



SPENCERS WOOD FOOTBALL CLUB

Football for everyone!

Who are we?



- ▶ Spencers Wood Football Club is a grass-roots, community-focused, FA Charter Development Standard based Football Club, providing football coaching for children and Adults in Spencers Wood and the surrounding areas. The club currently has a large number of registered players, with ages ranging from 4 up to 18 and over.
- ▶ As a club, the health, safety and welfare of every child that participates in football at Spencers Wood are our first and most important priority.
- ▶ This is closely followed by our commitment to providing a happy and inclusive environment for children to learn and develop their football skills under the tutelage of experienced coaches, who are FA qualified and have the appropriate DBS child safety checks, FA Safeguarding and FA emergency aid qualifications.

Our Commitment

- ▶ It is an absolute commitment of the club that no child is ever excluded from playing football for reasons of gender, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion, sexual orientation or *perceived ability as a footballer*.
- ▶ We strongly believe that football is a game to be played and enjoyed by everyone and all, and our success is measured not by the trophies we win, but by the number of children who choose to play for and remain at Spencers Wood Football Club throughout their childhood, many of which return as Adult coaches volunteering to assist in running the club.
- ▶ This is notwithstanding children whose natural progression may take them to higher levels of the game. Players who fall into this category can expect the full support and freedom from the club to pursue their ambitions, safe in the knowledge that they will be welcomed back at Spencers Wood Football Club should they wish to return.



Our Ethos

- ▶ To deliver this, it is important that the Spencers Wood Football Club has a strong, distinctive ethos that is shared and adhered to by its coaches, its volunteers, its players and the player's parents or carers.
- ▶ This ethos can be summarized as follows:
 - ▶ The health, safety and welfare of every child that participates in football at Spencers Wood FC is our first and most important priority.
 - ▶ It is an absolute commitment of the club that no child is ever excluded from playing football for reasons of gender, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion, sexual orientation or perceived ability as a footballer. We strongly believe that football is a game to be played and enjoyed by everyone. We commit to ensuring equal opportunities for any child playing football at the club.
- ▶ We are committed to providing a happy and inclusive environment for children to learn and develop their football skills.
- ▶ This includes a commitment that every child will get at least the minimum recommended game time as specified by the relevant league and will also not be 'overplayed', that is playing too much football in a duration that could be harmful or detrimental to the child's health, wellbeing and development.
- ▶ We adhere to the appropriate League Rules governing game time in the age group concerned.
- ▶ Children can expect to be asked to play in different areas of the pitch in order to maximize their learning experience and to learn a variety of positions and game play.
- ▶ Football is a game that children want to 'play'. We want all players to have touches of the ball and have the freedom to explore, express themselves and be creative.

The club's codes of conduct for officials, coaches, players and parents are not negotiable. They underpin everything we do.

- ▶ Children by their very nature can be inconsistent and random in their actions, so it should not be a surprise when mistakes are made, particularly when learning new skills. There are no mistakes just learning opportunities.
- ▶ We place the learning aspect of the game above winning at all times and expect all officials, coaches, players and parents to accept this.
- ▶ Winning, however, isn't a dirty word. Winning games can produce a positive environment for the players and fill them with confidence and self-belief, but our focus will always remain on the player's development and enjoyment as part of a team.
- ▶ We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates of chronological and maturation age, and at different rates of physical growth.

It is vital that children can enjoy their football and not be negatively criticised for mistakes.

Coaches and parents must see mistakes as learning opportunities.

It is our view that winning games is a product of good development and is not the bench mark that success be measured in.

Good development isn't always a product of winning.

- ▶ No child will ever be made to feel inferior or superior to his or her peers during their initial development.
- ▶ This includes the formal segregation of young children based on ability. We believe this practice is at odds with the inclusive nature of the club and can potentially have an adverse effect on the development of children who develop later than others.
- ▶ Although we are NOT an academy, we are committed to providing the highest level of coaching that our volunteers can offer. We commit to continual improvement in our coaching methods to ensure your child receives the best learning experience, we can possibly provide.

Player and Team Development

This falls into two categories:

- i) Non-published score format
- ii) League format

Non-published score format

This currently includes teams from Under 7 through to Under 11

Training and Team Registration

- The club encourages that all teams within individual age groups train together with, where possible, a variation of age group coaches, however we also appreciate that on some occasions it will be necessary to train as an individual team to work on team related development. Positive Results will no doubt be seen in the future as children will have the benefit of receiving coaching in a variety of styles and presentation.
- Group training helps build friendships between, not only players but, managers and parents alike and negates any chance of rivalry between teams of the club.
- Players can play in ANY team during training within their designated age group and will be placed in an environment applicable to their stage of development, as directed by the coaches.
- Children from the age of 7 upwards will be registered to one team, as per League rules and will not be able to move to another team by any other means than the relevant League transfer process.

Recruitment and Movement of Players

- ▶ We repeat that it is an absolute commitment of the club that no child is ever excluded from playing football for reasons of gender, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion, sexual orientation or perceived ability as a footballer and new players to the club will always be welcome.
- ▶ If a place is not available at that time in a team then the child will be entitled to train with the team/age group and be entered onto a waiting list to join the team.
- ▶ Each Manager will run a waiting list. As space becomes available places should be offered to the next player on the list, not to the player perceived to be more able.
- ▶ Where there are multiple teams in an age group, joining criteria for new players will be in order as follows:
 - 1) Player team preference, where spaces are available
 - 2) The team with the least number of registered players.
- ▶ If more Players are looking to join a specific team than there are spaces, friendship bonds, personal connections to the team will be considered first.
- ▶ Players cannot move during the season from one team to another, unless this is first agreed by the player, the players parents, the coaches in both teams and the club. If agreed then Transfer will be made by the relevant League Transfer process.
- ▶ Coaches will not seek to recruit players from another team in the club. First and foremost, the wishes, health and wellbeing of the child will be the main priority.
- ▶ Children like to play football with their friends and the wishes of the child are the most important factor, the club will 'listen' to the wishes of the child and will always try to accommodate the child.
- ▶ All disputes regarding team players shall be brought before a panel consisting of members of the committee that will include no less than the Chair (Vice Chair), Welfare Officer and Registration Secretary. The panel will call representatives which may include the child and parents, coaches and any other parties involved in the dispute.
- ▶ **The panel's decision will be final.**

League format

- ▶ This currently includes teams at Under 12 and above. We understand that players at these ages are beginning to “feel like footballers” and have a more advanced level of understanding of the game.
- ▶ Where logistically possible we, as a club, would encourage age group training sessions of multiple teams to maintain the club ethos and prevent rivalry.
- ▶ Players will also be registered to a specific team. This will be assessed by the club’s coaches and based upon the individual’s ability and experience. It is imperative that children, of whatever age, continue to play the game in an environment that tests their abilities but *does not deter them from playing*.
- ▶ Our ethos is clear and underpins our mission: to be a safe, happy, open and inclusive football club that strives to provide the best overall football experience for your child.



Please remember.....

These are kids
This is a game
The coaches are volunteers
The referee is human

“I would love my girls to play in this team!”

County Coach Developer, Berks and Bucks County FA