

# SCOTTISH FA

## PHASE THREE: RETURN TO TRAINING GUIDELINES

### CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE (5 – 17 YEARS OLD)



# INTRODUCTION

- This guidance applies to all Scottish FA National Affiliated Associations leagues and clubs and is in accordance with the Scottish Government 'Phase Three' guidelines published on 9 July 2020 and can be implemented from Monday 13 July.
- This guidance relates to Children & Young People aged 5 – 17 years old.
- During organised training sessions only, Children & Young People can participate in groups of up to 10 players and 2 coaches (max). Players do not need to adhere to physical distancing whilst on the pitch, but all adult coaches must maintain 2 metre physical distancing at all times.
- During this phase and to assist with planning and communication, we recommend that out with training sessions, all participants observe 2 metre physical distancing in and around the club.
- It is a club's responsibility to follow all appropriate guidelines to enable the return to training in a safe manner.
- Clubs must visit and understand all relevant facilities guidance available on the [Scottish FA 'Return to Football Hub'](#).

# PHASE THREE

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE 5-17 YEARS OLD

COVID-19 UPDATE - GRASSROOTS RETURN TO TRAINING

The Scottish FA is delighted to release this guidance to reflect the Scottish Government's transition to Phase 3. This guidance is applicable to all affiliated member clubs and associations.

These 'Return to Training' protocols are applicable to Children and Young People only. Please note that the permitted activity for Adults is not the same.

Thank you for your ongoing support, patience and everything that you, your clubs and your community have contributed to make this happen.

### PERMITTED ACTIVITY - RETURN TO TRAINING - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE 5-17 YEARS OLD



**PLAYERS**  
Contact training is permitted during the session



**GROUP SIZE**  
Max 10 players – 2 coaches



**COACHES**  
Stay two metres physically distant from players



**SMALL SIDED GAMES**  
Within your own club only



**MATCHES/FESTIVALS/EVENTS**  
Not permitted at this time

### FACILITIES



**OUTDOOR PITCHES**



**INDOOR PITCHES**

### PUBLIC HEALTH MESSAGES



Wash hands or sanitise before and after any activity

Please follow all relevant Scottish Gov Guidance

### MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

This has been a challenging time for all of the football family

Stay in touch and please continue to look after one another



**PROTOCOLS**  
Share your protocols with all members, including Test and Protect

## COVID-19 WARNING

You must not attend any group activity if in the past 14 days you:

Have been unwell or had any flu-like symptoms

Have been in contact with a known or suspected case of COVID-19

Have had any respiratory symptoms (even if mild)

Before taking part in any formal football activity, please ensure you follow all guidance on the Return to Football HUB: [scotfa.co/ReturnToFootball](https://scotfa.co/ReturnToFootball)



# CONTENTS

- **Role of the club**
  - Plan & prepare
  - Facility access
  - Test & protect protocols
  - Health & hygiene
  - Child wellbeing & protection
  - Role of the COVID co-ordinator
- **Role of the coach**
  - Plan & prepare
  - During the session
  - After the session
- **Role of the parent**
  - Plan & prepare
  - During the session
  - After the session
- **Role of the player**
  - Plan & prepare
  - During the session
  - After the session
- **Facility set up**
  - Plan & prepare
  - Pitch set up
  - Timetable

# ROLE OF THE CLUB



# PLAN & PREPARE

- Ensure your club and ALL players are registered with your Affiliated National Association.
- Clubs are recommended to appoint a [COVID co-ordinator](#) to ensure all 'best practice' guidance is followed by all members - players, coaches and club volunteers alike – promoting a safe & confident return to training.
- Coaches are responsible for the safety of the players and should be fully aware of their own club's policies and those of any venue(s) used.
- Online payments for sessions should be taken if possible. If not, alternative measures should be put in place. Where possible avoid handling cash.
- Ensure all officials have completed all relevant and appropriate appointment and selection procedures (including PVG scheme membership).
- Ensure there are enough first aid qualified officials and adequate first aid provision at all training sessions.
- Communicate with all members to ensure they feel safe and ready to return to training.
- Complete risk assessments for return to training.
- Liaise with your insurers to check that you're covered for all activity offered.
- Communicate with coaches, players and parents to ensure they understand the new procedures to keep everyone safe.
- Ensure everyone is aware of your Child Wellbeing & Protection policy, especially the Responding to Concerns procedure.

# FACILITY ACCESS

- If you own or manage your facility, read through and follow [sportscotland's "Getting Your Facility Fit for Sport" guidance](#).
- If you own or manage your facility please adhere to all relevant [Scottish Government guidelines](#).
- Sports facility operators and clubs may now open toilets for public use if they follow the guidelines outlined on the Scottish Government website Opening Public Toilets Guidelines. Risk assessment, and control measures should be proactively monitored by clubs/operators and appropriate cleaning procedures and equipment, disinfectant and all other materials should be provided as per Health Protection Scotland guidance.
- Clubs and participants should be aware that the easing of restrictions does not mean that all facilities will open immediately.
- Owners and operators will require time to consider all the implications of opening facilities, putting plans in place to re-engage staff and setting up operations that ensure the safety of participants, staff and volunteers.
- This is a difficult time for everyone so please emphasise the importance of patience.
- If you are hiring a facility ensure you are aware of and follow all procedures that the owner/operator has put in place to ensure user safety.
- If you are using a public space, please follow all guidelines and be respectful to other users.

# TEST AND PROTECT PROTOCOLS

- If someone who has attended your club activity develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should be directed to follow the Scottish Government's 'test and protect' guidelines, which can be read on the [nhsinform.scot](https://www.nhsinform.scot) website
- Ensure an accurate register, including contact details, is kept for EVERY session. This register should be held by both the appropriate COVID Co-ordinator and session lead coach for the duration of lockdown.
- Ensure all club members are aware of who their relevant COVID Co-ordinator is, should they have to pass on their details to a member of the NHS Scotland Test & Protect team.
- It is not the responsibility of the football club to inform members if someone at the club has tested positive for COVID-19. This will be done by the NHS Scotland Test & Protect team. An individual's right to privacy must be observed.
- The football club will be expected to be able to pass on contact details of all attendees should they be asked by a member of the NHS Scotland Test & Protect team.
- Data protection guidance should be followed at all times and personal details not held for any longer than is necessary.

# HEALTH & HYGIENE

**IMPORTANT:** Remind all members of the following protocols:

- Scottish Government advice remains that anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should self-isolate for 7 days and household members for 14 days as per NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend an outdoor sports facility/activity.
- Outside your organised training session 2 metre physical distancing must be adhered to by EVERYONE at ALL times.
- First aid protocols can be found at the following websites;  
HSE -<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/first-aid-and-medicals/first-aid-certificate-coronavirus.htm>  
St Johns Ambulance -  
<https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/covid-19-advice-for-first-aiders/>
- If you need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or upper sleeve. Dispose of your tissue in an appropriate bin at the venue or place in a plastic bag and take home. Wash your hands afterwards for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your face and ensure you clean your hands when you finish participating.
- Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes appropriate for the surface they are being used on. Cleaning products should confirm to EN14476 standards.
- All coaching should take place outdoors.

# CHILD WELLBEING & PROTECTION

- All football activities involving Children & Young People must involve a minimum of two adults in line with [Scottish Football's Child Wellbeing and Protection Policy](#).
- Under the Scottish Government's route map and in line with the above policy, the following must be adhered to when any football activity is undertaken with children:
  - All coaches/staff/volunteers involved in any regulated activity must have undertaken 'safe' recruitment procedures including completion of the PVG membership scheme via the relevant National Affiliated Association.
  - Coaches/staff/volunteers involved in any football activity can only coach within their own club setting and with players registered to that organisation.
  - All coaches/staff/volunteers must undertake relevant training and agree to a Code of Conduct.
  - All activities must be fully risk assessed in advance with the relevant club insurance in place.
  - All football activity should take place outdoors.
- Coaches and instructors working with children should familiarise themselves with the additional considerations developed by **Children 1<sup>st</sup>**: [Child Wellbeing and Protection Considerations](#) .

# ROLE OF COVID CO-ORDINATOR

This person should:

- [Follow the role profile as outlined here - COVID co-ordinator.](#)
- Be familiar with Scottish Government and Scottish FA guidelines in relation to COVID-19, and be guided by them at all times.
- Complete safe appointment and selection process (including a valid PVG Scheme membership).
- Be a registered club official.
- Encourage everyone involved with the club to take collective responsibility and ensure all guidelines are adhered to.
- The COVID Co-ordinator will retain all session registers for their allocated groups and act as first point of contact for NHS Scotland Test & Protect staff in the event of any reported positive tests. However, all coaches must retain a copy of the register for every session they lead as back-up in the event of any admin issue.

# ROLE OF THE COACH



# PLAN & PREPARE

- Make sure that the activity is appropriate for the age and stage of player.
- Coaches must maintain accurate registers of attendees, times and dates. These should be shared with the appropriate COVID Co-ordinator to allow contact tracing if required.
- Where possible, come to the football club on foot or by bicycle and avoid using public transport.
- Coaches who are shielding are not permitted to deliver at the current time.
- Coaches and volunteers over 70 years old and from high risk groups should self-assess whether they should attend training sessions. Consult your doctor for advice if you are unsure.
- Arrive in time to ensure that the training is ready so when players arrive they can start immediately.
- Ensure all players train in clearly marked out area and set up a designated 'Hygiene Station' and 'Players Area' for your players.
- Clearly communicate the rules to players in advance of training sessions.
- Come to the football club in your coaching kit. Any dressing rooms will be closed. You CANNOT take a shower and please make sure that you have been to the toilet at home immediately before leaving for training.
- Bring your own water bottle clearly marked to ensure no sharing.
- Additional example activity sessions will be made available on the Scottish FA Return to Football HUB.

# DURING TRAINING

- Make the sessions fun!
- It is important that we don't push our players too hard, increasing the risk of injury.
- Physical intensity should start low and increase gradually.
- Please avoid using your hands at any stage during the activity to feed the balls to players.
- Players should stay well hydrated at all times drinking plenty of water with regular small sips from their *own* bottle.
- Spitting is not allowed.
- Heading is not allowed.
- Although 'physical fitness' is something that may have decreased during this break, we should still keep our main focus on fun, technical and tactical development.
- Ensure players touch or share as few items of equipment as possible.
- Always follow club guidance from, for example, other coaches, COVID Co-ordinator or committee members. Stay with your own group when several groups are active at the same time.

# AFTER TRAINING

- Once all players have left the training facility safely, please also leave promptly.
- Clean and wipe down your equipment, including any goals used, before and after training.
- Ensure you take all personal belongings and equipment with you at the end of the activity.
- Do not leave anything at the venue/facility.
- At this stage, home-based training and setting individual skill and fitness challenges are vital to maximise development within the limited contact time.
- Remind and manage your players, regardless of age, to maintain 2 metre physical distancing at ALL times out-with your organised training sessions. This applies when not on the pitch immediately before and after the session and whilst within the confines of the facility being used.

We fully appreciate that Under 12s are now free from physical distancing. However, the above point has been put in place to help clubs safely manage sessions that may involve players from both the Children and Young People age groups.

# ROLE OF THE PARENT / CARER



# PLAN & PREPARE

- DO NOT ATTEND TRAINING if you or anyone from your household should be isolating based on Scottish Government guidelines.
- Parents/carers who are supervising their children should abide by Scottish Government physical distancing guidance and stay at least 2m away from those out with their own household. Groups of parents from different households should not congregate before, during or after the activity.
- Talk to your child about returning to training to help them understand the measures that have been taken to keep them safe.
- Remind your child it is important they focus on having fun. Don't push too hard and risk injury.
- Ensure your child washes their hands thoroughly before training and arrives ready to train in clean kit.
- Ensure your child and coach has your contact number.
- Your child should bring their own water bottle with their name clearly visible.
- Please give your child's coach plenty notice as to whether your child will attend or be absent from any training session.
- To limit over-crowding, please bring your child to the training session on your own, following your club's advice on arrival time.
- Only bring your child to the football club for arranged training sessions.

# DURING TRAINING

- Always follow club guidance from coaches, the COVID Co-ordinator or committee members.
- Parents/carers will be encouraged not to spectate during training in order to ensure physical distancing measures for adults are maintained. This applies before, during and after the session.
- Your club should provide clear guidance regards drop off and pick up points.
- If you envisage your child may require support during a training session (e.g. help accessing a toilet), it is permitted to have one parent/carer present.
- This person must however observe the applicable protocol, e.g. remain in the car or close to the facility whilst maintaining physical distance from others.
- [First aid protocols can be found here](#) – Please remember that only emergency first aid can currently be given directly by coaches. Otherwise guidance is for first aiders to assist “casualties” from a distance, supporting them to treat themselves.
- If your child would not be able to do this, discuss with your club how you can safely stay close by to the training venue so you can come and assist if your child was to be injured.

# AFTER TRAINING

- Immediately after training, a parent/carer should collect the child as promptly as possible.
- Ensure you and your child's hands are sanitized immediately after training.
- Inform the club immediately should your child start to show symptoms of COVID-19.
- At this stage, home training and setting individual skill and fitness challenges are vital to maximise development within the limited contact time. Please liaise with your child and the coach to find out what these are.
- Remind and manage your child, regardless of age, to maintain a 2 metre physical distance from everyone at ALL times before and after their organised training sessions whilst at the facility.

# ROLE OF THE PLAYER



# PLAN & PREPARE

- If you are feeling unwell, let someone at home know and don't come to training.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds, including just before you leave for training.
- Come ready to take part in training:
  - Have clean training kit on
  - Bring a water bottle that is clearly identifiable as yours - you may want to add your name or initials
  - Bring your own hand sanitiser.
- Where required tie your laces or ask a parent/carer to help
- Put your belongings in your designated 'Players Area' (if applicable).
- Do not enter the pitch before you are asked to do so by your coach or another club official.
- Use only your own equipment where at all possible.
- If you have any questions or concerns about going back to training, tell your parent/carer who can get any answers you need from your club.
- Regardless of your age you must to maintain 2 metre physical distancing from everybody before and after your training session

# DURING TRAINING

- Have fun!
- Always listen to your coaches. They are there to keep you safe and to help you enjoy playing football.
- Do not touch equipment that is not yours. This includes goalposts, cones, markers, poles, hurdles or any other equipment that is used for training.
- Do not touch the footballs with your hands or head. All the activities that your coaches will do will give you lots of time with the ball at your feet.
- If you need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or your elbow and then wash your hands at the hygiene station provided (your coach will be able to tell you where this is).
- When asked to do so by your coach, wash your hands using the 'Hygiene Station' provided.
- Remember to have fun!

# AFTER TRAINING

- Follow instructions from your coach to leave your training session quickly once you are finished; making sure a parent/carer is there to collect you – do not wander off on your own.
- Please limit your attendance at the football club and only attend for arranged training sessions.
- Apply hand sanitizer.
- Ensure you take all personal belongings and equipment with you at the end of training and do not leave anything at the venue/facility.
- At this stage, home training and setting individual skill and fitness challenges are vital to maximise development within the limited contact time – please speak to your coach to find out what these are.
- Regardless of your age you must to maintain 2 metre physical distancing from everybody before and after your training session.

# FACILITY SET UP



# PLAN & PREPARE

Clubs should plan their activity to ensure that there is the following:

- A COVID co-ordinator to ensure that groups enter and exit the pitch correctly.
- 4 individual training areas for each group of participants (an example diagram is included).
- An agreed meeting area for each individual group to meet before entering the park.
- All groups must exit the park on an individual group basis before the next groups can enter.
- There should be an agreed running order for group, e.g:
  - Group A move to 'Red Zone'
  - Group B move to 'Green Zone'
- Any one not participating SHOULD NOT congregate before, during or after a session.
- Parents/carers should stay in close proximity of the training area for first aid purposes but avoid congregating.

# PITCH SET UP

- Coaches must ensure players avoid congregating at gates and other potential 'pinch points'.
- The pitch should be marked out into individual training areas. It is recommended a full size pitch is marked out in quarters (example included).
- Recommended area size:  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a full size pitch (10 players and 2 coaches max).
- Coaches must follow all guidance related to Child Wellbeing.
- Coaches are responsible for informing all players and parents/carers of the entry and exit protocol at the training venue including hand sanitising on entry and exit.
- Coaches should not enter the pitch before the previous group has vacated it and any remaining equipment is cleaned.
- Group members should remain with the same group for the duration of each session.

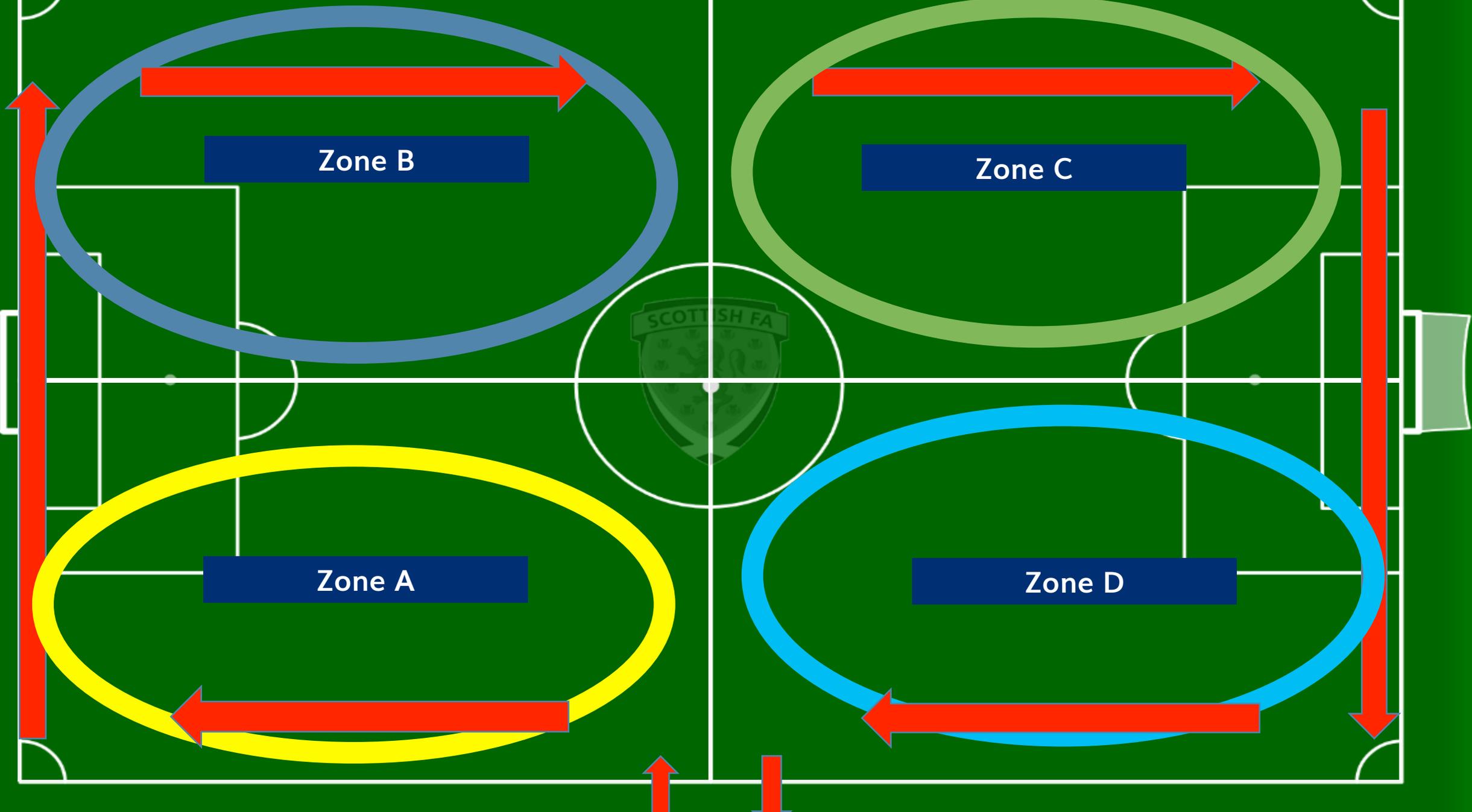
A maximum of 12  
individuals  
(10 players, 2  
coaches max) in any  
one area

Must be a minimum  
of 2 club coaches  
when working with  
children and young  
people

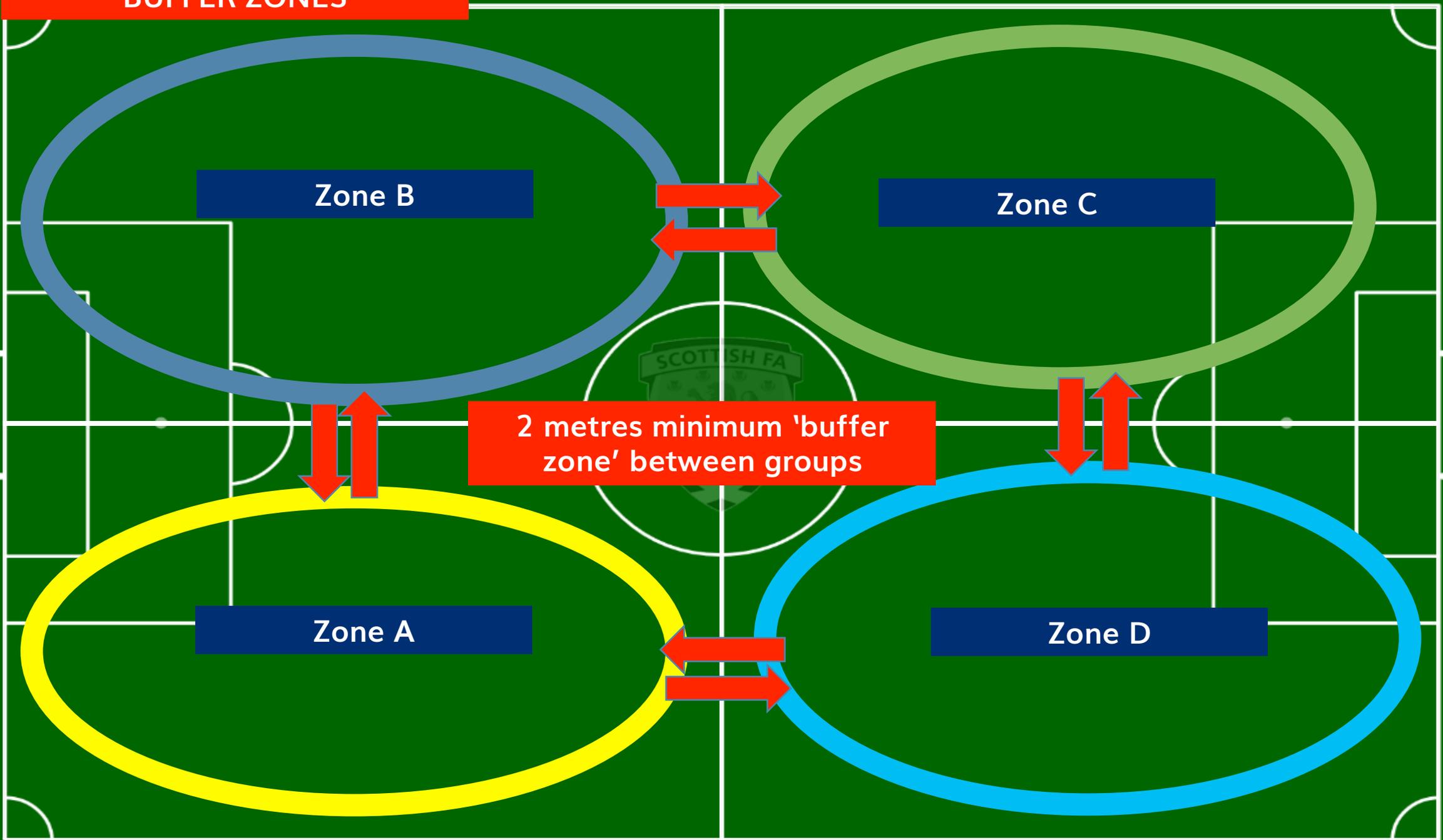
Groups should stay  
within agreed  
training area

First Aid protocol  
must be followed

# EXAMPLE FLOW OF PARTICIPANTS



# BUFFER ZONES



Zone B

Zone C

2 metres minimum 'buffer zone' between groups

Zone A

Zone D

# PITCH SET UP

- Coaches should only handle their own equipment (e.g. markers, bibs, small goals etc.) and care should be taken to avoid others touching it.
- Stray footballs should be kicked/dribbled back to position and not picked up.
- **Players should not enter adjacent zones at any stage.**
- Contact with players should be at reduced levels; instead of training twice per week, one session is advised.
- Sessions should be shorter than usual to reduce potential exposure – e.g. 30-40mins max. This allows for safe entry/exit to avoid contact with other groups and of course in larger clubs, offers every player a chance to play.

# TIMETABLE

- Clubs must timetable the arrival of all groups and ensure that car parking areas are marked out accordingly.
- Individual groups must know their arrival time and should wait at agreed meeting point before entering the pitch.
- Groups must enter the pitch and move directly to the designated area.
- All groups must clear the pitch 15 minutes before the next groups enter.
- Incoming training groups must remain in their cars or at specified waiting areas until the pitch is clear.

## Example Timetable

Training Time	Arrival Time	Finish Time	Maximum group on full pitch
6pm	5.50pm	6:40pm	40 (Max 10 Players & 2 Coaches in one zone)
7pm	6:50pm	7:40pm	40 (Max 10 Players & 2 Coaches in one zone)
8pm	7:50pm	8:40pm	40 (Max 10 Players & 2 Coaches in one zone)
9pm	8:50pm	9:40pm	40 (Max 10 Players & 2 Coaches in one zone)



Visit: [scotfa.co/ReturnToFootball](https://scotfa.co/ReturnToFootball)