

WILLIAMSTOWN JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB

AGE GROUP TEAM GRADING & SELECTION POLICY

1. POLICY APPROVAL

This policy was tabled and reviewed and ratified by the Williamstown Junior Football Club Committee on 27 February 2019. The policy was created given the WRFL's decision to adopt Even Age Groups for the upcoming 2019 season. This policy was modelled and adapted from other clubs in the EDFL where there are dual age groups.

2. REVIEW DATE

This policy / guide shall be reviewed again at the end of the 2019 season. If not reviewed, this policy will stay in force until a date that the WRFL changes the age group divisions again.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to committee, players, coaches, coordinators and parents of players at the graded level's being under 12's, 14's and 16's.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- To fielding competitive teams in each age group across the relevant divisions.
- Maximising the opportunity for as many players as possible and practical to continue to play football.
- Selecting teams that will allow each player to develop and play footy in an enjoyable and supportive environment.
- Where possible to spread player numbers evenly across teams to minimize bench and rotation time.

5. PURPOSE

- The purpose of this policy is to inform all members of Williamstown Junior Football Club of the process and criteria for team selection. It will also endeavour to provide a fair, consistent and manageable system for determining team selection.
- Ensuring all stakeholders conduct themselves in a respectful manner and abide by codes of conduct so that players, parents, coaches and coordinators are treated with dignity and respect throughout the selection process.

6. BACKGROUND

Team selection is a complex process based on many factors and the process of allocating hundreds of players across dual age teams is full of challenges. Our guiding principles is to ensure players have fun and develop their skill and game sense and to field competitive teams in each division.

Pre-season training and practice matches provide the opportunity for coaches and coordinators to observe the skills and attitudes of players, share their knowledge about players and consider all the pieces of the puzzle that go into determining the eventual line up of teams. This process takes

considerable time and effort from a group of volunteer parents acting as coaches, coordinators and committee representatives. Those responsible for selecting teams will always endeavour to get the outcomes as right as possible for everyone concerned.

7. GRADING & TEAM SELECTION

Process of initial selection:

- Pre-season training squad's will be formed subject to attendance on the training night by players and coaches. Players will be split evenly into groups based on the number of attending coaches and may notionally reference to age or teams from the previous year.
- Coaches and coordinators will determine where players are selected at the start of the season from pre-season training, intra-club and practice matches played.
- The selection process is by nature a subjective process however will take into account player's skill, discipline, experience, physical maturity, size, age and fitness, as well as team balance.

Team selection – Division 1 & 2:

- The Div 1 Coach will select a team in consultation with the Div 2 Coach. The number of players selected will depend on the total pool of players to ensure as close to even numbers in each team (as practically possible). Teams may consist of 22, 23 or a cap of 24 players in each team. Again each team needs to be even in numbers across all divisions, not just 1 & 2.
- The appointed Div 2 Coach will then select a team again being capped at 24 players.

Division 3 & 4:

- The appointed Div 3 & 4 Coaches will divide the remaining players across these divisions and where possible place younger age players primarily in the lower division team.

8. MOVEMENT BETWEEN TEAMS AND REQUIRED COMMUNICATION

- It is important that when possible a full complement of players is selected to play each week, starting from the top team and flowing down, to ensure more players get to play each weekend.
- Player movement will primarily be driven to balance player numbers in each team.
- Players will move up and down divisions if the opportunity arises and their form warrants re-evaluation of what level they are selected to play.
- When the players are selected for Round 1 this does not mean they will remain in that team for the entire year.
- A player may start the season in the Div 3 and be elevated to Div 2 and then elevated to Div 1. Alternatively a player who was selected in Div 1 or 2 may be moved to Div 3 or 4.
- Where a player is being moved from a team (up or down), the coach from the preceding game (the players "current coach") will inform the players parent/s of this change, in advance of the team selection being published on TeamApp.
- The process of notification will be a text message or phone call to the parent's nominated mobile number/s, flagging the nature of the selection change (up / down), a very brief reason as to why ie even numbers required in each division.
- Coaches need to make themselves available for further discussion with players and parents, however where a coach gets no engagement from the parent, it is reasonable for them to assume there is no concerns as to the decision.
- This communication process applies to all players in all divisions and is not the choice of the coach to communicate or not. A player who is asked to move between the divisions is required to comply with this club policy.

Rotation During Games

- The coach will have discretion over the position a player is best suited to play in for team balance.
- Coaches should afford players the opportunity to develop in multiple positions particularly in situations where the team is winning by a significant margin.
- The coach is expected to ensure each player has an equal amount of playing time i.e. not have the elevated player sit on the bench for the game.

Finals Selection

- The coach will determine the players most deserving to play finals. Teams will be selected to allow the greatest opportunity for team success.

10. IN SEASON TRAINING

- Players will typically train with the team that they played with in the previous game.
- Where a player is under selection consideration for the coming game (up or down), they may be shifted by their coach to the potential destination team for the purposes of evaluation during training and to assist in the final selection decision.
- Warm up's and initial training drills are likely to be across teams ie Div 1 & 2 together Div 3 & 4 together or a combinations noting attendance numbers before any splitting off.

11. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Committee is responsible for overseeing the team grading and selection policy providing coaches and coordinators with player details required for selection.
- Coaches are responsible for working collaboratively to select teams in accordance with these guidelines and communicating with players and parents.
- Parents are responsible for alerting Coaches or Coordinators to any details they think should be considered when placing their child in a team.
- Coordinators are responsible for addressing parental concerns where a coach has been unable to address a parent concern and elevating these to the committee if unresolved.

12. GREIVENCES

- **Parents with questions, concerns or grievances about the selection process should discuss this with the Coach in the first instance.**
- Should the matter be unresolved, parents may then contact the Age Group Football Operations Coordinator. All contact details are on the website.

13. PROCESS

- Registrar provides information for age group to co-coordinator and coaches.
- Teams selected based on above guidelines.
- Announcement of teams on training nights before season commences.