



League Rules

2023/24 Season

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PREFACE

COMPETITION ETHOS

The Herts Youth League seeks to provide our children, coaches and referees with the best possible start in football. We want our children to play with freedom in a safe and calm environment that allows them to make, and learn, from their own mistakes.

The Competition adopts best practice where possible and rules which benefit long term player and referee development. It aims to support best practice Clubs committed to putting the welfare, enjoyment and development of our children first. Such Clubs promote high standards of behaviour and, in joining the Herts Youth League, accept responsibility for promoting and adhering to the Competition ethos including:

Playing To Learn, Not Just to Win

This is children's football where games are intended to help them learn, to develop their skills, their confidence and their self-esteem. Results of development fixtures are not published as the focus is long term player development, and enjoyment, not short term wins. That does not mean it is not competitive, it's just that it is the children competing not the adults!

Fewer Instructions

Children learn by making mistakes. The more mistakes they make, the more they learn. Standing on the touchline shouting instructions detracts from the learning experience. By giving children an answer they do not learn to find their own solutions. Coaches should keep advice on tactics to a minimum while they are playing, with coaching points best made before and after the game and during scheduled breaks.

More Silent Sidelines

Children learn best in a calm supportive environment. Young children can find touchline noise distracting, confusing or even intimidating and the groans of adult disappointment simply put children off trying new skills for fear of failure. That is why we promote Silent Sidelines. Spectators are asked to support all the children by applauding good play from both teams, and not shouting out. Relax, stand back and enjoy the game. The loudest sound should be the children playing!

Equal Playing Time

Children develop by playing, not by watching from the sidelines. The more pitch time they get, the faster they develop. That is why we encourage Equal Playing Time.

DEFINITIONS

1. (A) In these Rules:

"Affiliated Association" means an Association accorded the status of an Affiliated Association under the rules of The FA.

"AGM" shall mean the annual general meeting held in accordance with the constitution of the Competition.

"Club" means a club for the time being in membership of the Competition.

"Competition" means the Herts Youth League.

"Competition Match" means any match played or to be played under the jurisdiction of the Competition.

"Contract Player" means any Player (other than a Player on a Scholarship) who is eligible to play under a written contract of employment with a Club.

"Deposit" means a sum of money deposited with the Competition as part of the requirements of membership of the Competition.

"Fees Tariff" means a list of fees approved by the Clubs at a general meeting to be levied by the Management Committee for any matters for which fees are payable under the Rules, as set out at Schedule A.

"Fines Tariff" means a list of fines approved by the Clubs at a general meeting to be levied by the Management Committee for any breach of the Rules, as set out at Schedule A.

"Ground" means the ground on which the Club's Team(s) plays its Competition Matches.

"Management Committee" means in the case of a Competition which is an unincorporated association, the management committee elected to manage the running of the Competition and where the Competition is incorporated it means the Board of Directors appointed in accordance with the articles of association of that company.

"Match Officials" means the referee, the assistant referees and any fourth official appointed to a Competition Match.

"Mini Soccer" means those participating at ages under 7s to under 10s.

"Non Contract Player" means any Player (other than a Player on a Scholarship) who is eligible to play for a Club but has not entered into a written contract of employment.

"Officer" means an individual who is appointed or elected to a position in a Club or Competition which requires that individual to make day to day decisions.

"Participant" shall have the same meaning as set out in the rules of The FA from time to time.

"Player" means any Contract Player, Non Contract Player or other player who plays or who is eligible to play for a Club.

"Player Registration System" means The FA system to register players as determined by The FA from time to time.

"Playing Season" means the period between the date on which the first competitive fixture in the Competition is played each year until the date on which the last competitive fixture in the Competition is played.

"Rules" means these rules under which the Competition is administered.

"Sanctioning Authority" means the Hertfordshire County Football Association Limited.

"Scholarship" means a Scholarship as set out in Rule C 3 (a) (i) defined in of the rules of The FA rules.

"Season" means the period of time between an AGM and the subsequent AGM.

"Secretary" means such person or persons appointed or elected to carry out the administration of the Competition.

"SGM" means a special general meeting held in accordance with the constitution of the Competition.

"Team" means a team affiliated to a Club, including where a Club provides more than one team in the Competition in accordance with the Rules.

"The FA" means The Football Association Limited.

"written" or "in writing" means the representation or reproduction of words or symbols or other information in a visible form by any method or combination of methods, whether sent or supplied in electronic form or otherwise.

"Youth Football" means those participating at ages under 11s to under 18s.

(B) Unless stated otherwise, terms referring to natural persons are applicable to both genders. Any term in the singular applies to the plural and vice-versa.

GOVERNANCE RULES

COMPETITION NAME AND CONSTITUTION

2. (A) The Competition will be known as the Herts Youth League (or such other name as the Competition may adopt). The Clubs participating in the Competition must be members of the Competition. A Club which ceases to exist or which ceases to be entitled to play in the Competition for any reason whatsoever shall thereupon automatically cease to be a member of the Competition.
- (B) This Competition shall consist of not more than 30 Clubs approved by the Sanctioning Authority.
- (C) The geographical area covered by the Competition membership shall be England Football Accredited Clubs (or like FA accreditation) and, at the discretion of the Management Committee, clubs in the process of attaining England Football accreditation affiliated to the Hertfordshire County Football Association located north of the M25 or inside the City and District of St Albans local authority and within a 12 mile radius from Welwyn Garden City Town Hall. In the event that a Club loses its status as an England Football Accredited Club a Club will be allowed to remain in the Competition until the end of the following Playing Season. If status as a Charter Standard Club is not regained by the end of the following Playing Season a Club will no longer be eligible to participate in the Competition.
- (D) The administration of the Competition under these Rules will be carried out by the Competition acting (save where otherwise specifically mentioned herein) through the Management Committee in accordance with the rules, regulations and policies of The FA.
- (E) All Clubs shall adhere to the Rules and the Competition ethos (see Preface). Every Club shall be deemed, as a member of the Competition to have accepted the Rules and to have agreed to abide by the decisions of the Management Committee in relation thereto, subject to the provisions of Rule 7.
- (F) The Rules are taken from the Standard Code of Rules for Youth Competitions (the "Standard Code") determined by The FA from time to time. In the event of any omissions from the Standard Code then the requirements of the Standard Code shall be deemed to apply to the Competition.
- (G) All Clubs must be affiliated to an Affiliated Association and their names and particulars shall be returned annually by the appointed date in a manner prescribed by the Sanctioning Authority and must have a constitution approved by the Sanctioning Authority. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

This Competition shall apply annually for sanction to the Sanctioning Authority and the constituent Teams of Clubs may be grouped in divisions, each not exceeding 12 in number.

(H) Inclusivity and Non-discrimination

- (i) The Competition and each Club must be committed to promoting inclusivity and to eliminating all forms of discrimination and should abide and adhere to The FA Equality Policy and any legislative requirements (to include those contained in the Equality Act 2010).
- (ii) This Competition and each Club must make every effort to promote equality by treating people fairly and with respect, by recognising that inequalities may exist, by taking steps to address them and by providing access and opportunities for all members of the community, irrespective of age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability or otherwise.
- (iii) Any alleged breach of the Equality Act 2010 legislation must be referred to the appropriate Sanctioning Authority for investigation.
- (I) Clubs must comply with the provisions of any initiatives of The FA which are adopted by the Competition including, but not limited to, England Football Accredited and RESPECT programmes. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (J) All Participants shall abide by The Football Association Regulations for Safeguarding Children as determined by The FA from time to time.
- (K) Clubs shall not enter any of their Teams playing at a particular age group in the Competition in any other competition (with the exception of FA and County FA Competitions) except with the written consent of the Management Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (L) At the AGM or a SGM called for the purpose, a majority of the delegates present shall have power to decide or adjust the constitution of the divisions at their discretion. When necessary this Rule shall take precedence over Rule 22.

CLUB NAME

3. Any Club wishing to change its name must obtain permission from the Sanctioning Authority and from the Management Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

ENTRY FEE, SUBSCRIPTION, DEPOSIT

4. (A) Applications by Clubs for admission to the Competition or the entry of an additional Team(s) from the same Club must be made in writing to the Secretary by such date determined by the Management Committee and must be accompanied by an entry fee per Team as set out in the Fees Tariff, which shall be returned in the event of non-election.
- At the discretion of the voting members present applications, of which due notice has been given, may be received at the AGM or a SGM or on a date agreed by the Management Committee.
- (B) The annual subscription shall be payable in accordance with the Fees Tariff per Club/Team (where a Club has more than one Team in membership of the Competition) and shall be payable on or before the date of the AGM in each year.
- (C) A Deposit, if any, determined by member Clubs in general meeting, shall be payable in accordance with the Fees Tariff per Club and shall be payable on or before the following AGM in each year. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (D) A Club shall not participate in this Competition until the entry fee, annual subscription and Deposit (if required) have been paid.
- (E) If requested by the Competition, Clubs must advise annually to the Secretary in writing by 31 July of its Sanctioning Authority affiliation number for the forthcoming Playing Season. Clubs must advise the Secretary in writing, or on the prescribed form, of details of its headquarters, its Officers and any other information required by the Competition. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (F) An all-female team can apply to the Competition to play an age group down in a mixed gender competition, subject to rule 8A(iii)&(iv) and provided the team has obtained approval from its Sanctioning Authority.

MANAGEMENT, NOMINATION, ELECTION

5. (A) The Management Committee shall comprise the Officers of the Competition and a maximum of 2 members who shall all be elected at the AGM.
- (B) Retiring Officers shall be eligible to become candidates for re-election without nomination provided that the Officer notifies the Secretary in writing not later than 30 April in each year.
- All other candidates for election as Officers of the Competition or members of the Management Committee shall be nominated to the Secretary in writing, signed by the secretaries of two Clubs, not later than 21 days before the AGM in each year. Names of the candidates for election shall be circulated with the notice of the AGM. In the event of there being no nomination in accordance with the foregoing for any office, nominations may be received at the AGM.
- (C) The Management Committee shall meet as and when required, save that no more than three calendar months shall pass between each meeting.
- On receiving a requisition signed by two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Management Committee the Secretary shall convene a meeting of the

Management Committee.

- (D) Except where otherwise mentioned all communications shall be addressed to the Secretary who shall conduct the correspondence of the Competition and keep a record of its proceedings.
- (E) All communications received from Clubs must be conducted through their Officers and sent to the Secretary.
Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

POWERS OF MANAGEMENT

- 6. (A) The Management Committee may appoint sub-committees and delegate such of their powers as they deem necessary. The decisions of all sub-committees shall be reported to the Management Committee for ratification. The Management Committee shall have power to deal only with matters within the Competition and not for any matters of misconduct that are under the jurisdiction of The FA or Affiliated Association.
- (B) Subject to the permission of the Sanctioning Authority having been obtained the Management Committee may order a match or matches to be played each Season, the proceeds to be devoted to the funds of the Competition and, if necessary, may call upon each Club (including any club which may have withdrawn during the Season) to contribute equally such sums as may be necessary to meet any deficiency at the end of the Season.
- (C) Each member of the Management Committee shall have the right to attend and vote at all Management Committee meetings and have one vote thereat, but no member shall be allowed to vote on any matters directly appertaining to such member or to the Club so represented or where there may be a conflict of interest. (This shall also apply to the procedure of any sub-committee).

In the event of the voting being equal on any matter, the Chairman of the Management Committee shall have a second or casting vote.

- (D) The Management Committee shall have powers to apply, act upon and enforce these Rules and shall also have jurisdiction over all matters affecting the Competition. Any action by the Competition must be taken within 28 days of the Competition being notified.

With the exception of Rules 6(I), 8(H) and 9, for all alleged breaches of a Rule the Management Committee shall issue a formal written charge to the Club concerned. The Club charged shall be given 7 days from the date of notification of the charge to reply. In such reply a Club may:-

- (i) Accept the charge and submit in writing a case of mitigation for consideration by the Management Committee on the papers; or
- (ii) Accept the charge and notify that it wishes to put its case of mitigation at a hearing before the Management Committee; or
- (iii) Deny the charge and submit in writing supporting evidence for consideration by the Management Committee on the papers; or
- (iv) Deny the charge and notify that it wishes to put its case of mitigation at a hearing before the Management Committee.

Where the Club charged fails to respond within 7 days, the Management Committee shall determine the charge in such manner and upon such evidence as it considers appropriate.

Where required, hearings shall take place as soon as reasonably practicable following receipt of the reply of the Club as more fully set out above.

Having considered the reply of the Club (whether in writing or at a hearing), the Management Committee shall make its decision and, in the event that the charge is accepted or proven, decide on the appropriate penalty (with reference to the Fines Tariff where applicable).

The maximum fine permitted for any breach of a Rule is £100 and, when setting any fine, the Management Committee must ensure that the penalty is proportional to the offence, taking into account any mitigating circumstances.

No Participant under the age of 18 can be fined.

All breaches of the Laws of the Game or the Rules and Regulations of The FA shall be dealt with in accordance with FA Rules by the appropriate Association.

- (E) All decisions of the Management Committee shall be binding subject to the right of appeal in accordance with Rule 7.
Decisions of the Management Committee must be notified in writing to those concerned within 7 days.
- (F) 50% of its members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business by the Management Committee or any sub-committee thereof.
- (G) The Management Committee, as it may deem necessary, shall have power to fill, in an acting capacity, any vacancies that may occur amongst their number.
- (H) A Club must comply with an order or instruction of the Management Committee, and must attend to the business and/or the correspondence of the Competition to the satisfaction of the Management Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (I) Subject to a Club's right of appeal in accordance with Rule 7 below, all fines and charges must be paid within 14 days of the date of notification of the decision.
Any Club failing to do so will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff. Further failure to pay the fine including the additional fine within a further 14 days will result in fixtures being withdrawn until such time as the outstanding fines are paid.
- (J) A member of the Management Committee appointed by the Competition to attend a meeting or Competition Match may have any reasonable expenses incurred refunded by the Competition.
- (K) The Management Committee shall have the power to fill any vacancy that may occur in the membership of the Competition between the AGM or SGM called to decide the constitution and the commencement of the Playing Season.
- (L) The business of the Competition as determined by the Management Committee may be transacted by electronic mail or facsimile.

PROTESTS, CLAIMS, COMPLAINTS, APPEALS

- 7. (A) (i) All questions of eligibility, qualification of Players or interpretations of the Rules shall be referred to the Management Committee or a sub-committee duly appointed by the Management Committee.
- (ii) Objections relevant to the dimensions of the pitch, goals, flag posts or other facilities of the venue will not be entertained by the Management Committee unless a protest is lodged with the referee before the commencement of the Competition Match.
- (B) Except in cases where the Management Committee decide that there are special circumstances, protests and complaints (which must contain full particulars of the grounds upon which they are founded) must be lodged with the Secretary within 7 days (excluding Sundays) of the Competition Match or occurrence to which they refer. A protest or complaint shall not be withdrawn except by permission of the Management Committee. A member of the Management Committee who is a member of any Club involved shall not be present (except as a witness or representative of their Club) when such protest or complaint is being determined.
- (C) No protest of whatever kind shall be considered by the Management Committee unless the complaining Club shall have deposited with the Secretary a sum in accordance with the Fees Tariff. This may be forfeited in whole or in part in the event of the complaining or protesting Club losing its case. The Competition shall have power to order the defaulting Club or the Club making a losing or frivolous protest or complaint to pay the expenses of the inquiry or to order that the costs be shared by the parties.
- (D) All parties to a protest or complaint must receive a copy of the submission and must be afforded an opportunity to make a statement at least 7 days prior to the protest or complaint being heard.
 - (i) All parties must have received 7 days' notice of the hearing should they be instructed to attend.
 - (ii) Should a Club elect to state its case in person then it should forward a deposit of £10 and indicate such when forwarding the written response.
- (E) The Management Committee shall also have power to compel any party to the protest to pay such expenses as the Management Committee shall direct.

(F) Any appeal against a decision of the Management Committee must be lodged with the Sanctioning Authority within 14 days of the posting of the written notification of the decision causing the appeal, accompanied by a fee (as set out in the Fees Tariff), which may be forfeited in the event of the appeal not being upheld. A copy of the appeal must also be sent to the Secretary. The procedure for the appeal shall be determined by the Sanctioning Authority, in such respect the Sanctioning Authority may (but is not obliged to):

- (i) invite submissions by the parties involved; or
- (ii) convene a hearing to hear the appeal; or
- (iii) permit new evidence; or
- (iv) impose deadlines as are appropriate.

Any appeal shall not involve a rehearing of the evidence considered by the Management Committee.

(G) No appeal can be lodged against a decision taken at an AGM or SGM unless this is on the ground of unconstitutional conduct.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

8. (A) The AGM shall be held not later than 30 June in each year. At this meeting the following business shall be transacted provided that at least two thirds (2/3) of members are present and entitled to vote:-
- (i) To receive and confirm the minutes of the preceding AGM.
 - (ii) To receive and adopt the annual report, balance sheet and statement of accounts.
 - (iii) Election of Clubs to fill vacancies.
 - (iv) Constitution of the Competition for the ensuing Season.
 - (v) Election of Officers of the Competition and the Management Committee members.
 - (vi) Appointment of auditors.
 - (vii) Alteration of Rules, if any (see Rule 14).
 - (viii) Fix the date for the commencement of the Playing Season and kick-off times applicable to the Competition.
 - (ix) Fix the date for the end of the Playing Season.
 - (x) Other business of which due notice shall have been given and accepted as being relevant to an AGM.
- (B) A copy of the duly verified balance sheet, statement of accounts and agenda shall be forwarded to each Club at least 14 days prior to the meeting together with any proposed Rule changes.
- (C) A signed copy of the duly verified balance sheet and statement of accounts shall be sent to the Sanctioning Authority within 14 days of its adoption by the AGM.
- (D) Each Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to an AGM. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only. 14 days' notice shall be given of any AGM.
- (E) Clubs who have withdrawn their membership of the Competition during the Playing Season being concluded or who are not continuing membership shall be entitled to attend but shall vote only on matters relating to the Season being concluded. This provision will not apply to Clubs expelled in accordance with Rule 12.
- (F) All voting shall be conducted by a show of voting cards unless a ballot be demanded by at least 50% of the delegates qualified to vote or the Chairman so decides.
- (G) No individual shall be entitled to vote on behalf of more than one Club.
- (H) Any continuing Club must be represented at the AGM. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (I) Officers of the Competition and Management Committee members shall be entitled to attend and vote at an AGM, but cannot also cast a vote on behalf of a club (See Rule 8.G).
- (J) Where a Competition is an incorporated entity, the Officers of the Competition shall ensure that the Articles of Association of the Competition are consistent with the requirements of these Rules.

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

9. (A) Upon receiving a requisition signed by two-thirds (2/3) of the Clubs in membership the Secretary shall call a SGM.
- (B) The Management Committee may call a SGM at any time.
- (C) At least 7 days' notice shall be given of a meeting under this Rule, together with an agenda of the business to be transacted at such meeting.
- (D) Each Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to all SGMs. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only.
- (E) Any Club failing to be represented at a SGM shall be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (F) Officers of the Competition and Management Committee members shall be entitled to attend and vote at all SGMs, but cannot also cast a vote on behalf of a club (see Rule 9.D).

AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED

10. Each Club shall complete and sign the following agreement which shall be deposited with the Competition together with the application for membership for the coming Season, or upon indicating that the Club intends to compete.

"We, (A), (name) [] of (address) [] (Chairman)/Director and (B) (name) [] of (address) [] (Secretary/Director) of [] Football Club (Limited) have been provided with a copy of the Rules and Regulations of the Herts Youth League Competition and do hereby agree for and on behalf of the said Club, if elected or accepted into membership, to conform to those Rules and Regulations and to accept, abide by and implement the decisions of the Management Committee of the Competition, subject to the right of appeal in accordance with Rule 7."

The agreement shall be signed by:

- (i) Where a Club is an unincorporated association, the Club chairman and secretary; or
- (ii) Where a Club is an incorporated entity, two directors of the Club.

Any alteration of the chairman and /or secretary of the Club on the above agreement must be notified to the Hertfordshire County Football Association to which the Club is affiliated and to the Secretary.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP, WITHDRAWAL OF A CLUB

11. (A) Any Club intending, or having a provisional intention to withdraw a Team from the Competition must do so at least 90 days before the AGM. This does not apply to a Club moving in accordance with Rule 22(B). Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (B) The Management Committee shall have the discretion to deal with a Team being unable to start or complete its fixtures for a Playing Season, including but not limited to, issuing a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (C) Notwithstanding the powers of the Management Committee pursuant to Rule 6(I), in the event of a Club failing to discharge all its financial obligations to the Competition in excess of £50, the Management Committee shall be empowered to refer the debt under The FA Football Debt Recovery provisions.

EXCLUSION OF CLUBS OR TEAM. MISCONDUCT OF CLUBS, OFFICERS, PLAYERS, MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- 12. (A) At the AGM or SGM called for the purpose in accordance with the provisions of Rule 9, notice of motion having been duly circulated on the agenda by direction of the Management Committee, the accredited delegates present shall have the power to: (i) remove a member of the Management Committee from office, (ii) exclude any Club or Team from membership, both of which must be supported by more than two-thirds (2/3) of those present and voting. Voting on this point shall be conducted by ballot. A member of the Management Committee or Club which is the subject of the vote being taken shall be excluded from voting.
- (B) At the AGM, or at a SGM called for the purpose in accordance with the provisions of Rule 9, the accredited delegates present shall have the power to exclude from further participation in the Competition any Club or Team whose conduct has, in their opinion, been undesirable, which must be supported by more than two-thirds (2/3) of those present and voting. Voting on this point shall be conducted by ballot. A Club whose conduct is the subject of the vote being taken shall be excluded from voting.
- (C) Any Officer or member of a Club proved guilty of either a breach of Rule, other than field offences, or of inducing or attempting to induce a Player or Players of another Club in the Competition to join them shall be liable to such penalty as a General Meeting or Management Committee may decide, and their Club shall also be liable to expulsion in accordance with the provisions of clauses (A) and/or (B) of this Rule.

TROPHY

- 13. (A) The following agreement shall be signed on behalf of the winners of the cup or trophy:-
"We A [name] and B [name], the Chairman and Secretary of [] FC (Limited), members of and representing the Club, having been declared winners of [] cup or trophy, and it having been delivered to us by the Competition, do hereby on behalf of the Club jointly and severally agree to return the cup or trophy to the Competition Secretary on or before 31 March each year. If the cup or trophy is lost or damaged whilst under our care we agree to refund to the Competition the amount of its current value or the cost of its thorough repair."
Failure to comply will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (B) At the close of each Competition awards may be made to the winners and runners-up if the funds of the Competition permit.

ALTERATION TO RULES

- 14. Alterations, for which consent has been given by the Sanctioning Authority, shall be made to these Rules only at the AGM or at a SGM specially convened for the purpose called in accordance with Rule 9. Any alteration made during the Playing Season to these Rules shall not take effect until the following Playing Season, except in exceptional circumstances and approved by Sanctioning Authority and The FA.
Notice of proposed alterations to be considered at the AGM shall be submitted to the Secretary by 31 March in each year. The proposals, together with any proposals by the Management Committee, shall be circulated to the Clubs by 15 April and any amendments thereto shall be submitted to the Secretary by 1 May. The proposals and proposed amendments thereto shall be circulated to Clubs with the notice of the AGM. A proposal to change a Rule shall be carried if a majority of those present, entitled to vote and voting are in favour.
A copy of the proposed alterations to Rules to be considered at the AGM or SGM shall be submitted to the Sanctioning Authority or The FA (as applicable) at least 28 days prior to the date of the meeting.

FINANCE

- 15. (A) The Management Committee shall determine with which bank or other financial institution the funds of the Competition will be lodged.
- (B) All expenditure in excess of £100 shall be approved by the Management Committee. Cheques shall be signed by at least two Officers nominated by the Management Committee.
- (C) The financial year of the Competition will end on 31 May.
- (D) The books, or a certified balance sheet, of a Competition shall be prepared and shall be audited/verified annually by a suitably qualified person(s) who shall be appointed at the AGM.

INSURANCE

- 16. (A) All Clubs must have valid public liability insurance cover of at least ten million pounds (£10,000,000) at all times.
- (B) All Clubs must have valid personal accident cover for all Players registered with them from time to time. The Players' personal accident insurance cover must be in place prior to the Club taking part in any Competition Match and shall be at least equal to the minimum recommended cover determined from time to time by the Sanctioning Authority. In instances where The FA is the Sanctioning Authority, the minimum recommended cover will be the cover required by the Affiliated Association to which a Club affiliates.
Failure to comply with Rule 16(A) or 16(B) will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

DISSOLUTION

- 17. (A) Dissolution of the Competition shall be by resolution approved at a SGM by a majority of three quarters (3/4) of the members present and shall take effect from the date of the relevant SGM.
- (B) In the event of the dissolution of the Competition, the members of the Management Committee are responsible for the winding up of the assets and liabilities of the Competition.
- (C) The Management Committee shall deal with any surplus assets as follows:
 - (i) Any surplus assets, save for a trophy or any other presentation, remaining after the discharge of the debts and liabilities of the Competition shall be transferred only to another Competition or Affiliated Association or The Football Association Benevolent Fund or to such other charitable or benevolent object in the locality of the Competition as determined by resolution at or before the time of winding up, and approved in writing by the Sanctioning Authority.
 - (ii) If a Competition is discontinued for any reason a trophy or any other presentation shall be returned to the donor if the conditions attached to it so provide or, if not, dealt with as the Sanctioning Authority may decide.

MATCH RELATED RULES

QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS

18. (A) A Player is one who, being in all other respects eligible, has registered through the FA Player Registration System and received approval from the Competition.

Any registration that is not fully and correctly completed will be returned to the Club unprocessed and the player classed as unregistered. If a Club attempts to register a player via the Player Registration System but does not fully and correctly complete the necessary information via the Player Registration System, the registration will not be processed. Only players registered with the League can play in fixtures.

For Clubs registering Players via the Player Registration System Clubs must access the Player Registration System in order to complete the registration process. The registration document must incorporate a current passport-size photograph of the Player seeking registration together with confirmation that the Player's proof of date of birth has been checked by the Club and is accurate.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (B) (i) Contract Players are not permitted in this Competition with the exception of those Players who are registered under contract with the same Club who have a Team operating at Steps 1 to 6 of the National League System.

It is the responsibility of each Club to ensure that any Player registered to the Club has, where necessary, the required International Transfer Certificate. Clearance is required for any Player aged 10 and over crossing borders including Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

- (ii) A Player registered with a Premier League or EFL Academy under the Elite Player Performance Plan contained within Youth Development Rules will not be permitted to play in this Competition, except for those in the under 11 age-group and below where consent has been given by the relevant Premier League or EFL (such consent can be withdrawn at any time). Trial players are not considered to be registered with a Premier League or EFL Academy for these purposes and therefore the prohibition on playing in the Competition does not apply to them. The relevant Premier League/EFL Academy remains responsible for managing the frequency of the player's playing time. Details of the Youth Development Rules are published on The FA website. A Player registered with an FA Emerging Talent Centre or an FA Professional Game Academy may play in this Competition subject to the FA Girls' Emerging Talent Centre Operating Criteria and Professional Game Academy Youth Development Rules.

- (iii) Each Team must have the following number of Players registered 10 days before the start of each Playing Season:

| FORMAT | MINIMUM NUMBER |
|--------|----------------|
| 5v5 | 5 |
| 7v7 | 7 |
| 9v9 | 9 |
| 11v11 | 11 |

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (C) A child who has not attained the age of 6 shall not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play, in a match of any kind.

The relevant age for each Player is determined by his or her age as at midnight on 31 August of the relevant Playing Season i.e. children who are aged 6 as at midnight on 31 August in a Playing Season (together with those who attain the age of 6 during the Playing Season) will be classed as Under 7 Players for that Playing Season. Children who are aged 7 as at midnight on 31 August in a Playing Season will be classed as Under 8 Players for that Playing Season, and so on.

Notwithstanding the above, a child is permitted to play up in the age group above his or her chronological age group, irrespective of any changes of format or competition structure, save that a child who attains the age of 6 after 31 August is permitted to play only in the Under 7 age group, and may not play in the Under 8 age group, for that Playing Season. Girls in all female teams may also be permitted to play an age group down in accordance with Rule 4(F).

The age groups that children are eligible to play in are set out in the table below, subject to Rule 4(F), along with the permitted football formats for each of those age groups. For the purposes of this Rule 18(C), provisions relating to playing in specified age groups shall include participating in training as well as playing in matches. Children shall not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play, in a match between sides of more than the stated number of players, according to their age group:

| Age on 31 August of the relevant Playing Season | Eligible Age Groups | Maximum Permitted Format | Minimum Pitch Sizes | | Maximum Pitch Sizes | | Recommended Goal Sizes in feet | Ball Size |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| | | | Yards | Metres | Yards | Metres | | |
| 6 | Under 7 | 5v5 | 30 x 20 | 27.45 x 18.3 | 40 x 30 | 36.3 x 27.45 | 12 x 6 | 3 |
| | Under 8 | | 30 x 20 | 27.45 x 18.3 | 40 x 30 | 36.3 x 27.45 | 12 x 6 | |
| 7 | Under 8 | 5v5 | 30 x 20 | 27.45 x 18.3 | 40 x 30 | 36.3 x 27.45 | 12 x 6 | 3 |
| | Under 9 | 7v7 | 50 x 30 | 45.75 x 27.45 | 60 x 40 | 54.9 x 36.6 | 12 x 6 | |
| 8 | Under 9 | 7v7 | 50 x 30 | 45.75 x 27.45 | 60 x 40 | 54.9 x 36.6 | 12 x 6 | 3 |
| | Under 10 | | 50 x 30 | 45.75 x 27.45 | 60 x 40 | 54.9 x 36.6 | 12 x 6 | |
| 9 | Under 10 | 7v7 | 50 x 30 | 45.75 x 27.45 | 60 x 40 | 54.9 x 36.6 | 12 x 6 | 3 |
| | Under 11 | 9v9 | 70 x 40 | 64 x 36.6 | 80 x 50 | 73.15 x 45.75 | 16 x 7 | |
| 10 | Under 11 | 9v9 | 70 x 40 | 64 x 36.6 | 80 x 50 | 73.15 x 45.75 | 16 x 7 | 4 |
| | Under 12 | | 70 x 40 | 64 x 36.6 | 80 x 50 | 73.15 x 45.75 | 16 x 7 | |
| 11 | Under 12 | 9v9 | 70 x 40 | 64 x 36.6 | 80 x 50 | 73.15 x 45.75 | 16 x 7 | 4 |
| | Under 13 | 11v11 | 90 x 50 | 82.3 x 45.75 | 100 x 60 | 91.44 x 54.9 | 21 x 7 | |
| 12 | Under 13 | 11v11 | 90 x 50 | 82.3 x 45.75 | 100 x 60 | 91.44 x 54.9 | 21 x 7 | 4 |
| | Under 14 | | 90 x 50 | 82.3 x 45.75 | 100 x 60 | 91.44 x 54.9 | 21 x 7 | |
| 13 | Under 14 | 11v11 | 90 x 50 | 82.3 x 45.75 | 100 x 60 | 91.44 x 54.9 | 21 x 7 | 4 |
| | Under 15 | | 90 x 50 | 82.3 x 45.75 | 110 x 70 | 100.58 x 64 | 24 x 8 | |
| 14 | Under 15 | 11v11 | 90 x 50 | 82.3 x 45.75 | 110 x 70 | 100.58 x 64 | 24 x 8 | 5 |
| | Under 16 | | 90 x 50 | 82.3 x 45.75 | 110 x 70 | 100.58 x 64 | 24 x 8 | |
| 15 | Under 16 | 11v11 | 90 x 50 | 82.3 x 45.75 | 110 x 70 | 100.58 x 64 | 24 x 8 | 5 |
| | Under 17 | | 100 x 50 | 91.44 x 45.75 | 130 x 100 | 118.87 x 91.44 | 24 x 8 | |
| | Under 18 | | 100 x 50 | 91.44 x 45.75 | 130 x 100 | 118.87 x 91.44 | 24 x 8 | |
| 16 | Under 17 | 11v11 | 100 x 50 | 91.44 x 45.75 | 130 x 100 | 118.87 x 91.44 | 24 x 8 | 5 |
| | Under 18 | | 100 x 50 | 91.44 x 45.75 | 130 x 100 | 118.87 x 91.44 | 24 x 8 | |
| | Open Age | | 100 x 50 | 91.44 x 45.75 | 130 x 100 | 118.87 x 91.44 | 24 x 8 | |

- (D) A fee as set out in the Fees Tariff shall be paid by each Club/Team for each Player registered, if applicable.
- (E) The Management Committee shall decide all registration disputes taking into account the following.
- (i) A Player shall not be permitted to register for more than one Club subject to the exceptions set out in Rule 18 (E) (iii) below.
 - (ii) In the event of a Player signing a registration form or having a registration submitted for more than one Club priority of registration shall decide for which Club the Player shall be registered. The Secretary shall notify the Club last applying to register the Player of the fact of the previous registration subject to the exceptions set out in Rule 18 (E) (iii) below.
 - (iii) A Player is only permitted to register for more than one Club provided that:
 - a. The team(s) in which the Player plays in are not in the same age group; or
 - b. Except for the purpose of a transfer.
 And the Player meets the requirements in Rule 18(C).
- (F) It shall be a breach of these Rules for a Player to:-
- (i) Play for more than one Team in the same age group in the Competition in the same Playing Season without first being transferred (and as required by Competition rules).
 - (ii) Having registered for one Club in the Competition, register for another Club in the Competition in that Playing Season, except if the provisions set out in Rule 18 (E) (iii) apply, or where the Competition adopts rule 18(P).
 - (iii) Submit a signed registration form or submit a registration through the Player Registration System for registration that the Player had willfully neglected to accurately or fully complete.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (G) (i) The Management Committee shall have the power to accept the registration of any Player subject to the provisions of Rule 18(G) (ii) and (iii) below.
- (ii) The Management Committee shall have power to refuse, cancel or suspend the registration of any Player, the exercise of such power being without prejudice to the Management Committee's ability to fine a Club at its discretion (in accordance with the Fines Tariff) that has been charged and found guilty of registration irregularities (subject to Rule 7).
- (iii) The Management Committee shall have the power to refuse or cancel the registration of any Player charged and found guilty of undesirable conduct (subject to Rule 7) subject to the right of appeal to the Sanctioning Authority or The FA. Where the Management Committee does not have enough information to enable it to make a decision pursuant to the above power, it may apply, in its absolute discretion, to the Sanctioning Authority or The FA for further information.
- Undesirable conduct shall mean an incident of repeated proven misconduct, which may deter a Participant from being involved in this Competition.
- (iv) For a Player who has previously had a registration removed in accordance with Rule 18(G) (iii) but has a registration accepted at the expiry of exclusion will be considered to be under a probationary period of 12 months. Whilst under a probationary period, should the Player commit a further act of proven misconduct under the jurisdiction of the Competition, (excluding standard dismissals), the Competition would be empowered to consider a further charge of bringing the Competition into disrepute.

(Note: Action under Rule 18(G) (iii) shall only be taken against a Player in cases of the Player bringing the Competition into disrepute and will in any event be subject to an appeal to the Sanctioning Authority or The FA. All decisions must include the period of restriction. For the purpose of this Rule, bringing the Competition into disrepute can only be considered where the Player has received in excess of 112 days' suspension, or 10 matches in match based discipline, in any competition (and is not restricted to the Competition) in a period of two years or less from the date of the first offence.)

- (H) Subject to compliance with FA Rule C when a Club wishes to register a player who is already registered with another club it shall submit a transfer form (in a format as determined by the Competition) to the Competition accompanied by a fee as set out in the Fees Tariff. Such transfer shall be referred by the Competition to the club for which the player is registered. Should this club object to the transfer it should state its objections in writing to the Competition and to the player concerned within 3 days of receipt of the notification. Upon receipt of the Club's consent, or upon its failure to give written objection within 3 days, the Secretary may, on behalf of the Management Committee, transfer the player who shall be deemed eligible to play for the new Club from such date.

In the event of an objection to a transfer the matter shall be referred to the Management Committee for a decision.

- (I) A Player may not be registered for a Club nor transferred to another Club in the Competition after 28 February except by special permission of the Management Committee. (Permission will not be unreasonably withheld where a player is not currently playing for a club.)
- (J) A Club shall keep a list of the Players it registers and a record of all matches in which those Players have played for the Club, and shall produce such records upon demand by the Management Committee.

In the event a Club has more than one Team in an age group, each Team must be clearly identifiable but not designated 'A' or 'B' or 1st or 2nd. In such cases, Players will be registered, in the case of under 12s and below and subject to Management Committee discretion, to the Club and, in the case of Under 13s and above, for one Team only. A Player so registered will be allowed to play for their Club in a younger or older age group within the provisions of Rule 18(C).

- (K) A register containing the names of all Players registered for each Club, with the date of registration, shall be kept by the Registrations Secretary and shall be open to the inspection of an Officer of the Club at all Management Committee meetings or at other times mutually arranged. Registrations are valid for one Playing Season only.

In the event of a Non Contract Player changing their status to that of a Contract Player with the same Club, another Club in the Competition or with a club in another competition their registration as a Non Contract Player will automatically be cancelled and declared void unless the Club conforms to the exception detailed in Rule 18(B)(i).

- (L) A Player shall not be eligible to play for a Team in any special championship, promotion or relegation deciding Competition Match (as specified in Rule 22(A)) unless the Player has played 2 Competition Matches for that Team in the current Playing Season, has been registered for that Team for two weeks or received special permission from the Management Committee.

- (M) A Team shall not include more than 2 Players who have taken part in one or more senior Competition Matches during the current Playing Season unless a period of 21 days has elapsed since they last played.

For the purpose of this Rule a senior competition(s) means playing in the Eastern Junior Alliance or Junior Premier League.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (N) (i) Subject to Rule 18(N)(ii), any Club found to have played an ineligible Player in a Competition Match or Matches where points are awarded shall have the points gained from that Competition Match deducted from its record, up to a maximum of 12 points, and have levied upon it a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (ii) The Management Committee may vary the sanction as relates to the deduction of points set out at Rule 18(N)(i) only in circumstances where the

ineligibility is due to the failure to obtain an International Transfer Certificate or where the ineligibility is related to the Player's status.

- (iii) Where a Club is found to have played an ineligible Player in accordance with Rule 18(N)(i) above, the Management Committee may also, at its discretion:
 - (a) Award the points available in the Competition Match in question to the opponents, subject to the Competition Match not being ordered to be replayed;
 - (b) Levy penalty points against the Club in default; and/or
 - (c) Order that such Competition Match or Matches be replayed (on such terms as are decided by the Management Committee).

(The following clause applies to Competitions involving Players in full-time secondary education):-

- (O) (i) Priority must be given at times to the activities of schools all and school organisations. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (ii) The availability of children must be cleared with their head teacher (except for Sunday league competitions).
- (iii) A child under the age of 15 as at midnight on 31 August in the relevant Playing Season, shall not be permitted to play in a Competition Match during that Playing Season where any other Player is older or younger than that child by two years or more.
- (P) If a Club wishes to cancel a Player's registration within the Competition, it must make a request via The FA's electronic player registration system giving the reasons for the request. The Competition may either approve or decline the request.
If a Player's registration is cancelled he/she will not be eligible to play in the Competition for a period of 1 day from the date of cancellation.

CLUB COLOURS

- 19. Every Team must register the colour of its shirts and shorts with the Secretary by 30 June who shall decide as to their suitability.
Any Team wishing to change its colours during the Playing Season must obtain permission from the Management Committee.
Goalkeepers must wear colours which distinguish them from all other Players and the Match Officials.
No Player, including the goalkeeper, shall be permitted to wear black or very dark shirts.
Any Team not being able to play in its normal colours as registered with the Competition shall notify its opponents the colours in which they will play (including the colours of the goalkeeper jersey) at least 7 days before the Competition Match.
If, in the opinion of the referee, two Teams have the same or similar colours, the away Team shall make the change. Should a Team delay the scheduled time of kick-off for a Competition Match by not having a change of colours they will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
Shirts must all be numbered differently, failing which a fine will be levied in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

PLAYING SEASON. CONDITIONS OF PLAY, TIMES OF KICK-OFF, POSTPONEMENTS, SUBSTITUTES

- 20. (A) All Competition Matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as determined by the International Football Association Board or, for Mini-Soccer, The Mini-Soccer and Youth Futsal Handbook, or, for 9v9 football, The FA's Guide to 9v9 Football.
Clubs must take all reasonable precautions to keep their Grounds in a playable condition. All Competition Matches shall be played on pitches deemed suitable by the Management Committee. If through any fault of the home Team a Competition Match has to be replayed, the Management Committee shall have power to order the venue to be changed.
The Management Committee shall have power to decide whether a pitch and/or facilities are suitable for Competition Matches and to order the Club concerned to play its Competition Matches on another ground.
Artificial Football Turf Pitches (3G) are allowed in this Competition provided they meet the required performance standards and are listed on the FA's Register of Football Turf Pitches - <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/3g-pitch-register>. All Football Turf Pitches used must be tested (by a FIFA accredited test institute) every three years and the results passed to The FA. The FA will give a decision on the suitability for use and add the pitch to the Register.
The home Club is also responsible for advising Participants of footwear requirements when confirming match arrangements in accordance with Rule 20(C).
Overhead netting is allowed for 5v5 and 7v7 mini soccer if the overhead netting height is at a minimum of 6m. No overhead netting is allowed for 9v9 and 11v11 affiliated matches.
Overhead wires used to support pitch divider netting are ideally removed for affiliated matches but if they cannot be removed then discretion is given to the match official to restart the match in accordance of the laws of the game.
All Competition Matches shall have a duration as set out below unless a shorter time is mutually arranged by the two Clubs in consultation with the referee prior to the commencement of the Competition Match, and in any event shall be of equal halves.
Competition Matches should be played in accordance with the Laws appropriate to the relevant age group, as laid down by The FA, as detailed below.

| Age Group | Minimum Duration of play per quarter (minutes) | Maximum Duration of play per quarter (minutes) | Minimum duration of play per half (minutes) | Maximum duration of play per half (minutes) | Maximum playing time in one day in all organised development fixtures (minutes) | Maximum playing time in one day in all tournaments and trophy events/festivals (minutes) | Competition structure |
|----------------------|--|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| Under 7 and Under 8 | 5 | 10* | 10 | 20 | 40 | 60 | Development focused with a maximum of 3 trophy events per season over 2 week periods (6 weeks) |
| Under 9 and Under 10 | 10 | 12.5* | 20 | 25 | 60 | 90 | Development focused with a maximum of 3 trophy events per season over 4 week periods (12 weeks) |
| Under 11 | N/A | N/A* | 20 | 30 | 80 | 120 | Development focused with a maximum of 3 trophy events per season over 6 week periods (18 weeks) |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|------|----|----|--------------------|-----|--|
| Under 12 | N/A | N/A* | 20 | 30 | 80 (if applicable) | 120 | Any varieties including one season long league table |
| Under 13 and Under 14 | N/A | N/A | 25 | 35 | 100 | 150 | Any varieties including one season long league table |
| Under 15 and Under 16 | N/A | N/A | 25 | 40 | 100 | 150 | Any varieties including one season long league table |
| Under 17 and Under 18 | N/A | N/A | 25 | 45 | 120 | 180 | Any varieties including one season long league table |

* This Competition has adopted quarters for ALL matches (as set out in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3).

For round robin/trophy events, the maximum duration of play per half cannot be exceeded, but the minimum duration of play per half may be adjusted.

For trophy events, the Competition may award mementos.

The times of kick-off shall be fixed at the AGM, by the Management Committee and home team. No match shall kick-off earlier than 10am or later than 3pm, except with the prior approval of the Management Committee. Once the kick-off time for a fixture has been determined by the home club it can only be altered by the mutual consent of the two competing Clubs prior to the scheduled date of the Competition Match with written notification given to the Competition at least 2 days prior.

Prior to the commencement of each match, teams must line up and have their registrations checked by an opposition Club official. Each Team will provide a team sheet for this purpose produced from the Player Registration System. Any individual not registered will not be permitted to participate. In the event that a Club official is not satisfied that a participant is a Player registered in the Player Registration System, the game should be played with the Club official reporting their concerns to the Management Committee.

Referees must order Competition Matches to commence at the appointed time and must report all late starts to the Competition. Any delay exceeding 20 minutes may be deemed a non-fulfilment and the Rules in respect of non-fulfilment applied to the defaulting Club.

The home Team must provide goal nets, corner flags and at least two footballs approved by the Competition and fit for play and the referee shall make a report to the Competition if the footballs are unsuitable. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(B) Except by permission of the Management Committee all Competition Matches must be played on the dates originally fixed but priority shall be given to The FA and parent County Association Cup Competitions. All other matches must be considered secondary. Clubs may mutually agree to bring forward a Competition Match with the consent of the relevant Fixture Secretary.

- i) If a Team is notified that it is to play in a Parent County FA Competition fixture on the same day as a League fixture the Club concerned shall notify the appropriate Fixture Secretary within 48 hours of receiving notification, and the League fixture postponed.
- ii) There will be no fixtures scheduled for two weeks over Christmas or over Easter weekend.
- iii) Two "free weeks" will be granted to a team providing the request is received in writing by the appropriate Fixture Secretary at least 21 days before the potential fixture date. If requesting a "free week" for a school trip/event a notice period of 7 days applies, if a letter is provided by the school showing the name of the Players unavailable for the fixture.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

In the case of a revised fixture date, the Clubs must be given by the Competition 5 clear days' notice of the Competition Match (unless otherwise mutually agreed).

(C) An Officer of the home Club must give notice of full particulars of the location of, and access to, the Ground and time of kick-off to the Match Officials and an Officer of the opposing Club at least 4 clear days prior to the playing of the Competition Match (i.e. by midnight on Monday for a Saturday fixture). If not so provided, the away Club shall seek such details and report the circumstances to the Competition. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(D) The minimum number of Players that will constitute a Team for a Competition Match is as follows:

| FORMAT | MINIMUM NUMBER |
|--------|----------------|
| 5v5 | 4 |
| 7v7 | 5 |
| 9v9 | 6 |
| 11v11 | 7 |

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(E) (i) In competitions where points are awarded, home and away matches shall be played. In the event of a Club failing to keep its engagement the Management Committee shall have the power to impose a fine (in accordance with the Fines Tariff), deduct points from the defaulting Club, award the points from the Competition Match in question to the opponents, order the defaulting Club to pay any reasonable expenses incurred by the opponents or otherwise deal with them except the award of goals. Notwithstanding the foregoing home and away provision, the Management Committee shall have power to order a Competition Match to be played on a neutral ground or on the opponent's Ground if they are satisfied that such action is warranted by the circumstances.

(ii) Any Club unable to fulfil a fixture or where a Competition Match has been postponed for any reason must, without delay, give notice to the relevant Fixture Secretary, the Competition Referees Appointments Secretary, the secretary or other official of the opposing Club and the Match Officials.

A Team which fails to fulfil 3 or more fixtures during a season may have fixtures withdrawn by the Competition until the Club concerned submits a written explanation to the Management Committee as to the reason for its non-fulfilment of its fixtures. The report should be submitted within 7 days of notification of the withdrawal of fixtures to the Discipline Secretary.

It is the responsibility of both Teams to make every effort to play a Competition fixture on the date scheduled. The fixture may be reversed up to 24 hours before the scheduled kick-off if the home Team pitch is unplayable and the away Team can provide a suitable alternative venue. In the event that a match is postponed this should also be reported via the automated text message or similar system.

(iii) In the event of a Competition Match not being played or abandoned owing to causes over which neither Club has control, it should be played in its

entirety on a date to be mutually agreed by the two Clubs and approved by the Management Committee. Failing such agreement and notification to the relevant Fixture Secretary within 3 days the Management Committee shall have the power to order the Competition Match to be played on a named date or on or before a given date. Where it is to the advantage of the Competition and the Clubs involved agree, the Management Committee shall also be empowered to order the score at the time of an abandonment to stand.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (iv) The Management Committee shall review all Competition Matches abandoned in cases where it is consequent upon the conduct of either or both Teams. Where it is to the advantage of the Competition and does no injustice to either Club, the Management Committee shall be empowered to order the score at the time of the abandonment to stand. In all cases where the Management Committee are satisfied that a Competition Match was abandoned owing to the conduct of one Team or its Club member(s) they shall be empowered to award the points for the Competition Match to the opponent. In cases where a Competition Match has been abandoned owing to the conduct of both Teams or their Club member(s), the Management Committee shall rule that neither Team will be awarded any points for that Competition Match and it shall not be replayed. No fine(s) can be applied by the Management Committee for an abandoned Competition Match.
- (v) The Management Committee shall review any Competition Match that has taken place where either or both Teams were under a suspension imposed upon them by The FA or Affiliated Association. In each case the Team that was under suspension would be dealt with in the same manner as if they had participated with ineligible players in accordance with Rule 18(N)(i) above. Where both Teams were under suspension the Competition Match must be declared null and void and shall not be replayed.
- (f) A Club may at its discretion and in accordance with the Laws of the Game use substitute Players in any Competition Match.

For Under 11s - Under 18s – A Club may use up to 5 from 5 substitute Players. A Player who has been substituted becomes a substitute and may replace any Player at any time subject to the substitution being carried out in accordance with Law 3 of the Laws of Association Football.

For Mini-Soccer – any number of substitutions may be used at any time with the permission of the referee. Entry onto the field of play will only be allowed during a stoppage in play. A Player who has been replaced may return to play as a substitute for another Player. All substitutes must be used and, ordinarily, play a minimum of 50% of the match duration. A Team must not have a match day squad greater than double the size of its team in an age group. (Note the lower limits adopted by the Competition as set out in Appendix 2.)

In Youth Football only, the referee shall be informed of the names of the substitute Players not later than 10 minutes before the start of the Competition Match and a Player not so named may not take part in that Competition Match. A Player who has been named as a substitute before the start of that Competition Match but does not actually play in the game shall not be considered to have been a Player in that Competition Match within the meaning of Rule 18 of this Competition.

- (g) The half time interval shall be of 5 minutes' duration, but it shall not exceed 15 minutes. The half time interval may only be altered with the consent of the referee.
- (h) The Competition has adopted the FA Respect Programme and shall require all Players and Club officials to have signed up to the relevant FA Respect Code of Conduct and produce these if so requested by the Management Committee.
- Participating Teams and officials should observe The FA Respect Handshake protocol prior to a Competition fixture, and shake hands, fist bump or similar after the fixture.

Spectators will stand in Designated Spectator Area(s) on one side of the pitch and all Players and Club officials in Designated Technical Areas on the other side of the pitch. The Designated Spectator Area(s) should be marked by cones, a temporary barrier or a permanent barrier at least 2 yards from the touchline (with 3 yards recommended for older age groups). The Designated Technical Areas should be marked by cones or painted line(s).

The Teams taking part in Under 7s to Under 10 or Youth Football shall identify a Team captain who shall wear an armband and shall have a responsibility to offer support in the management of the on-field discipline of his/her teammates.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (i) The Management Committee reserves the right to hold Supplementary Competitions. Entry will be at the Management Committee's discretion, and any such competition will be held in accordance with these League Rules and any specific rules determined by the Management Committee prior to commencement.
- (j) The Management Committee may for any reason instruct Teams to play two short games on one day ("Double Headers"). In this event the following match duration will apply:
- i) Under 13s and Under 14s – 50 minutes per game (25 minutes each way)
 - ii) Under 15s and Under 16s – 50 minutes (25 minutes each way)
 - iii) Under 17s and Under 18s – 60 minutes (30 minutes each way)

In addition the Management Committee may instruct fixtures be played midweek. Midweek fixtures should be played between Teams within 10 miles of each other on a date agreed between the Teams during the week instructed by the relevant Fixture Secretary. Should two Teams not be able to agree a date the Fixture Secretary will determine the day on which the fixture will be played.

- (k) Each Team shall provide a "Match Delegate" for Competition fixtures. A Match Delegate so provided must carry out the responsibilities of a match delegate as outlined in Appendix A. Failure to provide a Match Delegate, duly introduced to the referee and wearing a delegate bib supplied by the Competition in the conduct of their duties, will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (l) During a match when the goal difference reaches 4, the losing team may field an additional player. If the goal difference reaches 6, the losing team may field another additional player (taking the total up to 2 additional players). At the point the goal difference falls to 5, the losing team must withdraw one of their additional players. At the point the goal difference falls to 3 the losing team must withdraw their final additional player (this does not need to be the same player that was put on as the additional player).

REPORTING RESULTS

21. (A) The Fixture Secretary must receive within 2 days of the date played, the result of each Competition Match in the prescribed manner i.e. online completion of the result card in the Full Time system. This must include the forename(s) and surname of the Team Players, name of Match Delegate and also the referee markings required by Rule 23, Respect mark for Players' behaviour, marks for Team Officials and Spectators or any other information required by the Competition. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (B) Both Clubs shall return the result of each Competition Match in the prescribed manner by 6pm on the day of the game. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (C) The match result notification, correctly completed, shall be signed by an Officer of the Club, or as prescribed by the Competition. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (D) The Competition and Clubs are permitted to collect but NOT publish results or any grading tables for fixtures involving Under 7s, Under 8s, Under 9s, Under 10s, and Under 11s. Any Competition failing to abide by this Rule will be dealt with by the Sanctioning Authority, and any Club failing to abide by this Rule will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff. The Competition and Clubs are permitted to collect and publish results for trophy events.

- (E) A Club must submit a report within 7 days of the fixture to the Discipline Secretary if a Respect mark of 1 has been awarded to the Players, Team Officials or Spectators or within 7 days of request if a report is solicited by the Management Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (F) Where Players, Officials or Spectators of a Team repeatedly receive low marks the Management Committee will work with the relevant Club to address the matter. If remedial action fails to deliver any improvement the Management Committee reserves the right not to allocate fixtures to that Team.

DETERMINING CHAMPIONSHIP

22. (A) In Competitions where points are awarded, Team rankings within the Competition will be decided by points with three points to be awarded for a win and one point for a drawn Competition Match. The Teams gaining the highest number of points in their respective divisions at the end of the Playing Season shall be adjudged the winners. Competition Matches must not be played for double points.
- In the event of two or more Teams being equal on points at the end of the Playing Season, rankings may be determined by a deciding match or matches played under conditions determined by the Management Committee, or the position shared.
- (B) Not applicable to this Competition.
- (C) Not applicable to this Competition.
- (D) In the event of a Team withdrawing from the Competition before completing 75% of its fixtures for the Playing Season all points obtained by or recorded against such defaulting Team shall be expunged from the Competition table. For the purposes of this Rule 22 (D) a completed fixture shall include any Competition Match(es) which has been awarded by the Management Committee.

MATCH OFFICIALS

23. (A) Registered referees (and assistant referees where approved by The FA or County FA) for all Competition Matches shall be appointed in a manner approved by the Management Committee and by the Sanctioning Authority.
- i) The home Team should contact an appointed referee and provide match details, including kick-off time, by midnight on the Monday before the fixture;
- ii) If an appointed referee is not available then the home Team should email the Referee Co-ordinator as soon as possible with the age group, venue and kick-off time for their fixture;
- iii) The Referee Co-ordinator will seek a replacement referee for the fixture and advise the home Team accordingly;
- iv) If a referee cannot be found by 11am on the Thursday before the fixture then responsibility to find a referee will pass back to the relevant Teams.
- (B) In cases where there are no officially appointed Match Officials in attendance, the Clubs shall agree upon a referee. The following procedure will be adopted to reach agreement:
- i) The home Team should seek to secure an independent registered qualified referee;
- ii) The away Team should seek to secure an independent registered qualified referee;
- iii) The home Team should seek to secure a registered qualified referee;
- iv) Both Teams agree on a suitable person, with the away Team's suggestions given priority.
- An individual thus agreed upon shall, for that Competition Match, have the full powers, status and authority of a registered referee. Individuals under the age of 16 must not participate either as a referee or assistant referee in any open age competition and individuals under the age of 14 must not participate either as a referee or assistant referee in any Competition Match. Referees between the ages of 14 and 16 are only eligible to officiate in competitions where the Players' age band is at least one year younger than the age of the referee, for example a 15 year old referee may only officiate in competitions where the age banding is 14 or younger.
- The name of a referee appointed under this Rule must be communicated to an opposition Team official before kick-off.
- (C) Where assistant referees are not appointed each Team shall provide a Club assistant referee (as required). Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine (in accordance with the Fines Tariff) being imposed on the defaulting Club.
- (D) The appointed referee shall have power to decide as to the fitness of the Ground in all Competition Matches and that decision shall be final, subject to the determination of the Local Authority or the owners of a Ground, which must be accepted.
- (E) Subject to any limits/provisions laid down by the Sanctioning Authority, Match Officials appointed under this Rule shall be paid a match fee in accordance with the Fees Tariff inclusive of travel expenses.

| REFEREE FEES | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Age Group | Referee's Fee | Age Group | Referee's Fee |
| U7s and U8s | £20.00 | U13s and U14s | £28.00 |
| U9s and U10s | £20.00 | U15s and U16s | £30.00 |
| U11s and U12s | £25.00 | U17s and U18s | £35.00 |

Registered referees appointed by the Management Committee as assistant referees shall be paid the same fee. Where assistant referees are appointed their fees will be divided equally between the home and away Teams.

For Double Headers referees will be paid one and a half times the normal fee, which will be split between home and away Teams.

| DOUBLE HEADERS – REFEREE FEES | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Age Group | Referee's Total Fee | Home Team Fee | Away Team Fee |
| U13s and U14s | £42.00 | £21.00 | £21.00 |
| U15s and U16s | £45.00 | £22.50 | £22.50 |
| U17s and U18s | £52.50 | £26.25 | £26.25 |

Match Officials will be paid their fees and/or expenses by the home Club before the Competition Match, unless otherwise ordered by the Management Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (F) In the event of a Competition Match not being played because of circumstances over which the Clubs have no control, the Match Officials, if present, shall be entitled to half fee. Where a Competition Match is not played owing to one Club being in default, that Club shall be ordered to pay the Match Officials, if they attend the Ground, their full fee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (G) A referee not keeping his or her engagement, and failing to give a satisfactory explanation as to their non-appearance, may be reported to the Affiliated Association with which he or she is registered.
- (H) Each Club shall, in a manner prescribed from time to time by The FA, award marks to the referee for each Competition Match and the name of the referee and the marks awarded shall be submitted to the Competition on the prescribed form provided. A Club must submit a report within 7 days of the fixture to the Discipline Secretary if a mark of 60 or less has been awarded to the referee or within 7 days of request if a report is solicited by the Management Committee. Clubs failing to comply with this Rule shall be liable to be fined (in accordance with the Fines Tariff) or dealt with as the Management Committee shall determine. (See Appendix 5 for marking guide.)

- (I) The Competition shall keep a record of the markings and, on the form provided by the prescribed date each Season, shall submit a summary to The FA/County FA.
- (J) The referee shall submit a report form, supplied by the Competition, giving the result of the Competition Match, the number of Players in each Team, the time of kick-off, indicate any cautions and dismissals together with marks for spectator, Team Official and Players' behaviour to the Discipline Secretary within two days of the Competition Match.
- (K) Match Officials shall be supplied, each season, with a copy of the Competition Rules free of charge.
- (L) Match Officials shall have undertaken a RESPECT briefing offered by The FA/County FA or the Competition.

SCHEDULE A – FEES TARIFF

| FEES TARIFF | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| RULE NUMBER | DESCRIPTION | MAXIMUM FEE |
| 4 (A) | CLUB ENTRY FEE | £50.00 |
| 4 (B) | CLUB/TEAM ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION | £150.00 |
| 4 (C) | DEPOSIT | £100.00 |
| 7 (C), 7(E) | PROTEST/APPEAL FEES | £25.00 |
| 18 (D) | PLAYER REGISTRATION FEE | £10.00 (per player) |
| 18 (H) | TRANSFER FEE | £10.00 |
| 23 (E) | REFEREE FEES | As agreed with Sanctioning Authority |
| 23 (E) | ASSISTANT REFEREE FEES | As agreed with Sanctioning Authority |

SCHEDULE B – FINES TARIFF

| FINES TARIFF | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| RULE NUMBER | DESCRIPTION | MAXIMUM FINE |
| 2 (G) | FAILURE TO AFFILIATE | £100.00 |
| 2 (I) | FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH FA INITIATIVES | £100.00 |
| 2 (K) | UNAUTHORISED ENTRY OF TEAMS INTO COMPETITIONS | £100.00 |
| 3 | FAILURE TO OBTAIN CONSENT FOR A CHANGE OF CLUB NAME | £30.00 |
| 4 (C) | FAILURE TO PAY A DEPOSIT | £100.00 |
| 4(E) | FAILURE TO PROVIDE AFFILIATION NUMBER/DETAILS FORM | £100.00 |
| 5 (E) | COMMUNICATIONS CONDUCTED BY PERSONS OTHER THAN NOMINATED OFFICERS | £25.00 |
| 6 (H) | FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH AN INSTRUCTION OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE | £100.00 |
| 6 (I) | FAILURE TO PAY A FINE WITHIN REQUIRED TIMEFRAME | DOUBLE THE ORIGINAL FINE UP TO £100.00 |
| 8 (H) | FAILURE TO BE REPRESENTED AT AGM | £100.00 |
| 9 | FAILURE TO BE REPRESENTED AT SGM | £100.00 |
| 10 | FAILURE TO SUBMIT THE REQUIRED WRITTEN AGREEMENT OR TO NOTIFY CHANGES TO SIGNATORIES | £25.00 |
| 11 (A) | FAILURE TO PROVIDE NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL BEFORE DEADLINE | £100.00 |
| 11 (B) | FAILURE TO COMMENCE/COMPLETE FIXTURES | £100.00 |
| 13 (A) | FAILURE TO SUBMIT THE REQUIRED WRITTEN AGREEMENT REGARDING THE TROPHY | £25.00 |
| 16(A) | FAILURE TO HAVE THE REQUIRED INSURANCE | £100.00 |
| 16(B) | FAILURE TO HAVE THE REQUIRED INSURANCE | £100.00 |
| 18 (A) | FAILURE TO CORRECTLY REGISTER A PLAYER | £40.00 |
| 18 (B)(iii) | FAILURE TO HAVE THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF REGISTERED PLAYERS PRIOR TO THE PLAYING SEASON COMMENCING | £25.00 |
| 18 (F) | REGISTERING OR PLAYING FOR MULTIPLE CLUBS OR INACCURATE COMPLETION OF A REGISTRATION FORM | £25.00 |
| 18 (G)(ii) | REGISTRATION IRREGULARITIES | £100.00 |
| 18(M) | FIELDING MORE THAN THE PERMITTED NUMBER OF PLAYERS WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN SENIOR COMPETITIONS MATCHES | £100 |
| 18 (N)(i) | PLAYING AN INELIGIBLE PLAYER | £100.00 |
| 18 (O)(i) | FAILURE TO GIVE PRIORITY TO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES | £50.00 |
| 19 | FAILURE TO NUMBER SHIRTS | £10.00 (per shirt, up to an aggregate maximum of £30) |
| 19 | DELAYING KICK-OFF TO DUE TO NO CHANGE OF COLOURS | £30 |
| 20(A) | DELAYING KICK-OFF DUE TO FAILURE TO PROVIDE REQUIRED EQUIPMENT | £30.00 |
| 20 (B) | FAILURE TO PLAY MATCHES ON THE DATE FIXED | £100.00 |
| 20 (C) | FAILURE TO PROVIDE DETAILS OF A FIXTURE | £50.00 |
| 20 (D) | PLAYING MATCH WITH LESS THAN REQUIRED NUMBER OF PLAYERS | £100.00 |
| 20 (E) (i) & (iii) | FAILURE TO PLAY FIXTURE | £100.00 |
| 20 (H) | NO CAPTAIN'S ARMBAND | £10.00 |
| 20 (H) | FAILURE TO MARK OUT DESIGNATED SPECTATOR(S) AND TECHNICAL AREAS | £25.00 |
| 20 (K) | FAILURE TO PROVIDE OR INTRODUCE MATCH DELEGATE | £18.00 |
| 21 (A) & 21 (C) | LATE RESULT NOTIFICATION FORM | £20.00 |
| 21 (B) | FAILURE TO PROVIDE RESULT | £20.00 |
| 21(D) | PUBLISHING RESULTS/GRADING TABLES FOR FIXTURES INVOLVING U7S, U8S, U9S, U10S OR U11S | £50.00 |
| 23 (C) | FAILURE TO PROVIDE CLUB ASSISTANT REFEREE | £25.00 |
| 23 (E) | FAILURE TO PAY MATCH OFFICIALS' FEES AND EXPENSES | £25.00 |
| 23 (F) | FAILURE TO PAY MATCH OFFICIALS WHERE A MATCH IS NOT PLAYED | £25.00 |
| 23 (H) | FAILURE TO PROVIDE REFEREE'S MARK | £25.00 |

APPENDIX 1 – MATCH DELEGATE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role of the Match Delegate

Both home and away Teams must nominate a responsible adult/member of their Club to act as Match Delegate on the day of the match. This should NOT be a Team Official (e.g. manager or coach), but another adult who is at the match. The Match Delegate must wear a "Match Delegate" bib supplied by the Competition in the conduct of their responsibilities.

Responsibilities of the Match Delegate

- 1) Upon arrival at the venue, the Match Delegate from the home Team will ask their opponents, who their Match Delegate is and make introductions to one another.
- 2) Together, they will then report to the match official at least 15 minutes before the start of the game and introduce themselves to him or her.
- 3) The primary responsibility of the home Team Match Delegate is to look after the referee(s) before, during and after the game until he or she leaves the ground. It would be appropriate if the home and away Team delegates did the job together.
- 4) This would include, showing the referee(s) where the changing rooms and toilets are, directing them to the correct pitch, and possibly offering them a drink at half time and after the game and ensuring that their fees are paid.
- 5) During the game, each delegate will be responsible for the behaviour of all their Club Members and spectators. If the referee needs to he/she will, during a stoppage in play, approach the Match Delegates to assist him/her in dealing with any problems that may occur. (The Match Delegate is not exempt from being reported for misconduct.)
- 6) It is the responsibility of the Match Delegate to encourage spectators from their Club to respect the Designated Spectator Area. No one, including Team officials and the Match Delegate themselves, is allowed to stand behind the goal.
- 7) The FA Respect Programme must be considered by the Match Delegate at all times, and a report form is provided for any issues to be reported to the County FA.
- 8) The Herts Youth League is totally committed to equality and the County FA Equality Policy must be emphasised and observed at all times.

APPENDIX 2 – MINI SOCCER RULES

MINI SOCCER – FOR UNDER 7s, UNDER 8s, UNDER 9s & UNDER 10s

Under 7s, Under 8s, Under 9s & Under 10s shall have fixtures arranged by the Competition. In general, results shall not be published but will be collected by the Management Committee in order to set fixtures that are in the best interests of the Competition and development of the Players.

Under 7s will initially play 5v5 games at organised festival events. After Christmas, 5 v 5 development fixtures may be arranged by the Competition broken down into four 10 minute quarters per match with only a 2 minute break in between each quarter. Other formats of competition may be organised throughout the season. Any fixtures organised would generally adhere to the principle of Teams playing 3 out of every 4 weeks..

Under 8s will play 5 v 5 development fixtures arranged by the Competition broken down into four 10 minute quarters per match, with only a 2 minute break in between each quarter. Other formats of competition may be organised throughout the season. Any fixtures organised would generally adhere to the principle of Teams playing 3 out of every 4 weeks.

Under 9s will play 7 v 7 development fixtures arranged by the Competition broken down into four 12.5 minute quarters per match, with only a 2 minute break in between each quarter. Other formats of competition may be organised throughout the season. Any fixtures organised would generally adhere to the principle of Teams playing 4 out of every 5 weeks.

Under 10s will play 7 v 7 development fixtures arranged by the Competition broken down into four 12.5 minute quarters per match, with only a 2 minute break in between each quarter. Other formats of competition may be organised throughout the season. Any fixtures organised would generally adhere to the principle of Teams playing 4 out of every 5 weeks.

All Teams must return the result of a fixture by 6pm on the day of the game and complete a result card within 2 days following the day of the game. Failure to do so may result in a fine.

Players at Under 7s, Under 8s, Under 9s & Under 10s shall be registered with their Club, and not a Team, and therefore can generally be moved between Team(s) each week. However, players cannot be moved from Team to Team on the day of the match.

Match Delegates

Both home and away Teams must nominate a responsible adult/member of their Club to act as Match Delegate on the day of the match. Each delegate shall wear a HDL 'Match Delegate' bib, MUST be introduced to the referee before 'Kick-off' and shall assist the referee where necessary. Please see Appendix 1 for further guidance.

Failing to supply a Match Delegate wearing a bib may result in a fine of £18.00.

PLAYING RULES – MINI-SOCCER

Unless otherwise indicated, the Laws of Association Football apply. Each Law is numbered to correspond with the appropriate Law of the Game.

1. Playing Area

The size of the playing area shall be within the following guidelines for Under 7s - Under 10s:

| Age Group | Format | Pitch Size |
|------------|--------|---------------------------|
| U7s & U8s | 5v5 | 30yds*20yds – 40yds*30yds |
| U9s & U10s | 7v7 | 50yds*30yds – 60yds*40yds |

Halfway Line

The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The centre mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. This is also used as the retreat line when restarting play with a goal kick.

Designated Spectator and Technical Areas

Spectators will stand in Designated Spectator Area(s) on one side of the pitch and all Players and Club officials in Designated Technical Areas on the other side of the pitch. The Designated Spectator Area(s) should be marked by cones, a temporary barrier or a permanent barrier at least 2 yards from the touchline. The Designated Technical Areas should be marked by cones or painted line(s).

Goal Size

The distance between the posts is 12ft and the distance between the lower edge of the cross bar and the ground is 6ft.

WARNING: In view of a number of accidents that have occurred it is necessary to ensure that portable goals of any size are either pinned or weighted to prevent them from toppling forward.

2. Match Ball

Under 7s, Under 8s, Under 9s and Under 10s shall play all their matches with a size 3 football approved by the Competition (i.e. an "official" match ball).

3. Players

The number of players per team including a goalkeeper shall be as follows:

Under 7s - 5 players per team

Under 8s - 5 players per team

Under 9s - 7 players per team

Under 10s - 7 players per team

Under 7s and Under 8s may register up to 8 players per 5v5 team, and Under 9s and Under 10s may register up to 12 players per 7v7 team.

A maximum of 3 substitutes for 5 a-side and a maximum 5 substitutes for 7 a-side can be named for each team all of whom must, ordinarily, play a minimum of 50% of the total match time. Substitutes can be used at any time during a match, with the permission of the Referee. A player who has been replaced may return to the playing area as a substitute for another at any time during the match. ALL PLAYERS TAKEN TO A MATCH MUST PLAY BY WAY OF ROLL ON/ROLL OFF SUBSTITUTIONS.

If any Team goes 4 goals ahead, the other Team may field an extra Player until the goal difference is reduced to 3 goals. If any Team goes 6 goals ahead, the other Team may field another extra Player until the goal difference is reduced to 5 goals.

If a Team has too few Players for a development fixture, the other Team may lend them a willing Player or withdraw Players to make the numbers even.

4. Playing Equipment

A Team 'First Aid Kit' must be available at all matches.

All players are required to wear shin guards – any player without shin guards is not permitted to play and goalkeepers must wear a distinguishing playing kit. Shin guards must be covered entirely by the socks.

Players must wear the appropriate clothing dependent on the weather.

Correct footwear must be worn for the surface of the pitch e.g. no metal studs on artificial grass pitches.

Corner flags must be provided.

Barriers or cones must be used to mark Designated Spectator and cones or painted line(s) to mark Designated Technical Areas for each match.

NO JEWELLERY OF ANY KIND SHOULD BE WORN BY ANY PLAYER.

5. Referees

Referees shall be appointed to all matches where possible. The home Team shall pay the referee's fees before the match.

6. Other Match Officials

An independent timekeeper / scorer may be appointed to assist the referee, where necessary. This official shall:

- (a) - Record the goals scored;
- (b) - Act as timekeeper and signify quarters, half-time and full-time by an agreed signal;
- (c) - Suspend time on the referee's instructions for all stoppages, and add time to the end of each quarter or half;
- (d) - Supervise the use of substitutes as permitted by the Rules of the Competition.

7. Duration of the Game

Under 7s and Under 8s shall play four 10 minute quarters, with a break of 2 minutes maximum between quarters (except, for the avoidance of doubt, the break marking half time) – total match length 40 minutes.

Under 9s and Under 10s shall play four 12.5 minute quarters, with a break of 2 minutes maximum between quarters (except, for the avoidance of doubt, the break marking half time) – total match length 50 minutes.

8. Start / Restart of Play

Kick-off shall be taken at the centre of the playing area, to start each quarter and to re-start after a goal has been scored.

Opponents must be 5 yards away from the ball and in their own half of the field. A goal cannot be scored directly from a start or restart of play.

Special Circumstances

A dropped ball to restart the match, after play has been temporarily stopped inside the penalty area, takes place on the penalty area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when the play stopped. No goal can be scored direct from a dropped ball.

9. Ball In / Out of Play

As per FA Rules.

10. Determining the Match

Scoring as per FA Rules.

11. Offside

There shall be NO offside.

12. Fouls and Misconduct

The referee shall have the power to temporarily dismiss a Player for dissent. The referee shall indicate a temporary dismissal by showing a yellow card and pointing with both arms to the relevant Team's Technical Area. A Player temporarily dismissed will be suspended from play for 8 minutes before returning with the referee's permission.

Goalkeepers cannot pick up a back pass. In doing so a Free Kick on the edge of the area, directly in line where the ball was picked up, should be awarded.

A free kick is awarded to the opposing team if the goalkeeper:

- Takes more than 6 seconds to release the ball from his/her hands;
- Touches the ball again with his/her hands after it has been released from his/her possession and has not touched any other player;
- Touches the ball with his/her hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him/her by a team mate;
- Touches the ball with his/her hands after he/she has received it directly from a throw in taken by a team mate.

For all these offences, the free kick should be taken from the penalty area line, parallel with the goal line, at the nearest point to the offence.

Under 7s and U8s cannot deliberately head the ball. In doing so an indirect free kick will be awarded at the point where the ball was deliberately headed, except where a player deliberately heads the ball within their own penalty area, the referee will stop the game and restart with an indirect free-kick to the opposition from the nearest side line of the penalty area where the offence took place.

13. Free Kicks

All free kicks are direct. Opponents must be 5 yards from the ball.

14. Penalty Kicks

Penalty kicks shall be taken from the penalty mark. For Under 7s and Under 8s the penalty mark is located 7 yds, and for Under 9s and Under 10s 8 yds, directly opposite the centre of the goal.

All players (excluding the kicker & goalkeeper) must be behind the ball and at least 5 yards away.

15. Throw-Ins

Throw-ins shall be taken as instructed in FA Rules.

At Under 7 and Under 8 Players are permitted to roll the ball underarm with one or both hands into the field of play.

The role of the referee is to also allow young players to learn the game. This may involve letting players take throw-ins again, if incorrect technique is used. The referee should ensure the same player attempts a second time, with guidance and help from the match official.

16. Goal Kicks

Goal Kicks from the floor should be taken at any point within the penalty area.

(Goalkeepers may kick the ball from their hands, providing the ball has remained in play.)

At Under 7 and Under 8 all opponents must retreat to their own half until the ball is in play.

At Under 9 and Under 10 all opponents but one must retreat to their own half until the ball is in play.

The defending team does not have to wait for the opposition to retreat and has the option to restart the game before should they choose to.

The ball is in play when it is kicked directly out of the penalty area.

17. Corner Kicks

Corner Kicks should be taken within a 1 yard radius of the corner.

Players from the opposing team should be at least 5yds away from the ball. The kicker may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. If he/she does, a free kick is awarded against them. The ball is in play immediately when it enters the field of play.

REGISTRATIONS

All players must be registered in accordance with Competition Rules.

TEAM SHEETS MUST BE SHOWN PRIOR TO ALL MATCHES.

Players that have not reached their 6th Birthday before 31st August are not permitted to play in this competition.

FIXTURES

All Mini- Soccer matches within this Competition shall be played on a Saturday.

MISCONDUCT

Misconduct by Players, Team Officials or Spectators will not be tolerated. Instances of misconduct will be reported to Clubs and the County FA for appropriate action to be taken.

APPENDIX 3 – 9V9 RULES

9V9 – FOR UNDER 11s & UNDER 12s

Under 11s & U12s shall have fixtures arranged by the Competition. In general, results shall not be published but will be collected by the Management Committee in order to set fixtures that are in the best interests of the Competition and development of the Players.

Under 11s will play 9 v 9 development fixtures arranged by the Competition broken down into four 15 minute quarters per match, with only a 2 minute break in between each quarter. Other formats of competition may be organised throughout the season. Any fixtures organised would generally adhere to the principle of Teams playing 4 out of every 5 weeks.

Under 12s will play 9 v 9 development fixtures arranged by the Competition broken down into four 15 minute quarters per match, with only a 2 minute break in between each quarter. Other formats of competition may be organised throughout the season. Any fixtures organised would generally adhere to the principle of Teams playing 6 out of every 7 weeks.

All Teams must return the result of a fixture by 6pm on the day of the game and complete a result card within 2 days following the day of the game. Failure to do so may result in a fine.

Players at Under 11s & Under 12s shall be registered with their Club, and not a team, and therefore can generally be moved between Team(s) each week. However, players cannot be moved from Team to Team on the day of the match.

Match Delegates

Both home and away Teams must nominate a responsible adult/member of their Club to act as Match Delegate on the day of the match. Each delegate shall wear a HDL 'Match Delegate' bib, MUST be introduced to the referee before 'Kick-off' and shall assist the referee where necessary. Please see Appendix 1 for further guidance.

Failing to supply a Match Delegate wearing a bib may result in a fine of £18.00.

PLAYING RULES – 9V9

Unless otherwise indicated, the Laws of Association Football apply. Each Law is numbered to correspond with the appropriate Law of the Game.

1. Playing Area

The size of the playing area shall be within the following guidelines for Under 11s & Under 12s:

| Age Group | Format | Pitch Size |
|-------------|--------|---------------------------|
| U11s & U12s | 9v9 | 50yds*40yds – 80yds*70yds |

Halfway Line

The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The centre mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. This is also used as the retreat line when restarting play with a goal kick.

Designated Spectator and Technical Areas

Spectators will stand in Designated Spectator Area(s) on one side of the pitch and all Players and Club officials in Designated Technical Areas on the other side of the pitch. The Designated Spectator Area(s) should be marked by cones, a temporary barrier or a permanent barrier at least 2 yards from the touchline. The Designated Technical Areas should be marked by cones or painted line(s).

Goal Size

The distance between the posts is 16ft and the distance between the lower edge of the cross bar and the ground is 7ft.

WARNING: In view of a number of accidents that have occurred it is necessary to ensure that portable goals of any size are either pinned or weighted to prevent them from toppling forward.

2. Match Ball

Under 11s & Under 12s shall play all their matches with a size 4 football approved by the Competition (i.e. an "official" match ball).

3. Players

The number of players per team including a goalkeeper shall be 9.

Under 11s and Under 12s may register up to 14 players per 9v9 team.

A maximum of 5 substitutes can be named for each team all of whom must, ordinarily, play a minimum of 50% of the total match time. Substitutes can be used at any time during a match, with the permission of the Referee. A player who has been replaced may return to the playing area as a substitute for another at any time during the match. ALL PLAYERS TAKEN TO A MATCH MUST PLAY BY WAY OF ROLL ON/ROLL OFF SUBSTITUTIONS.

If any Team goes 4 goals ahead, the other Team may field an extra Player until the goal difference is reduced to 3 goals. If any Team goes 6 goals ahead, the other Team may field another extra Player until the goal difference is reduced to 5 goals.

If a Team has too few Players for a development fixture, the other Team may lend them a willing Player or withdraw Players to make the numbers even.

4. Playing Equipment

A Team 'First Aid Kit' must be available at all matches.

All players are required to wear shin guards – any player without shin guards is not permitted to play and goalkeepers must wear a distinguishing playing kit. Shin guards must be covered entirely by the socks.

Players must wear the appropriate clothing dependent on the weather.

Correct footwear must be worn for the surface of the pitch e.g. no metal studs on artificial grass pitches.

Corner flags must be provided.

Barriers or cones must be used to mark Designated Spectator and cones or painted line(s) to mark Designated Technical Areas for each match.

NO JEWELLERY OF ANY KIND SHOULD BE WORN BY ANY PLAYER.

5. Referees

Referees shall be appointed to all matches where possible. The home Team shall pay the referee's fees before the match.

6. Other Match Officials

Where assistant referees are not appointed each Team shall provide a Club assistant referee (as required).

An independent timekeeper / scorer may be appointed to assist the referee, where necessary. This official shall:

(a) - Record the goals scored;

- (b) - Act as timekeeper and signify quarters, half-time and full-time by an agreed signal;
- (c) - Suspend time on the referee's instructions for all stoppages, and add time to the end of each quarter or half;
- (d) - Supervise the use of substitutes as permitted by the Rules of the Competition.

7. Duration of Play

Under 11s & Under 12s shall play four 15 minute quarters, with a break of 2 minutes maximum between quarters (except, for the avoidance of doubt, the break marking half time) – total match length 60 minutes.

8. Start / Restart of Play

Kick-off shall be taken at the centre of the playing area, to start each quarter and to re-start after a goal has been scored.

Opponents must be 7 yards away from the ball and in their own half of the field.

9. Ball In / Out of Play

As per FA Rules.

10. Determining the Match

Scoring as per FA Rules.

11. Offside

Offside rules apply as per 11 v 11 Laws of the Game.

12. Fouls and Misconduct

The referee shall have the power to temporarily dismiss a Player for dissent. The referee shall indicate a temporary dismissal by showing a yellow card and pointing with both arms to the relevant Team's Technical Area. A Player temporarily dismissed will be suspended from play for 8 minutes before returning with the referee's permission.

13. Free Kicks

As per FA Rules.

14. Penalty Kicks

Penalty kicks shall be taken from the penalty mark located 9 yds directly opposite the centre of the goal.

All players (excluding the kicker and goalkeeper) must be behind the ball and at least 7 yards away.

15. Throw-Ins

Throw-ins shall be taken as instructed in FA Rules.

16. Goal Kicks

Goal kicks from the floor should be taken at any point within the goal area (i.e. the 4 yard box).

(Goalkeepers may kick the ball from their hands, providing the ball has remained in play.)

At Under 11 and Under 12 all opponents but two must retreat to their own half until the ball is in play. The defending team does not have to wait for the opposition to retreat and has the option to restart the game before should they choose to. The ball is in play when it is kicked directly out the penalty area.

17. Corner Kicks

Corner kicks should be taken within the corner arc.

Players from the opposing team should be at least 7 yards away from the ball.

REGISTRATIONS

All players must be registered in accordance with Competition Rules.

TEAM SHEETS MUST BE SHOWN PRIOR TO ALL MATCHES.

FIXTURES

Under 11 matches within this Competition shall be played on a Saturday. Under 12 matches within this Competition shall be played on a Sunday.

MISCONDUCT

Misconduct by Players, Team Officials or Spectators will not be tolerated. Instances of misconduct will be reported to Clubs and the County FA for appropriate action to be taken.

APPENDIX 4 – CUP COMPETITION RULES

Players at Under 7s, Under 8s, Under 9s, Under 10s, Under 11s and Under 12s may take part in three trophy events each season. The winners of these events can be published and trophies can be presented.

1. Constitution

Cup competitions shall be provided annually for member clubs, and are by invitation of the Management Committee. The method of conducting each cup competition shall be determined each year before the commencement of the relevant cup competition draw.

2. Qualification of Players

Players will not be allowed to move between Teams during a cup competition, where a Team squad list will need to be submitted and adhered to. Once a Player has participated in a cup competition for one Team, then that Player is prohibited from playing in the same competition for another Team and/or Age Group. Any Team found to have played an ineligible player may be disqualified from the relevant cup competition and otherwise be dealt with as the Management Committee sees fit.

3. Postponements

Any cup competition fixture postponed or abandoned, due to circumstances beyond the control of the Teams, will be rearranged by the relevant Fixture Secretary and take priority over other fixtures.

4. Duration of Play

Unless otherwise stated, the duration of play is according to Competition rules for development fixtures for the relevant age group.

Extra Time

If at the end of the normal duration of play a result has still not been obtained, unless separately published cup competition rules provide otherwise, extra time shall be played and the length of extra time shall be:

Under 7s and Under 8s: no extra time

Under 9s and Under 10s: 5 minutes each half – total extra time of 10 minutes

Under 11s and Under 12s: 7 minutes each half – total extra time of 14 minutes

If at the end of extra time a result has still not been obtained, unless separately published cup competition rules provide otherwise, the game will be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark:

Under 7s and Under 8s: 3 Penalties then sudden death

Under 9s and Under 10s: 3 Penalties then sudden death

Under 11s and Under 12s: 5 Penalties then sudden death in accordance with the Referees' chart

5. Matters Not Covered

All matters not provided for in the Cup Competition Rules, will be governed by the Competition rules for development fixtures for the relevant age group. Any matters not otherwise covered shall be dealt with by the Management Committee. All decisions of the Management Committee shall be final and binding.

APPENDIX 5 – REFEREE MARKING GUIDE

HOW TO DECIDE ON THE REFEREE'S MARK

The marking scheme focuses on the key areas of a referee's performance.

Overall Decision Making (1-40)

Did the Referee:

- Recognise patterns of play and not invade player/game space;
- Correctly recognise and award throw-ins, goal-kicks and corners;
- Demonstrate consistent and credible recognition, detection and interpretation of 'normal' Law 12 (Fouls and Misconduct) offences i.e. but not limited to; foul tackles, holding, aerial challenges, handball etc;
- Recognise Law 11 (Offside) + 12 (Fouls and Misconduct) offences and advantage application opportunities, not merely possession, applied in credible areas and/or applied without detriment to match control;
- Demonstrate awareness of when appropriate to use the range of management techniques available, before resorting to formal disciplinary action;
- Recognise where player(s), teams(s) are using time consuming tactics and takes positive appropriate action i.e. preventative actions;
- Demonstrate high levels of fitness and work rate throughout the entire game to meet the demands of the game.

Judgement of Major Decisions (1-30)

Did the Referee, in respect of Cautions/Non-Cautions, Sendings Off/Non-Sendings Off, Penalties/Non-Penalties, Goals Awarded/Disallowed or any other significant game changing decisions:

- Demonstrate identification of 'significant game impact' incidents and offences with appropriate action(s) applied;
- Demonstrate the ability to recognise the importance of potential key match decisions and effectively move towards/gain an optimum viewing angle to (a) judge, (b) enhance credibility and (c) adds value to the decision.

In the highly unlikely event of there being no major decisions, a standard mark of 15 should be awarded to the Referee.

Overall Control and Player Management (1-30)

Did the Referee:

- Act in a positive manner in their Pre-match Communication and Off-Field Behaviour;
- Lead their team, ensuring all officials worked in harmony without contradictory decisions (where Assistant Referees are appointed);
- Display empathy for the game, managing game situations in an empathetic manner recognising the ever changing ebbs/flows, nature and temperature of the game and adapts refereeing style to suit;
- Recognise when/how to raise his/her profile to aide their match control and remain in self-control of emotions, demonstrating composure;
- Recognise when appropriate to enter face-to-face dialogue with the Assistant Referee(s) (where applicable), to aide visual co-operation and major decision making;
- Effectively manage, when appropriate, two-way interaction with players, technical staff etc;
- Demonstrate a natural authority/confidence – not influenced by players, spectators or team officials.

Notes:

A mark of 71 or 80 represents the standard of refereeing expected.

A Club must submit a report within 7 days of the fixture to the Discipline Secretary if a mark of 60 or less has been awarded to the referee or within 7 days of request if a report is solicited by the Management Committee.