

**LARA FOOTBALL CLUB**

**JUNIOR HANDBOOK**

**2017**

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1. **COORDINATORS WELCOME**

On behalf of our Junior Committee, welcome to the Lara Football Club for the 2017 season. We are all looking forward to a great 2016 season. We are a team of volunteers across all Junior and Youth age groups and will assist you and your child any way we can. We are looking forward to meeting the players and parents new to the club and seeing familiar faces return.

Upon registering your child to play football at Lara you and your child are signing on to be part of a team – your child is part of the on field team and you are part of the off field team. Volunteering is a great way to get involved in your child’s sport, share or develop your talents and get to know others. Clubs don’t exist without volunteers, so we ask you to consider volunteering wherever possible by helping out your coaches and your team or getting behind fundraising initiatives that will be happening this season. Every family is expected to contribute. Your team manager will be seeking volunteers to assist with weekly game day duties and will create a roster. Such jobs may include field or goal umpiring, being an umpire escort, time keeping, canteen &/or BBQ duty, providing oranges for half time. All parents are expected to participate in the roster of duties. Your team will also need a runner. We are also looking for first aid officers for each team, so please put your hand up if you can help. Your active volunteering will ensure one less thing for them to worry about and ensure they can focus on having the team well prepared!

Lara is a great family club and we encourage all to embrace and become a part of it by not just attending your child’s games, but to come along and support the senior football teams as well. There are always friendly people and banter at the home games and every Lara supporter is made very welcome.

Finally, we wish you all the best for the upcoming 2017 season.

Go Cats!

1. **CLUB INFORMATION**

**Founded:** Lara Football Club was founded in 1880. We commenced our football journey in the GDFL. In 1989 we were promoted to the GFL.

**Club Nickname:** Cats

**Premierships:** 1912, 1929, 1930, 1937, 1952, 1965, 1986, 1994, 2002

**Club President:** Gerard Evans

**Club Facebook page:**

<https://www.facebook.com/lsc.football/>

**Club song:**

Out we come, out we come, out we come to play,

Just for recreation sake, to pass the time away,

Lots of fun, heaps of fun,

Enjoy yourself today,

The Lara boys are hard to beat, when they come out to play.

So, join in the chorus and sing it one and all.

Join in the chorus, Lara’s on the ball.

Good ole’ Lara, we’re champions you’ll agree.

And Lara will be premiers, just you wait and see!

(Sung to the North Melbourne FC theme song)

1. **REGISTRATION FEES**

The registration fees for the 2016 season are:

U9, 10, 12 & Junior Girls: $175

U14, 16 & Youth Girls: $210

The club requires fees to be paid in full by the end of grading games (May 21st 2017) unless a payment plan has been arranged with the Registration Officer.

These fees are required by the club to cover the following costs:

* JLT Sport Insurance
* AFL Barwon team registrations
* Umpires fees (U14, U16 & Youth Girls)
* Ground running costs such as lights for training and night games
* Team equipment eg: footballs, training equipment, jumpers
* Finals
* Trophies, pie nights and presentation nights

The club strongly encourages online payment of fees at the time of online registration. We do provide the option to pay by cash.

If you are experiencing financial difficulties and are unable to pay the full registration fees upfront, please contact your age group coordinator to discuss payment plan options.

The junior committee always aims to keep registration fees at a minimum. In order to cover all costs, the committee will be running fundraising initiatives throughout the season and will count on your support.

1. **PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Junior football relies heavily on parent assistance to run the competition.

Parents will be expected to assist with the following team roles throughout the season:

* Time keepers
* Goal umpires
* Field umpires - U9, 10 & 12 each team needs to provide field umpires. Umpires are generally provided by AFL Barwon for older age groups
* Runners
* Water runners (must be a minimum age of 12)
* Cleaning of dressing rooms after matches
* People to man the BBQ and canteen
* Club Best and Fairest Votes

It is important that every position is filled at every game. A roster system will be implemented by your team manager and everyone is expected to take their turn.

**Canteen & BBQ:**

All parents should note they will be expected to assist in the canteen and on the BBQ. If your child is playing a home game on the main oval, your team will be rostered on to help in the canteen and BBQ. Your team manager will advise you of your roster closer to the days. If you can’t help out on this day, it is your obligation to find a replacement.

Remember, many hands make light work!

**Training:**

Training finishing times are guidelines only and may vary by up to 30 minutes. Parents must be available to collect players at the end of training (and games) or make alternative arrangements. It is not the coaches, team managers or age group coordinators responsibility to remain at the ground waiting for players to be collected. Where players are not collected in a timely fashion at the conclusion of training and games, parents accept full responsibility for their child’s welfare.

Parents/guardians are expected to attend (or be easily contactable) during both training and games. Please be aware that in the event of a player injury, if no parent/guardian can be immediately contacted, then an ambulance may be called if deemed necessary (regardless of whether you have ambulance cover or not). We recommend that all players have ambulance cover as the club does not cover the cost of an ambulance. Please go to the following website to sign up. [www.ambulance.vic.gov.au](http://www.ambulance.vic.gov.au)

**Medical concerns:**

If your child has a physical disability or ongoing health issue, please ensure that you inform your coach and team manager. It is not the responsibility of the coach or team manager to administer medication to your child. If your child requires medication during training/games (eg: asthma inhalers) it is your responsibility to attend games to administer the medication correctly. Only qualified trainers and medical officers are allowed to administer medication. If you have ongoing concerns about your child’s health and safety please ensure you discuss this with your coach &/or team manager. Any players require strapping need to have this applied by a parent BEFORE they arrive at training and games. Only qualified trainers can apply strapping but parents need to discuss this with coaches and trainers.

We are always looking for parents to volunteer as trainers/first aid officers. If you have first aid qualifications and would be able to volunteer, please contact your age group coordinator.

**Parent Behaviour:**

Smoking is prohibited within 10 meters of any facility, arena or player at all junior football games/training. The consumption of alcohol is strictly prohibited at all junior games. Due to the vicinity of Club Lara to our main oval, alcohol may only be consumed whilst under the verandah area of the building. Alcohol during senior games and club social events will be served as per the RSA laws.

Abuse of umpires, club officials, players and supporters (of both playing clubs) will NOT be tolerated. Parents and other supporters are required to abide by our code of conduct included within this handbook. Please ensure you read the code of conduct to familiarize yourself with what is required.

Whilst parental support is valued at team huddles, please leave all coaching instructions to our coaches. Coaching instructions from parents may contradict the coach and this can cause player confusion and interruption of set game plans.

**Social events:**

The Junior committee would like all parents to feel welcome to attend social functions at the club during the year. This is a great way to get to know other Lara Football Club families.

1. **PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Players are expected to be at training and games on time. Your coach will advise you of game times and the expected arrival times. Parents/players are expected to notify coaches or managers if they are going to be late or absent from training or games. Please notify your coach/team manager as soon as possible as leaving this until the last minute can cause issues with player numbers. It is the parent’s/player’s responsibility to communicate directly with the coach. Messages passed on by friends are not acceptable.

All injured players are required to report their condition to their coaches and/or trainers prior to commencing any training activities. Any player with a long term injury must keep their coach up to date with their recovery and consult with their coach regarding a return date.

Players are expected to attend all training sessions. Training sessions are held in all weather, including rain. Training will be cancelled only if there are safety concerns for the players such as lightning storms.

Players are expected to arrive at club games in club apparel (at minimum, a club hoodie). Players also need to be respectful of club behaviours and expectations when wearing club apparel outside of club functions. Players need to be mindful that behavior outside of club games and functions reflects on the LJFC as a whole.

It is expected that players treat club facilities with respect and take necessary action to maintain them in a clean condition.

This includes the following:

* Boots are to be cleaned on the ground, not in the rooms or on the paved area at the front of the clubrooms. Banging of boots against building walls is strictly prohibited.
* Players are expected to clean rooms after training and games if used. The oval and ground facilities must also be kept cleaned (any rubbish needs to be placed in a bin).
* Players are expected to put any tape and rubbish in the bin after training and games. Leaving rubbish on the change room floors will result in disciplinary actions.

Any player found with drugs or alcohol within the club boundaries will be disciplined accordingly as deemed necessary by the club. The consumption of alcohol by any junior players at club social events or dinners is strictly prohibited regardless of whether the player is accompanied by a parent or not.

1. **RACIAL & RELIGIOUS VILIFICATION POLICY**

The Lara Football Club is committed to an environment which promotes racial and religious tolerance. Please make yourselves familiar with this policy.

<http://www.aflbarwon.com.au/fileadmin/user_upload/AFL_Barwon_Standard_Forms/2014_AFL_Vic_Vilification_Policy.pdf>

**CYBER POLICY**

The Lara Football Club & AFL Barwon have a zero tolerance when it comes to the Cyber Policy. Penalties are: 1st breach of policy, automatic 2 week suspension, 2nd breach, deregistration. Please make yourselves familiar with this policy.

http://www.aflbarwon.com.au/fileadmin/user\_upload/AFL\_Barwon\_Standard\_Forms/2014\_AFL\_Barwon\_Cyber\_Safety\_Policy.pdf

1. **UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS**

The club requires that all players wear a Lara Football Club football jumper, navy blue shorts, navy blue socks, football boots and mouth guard. All items (except the football jumper) are available at most sport stores around Geelong. Short “skins” or bike shorts are allowed under football shorts, but must be neutral colored. Also, please refrain from wearing T-shirts under football jumpers. Mouth guards are mandatory.

Please note Geelong Junior Football does not allow the use of playing gloves.

The club will supply each player with a Lara Football jumper. This jumper is allocated to each player for the season and must be returned after the final game, clean and in good condition. Football jumpers are to be worn on game day only – please do not wear them to training. This will help keep the jumpers in good condition for several years.

Lara Football Jumpers can be worn at representative squads training sessions.

1. **CLUB MERCHANDISE**

The club has a range of apparel available such as caps, polo shirts, hoodies, spray jackets, tracksuit pants and shorts available for sale for children and adults. Please contact Carol Stone to place your order.

1. **TEAM SELECTION**

**Mission Statement**

The Lara Junior Football Club aspires to generate a safe and friendly environment that provides all players with the opportunity to participate in Australian Rules football to ensure they maximise and achieve their potential.

At Lara every team in every age group is as important as each other. Just as older aged players are integral to the development of senior footballers, younger players are integral to providing a platform for our older aged teams. Each age level is a stepping stone to the next.

**Playing in the appropriate age group**

It is the policy of the LJFC that a player plays in their appropriate age group i.e: if they are an under 10 player, they play under 10’s and so on. This does not restrict an underage player from ‘topping up’ in a higher age group as outlined further into the Training & Selection Policy.

At each level a slightly progressive approach takes place.

In U9 & U10 we endeavor to give the kids a chance to further develop social interactions they have with mates and school friends. We will endeavour to ensure they have a few of these friends in their team.

In U12 level selection of players in a particular team are primarily based on school’s attended and/or known friendships. At this age level the focus is on development of player’s skills, knowledge of the fundamentals of team play & having fun.

In U14 & U16’s players are strictly graded into teams based on performances in games and at training; each team is then graded into a division by league officials.

PARENTS NEED TO REALISE THAT

* Grading is not an effort to single out the better players but is there to ensure every child gets a chance to be a contributing member of his/her team on game day.
* The league determines what division each team ends up in and who you play based on the performances of every club over a considerable time frame.

**Training**

All players of the same age group are to train together as a squad on the same night(s).

Coaches can break up players into groups for specialised training and/or drills. Training is not to be conducted in a way that creates two separate teams within one age group. Player numbers within an age group may require teams to be split, however this should be done only when necessary, not as a matter of course.

All players of the same age group are to train together on the same nights. Where possible, coaches are to train players as a squad, however age groups can be split into teams in order for coaches to concentrate on their own teams to practice set plays and playing style

**Reasons**

* Players are able to judge their ability and improvement against their peers.
* Coaches are also able to judge players potential & improvement
* Players have a feeling of belonging to one squad/team
* Players get to know team’s style of play
* Assist with player rotations
* Eliminates the “them & us” mentality.

**Selection**

**Under 9’s, 10’s & 12’s**

* Coaches shall endeavor to make teams as “equal” as possible in terms of skills, sizes and age, however under 9’s, 10’s & 12’s selection of players in a particular team are to be primarily based on schools attended and/or known friendships. At this age level the focus is on development of players’ skills, knowledge of the fundamentals of team play & having fun. Also when selecting teams, consideration should also be given to:
* Continued development of each player no matter their ability
* All players are to play a minimum of three quarters per game in the home and away games of the season
* Consideration of player size, strengths, weaknesses and skills so that a reasonable balance can be achieved in individual team selection and positioning.
* Rotate no more than 4 players each week (if required)
* If a Coach and/or a Team Manager has a child in the age group that they are involved with, then that child is to be selected in the same team that the Coach/Team Manager coaches/manages. The child/children should not be rotated unless prior agreement is reached with both Coaches/Team Managers involved in that age group.
* The LJFC Development Committee will continually review the competitiveness of all teams. Team performance and balance will be discussed with Coaches. Players will be moved between teams if and when required so that all teams remain competitive.
* It is a priority that Coaches DO NOT develop 2 or more separate teams within an age group.
* Each team is to have an equal (+/-1) number of players each week (eg 20 -21 players)
* To assist in maintaining the above guidelines Coaches within the age group need to assess and continually review each player’s stage of physical development, level of skill and understanding of the game.
* Where a player from a lower age group tops up in a higher age group the lower age group player should not take the field in place of a player of the higher age group. (i.e start the lower age group players on the bench and interchange them during the game for injured players or as part of game day rotations. Don’t start the lower age group player on the ground and start the higher age group players on the interchange bench).
* An underage player may only play in an overage team if there are insufficient players in that team.

**Under 14’s & 16’s**

Where more than one team exists in each age group, the selection of players in these teams within the same Age Groups is to be based on **merit.**- In considering **“merit”** the following should be taken into consideration:

\* Player’s ability

\* Player’s physical development

\* Player’s attitude

\* Player’s adherence to relative Codes of Conduct

\* Player’s adherence to team rules

\* Player’s attendance at training

* Rotate no more than 4 players each week (if required)
* The LJFC Development Committee will continually review the competitiveness of all teams. Team performance and balance will be discussed with Coaches. Players will be moved between teams if and when required so that all teams remain competitive.

- Where possible, coaches are to ensure players receive fair and equitable amounts of playing time. However, the coach needs to base this on game by game circumstances

* It is a priority that Coaches DO NOT develop 2 or more separate teams within an age group.
* Each team is to have an equal (+/-1) number of players each week (eg 20 -21 players)
* To assist in maintaining the above guidelines Coaches within the age group need to assess and continually review each player’s stage of physical development, level of skill and understanding of the game.
* Appointed representative(s) of the LJFC Development Committee will attend training & games on a regular basis so that assistance can be provided to the Coaches working within these Guidelines
* Initial enquires regarding team selection should be directed to the age group Coaches, LJFC Development Committee representative, or alternatively put in writing to the Club Secretary.

Younger players filling in guidelines:

* An underage player may only play in an overage team if there are insufficient players in that team.
* A younger player must not fill in if their own age group game clashes with the older age group game – their own team MUST take priority over filling in with a higher age group
* Top age players from the lower age group are to be given priority over bottom age players. Bottom age players may be used if an insufficient number of top age players are unavailable
* Age group coordinators will endeavor to use different younger players to fill in to minimise risk of injury and “burn out” of younger players
* Where a player from a lower age group tops up in a higher age group the lower age group player should not take the field in place of a player of the higher age group. (i.e start the lower age group players on the bench and interchange them during the game for injured players or as part of game day rotations. Don’t start the lower age group player on the ground and start the higher age group players on the interchange bench).

When a player from a lower age group tops up in a higher age group, it is up to the coach’s discretion on how this player is used based on game by game circumstances.

* A player from a lower age group must not be placed into the ‘A’ team of a higher age group ahead of players from the ‘B’ team of that age group. The ‘B’ player must be given the opportunity to play at the higher level. In exceptional circumstances permission may be granted by the LJFC Development Committee.

**Captain Selection**

* For Under 14’s, 16’s & Colts, the coach may choose team leaders for the season

**Game Day Team Official Policy**

* Only the coach, assistant coach, runner & trainer are to be over the fence on game day and all must be nominated on the official team sheet.
* There shall be no engagement from coach, official or team members on the bench with the opposition at ANY time.
* There shall be no engagement from the coach or team on the bench with umpires.

1. **CODES OF CONDUCT – PLAYERS, PARENTS & OFFICIALS**

**Responsibilities of Junior Players**

* Play by the rules;
* Cooperate with your coach, teammates and opponents. Without them there would be no competition.
* Never argue with an official.
* Control your temper. Verbal abuse of umpires and sledging of other players, deliberately distracting or provoking an opponent or team mate are not acceptable or permitted behaviours in any sport.
* Work equally hard for yourself and your team, not just to please parents and coaches. Your own personal and team’s performance will benefit
* Be a good sport. Always display appropriate sporting behavior, ensuring the practice of fair play
* Treat all players as you would like to be treated. Respect the efforts of your teammates and the opposition. Always acknowledge good play.
* Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit, not just to please parents or coaches.
* Do not use derogatory language based on gender, race or religion.
* All equipment, grounds and clubrooms must be looked after and respected.
* Wear club apparel to games.
* Arrive at training and games on time. Notify coaches or team managers of unavailability for training and games.
* Familiarise yourself with the AFL Barwon on cyber and racial and religious vilification policies (links are provided in this handbook)

**Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians and Spectators**

* Remember that children participate in sport for their enjoyment and benefit, not yours.
* Encourage children to participate, do not force them.
* Focus on the child’s effort and performance rather than winning or losing.
* Condemn the use of violence in any form, whether it is by spectators, coaches, officials or players.
* Encourage children always to play according to the rules and settle disagreements without resorting to hostility or violence.
* Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from all sporting activities
* Never ridicule or yell at a young child for making a mistake or losing a game. Positive comments are motivating.
* Remember that children learn best by example. Appreciate all good performances and skillful plays by all participants.
* Applaud good performance and efforts from all individuals and teams.
* Congratulate all participants on their performance regardless of the game’s outcome.
* Respect the decisions of officials. Officials are never to be publicly criticised; any complaints should be raised in private with club officials
* Lead by example and show respect to all players, coaches, umpires, volunteers and spectators
* Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion
* Show appreciation for volunteer coaches, officials and administrators. Without them your child could not participate
* Trust the coaches in their efforts to develop your child and refrain from interfering during ¼, ½ and ¾ time breaks. Communication of team instructions on match day is the job of the coaches. Note that this includes the 5 meter exclusion zone around the coaches, officials and players bench at all times games are in progress. This is to ensure officials and players are unimpeded in their game day responsibilities
* Show respect for your teams opponents. Without them there would be no game.
* Encourage players to follow the rules and official’s decisions
* Do not use foul language, sledge or harass players, coaches or officials. Remember, that comment you might make on the side of the field can carry and be heard by players.
* Demonstrate a healthy sports environment by refraining from drug, alcohol and tobacco use during all sporting events
* Familiarise yourselves with the AFL Barwon cyber and racial and religious vilification policies (links are provided in this handbook)

**Responsibilities of Coaches, Managers & Club Officials**

* Remember that young people participate for pleasure and winning is only part of that fun.
* Never ridicule or yell at a player for making a mistake.
* Be reasonable in your demands on player’s time, energy and enthusiasm.
* Operate within the rules and spirit of the sport and teach your players to do the same.
* Ensure that the time players spend with you is a positive experience. All people are deserving of equal attention and opportunities.
* Avoid overplaying the talented players: all players need and deserve equal time.
* Display control, respect and professionalism to all involved with the sport. This includes opponents, coaches, officials, administrators, parents and spectators. Encourage players to do the same.
* Show concern and caution toward sick and injured players. Follow the advice of a physician when determining whether an injured player is ready to recommence training or competition.
* Any physical contact with players should be appropriate and necessary for the player’s skill development.
* Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

**SANCTIONS FOR BREACH OF CONDUCT:**

1) Warning – the offender shall be notified with an official warning by a committee representative

2) 2nd offence – 2 week suspension from the club

3) 3rd offence – termination from the club (no refund of fees given)

1. **GROUND ALLOCATIONS**

Your coach and/or team manager will let you know which ground you will be playing at each week. The best way to keep up to date with the fixture and find the grounds is via the Fox Sports Pulse App which you can download on your smart phone. The fixture won’t be on the app until the teams have been selected and graded. Once you know which team your child will be playing with, you can set up a short cut to your team fixture on the app by using the following steps:

* Open the app and select ‘Australian Football’
* Search for ‘Geelong’ then scroll down the list and select the relevant age group.
* Select your team
* Click on the star located at the top right hand corner of the screen to add to your favourites. There should now be a shortcut on the home screen of the app for your selected team.