



TEAM ALLOCATION AND PLAYER GRADING POLICY

The Heathmont Jets Junior Football Club aims to field at least one team in each age group of the EFL junior competition. Wherever possible, more than one team will be entered into an age group. The Club will finalize and advise players and parents of the number of teams it will be expecting to field at each age group level in the upcoming season as soon as practical after Registration Day, or as required by the EFL.

Two or More Teams in an Age Group

Where two or more teams are entered into a particular age group, the following will apply with regard to the allocation of players to teams:

Age Groups Under 8's through to Under 12's

Players in these age groups will be allocated to teams on the basis of:

- School and friendship groups
- An approximately equal allocation of players per team
- Team numbers being capped at a maximum of:
 - Under 8 – 21 players per team
 - Under 9's to Under 12's – 24 players per team.

The Club believes that players in these age groups are highly motivated by the desire to play alongside their friends, and in the company of their primary school mates. Therefore players in these age groups will be allocated to teams based primarily upon friendship and primary school groupings.

Age Groups Under 13's through to Under 17's

Players in these age groups will be allocated to teams on the basis of:

- Ability grading – refer to player grading and team selection process outlined below
- An equal allocation of players per team based on total numbers within the age group
- Team numbers capped at a maximum of:
 - Under 13's to Under 15's - 24 players per team
 - Under 17's – 26 players per team.

The Club believes that the Under 13 age group is the most appropriate time to be grading players according to ability and taking into account their stage of development. At this age group most players will be transitioning from primary school to secondary school and subsequently school and friendship groups tend to undergo some changes at this time.

Note: The EFL is a graded competition from Under 11's upwards with teams allocated to Divisions based on previous year team performance and requests from clubs. The HJJFC will submit grading requests to the controlling body taking into account the ability of the playing group of each team.

Player Grading and Team Selection Process

The team allocation and player grading and selection process will be undertaken by the respective age group coaches. The recommendations of the coaches will then be ratified by the Football Sub-Committee consisting of the Director of Football, the Football Operations Manager and one other nominated Committee member.

At those age groups where players will be graded and allocated to a team based on ability, a selection process based on the following criteria outlined below will be implemented. These criteria are designed to balance the key elements of player performance and development, safety, enjoyment and team competitiveness:

- Previous playing performance and demonstrated ability
- Knowledge and understanding of the game
- Pre-season training, practice match form and, if required, early season game performance
- Overall attitude and level of commitment including training attendance
- The need for team balance of across the teams within a given age group.

Movement of Players between Teams

Movement of players between the two teams in the same age group will be permitted during the first eight weeks of the season in accordance with EFL rules in order to finalise grading selections. This should only occur as a last course of action required to determine the appropriate team selection for a very small number of players. Coaching staff will manage this movement under the direction of the Football Sub-Committee.

After the eight games player movement will only be allowed where there is a genuine shortage of numbers in the higher graded team.

Football Sub-Committee

The Football Sub-Committee will consist of the Director of Football, the Football Operations Manager and a nominated member of the Committee. The Football Sub-Committee will take overall responsibility for the grading process and all player team allocations across the entire Heathmont Jets Junior Football Club and it will act as the sole contact for parents in relation to team allocations. The Football Sub-Committee will be responsible for arbitrating and making a final decision whenever a dispute arises regarding the allocation of a player to a particular team.

Training Arrangements for Age Groups with Two or More Teams

Where two or more teams are fielded in the same age group the following training arrangements will be implemented:

- Teams in ***the non-competitive age groups*** will train together as a single squad. However, a small portion of each training night can be dedicated to individual team development which will require the squad to be separated into team groups.

- Teams in the ***competitive age groups*** should train together as a single squad for at least a portion of their training time. For example, if training once a week, both teams should undertake the warm-up, cool-down and some skill-development drills together. The teams could then be split into their respective squads for other parts of the training session.
If training twice a week, teams could train together as a single squad for one session and then train separately during the second session. Other alternate arrangements that are in keeping with this philosophy can be implemented by the age group coaches.

Age Groups

The Heathmont Jets Junior Football Club believes that all under-age players are best served by playing in their appropriate age group in order to allow for the sequential and progressive development of their football skills and understanding of the game. This also helps to ensure the health and safety of the players.

At the discretion of the Executive Committee, and in exceptional circumstances, players may play in a different age group to enable the Club to field full and/or effective teams. However, in such circumstances a player will only be permitted to play up a single age group (for example, an Under 13 player will only be able to play at Under 14 level). The Executive Committee will ensure parental approval before players are selected in an age group other than their own.

Effective Date and Review

This policy is effective from **1 December 2014** and will be reviewed annually in August of each year.