



WOONONA FOOTBALL CLUB

PO Box 68 Woonona, NSW 2517 ABN 24 990 899 582
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Junior Grading & Team Allocation Policy – Woonona Football Club

At Woonona Football Club, we pride ourselves on being a community-oriented club where players of all abilities can enjoy soccer, challenge themselves, develop their skills, and make lifelong friendships. Playing in a team sport teaches children valuable life lessons such as persistence, teamwork, friendship, and fair play. Our primary aim is to allow every player to play to the best of their ability, enjoy the game, and grow both on and off the field.

As players progress in their soccer journey, grading becomes essential to ensure they play alongside others with similar skill levels. This allows for both enjoyment and personal growth. Our grading policy is designed to be fair, transparent, and focused on long-term player development.

Why Do We Do Grading?

Grading ensures that all players can enjoy soccer with others of similar ability. It promotes confidence, skill development, and a positive team environment. Most clubs within the Football South Coast (FSC) Association grade teams starting at Under 10s (U10), and then designate teams as advanced, intermediate, or beginner levels. This system ensures that players compete with and against teams that match their abilities, making each game fun and competitive.

Do All Players Have to Attend Grading?

For those interested in progressing to advanced teams, attending grading is essential to secure placement.

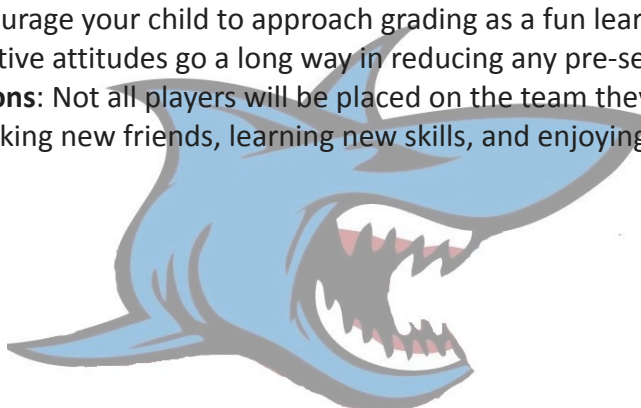
Grading is optional for those players who do not wish to be considered for the advanced teams; players can choose not to attend without repercussions. The club will also try to group players who do not attend grading with their friends who opt out.

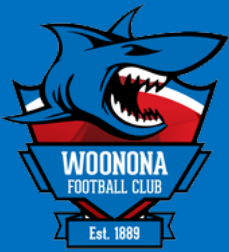
What Happens if My Child Can't Attend Grading?

We understand that illnesses or other events may prevent a child from attending their scheduled grading session. If this happens, don't hesitate to contact the club before the session to arrange an alternative time.

How Can Parents Support the Grading Process?

- **Pre-session support:** Ensure your child is registered and ready for their grading session.
- **During grading:** Encourage your child to approach grading as a fun learning experience, similar to a training session. Positive attitudes go a long way in reducing any pre-session nerves.
- **Managing expectations:** Not all players will be placed on the team they hoped for. Focus on the positives, such as making new friends, learning new skills, and enjoying the season.





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Grading Process & Team Allocation

- **Players wishing to play in their age group:** Players who want to remain in their original age group will be prioritised. If a player requests to play in an older age group, they may be moved to the next lower age group if necessary to ensure a balanced team structure.
- **Returning Players:** Returning players will receive first preference. This ensures that players who have been part of the club have continuity in their team experience.
- **Age Group Movement:** If too many players are registered within a specific age group, players who have requested to play in an older age group may be moved down to fill teams. Similarly, players may be moved up to fill available spots in older teams if an age group is under-subscribed. This flexibility ensures we can create balanced teams that provide appropriate challenges for players of all skill levels.

Example: For U13-U18 teams, we typically register between **12 and 16 players per team**. If, after registration, we have **34 players** but need more to form three teams (but two too many for two teams), we may move two players to the next age group below or above to balance the numbers. Players eligible to move down (i.e., younger players) will be considered first. **Players will be moved based on their club history, registration date and grading result.**

In the rare event that we cannot form a whole team, the club will work with other local clubs to accommodate the players in a suitable team.

Who Does the Grading?

Grading is conducted by independent **professional coaches** accredited by **Football South Coast (FSC)**. These coaches are experienced, qualified, and have a deep understanding of player development. They dedicate multiple sessions to ensure a fair and accurate grading process. Their professional expertise ensures that all players are assessed based on objective criteria and placed in the most suitable team according to their skill level.

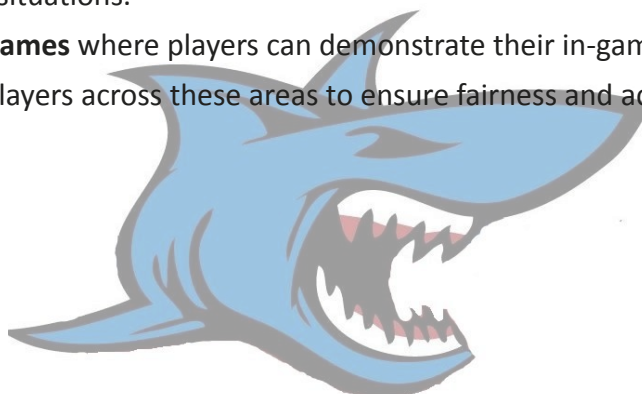
What Happens at a Grading Session?

- **What to bring:** Players should arrive ready to participate, wearing **football boots and shin pads**.
- **Parent involvement:** Parents are welcome to stay but are not permitted in the grading area or to give instructions to their children during the session.

Grading activities include:

1. **Technical drills** focusing on core competencies: striking the ball, first touch, running with the ball, and 1v1 situations.
2. **Small-sided games** where players can demonstrate their in-game skills and decision-making.

Multiple graders will score players across these areas to ensure fairness and accuracy.





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After the Grading Session

- **Team placement:** After grading, teams are formed based on the scores and observations from the grading sessions. Depending on the number of **age groups** being assessed, this process typically takes 1-2 weeks to complete.
- **Notification:** Players and parents will be notified by email about team placements. This will also include an invitation for parents to volunteer as a **coach** or **team manager**.

What if I disagree with my child's team Placement?

We understand that team placements may be disappointing for some. However, we want to reassure parents that the grading process is **fair and thorough**. Players are graded based on **objective assessments** by qualified coaches. If you have concerns, we are happy to provide feedback and suggestions for areas your child can work on to improve their skills throughout the season.

Conclusion

At **Woonona Football Club**, our grading policy ensures that all players can play in teams that best match their skill level. This supports their enjoyment of the game and ongoing development. While grading is essential, we are committed to ensuring that all players feel valued and have a positive experience, regardless of their team placement.

We are excited for another great football season and look forward to seeing everyone at the grading sessions!

