

The FA Charter Standard League Programme Better Players Guidance Note



Get **into** Football 

The FA Charter Standard League Programme

Better Players Guidance Note

The FA National Game Strategy identified as one of its key goals, the need to support players at all levels to improve their technique and skills to become better players.

In these guidance notes, we will look at a number of examples as to how FA Charter Standard Leagues can help with this goal. Please note these ideas may not work in every part of the country, but we trust it will stimulate debate and that every league will be able to offer at least one of the ideas in the pilot.

The examples focus on:

- Principles of Long Term Player development
- Small sided Formats
- Numbers of Teams in a division
- Flexible Format Festivals
- Coach education Programme-In service Programme.

Principles of Long Term Player Development (LTPD)

The FA has recently incorporated LTPD into its coach education courses. LTPD recognises the need to develop the player technically, physically, psychologically and socially.

As part of LTPD, The FA will be developing a competitions framework, which sets out guidance of training to games ratio, as well as appropriate formats of the game.

Experts tell us that children need more practice and should ideally have three practice/training sessions to every game. In grassroots football that is often impractical, however your league could help by building into your league programme training days, around 2/3 per season, as opposed to matches every weekend.

Small sided formats

Research shows that playing Mini Soccer provides children with more touches of the ball and a greater involvement in the game.

Whilst every league with U10s will provide as a minimum 7v7 Mini Soccer, as an FA Charter Standard League, could you, if facilities allow, have your younger age groups playing 4v4 or 5v5?

Or why not, at U11, try offering a 7v7 or 9v9 option?

Number of teams in a division

To achieve the Charter Standard League Award leagues may have a maximum of 12 teams in a division'.

The reasoning for this is as follows. There are only 34 weekends between September and the end of April. We live in a flexible society; more and more parents take half term as a holiday, the leagues close down at Christmas and we usually lose a week at Easter.

So we are left with 26/27 weekends. If you have a league of 12, that's 22 league games plus cups. Most parts of the country will have two cups, so even if a team goes out in the first round, that's 24 weekends gone, so we get the games played, providing we have a "good" winter.

If the weather is poor, fixture congestion results, putting pressure on teams to play back to back games over a weekend which is bad practise for young players and also reduces their vital practise and training time. 12 teams divisions should therefore be a maximum, and whenever possible leagues should consider reducing this to 10 or lower with an option to run a subsidiary competition if the league finishes early

A league in the Midlands is planning to have no league games at holiday periods but will offer those teams that want to play, a chance to play in cup competition.

Flexible format festivals

Leagues should encourage the use of flexible format festivals

Here is one example of how a flexible format could work:

As a league, could you organise a flexible format festival for your clubs?

- 1 day
- Up to 28 teams
- 2 referees
- 9 activity co-ordinators
- 2x full size pitches
- 16 Mini Soccer goals (8 sets).

Zones

1. 7 vs 7
2. 4 vs. 4
3. Skill Zone
4. Tag rugby
5. Keep ball (sale zones)
6. 4 corners
7. Quiet Area

Format

10.00 Registration

Clubs go round in blocks of four teams

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.30	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
11.05	G	A	B	C	D	E	F
11.40	F	G	A	B	C	D	E
12.15	E	F	G	A	B	C	D
12.50	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
13.25	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
14.00	B	C	D	E	F	G	A

14.30 Present certificates

Teams will be allocated colours (bibs); they stay in these bibs all day.

Zone 1 - Red vs. Blue; Yellow vs. Green (13 mins - 1 way)

Zone 2 - Red vs. Yellow; Blue vs. Green (12 mins, but swap after 6)

Zone 3 - Red and Yellow together / Blue and Green together (13 mins per group)

Zone 4 - Red vs. Green; Yellow vs. Blue (13 mins per game)

Zone 5 - Red vs. Blue; Yellow vs. Green (13 mins per game)

Zone 6 - Red vs. Green; Blue vs. Yellow (13 mins per game)

Zone 7 - Red vs. Yellow; Blue vs. Green (13 mins per game)

Zone 1



Zone 2



Zone 3



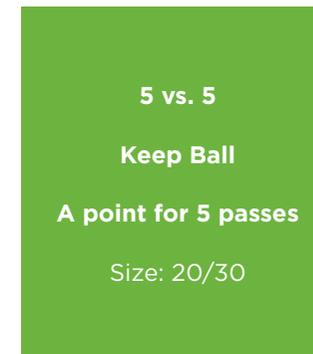
Zone 7



Zone 6



Zone 5



Zone 4



In-service programme

Please work with your CFA Development team to organise two in-service coaching sessions per season.

Coach Education Programme

Again, please work with your CFA Development teams to offer a coach education programme which includes:

- FA Level 1
- FA Youth Module 1
- FA Age Appropriate Course - Introductory Module

For adult leagues, we would expect leagues to offer The FA Coaching Adults Course.