



Grading Policy (For Juniors 8 – 17)

1. Objective

The SMKSC Grading Policy and Process is designed to ensure that:-

1. We group players with similar abilities to maximise their enjoyment and opportunity to improve their soccer skills
2. Players learn from their peers and develop life skills from a team environment and a love of the game of soccer
3. Players, coaches and parents alike, have fun, enjoy the season and return to the club year after year

2. General policy

- 2.1.** Players must be graded and play in the age group in which they fall. Exceptions are at the discretion of the Grading Committee, in consultation with the players and their parents, for circumstances such as:-
 - a)** The age group has a surplus number of players and the age group above can accommodate those players OR
 - b)** In the previous season, a player was granted permission to play up an age group.
- 2.2.** The Grading Committee assigns players to teams named A, B, C etc, however the allocation of a division (e.g., 1, 2, etc.) is a separate process done in conjunction with GDSFA (see Grading Process sections 1.10 & 1.11).
- 2.3.** Team sizes will be managed to “fill upwards”. Grading will purposefully have the A & B teams lower on numbers compared to others. During trial games, Graders will assess borderline cases and may move players to “even out” team numbers. If a Grader has a direct interest in an age group (child playing or they intend to coach in that age group) they must make the Chief Grader aware of this situation.
- 2.4.** All players will be treated equally irrespective of their skill level or prior playing experience.

3. Attendance at grading

- 3.1.** SMKSC Grading is compulsory for all players and all must be fully registered before participating in grading. It is important for all players to bring registration receipts and if unable to attend any grading sessions (e.g. due to injury or illness), must inform the club in writing.
- 3.2.** After considering the grading scores and the previous season's performances, players will be assigned to a team. There is no guarantee that they will remain with players from their previous year's team. If required the player may be further assessed during the trial games to see if they stand out or struggle in the assigned team and they may be reassigned to another team.
- 3.3.** Refer to the "Registration Information" document for player grading session dates & times.

4. Coaches' rights and obligations

- 4.1.** Coaches have the right to be consulted about/appeal against grading decisions.
- 4.2.** Coaches have an obligation to accept players who have been graded into their teams subject to any appeal outcomes. This is the case whether the team is formally graded or whether it is self organised (eg. Seniors).

5. Reserving places for non-registered players

- 5.1.** Places cannot be reserved for players who have not registered with the Club by the time grading/team assignments have been completed.
- 5.2.** Late registrants will be offered places depending upon team vacancies (as determined by the Registrar) and best fit to skills (as determined by the Chief Grader or his delegate) after existing registered players have been assigned to teams.

6. Dealing with surplus players in any age group

If there are surplus players that cannot be offered a place in their age group because the team/s in that division/age group are full, the following steps will be taken in the sequence listed:

- 6.1.** Attempts will be made to find new players to make up a full team.
- 6.2.** If step **6.1** does not resolve the problem all players graded in the team/or division to which surplus players are the closest fit will be invited by the Registrar to fill vacancies in a higher division or age group (subject to their age eligibility). The Chief Grader will be available to assist any player in determining whether they are capable of playing in a higher age/division. No player will be forced to move to a higher age/division.
- 6.3.** If step **6.2** does not resolve the problem the following criteria will be used to determine the players order of precedence:
 - a)** Returning players from previous years will take precedence over new entrants.
 - b)** Length of current unbroken service will determine priority e.g. a returning player with 1 or more continuous prior years service will take precedence over a player returning after a break
 - c)** Players who are displaced as a result of applying this process will be offered a vacant spot as per step **6.2** above
 - d)** New entrants competing for a vacancy will be prioritized based on who registered first as determined by the Registrar – first come best dressed
 - e)** Players who decline an offer will leave the Club and may be entitled to a refund of their registration fees less \$50, subject to SMKSC Committee decision.

Grading Process for Juniors (8 – 17)

This Grading Process is aimed at providing guidelines to grading volunteers and to demonstrate openness to parents and players. Constructive feedback and additional volunteers to help are always welcomed.

1. Grading Sequence

- 1.1. Players are to be graded within their registered age group, usually over 2 or 3 sessions. Ideally, every player should attend every session
- 1.2. Club appointed Graders use the sessions to assess players' skills & their performance against peers
- 1.3. Graders may refer to the previous coach's assessment record
- 1.4. Teams will be announced as soon as possible after the conclusion of the final grading session.
- 1.5. Players assigned to teams by letter A, B, C etc where A is the higher skilled grade in comparison to other teams
- 1.6. Trial games are used to fine tune the team assignments in order to balance team numbers
- 1.7. The club recommends a division (e.g., 1, 2.) to GDSFA based on the list of players in the team showing their prior year's division and result. Club Coach & Chief Grader may discuss with the Age Manager and the assigned Team Coach. "A" does not mean division 1, etc. There may be two teams in the same division, e.g., "A" becomes division 2 BLK and "B" is division 2 WHT
- 1.8. Club recommendations must be submitted to GDSFA by the last week of February and the final allocation of a division (e.g., 1, 2..) is then made by GDSFA

2. Grading Criteria

All players will be allocated assessments based on the following criteria:-

- 2.1. **Personality & Attitude**
- 2.2. **Effectiveness in a Match Setting**
- 2.3. **Individual Technique & Ability on the Ball**
- 2.4. **Athleticism**

3. Grading Roles

- 3.1. **Chief Grader** has overall responsibility for player assignment
- 3.2. **Grading Administrator** responsible for the management of the process (e.g. organisation and record management)
- 3.3. **Age Graders**
Assist the Chief Grader in assessing players' skills. Should have good knowledge of the game and the skills required in order to differentiate player skill levels (Previous coaches are encouraged to assist). Ideally will not have direct interest in the age group
- 3.4. **Grading Assistants**
Provides help on the Grading Nights to co-ordinate players, equipment and paperwork.
No experience necessary.
- 3.5. **Grading Sub-committee**
Volunteers from the current SMKSC committee

4. Appeals

- 4.1.** Appeals on grading must be put in writing within 7 days of grading
- 4.2.** Appeals determined by Grading Sub-committee
- 4.3.** Grading Sub-committee decisions are final

Ages 6 – 7 Inclusive

This age group is treated differently from all others as they only play non competitive in-house soccer, where teaching basic soccer skills in a relaxed, fun environment is paramount.

Whilst it is desirable for the benefit of all players that a mix of players of varying levels of skills & ability are placed in the same team, to learn from each other and develop an appreciation for the game, the club is mindful of players wanting to play with their friends and this is accommodated where possible.

Once children reach the junior age groups from 8 to 17 inclusive, they will be graded in accordance with the grading policy. Children will be placed in teams based on their skill level, not on where their friends are or on which team they played with the previous season.

Seniors & Over 35's

Senior and over 35 teams are not required to participate in the club grading process, however team representatives must liaise with the Chief Grader and the Grading Committee to determine appropriate nominations to GDSFA.

Senior and over 35 team numbers and players can be determined in consultation with the SMK Executive Committee.