



PLAYER GRADING AND PLACEMENT POLICY

The Preston Bullants Junior Football Club (PBJFC) provides an opportunity for the youth of our area to participate in Australian Rules Football and enhance their health and wellbeing through organised sport.

1. Purpose

To ensure that all players, parents, and officials of PBJFC are provided with a clear and consistent set of guidelines with regards to the placement of players in teams, and an understanding of PBJFC's commitment to ensure the most equitable process is in place to meet the needs of players as they progress through junior football.

From U13 onwards, there can be significant diversity in the physical development and emotional maturity of different players. There is also a noticeable increase in the physical intensity of the competition, particularly in the higher divisions of the Yarra Junior Football League (YJFL).

This is the more appropriate stage to place players in the level of competition most closely suited to their stage of physical development and to their football ability, while bearing in mind their desire to play as a part of friendship groups.

2. Policy Statement

The objective of the PBJFC Player Grading and Placement Policy is to maximise player participation and enjoyment by providing an environment that promotes opportunity in various positions allowing for game day contribution, game sense development, and skill improvement. All registered players will be allocated to teams and team allocation shall operate to ensure that:

Every player feels valued and an important member of the team

Every player participates at the appropriate level to enable them to enjoy and develop their football and gain greater confidence for the years to come

3. Tackers (U8/9)-U12

In the Tackers to U12 age groups, the emphasis is placed on participation and enjoyment.

Player placement at these age groups is based on friendship groups, with a focus on the development of football skills, social inclusion, and a strong team culture.

4. Player Grading: U13 and above

Where two or more teams are formed in the same age group, the Player Grading and Placement Policy will apply.

The Player Placement Policy is designed to provide the best chance of development, enjoyment, and participation for all players across all teams. The Club is committed to providing players with the opportunity to play in a grade/level that challenges but is suitable to their skillset, football game sense and overall ability.



The grading process will be focussed on team balance and positions of players, as much as the qualities of individual players.

5. Colts (U17)

In this age group, a greater emphasis is placed upon individual and team performances, and there may be circumstances that warrant player rotations between teams. Should this occur, the policy allows for discussion and agreement between player and coaches of each team.

6. Evaluation and Review

This policy was developed and documented in November 2021. This is a new approach and the Club understand that there may be a need for further refinement of the policy and its implementation. The Team Selection Policy will be evaluated and reviewed at the end of season 2022 and updated accordingly.

The policy will then be reviewed every three years.

All current PBJFC policies are available to view from the PBJFC website.

www.prestonbullantsjfc.com.au

This policy is aligned with:

- PBJFC Coaching Philosophy and Policy
- PBJFC Out of Age Policy
- PBJFC Positive Playing Initiative
- YJFL Grading Policy

Policy adopted: 22/11/2021



Operational Guidelines

Information Session

A communication and information session for players and parents from under 13 and above will be conducted at the beginning of each season to clarify both the PBJFC Team Selection policy and YJFL Grading Process.

Player Grading and Placement Selection Panel

All grading and placement are undertaken on behalf of the Club by the PBJFC Football Operations Committee (FOC) which is comprised of:

- Football Development Director
- Junior/Senior Coaching Coordinators; and
- Age Group Coaches.

Selection Process

Players will be assessed prior to the commencement of each season and all teams will be finalised at least 2 weeks prior to the beginning of Round 1. This assessment will be carried out by the coaches and the FOC and will consider the skills, experience, and strengths of each player.

The outcome of this assessment and the application of the guidelines may result in the reorganisation of the teams for that age group. Any change in teams will be done in consultation with the player and the player's parents/guardians. Team balance and player suitability will be considerations when making this this decision.

Although teams will be finalised before Round 1 the FOC reserves the right to make temporary or permanent changes up until Round 4.

Players will be notified of the team they have been placed in by the Coaches and Football Development Director.

Selection Criteria

The selection of teams will consider a range of relevant factors, including the following:

- (i) a player's previous season performance
- (ii) the make-up of the teams
- (iii) pre-season training performance; and
- (iv) performance in pre-season practice matches
- (v) commitment, attitude and sense of fair play



Conflict of Interest

Where a conflict of interest exists (i.e., the grading session involves the child of a FOC member) that member of the FOC will only grade the other players and his or her child will be graded by all the other department members.

Evaluation and Review

The Player Grading and Placement Policy was developed and documented in November 2021. This is a new approach for the PBJFC, and as such, it is important that parent and player feedback is considered when evaluating the success of the implementation. Players and parents are urged to be objective and reasonable in their expectations, and to encourage children to be happy no matter which team they are selected to play in.

Any concerns or queries with the implementation of this policy should be discussed with the relevant Coach and, should they remain unresolved or unanswered, are to be addressed in writing or by email to the PBJFC Committee.

YJFL rules regarding player rotation

No more than four players may be rotated between a higher and a lower graded team per round. If a player participates in six or more games in a higher division, they cannot play in a lower grade for the rest of that season.

If a player qualifies for finals in multiple divisions (minimum six games) within an age group, they may only play finals in the highest division of that age group for which they have qualified.



Team Selection Policy

The Preston Bullants Junior Football Club provides an equal opportunity for all boys and girls to participate in competition football.

The Club registers up to the following maximum of players:

- Tackers to U14 - 28 Players
- U15's to Colts - 26 Players

Coaches and Team Managers do not have the authority to set the maximum number of players per team.

Only the Executive Committee can authorise the maximum number of registrations per team

During the home & away season only 24 players can play during a game.

During Finals, all registered players in the team may be able to play. (Subject to clause 6 below)

The following criteria should apply when selecting teams:

1. Attendance at training

Players who attend training during the week prior to the game should be the first selected. The only exception to this rule is when a player is unable to attend training due to one of the following reasons:

- a) Illness and the Coach or Team Manager is advised accordingly
- b) The player is not home from school in time for training
- c) The player is participating in other training. This can include training with a combined team such as the YJFL League Representative Squad or has genuine school or other sporting commitments that fall on the same night as our organised training night
- d) At the discretion of the football sub-committee players can be excused from training for reasons such as family circumstances, distance, or other compelling factors.

All exceptions must be made known to the team when it is announced so that all players, officials and parents are made fully aware of the situation.

Schedules recording training attendance are filled in at each training session and returned to the Football Sub Committee. These schedules will be used when selecting teams or discussing training attendance with interested parents and/or guardians.

2. Playing Roster

Excess players will be rostered off equally during the season. To assist families with planning a weekend away etc, parents should inform the Team Manager and Coach as soon as practical to assist with the development of the playing roster.



If a player is called up to play when rostered off due to shortage of players that player is still deemed to have taken their turn of being rostered off unless a swap sanctioned by the Coach/Team Manager is agreed between the players and their parents/guardians.

Coaches are to also encourage rostered players to attend the game and if practicable, participate in game day off field duties (i.e., Take stats, fill water bottles)

3. Substitution

Players rostered off will, if practicable, be offered a game in a higher age group. Coaches must consult with each other as soon as they become aware of the shortfall in player numbers. The Football Sub-Committee must be consulted prior to any decisions being made in playing younger aged players up.

At all times the club, coaches and its representatives must abide by the YJFL bi-laws in relation to top up and rotation of players. Where a player from a lower age group tops up in a higher age group the lower group player should not take the field in place of player of the higher age group (i.e., the lower age group player must start the game on the bench and will be interchanged during the game for injured players or as part of game day rotations.

4. Rotations

In younger age groups (Tackers to Under 13s) the players will be rotated at the end each quarter during each game. Each player will participate in at least 3 quarters every game, subject to training attendance and attitude.

In the older age groups (under 14s, under 15s and Colts) every effort will be made to rotate the players so that they get at least 2 quarters and selection will be based on training attendance and attitude.

5. Player Placement Policy

In the older age groups (under 13, under 14, under 15, under 16 and Colts), where there are enough players registered to field two or more teams, the Player Grading and Placement policy will apply to team selection.

6. Finals

In all Age Groups, every player participating in all finals games is required to play a minimum of 1 quarter of football. Coach's discretion should be used regarding how this is applied, with consideration to team structure and balance.

The Coaching Coordinator or another member of the Football Sub Committee will attend training and games on a regular basis so that assistance can be provided to the Coaches working within this Policy.

Initial inquiries regarding team selection should be directed in the first instance to the age group coaches, and secondly to the Coaching Coordinator.



Coaching Philosophy and Policy

Every effort will be made to ensure that all players have equal opportunity to develop and enjoy playing football. PBJFC recognizes that the maintenance of equity has a profound effect on players self-esteem, skill development, fitness and understanding of the game.

The Club also acknowledges however, that as players move through the age groups, the implementation of equity may vary slightly.

Coaches must avoid prioritizing winning over maximizing participation, enjoyment and improvement for all players regardless of ability. All coaches are to ensure that every player is recognized as being an equal member of the team with a valuable contribution to make. The Club recognises that goals are best achieved by working as a team and by fostering team harmony at all times.

PBJFC seeks to create an environment where players are encouraged to perform to the best of their ability and take pride in their performance - regardless of the scoreboard. The aim of each team should be to 'be the best team they can be' not to 'be the best team'.

As a general principal, the Club believes it is better for teams to play in the highest division in which they will be competitive, rather than trying to grade them to lower division with the aim of winning a Premiership.

Skill development of all players is a major focus of our club. A junior and senior Coaching Coordinator will be appointed annually, to provide support, resources and assistance to coaches to achieve a greater level of player and coaching development. This position is a member of the Football Sub Committee.

Parental involvement at training is also to be actively encouraged and will be managed by the Coach.

Coaching Policy.

The Executive Committee appoints the Football Sub-committee to conduct all Coaching interviews and make appointment recommendations to the Executive Committee for approval. All applicants will be subject to an interview, regardless of whether they are the only applicant.

It is expected that all coaches appoint an assistant coach(es), who are also expected to adhere to club policies & philosophies. Where a coach doesn't appoint an assistant, the Club will make an appointment to the role.

Coaches are appointed to the role for one playing year. This does not preclude the Coach from applying to coach the team again the following year. As a general rule, no coach shall coach the same group for 2 consecutive seasons.

For a coach to be eligible to apply for further consecutive year/s with the same group of players; the Football Sub Committee will consider the following:

- The coach has not been placed with another team.
- A suitable candidate has not applied.



- Considerable effort has been made to find a suitable applicant.

Objective

- Provide new opportunities for players and officials
- Eliminate risk of complacency and generate enthusiasm
- Enhance player development by exposure to as many quality coaches as possible.

The Executive Committee and Football Sub Committee place full support in the Coach of a team. Any concerns related to a coach, or their performance should be referred to the Coaching Coordinator in the first instance. If a suitable resolution cannot be reached, the Coaching Coordinator will escalate the concern to the PBJFC Executive Committee.