

Clyde Cougars Junior Football Club

Playing Up Policy 2025



Purpose

This policy provides clear guidelines for assessing and approving the suitability of players at Clyde Cougars Junior Football Club (CJFC) to play permanently in a higher age group. It ensures the safety, development, and enjoyment of all players while maintaining fair opportunities for all teams.

Guiding Principles

This policy aligns with:

- AFL Laws of the Game
- AFL South East Competition By-Laws (6.2 & 10.6)
- CJFC Registration Policy

Key Guidelines for Playing Up

- Players will only be permitted to play up when they demonstrate the physical, social, and emotional readiness to compete in the higher age group.
- Vacancies must exist in the higher age group; ~~true-age players cannot be displaced by players playing up.~~
- Players are generally limited to playing up one age level. Playing up two age levels will be discouraged however exceptional cases may be reviewed by the Executive Committee.

Approval Process

- A **Playing Up Form** (see Appendix A) must be submitted before the start of the season by the player's parent/guardian to the Registrar for review (requests received during the season may be reviewed under exceptional circumstances).
- The Football Director, true-age coach, and higher-age coach will assess the request. Factors considered include player readiness, team needs, and safety.
- Decisions will be communicated to the family. Disputes or unresolved cases will be referred to the Executive Committee for final resolution.

Guidelines for Fill-Ins

- Players may occasionally play in an age group other than their own to fill vacancies in other teams due to shortfalls on game day, the Clyde Cougars "Filling-In Policy" is to be referred to in this circumstance.

Playing Up Conditions

- Players approved to play up must train with the higher-age team.

Exceptional Circumstances for Playing Up Two Age Levels

- Requests must be supported by a detailed written explanation from the parents outlining the exceptional circumstances.
- Such cases are reviewed by the Football Director, relevant coaches, and the Executive Committee.
- The decision will be made by vote at the next committee meeting, with no further appeals beyond this point.

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Grievances and Appeals

- Families dissatisfied with a decision may raise concerns with the Football Director or Club President.
- If unresolved, the Executive Committee will make the final decision after reviewing all perspectives.

Planning and Review

- Prior to the start of each season, the Registrar will review players approved to play up the previous year to ensure continued suitability or reassignment to their true-age group in consultation with the Football Director. Any disputes are to be brought to the full Executive Committee.
- Parents will be contacted prior to the start of each season to discuss their eligibility to continue playing in a higher age level.

Inclusivity and Player Development

- Decisions will always prioritise player safety, well-being and skill development, ensuring a fair and inclusive environment for all players and teams.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee to ensure it remains fair, relevant, and aligned with the needs of CJFC members.

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| Version number: 2 |
| Approved by: CJFC Executive Committee |
| Date: 6/03/25 |
| Effective date: 6/03/25 |
| Next Review date: 30/09/25 |
| Policy Owner: Secretary |

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Appendix A



AFLSE PARENTAL CONSENT FOR PLAYING UP

The AFL Junior Match policy acknowledges the principle role of the parent or guardian in determining that a player should play in a higher age competition than the one determined by the player's chronological age. Players should only be permitted to play up an age level when their physical capacity and social sense enable them to compete adequately at the higher age level. The decision whether a player should play up beyond the two-year age span should be based on the advantages to be gained by the player. Before a player participates in a competition outside the recommended two-year age span, the player's parent or guardian must sign a consent form and receive written approval from the League.

| Player Name (Player) | Date of Birth | |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | | |
| Club | Current Age Group | Play Up Age Group |
| | | |

I, _____ (insert parent/guardian name) give permission for the 'player' to participate in the _____ (play up age group), in the _____ Junior Football Competition for the current season. I understand that the 'player' is still covered by insurance however, by playing up an age group, this creates a 'grey area' and makes the insurance policy more open to being contested.

The League has the discretion to review the player if they deem it necessary.

As parent/guardian, I accept full responsibility for the 'player' playing up to the nominated higher age group.

PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

CLUB ENDORSEMENT

Name: _____ Position: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

NEXT STEP

Form must be completed and returned (by Club) to the League. Forms will not be accepted directly from the parent/guardian.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Play Up Application Accepted: YES NO

Name: _____ Position: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____