



## Harvesters FC Weather Policy & Pitch Inspection Process 2023-24

This policy is designed to ensure the safety of players, coaches, officials and spectators, relating to bad weather, including lightning, in outdoor football. Harvesters FC will always prioritise safety when it comes to outdoor sports in adverse weather conditions.

1.

Lightning Safety Protocol and Weather Increments:

- When lightning is forecasted within a certain radius (e.g. 15 miles), Harvesters FC will immediately take the decision to close the site to all.
- When lightning is detected within a certain radius (e.g. 15 miles), activities on the AWP and grass pitches will be suspended immediately.
- For an unforecasted storm players, coaches and officials should seek shelter in a safe, enclosed structure (e.g. the clubhouse).
- The site will be closed if temperatures fall to below 0 degrees
- The site will be closed if temperatures rise to above 38 degrees
- The site will be closed if winds reach gusts of over 50 MPH
- The site will be closed in the event of settled snow
- Football will continue as normal in rain/ sleet/ hail, unless it's agreed to stop by officials/ club committee

2.

Communication:

- The club will regularly monitor weather forecasts and conditions.
- Coaches, players, parents and private hires will be notified before training and games.

3.

Referee Authority:

- Referees have the authority to suspend or postpone matches due to inclement weather, including lightning.

4.

Training and Education:

- Coaches, players and officials will receive training on lightning safety and be aware of the risks associated with lightning.

## Pitch Inspection Process at Harvesters FC

In order to set your expectations and clear up a few misunderstandings on why the club is vigilant in protecting the Grass pitches at Harvesters, we thought it would be helpful to set out the pitch inspection process for you. Should a pitch inspection be needed the club members will be given notice via our social media outlets, managers will also be emailed by the club with the subsequent outcomes.

In adverse weather conditions such as storms and strong winds the Director of Estates may close the site altogether for safety reasons. In the event of a sudden change in weather such as a lightning storm then the referee who is responsible for the game should abandon the fixture on safety grounds providing both managers are in agreement.

Pitch inspections will be conducted by a qualified groundsman, a Herts FA referees appointments officer and senior referees when required.

### Saturday 'AM' games

Pitches will be inspected on Friday afternoon and a decision will be made at that time.

### Sunday 'AM' games

Pitches will be inspected on Saturday afternoon and a decision made at that time.

### Sunday 'PM' games

Pitches will be inspected again on Sunday morning and final decision made at that time. In the event of the club having to restrict the number of games played then priority will be given to Cup fixtures in the first instance and in line with league rules. The fixture secretary will then have the final say on who takes priority based on the number of games played or to be played.

Pitches are **NOT** saved for end of season finals nor are they used by external hirers ahead of our own members.

Pitches **ARE** saved so that **ALL** our kids have the best football experience on the best pitches at arguably the best grassroots football club in the area.

We are **NOT** elitist, but we do have high standards and our pitches are as good as they are because we look after them.

If the site manager makes the decision to call off grass games, this decision is final and **NO** grass games will take place that day.