



CHIPSTEAD FOOTBALL CLUB

Formed 1936



PLAYER DEVELOPMENT GUIDE FOR JUNIOR CLUB COACHES

Our Club philosophy is to put the player first. These guidelines are for junior club coaches to help young players achieve their full potential.

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1. PLAYER DEVELOPMENT – CLUB VISION

- 1.1 To provide football for all ages in a fun and safe environment where every player is given the opportunity to learn, develop, improve and make friends.
- 1.2 To be committed to developing all of our players of all abilities.
- 1.3 To help players achieve their full footballing potential by providing a ladder of opportunity into our 1st team.
- 1.4 To offer players the opportunity to explore different pathways within the Chipstead FC family whether it be in a coaching, refereeing or volunteer role.

2. CLUB COACHING PHILOSOPHY

As a Club we appreciate the commitment of time and energy each of our coaches voluntarily give to the Club. We are aware of the huge responsibility you have and this guideline is intended to support you in your role and ensure uniformity in our coaching across the club.

2.1 COACHES MUST PUT THE PLAYER FIRST.

Coaches must:

- Give players time and space to flourish and develop as players through games and game like activities, so that they feel comfortable making decisions and solving problems.
- Encourage players to have fun and enjoy the experience and to try things without fear of failure.
- Encourage players to be as good as they can and highlight what they have done well rather than find fault with their performance.
- Encourage players to think about what can be achieved and not about what can go wrong.

2.2 COACHES MUST PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO PLAY.

- All players need to be given the opportunity to play.
- Every player needs the experience of starting or coming on as a substitute to learn to affect the game.
- Less able players need to be given match time alongside stronger players.

(See 5 on Equal Playing Time below)

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2.3 A COACH'S STANDARD OF BEHAVIOUR

- Demonstrate high standards of behaviour as this will set the standard for players and parents.
- Set a good example by being humble in victory, gracious in defeat and exemplary in your conduct towards the referee, the opposition and your own players and parents.
- Clear, consistent and open communication will lead to a coach having a good working relationship with players and parents.
- Get to know the players, think about them as people first; a friendly disposition goes a long way to making a coach approachable.

(See 6 below for Match Day Standards. In addition, all coaches should read the Club's Code of Conduct for Coaches on the Club Website:

https://members.chipsteadfc.org.uk/uploads/documents/833Code_of_Conduct_-_Coachesv1.pdf

2.4 A COACH'S VALUES

- It is important to be focused and passionate but remember that these are young players and both training and matches should be a fun and enjoyable experience.

3. NO PLACE FOR BULLYING

3.1 As a Club we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our members so that they can participate in football in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

3.2 Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club.

3.3 If bullying does occur, all club members should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with confidentially, promptly and effectively.

We are a TELLING club – this means that anyone who knows bullying is happening is expected to tell the Club Welfare Officer or any committee member.

(The Club's bullying policy can be found on the Club website:

https://chipsteadfc.org.uk/uploads/documents/9_CJFC_Anti_Bullying_Policy_2020.pdf

4. STREAMING

4.1 It is Club policy that streaming (the allocation of players to teams playing at different levels according to their ability, attitude, flexibility and attendance) is necessary from U11 onwards if players are to develop and progress.

4.2 All coaches and parents need to be aware of this. Clear communication is key.

4.3 We **deliberately** avoid the A and B tag, instead we have opted to standardise on Eagles, Falcons, Kestrels and Hawks across all junior age groups.

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4.4 Irrespective of team, all players are viewed as one age group representing Chipstead; we expect total unity between players and coaches at all times.

4.5 **The coaching team is responsible for ALL players in their age group** not just their individual teams. Where feasible (all teams in age group sharing the same venue), we encourage coaches to take turns coaching the other team(s) in mixed training sessions and when they break into their individual teams. The aim over the course of each season must be that all coaches will have coached the majority of players. Apart from keeping the coaching sessions varied and fresh, this will also help coaches develop a rapport with all players and be more in tune with the needs and wishes of individual players. For example, it is important to know which players may be quite happy playing alongside their friends, and those who may be more competitive and want to push themselves to achieve more.

4.6 U6

- There are no teams at U6 when children first join the club, moving from Reception to School Year 1. Fun and enjoyment is the key as they take the first steps to learning the basic skills. Although you can quickly identify those with natural skills, perhaps honed by playing with older siblings, there are also those whose talent may not surface till later on in their football adventure.

4.7 U7 to U10

- During the mini-soccer years (U7-U10), teams are paired up to play against other clubs. The League insist that each pair of teams must be equally balanced in respect of ability and strength, something we fully support.
- In the event of there being an odd number of teams (normally three), it is usual for one of the 3 teams to pair up with a nearby club which might also have an odd number of teams and take turns hosting matches against other clubs. Even in these circumstances, teams paired together must be equally balanced.
- In the event of a team not being able to team up with a team from another club, friendly matches should be arranged to give them competitive experience. If there are only 2 qualified coaches, each coach must on non-match days take turns coaching the squads to aid their progression.
- Having 4 teams allows 2 pairs of teams to be grouped together, each pair usually playing at different competitive levels.
- The number of teams is of course dependent on the number of qualified coaches within the age group (one qualified coach minimum per team). No matter the number of teams, it is important that all coaches meet up on a regular basis to review the make up of each team.
- Partial streaming tends to exist at U9 and U10, with the majority of players moving between the different competitive levels when more than 2 teams.

4.8 U11 to U18

- Streaming for real starts when the teams move to 9 v 9 at U11.
- The initial selection process is carried out pre-season by the entire coaching team, who through the years and regular reviews will have built up a good knowledge of the capabilities of each and every player within the age group. Factors such as attitude to training, attendance, flexibility and best position must be taken into account to ensure a good balance across all teams. Our Head of Player Development Joffie Shea must be involved initially and thereafter

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annually to provide a neutral assessment of player suitability. This will also help manage parental expectation.

- Streaming also necessitates the process of assigning coaches to teams. This must be agreed by the entire coaching team to ensure there is no imbalance in numbers of coaches across all teams. Although the norm is for a dad to coach his son's team, there can be benefits in a coach not doing so, thus avoiding any potential conflicts of interest or difficult situations regarding selection for example. That decision lies with the individual coach. It is worth remembering that a coach has a duty to develop all players in that age group.
- It is also important that teams are entered into the correct league. They need to be playing at the right level to develop. Again, Joffie can advise on the most appropriate level for each team.
- Annual squad reviews should be undertaken prior to the start of each season. There is also an opportunity to carry out a mid-season review at Christmas if deemed necessary. In addition to reviewing individual player performances, the coaching team also need to take account of players' feelings and wishes. All factors need to be considered before any changes can be recommended. Once provisional teams have been selected as above, individual players should be spoken to about moving and then their parents advised.
- For whatever reason, it may be necessary to reduce the number of teams from two to one. This tends to be the case once teams get beyond the mid-teens. The usual scenario is numbers dropping off and not having sufficient players to run two teams, despite best endeavours to recruit new players. Advising players that they are not being retained is not a pleasant task but necessary in such circumstances. Joffie once again should act as a neutral assessor.

5 EQUAL GAME TIME

5.1 FA GUIDELINES

It is important the Club implements the FA's guidelines for equal playing time. It is not always easy to implement equal game time so Club guidance is found at 5.2 below. It is important for coaches to remember why these guidelines are so important in junior football:

Maximises long term player development

Without access to playing time, quality coaching or experiencing critical game situations (such as playing against special teams or cup semis/finals), players who started playing late or are temporarily behind their peers in terms of physical or mental development are less likely to improve. These same players may actually have more long term potential if provided with the same opportunities to develop.

Development v Winning

Some coaches persist in playing their "best" players all the time. This ignores the needs of their new or not-so-skilled players presumably because they want to win matches so much they dare not take a risk with a player who might make a mistake and cost the team a goal. However, a coach can provide equal playing time and be trying to win the

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game but not at all costs. It is not an easy balance but a coach must remember the Club's responsibility is to develop all players.

Fun increases motivation

The number one reason children play sports is to have fun. Enjoying playing football is the main reason children work hard in practice and spend their free time playing and practising on their own. Not playing is not fun and can result in children who are less motivated, have less fun and who may choose to quit.

Social/psychological well-being of the players

What is the effect on the self-esteem of a player who starts as a substitute and only plays a couple of minutes every week? Are they adversely affected by being openly acknowledged as less able in amongst their teammates and peers? As coaches we have a duty to consider the effect that our actions have on the child's development in a wider sense and to be accountable for the part we play in it.

Builds confidence and resilience

From a small child to the world's greatest athlete, those who are confident are confident because they have attempted a skill or taken thousands of shots, tried and failed many times in a supported environment, then tried again and got it right. This is a valuable life lesson and only by exposure to opportunity can the child benefit.

Enhances Teamwork

When players feel that everyone is an important part of the team and are treated fairly, they are more likely to focus on working together. When teamwork improves, players are more likely to make friends, have fun during training and matches, and the team will have a better chance of experiencing success.

Helps late developers

Players develop at different ages. Coaches should allow them to make mistakes and learn the game, without a dependence on the final score.

Improves relationships between coaches and parents

One of the most common causes of disagreements between coaches and parents is the subject of playing time. By providing players with equal opportunities to play, coaches set the stage for more positive relationships with parents. Parents want to see their child in the game. Lack of playing time can cause frustration directed at coaches, and children on the car ride home.

Minimise drop out

Sadly, a high percentage of children who play football stop playing the game before they get to the age of 15. A recent study found the top five reasons for the high dropout rate were: • Lack of playing time • Overemphasis on winning • Lack of fun • Coaching/adult behaviours • Other activities are more interesting.

Minimise fatigue

When teams fail to rotate players, some players could be fatigued by the end of the game and others could be cold, stiff and have less game experience.

5.2 HOW EQUAL GAME TIME SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED:

- 5.2.1 Coaches of **U7 to U10** teams must ensure **all players receive equal playing time for each and every game**. The only exception is where a player is injured, returning from injury or does not want to play for whatever reason.

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5.2.2 Coaches of **U11 to U16** teams must ensure **all players receive equal playing time over the entire season**. These age groups differ from the younger players because in some games, due to the superiority of the opposition, one or two players may struggle to compete which could lead to a loss of confidence or, worse still, a risk of injury. This may cause the coach to give greater playing time to some players in these games; those restricted to half a game will be given more playing time against different opposition.

5.2.3 Coaches of **U17 to U18** teams should attempt to provide equal playing time over the entire season. However, as these age groups transition towards adult football this is not always possible. Clear communication with the players, who no longer require parental consent to play, is therefore particularly important.

5.2.4 **Player Registration and Match Day Squad Numbers** - Coaches need to carefully consider both the number of players they wish to register and the number they ideally want in their match day squad. Too many substitutes on match day can be difficult to manage while too few can result in players becoming fatigued.

- **Player Registration Numbers** - the number of players who can be registered for each age group and format is outlined below:

<u>format</u>	<u>max. no. of registrations per team</u>
5v5	10
7v7	14 - (16 for Crowborough)
9v9	16 - (18 for Crowborough)
11v11	20

- Coaches must where possible give priority to children of current and former club officials when finalising their squads at the start of each season.
- Should a team not have the maximum of players registered on occasion the Executive Committee may in exceptional circumstances require a player(s) to be registered.
- It should also be feasible for a player to be signed on a training only basis and occasional match selection if numbers allow.

- **Match Day Squad Numbers** - all **U7-U10** teams must take a minimum of **2 substitutes to all matches and U11-U18 a minimum of 3, unless unable to do so because of injuries or unavailability**. Although the mini formats allow unlimited substitutes up to or equal to the number of players that can be registered, there is a limit of 5 for age groups U11-U18. Taking account of the different match playing times for each format, the recommended minimum and maximum match day squad sizes are:

<u>format</u>	<u>match day squad size</u>
5v5	7-8
7v7	9-11
9v9	12-14
11v11	14-16

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- The subbing of players ought to be flexible; a strict pre-planned double substitution every 10-15 minutes, for example, may give everyone equal game time but can prove extremely disruptive to the performance of the team.
 - If the number of players registered exceeds the number selected on match days, then all players will take turns on a rota basis.
 - All players in a match day squad must be guaranteed at least half a game, unless injured or not wanting to continue.
- 5.2.5 Although we do not expect Coaches to keep an exact record of the number of minutes afforded each player during the course of a match or over the entire season, we do expect each player (and parent) to feel that they have been given a fair and reasonable amount of game time by the end of the season.
- 5.2.6 Please contact Joffie Shea for assistance in implementing equal game time if required.

6 MATCHDAY STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

6.1 PLAYER COMMUNICATION

- 6.1.1 Do not scream and shout at your players during the game – make notes, then discuss at HT or FT.
- 6.1.2 Do not criticise any of your players from the touchline – make notes and speak to the whole team at HT – be positive and encouraging to your players.
- 6.1.3 Let your players have an input during HT team talks – e.g. what can we do better.

6.2 MATCH OFFICIALS AND OPPOSITION COACHES

- 6.2.1 Do not abuse match officials – players have to accept decisions and they will follow a coach's example. Perhaps respectfully discuss a disputed decision during a break or at HT.
- 6.2.2 Do not assume you know the rules better than the referee; chances are you do not so just let the referee get on with their job.
- 6.2.3 Players will be negatively influenced if they hear you abusing a match official or the opposing coach.

6.3 PLAYING POSITIONS – ROTATE OFTEN FOR THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS

- 6.3.1 Encourages players to enjoy the responsibilities that different positions demand; there is no question that they will improve their overall game by experiencing various positions on the field and have a better understanding of their teammates' roles.
- 6.3.2 Players are able to cover more than one position will undoubtedly see more game time, especially if they are able to fill in as both a goalkeeper and outfield player.
- 6.3.3 It lessens the risk of a player being typecast in a certain role according to their physical attributes in their early years e.g. a player is tall so they might be a centre back or someone who is quick plays in a wide position. This fails to account for the

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fact that an early developer might be tall for their age but eventually, at age 21, is not tall comparatively and is stuck with their formative football experience in a position which no longer suits them.

6.4 'WIN AT ALL COSTS' – DO NOT ADOPT THIS APPROACH

6.4.1 A coach's number one priority is to help players develop, without the worry of winning at all costs hanging over them.

If your team lose, they may be disappointed, but your role is to show them that as long as they continue to work hard they will improve. Their enjoyment of the game and inevitable improvement with your support and encouragement will mean they will start to win games; that is almost a guarantee.

6.4.2 Players gain little from an easy win or heavy defeat. Coaches can prevent such a situation arising by agreeing beforehand to even up the teams by adjusting the numbers up or down on one of the teams should the difference in goals reach a certain number. Once the deficit has been reduced to a respectable number, the teams can revert back to the original numbers. This measure can only be driven by the coaches as players will never suggest this, especially if they are the ones who are winning! This is especially relevant to matches involving U7-U10 teams.

7 WHAT DO WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE AS A CLUB?

We stated up front that putting the player first was key to the development of players at our club.

So, how do we measure success and how exactly do we want our players to feel about being a part of Chipstead FC?

We want them:

- To enjoy their football in a safe and happy environment so much they want to stay with the club.
- To feel they are learning new skills and improving all the time.
- To be happy with the amount of game time they are getting.
- To look forward to every coaching session and week-end match.
- To feel they have achieved their full potential as a player.
- To work towards the moment when they pull on a first team shirt.

If this Player Development Guide can help us achieve the above, then we can congratulate ourselves on a job well done. Thank you Coaches for all you do for our players and the Club.