# East Bierley Community Sports Association

# Weather & Playing Condition Policy

07/07/2025

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## Document Control.

## Document Information.

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|---|---|
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| **Author:** | Chris Marsden |
| **Policy Owner:** | EBCSA Facilities Lead |
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## Revision History.

| Date | Version | Detail | Author |
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| 07/07/25 | 1.0 | Policy created | Chris Marsden |
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## 1. Policy Statement

EBCSA is committed to ensuring that all sport and recreational activities take place in a safe environment. This policy outlines the procedures for assessing and responding to adverse weather and poor playing conditions at EBCSA facilities, including grass pitches and the 3G artificial pitch.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All users of EBCSA facilities (member clubs, hirers, and partners)
- Events, matches, training sessions, and community activities on EBCSA grounds
- Both grass and 3G surfaces

## 3. General Principles

- The safety and welfare of players, coaches, officials, and spectators is the top priority.
- Decisions should balance participant safety with practicality and consistency.
- The condition of facilities, particularly natural grass pitches, must be preserved to ensure long-term use.

## 4. Weather Conditions to Monitor

The following weather types require careful consideration

| **Weather Condition** | **Risk** |
|---|---|
| Heavy Rain | Waterlogged pitches, slippery surfaces, poor visibility |
| Frost or Ice | Hard, unsafe surfaces – especially grass pitches |
| Snow | Poor visibility, surface danger, cold exposure |
| Extreme Heat | Risk of heatstroke, dehydration |
| Lightning or Thunderstorms | Serious injury or fatality from lightning strikes |
| High Winds | Falling debris, equipment damage |
| Poor Air Quality (e.g. smoke) | Respiratory hazards |

## 5. Decision-Making Responsibilities

- **Grass Pitches**: Decisions to postpone or cancel games due to pitch condition rest with:
    - Grounds staff (where applicable)
    - Facility duty officer (if present)
    - Club coaches or match officials
- **3G Pitch**: More resilient to weather, but:
    - Activities must stop during lightning or extreme conditions
    - Final call rests with the EBCSA representative or lead organiser

Where no EBCSA representative is present, responsibility lies with the **senior club official or organiser** on site.

## 6. Lightning Protocol

Follow the **"30/30 Rule"**:

- If lightning is seen and thunder is heard within 30 seconds, suspend play
- Only resume 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder

All participants must **seek shelter immediately**, ideally inside a building or car. Do not shelter under trees or near metal structures.

## 7. Heat Management Guidance

On extremely hot days:

- Encourage regular water breaks
- Avoid midday sessions (11am–3pm)
- Reduce session intensity and duration
- Monitor players for signs of heat exhaustion

## 8. Pitch Protection Measures (Grass)

- Do not train or play on grass pitches when:
    - Water is sitting on the surface
    - The ground is frozen
    - Use may cause significant damage to the turf

Match officials and club leads must consider long-term pitch preservation, not just the immediate fixture.

## 9. Communication

In cases of cancellation or delay:

- Communicate clearly and promptly with teams, coaches, and participants
- Use agreed methods (e.g. Pitchero, WhatsApp, club email)
- EBCSA will support with website or social media updates where relevant

## 10. Insurance and Liability

- Activities carried out against EBCSA advice, or in unsafe conditions, may invalidate insurance.
- All users are expected to apply common sense and duty of care in adverse weather.

## 11. Review and Oversight

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually, or
- After a weather-related incident, or
- In line with changes to NGB or local authority guidance