



Athenry Association Football Club

Est. 1971

Moanbaun, Athenry, Co Galway, H65 NY66

E-mail: athenry@galwayfa.ie Website: www.athenryfootballclub.com

ATHENRY ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL CLUB STREAMING AND PLAYER DEVELOPMENT POLICY DOCUMENT

Introduction

Athenry Association Football Club Streaming and Player Development Policy outlines the principles and practices that guide our Football Club's approach to streaming and player development. Our primary aim is to provide a structured and nurturing environment for players at all levels to develop their skills, knowledge, and character, while ensuring fair opportunities and a holistic growth pathway for all involved.

Objectives

- It is the responsibility of Athenry Football Club to ensure that all players receive opportunities to develop their skills to their fullest potential.
- Ensure a structured and supportive environment for player growth and progression.
- Offer clear pathways for players to advance within the club and beyond.
- Provide high-quality coaching and resources to support player development.
- Ensure teams are streamed correctly, players are allowed to develop with teammates of similar ability.
- To maintain a commitment to fair play, equality, and inclusivity in every aspect of the club's operations.
- To foster a culture of continuous learning, physical development, and emotional well-being for all players.
- To safeguard young players and ensure their safety, education, and mental health are prioritized.
- Streaming is for the benefit of the players – **NOT** the parents.

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Streaming Policy

Streaming refers to the assignment of players to specific teams based on their skill level, age, and potential. While streaming is intended to challenge players appropriately, the policy ensures that no player is unduly excluded or limited by early assessments.

Key Principles of Streaming:

- **Age and Development Stage:** Players will be streamed based on their age and developmental maturity. This may involve adjustments as players grow and improve.
- **Player Potential:** Emphasis will be placed on recognizing not just immediate performance but also potential for future development. The club will continually assess players to ensure that they are placed in environments where they can thrive.
- **Dynamic and Fluid:** Player placement within teams should be flexible, with players being moved to teams or training groups that better suit their evolving skill set. Regular evaluations will ensure that the streaming process is fair, and players are not confined to a level that inhibits their growth.
- **Inclusivity:** Every player, regardless of ability, will be given fair access to playing time, training sessions, and opportunities to grow. Special care will be taken to avoid “pigeonholing” players early in their careers.

Player Advancement:

Players will be provided with opportunities to progress from grassroots football through to Senior levels. Talent identification will be integrated into all stages, ensuring that promising players are identified early and given the appropriate support.

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Player Streaming Process

Players will be assessed through a combination of trials, training sessions, and competitive matches. Our coaching staff will evaluate players based on their technical skills, tactical understanding, physical attributes, and psychological readiness.

The Trials must be made known to all players within the age group of the intended streaming, and any other age group permitted to attend the trials

All managers of the Intended age group plus a minimum of two coaches from the *streaming panel must attend the full trial process * (streaming panel coaches should be certified to at least a National D license)

The Criteria on which players will be rated should be as follows:

- The Players First Touch
- Awareness of surroundings (space, support, etc)
- How Comfortable they appear on the ball
- Close control of the ball and the ability to take on opponents
- Their Communications skills
- Speed - both mentally & physically
- Their ability to close down and make a tackle

Players will be streamed into different categories based on their age, skill level, and development needs:

- **Development Squad (C&D)** : For younger players focusing on fundamental skills and basic tactical awareness.
- **Intermediate Squad (B)** : For players who have demonstrated a solid foundation and are ready for more advanced training.
- **Advanced Squad (A)** : For players who have shown exceptional talent and are preparing for higher levels of competition.

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Player Pathways

- **Foundation Level (U6 - U11):** Focus on fundamental skills, understanding the game, and fostering a love for football. No formal streaming or high-pressure competition will take place at this stage, coaches should start to become aware of player abilities as they progress through these age groups.
- **Youth Teams (U12 - U16):** Players will begin to specialize and refine their technical abilities. Coaching will aim to improve both individual skills and team dynamics. It is essential that Player streaming at these levels focuses on ensuring all players are playing at the correct levels.
- **Elite/Development Teams (U17 - U21):** Players at this level will undergo more intensive training and be exposed to high-level competition. Individual development is prioritized, and some players may be invited to train with senior teams based on their abilities and readiness.

In Accordance with the FAI Player Development Plan,

Female players are permitted to play at all underage levels. If a girl's own age group or a girls' team is not available, she can play on boys' teams from U12 to U16. For example, a girl eligible to play at U14 can participate on an U14 or U13 boys' team, depending on which age group best serves her developmental needs.

Team selection is based on the player's ability, not gender

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Youths (Boys & Girls) can play up more than one age group, but this is typically subject to specific conditions and considerations. While the overall goal is to ensure that player development is in the best interest of the individual, there are some key principles:

Player Development Focus: If a player is deemed capable of competing at a higher level (based on ability, maturity, and physical development).

Age and Safety Considerations: The physical and psychological maturity of the player is important in deciding whether they can handle the higher competition level. Always err on the side of caution - Feedback from welfare officer if necessary

Discretion of the Club: A player's coach and at least two recognised Streaming coaches may evaluate the player's skill level, physical readiness, and how they fit into the higher age group before granting permission.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Athenry Football club is committed to continuous improvement. We regularly monitor and evaluate our streaming and development policies to ensure they meet the needs of our players and align with best practices. Feedback from players, parents, and coaches is integral to this process.

Conclusion

Athenry Soccer Club's Streaming and Player Development Policy is designed to provide a clear and comprehensive framework for nurturing the talents and potential of our players. By adhering to these guidelines, we aim to create an environment that supports the holistic development of our players, preparing them for success both on and off the field.

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