



PLAYER GAME TIME & POSITION ROTATION POLICY

This POLICY is to be read in conjunction with:

- *POLICY - Coaching Philosophy*
- *POLICY - Positive Playing Environment*
- *POLICY - Team Selection*

Context:

The stated purpose of the Preston Bullants Junior Football Club is:

To provide our children with the opportunity to develop physical fitness and skills, experience teamwork and enjoyment, develop friendships, and a sense of fairness in a safe and caring environment that is inclusive of family and community.

Player skill development, personal development, and player participation are the major focus. Club survey results have been unequivocal that one of the major reasons for children ceasing to play football is diminished enjoyment as a direct result of perceived inequity on match day. More specifically, the perception of equity can be influenced by the exercising of coach discretion in relation to:

- Starting position/bench
- Total time on ground
- Time in different positions

Players play football because they love it, they love the game and playing it, be it training or match day. Major studies have shown that limiting their time playing is often taken by the child as a punishment or judgement on their ability – this has a negative effect on the child and will affect their confidence. Similarly, starting every (or most) games on the bench can significantly affect the self-esteem of a player as this can be seen as an indicator of their relative lack of ability or worth to the team.

The policy is defined in two parts based around age groups, as the progressive capacity of individuals increases as they get older. Precise measurement is not the goal of this policy but having consideration to being fair and equitable.

The overarching intent of this policy is to achieve game opportunities that are as close as practicable to equitable, while still enabling coaches some level of flexibility to “manage” their player rotations on game day.

It should be noted that equal playing time is not a universal right, there are also expectations of the player, such as a full commitment to training, respectful behaviour etc.

Coaches will take into account all of these considerations in ensuring that this policy is delivered in a fair manner, and where player enjoyment is paramount.

Any parent or guardian unsatisfied with the opportunities being afforded to their child should refer to the club *POLICY - Issue Resolution*.

U8 to U12

Home & Away Game Time

All players must be given EQUAL GAME TIME **for each match every week** and be a starting player for a fair and equitable number of matches across the season – exceptions may **only** occur for injury, ill-discipline, or a choice by the parent or child.

Finals Game time

YJFL rules allow for all listed players to play by enabling an extended bench. Minimum game time provisions are to be applied in Finals. Game time is tiered according to list size:

No. of players available	Min game time per player
Up to 24	3 quarters
25-36	2 quarters
37 +	1 quarter

Positional Rotations

All players are to experience at least 2 full games in all 4 position types* across the course of the Home & Away season.

* Position Types

- Backs
- Midfielders
- Forwards
- On Ball

U13 to Colts/Youth Girls

Home & Away Game Time

All players must play an equal amount of time **over the course of a season** and be a starting player for a fair and equitable number of matches. This does not require equal playing time in each game.

The Coach shall have the discretion as to how he/she administers this Policy taking into account:

- the calibre of the opposition;
- behaving appropriately with respect;
- the safety of the player concerned;
- the status of the game; or
- the preparation of the player.

At Colts level, the coach shall have additional discretion to place greater emphasis on training and merit rather than guaranteed equal time. This is seen as a suitable step for this age group as a transitional stepping-stone to the requirements of senior football.

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Positional Rotations

It is acknowledged that many players have started to identify preferred or suitable position types by the time they reach Under 13s. For this reason, the policy is less stringent for these older age groups.

While the coach will take into account player preferences, he/she will be obliged to have each player experience at least 2 position types* across the course of the Home & Away season.

**Position Types: Backs, Midfielders, Forwards, on-ball*

Guidance for coaches in application of the Policy:

- All coaches and officials are expected to buy in to the intent of and to adhere to the Policy.
- Many of the issues that can arise with concerned parents can be avoided by clear and frequent communication with players and with the parent group.
- It may be beneficial to pre-plan weekly selection (starting 18) and rotations across the season. Your Coaching Co-ordinator can provide assistance in this regard.
- **U13 to Colts/Youth Girls** - The over-riding principle of the above policy is that Coach must provide each registered player with EQUAL PLAYING TIME over the course of the home and away season. There must not be significant and obvious disparity between all players' playing time and adjustments for not playing in a specific game must be compensated for in other games.
- As a guide, legitimate considerations to vary from Equal game time may include:
 - poor player behavior (not behaving appropriately or with respect);
 - being rude to the coach, other team members or players of another team;
 - not attending regular training, without notice to coach or manager;
 - not respecting the umpire during a match;
 - the safety of the player concerned
- Where the club becomes aware that the policy is not being followed, a discussion with the Coaching Co-Ordinator will occur to ensure that players, parents and coaches fully understand the policy. If this does not satisfactorily resolve any issue with the application of the policy referral to the club executive may be made by the Coaching Co-Ordinator, Coach or parent in accordance with the club's POLICY – Issue Resolution.