Newcastle West End Football Club
2026 / 2027 Weather Policy.

The number one priority is the safety of our players and members. Sometimes, to keep players and members safe due to conditions of the pitch or adverse weather, it is necessary to cancel or abandon a football game or event.

This decision should be made by the session leader, Coach or Match Official and with the safety of all participants at the forefront. This policy is to be used for guidance in the event of Adverse weather.

Items included in this Weather Policy:

1. Clothing
2. Pitch & Weather Conditions
3. Hot Weather
4. Cold Weather
5. Storms and Lightning

1. Clothing

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure that children and young people are dressed accordingly for the weather conditions when activities go ahead. Football can be played in very cold / wet conditions and your children need to be suitably dressed during training and matches.

Cold weather

Coats
Thermal under layers
Gloves
Hats

Hot weather

Suncream
Water
Hats (when not playing).

Please note that hats will not be allowed during matches except for goalkeeper caps (and other head coverings as per the FA policy)

https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/lawsandrules/laws/football-11-11/law-4---the-players-equipment

Managers/coaches are encouraged to rotate substitutes as much as possible during adverse weather to keep children warm or to give breaks during hot weather. This is an advisory only.

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2. Pitch & Weather Conditions

Games will be cancelled for the following reasons:

Very hot weather	Dangerous for players safety.
Frozen and/or Rutted Pitch	Dangerous for players safety.
Waterlogged Pitch	Dangerous for players safety.
Snow/Frost Covered Pitch	Pitch markings and match ball need to be seen
Fog	If Referee can't see both goals from centre circle
Heavy persistent Rain	If both Goalkeepers cannot see unaided referee to be informed of lack of visibility.

Our pitches at McKendrick Villas are inspected throughout the week and wherever possible pitch closures will be communicated with plenty of notice. However, sometimes it is impossible to predict how the pitch will be on the day. Decisions around pitch safety are collaborative between senior committee (with advice from Grounds-workers at times) and referees.

Every effort is made to keep our pitches in a good and safe condition. However, it may be necessary to limit use to maintain these standards and during these times league matches will take priority over training and friendlies. Communication about game postponement will come to managers via WhatsApp or other means as required and then should be shared with families, players etc on the team WhatsApp or group chats.

This policy applies to matches and events that Newcastle West End FC are hosting. When playing away, risk assessments will be done by the hosting team. If you are concerned about taking your team to play in an away game that is going ahead outside of our policy, please speak with club welfare officer / club secretary for support in making a safe decision.

3. Hot Weather

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

If the temperature at kick off is forecast to be 32C or higher for junior matches, Newcastle West End FC will reschedule a match and or withdraw any approval of a friendly match.

We recommend using the MET Office website or app
https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/

This website will also provide timely weather warning information.
https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/guides/observations/how-we-measure-temperature

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. This makes it harder for children to cool off and so needs to be managed carefully. If the temperature at kick off for any junior match is forecast to be 30 or 31C, or 34C or higher for senior matches, a drinks break must be held in each half of the match.

The timing of the drinks break is at the discretion of the match official but should occur, where possible, approximately two-thirds of the way through each half. This is due to the players being able to hydrate more appropriately prior to the start of the half, with the drinks break providing a "top-up" opportunity before half time or the end of the match.

The committee will check the temperature regularly during the hotter months and will, where possible, aim to schedule training / matches to a time where the session can be completed before or after peak temperatures.

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Coaches will encourage players to drink fluids prior to, during and after all matches and training sessions to avoid dehydration and for rehydration following strenuous activity. Where possible, we will provide a shaded area for participants during breaks in matches and training sessions.

To avoid heat exhaustion if participants feel unwell during exercise they should immediately stop and rest. Further benefit comes if the rest is in a shaded area with some passing breeze (from a fan if necessary) and the person takes extra hydration. Misting or spraying with water can also help. Heat stroke is a potentially fatal condition and must be treated immediately. It should be assumed that any collapsed participant is at danger of heat stroke.

The best first aid measures are “strip/soak/fan”: a) Strip off any excess clothing. b) Soak with water. c) Fan. Ice placed in groin and armpits is also helpful. The aim is to reduce body temperature as quickly as possible. The participant should immediately be referred for treatment by a medical professional. It is important to note that heat exhaustion or heat stroke can still occur even in the presence of good hydration.

> 29°c
Extreme Conditions
No outdoor training or indoor without air conditioning, delay training until cooler, or cancel training.

27 - 29°c
High risk for heat related illness.
Maximum of 1 hour of training with 4 by 4-minute breaks within the hour. No high intensity or additional conditioning allowed.

24 - 27°c
Moderate risk for heat related illness.
Maximum 90 mins of training time with a mandatory 10-minute break after 30 minutes of continuous training. Access to water at all times.

> 24°c
Less than ideal condition.
Use discretion, provide three separate, mandatory 4-minute breaks each hour.

< 24°c
Good Conditions
Normal activities. 3 drinks breaks should be provided as a minimum. 3 minutes per break is recommended.

4. Cold Weather

The effects of cold weather can impact health and safety during practices and games. The definition of “cold stress” varies depending on how accustomed people are too cold weather.

Cold weather conditions can be just as dangerous as hot weather conditions. The mix of cold air and hard playing surfaces can cause difficulty breathing, muscle pulls, loss of feeling in extremities, frostbite to exposed skin, and greater risk for injury coming into contact with a harder / cold surface.

Below are the guidelines for temp (air temp or wind-chill factor), amount of exposure, and suggested clothing during cold weather activities.

< 0°c - with wind and/or rain.
Extreme Conditions.
Cancel training/game or attempt to move indoors.

0 - 2 °c
High Risk of cold related illness.

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Modify practice to keep players moving and limit exposure. If it is also raining, consider cancelling.

2 - 3°c
Moderate Risk of cold related illness.
Ensure players have suitable protective clothing. Players should be encouraged to wear hats and gloves. If there is heavy rain, consider cancelling.

3 - 5°c
Less than ideal conditions.
Use discretion, Beware of the potential risk of cold injury. If there is heavy rain consider cancelling for children younger than 12.

> 5°c
Good Conditions. Normal activities.

5. Storms and Lightning

In the event of thunder and lightning, or extreme winds and rain, outside activity will stop and people ushered to an area where players can shelter safely.
If the weather makes playing unsafe, it should be abandoned.

30/30 rule (ROSPA)

Research shows that people struck by lightning are predominantly hit before and after the peak of the storm. This means that you should be thinking about the proximity of the lightning, not the occurrence of rain. The 30/30 rule provides a good way of ensuring everyone is sheltering during the riskiest parts of the storm.

It proposes that if the flash (lightning) to bang (thunder) is 30 seconds in length or less you should seek shelter. Staying inside this shelter is advised until 30 minutes past the last clap of thunder. This ensures that any distant strikes at the beginning of the storm (lightning can travel up to 10 miles), or trailing storm clouds at the back of the storm do not take anyone by surprise.

Seeking shelter

Ideally, seek shelter inside a large building or a motor vehicle keeping away from, and getting out of wide, open spaces and exposed hilltops. **Do not shelter beneath tall or isolated trees.**

If you are exposed to the elements with nowhere to shelter, make yourself as small a target as possible by crouching down with your feet together, hands on knees and your head tucked in. This technique keeps as much of you off the ground as possible.

The inside of a car is a safe place to be in a storm, lightning will spread over the metal of the vehicle before earthing to the ground through the tyres.

This Policy was revised and adopted by the committee at a policy clinic meeting on Sunday 30th August 2026.

Policy Reviewed 30/08/2026

Name: Sean Morrissey Position: Treasurer Signed: S Morrissey

Name: Ryan Abraham Position: Secretary Signed: R, Abraham

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Name: Alana Ruddick Position: Chairperson Signed: A Ruddick

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