



## **Return to Play – FAQs**

### **Phase 3 FAQs**

#### **Who is the Phase 3 (Stage 1 & 2) protocol document relevant to?**

The protocol document released on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September is relevant to all levels of football as we have used this document to outline the roadmap for the return of matches at all levels of the game as well as include some amended guidelines related to use of indoor facilities and coronavirus symptoms.

However, Stage 1 & 2 refers specifically to the Staged Return of Football at Phase 3 (as detailed on page 6 of the document), which will see in-house club training matches and inter-club training matches return for u6 – u11 age group teams. The intra-club and inter-club match protocols outlined in the document are specifically relevant to u6 – u11 age group teams, further guidance will be issued related to match protocols for the u12 – u16, youth and senior football.

#### **In the Staged Return of Football at Phase 3, why is there a staged approach to the return of matches at different age groups?**

As highlighted in the protocol document, the 30-person limit does impact our ability to deliver football at all levels in the same way as pre-COVID-19. The playing formats and slightly different restrictions placed on young people aged under 11 means we are able to re-start matches for this age group sooner than other age groups. We remain hopeful of an increase in the 30-person limit for outdoor organised activity and want to allow as much time as possible for this to occur prior to leagues resuming. This reduce the conditions we would need to place on matches for u12 -u16, youth, senior and veterans if the 30-person limit remained. If an increase does not occur, our roadmap of the staged return of football outlines our approach we must continue to operate within the 30-person limit. The staged approach also allows us to review the protocols in place at different formats of the game and assess how these may need to be amended for formats of the game that will re-start at a later stage. We recognise that this has been an extremely frustrating time for all players, coaches, officials and administrators however we are confident that the timeline we have outlined in the protocol document will be adhered to and that matches at all levels will resume in October.

#### **In the Staged Return of Football at Phase 3, why is there a period of in-house club matches prior to friendlies taking place and a mandatory period of friendlies prior to leagues resuming?**

The reason for starting with in-house club training matches prior to inter-club friendlies is that it gives the appropriate time for clubs to plan and complete the necessary steps outlined to return to play matches. It will also allow clubs to use training matches as an opportunity to experience and practice the match-day protocols in a match environment prior to implementing them in an inter-club match.

The rationale for a 3-week period of friendlies before leagues return is

- it will allow players a phased return to match-play following a prolonged period of absence – given that the number of available substitutes will be significantly reduced to stay within the 30-person limit, specific conditions will be placed on friendly matches to protect players welfare
- it ensures leagues have enough time to prepare what their respective season structure would look like and can communicate and discuss that with clubs



- it allows some time for any increase in the 30-person limit for organised outdoor activities to be implemented in a revised playing format ahead of leagues resuming

**Why aren't spectators permitted? How do you expect clubs to police not allowing spectators to watch matches? What about if parents or young children aren't happy to be left on their own?**

The decision on not allowing spectators to watch matches pitch-side is a Welsh Government guideline not an FAW decision. Welsh Government guidelines do not permit a group of spectators to watch a match pitch-side outside of the 30-person number participating within the organised activity. This is in line with the protocols we have issued for both phase 1 and 2. We have asked for this to be reviewed by Welsh Government to allow spectators to attend in a separate 'bubble' of up to 30 in a designated area.

Within current Welsh Government guidelines, a caveat is issued for spectators in that they are permitted to attend if there is a health or safeguarding reason for them to be present. Unfortunately, there isn't a criteria outlined for what would constitute a valid safeguarding or health reason. With regards to this matter, we would urge that a significant degree of common sense is applied. For example, we have received a number of queries relating to young children being left on their own and feel that if a child or parent is concerned about being left on their own there is a justified safeguarding reason for a parent to be present.

In terms of clubs being able to police this matter; we recognise this will be difficult for clubs however as the governing body we have to be issuing advice in line with current government guidance. Again, we would advise that common sense is applied, parents cannot be present pitch-side but can remain within the wider facility area, e.g. club car park or away from the pitch at a public park, after they have dropped their child at the designated drop off area to meet their club coach. Clubs should include this within their risk assessment to ask parents/ guardians to be respectful of the guidelines regarding spectators not being permitted pitch-side. Outside of this, it is up to the parents to act responsibly to maintain social distancing if they decide to remain within the wider facility area.

Large crowds gathering around pitches across the country could significantly impact our ability to progress the return of football at all levels as well as contribute to the transmission of the virus. As a result, we must ensure we all act responsibly to protect each other, our clubs and the game as a whole.

**Why can we only play teams from our own League? Can teams play across divisions of the same League?**

This protocol document is specifically related to Stage 1 & 2 and the return of matches for u6 – u11. Specific guidance will be issued related matches at u12 – u16, youth and senior.

The rationale for initially outlining that clubs can only play teams within the same league at u6 – u11 age groups is to limit travel, however we recognise that some leagues cross more than 1 local authority boundary and as a result we have issued amended guidance in a revised version of the protocol document that has been shared with Club COVID-19 Compliance Officers.

*Matches should take place against local teams either within the same league or within the same local authority, which ever would result in the least travel time.*

**How does RCT and Caerphilly lockdown affect our the return of football?**



Based on the guidance issued from Welsh Government related to the local lockdowns issued in Caerphilly and RCT, the following should be applied by all clubs:

- No participants, coaches, officials or other club volunteers residing in the Local authorities to attend activities outside the borough e.g. training, face to face education courses, meetings
- Local lockdown measures mean that clubs should exclude any members living outside of the borough from attending training sessions inside the borough
- No participants, coaches, officials or other club volunteers residing outside the borough to attend facilities or training sessions in the borough

If any further lockdowns are issued, clubs will be contacted by their Area Association with specific guidance on how the lockdowns impact

### **What do I need to do as a club to return to play matches at phase 3?**

- Have AT LEAST one Club COVID-19 Compliance Officer appointed
- Club Management meeting to discuss FAW Safer Return to Play Phase 3 protocols
- Club COVID-19 Compliance Officers to share FAW Safer Return to Training phase 3 protocols with  
Players; Parents; Coaches; Facility provider (if applicable)
- Complete a NEW COVID-19 risk assessment - this does not need to be shared with FAW for approval
- **If clubs are returning to play matches at u6 – u11 age groups, a NEW club checklist should be completed for phase 3**
- Clubs should meet regularly to review implementation, risk assessment and latest guidelines
- All clubs should hold regular de-briefing sessions with coaches, club management and Club COVID-19 Compliance Officers and Operational Leads

### **COACHING ACTIVITY**

**Can 2 teams from different clubs share 1 training area (1 pitch) even if they are different age groups**  
Yes, we have amended this in our Safer Return to Play document available [here](#)

**Training is 14 players and 1 coach, if you have 20 children does that mean you have to have 2 coaches present?**

Yes

**Can a coach move between 2 groups during the same session? Is 1 coach to 5 players a requirement or can 1 coach work with 2 or more groups of 5 players at a session?**

We would encourage coaches to stay with the same group for the duration of the training session and not move between 2 groups of players to limit contact between multiple players and coaches.



**Can a coach hold 2 sessions or lead 2 sessions back to back?**

No, this has changed following the latest government guidelines.

**Are groups allowed to train indoors?**

Yes, however there are difference guidelines for the indoor training which are outlined in our Safer Return to Play document available [here](#)

**Will each coach have free access to Coach Cymru for learning resource?**

Yes provided they have an FAW Courses login – if coaches do not know their FAW courses login please contact [info@fawcourses.com](mailto:info@fawcourses.com)

**FIRST AID & MEDICAL**

**Can players train if they have asthma or any respiratory issue?**

Players should seek advice from their GP or medical professional if they are concerned about returning to train.

**If we need more first aiders, is there going to be an online basics course?**

**We can't currently book a first aid course. Is there going to be any courses available soon?**

**Even though we have first aid trained volunteers some of them will have lapsed or are about too?**

**The first aid course has not been available, what do we do in that situation?**

**What if your FAW first aid has expired and was booked on but COVID blocked it, but have a first aid from work would still ok**

Following guidance issued by the accredited awarding body for our FAW First Aid Award, Agored Cymru, we are unable to deliver our Award in the current climate. This centres around the practical nature of the course and competency assessment required for all candidates completing this Award. It is for these reasons that all candidates will need to attend in person opposed to exploring 'online' alternatives.

Therefore, all courses due to be held within the suspension period will be rearranged as a priority as soon as it is safe to do so. Certificate extensions have been provided for Coaches due to expire in 2020 – 2023.

In relation to adhering to phase 3 Return to Play guidelines:

For each training session or match (i.e. per group of 30 people), a minimum of 1 FAW qualified first aider (or approved equivalent) that has a valid DBS will need to be present

This is an amendment to existing club accreditation regulations related to clubs providing a first aid qualified person per age group team/squad

Therefore, if clubs have multiple age groups training at the same time on the same training area – only 1 qualified first aider is required to be present

If clubs are using multiple training areas, a qualified first aider is required for each training area

For further support and information in relation to FAW Trust Club Accreditation Criteria and approved qualifications, please visit our website [www.FAWTrust.cymru](http://www.FAWTrust.cymru) or directly on the following link - <https://www.fawtrust.cymru/grassroots/clubsupport/club-accreditation/accreditation-criteria/>



**I assume clearer guidance will be provided in terms of First Aid provision?**

Yes, a First Aid guidance document is available [here](#)

**What PPE does FAW suggest that clubs need. e.g. disposable gloves, face shield, ordinary face mask. Do FAW have a preferred supplier for these items - as you can imagine these are going to be a popular item for all clubs, as well as additional cost to clubs.**

We would advise clubs to look at purchasing face masks, gloves and disposable aprons for first aiders. The FAW doesn't have a preferred supplier but support is available through the Be Active Wales Fund to purchase these items.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

**Do we need to complete a risk assessment for each team or just 1 risk assessment for the club? Will the FAW be providing all clubs with a risk assessment template with regards to bringing back training?**

You would need to complete a risk assessment for the club at each venue your club uses. A new risk assessment should be completed to return to matches at phase 3. A template and guidance document will be available [here](#)

**Will there be a section for clubs to use to risk assess the staff of the club to ensure they are ok to resume training - or would this be part of the overall risk assessment?**

This could form part of an overall risk assessment for the club or you could use the template to complete a separate risk assessment for staff and volunteers.

**Will FAW confirm that a club can return to training on submitting and completing documentation.**

Clubs will not be formally approved to return to training by the Area Association, FAW or FAW Trust. Once clubs successfully complete the club checklist they would be eligible to return to training. Clubs should remember that their insurance cover is based on adhering to governing body guidelines.

### **FACILITY, EQUIPMENT AND CLEANING**

**What is FAW recommendations on the toilets usage at club facilities - currently public toilets are closed should clubs keep them closed?**

**Do we as clubs require hand sanitisers around the ground? Or can parents ensure to bring them for their child and senior players provide their own? Should we also ensure to get hand sanitisers for the club buildings such as toilets, ref room, toilets (even though we have a sink), canteen and changing rooms in preparation?**

Guidance on toilet facilities and hand sanitisers are provided in the Safer Return to Training protocols available [here](#)

**Is there a recommended alcohol-based cleaning agent or hand washing solution? Will there be detailed guidance on sanitisation?**

Guidance on cleaning products are provided in the Safer Return to Training protocols available [here](#) by signposting to [Government guidance on cleaning in a non-healthcare setting](#)

**Are there any restrictions in place if we only use a council field to train? If using council facilities for outdoor training can we utilise public toilet facilities?**

You would need to contact your facility provider in advance of returning to train to check this.



**If there are full size two pitches running parallel to each other are you still limited to max 30 people? even if they are separated and screened from each other?**

In this instance, you would be permitted to have 60 players and coaches across the 2 training areas based on our guidelines of 30 players and coach per training area. You would need to consider how you manage entry to and exit from the facility to limit contact between players.

**Will the FAW be providing clubs with PPE & Temperature measuring equipment?**

These items will be eligible for clubs to apply for through the Be Active Wales Fund.