



LITTLETON
Junior FC



LITTLETON JUNIOR FC

CLUB ETHOS & COACHING PHILOSOPHY

SINCE 1972



OUR CLUB ETHOS



3. WE ENJOY THE GAME

We want players to have fun with their friends, to develop their love of the game, and to express themselves and their personalities.

4. WE MIX ABILITIES

We know children play sport for many different reasons. We understand that not all players develop at the same rate, so we put the foundations in place for all kids, of all abilities.

1. WE ARE INCLUSIVE

Littleton Junior Football Club is an inclusive club for children of all ages and abilities. The club provides children from across the Winchester area with football training and matches, all played in a safe, fun and inclusive environment.

2. WE PUT FUN FIRST

We believe fun should always come first. If you enjoy football, then you're going to be better at it.

FUN. FRIENDSHIP. FOOTBALL.



COACHING AIMS IT'S ALL ABOUT THE PLAYERS



FOUR CORNERS

Develop players to their full potential using the 'four corners' of the FA's long-term player development model:

Technical/tactical

Psychological

Physical

Social



THE ABCs

Improve the players' movement skills (ABCs):

Agility

Balance

Coordination

Speed

PLAYER-CENTRIC

Create a player-centric environment and provide coaching that is suited to age and ability, in a safe and positive way.



LEARN THROUGH FUN

Make coaching sessions appropriately challenging, educational and enjoyable, whilst developing the players' technical skills, and improve their decision-making ability.



LIFE SKILLS

Teach the players life skills:

Cooperation

Teamwork

Communication

Friendship

COACHING AND SQUAD STRUCTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL



VOLUNTEER COACHES

The club depends on parent-volunteer coaches to run teams and training groups. All squads require at least two coaches, both with FA DBS checks and FA Safeguarding certification, plus at least one with an FA Level 1 qualification.

COACHING SUPPORT

The club utilises Saints Foundation coaches to support with training sessions, and provides access to The Coaching Manual to help coaches plan training sessions.

SQUAD SIZES

Players should have the chance to play all matches, so team squad sizes should be set accordingly.



EQUAL PLAYING TIME

Squads should not be expanded with a view to strengthening the team at the expense of individual playing time. All players should get equal playing time in matches, regardless of ability.

NO STREAMING

Player recruitment should be managed in a fair, transparent and coordinated way. This should involve all of the coaches across an age group, and not be streamed according to ability.



STICK WITH IT

Players should only move between teams in exceptional circumstances, and based on the agreement of all the coaches in the relevant age group(s).

THE ROLE OF THE COACH

INCLUSION AND INSPIRATION



MAKE IT FUN

Make the environment welcoming and inclusive.

Allow players to enjoy playing the game without pressure from a coach, family or other spectators.



MAKE IT APPROPRIATE

Communicate using age-appropriate language and instructions.

Set appropriate challenges to inspire the players.

ENCOURAGE

Enthuse and motivate players and encourage them to try new skills.

Support and inspire regular practice, and encourage children to be the best they can be, but never pressure them.

LISTEN AND CARE

Listen to players, give advice and extend their thinking.

Put the child's needs at the centre of the activity.

BE COMPASSIONATE

Consider how children learn as well as issues relating to self-esteem and motivation.

Understand that children are not the same as adults.

TAKE YOUR TIME

Understand issues that impact upon young player development.

Understand that development for football players is a long-term process.



COMMON COACHING GOALS QUALIFICATIONS AND BEHAVIOUR



ALL COACHES

All coaches **must** have a valid enhanced FA CRC/DBS check and complete FA Safeguarding training.

TEAM MANAGER

Each team manager **must** be qualified to a minimum of FA Level 1 or have completed the FA Introduction to Coaching Football, including Emergency Aid and Safeguarding certification.

COACHING ASSISTANTS

All other coaches **should** complete the FA Playmaker course and are encouraged to complete the new FA Introduction to Coaching Football qualification.

RENEWALS

Coaching qualifications **must** be kept up-to-date and renewed when necessary. The Club Welfare Officer supports coaches with DBS and qualification renewal dates.

RESPECT

Coaches **must** follow the FA Respect Code of Conduct, as well as strictly following club policies and procedures.

ENCOURAGE

Players **must** be free to play during matches with positive encouragement from coaches and parents.

LET THEM PLAY

Coaches **must not** patrol the touchline shouting continuous instructions. Let them make, and learn from, their mistakes.

GET THEM THINKING

Information from the touchline **should** be in the form of occasional questions from coaching staff.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT THE FA FOUR CORNER MODEL



TECHNICAL/TACTICAL

Unopposed: Technique practice.
Uneven sides: Skill practice.
Even sides: Game practice.
Game craft: Game as the teacher.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Practising, learning and experimenting.
Decision-making.
Learning styles.
Relevant to the player's needs.

PHYSICAL

Generic movement skills: Agility, balance, coordination, speed.
Football functional movement skills: Receiving the ball, running with the ball, dribbling, turning, kicking and heading.

SOCIAL

Are the players enjoying it?
Are they included in the process?
Are they challenged?
Are they supported when necessary (visually, orally, practically)?
Are they given ownership, trust and responsibility?



**“THE FOUR CORNER MODEL
HAS BEEN CREATED
TO HELP DEVELOP
THE PERSON AND THE
PLAYER.”**





TECHNICAL/TACTICAL

Encourage players to try new skills in practice and work out where they can be used in a game.

Where appropriate, practice should replicate the demands of the game, encouraging players to think and make decisions just as they would do in a match.

Vary difficulty to match the players' needs by altering the Space, Task, Equipment or Players (STEP).

Cut down on 'stop, stand still' interventions and let players experience the flow of the game.

PHYSICAL

Encourage appropriate movement skills which develop agility, balance, coordination and speed.

Remember that players grow at different rates and may need support and patience as they develop.

Children are not the same as adults. They should not be subjected to laps of the pitch or press-ups.

All 'warm-ups' should be dynamic, not static.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Use different methods of communication to engage with different types of learners.

Visual (seeing): tactics boards, posters, diagrams, cue and prompt cards, cones on the pitch.

Auditory (hearing): speak with players, ask questions, encourage discussions in groups to solve game-related problems.

Kinaesthetic (doing): demonstration to the team by the coach or by a player to their team-mates.

SOCIAL

Be a good role model for the players, and create a positive and welcoming environment.

Praise players for their effort and endeavour as well as their ability.

Manage mistakes to the player's advantage – understand what they were trying to do. Sometimes, they will have the right idea but just fail in the execution of the technique or skill.

Make sure football is fun, but with a purpose of development of skills and game understanding.

FOUNDATION PHASE 5–11 CREATING A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

Encourage players to be creative and take considered risks in practice and games. Remember, mistakes do happen.

Let players make some of the decisions and let them know that their opinions count.

Create opportunities for players to explore, question and foster their natural curiosity and imagination.

Allow all players to experience success... and failure!

Praise effort and positive behaviour as well as good play.

Appreciate what it is like to be young. For ages 5–11, football is very different to the game played by older players and adults.

Don't apply out-dated coaching methods with young players.

FOUNDATION PHASE 5–11 PRACTICE

Help players develop their game understanding by rotating positions during practice and games.

Ensure they can play a 'game' during every practice session.

Practice should replicate the demands of the game as much as possible and avoid players standing in lines or queuing.

Give lots of opportunities to practice different aspects of the game: shooting, dribbling, tackling, passing, goalkeeping.

Small-sided games on appropriate-sized pitches provide young players with opposition, decision-making, and challenges.

Set challenges in practice sessions. For example, tell them not to use their strongest foot if possible.

Try to match up players in lots of different ways to meet their individual needs.

Consider using uneven sides to challenge the players.

FOUNDATION PHASE 5–11 MATCHES

Don't impose unrealistic adult expectations on young players.

All children must have the opportunity to play for a minimum of 50% of the total game time on match days.

Reinforce the learning focus from practice sessions by setting players specific challenges that link to a recent practice theme. These can be discussed in breaks or after the match.

Consider how decisions impact upon a young player's self-esteem, motivation and enjoyment of the game. For example, what would it feel like to be used repeatedly as a substitute?

Players must be free to play during matches with positive encouragement from coaches and parents.

Coaches must not patrol the touchline shouting continuous instructions at the players.

Use alternative intervention techniques: Q&A, command, trial and error, observation and feedback, or guided discovery.

Don't be so intent on winning games that young players miss out on their chance to learn and fall in love with the game.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT 12–18 BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION PHASE

Continue to prioritise a positive learning environment. Ensure your methods and sessions remain appropriate to the players' age and ability.

Realistic passing, receiving and possession practice, which create pressure, interference and distraction, will help young players develop their awareness and understanding of the game.

Encourage players to become more effective 'off the ball'. Help them develop an understanding of movement that supports their team-mates, and explain how to create and exploit space.

Develop scanning, predicting and assessing skills to form a 'picture' before receiving the ball.

Introduce specific positional practices, balanced with experience of playing and practicing in different positions.

Encourage players to reflect on their effectiveness in practice and games, and to think about how they may improve.

Continue to encourage players to be creative by designing challenging practice sessions, and develop the players' active involvement in the training and learning process.

LITTLETON COACHES'
WORDS OF WISDOM



“NON-COMPETITIVE FOOTBALL ALLOWS THE PLAYERS TO WIN WITH DIGNITY, AND LOSE WITH THEIR HEADS HELD HIGH. BOTH SKILLS ARE SO IMPORTANT IN FOOTBALL, AND IN LIFE.”

“WE ONLY HAVE TWO RULES IN OUR TEAM... NEVER GIVE UP, AND NEVER CRITICISE. THESE CAN BE APPLIED TO SO MANY SITUATIONS, AND ARE SIMPLE, BUT BRILLIANT, BEDROCKS OF OUR TEAM ETHOS.”

“IT IS GENUINELY GREAT TO SEE PLAYERS TRYING OUT DIFFERENT POSITIONS. IT MEANS WE DON'T ALWAYS WIN MATCHES, BUT WE LEARN SO MUCH MORE AS A TEAM.”



“In a recent match, one of our players ran over to an opposition player to congratulate him after he scored a screamer in the top corner. It made my spine tingle to see so much positivity and respect. There's so much more to succeeding in sport than just winning a match.”

“THERE IS PROBABLY MORE CHANCE OF WINNING THE LOTTERY THAN MAKING IT IN THE PREMIERSHIP, SO BE SURE YOU ARE PLAYING FOR FUN, NOT FOR WINS (NOR YOUR OWN EGO).”

LITTLETON COACHES' WORDS OF WISDOM



“GET THE PARENTS ON BOARD, AND GET THEM INVOLVED. CREATE A FAMILY SPIRIT AROUND YOUR TEAM, FULL OF POSITIVITY, ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT.”

“Jamie hadn’t played before he was 12 and had two left feet. He trained with us for a year, and practiced hard at home and joined the team at 11-a-side. By 14 he was captain of the team and at 18 he helped us win the top league. My advice is to give everyone a chance, never write off anyone, and don’t just back the ‘star’ players. Kids change, all the time.”

“THE FA ASKED KIDS WHAT THEY WANTED FROM FOOTBALL. FIRST WAS PLAYING FOOTIE WITH THEIR MATES. WINNING MATCHES CAME IN AT NO.10.”

“IF IN DOUBT, WATCH THE FA VIDEOS WITH RAY WINSTONE IN. THEY’LL STOP YOU TURNING INTO THE COACH FROM HELL.”

“A recent year group streamed heavily from an early age. They ended up with one team winning the top league at u18 far too easily, with bored, unchallenged players... and the other team just about survived in a bottom league. The following year the teams played mixed ability football from u8–u18. Both teams ended up in high positions in the top league, all challenged, all happy.”

