



YEL ADVERSE WEATHER GUIDANCE

Please note: this is not a YEL policy. The information provided below is for guidance only and designed to assist managers/clubs when making a decision on whether to play or not during adverse weather.

Firstly, we would state that there is no official guidance from The FA on this subject; However the overriding consideration for all clubs/teams when making a decision about whether a game can go ahead/continue once started, has to be player safety and pitch condition. These two considerations nearly always go hand in hand.

Pitch conditions

Waterlogged Pitches - Private facilities/clubs who lease a ground - Clubs will normally have their own pitch inspection team that will determine whether or not a pitch is waterlogged/unfit to play on. If in doubt, the final decision will be made by the match official. Clubs who use external provider facilities/council parks - these providers will initially make the decision as to whether or not a game can go ahead.

Frozen Pitches - Private facilities/clubs who lease a ground - Clubs will normally have their own pitch inspection team that will determine whether or not a pitch is frozen/unfit to play on. Some clubs may leave the decision to individuals managers regarding the fitness of the pitch. The general rule of thumb is whether the pitch will take a stud or the key test. ALL areas of the pitch must be inspected and deemed fit for play for the game to go ahead. If in doubt, the final decision will be made by the match official. Clubs who use external provider facilities/ council parks - these providers will make the decision to cancel and notify all users.

Baked pitches - Games in the summer can be just as susceptible to the weather. Prolonged dry periods can make pitches as hard as frozen ones and just as dangerous. The same considerations should be applied - can you get a stud in and do the key test. Equally, depending on the make up of the surface, cracks can open up which can be potentially dangerous to players getting their studs caught in them. If in doubt, the final decision will be taken by the match official.

Thunder and Lightning - No games should start if thunder and lightning are in the area. Teams should wait until the storm has passed through. Any game in progress should be stopped and players and spectators should move to an area of safety ie a clubhouse or other indoor area -

and not resume until the storm has passed. The pitch may be perfectly playable but always wait until the storm has passed.

Heavy Rain/Driving snow - firstly check if the pitch is playable. If the game is halted whilst in progress, check the pitch conditions haven't deteriorated sufficiently to prevent the game resuming.

Extreme wind - Always consider the safety of the participants - parents/carers, players, match officials and coaches. Is it safe to travel to the ground? Have any weather warnings been issued against unnecessary travel? Will the wind create a wind chill factor to be concerned about?

Player safety

If the pitch is playable, the other consideration is player safety. Things to consider -

Has adequate provision been made and communicated to all relevant parties to protect their wellbeing -

Cold temperatures

- Suitable clothing - thermal layers ie body skins and leg skins, gloves for players, plus hats and winter coats for subs when not playing
- Suitable warm ups to keep the players active and warm - ensure regular warm ups for subs
- Any underlying medical conditions noted which can be affected by high/low temperatures

Hot temperatures

- Sun cream
- Suitable clothing - sunhats when not playing
- Shade for subs - umbrellas, pop up gazebos etc
- Plenty of water to keep them hydrated
- Any underlying medical conditions noted which can be affected by high/low temperatures

What are the effects of extreme temperatures

Information available and found online

High temperatures

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

- Children who play sports or are physically active in hot weather, can be at risk of heat illnesses including dehydration and heat stroke.
- Children sweat less than adults which makes it more difficult for children to cool off. Particular attention needs to be paid to this.
- Regular drinks breaks should be held during the game which will be supervised by the referee. Please ensure you agree this with them and your opposition prior to the game.
- If any participants feel unwell during the game, they should immediately stop and rest. Worst case - this could be heat exhaustion. Remove them from play and place them in a shaded area and give them plenty of hydration.
- In severe cases, a participant may be suffering from heat stroke. This should be dealt with immediately as, untreated, it could lead to complications. If they have collapsed, you should immediately seek appropriate guidance from a medical professional.

Cold temperatures

- Low temperatures can be just as dangerous as high temperatures especially if there is additional weather conditions including wind - wind chill factor - and rain/sleet/snow.
- The combination of cold air, wet conditions and hard playing surfaces can cause difficulty breathing, muscle pulls, loss of feeling in extremities, in extreme cases - frostbite to exposed skin, and greater risk for injury coming in contact with a harder/cold surface.

All of the above is important to consider when making a decision over whether a game can go ahead or not. Ultimately, applying common sense alongside the above information should help you make the right decision.