

Saffron Walden Community Football Club

GUIDANCE NOTE



Postponement of SWCFC Home Matches

The two main causes of games not going ahead are a frozen or waterlogged pitch.

The health and safety of players and officials should always be the top priority when considering if pitches are playable.

The League receives complaints every season from teams that have been made to travel to games only to find when they arrive that they will not be played, and in many cases never had any chance of being played. This is extremely frustrating at best for those involved and in the majority of cases could have been avoided with a “little bit of thought” by either team, as on many occasions prevailing weather conditions were well known to everyone in advance.

Due regard should be given to giving early warning of postponements wherever possible. Call offs should be at least 90 minutes before kick-off, and night before where possible and appropriate.

In regard to the postponement of SWCFC home matches at all the club’s venues, the following procedures should be followed:

- In periods of cold (or exceptionally wet) weather managers should be aware of the risk of pitches being unplayable, and should prepare accordingly (e.g. monitoring the weather and communicating with the opposition coach and match referee).
- Postponements can be carried out by an appropriate club official, or age group lead, or team manager. It is also done by the facility owner on some occasions. It does not require the authorisation of a qualified referee, though the referee can still call off the game if in their opinion it's not safe. #
- Where it is clear (due to the weather forecast) that there is a risk of postponement with a coming set of matches, the SWCFC Board may also take a view that all matches be postponed. The Board would look to take a decision on this about 6pm the night before the matches in question.
- Postponement can be on the basis of:
 - The pitch being dangerous for players (e.g. frozen)
 - Being in an unsuitable condition



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- Exceptionally, where playing would result in unacceptable damage to the playing surface (e.g. the pitch cutting up).
- Postponement should be done as soon as possible. This could be the day before the match (if the position looks pretty certain), or on the day of the match. Where it is on match day, it should be done early enough to take account of the opposition's travel plans. If there is a planned inspection it is important to also notify opposition and referee to let them know. Again, please factor in travel time for away teams.
- Where the pitch is found to be unsafe or unsuitable for playing, contact must be made, by the home team manager/coach, with the opposition manager; the match referee; and SWCFC Club Secretary (<https://swcfc.club/contact-us/> for contact details).
- We also need to ensure all SWCFC players/parents are aware of the decision in good time.

Where SWCFC have away matches threatened by poor weather, managers should be in regular contact with the opposition coach and provide regular updates to parents.

SWCFC Board December 2017



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