



SHREWSBURY UP & COMERS FC HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY – Version 1.0

Shrewsbury Up & Comers FC is a voluntary organisation operated entirely by volunteer team of managers / coaches and a volunteer management committee.

As a club our policy is that every child or young person who plays or participates in football through our club should be able to do so in an enjoyable and healthy and safe manner.

We provide clear instructions and information and appropriate training to ensure our volunteers are appropriately qualified and competent as required by both the County and National Football Association.

In conjunction with this we follow all Football Association policies and procedures for **Safeguarding Children**. Children come first and their Health Safety and wellbeing is our primary concern, above and beyond the game of Football itself.

Procedures for Health and Safety

The Manager/Coach being demonstrably 'competent' is our main Health and Safety control measure. The specified Manager/Coach is the responsible person for their 'Age Group Team' and this person has a duty to ensure that they personally are 'in date for both FA Emergency Aid and FA Safeguarding Children. They also **MUST** hold an 'in-date', **FA Accepted Enhanced CRC** together with either a FA LCC card (if they are Level 1 coaching or above)

The following guidelines should all be carried out by all Managers and Coaches:-

1) Equipment

All players must wear shin guards/ pads. Is

the ball safe (i.e. not damaged?)

All equipment must be used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

Player's boots and the 'blades' or 'studs' on them should be checked regularly for safety. (There have been serious accidents and injuries caused by 'blades' with sharp worn edges and also 'studs' with sharp or exposed metal – players wearing such

boots on concrete or gravel should therefore be actively discouraged as this can cause this problem)

**Referees do have the right to inspect player's boots accordingly
(FIFA Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees)**



All items of jewellery (necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, leather bands, rubber bands, etc.) are strictly forbidden and must be removed. Using tape to cover jewellery is not acceptable.

(This is all as per Law 4 The FA/ FIFA Laws of the Game concerning Equipment)

2) Playing and Training Venue

Check the pitch, sports hall, all weather surface or field for any obstacle, item or implement which may cause **harm** or discomfort to any player, official or spectator. This is known as a **hazard**.

Check the goal posts for security and safety

Check that the corner flags and 'Respect' barriers are used correctly in matches. Check changing facilities for security and safety

3) Risk Assessment

By doing the checks in 1&2 above you are carrying out a dynamic risk assessment on all matches and venues used. Ensure that all 'control' measures to reduce both /or either the severity and probability of harm from any hazard occurring are put in place and checked.

All 'home' venues used by SHREWSBURY UP & COMERS FC for Training and Matches are hired from either Schools, Shrewsbury College of Arts & Technology or other organisations. Hence it is the venue owners responsibility to ensure venue is appropriately assessed and continues to be fit for purpose.

However we need to check on a week by week basis for hazards that can arise such as damaged facilities. If issues arise from these checks then our Managers / Coaches must report things promptly to the venues responsible person with a copy to the Club Secretary so they can be followed up with the owners of the facilities we use.

If anything is unsafe and cannot be made safe then the match or training session should not take place.

For 'away' venues and facilities in the first instance please raise any concern with the 'home' team manager and should you be unsatisfied with a response or lack of a response then please notify SHREWSBURY UP & COMERS FC Club Secretary.



4) First Aid

Make sure a qualified first aider is at all training and match venues with a suitable first aid kit.

Also please ensure you have copies of SHREWSBURY UP & COMERS FC Accident Report Forms, SHREWSBURY UP & COMERS FC Head Injury Card, Pocket 'CONCUSSION RECOGNITION TOOL' and the Club Medical Emergency Action Plan' in the bag with the first aid kit.

An emergency phone should be available.

5) Contact Details

Ensure you have either a complete and up to date **Team Register**.

6) Goal Post Safety

FA Goal Post Safety Guidelines must be followed at all times. The most recent Goal Post Safety Guidelines (Updated May 2015 by The Football Association, along with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Health and Safety Executive and the British Standards Institution,) are also available in the SHREWSBURY UP & COMERS FC Filepool and on the FA Website.

All Managers / Coaches responsible for matches / training sessions should ensure that they are fully familiar with the Guidelines and that they are followed. Several serious injuries and fatalities have occurred in recent years as a result of unsafe or incorrect use of goalposts. Safety is always of paramount importance and everyone in football must play their part to prevent similar incidents occurring in the future.

The FA's guidelines for the safe use of goalposts state as follows:-

- For safety reasons goalposts of any size (including those which are portable and not installed permanently at a pitch or practice field) must always be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goalposts must be secured as per the manufacturer's instructions
- Under no circumstances should children or adults be allowed to climb on, swing or play with the structure of the goalposts
- Particular attention is drawn to the fact that if not properly assembled and secured, portable goalposts may overturn
- Regular inspections of goalposts must be carried out to check that they are properly maintained
- Portable goalposts if left in place should be checked for safety before use.
- The use of metal cup hooks on goals was banned from the commencement of 2007-08 season and match officials have been instructed not to commence matches



where such net fixings are evident for safety reasons. Nets should only be secured by plastic hooks, net grips or tape and not by metal cup hooks.

- Any metal cup hooks should have been removed and replaced. New goalposts should not be purchased if they include metal cup hooks
- Goalposts which are “home made” or which have been altered from their original size or construction should not be used. These have been the cause of a number of deaths and injuries

There is no BS/CEN standard for wooden goals and it is unlikely that wooden goals will pass a load or stability test. The FA recommends that wooden goals should be replaced when necessary with compliant metal, aluminium or plastic goalposts. All wooden goals previously tested by independent consultants have failed strength and stability tests.

For reference, The FA and BSI, in conjunction with the industry, have developed two standards for goalposts – BSEN 748 (2004) and BS 8462 (2005). It is strongly recommended that you ensure that all goals purchased comply with the relevant standard. A Code of Practice BS 8461 has also been completed and copies of all of these three standards are available from the British Standards Institute.

7) Pitch Inspections

Such extreme weather conditions such as heavy snow, severe frost, water logging with puddles of standing water and/ or areas of sinking mud/ turf will result in matches being postponed. In this case, Leagues and opponents being advised of this as soon as possible and practical to do so.

As a fundamental inspection rule the ground should take a stud and enable safe turning without slipping.

Youth soccer coaches have to be careful not to allow matches to go ahead on unsuitable pitches. There can often be pressure to allow the game to go ahead from your own team (who are usually keen to play no matter what the conditions) and the opposition (who may have travelled a considerable distance). However, this must be resisted. The health and safety of the players has to come first.

The article below was written by an experienced referee and offers some advice for coaches who are about to inspect a hard, frosty pitch.

- There is no scientific measure that can be used to deem a frosty ice covered field to be safe.
- Nevertheless, any experienced Referee will take the following into consideration before making a decision.
- It is the Referee's responsibility to make the decision and nobody else's.
- The whole of the field of play surface MUST be safe.



- There is a great danger that if 99 percent of the field of play surface is OK, and the game is allowed to be played, players will assume that 100 percent is OK, and play normally, and not compensate for any hard surface areas. In other words, playing on a hard field of play, which is partially 99% OK, is just as dangerous (if not more so) than on a field of play, which is totally hard. Neither game should be played.
- The Referee should not be influenced by the teams' opinion. If an accident happens, it is the Referee who cops it. The teams will deny any responsibility! Therefore, when a field of play inspection is carried out, the Referee should not do so in company of team managers or Club Officials, as they will try to influence the Referee's decision.
- When the weather is doubtful, the Referee should aim to arrive at the ground as early as he can to make an inspection. This may allow time for travelling teams to be warned of a cancellation. When the weather is doubtful, a check on the local weather forecast can help. For example, although a field of play may be frozen in the early hours of the morning, a prediction of sunshine, will give the Referee a good idea of the possibility that the field may become playable later in the day.
- If the forecast is for snow or frost or freezing temperatures, then the chances are, that the game will not proceed. At lower level football, it can be useful for a local Referee to be contacted, to make an early inspection on behalf of the match Referee who lives some distance away from the ground. This can prevent unnecessary travelling.
- When completing the field of play inspection, a good indicator of the suitability of the surface, can be ascertained by inspecting the goalmouth areas and the centre circle area first. These are the areas that get more use, and are more likely to be rutted and hard due to frost.
- When completing the field of play inspection, other areas for close inspection, are places covered in shadow from buildings or trees. They are more likely to be frost bound, rather than those areas basked in sunshine. When completing the field of play inspection, if it is not immediately clear that the game cannot be played (i.e. the goalmouth areas are completely solid with frost and the game is definitely cancelled), the whole of the field of play surface MUST be inspected to eliminate any hidden areas of danger.
- A referee, who is seen to be completing a thorough field of play inspection, will have greater credibility when he decides to call off the game, than a Referee who only spends a few minutes making his inspection. 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. The referee 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.
- When the Referee has made his decision, it should be communicated to the teams as soon as possible.
- When a Referee is communicating his decision to the teams, that in his opinion, the field of play is not safe, the decision should be made confidently. If teams suspect any doubt in the Referee's decision, they will try and persuade the Referee to change his mind. In short, when a Referee makes his decision, he should not back down, and he should make it abundantly clear that the decision is his to make, and the game will not be played under his authority.
- The inspection of a field of play covered in frost, and whether to sanction a game or not, is not a difficult decision to make for a Referee. It is fairly obvious to identify dangerous area that could potentially cause an injury. Common sense should be used. Young players are more likely to get injured on hard surfaces. Therefore, even greater care must be taken when making a decision to allow the game to be played or not. If there is any doubt (no matter how small), then the game must not be played.

8) Parental Responsibility

Children remain the responsibility of their parents /legal guardians at all times during football training, matches and other SHREWSBURY UP & COMERS FC Activities and when arriving and departing at them. SHREWSBURY UP & COMERS FC does provide all reasonable safeguards in terms of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (CRC checks), First aid qualified volunteers and a club Child Welfare officer and acts as advised by Shropshire County Football Association and The Football Association in the conduct of its activities and affairs.



As a club of volunteers, our volunteers do have a Duty of care for the children in our membership but this does not extend to the level of that of teachers or registered childminders and as such parents/legal guardians must be advised against dropping their younger age group children off and leaving the site during football training, matches and other SHREWSBURY UP & COMERS FC Activities. Should parents/legal guardians make any arrangements with other adults concerning their child and supervision and transportation for SHREWSBURY UP & COMERS FC Football activities then this is at their own responsibility in their own legal capacity and not the responsibility of SHREWSBURY UP & COMERS FC.

9) Indoor sports halls Health & Safety 'risk controls'

1. Prior to anybody going into the sports hall, managers / coaches must inspect surface, goals and general area. If unsafe or in doubt the training session should be cancelled.
2. Any problems should be reported to site personnel and club officials immediately.
3. Any standing water must be mopped up and the area coned off
4. All sports hall equipment not in use should be moved into a position of safety
5. Cricket and segregation nets should be secured against the walls. Nothing should be left trailing on the floor
6. Goals must be secured to the wall with the relevant equipment. If no securing equipment is available, do not use the goals
7. Managers / coaches should have a first aid kit with them at all times & mobile phone available to them & emergency contact details for all their players.
8. Squad members should wear appropriate equipment, including trainers and shin pads.
9. Managers / coaches must make sure all goals are put back safely and properly at the end of the training session.
10. Managers / coaches must make sure all rubbish (bottles etc) are removed at the end of the training session.
11. Smoking is not permitted at any time.
12. The next squad waiting to access the hall should not enter until the previous team and associated equipment has been removed.



13. All sessions should finish promptly and the facility left with equipment in the correct location. If required team briefs should be taken outside of the hall.

14. children remain the responsibility of their parents/legal guardians at all times during football training & matches and when arriving and departing although SHREWSBURY UP & COMERS FC's reasonable safeguards are assured.

10) Outdoor all-weather pitches Health & Safety 'risk controls'

1. prior to anybody going into the all-weather enclosure, managers / coaches must inspect surface, goals and general area. if unsafe or in doubt the training session should be cancelled.

2. any problems should be reported to site personnel and club officials immediately.

3. gates should be kept closed and only managers / coaches should be inside whilst set-up for training is taking place (*with the exception of their own supervised children*).

4. managers / coaches should have a first aid kit with them at all times & mobile phone available to them & emergency contact details for all their players.

5. when more than one group is using the facility buffer zones should be marked with cones

6. squad members should wear appropriate equipment, including trainers or astro boots (no metal studded boots or blades) and shin pads.

7. no one, other than team officials and associated squad, should be allowed into the all-weather enclosure at any time.

8. managers / coaches must make sure all goals are put back safely and properly at the end of the training session.

9. managers / coaches must make sure all rubbish (bottles etc) are removed at the end of the training session.

10. smoking is not permitted at any time.

11. dogs are not permitted on SCAT property including all areas around the all weather pitch.

12. the next squad waiting to access the area should not enter until the previous team and associated equipment has been removed.

13. all sessions should finish promptly and the facility left with equipment in the correct location. if required team briefs should be taken outside of the enclosure.