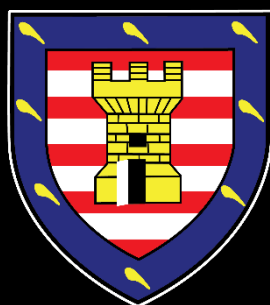




MORPETH TOWN JUNIORS F.C.

“Our Coaching Ethos – The way we coach”

INFORMATION FOR COACHES AND PARENTS



*“Football has to be **FUN** for kids, otherwise it doesn’t make sense.”*

Johann Cruyff

“Winning games is for the coaches’ ego. It should be about developing technically gifted players.”

John Collins



The purpose of this guide for coaches and parents is to outline the coaching ethos the club seeks to implement across its teams.

As adults, we have a pivotal role to play in a child's football journey. We have a natural desire to 'win', but whilst winning is not discouraged – sport is by nature competitive and we want our players to want to win and learn from mistakes or failure – **the priority must be on individual development.**

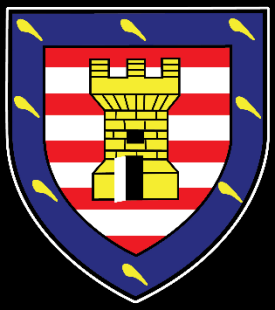
Our coaching and decisions need to ensure the children are having FUN and get enjoyment from playing the game. They need to be **player-focused** with the aim of developing a child's footballing skills in an **environment where they can learn football without the pressure to win.**

We align our coaching with the FA's England DNA, its four cornered model and apply it in line with the relevant age phases of development – see the following link :

<https://learn.EnglandFootball.com/articles/resources/2022/the-fa-4-corner-model>

We hope the information in this guide echoes your own values about grassroots sport.





OUR AIMS

1. **Instil a lifelong love of football** – our players need to enjoy playing the game so that they stay in the game as long as possible.
2. **Better the Person** – through football, teach the children positive character traits.
3. **Better the Player** – help the children become the best footballer they can be by creating the right environment to develop their football skills.



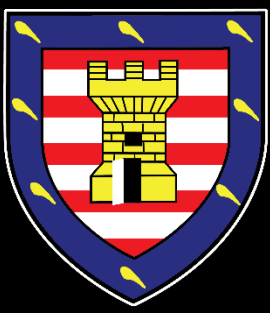


“You’ve got to enjoy it. Unless you really love something, I think it’s very hard to become really good at it.”

Roy Keane

“Kids must enjoy it. You choose to do the things you enjoy any chance you get.”

Ronaldo (Brazil)



OUR COACHING ETHOS

1. **Develop the Person** – instil and emphasise good lifelong characteristics such as teamwork, effort, discipline and respect.
2. **Player Focused** – process over outcome. Encourage personal challenges, learning from mistakes, the importance of practice and working hard to compete.
3. **Learning via games** – encouraging learning and decision-making via games-based scenarios, aligning with the England DNA.



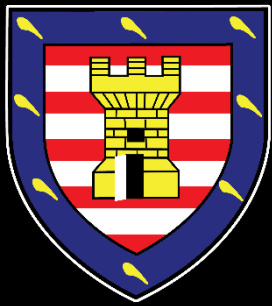


“Young players need freedom of expression to develop as creative players. They should be encouraged to try skills without fear of failure.”

Arsene Wenger

“There are times not to coach. Sometimes it is better to let them make a mistake and they learn more from that mistake than being told what to do.”

Denis Bergkamp



OUR TRAINING SESSIONS

Whilst the training session content will change throughout the age groups, there will be consistent age-appropriate themes to our coaching sessions, aligned to England DNA and supplemented by the club's extensive coaching resource via the Coaching Manual.

1. **No more lines** – move away from 'old-school' lines and drills to get players more time on the ball and be challenged in more game realistic scenarios.
2. **Games based practice** – regular use of small-sided games (SSG) to allow players to learn skills and techniques in game-like contexts.
3. **Player involvement** – have the players involved in the training sessions by having them make decisions about their learning, especially in the older age groups.

KEY AGE-APPROPRIATE FOCUSES

Foundation Phase

Up to U8s – Mastering the ball, stay on the ball, as many touches of the ball as possible.

U9-U11s – Individual skills on and around the ball with focus on opponents. Basic tactical concepts introduced.

Youth Development Phase

U12-U14s – Increased tactical concepts, creating and denying space, linking with team-mates.

U15s and older – Increased focus on team tactics and units within the team.



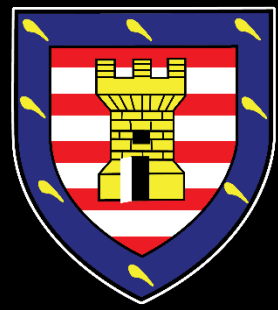
“I didn’t really want to be the coach that wins, but the coach that educates.”

Vicente Del Bosque

“We don’t need to be screamers on the sideline. I think we can create an environment where the KID is in charge of his / her own game.”

Jurgen Klinsmann





MATCHDAY

Matchdays must be viewed as another opportunity for players to learn and as adult coaches and parents / spectators, we need to create a **positive, respectful environment for BOTH teams**. The coaches' decisions on matchdays are made with **player development** in mind.

1. **Encouragement not instruction** – encourage players to make their own decisions and let them learn from their mistakes. Ask questions to confirm learning.
2. **Stay on the ball** – let players develop their skills in a game environment. Encourage them to keep the ball and make the right decisions on when to dribble or pass.
3. **Positional rotation and playing time** – Need to be age appropriate and guidance is given below.

Foundation Phase

Up to U8s – Full positional rotation (including goalkeeper) and equal playing time.

U9s – U11s – Extensive positional rotation, but players begin to develop preferences. Equal playing time.

* Provided players are demonstrating attitudes and behaviours consistent with the club's values.

Youth Development Phase

U12s – U14s – Less rotation with preferred first and second positions and specialist goalkeepers. A minimum of 50% playing time.

U15s and above – Little rotation. Players will have settled into their preferred position and will develop / learn more about roles. A minimum of 50% playing time.

* Playing time based on attitude and behaviour, but increased focus of performance too.

Our club development plan sets out our ethos and where we detail the importance of it being a **FUN** experience for our players, with a focus on **PLAYER DEVELOPMENT** and where winning is viewed as a welcome bonus rather than a necessity.

That doesn't mean we discourage children from winning (far from it), but the long-term aim is to give our children a valued experience with their individual development at the forefront of what we do. The emphasis may change slightly as the children get older, but if they are enjoying what they do, developing their footballing skills and abilities, then good individual and team performances will come through.

We don't aspire to be the Manchester City or Liverpools of the local junior football scene, **but we seek to be a distinct, respected and community focused club run with the development of the individual player as key to our existence.**

We hope this information aligns with your own values and beliefs about grassroots sport, and if it does, please share in our vision of delivering the best possible experience for all our players.

WE THANK ALL OUR COACHES AND PARENTS / SPECTATORS FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT.

