



LANE COVE FOOTBALL CLUB – GRADING POLICY AND ADVICE

Why do we Have a Player Grading?

The Lane Cove Football Club (LCFC or the Club) has a policy regarding the grading of players. The Policy aims to achieve the following outcomes:

1. That players are placed into teams commensurate with their football skills and physical development
2. That players are given the optimum opportunity to develop their skills to the highest level within the LCFC structure
3. That players are given every opportunity to continue to develop friendships and relationships with recognised teammates if it does not unduly compromise the ability of that (those) player(s) to develop skills at an appropriate level

LCFC places great emphasis on ensuring there is a fair and equitable grading policy for all players based around the aims stated above.

We respectfully ask that parents acknowledge grading is not a perfect science. Our graders may be independent external graders appointed by the Club, whose aim is to ensure players are placed in the most appropriate team to match the skills they have displayed both in prior years and at the grading trials. If you feel the grade result for your child is not appropriate, please discuss this in a courteous and respectful manner with the MiniRoos or Junior Football Coordinator who will review the circumstances behind any decision-making and make any adjustments they feel are appropriate. If you are still unsatisfied with the result you may make representation to the Club President via the office at admin@lcfc.com.au. Learning to deal with disappointment, as well as enjoying success, is an important growth and development tool for any individual, including children.

Which Players Need to be Graded?

Depending upon the number of players registered in an age group, grading will be undertaken for Under 8 to Under 18 boys and girls. Please note the following:

1. As a rule, grading will cover all teams, however allowance may be made for teams where enough players express a desire to play together and where there is not a significant variation in the level of skills between players in that team. Any decision relating to the formation of such teams shall be at the sole discretion of the MiniRoos or Junior Football Coordinator and Age Coordinator appointed by LCFC. Such a decision should not be designed to create a feeling of exclusivity around such a team, such that other players may not be given a fair chance to play at their correct skill level
2. Players may try-out for a higher age-group subject to MiniRoos or Junior Football Coordinator approval
3. Only registered players are entitled to participate in the grading process



Grading Policy per Age Group

Under 6s – Under 7s

At this level the focus is on fun, participation, social interaction and learning. Greater emphasis is put on forming social teams where players are grouped together with their friends or community networks (schools etc). If you have a particular preference for your child to play with a certain group of players then please let the MiniRoos Coordinator (minirooms@lcfc.com.au) and the office (admin@lcfc.com.au) know of your preferences. The club will do everything it can to respect such preferences in these age groups.

Under 8s – Under 11s

As players become older and abilities more disparate the club begins to identify appropriate skills levels for each team. In particular, the club introduces Development Squads in these age group, whose teams are trialled and selected around November prior to the season commencing. For those who do not participate in Development Squads the aim of grading is still to place players in teams appropriate to their skill levels and physical development. We do however, as noted above, pay attention to specific requests for players to stay together (often for social reasons) and will accommodate this option where reasonably possible depending upon disparities of skill levels. Many of our graded teams are often as good as or better than the Development Squads and play at the same level. The only major difference may be the provision of additional resources in the Development Squads (professional coaches) but this comes at a higher price.

Under 12s – Under 18s

Grading becomes even more important in the higher age groups (Under 12+) when actual competition begins. As players progress through the teenage years, the games become a little more competitive and winning when compared with SSF (Small Sided Field games Under 6s – Under 11s) assumes more of a priority.

Although the Club nominates each side for a respective grade it is the association (NSFA) that makes the final decision on the allocated grade based on that team's previous year's performance and the number of sides nominated for that respective age group.

Grading Process

Grading trials will be carried out prior to the commencement of each season on days determined by the LCFC Board. Grading must be completed prior to the deadline of submission of team information to the association. There will generally be two grading sessions in consecutive weeks allocated to each age group. Grading dates and times will be given out during the registration process and will be published on the club website (www.lcfc.com.au) and social media accounts.

All players must attend the grading sessions to ensure they are placed in a team consistent with their demonstrated level of skill and ability. Players who do not attend grading may be placed in a team suitable for their skill levels based on prior year performances, but this is not guaranteed. New players to the club who do not grade will be placed into the lowest division but may be provided with an opportunity to be re-graded prior to the start of the season where it becomes clear their skills level does not match that of the lowest team.



Grading sessions for the Under 8s to Under 14s age groups will generally be undertaken by independent coaches. These coaches will assess the skills of each player using a grading system built around four key metrics:

1. Skills
2. Fitness / Agility
3. Tactical Awareness
4. Temperament

Players will then be allocated into teams based around the results of the gradings but subject to any other decisions that may affect this (such as the formation of a friends' team as noted previously).

Teams will be announced at the conclusion of the final grading session for each age group and ideally coach and manager volunteers will be nominated and approved for each team.

Once finalisation of teams has occurred the administration office will distribute team details to all parents and notify times and days for training to commence.

Team Construction

Where possible the club will make every effort to allocate the optimum number of players to each team to ensure there is no shortage of players during the season. This may necessitate the closure of age group registrations at a point in time when the club determines it has the appropriate numbers to fill teams. There may also be occasions when due to numbers in each age group it is necessary to combine players from two age groups to form a team. The Club will discuss this with those players and parents involved to ensure the best solution is determined for everyone at the right level of skill.

LCFC Board

UPDATED: September 2024