

Recruitment and retention of players

Wherever possible, we will seek to “grow our own” players, teams and coaches. We wish to instil a sense of community and some key principles across the club from the outset.

Key Principles:

- Play- Enjoy the ball, want the ball, share the ball. Let the players play
- Build- Build from the back, build skills, build players, build teams, build a community club
- Be game based- training activities need to reflect games and have a high percentage of ball rolling time
- Attitude and Application- try hard, be brave on the ball, recover well and enjoy it

The development will continue to operate on a Friday evening and be overseen by our appointed Head of Development. It is open to players who are in Year one and Reception mainly. Players who are younger or older may be accommodated should their circumstances dictate that this is necessary.

In preparation for U7 Summer League in June, players in year one at school should be given another age-group specific training session, starting in January of the same year. This will be led by the first identified coach for this age group. The first seven or so players to commit to the club will comprise a squad that will be assigned a Waldridge Park street name. The next seven or so players will comprise another squad with another Waldridge Park street name and so on. There is to be no 1st/ 2nd, A/ B team scenario. The club recognises that players at all ages develop at different rates. Players find more opportunity to develop when in mixed ability groups. It is the responsibility of the coaches leading these teams to notify families in good time as to squad composition and training arrangements. This group will continue to train as an age group. No player should be turned away nor their family left with the impression that we are full. We don't get full at U7 or U8, we attract more players and coaches step forward. Be patient coaches; do not put your individual team ahead of the club at this point in time. Have a growth mentality.

A family's commitment will be taken from their submission of forms to the club- typically direct debit and registration forms. Direct debits should begin during April in the year ahead of the June Summer league start.

It is not accepted club policy or practice to draw established players or established teams from other clubs. Open trials are not welcomed and existing players are not to be subject to any such trials. Nor shall existing players be deemed to be surplus to requirements. If as a coach you feel a player is not making the progress you would like, the emphasis is upon you to redouble your efforts to inspire, motivate and improve that player. The FA Youth Modules are especially helpful in assisting coaches to move players towards this end goal.

Nothing motivates a player like feeling involved and having a fair deal of playing time. The following principle is to be applied from U7 to U13 inclusively:

No player should be given less than one third of the daily match time on the pitch. It is reasonable for a player to expect 50% match time at least on a regular basis. Players do not improve their skills or decision making by standing on the touchline.

For example, in the case of an hour long game, no player should get less than 20minutes on the pitch. They can expect to get 30minutes on a regular basis. This does not need to be in one chunk, but could be three spells of 10minutes.

Another example, in the case of two small sided 20minute games in one day, total playing time is 40 minutes. Each player should be getting 20minutes total playing time across the two games. This could be four spells of 5minutes or one whole game.

Lack of pitch time in this developmental phase is cited as the most common reason for players leaving. Further to this, the players regularly playing full games without a break often leave the pitch looking drained at the final whistle. Being brought off gives the coach a chance to acknowledge to player all of the things they have done well.

Clever rotation of positions can ease this situation for coaches and it is anticipated that players should get a fair spell of time in their preferred positions- this includes goal keeper.

In the case of a player seeking a move from one Waldridge Park team to another during the season, this must be passed through the management committee for an outcome to be fully ratified. These transfers are subject to standard FA practice (7 day rule) and the requesting team should approach the management committee to give seven days' notice of approaching the current team for the player. If the current team coach is willing to forego the seven day notice, the approach may proceed immediately. If not, seven days must pass. Any subsequent approach for another player between those two teams in that same direction must then be subject to the 28 day rule.

Parents and carers are not the driver of these moves during the season.

It is the expectation of the management committee that players should play first and foremost at their correct chronological age groups. Exceptions may well occur, but must be fully ratified by the management committee to ensure the player is happy with the arrangement.

Long service awards are made available to players with six and also ten years unbroken playing commitment to the club. Such long service is cherished by the management committee.

Players may dual register for two Waldridge Park teams (either in different leagues or at different age levels) the management committee will indicate which team the player has a primary commitment to.

The coach of each individual team retains the duty of communicating this policy effectively to the parents and players in their squad and to any age group they are overseeing.