

## RULES

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Equal playing time

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League entry must be agreed with club (via Development Officer)

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Player moves agreed with club and all managers in the age group

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## PHASES

### JUNIOR U8–U11

### YOUTH U12–U15

### OPEN U16–U18

## SQUAD COMPOSITION

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Based on friendship and school groups, not ability

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Must remain mixed, not streamed on ability

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Can either be mixed or based on ability

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## PLAYER TRANSFERS

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Only in exceptional circumstances

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Only to close largest ability gaps

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Permitted but still subject to rules above

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## RECRUITMENT

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Players must be recruited from the following, in order:

- Training-only players
- Waiting list
- Elsewhere

New players must cope with division standard

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Players must be recruited from the following, in order:

- Training-only players
- Waiting list
- Elsewhere

New players must match overall team ability range

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From anywhere if player numbers are short

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Littleton Junior Football Club welcomes children of all ages and abilities from Year R onwards. We encourage a mixed model with an emphasis on friendship throughout the club, but we recognise that children do not all develop at the same rate. We divide our player development into three phases: a **Junior Model** before U12 that enables players to learn the game in a low-pressure setting; a **Youth Model** before U16 that allows squads to build on what they have learned; and finally a more open environment called an **Open Model**.

The following rules always apply:

- **Players should be given equal playing time**
- **Each team's choice of league must be agreed with the club**
- **Player moves and recruitment must be agreed with the club and all managers in the year group**

## JUNIOR MODEL U8–U11

With the club's help, U7 coaches put players in squads for the U8 season. These are based on a balance of friendship and school groups. They are not based on ability, which changes all the time.

In exceptional circumstances – for example if a player is struggling or unhappy, or to prevent a team folding – a player may be moved to a different squad. This must be with the full agreement of all other coaches in the year group, and approved by the club Development Officer. This is not a method by which coaches can offload unwanted players.

Each age group should accommodate any 'training-only' players into their sessions. If coaches and pitches are available, a development squad may be created to offer them match experience with other players.

As teams expand, managers should recruit first from these development players, then from the club's waiting list, and after that from outside the club. New recruits must be able to cope with the standard of football in the team's division. Squads should never be expanded at the expense of an individual's equal playing time.

## YOUTH MODEL U12–U15

As competitive league matches begin, squads should remain mixed. However, managers can decide – with the full agreement of other year group coaches and the approval of the club Development Officer – to move players into closer groupings of ability. These should remain as broad as practicable to allow for further changes in ability. The club committee will not allow full streaming on the grounds of ability. But keeping a good, manageable range of abilities within each squad is key.

When they need to expand their squads, managers must prioritise development team players and anyone on the waiting list, but if needed can recruit players who match their team's overall ability range. Everything must be agreed first with the other year group coaches and the club Development Officer. Poaching from other squads is unacceptable. Coaches must be open and transparent, reaching agreement first with the other year group coaches about proposed moves, not parents or players.

## OPEN MODEL U16–U18

At U16 onward, managers are free to move players between squads based on ability. But, as before, poaching from other squads is unacceptable. Coaches must discuss transfers first with the other coaches in the year group, not with parents or players. If player numbers are short, squads can recruit externally. Any player moves or recruitment need to be agreed by all year group coaches and the club Development Officer.