 Officer for Milborne Port FC is Robert Lockey

The COVID-19 Group consists of the COVID-19 Officer and Victoria Rymell covering Minileague and Youth and Jody Baunton covering adult football.

This Plan and the accompanying Risk Assessment will be continuously monitored and updates carried out when required or when FA/UK Government guidelines change.