

Selection and Game Time



For Grassroots Youth

This document explains **Alton FC** approach to player recruitment, selection and game time.



Our Approach

At Alton FC, we are committed to providing a positive grassroots football experience where every player can develop, learn and enjoy the game.

Our approach focuses on long-term player development, helping children build confidence, skills, teamwork, and a love for football in an environment that is safe, inclusive, and supportive life skills.

We believe that every player should have the opportunity to reach their potential, regardless of ability, while enjoying the game, making friends and creating lasting memories as part of the Alton FC community.

Our Approach

At Alton FC, our player recruitment and selection process is aligned to the needs of each stage of development.

In the Foundation Phase (U7 to U10), we focus on enjoyment, participation, and identifying a willingness to learn, while encouraging all players to develop fundamental movement and football skills.

Players will be of mixed ability, allowing them to build on their ability and enjoyment of the game.

We focus on fun over results.

Before moving to U10, we use the FA's four-corner model and assess players' ability to realign teams to support future development. This allows our coaching community to focus sessions on a similar ability level and ensures players are supported. We work closely with the North East Hants league to ensure that from this stage our teams are in divisions that are challenging but match their ability

During the Development Phase (U11 to U13), selection places greater emphasis on technical ability, game understanding, attitude and commitment to learning.

Recruitment of further players will depend on new players' ability and which team they should join to ensure they are supported.

In the Performance Phase (U14 to U18), recruitment and selection focus on helping players maximise their potential through a combination of technical quality, tactical understanding, physical development, resilience, and a positive mindset, while ensuring every player continues to develop within a supportive, safe, and inclusive environment.

GAME TIME AND PARTICIPATION

At Alton FC, we are committed to supporting playing time; this is one of the most important parts in a player's development.

In the foundation phase, all players must have broadly equal playing time. This can either be achieved in individual matches or across a season. Players should have at least half a match when available for selection subject to any exceptional circumstances.

In the development phase, playing time should also be equal, but we place more emphasis on players' attitude, attendance & effort.

In the performance phase, all players should get a fair level of playing time across the season, with the understanding that this phase is fully competitive.

The Role of a Coach

At Alton FC, coaches play a vital role in creating a positive, welcoming and respectful environment where every player can develop and enjoy their football.

Coaches are expected to communicate clearly and consistently, ensuring that decisions relating to player development, selection and playing opportunities are explained appropriately and in line with the club's values.

Any potential conflicts of interest are managed openly and fairly, with the best interests of players and the team always taking priority.

The club provides coaches with ongoing guidance, support and development opportunities to help ensure a consistent approach across all age groups.

Where agreed standards or expectations are not being applied consistently, Alton FC will work constructively with coaches to provide support, feedback and, where necessary, appropriate intervention to maintain a positive experience for all players, parents and careers.

Communication

Alton FC is committed to open, honest and respectful communication with players and parents/carers to help build trust, understanding and positive relationships across the club.

We communicate our values, expectations and decisions clearly through team meetings, parent briefings, digital communication channels and club events, ensuring information is accessible and easy to understand.

Players, parents and carers are encouraged to share their views, ask questions and contribute to discussions in an age-appropriate way so they feel heard and understand the reasons behind decisions that affect them.

We actively promote a culture of respect where constructive conversations and feedback are welcomed, with questions and concerns encouraged at suitable times away from matches and training sessions to ensure a positive environment for everyone.

Through clear, consistent and inclusive communication, Alton FC aims to create a supportive club culture where players, parents/carers, coaches and volunteers work together for the benefit of every child.

MANAGING QUESTIONS OR DISAGREEMENTS

Alton FC encourages any questions or concerns regarding selection or game time to be raised respectfully with the team coach in the first instance.

All feedback and concerns will be listened to carefully and reviewed fairly, with decisions explained in an age-appropriate and constructive manner.

Where concerns cannot be resolved informally, the club has a clear complaints process for escalation and review.

At all times, the wellbeing, development and enjoyment of the player remain the priority, ensuring conversations are child centred, respectful and focused on supporting positive experiences in football.

Concerns relating specifically to a child's safety, welfare or other safeguarding matter should be referred to the Club Welfare Officer in accordance with Alton FC's safeguarding procedures.

Open and timely communication is encouraged to build understanding and prevent issues from escalating.

In Summary

At Alton FC, our approach to recruitment, selection, and game time is centred on creating a positive, inclusive, and age-relevant environment where every player has the opportunity to develop, enjoy football, and reach their potential.

Decisions should reflect the club's values and be made fairly and transparently, with long-term player development, wellbeing, and enjoyment placed ahead of short-term results.

Statement Agreed By:	Alton FC Youth Committee
Date agreed:	01/09/2026
Date of next Review:	25/08/2027