

Team Selection & Game Time Policy

The Club aims to provide a positive, inclusive and development-focused football environment where players can enjoy the game, develop skills and grow in confidence.

Our approach to team selection and game time reflects the different stages of player development across age groups.

U7 - U11 (Mini Soccer)

During the primary school years, football should focus on learning, enjoyment and player development.

At this stage, the Club's philosophy is to prioritise:

- Player development over results.
- Learning and enjoyment.
- Confidence building and teamwork.
- Skill development and understanding of the game.

We want to create an environment where players feel comfortable trying new things, learning from mistakes and developing without fear of failure.

To support player development:

- Players may be encouraged to play in different positions to broaden their understanding of the game.
- Team selection will prioritise learning opportunities rather than match outcomes.
- Coaches will seek to ensure all players feel included and valued.

Game Time

For U7–U11 age groups, team managers will aim to:

- Provide comparable opportunities for team selection and game time across a season.
- Provide, wherever reasonably possible, approximately 50% game time in any given match for each player, including substitutes.

However, game time may be influenced by factors including:

- Player welfare, injury or illness.
- Match circumstances and player safety.

Whilst winning may be enjoyable and important to players, parents and coaches alike, development and enjoyment take priority in these age groups.

U12 - U18

As players move into secondary school years, football naturally becomes more competitive with league tables, cup competitions and team objectives.

In these age groups, team managers and coaches may establish individual and team objectives that reflect the aspirations, ability and development needs of the squad.

Team Selection

Selection decisions will be made by the Team Manager (in consultation with coaches where appropriate) and may take account of factors including:

- Attendance at training
- Match availability
- Fitness and readiness to play
- Commitment, behaviour and attitude
- Individual development needs
- Tactical considerations and match requirements
- Overall squad balance.

Selection for matches is not guaranteed and may vary depending on circumstances.

Game Time

Managers will seek to provide fair and reasonable game time across a season. However, game time in individual matches may vary depending on:

- Match circumstances
- Tactical decisions
- Injuries or player welfare
- Squad size
- Competition requirements.

Where reasonably practicable, managers will seek to provide playing opportunities to substitutes.

The Club recognises that fairness does not always mean equal playing time in every match. Team managers are expected to make decisions in the best interests of player development, team objectives and player welfare.

Communication

The Club encourages respectful and constructive communication between parents, players and coaches. Questions regarding team selection or game time should be raised respectfully and at an appropriate time away from match environments. Team managers' decisions should be respected.

Policy Review

Approved by: Readstone United JFC Committee

Last Reviewed: 18/06/2026

Next Review Date: 18/06/2027