

The Spartans FC Youth Player Pathway Guidance, 11 Aside (Boys)



OVERVIEW

The Spartans FC Youth aims to develop players and coaches into “the best, people, players and coaches they can be.”

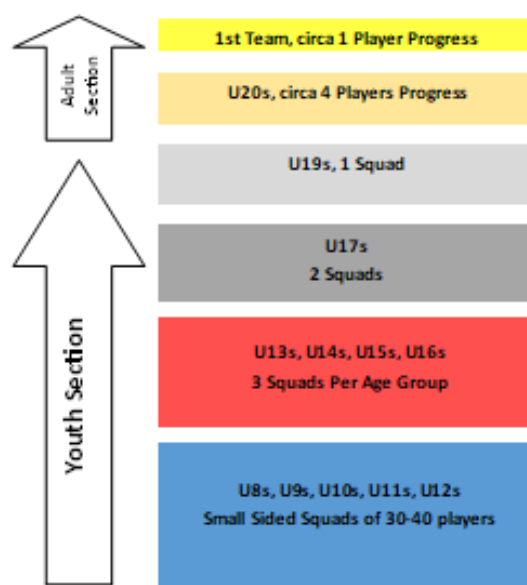
The emphasis is on producing young footballers who are proud to play for Spartans. Our aim to produce technically outstanding, innovative football players whilst also developing educating and supporting innovative coaches, who are excellent trainers in the game. To create coaches, players and squads who are recognised as excellent ambassadors and role models. To build a club culture of excellence, demanding 100% effort at all times. Winning is important but not at all costs. We have a Long-Term Player Development plan (LTPD) in place which is not result focussed.

One of the key objectives of the club is to ensure that members are encouraged to stay with the club and continue to play, train and, compete at their chosen level. We want to see players progressing through our ranks to the adult 1st team (and/or beyond).

CLUB VALUES

At Spartans FC Youth we have a set of core values which lead and guide our behaviours and underpin the “Spartans Way” on and off the pitch. Coaches are the role models for children and parents and have a responsibility to project and promote the clubs core values in all that they do.

PLAYER PATHWAY



Live together. Play together. Win together.

11 ASIDE - OFFICIAL ROLES

Year Group Coordinator

- Ideally an experienced coach who experience of the age group and who will keep communication flowing between the different age group team coaches and provide support where required in conjunction with the CDO.
- Organise regular meetings with the age group Head Coaches, (at least twice a year), to discuss player development and movement between squads.
- This role can be combined with one of the other roles

Head Coach:

- Will be qualified to SFA Coaching Qualification Level 1.3 on the Adult/Youth pathway. For 1st Division team Head Coach will be qualified to C Badge.
- Will coordinate the training sessions for their squad in collaboration with the squad's other coaches and ensure good communication between the coaching team.
- All new players to be recruited through the squad Head Coach. No squads to bring in any new players without first informing the other age group Head Coaches.
- Hold meetings/communicate regularly with squad parents/guardians to keep them up to date and gain parental buy-in.
- Establishing expectations at the beginning of the season and being honest about these will mean less opportunity for dissatisfied players and parents.

Coaches:

- At least one additional coach per squad who will be qualified to be SFA Coaching Level to a 1.2 on the adult/youth pathway.
- Will work with the squad Head Coach on all matters relating to the development of the players and squad and has input into all decisions for the squad.

Secretary:

- Responsible for registering the team, officials, and players each season.
- Maintains an up to date record of all current squad players, including the completion of the SYFA Parental Consent form.
- Maintains an up to date record of coaches and volunteers including contact details.
- To act as the liaison between the club and team officials, players, and parents/guardians.

First Aider:

- There must be at least one Sports Injury qualified First Aider per squad.
- The First Aider must be available to attend most squad training and matches and is responsible for the maintenance of the squads First Aid bag.

Parent Helpers:

- To support coaches at required at training and matches. Volunteers can provide a great support to the team carrying out tasks from admin to fundraising etc.

All Youth Section Volunteers are Committed to:

- All squad volunteers to complete the Volunteer Recruitment Process before starting
- Abide by the Spartans Coaches Code of Conduct to guide behaviour
- No squads shall disband without first consulting with the YSMC
- No Players should be asked to leave the club due to football ability

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AGE GROUP TRANSITIONS

Transition from Small Sided to 11 Aside

Splitting players into squads can be difficult. It is to the benefit of all players to find a level that they enjoy and that also challenges them. Ideally players should be playing with others of a similar ability to stretch & develop them.

There are a lot of factors that coaches need to consider when splitting players into squads as age/stage, growth and maturity all have an impact. It has been shown that sometimes players who are the most prominent at Small Sided do not always transfer this dominance to the eleven aside game and vice versa. Birth dates should be taken into consideration as some players can be eleven months older than others in the same year group which may result in 'catch up' at a later stage. Constant squad evaluation is the key to monitor this.

There are usual 3 squads formed from a Small Sided age group

1. Spartans FC Youth (normally in 1st division, developing players for the senior squad beyond)
2. The Spartans FC Reds, Colts (normally in 2nd division)
3. The Spartans FC Whites/Blues, (normally in 2nd, 3rd or 4th division)

Squad Guide

- Each squad should consist of 17 to 18 players
- Each player will get playing time each week although the playing opportunities and expectations need to be managed sensitively (expected 50% playing time at U13s & U14s)
- Commitment to train twice a week.
- If squad requires more players; first establish if there are players in the lower division squad who would benefit and be able to step up.
- Each season **5 new players can be recruited** to the team if the squad numbers remain manageable and the Head Coach explains and manages playing opportunities for all.
- Player development will be the driver of player movement and recruitment each season
- **Players are not Guaranteed to stay in the same division each season**

Preparation for the Age Group Split

Clear communication and following the points below will foster a smooth transition process:

- Age groups training on the same evening
- Continuous dialogue between coaches within the age group throughout the season
- Head Coaches are responsible for co-ordinating games to give all of the coaches the chance to see all the players play before the squads are finalised
- The squad Head Coaches will lead this process with input from all coaches
- It is advisable to ask all coaches to place players into squads independently of each other. This can then be compiled into aggregated squads without 'fear or favour' and form the basis of the discussion going forward. This gives all coaches an input into the process.
- CDO and Youth Section chair to attend if requested

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Transition to U17s and to U19s

The Spartans FC Youth Player Pathway allows for 2 x U17s teams and 1 x U19s team.

The reasons for the reduction in the number of squads at these age groups are:

- There are fewer SERYFA divisions
- There is generally a drop out of players at these age group as we find players leave to go to college/university, start employment or to pursue other interests
- Limited training space and facilities

There is the possibility of having a second U19s squad, provided training pitches are available or can be found and provided one U19s team is in its 2nd year and one U19s team is in its 1st year.

We can only guarantee one year of U19s football and priority will always be given to the squad identified as the development team.

Preparation for Reduction in Number of Squads

In most cases the first division squad will automatically progress to the next age group, however all players will have the opportunity to compete for a place in the team.

Clear communication and following the points below will foster a smooth transition process:

- Age groups training on the same evening
- Continuous dialogue between coaches within the year group throughout the season
- Head Coaches will co-ordinate games to give all players an opportunity to compete for places before the squad is finalised
- The Head Coach will lead this process with input from all coaches
- Players selected need to be able to play at the appropriate division level or be developing towards it.
- Under 20s coaching team will identify players suitable for progression to adult section
- CDO and YS chair to attend if requested

PLAYER MOVEMENT BETWEEN SQUADS

Moving players between squads can be difficult, however it is important that we have the ability to move players between squads and a procedure to guide this in place. Player development comes before individual squad needs.

All age group squads should meet twice a season (November & March) to discuss: training, player movement and general sharing of how the season has been, any progression made and lessons learned. The CDO should be kept up to date in the form of a short email. This gives us a clear and transparent pathway for players, coaches, and parents.

Support available for Coaches

- Guidance and advice from the Coach Development Officer (CDO)
- Spartans Curriculum – available on website and in electronic format
- Spartans Toolbox, (Homework & Player Assessment Booklet supplied)
- Spartans Youth will fund attendance at SFA coaching courses.

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INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

The challenge for Spartans FC Youth is to create an environment where players can learn and develop to their full potential and parents/guardians play a key role in this.

Regular Attendance

All players should attend training regularly if they want to be part of Spartans Youth. The minimum target for attendance is 75% across all sessions. If Players are attending Additional Development Squads attendance to standard sessions is expected.

Encourage Your Child to Talk to Coaches

If they are having difficulties, need help or have questions encourage them to speak directly to the coaches. Taking responsibility is part of developing as a player.

Be your Child's Best Fan

Give your child unconditional support, irrespective of performance. Encourage them, be supportive, cheer appropriately.

Keep a Check on Reality

If the team has lost but have tried their best, help your child see this as a "win". The focus should be on progress and not results.

Play an Active Role

There are lots of small tasks that need done to run a successful age group, e.g. taking the register, writing newsletters, fundraising, team building etc. Talk to the Head Coach to volunteer – it is fun to get involved and help with the age group or the wider club.

Pay Subs on Time

Spartans FC Youth budget carefully but relies on player subs to function effectively. Your subs pay for basic equipment, match strips, pitch bookings and supporting infrastructure.

Additional Funding

If you are lucky enough to have work for or run a successful business, please consider sponsoring a squad. A donation can help fund an age group to have additional kit, footballs, equipment etc. Ask for Sponsorship details.

Parents Code of Conduct

Please download a copy from the website and read it. Please respect the officials and the opposition and abide by the Code of Conduct. **Please do not coach from the side lines - leave that to the coaches.**

Queries

Queries about playing, squads and opportunities to develop should be dealt with by the squad Head Coach in the first instance and if not resolved can then be referred to the Coach Development Officer and YSMC if necessary.

For further information see our website at: <http://spartansfcyouth.com/>

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