



West Preston Lakeside Football Club Inc.

PLAYER PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

Player Placement

The purpose of the West Preston Jnr Football Club (WPJFC) is through Australian Rules Football, to ensure people within our community have access to well organised and well managed sporting opportunities that maximise positive health outcomes and support, individual, family and community growth. It does this by a) providing a safe non-threatening environment that engenders participation of all, b) promoting a team sport by providing a structure under which footballers can participate and develop and c) providing pathways for individuals who wish to pursue further football development opportunities.

Guidelines

One of the most difficult tasks for a junior football club with more than one team in an age group is placing players in teams in a way that satisfies all parents/guardians, players and coaching staff.

With potentially multiple teams at each age level this presents a particular challenge to the WPJFC. We do not pretend that everyone will be happy with the outcome in any one year. We do, however, endeavour to carry out the task according to the guidelines set out below, and in accordance with club culture, recognising that there may be disagreement.

Under 10s – Under 13s

The club has a policy of NOT selecting players for particular teams on the basis of any perceived playing ability. The desire is to encourage players to play with their mates, make new ones, have fun playing competitive footy and learn basic football skills.

During these years, typically the final years of primary schooling, players should be:

- placed in teams with a reported peer connection
- placed in teams with a variety of players with varying degrees of skill, ability and confidence
- placed within teams structured in such a way as to minimise the risk of one team having a shortfall of players on match days.

If there is a request from a parent/player for the player to move to another team in the same age group that request will be considered in line with these guidelines.

In these age groups, players should be given the opportunity to play in all positions around the ground throughout the season and the emphasis should be on player enjoyment and development rather than on the competitiveness of the team.

Under 14s - Under 17s

From Under 14's onwards (where there is more than one team in the age group) players will be given the choice, as far as possible, of either competing at a level commensurate with their physical size, development and football skills or playing in teams with preferred peer connections if it is safe and reasonable to do so.

At this age players are typically entering secondary school and there is significant disparity in physical development and emotional maturity. Also there is a noticeable increase in the physical intensity of the competition particularly in the higher divisions of the Northern Football League. 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 bearing in mind their desire to play with their mates.

- During these years, typically the first years of secondary schooling, players should be placed in teams
- to maximise their opportunities to develop and enjoy their playing experience, and minimise undue risks of injury
- primarily, though not exclusively, composed of players with skills, ability and confidence commensurate with their own
- structured in such a way as to minimise the risk of one team having a shortfall of players on match days.

In relation to the first criterion, where necessary, the WPJFC will conduct an assessment of players in each age group prior to the commencement of each season. This assessment will ideally be carried out by the coaching staff for that age group and will take into account the skills, experience and physical size and strength of each player.

The outcome of skills assessment coupled with the preferred wishes of the player, may result in the reorganisation of the teams in the age group but this will be based on the guidelines above and done in consultation with, and where possible the agreement of, the player and the player's parents/guardians. There will be no compulsion to play in a particular team if that person wishes to play in a lower grade with their friends.

During these years, players should:

- be guaranteed half a game of football on match day; and
- also have the opportunity to play in a variety of positions around the ground throughout the season (it is expected that the emphasis will gradually shift from player enjoyment to commitment to the team and to overall team competitiveness

That shift in emphasis will necessitate greater consistency of positional placement in these years).

Guidelines Review: To ensure this policy remains relevant to club operations and reflects community expectations the policy will be reviewed annually.

Signed
Date

The West Preston Lakeside Football Club Committee
March 2014