



Team Formation & Grading

OBJECTIVE

To provide clarity on how TCAFC Junior & Youth teams are formed and graded. This policy has been in place since 2018 and is supported by New Zealand Football (NZF) Team Formation & Grading guidance released in 2021. A full copy of this can be found here: tcafc.co.nz/resources.

This guidance applies to all TCAFC teams entered into the U4 - U19 Grades. Junior teams entered using players from our Skills Hub are excluded from this policy.

BACKGROUND

In 2018 TCAFC made the decision to stop conducting trials to select teams based on ability. The decision was based on feedback from members and advice from the club's head coaching group.

The focus was shifted from judgement calls on ability to fun and enjoyment. So teams are formed with age and friendships as the key criteria.

Results released from a NZF survey conducted in 2018 provided feedback on why junior players play football. The responses backed the TCAFC change and showed that:

- 69% play for fun.
- 10% play to be with friends.
- 7% play to learn new skills.

At TCAFC players are placed in grades based on their birth year. For example, players turning 10 years old in the current calendar year will be placed in the U10 grade.

OUR PROCESS

- During Registration, players register into their NZF grade * and asked for any team or teammate preferences.
- After registrations are closed, teams will be formed based on the team played for the previous season.
- Where possible, new players to a team will be added **.
- Coaches and Team Coordinators named.
- Teams announced.
- Coaches will advise training time and date.

* NZF Grades are based on the age a player is turning that calendar year. So if a player is turning 11 between 1 January to 31 December, they will be in the 11th grade. Please see below for Dispensation information.

** We try to meet all requests, however this can't always work and can be quite complex to meet everyone's request such as:

- Players requests don't match up.
 - e.g. Player 1 wants to play with Player 2, 3, 4 but Player 3, 4 want to play with Player 5 who is already in a team with 6, 7, 8.
- Game-day formations changing.
 - e.g. Last season you may have played 7v7, but your age group now plays 9v9. This means squad sizes need to increase, and players moved around.
- When you have requested to play in a team where all players from last season are keen to try and stay together, there isn't room for more players.



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DISPENSATION

Dispensation does allow for players to play in a different grade, based on the following criteria. Please note, some Dispensations do require approval from WaiBOP.

1. Social - A player is in the same school year as player(s) older/younger.
2. Development - Identified by our qualified FCTM Coaching Team to require a higher challenge point.
3. Team Numbers - Different grades requiring additional numbers.

Often playing in a different grade can be detrimental to a player's enjoyment and development, so we have this policy in place to ensure these are key considerations.

While you may meet one Dispensation reason, we can't guarantee your team preference as it depends on playing numbers. If the grade is full, players who are the correct age will be prioritised.

You can email hello@tcafc.co.nz with any relevant information to request a dispensation review.