



Harpenden Colts Year Group

Management Policy Guidelines

Approved April 2024

Each Harpenden Colts year group operates within the constitution of the Harpenden Colts Football Club (“Harpenden Colts” or the “Club”). This document has been adopted by the Football Management Committee. The Football Management Committee of the club is the final arbiter of any disputes relating to this document and any decisions relating to it will be guided by the Core Philosophy.

Any defined terms used in this document which are not expressly defined in it will have the meanings given to them in the Harpenden Colts Definitions Document.

This Policy been adopted to establish the approach to the management of each Harpenden Colts year group in the Boys section and the applicable groupings within the Girls and Inclusive sections.



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1. Core Philosophy

The club expects all Coaches, Players, Parents & Carers to act within the spirit of the Harpenden Colts core philosophy.

This Core Philosophy sets out how Harpenden Colts will function consistently across all age groups.

The key, underlying core philosophy of the Club is as follows:-

- We will deliver everything with safety as a priority
- At all times Harpenden coaches will seek to do whatever is appropriate for the player's development, well being and safety
- We are an inclusive organisation that welcomes people of all abilities, genders and ethnic backgrounds.
- Everyone is expected to respect others and contribute positively to the Colts community
- Harpenden Colts promotes a sense of fairness for all those within our club
- We aim to develop youngsters as individuals as well as footballers
- We aim to encourage and promote the enjoyment of football
- Coaches will be provided with appropriate Continuing Professional Development
- We want everyone within the Harpenden Colts family (Players, Parents, Carers and Coaches) to enjoy winning but not at the expense of our Philosophy



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2. Year Group Principals

- For all year groups within the Club
 - Each Year Group will have a Year Group lead and ideally also a Year Group Administrator
 - It is also advisable for each year group to have a Year Group Kit Manager, a Year Group Registration Secretary and a Year Group Training and Welfare Manager – which helps the overall Club official in charge of these functions to manage their role.

Note: These roles can be undertaken by existing coaches within the year.

- Teams can be entered into a 'league' from Under 8 upwards.
 - Boys teams will be entered into the West Herts Youth League.
 - Girls teams will be entered into the Hertfordshire Girls Football Partnership League.
 - Any boys or girls team wishing to enter into any other league require approval from the FMC first.
 - Each squad entered into a league must have at least two coaches who are DBS approved and have completed the mandatory FA coaching courses such as Safeguarding and First Aid.
 - Each squad will have a Squad Lead who must have an FA Level One/Intro to Coaching Football qualification.
 - No squad will be entitled to enter more than one league in any one season.
 - Squads not entered into a league can arrange a maximum of two Saturday/Sunday games per month at a venue to be decided by the Club.
 - Each year group may run one Development or "training only" squad
 - The proposed number of squads per year group for the following season must be provided to the girls and boys section lead in March of each year for this to be reviewed and agreed by the FMC. This ensures we can support every year groups need alongside the facilities and financials we have available.
- Boys Year groups Under 7 up to and including Under 11
 - Year Groups should have approximately 84 children there may be a need to have more players due to availability and the need to ensure squads are viable.
 - U8s – 5 a side max 9 squads
 - U9s/U10s – 7 a side max 8 squads
 - U11s – 9 a side max 6 squads



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- Training will take place at a venue to be decided by the FMC. These venues will be age appropriate.
- Matches will take place on a Sunday morning or midweek as directed by the league at a venue to be decided by the FMC each season.

- Boys Year groups Under 12 up to and including Under 18
 - When playing 11 aside, year groups will have a maximum of 5 squads.
 - When playing 9 aside, year groups will have a maximum of 6 squads
 - Training will take place midweek at a venue, day and time to be decided by the FMC. The FMC will work with squads to find a suitable venue, day and time but cannot guarantee to meet each squad's wishes.
 - Matches will take place on a Sunday morning or midweek as directed by the league at a venue to be decided by the FMC each season.

- Girls Year Groups
 - Year group numbers will not be as prescriptive as the boys section, recognising that demand for places fluctuates with age. Squad limits will be decided by the Girls Section officer in consultation with FMC and club facilities.
 - Training will take place midweek at a venue, day and time to be decided by the FMC. The FMC will work with squads to find a suitable venue, day and time but cannot guarantee to meet each squad's wishes.
 - Matches will take place on a Saturday morning or midweek as directed by the league at a venue to be decided by the FMC each season.
 - As it is not always practical for a Girls Year Group to have a development squad, the Girls section can offer Training only places within their existing squads.



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3. Year Group Officers

Year Group Lead

Requirements:

- Must be a parent or carer of a child in the Year Group
- Must have a valid FA Safeguarding Children certificate
- Must have an up-to-date FA DBS

Roles and Responsibility:

- Acts as the figurehead for the year group, representing it within the Harpenden Colts structure
- Ensures that the year group works within the philosophy and policies of Harpenden Colts.
- Invites applicants for and appoints the Squad Leads, Coaches, Administrator and other officers for the year group
- Assists the Year Group Officers to reach decisions about squad composition and allocation of players to and movement of players between squads (and ensures these are in accordance with the Harpenden Colts Player Allocation Policy)
- Convenes and chairs Year Group Meetings
- Seeks to balance the conflicting needs of squads within the year group
- Leads the strategic development of the year group
- Is available to support and guide the Squad Leads and Coaches
- Communicates with Parents & Carers of players in the year group in relation to issues that affect the whole year group
- Liaises with league representatives of Harpenden Colts and disseminates information and actions required to coaches within the year group
- Acts as the primary escalation contact for any grievances raised by coaches and the second escalation point for Parents/Carers & Players.
- Liaises with the Management Committee to resolve any disciplinary issues.



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Appointment and Removal:

- The Year Group Lead of the U7 is appointed by the Chair of Harpenden Colts.
- For other year groups, the incumbent Year Group lead will remain in place unless:-
 - The Year Group Lead decides to step down. The Year Group Lead will then be appointed by the FMC after consultation with the departing Year Group Lead and Squad Leads within the relevant year group; or
 - The Chairman receives a request from another Member seeking to replace the Year Group Lead. If the existing Year Group Lead wishes to continue in the role, the FMC will decide after consulting with the existing Year Group Lead and the Squad Leads within the relevant year group, whether the existing Year Group Lead will continue or be replaced; or
 - The Year Group Lead is removed/replaced by the FMC in accordance with Section 13 of this Policy.

Year Group Administrator

Requirements:

- Must have a valid FA Safeguarding Children certificate.
- Must have an up-to-date FA DBS.

Roles and Responsibility:

- Assists with registration of players with the Club and leagues
- Liaises with club officials to maintain the Club's database
- Assists the Club to ensure subscriptions are paid by all Members in the year group
- In conjunction with the Year Group Lead, arranges meetings of the year group, proposes the agenda for year group meetings and drafts and circulates minutes of year group meetings
- Maintains a waiting list of players who would like to join the year group and communicates with Parents/Carers on the waiting list.

Appointment and Removal:

- At Under 7, the Administrator is appointed by the FMC.



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- Thereafter the Administrator is appointed at the beginning of each season by the Year Group Lead.
- The Year Group Administrator can be removed/replaced mid-season as follows:-
 - By the Year Group Lead if the Year Group Administrator steps down during the season;
 - By a decision of the FMC if the Chairman receives a request from another Member seeking to replace the Year Group Administrator and the Year Group Administrator wishes to continue in the role; or
 - By the FMC in accordance with Section 13 of this Policy.

Child Welfare and Training Manager (if appointed for a year group)

Requirements:

- Must have a valid FA safeguarding certificate.
- Must have an up-to-date FA DBS.
- Ideally should have a valid Child Welfare Officer certificate

Roles and Responsibility:

- Maintains a database of people coaching within the year group.
- Ensures that all coaches apply for and obtain an FA DBS BEFORE they are active within the club.
- Promotes FA training opportunities and responsibilities to the coaches in the year group.
- Acts as the primary contact for any Child Welfare issues raised by Coaches/Parents/ Carers/Children within their squad.

Appointment and Removal:

- At Under 7, the Child Welfare and Training Officer is appointed by the FMC.
- Thereafter the Child Welfare Officer is appointed at the beginning of each season by the Year Group Lead.



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4. Squad Leads and Coaches

Squad Leads

Requirements:

- Must have an up-to-date FA DBS
- Must hold or be working towards an FA Level 1 or Introduction to Coaching Football certificate
- Must have a valid FA Safeguarding Children certificate
- Must have a valid FA Intro to First Aid in Football certificate

Roles and Responsibility:

- Ensures that the squad works within the philosophy and policies of Harpenden Colts.
- Makes recommendations to the year group in relation to the composition of the squad and movement of players from/to the squad in accordance with the philosophy and policies of the Club
- Ensures that anyone, BEFORE assisting with coaching of the squad has an up-to-date FA DBS.
- Participates in Year Group Meetings
- Communicates with Parents & Carers of squad members in relation to matters specific to the squad.
- Is listed as the administrative contact for the squad with the Club, FA and leagues.
- Selects and manages the side for matches in accordance with the philosophy and policies of Harpenden Colts.
- Acts as the primary contact for any grievances raised by Parents/Carers/players within their squad
- Delegates aspects of this role to other coaches within the squad and, if needed, appoints a squad administrator

Appointment and Removal:



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- The Squad Leads are appointed by the Year Group Lead at the start of each season.
- If the existing Squad Lead decides to step down during a season the replacement Squad Lead will then be appointed by the Year Group Lead, after consultation with the coaches in the relevant squad and the year group.
- The Year Group Lead shall ask the FMC to make a decision whether an existing Squad Lead will continue or be replaced if all of the following conditions apply: -
 - during the season the Year Group Lead receives a written request from the Parents & Carers of five or more members of the squad seeking to replace the Squad Lead; and
 - the existing Squad Lead wishes to continue in the role; and
 - there is an alternative Squad Lead who satisfies the requirements of a Squad Lead.
- In reaching its decision in relation to the above, the FMC shall take into consideration any submissions from the departing Squad Lead, the proposed replacement Squad Lead and any Parents/Carers of members of the squad.

Coaches

Requirements:

- Must have an up-to-date FA DBS
- Must have a valid FA Safeguarding Children certificate
- Must have a valid FA Intro to First Aid in Football certificate

Roles and Responsibility:

- Performs such duties as are delegated by the Squad Lead or, prior to the formation of squads, the Year Group Lead
- Helps with coaching at training sessions and/or matches
- Must work within the philosophy and policies of Harpenden Colts.

Appointment and Removal:

- The Coaches are appointed and removed by the Year Group Lead in consultation with the Squad Lead for the relevant squad.



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5. Year Group Structure

- The Under 7 year group must have least one coach per every 6 players.

6. Squad Structure

- No squad may be established in Harpenden Colts unless the Squad Lead has first obtained an FA Level 1 / Intro to Coaching Football (“I2CF”) qualification. Where, due to a departure of a Squad Lead, a squad no longer has a coach with an FA Level 1 / I2CF qualification, the squad may continue to train and play matches but at least one of the ongoing coaches must obtain an FA Level 1 / I2CF qualification within 6 months of the relevant departure.
- Each new squad established by a year group must first be communicated to the Club Secretary along with details of the FA level 1 / I2CF qualified coach associated by the Year Group Lead.
- From Under 8 upwards there must be at least two coaches per squad and at least one must be a FA Level 1 / I2CF qualified coach.
- Where the above criteria are not met the FMC will be entitled to require the squad to cease to operate and/or remove squads from the relevant league.

7. Decisions and Year Group Meetings

- The Year Group Lead will decide when, where and how often to hold Year Group Meetings and how decisions will be made within the year group. However, the Year Group Lead should seek to ensure that meetings are held frequently enough to enable the smooth running of the year group and obtain input from the Squad Leads and Year Group officers.
- The discussions during and the outcome of all year group meetings are confidential. The Year Group Lead will be responsible for deciding which decisions will be communicated to Parents & Carers and the manner and timing of those communications.
- If any Qualifying Coach makes a request for a decision to be made formally at a Year Group Meeting, then the Year Group Lead will ensure that the procedure set out in the Schedule to this policy is followed in relation to the making of that decision.
- Anything to be debated upon or decided by the Year Group must fall within the philosophy and policies of Harpenden Colts.



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8. Squad Management

All Harpenden Colts squads will be run in accordance with the Harpenden Colts Squad Management Policy.

9. Squad Composition

For guidance in relation to squad sizes and composition, including allocation of players to and movement of players between squads, please refer to the Harpenden Colts Player Allocation Policy.

10. League Participation

- Teams can be entered into a 'league' from Under 8 upwards.
- Until Under 12 all teams will be entered into the West Herts Youth League or Hertfordshire Girls Football Partnership League.



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11. *Waiting List and New Members*

Waiting List

- Each year group maintains a single waiting list (not one for each squad) of people wishing to join the Club. The waiting list records the order in which applications/enquiries were received. All new player enquiries should be directed to the Year Group Lead and the Administrator of the year group. A Squad Lead or coach cannot allow a new player to join their squad/year group, either formally or informally, without following the procedures set out in this section. Particularly in older years where squads are more settled, we recruit players based on suitability for the level of football we have space in. Our priority is to ensure that the decisions on which players are joining Colts is in the best interests of the joiners and the players already within Colts.
- The club runs PDC (Player Development Centre) sessions for some age groups. When a place arises in a Year Group with PDC sessions the decision on which player from the training sessions is offered the place will be made by the Year Group lead in consultation with the Training Lead (i.e. the Coach who leads the Training only sessions) and an Independent Officer of the Club. The choice of player will be based on the following criteria;
 - Is the player ready to play matches?
 - Which squad has the vacancy - the player should be of the right level to play in that squad
 - Has the player shown the right behaviour at the sessions?
 - Has the player shown the right level of effort at the sessions?
 - Has the player shown good attendance at the sessions (expectation is 75%+)?
 - When did they join the waiting list?
 - The expectation is that for any player to move from the Training sessions into a Colts squad they would have attended at least 10 Training sessions.
- The criteria above have been chosen to ensure that players joining Colts from the Training only sessions are suitable to join Colts. If the selection is not based on ability, the Independent Officer of the club must challenge the Year Group Lead's choice and ensure that the selection of the player is fair. Additionally it should also be considered if there are other players already within Colts who should be moved and therefore if the place being recruited for may be in a different squad.



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- For any Year Groups where there are insufficient players to make the PDC Training sessions viable or there are no players at the PDC sessions who are appropriate for the available space, players need to be taken from the Waiting list. As mentioned above, for older year groups we focus on recruiting for the gaps within the squads which exist so assessment sessions may need to be carried out. For younger year groups where there are insufficient players attending the PDC sessions or the players in the PDC are not of an appropriate level, players should be taken from the waiting list on a first come, first served basis subject to the criteria below
- However, certain players may be given preference when allocating available places to both the training sessions and to join Colts if:-
 - they live in Harpenden or one of the surrounding villages or attend a school in Harpenden;
 - they were previously a Member of the Club but left to participate in academy football;
 - they have a parent who volunteers to help with the administration of the club;
 - they have a parent who volunteers to be a Squad Lead and/or a Squad Coach and this enables an existing or new squad to be viable when it would not otherwise have been viable;
 - they have a particular skill (such as goalkeeping) which is needed to ensure an existing squad which is playing league football remains viable;
 - they have special needs which, in the discretion of the Year Group Lead with the support of the Boys/Girls lead and the Chair or Secretary, should be taken into account when deciding admission; or
 - the available place is for a squad playing league football and the Year Group Lead of the year group decides that a player or players on the waiting list are not ready for league football.

In some cases, predominantly those squads which are playing in the highest divisions, there may be no players either within Colts or within the PDC sessions who are of the appropriate standard (as agreed between the Year Group Lead, Boys/Girls Lead and Training Lead) to play at that level. With the agreement of the Colts Chair or Secretary, the Year Group lead may look to take players from lower on the waiting list or from outside the club if the side requiring new players assess those on the waiting list and they are not appropriate for the level of the squad requiring new players. These players have to be agreed with the YGL.

- Priority for those players being considered to be added should be that they live in Harpenden or the surrounding villages and/or are currently at school within Harpenden.
- In the event that a Year group decides to take players from lower on the waiting list they should give consideration to running assessment sessions and the opportunity to join training sessions of existing squads to give any players from the waiting list who are interested the opportunity.



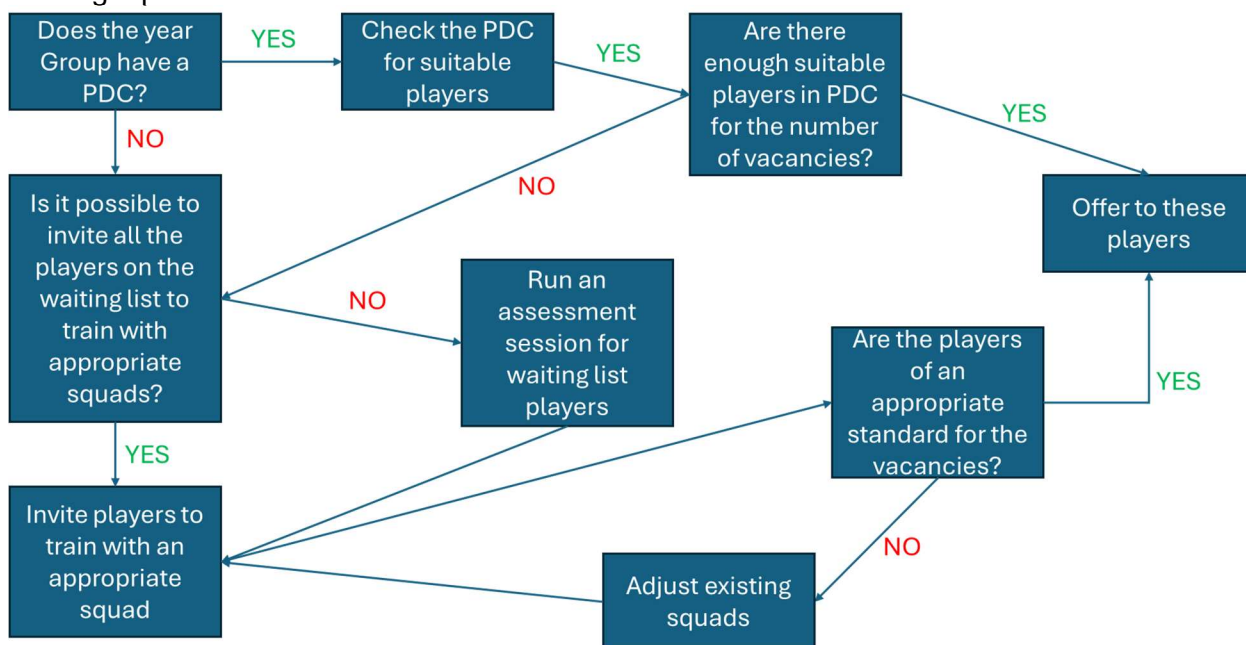
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Once the players that the Year Group wishes to offer places to have been identified, the Year Lead must discuss with the Boys/Girls Lead and the Chair/Secretary to obtain their approval to make the offers.

To be clear this part of the policy is not to enable Squad or Year Leads to;

1. Actively recruit players from other teams or players from outside Harpenden and the surrounding villages
2. Not offer places to players already in Colts from an existing team because the Squad Lead believes the players on the waiting list are better. Players internal to Colts should be considered first and should only not be moved if it would be detrimental to the enjoyment or development of those players being moved or other players within the squad

The below decision tree is included to aid Year Leads in understanding how to fill gaps in their existing squads.



New Members

- If a year group is full, new Members should only be admitted during the season if an existing Member leaves or if a squad is no longer viable due to injury or for other reasons.
- Additional players from the top of the waiting list may be added to a squad with the consent of the Year Group Lead. But if adding a player would exceed the squad size as determined below, those players are only able to train and not play matches with the squad.
- At the end of each season, the Year Lead decides how many places are available for new



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Members by:-

- deciding how many squads there will be within the year group and the size of each squad (see Harpenden Colts Squad Composition Policy);
- calculating the total number of players required during the next season to fill those squads, having regard to the total number of squads and hence players allowed in the year group as specified in this policy; and
- based on the number of existing Members who will be staying with the Club for the next season, calculating how many new Members are required to complete the squads.

Allocation of New Members

- If new Members join during the end of season player allocation process, they should be allocated to a squad in accordance with the principles set out in the Harpenden Colts Squad Composition Policy.
- If new Members join during the season, they should be allocated to the squad in which a vacancy has arisen.

12. Discipline of Players

For guidance on discipline please refer to the Harpenden Colts Squad Management Policy and the Club's Behaviour Management Guide.

13. Playing up a year

Players should only play up a year in exceptional circumstances where they need the challenge to develop them as a player. In the cases where players are already playing up a year they should be moved back to their own age group at the earliest possible time.

14. Removal of Club Volunteers

The Club's FMC has the right to remove and replace any year group officials (including the Year Group Lead and the Year Group Administrator) if the official is found not to be fulfilling the Club's reasonable expectations of them in their role for the Club, which would include, but is not limited to, if the following circumstances:-

- Bringing the Club into disrepute or creating a risk thereof
- Persistently and/or materially breaching any Policies or Codes of Conduct of the Club



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- Involvement in an arrangement that gives them a conflict of interest with the Club or their role within the Club

15. EJA – Eastern Junior Alliance

Where a year group decides to enter a side within the Eastern Junior Alliance (EJA) League, this will be run and agreed in partnership with Harpenden Town Football Club (HTFC). Please note HTFC may decide to enter an EJA side themselves for a particular year.

The decision to enter the side from a Colts year will be decided as follows:

- 1) By the relevant Section Lead, SL and YGL agreeing the side is ready to move into this standard.
- 2) The Club Secretary and/or the Chair agreeing this with the HTFC committee.

Upon approval the SL will then enter the team within the EJA League through HTFC and within the timeline set out by the EJA rules for new sides being asked to join.

The SL will agree the administration ways of working for this side with the HTFC committee supported by the Colts club secretary. E.g. who will register the players with the league etc.

While the EJA is a higher standard of football, the Colts ethos should remain, hence the players in the squad need to be of the appropriate standard to ensure all players in the squad enjoy their football. The Squad Lead in consultation with the YGL is permitted to bring players in from outside Colts to ensure this is the case. The expectation is that this will not exceed four players from outside the club in the first season.



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SCHEDULE

Procedures for Year Group Meetings

If a Qualifying Coach makes a request for a decision to be made formally at a year group meeting, the decision will be made in accordance with the procedures set out in this schedule.

All Year Group Officers must be given at least 7 days' notice of the meeting by email and the meeting must take place in person. If this is not possible due to extenuating circumstances a meeting may be held by video conference such as Zoom.

The year group meeting can be convened on less than 7 days' notice if at least 90% (which must include the Year Group Lead) of Year Group Officers entitled to attend and vote agree to shorter notice.

The following procedures will govern the conduct of the relevant Year Group Meeting:-

- The meeting notice will if reasonably possible include a list of the issue or issues upon which the year group is being asked to make a decision
- Prior to the establishment of squads, all Year Group Officers and the Administrator will be allowed to attend, speak and vote at the meeting.
- After the establishment of squads, only the following will be allowed to attend, speak and vote at the meeting (unless another Club policy specifies otherwise)
 - The Year Group Lead
 - Each Squad Lead
 - The Administrator
- An attempt will be made to reach decisions at Year Group Meetings by a consensus of those present.