**SCORCHERS BACK TO FOOTBALL PROTOCOLS**

**PROJECT ‘SCOTTON RESTART’ –DECEMBER 2020**

**Dear Parent/Guardian/Coach**

**Following the recent Government announcement at the end of October, currently no amateur sports are permitted for 4 weeks (from 5th November – 2nd December 2020).**

**However, consistent with Government advice published on 1st June 2020 and 17th July 2020, the following outdoor football activity is permitted once we can return – but will be subject to further reviews:**

* **playing football individually. For example, practice of individual skills or fitness activities;**
* **playing football with your family or other people living in your household;**
* **football training or fitness activities in groups of no more than 30, keeping two metres apart at all times.**

**Therefore, in terms of Project ‘Scotton Restart – Part 3’, the following principles will become club policy for the foreseeable future:**

**GENERAL CONDUCT**

* No physical contact between players is permitted at all times unless participating in an outdoor friendly/competitive game – but this is only to allow use of tackling and social distancing should occur in breaks of play and before/after the match;
* Players not to touch equipment/footballs with their hands (except GK with gloves on.) during training sessions. This is however permitted in matches to follow Rules of the Game (eg throw ins, etc.). If this occurs, player should sanitise using wipes/sanitizer at the the earliest opportunity (breaks in play, half time etc.);
* Any player/coach/spectator found to be breaching club policies or breaching social distancing rules may be asked to leave the venue;
* Please be reminded, if an individual is symptomatic, living in a household with a possible COVID-19 infection or if anyone is classified as extremely vulnerable on health grounds, the guidance is that your son/daughter should remain at home;
* Parental Consent Forms to be issued to all registered players’ parent/guardians. Non-registered players are not permitted to take part until such time that they are registered/covered under club insurance;
* Club to implement a NO SPITTING POLICY for both players and coaches/parents within the perimeters of Percy Fields/King James’s/Cricket Club INCLUDING all car parking areas. Anyone in breach of this will be asked to sit out the session or leave the venue.

**ARRIVAL**

* On arrival players to go directly to allocated pitch, meet their coach and are not permitted to make any physical contact with teammates – must use own sanitizer during sessions and on arrival/leaving pitch area;
* Parents must remain contactable for the duration of any session and coaches to have access to Emergency Contact Numbers for parents;
* Parents/Guardians can drop off/collect their son/daughter for sessions and are not permitted on the field of play at any venue for TRAINING SESSIONS – this includes waiting in the vicinity of the pavilion (Percy Fields/Cricket Club).
* For Match Day arrangements, ONE PARENT PER CHILD is permitted to spectate at matches in ‘bubbles of 6’ but must remain minimum 3 metres and socially distanced from the pitch and other bubbles 2 metres apart;
* Players must use own sanitizer if they have the need to use toilet facilities, however the club will provide a ‘sanitizer station’ also;
* Players to not handle any equipment (except GK who must have clean gloves on);
* Avoid meeting in groups of six in busy or overcrowded areas if it is not possible to maintain social distancing at all times;
* Pitch location plan to be displayed in vicinity of arrival area.

**PAVILION/TOILETS**

* No player access to pavilion unless using side entrance for purposes of using toilet facilities;
* Toilets will be professionally cleaned each week before Saturday morning sessions/matches – an additional sanitizer station will be at the side entrance to the pavilion;
* Club will operate a ‘Toilets - 1 in/1 out’ system making sure sufficient hand wash/paper towels are stocked in toilet area – this may be only where player is in need of facility use;
* TWO designated, fully DBS checked persons may be required to monitor use of toilets and make sure above is implemented and also keeping an eye on sanitizer stocks, but must remain in view of pitches at all times;
* Maximum THREE designated persons permitted to have access to pavilion at any one time for purposes of using kitchen facilities/access to storage area;
* Refreshments/Café being run on a trial basis following all Covid-19 requirements to serve refreshments. Updates from the Government/the FA will be reviewed and added to any new Club Policy becomes available.

**EQUIPMENT/CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES**

* All footballs to be cleaned/sanitised prior to commencement of any session (Lead Coach responsibility);
* All equipment to be thoroughly cleaned including cones, poles, markers, etc – club to organise a cleaning day with water, buckets, towels etc prior to restart;
* Club to purchase sanitizer/hand wash including refills and paper towels sufficient for all squads and sufficient stocks to remain in place until further notice. Distribution by designated Club Committee/Welfare Team;
* Players to carry a small sports bag which would have a drink bottle, towel, small bottle of sanitizer, tissues and change of shirt;
* All players over 16 years of age and all adults to check in using the NHS Covid 19 QR Code Scanner or must complete their contact details on spectator register (issued to each lead coach and a copy must be carried);
* Coaches to complete a register at EVERY SESSION so that the club can monitor player registrations/attendances – or it may be better for Welfare Team/Committee members to sign in/sign out players if necessary;
* Pitches to be marked out where necessary and relabelled for purposes of identification to teams;
* PPE Equipment (Apron/Gloves/Face mask) will be given to every coach and must be carried as part of their First Aid Kit for use in the event of injury involving bodily fluids (blood/urine etc);
* Sharing of equipment should be kept to a minimum and strong hand hygiene practices should be in place before and after;
* COACHES TO EMPHASISE THAT THERE IS TO BE NO PHYSICAL CONTACT BETWEEN PLAYERS during team talks, breaks in play, drinks breaks, before/after each match and during training sessions ;
* Use of Bibs is permitted but must not be shared between players – therefore, player retains same bib for duration of session.

**TRAINING SESSIONS**

* Competitive training is now permissible from 17th July 2020 but only in an outdoor setting;
* Club will look to stagger training session times for all squads (including mid-week) – COACHES TO READ/CHECK PITCH PLAN FOR UPDATES/CHANGES;
* Club to decide restart date and Groups of 30 maximum. Where possible, training sessions may include small groups to 1 coach – complying with the FA Safeguarding Policy and not exceeding advised ratio numbers;
* Equipment should not be touched by players – if this happens, that player should sanitize straight away;
* Risk assessment of any activities must be carried out; gaining consent from parents/carers and ensuring you are in sight of another adult. For example, a parent/carer or another coach and that the ratio of coach to different age-groups of children is appropriate;
* Additional parent/carer or coach is included as part of the group of 30 but must remain in sight of the activity;
* Each squad to train on larger pitch area than normal. Sufficient pitch space will be allocated per squad to ensure social distancing in place at all times – CHECK PITCH PLAN;
* Training Sessions are ideally to be non-contact, but some sessions may permit tackling. However, SOCIAL DISTANCING RULES MUST BE OBSERVED at breaks in play, etc. No physical contact between players or coaching staff is permitted;
* Each small group will use separate equipment (coach responsibility to make sure kit/equipment is cleaned and sanitised before/after each session);
* Coaches are to maintain distance between them and coaching team/players at all times;
* It is permissible for coaches to organise a training session ‘match’ that has two groups (including the coach) involved so as long as the groups are kept separate, everyone is socially distancing and strict hygiene measures are in place with any equipment.

**MATCHES**

As well as the above protocols being in place, there are some additional measures that need to take place on Match Days or when organising friendly matches.

* From 1st August 2020, outdoor, competitive matches (e.g. Pre-Season friendlies/Small sided festivals) are now permitted to take place;
* If coaches wish to arrange a friendly match with another team, ALL external matches (i.e. not teams within same club) MUST be with teams fully affiliated to a County FA. League fixtures will always take precedence over any friendlies – check with Club Secretary regarding pitch space;
* Away team must be sent the ‘Visiting Club Protocol Document’ – Welfare Team will email out updated copy. In all settings before/after and in breaks of play, social distancing measures should be in place and should occur and follow Government rules;
* Pre-match handshakes/team-talk ‘huddles’ are not permitted. But, team-talks with players/coach can take place as long as social distancing is observed and are outdoors;
* All players to bring their own equipment including drink, shin pads, sanitizer, spare t-shirt, tissues and towel;
* Warm Ups/Cool Downs should always observe social distancing;
* Team ‘touchline areas’ and substitutes areas should all observe social distancing rules – substitution changes should be made quickly and allowing sufficient space between players, coaches and officials;
* Set Plays – coaches/referees should encourage prompt set up for free kicks/corners so that there is no prolonged close marking or set play set up (e.g. defensive walls);
* Goal Celebrations should be avoided;
* Match Officials – interaction with players/coaches should be done observing social distancing guidelines;
* Matches should be modified to provide more regular hygiene/drinks breaks and players should be discouraged from touching equipment persistently. Use multiple match balls so that previous one can be sanitized with spray/wipes. Ball retrieval when it goes out of play should be by feet and not by non-participants;
* Spitting/Sneezing/Coughing – Everyone should refrain from spitting. If a participant needs to cough/sneeze, they should be encouraged to do so in a towel/tissue/upper sleeve and avoid touching their face. All tissues to be disposed of in sealed bags;
* FOR MATCHES ONLY – spectators are permitted to watch the game (1 PARENT PER CHILD) but MUST remain socially distanced whilst doing so. Spectator groups must be restricted to discrete bubbles of 6 and should socially distance at least 2m apart from other bubbles of 6 along the touchline, as designated by the club or lead coach;
* Club to introduce ‘Covid Marshals’ for each squad who will be responsible for ensuring spectators comply with all club/covid protocols and any issues should be directed to the Club Covid Officer;
* Sufficient space should be left for match officials and participants;
* Coaches & substitutes from BOTH TEAMS should stand at the opposite side of the pitch to spectators and observe social distancing by marking out ‘team area’;
* Goal posts, flag poles and footballs should be cleaned before and after the game (plus additionally if opportunity arises);
* Players and parents should leave the venue by designated exits and there should be a staggered time period between home and away teams leaving (to avoid mass gatherings at exits/car parks).

**Breaches of any of the above guidelines by a player/coach/spectator or match official may lead to a request to leave the venue. Further action, if deemed appropriate, may be taken by the Club and/or County FA. Any updates to changes in guidelines will be sent out as required.**

***Please remember - If a player and/or their family member has been to a holiday destination requiring 14 days isolation (as per Government list) or have been advised to isolate for 14 days, they must comply and not attend any football.***

**If anyone has any questions or requires further guidance, please contact the Welfare Team by email:** **scorcherswelfareteam@gmail.com** **or by phone: 07922 848261.**

### Thank you

### Scorchers Welfare Team

### November 2020