















# THE NATIONAL **PLAYER PATHWAY**

**AGES 9 - 12**

**A RESOURCE FOR COACHES - 7v7s**

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## Introduction

**This booklet is designed to help all our volunteers taking a 7-a-side team.**

Many of your young players will have experienced the 4 and 5-a-side versions of football but some may be having their first experience. At this age and stage it is important to understand what young people want from their sporting activities. For most children playing with friends having fun and improving are the most important things for them and coaches of these age groups should always remember this. Therefore it is vital that we continue to provide a positive experience for all our players where they can be challenged to improve whilst having a good time with their friends.

The 7-a-side game format is the next step up from the 4-a-side/5-a-side game and hopefully the young players can extend their learning to have a greater understanding of the game whilst still learning the skills of the game. However the most important aspect is how you as the adult in charge make this experience fun and appropriate to the children's age and stage of development. Children will always be motivated if they are enjoying themselves and they are seeing improvements in their play.

This booklet along with the Developing Talent section of our website and our Coach Education courses are designed to help you deliver a fun, challenging and developmental experience to your players.

Remember you are not a Premier League manager but a teacher of young children and hopefully you will derive as much enjoyment from seeing them develop as they will playing the game.

## Scotland's National Player Pathway

**The Scottish FA have in partnership with the Scottish Youth FA and football stakeholders implemented a 'Player Pathway' informed by our 'Developing Talent Plan' which takes a common sense and player-centered approach to developing the football potential in our young people.**

The national player pathway is progressive, coherent and challenging and will allow young players to reach their potential wherever they live in the country.

Following the philosophy that **'the game grows with the child'** the player pathway sets out principles and guidelines on best practice for teaching players how to enjoy and develop as players and citizens through our national game.



### 9-12 years – Desire to Play

**The driving philosophy of this stage is:**

- Learning to love the game
- Learning the skills of the game

### Objectives

- The major objective at this stage is skill acquisition. These are the 'skill hungry' years where children are geared to learn skills at this time and is an ideal opportunity for focusing on building the skills of the game
- Use a game based approach to motivate and develop your young players. Anything from 1v1 to 7v7 is appropriate
- Speed and agility are key physical qualities that can be developed at this stage

Please note that there are some minor differences within the Female Player Pathway and these are outlined on Page 7. ►

For further information or clarification on match rules please contact SWF direct. [Click here.](#)

## 9-12 YEARS LEARNING TO PLAY (7v7)

- Trophy free - festival or fixture basis
- The rules change for each age group
- Retreating line at 9 & 10 years of age
- Pass back rule at 11 and 12 years
- 2 or 3 periods of play with increasing time allocations
- Size 4 ball for 9-12 years

2

# THE NATIONAL PLAYER PATHWAY

## 6-8 YEARS DESIRE TO PLAY (4v4 & 5v5)

1

- COACHING
- VOLUNTEERING
- OFFICIATING
- SPECTATING

6

## ADULT FOOTBALL

- Professional
- Amateur
- Recreational

5

## 16-21 YEARS PREPARING TO COMPETE (11v11)

4

## 13-16 YEARS DEVELOPING THE PLAYER (11v11)

3



## 10-12 YEARS LEARNING TO PLAY (7v7)

- Trophy free
- U11 festival or fixture format
- U13 fixture format
- Retreating line at U11
- Pass back rule at U13
- Size 3 ball for U11
- Size 4 ball for U13

2

# THE FEMALE PLAYER PATHWAY

## 5-9 YEARS DESIRE TO PLAY (4v4 & 5v5)

1

- COACHING
- VOLUNTEERING
- OFFICIATING
- SPECTATING

6

## ADULT FOOTBALL

- Elite
- Amateur
- Social

5

## 16-18 YEARS PREPARING TO COMPETE (11v11)

4

## 13-16 YEARS DEVELOPING THE PLAYER (11v11)

3



## Role of the Coach

Without coaches and volunteers there would be no football. The role of the coach within children's football is crucial as this is the stage where most players will learn to fall in love with the game and where most will establish the basis of their footballing habits. A knowledge of children and how to teach is often more important than a knowledge of the game. It is also important that we understand why children enjoy playing football.

**Your role as coach is to .....**

- Provide fun and enjoyable activity suitable to the ages of the players
- Provide well organised and planned practices and games
- Provide stimulating activities that promote fundamental skills and movement development
- Communicate appropriately with children
- Encourage children to have the freedom to express themselves
- Be a good role model
- Teach basic ethics of fair play and sportsmanship

**.....so that the players will.....**

- Fall in love with the game
- Have basic movement skills
- Be comfortable with the ball
- Be more confident to try new challenges
- Understand and demonstrate good sportsmanship

**Use the checklist below to help guide you to create the best possible football experience for your young players:**

- ☒ Make it fun
- ☒ Make it safe
- ☒ Use the ball
- ☒ Always coach positively
- ☒ Involve all your players
- ☒ Be patient
- ☒ Be a good role model

## Coach Education Pathway

The Scottish FA continues to invest in the development of our coaches and volunteers and values the role these people play in the development of our game. The game is as good as the coaches who provide the opportunities. To ensure quality provision we have worked hard to implement a Coach Education Pathway which addresses the needs of the coach in relation to the age and stage of their players.

The following pathway for coaches working in the children's game is available:



For more information on the Scottish FA Coach Education Pathway visit [www.scottishfa.co.uk/coacheducation](http://www.scottishfa.co.uk/coacheducation) or contact your local football development officer.





## Positive Coaching Scotland

#MakeFootballFun

The Positive Coaching Scotland (PCS) programme is about creating a positive environment in youth football - one which focuses on encouraging effort and learning, improving performance and fostering competition. We strive to develop young players to win through effort and teach young people valuable life skills through sport - Better players & better people.

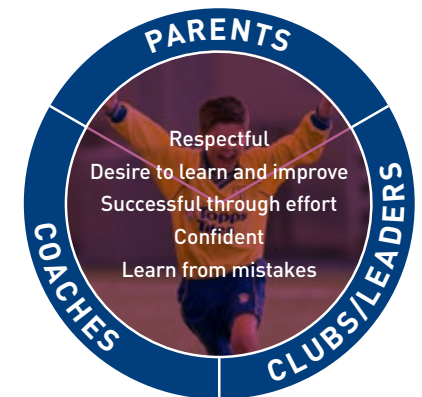
Through the Positive Coaching Scotland programme we are driving change.

Positive Coaching Scotland gives all involved in the game the tools to develop happy, successful, confident, and respectful young people. It's our role to make football fun and help them develop a love for the game that will keep them involved through to adulthood.

We need your help to give young people the best experience possible playing football. Unfortunately across all levels of the youth game, coaches focused on winning at all costs, irresponsible parents piling pressure on their children, violence on the touchline and disrespect for officials have become far too common. Therefore it's no surprise a high proportion of players are lost to football at a young age and we aren't producing enough high performing players. Coaches, parents, volunteers, officials and players alike, let's work together to change our culture.

### The PCS Approach

PCS is unique as it delivers keys consistent messages to all the key people involved in a football environment. Our aim is to unite them all under one culture and ethos where all these people are aligned through the same values and work together for the development of young people. PCS can support you to develop a positive club culture through our workshops and resources. For more information on the programme please visit [www.scottishfa.co.uk/positivecoaching](http://www.scottishfa.co.uk/positivecoaching)



We use three key principles:

### Honour Our Game

Teach everyone involved how to respect their team-mates, opponents, the rules, officials, and themselves.

- Encourage all young players to obey and uphold the rules and play the game fairly
- Encourage all players to show respect to opposition - Play hard and play fair
- Encourage all players to value a referee's role and always show respect
- Give teammates praise & encouragement
  - Work together to achieve team goals
- Lead by example by your manner and behaviour on and off the pitch



### Redefine Winning

Move the focus from the scoreboard to succeeding and winning through effort.

- Sustained effort to achieve set goals – encourage players to work hard to achieve in whatever they do
- Don't focus just on results, focus players to learn and improve to master skills and improve performance
- Mistakes happen – more important is we encourage players respond quickly and positively to recover.

### Fill the emotional tank

Build a young player's confidence, self- motivation and resilience.

- Encourage players to give praise and encouragement to their teammates
- Give positive encouragement of effort irrespective of outcome or result
- Encourage young players to be confident and don't be scared to try things
- All players get nervous- praise, listen and support players to build confidence
- Model the good behaviour you want to see in your players through positive verbal and non-verbal communication on the pitch

Taking on board these goals and principles, the role of the coach at this stage is vital and you can have a big influence on young people. PCS will provide you, the coach, with a unique range of tools for use in training and competition that will enable you to coach children in such a way that they will learn more, try harder and stay longer in sport. What's more, they'll enjoy the journey.

### Be a positive coach

- Develop a football culture in your club where young players are developed positively and supported to be the best they can be.
- Teach everyone involved in your club including players, parents, volunteers and spectators how to show respect and sportsmanship to Honour Our Game
- Have a long term aim by moving the focus away from results and league tables to succeeding and winning through effort.
- Work in partnership with parents, coaches & players, to enhance the skill and learning of all members to create a club committed to excellence and championing the PCS culture.
- Keep young people in football longer

### PCS Coaching Tools

We promote a number of tools that can support you to get the best out of your players and create the best possible environment.

### Teach RESPECT and manage behaviour

As a coach, it is important that you set high standards of attitude and behaviour for your young players and how they play the game. At this stage it is very important you discuss respect with your players. Talk and discuss respect with your players you will be able to encourage all your players to play the game with honesty and great sportsmanship.

#### Who players can show respect to:

- ✓ Yourself
- ✓ Teammates
- ✓ Opponents
- ✓ Coaches
- ✓ Referees
- ✓ Parents
- ✓ Club
- ✓ School

#### How players can show respect:

- ✓ Shake hands
- ✓ Praise & appreciate others
- ✓ Support & help others
- ✓ Win with grace, lose with dignity
- ✓ Thanks opponents, referee, coach & parents
- ✓ Lead by example



A great way to teach respect is using **'Teachable Moments'**. There are many situations that arise during practice sessions, matches or even in professional football which can be used to teach young people valuable about respect. These teachable moments can be both negative and positive – for example a high profile player behaving in a controversial way or a young player assisting an injured opponent. Use these situations and examples to engage the young people in discussions about which situations show respect. You can let them know how you feel the situation should have been dealt with after they have voiced their thoughts.

### Managing behaviour

As a coach you may face situations where players, parents or other coaches do not honour our game. These situations should be addressed immediately and not allowed to escalate. Some coaches may find it uncomfortable to intervene and challenge inappropriate behaviour. However, without intervention this behaviour will only get worse. No matter how small or how big the problem, make sure you address the issue. Using the tools to Honour Our Game should help to minimise levels of bad behaviour. However, situations that cannot be ignored may still arise. If they do, then:

- Reinforce the behaviour you want
- Ignore behaviour you don't want
- When you can't ignore it, use the three Cs
  - Intervene calmly
  - Be consistent
  - Be aware of consequences

Remaining calm and in control is key to resolving any behavioural issues.



**It's their  
game. Let  
them play it!**

### Fair Play Cards

We promote the use fair play cards as a non-threatening way of reminding parents/spectators that they are role models and how they can best support their child. The message on the fair play cards is very clear and helps you as a coach get some key messages out to parents.

#### Using your fair play cards:

- Before kick-off coaches should bring all players together and set the behavioural standard they expect from the players
- Coaches then give each player a fair play card
- Players then run to their parent/guardian, hand the card to them and ask them to read it (if they do not have anyone watching the player should hand the card to team officials/coaches)
- After the match the coach should call the players together to reinforce any behavioural issues that may have arisen during the match (these can be positive or negative issues)
- The players should then run to their parent/guardian and collect the fair play card back from them
- Coaches then collect the cards to use again the next week

The cards can also be used directly to parents/spectators who are shouting from the touchline. By giving them a card to read will hopefully quiet them down and hopefully make them think about their behaviour. Its helps you as a coach set a standard of behaviour for you team which includes the parents & spectators.





## Redefine winning

Children are naturally competitive – a quality we should not discourage. However, as coaches we have a duty to manage and educate our kids on the processes of winning instead of judging success on the scoreboard. Winning on the scoreboard is one of our targets but solely focusing on this will only prevent development and in return result in failures and regrets.

The most successful youth coaches are not necessarily the ones who win the most games. Coaches who are successful win on the basis of players' development and creating a robust team work ethic and togetherness.

Our aim is to change the perception of a winner, with the aim being to change the coaching culture of Scottish Youth Football.

The win at all costs mentality which has an only focus of winning games often omits to teach the best footballing techniques and the result of this, being coaches train the children as opposed to coaching them, in effect, inhibiting their development.

*“As a kid they teach you not to play to win, but to grow in ability as a player. At Barca, we trained every day with the ball, I hardly ever ran without a ball at my feet. It was a form of training aimed very clearly at developing your skills.” (Lionel Messi)*

Our aim is to promote an atmosphere of teamwork, respect, and a commitment to set goals to continually improve. Easier said than done but by striving to achieve this ethos you can be a successful coach who develops individuals and wins the odd game too.

## WIN AT ALL COSTS COACHING

Win at all costs mentality, where coaches compare players and teams. The emphasis to win, leads them to criticise players, creates an environment whereby mistakes are unacceptable and focus on the short term glory.

- ✗ Results
- ✗ Compare with others
- ✗ Mistake NOT ok

➡ MORE ANXIOUS

➡ LESS CONFIDENCE



## MASTERY COACHING

At PCS we promote mastery coaching which promotes Effort, Learning and Mistakes as being essential to a positive environment. Effort should be encouraged and recognised at all times: Learning should be broad and wide and Mistakes are more than ok, analyse them and learn from them.

- ✓ Effort
- ✓ Learning and development
- ✓ Mistake ok

➡ MORE CONFIDENT

➡ LESS ANXIOUS

### Benefits of creating a positive environment through Mastery Coaching:

- ✓ More satisfaction, higher enjoyment, more positive emotions
- ✓ Learn faster and process information more deeply
- ✓ More creativity and problem-solving ability
- ✓ Stick with football longer and through adversity
- ✓ Win more



## Rewarding Effort

The key is to champion **EFFORT & LEARNING** over results. An easy way to do this is to reward and praise your players when they have worked hard and gave maximum effort

All coaches are able to recognise when a player has performed well. It is important to recognise the effort made regardless of whether they were successful or not. For example if a player dribbles past two defenders and then shoots the ball high and wide. At first the player will be disappointed but by rewarding effort made to go past two defenders and get a shot should be rewarded with praise. By doing so, participants will feel valued and their confidence levels will be maintained, leading to an increased desire to try harder next time.

It is easy to praise great goals, assists, goal saving tackles but also look for the less obvious efforts that your players are making. This will help create a culture where hard work is being rewarded and becomes the norm for your team.

Straight after game a great way to change focus from results to learning and development is to ask the right questions?

- **Did you enjoy the game?**
- **Did you work hard?**
- **What went well?**
- **What you learn?**
- **What could you improve next time?**

This will help build confidence and focus the young players on working hard to achieve and develop.

## Player friendly feedback

### Magic ratio 5:1

There will be times when you have to give constructive criticism to a player as this is an integral part of the coaching process. It is recommended that when giving criticism you should give five positive comments to every negative comment. Research has shown that a magic ratio of 5:1 is ideal. Although five comments may sound a lot, they can take the form of positive body language such as smiling, clapping or giving a thumbs up or high five.

### Ask Rather than Tell

A great tool for coaches is 'ask rather than tell'. Get in the habit of asking questions of your players rather than telling your players what to do. Asking questions and listening to your players will help them think for themselves and you as a coach can monitor their learning and understanding. The player will become less reliant on your feedback and will be able to solve problems for themselves. This way they are taking more active involvement in their learning rather than being dictated to.

Ask, "How can you get past that player? Or, "If you are in the same situation next time, what can you do differently?", "Why am I asking you to move of the ball" This again allows the player to think for themselves, analyse what went wrong/right and identify what they need to do to improve. Asking the right questions takes as much skill as giving the right answers.

### Positive feedback

Coaches will often spot things which are being done incorrectly and then try to correct or improve them. However, it is equally important – and valuable – for coaches to spot things that are being done well and to reinforce these points with the individual as this will encourage them to continue.

These can be verbal as well as physical actions. You can look for good positional play, good skill/technique, communicating well with teammates, helping teammates recover from mistakes, respecting referee.

Try to identify 3/5 points per player that all focus on positive things they have done in training or games. Share these points with each player and also look to share with the wider group at the end of a session will encourage others to show the behaviour you are praising.

#### During the competition

1. Well done!
2. Terrific!
3. Good Work
4. That's a real improvement!
5. You're really working hard today!
6. Keep up the good work!
7. Tremendous
8. Great!
9. Outstanding!
10. Fantastic!

#### After the competition

11. That was really good!
12. I'm proud of your effort today!
13. You did really well today!
14. You must have been practicing!
15. That was great, you're improving!
16. You worked well today!
17. Good effort out there today!
18. Great effort!
19. You're getting better every day!
20. I'm so proud of you!



## Codes of Conduct & Good Practice

One of the critical components of our game is the passion that people show for the team and club that they support. Whilst this passion is usually harnessed and used to support our game it sometimes can boil over to create negative situations. We must all work together in the attempt to eliminate this negative passion. Codes of Conduct are an integral component of footballing activities and the following codes compliment the good work of the many football bodies in Scotland.

All members of your club or association must adopt specific codes. The Scottish FA and SYFA encourages members to be vigilant in enforcing such codes whether via support for those who constantly abide by the codes and/or penalties for those who fail to act in accordance with the codes.

Fair Play must be fundamental to the aims and objectives of the club where it is crucial to ensure that all players, officials and volunteers abide by the rules, respect everyone and maintain high standards of sportsmanship at all times.

**Always Honour the Game!**





## COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT

- Allow all players, no matter their level of ability, the opportunity to play
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every player and treat everyone equally within the context of football
- Always pursue fair play
- Prohibit use of camcorders and cameras unless parental consent has been provided
- Place safety and well-being of the player above the development of performance
- Be aware of the Scottish FA, SYFA and the Club's Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures
- Ensure that coaching sessions are enjoyable, well-structured and focus on developing skills, decision making and a general understanding of the game
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with players based on mutual trust and respect
- Encourage players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance
- Ensure that sessions and games are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual
- Must consistently display high standards of appearance and behaviour
- Know where to find appropriate first-aid training. Contact the Scottish Youth FA
- Hold a current membership list and have a register available at all activities

## PLAYERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

- Play by the rules – the rules of your club and the rules of the game
- Never argue with a Match supervisor or other official – without these people you can't play football
- Control your temper - verbal abuse of officials and abusing other players doesn't help you enjoy or win any games
- Be a team player – it's a team game, treat it that way
- Treat all players as you would like to be treated – fairly
- Co-operate with your coach the referee and team-mates
- Play for your own enjoyment and to improve your skills through hard work
- Don't use ugly remarks based on race, religion, gender or ability – you'll let down your coach, team-mates and family if you do – and many such comments are actually now illegal





## Positive Parents: Build a coach/parent relationship

Young players bring parents with them so you as a coach must engage with parents to help build a positive team culture. A good working relationship between coaches and parents can be a great tool in developing young players.

**Parent meeting** - a meeting with the parents at the start of the season can be a great way of developing a positive environment and setting down the standards that you will be applying for the coming season.

At this meeting you should discuss;

- **Coaching Philosophy** – discuss your philosophy as a coach which may include respect, effort, learning and set your rules on game time, missing training, travel etc.
- **Aims and goals** – set down aims and goals for the season including player and team development
- **Logistics** – training and game information, team contact list and what equipment the players will need
- **Parent code of conduct/Parent pledge** – clear rules regards match days and the behaviour expected to best support their child
- **Parent Volunteers** – Parents can be a fantastic support for your team and your club and you should encourage them to take on duties which may include kit washing, refreshments or other club roles. It is good to discuss support needed with parents as many parents will have specific skills that will be able to support your club. Involving parents will also help develop a family friendly environment and a positive experience for all.
- **Touchline coordinators** – Appoint touchline coordinators on match days to help honour the game. A touchline coordinators role is to promote the honour our game message of respect and to communicate with all parents to support the coach and the players in a positive way. Touchline coordinators will uphold the messages of respect for the rules, officials, opponents, teammates and self and will work with parents to let the players play, coaches coach, referees make decisions.
- **PCS Parent leaflet** – Coaches and PCS touchline champions can use the PCS parent leaflets to reinforce the standards of behaviour you set and the use of the leaflets is a way of reminding spectators that they are role models and play a key role in the development of their child

## SAFETY

Coaches have a responsibility to ensure the safety of the players in their charge as far as possible within the limits of their control. Therefore coaches should seek to create a safe and enjoyable environment in which to play and train.

In this respect:

- Regular safety checks should be carried out in relation to premises, training facilities and equipment
- Appropriate safety rules should be adopted and implemented
- Parents/guardians should be informed of the starting and finishing times of training sessions and matches
- A trained first aider and first aid kit must be available at all training sessions/ matches and injuries should be recorded, with a note of action taken in relation to each one. Never play injured players
- Parents/guardians should be notified of injuries/illness which their children incur whilst participating in any football activity

Goals – play it safe

Make goalpost safety your goal

Check it....secure it.....test it.....respect it.....



## 7-A-SIDE FOOTBALL MATCH GUIDELINES

### Seven-a-side Football (up to twelve years old)

#### 1. The Field of Play

##### Recommended

- The field of play shall be 36 to 45 metres wide and 55 to 65 metres long
- Goalposts should be no more than 4.9 metres x 1.8 metres (16ft by 6ft)

##### The Penalty Area

- The penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows:

Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal lines 20 metres apart from each other. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of 10 metres and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line

Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made 9 metres from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. There should be a centre mark at the midpoint of the halfway line

##### Alternative

- Field and goalposts as supplied by the local authority may be used
- Coaches should adapt the recommendations according to the venue specifications

#### 2. The Ball

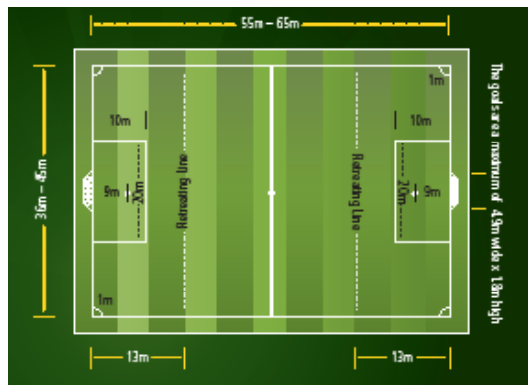
A size 4 ball should be used.

#### 3. The Number of Players

Teams will comprise 6 outfield players plus a goalkeeper. Team squads may consist of up to 10 players with rolling substitutions used throughout the match. Players who have been substituted may return to the field of play as often as necessary. All team members should receive equal playing time where possible. In the event of an obvious mismatch the weaker team as jointly agreed by the respective team leaders, may field an extra player.

#### 4. The Players' Equipment

- All players must wear shin-guards
- Metal studs are suitable for grass fields only
- Players must wear the appropriate clothing dependant on weather
- Glasses may be worn provided they have safety frames and lenses



#### 5. The Referee

A match supervisor shall be either a club official or an adult approved by both sides and will not be allowed to coach either team.

#### 6. Assistant Referees

Assistant referees are not required.

#### 7. Duration of the Game

##### Recommendation

At age groups 9 and 10 the duration of the game shall be 2 periods of 20 minutes with a 5 minute interval. Matches should be organised on a festival basis or as weekly fixtures and shall be trophy free. Festival format may require some flexibility in timing depending on the venue and booking times.

##### Alternative

At age groups 9 and 10 the duration of the game may be 3 periods of 15 minutes with 5 minute intervals. Matches should be organised on a festival basis or as weekly fixtures and shall be trophy free. Festival format may require some flexibility in timing depending on the venue and booking times.

##### Recommendation

At age groups 11 and 12 the duration of the game shall be 2 periods of 25 minutes with a 5 minute interval. Matches should be organised on a festival basis or as weekly fixtures and shall be trophy free. Festival format may require some flexibility in timing depending on the venue and booking times.

##### Alternative

At age groups 11 and 12 the duration of the game may be 3 periods of 15 minutes with

5 minute intervals. Matches should be organised on a festival basis or as weekly fixtures and shall be trophy free. Festival format may require some flexibility in timing depending on the venue and booking times. Flexibility should prevail. The team leaders have joint discretion to alter this in the event of poor weather conditions, pitch conditions or an obvious mismatch.

#### 8. The Start and Restart of Play

On scoring a goal the team that scores will retreat to the halfway line. The team conceding the goal will restart the game with a kick-off at the centre of the pitch. Opponents should be 6 metres away from the ball.

#### 9. The Ball in and out of Play

Normal rules apply.

#### 10. The Method of Scoring

Normal rules apply.

#### 11. Offside

There is no offside rule.

#### 12. Fouls and Misconduct

Normal rules apply except in relation to a deliberate pass to the goalkeeper commonly known as the 'pass back'.

##### Pass Back

For age groups 9 and 10 the deliberate pass to the goalkeeper does not apply.

For age groups 11 and 12 the deliberate pass to the goalkeeper does apply.

#### 13. Free Kicks

Normal rules apply except that opposing players must be 6 metres away. At Age groups 9 & 10 all free kicks outside the penalty area are indirect.

#### 14. The Penalty Kick

Normal rules apply.

#### 15. The Throw In

Age groups 9 and 10 should use kick-ins. In the event of the ball going out of play, a kick-in will be awarded. At all kick-ins all opposition players must be 6 metres from the ball. The player taking the kick-in must use a short pass with the inside of the foot. Age groups 11 and 12 should take throw-ins. In the event of the ball going out of play, a throw-in will be awarded.

#### 16. The Goal Kick

##### Retreating Area

For age groups 9 & 10 there will be a 13 metre retreating area. When the goalkeeper has the ball in his/her hands the opposing team must retreat behind the retreating area (marked by cones, flat markers, poles or the match supervisor can be used to take a line) until the ball has been played to a member of his team. No player from the opposition is allowed into the retreating area until the outfield player has touched the ball.

For age groups 11 & 12 there will be no retreating area. Normal rules apply for the Goal Kick.

#### 17. The Corner Kick

Normal rules apply.

#### General

- Team coaches will stand on the same side of the field
- Parents should stand on the opposite side of the pitch behind a marked area, for example, cones, pitch tapes etc. Depending on the venue parents should be encouraged to stand a distance away from the pitch, to only encourage players and to uphold fair play
- Team coaches should encourage the rotation of players to experience different positions on the pitch
- Goalkeepers must either throw the ball or make a pass from the ground to a team mate. The goalkeeper must not kick the ball from hand
- It is recommended, time permitting, that matches will finish with every player taking a penalty kick
- At the end of every game, team coaches should encourage both teams to shake hands with each other and the officials
- Required Coach Education is Level 1.2 of the Children's Pathway
- Recommended Coach In Service is 7v7 Player Pathway In Service, relevant CCD & PCS coaches workshop
- It is unacceptable for a league and/or club to post results from development matches on to any website or publish in any newsletter or newspaper.

## Match-day Protocol

On match-days the home team can follow the guidelines below to ensure the games run smoothly for all.

- Early arrival at the venue
- Set Up Pitch - safety check, erect goals, set out 1m touchline barrier/cones
- Meet and greet own players
- Meet and greet away team
- Pre match preparations - winners circle, warm up, champions league style handshake
- Agree match supervision by representatives from each team if required
- Post match penalties
- Handshakes all round
- Winners circle
- This week's training arrangements etc



## Match Supervisor's Guidance

On match-days coaches will require to ensure that matches operate smoothly and without fuss. Teams should decide upon a match supervisor to ensure the game flows well throughout.

The role of the match supervisor should be to:

- Ensure the safety and well-being of all players
- Check pitch for potential hazards (e.g. broken glass, dogs' dirt) and check the safety of the goals being used
- With support of both team coaches give the players a brief reminder of the standard of behaviour expected and the need for **RESPECT** for team-mates, opponents and the match supervisor
- Ensure teams shake hands prior to kick-off and after the match
- Use Positive Coaching **PARENT CARDS** for players to hand out to all parents reminding them of the philosophy we follow
- Help to educate players whilst the game progresses, giving some basic pointers where appropriate (e.g. rules of the game)
- Allow the game to flow only making decisions when required...let the children play!
- Help to avoid potential rule breaking and possible confrontations
- If required, remind parents and spectators of the positive environment that should exist around the pitch at all times
- Praise and encourage good play by both teams
- Allow frequent substitutions to encourage equal playing time for all players
- Highlight skill, effort and **FAIR PLAY** and congratulate all involved at the end of play
- Use the Positive Coaching **BEST EFFORT** card to highlight a player in both teams who has demonstrated this throughout the game

## USEFUL CONTENT

### CREATIVE PLAYER (10 MINS)



Players with a ball each are encouraged to dribble freely within the defined area.

Imagination/Freestyle/Fantasy Football

- Players should be encouraged to get as many touches of the ball as possible
- Finish with ball between 2 players, one dribbling and one passive defender

Introduce 3 moves, for example:

- |                          |                    |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1) 1v1 Side by Side      | - Step Over & Spin |
| 2) 1 v 1 Facing Opponent | - Scissors         |
| 3) 1 v1 Diagonal Attack  | - Twist Off        |

7 v 0



#### Coaching Points

- Players are shown a variety of passing patterns in the shape as set out in the diagram above
- Coaches should focus on encouraging accurate passing, movement before receiving the ball
- Encourage decision making later whereby players can choose their own options

7 v 2



#### Coaching Points

- With the same set-up as 7 v 0, add 2 defenders with a ball. Their role is to dribble ball into areas to affect the passes of the players on the outside
- Again encourage accurate passing and quick decision making
- Progressions include allowing defenders to move without a ball and to remove the cones so players can move freely



7 v 4



### Instructions

- As with 7v0 and 7v2, add another 2 defenders, at first all with a ball. Defenders dribble ball around area to affect passes from the outside. This will make decision making a key factor for players. Attacking players pass the ball around and across the area avoiding the moving player
- Progression – defenders no longer dribbling and now win a point for every possession gained and if the attacking players put the ball out of the area. Attacking players win a point for every ball played between the defenders
- Finally remove all the cones and encourage more free movement from all players

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