

Castlemaine Goldfields Football Club**JUNIORS SQUAD ALLOCATION POLICY****Purpose:**

To enable squad allocation in order to place children in a team environment in which they can enjoy playing, develop their football skills, and be challenged in a fun and inclusive environment. In allocating squads, consideration will be given to players' age, team balance and maximising on field playing time with as few substitutions as possible.

Squad Allocation Decision Making

Junior Coaching Coordinators will make squad allocation recommendations, with support from CGFC committee members when needed. Age Group Team Coaches may also be consulted to help ensure positive team dynamics.

The CGFC Committee will approve final squad allocations based on recommendations from Junior Coordinators in line with this policy.

Criteria for Squad Allocation Recommendations and Decisions

- Place players in their correct age group as a starting premise;
- Determine the number of teams that can be formed in an age group from the number of players registered.
- Depending on age groups, seek to establish a squad that reflects the playing numbers of the age group (see table below). This is to allow for a bench and absences due to illness, injury and other commitments.
- If an age group does not have an appropriate number of players for a straightforward allocation of teams (for example, more than is manageable for one team, but insufficient for two teams) then consideration will be given to allowing players to play up or down an age group to create teams with manageable numbers across the club.
- In considering whether a player should play up or down an age group, consideration should be given to 'Squad Allocation Guiding Principles' outlined below. The players and parents or carers in question will have the circumstances and reasons explained to them by the Junior Coordinators and will be involved in the final decision.
- When there are sufficient numbers for two teams in an age division, Junior Coordinators will try and form teams of equal ability as much as possible, and teams will be formed based on principles below.

Team	Year of Birth	Squad	Max Squad	Ideal Squad	Min Squad
U10s	2015	9 + 5 Subs	14	12	11
U11s	2014	9+ 5 Subs	14	12	11
U12s	2013	9+ 5 Subs	14	12	11

U13s	2012	11 + 5 Subs	16	15	13
U14s	2011	11 + 5 Subs	16	15	13
U15s	2010	11 + 5 Subs	16	15	13
U16s	2009	11 + 5 Subs	16	15	13

*Please note a squad of 14 for 9 a side is an absolute exception, and should only be used if there is no other option for a child to play.

Squad Allocation Team Formation Guiding Principles

In assessing how to allocate players to squads appropriate team for a player the following are key considerations in order:

- Age group
- Availability for games throughout the season
- Achieving team balance
- Motivation/reason(s) for playing, e.g. social vs competition,
- Social groupings of players may be taken into account to ensure where possible every player has at least one friend/peer in the squad they are allocated to
- Occasionally there will be confidential issues raised by a parent or carer of a player which will be relevant to their team allocation.

The application of these principles may mean that:

- some players may not be playing with their existing friends, particularly where it impacts team balance; and / or
- some players may be playing with people they haven't played with before, or in a team which is different to the one they played with in the previous year
- players may have to play at a higher or lower level to make the squad sizes more balanced, ensure that the club can field teams and do our best to provide as many children the opportunity to join a team.

The club recognises that, for some players, their interest in playing may be heavily impacted by their social groupings. Care will be taken to ensure that the specific needs of these players is also a part of the team allocation process.

We anticipate that players adhere to our club's standards and demonstrate respect and consideration towards their teammates, coaches, game officials, and the club as a whole. Failure to meet the expectations may result in the club transferring disruptive players to another team or, if warranted, rescinding any offers of team placement. In such instances, the Junior Coordinator, the Junior Coaching Coordinator, and the CFGC Executive Committee would oversee the management of these matters.

Playing outside of the age group

The club anticipates that the vast majority of players will be playing within their own age group. However, in some circumstances such as :

- where an older team has vacancies and younger teams has adequate players, or
- if an older squad needs a coach, and there is a capable player with a parent/ guardian who is a good and willing candidate.

In these situations, the Junior Coordinators may look to younger players suited to playing in an older (or younger) age group. Before considering a player to be a candidate for playing outside their own age group Coordinators will look at:

- the ability, commitment and desire of the player, and
- the physical and social factors relating to playing at an older (or younger) age group.

Players will only play +/- one year. As always, the decision should be guided by what is in the best interests of the player.

Exception Priorities for Playing Down:

Player may play with younger squads, but eligible same competition age bracket in the following situations:

- A newcomer in an 11-a-side competition bracket
- The younger squad has few registered players than the older squad
- To keep players with classmates, on request and if feasible with player numbers. In this case, parents/carers and players should be aware that arrangements for one year may not be possible in future years
- There is an excess of players, and the younger squad is appropriate to the player's level of development.

Player may be supported to apply for dispensation from the league administrator to play with squad younger than their natural age if:

- They are new to football
- Their physicality is incompatible with the older age competition
- There are other compelling reasons to play with the younger squad, and the player's birthday is very close to the cut-off (e.g. it is in December)

Note: Final decision on dispensation request is with league administrator.

Squad Capacity Limits

There will be some instances where players cannot be accommodated due to the availability of squad places.

CGFC may establish a waiting list for players who want to register after squad capacity limits have been reached. If enough players join the waiting list to form a squad, and if a coach, assistant coach and manager can be confirmed, CGFC may register an additional team (if possible) with Football Victoria.

Concerns/ Appeals

Players or parents/ carers who have questions or concerns about the application of this selection policy with respect to their squad selection should raise the matter with the Junior Coordinator in the first instance. If the concern cannot be resolved, the Junior Coordinator will work with the relevant coach to review. If the issue still cannot be resolved, then the issue will be taken to the CGFC Executive Committee for final decision.

Our Values and Expectations

As our club continues to grow please remember squad allocation is not an exact science. It will be undertaken in good faith and with the developmental needs of the player in mind and balance of teams for the club. We ask our members to remember that junior sport teaches great life skills of compromise and flexibility and provides opportunities to develop and extend both skills and friendship groups while working together for the benefit of the team and club. Any change can be challenging and the Castlemaine Goldfields Football Club want to be very transparent about our squad allocation policy. This policy has been developed to provide a fair, consistent and manageable system for determining team selection. Parents: please help us by fostering your child's resilience. Any short term disappointment arising from their placement in any given team will, over time, be replaced by the joy of playing the game at a standard which is appropriate to them and the opportunity to develop new friendships among their playing group.