



Coach Handbook First Edition

1. Welcome to our club!

Welcome and thank you for agreeing to be part of our club and giving up your valuable time to help others. Our club is run entirely by volunteers and without the support of a great people like you, we simply wouldn't be able to offer football development opportunities to our players and families.

This handbook is designed to help you know what is expected of you as one of our coaches and to give you some clear information to help you ensure that our club is always well-run. There's a lot of information included, so we hope that this will serve as a useful resource and reference point for some key areas for you as a coach in our club.

We hope that you find your time with us hugely rewarding and thank you once again for agreeing to help develop our players in a fun and enjoyable way.

We recognise that you'll need some support along the way and this will be provided to you by your Head of Year (HoY), WGCYFC's Head Coach (HC) and the Head of Football (HoF) along with your fellow coaches of course.

2. A long way in a short time

Welwyn Garden City Youth FC were formed in 2012. In the Summer of 2016 we moved to our new home of Ridgeway Academy with some of our younger activities taking place at Welwyn Garden City FC's Hens Lane ground.

Over the summer of 2018 we were officially granted FA Charter Standard Status which we were delighted to receive. This serves as recognition from our national governing body, that WGCYFC has met the national criteria to evidence that we are a well-structured and organised club and that we have created a positive environment for our players to develop and enjoy their learning. In the Summer of 2021 'FA Charter Standard' was rebranded as 'England Football Accredited' clubs.

Our ambition is to achieve the higher levels of England Football Accredited club status over the coming seasons as reflection of our desire to make our offer to our players and families even better.

Our growth over recent seasons has seen us develop players from the age of 7-18 and run 40 teams per season – and this couldn't be done without people like you giving up their time.

2.1 Welwyn Garden City FC

We are Welwyn Garden City Youth Football Club, a completely separate entity from Welwyn Garden City Football Club. Whilst we previously enjoyed a beneficial facility-hiring relationship with WGCFC and accessed opportunities to be involved as mascots and ball-collectors on home matchdays for WGCFC; there is no longer a pathway between the two clubs. Both clubs offer their own development pathways and routes into senior football. WGCYFC's pathway is to develop a love of the game and at the end of a player's time with us; we will help signpost to opportunities for adult

football. This would include any opportunities for open trials with England Football Accredited clubs, which could include WGCFC.

3. Our Club Coaching Philosophy

Like any membership organisation, we feel that to ensure our offer to players and families is maintained by our volunteers, that it is important that we promote and enforce our club philosophy, values and principles. At Welwyn Garden City Youth FC, we strive to create the best learning environment possible for our players to develop.

It is proven that people learn more when they enjoy what they are doing.

Therefore, our club philosophy must be to ensure that learning and enjoyment in parallel is at the heart of everything we do for our players, coaches and families. Training and matches must always be extensions of our approach, and this must be properly managed by our coaches.

We fully subscribe to The Football Association's England DNA and Four-Corner development model. We believe that by ensuring our coaches develop our players across these four corners (see below), then we will achieve our aim of developing footballers and well-supported young people.



We want our players to enjoy their time as part of our club. This time spent at WGCYFC could be just the start of a long and rewarding football journey. It could be only a year or two. Their eventual destination is not our priority – but we recognise our responsibility in starting them off well or playing a significant part in their early steps.

We believe that winning can take many different forms. It could be the final score of a match that is so often the focus, taken from watching the professional game. Our coaches must always prioritise helping our players to achieve their own successes through individual, small group or whole team

objectives and challenges. Our players will mostly only play one game a week, so we will use the time we have with them to set them so many different challenges to help with their development. These smaller victories will help them succeed when it comes to matches and in so many more ways than focussing only on the final score.

We want our teams to be as competitive as we can be, but we will **always prioritise learning** over winning matches and smiles over score lines.

POLITE NOTICE: If your reason for wanting to become a coach is to create your own team to prioritise winning matches over learning; then we thank you for your time and your interest in our club and appreciate you reading this document this far - but now is the point to realise that you are not aligned to our philosophy and that our club is not the place for you to coach.

4. Our Club Values “The Welwyn Way”

In addition to our club philosophy, our club is underpinned by three key values which we call “The Welwyn Way”. These values are embodied in all we do by demonstrating behaviours of the highest standard whenever representing our club and making our club a valued and respected member of the community.

These values should be lived by our coaches at every training session, on a matchday, or when representing the club in an official capacity.

Our values are:

Pride

For our coaches, this means ensuring that your training sessions are planned, delivered and evaluated to the highest possible standard you can, and always in accordance with the Coaches’ Code of Conduct.

Respect

We respect our players, their families, our fellow coaches, our opposition, and the match officials. This means we accept decisions and always behave in a way which we would like people to behave toward us. We are always polite and act in a way which shows our club in a positive way, always acting in accordance with our Code of Conduct.

We must also ensure our players and families also behave with respect whenever representing our club. Every player’s shirt carries our values on the reverse. Feel free to use this as an illustrative reminder to players and families if that helps.

Teamwork

In the same way that we always encourage our players to think of themselves as part of a team; we expect that our coaches also think of themselves as part of the age group team of coaches and also part of the larger coaching team within the club. Our Head of Football and Head Coaches will organise Coaching Group meetings during the season and encourage as many of our coaches to attend as many of the meetings as possible.

These values underpin all aspects of our club codes of conduct and must be adhered to at all times. Failing to do so could result in enacting the Club Disciplinary Policy.



5. Coaching Requirements and Expectations

5.1 Mandatory Requirements

As part of maintaining our 'FA Chartered' status and our desire to follow best practice, it is essential that at least one coach from each team holds the following:

5.1.1 A minimum FA level 1/Introduction to Coaching Football Award qualified. The cost of this learning will be reimbursed by the club.

5.1.2 A current FA First Aid Qualification

5.1.3 An FA CRC carried out under the umbrella of WGCYFC. CRC/DBS disclosures on behalf of any other umbrella body are not applicable.

5.1.4 It is also essential that these coaches maintain their CPD record, first aid and safeguarding training every 3 years. See our Safeguarding section for more information.

Anyone operating in a coaching/managing capacity must have a FAN (FA number) and an FA CRC as described in 5.1.3.

5.2 Coaching Expectations

Everyone delivering any coaching activities and/or acting in a team management capacity on behalf of WGCYFC must sign to accept that they have read and will agree to abide by our **Coach's Code of Conduct**. This must be done each season and before any coaching can take place. **Coaches not completing this, will not be permitted to deliver activity for us.**

You will receive the opportunity to complete the code of conduct directly via a survey link which will be shared to you via the Coaches' Chat WhatsApp group, and checked by your HoY.

This document details the expected behaviours and roles and responsibilities of any person delivering football activities to our players and explains the recourse the club has to any coach not meeting these expectations.

We expect that all adults coaching our teams will have at least completed their FA Level One Coach Award/or the new (free of charge) FA Playmaker and Introduction to Coaching Football Award or FA Playmaker as an absolute minimum and be working towards completing the Introduction to Coaching Football within an agreed period). As a club we will financially support new coaches through the introductory coaching award.

For older players or parents wishing to support qualified coaches; we would encourage them to complete the FA Playmaker course. This is a prerequisite for those undertaking the Introductory coaching award, so serves as the first steps for anyone wishing to become a qualified coach.

In addition to the conditions in our code of conduct; we also expect that sessions are planned and delivered to use age-appropriate activities, so players are able to experience, comprehend, and execute the game as it relates to where they are at their own stage of physical and mental

development and based upon the FA's England DNA Model which you will have seen earlier in this document.

Coaches can coach two clubs/teams, on the strict understanding that neither club is detrimentally affected to the benefit of the other club.

6. How We Recruit, Select and Develop Our Players.

6.1 Player Recruitment

There are two ways a player may express a desire to join our club.

One is where a contact is made 'out of the blue' to us from an adult wishing for their child to join the club. The other is as a result of a recruitment drive. The information below will help manage this process. Please note that your Head of Year is key to the registration process, irrespective of how a player becomes known to the club. The Club Secretary will only register a player to play for the club if it has been first sanctioned by the Head of Year.

6.1.2 Should a coach become aware of a player wishing to join our club, the following process must be followed:

6.1.2.1 The details of any adult regarding a player who contacts the club through any channel about joining the club, must be passed to the HoY.

6.1.2.2 As well as contact details, information such as current club, football experience, position (for development phase players) should also be passed to the HoY. This will assist should spaces become available within the age group.

6.1.2.3 Anyone who makes contact to join the club in the Foundation Phase (for U7 to U11) must be informed the player is joining the club / age group and not an individual team as per the terms of membership.

6.1.2.4 If the player is in the Development Phase (U12-U17) then the player would eventually be signing to an individual team due to published results and league tables. However, streaming of players would still occur at appropriate times whereby they can be restreamed based on what is best for the player's development above all else in keeping with our club philosophy.

The HoY will then manage the process on behalf of the age group and find the best fit for all players.

6.1.3. Player Recruitment and Waiting Lists

All waiting lists at all age groups operate on a first come, first served basis dependant on the appropriateness of the player as determined by an assessment using the four-corner model. These waiting lists will be organised and maintained by each age group's Head of Year. If a space becomes available in a team participating in the highest division of a league, and the next player in the waiting list is completely new to the game, it may be deemed by the aforementioned assessment, that the level of competition is not appropriate to a new player. In this instance is it permitted to go to the next player on the waiting list deemed appropriate by the HoY to the available level of football to fill the space.

6.1.4. Individual Team Recruitment

Should a team need to recruit a player they should discuss this internally with the age group coaches and Head of Year to determine if there is a current player who is may be in need to restreaming (in any direction) based on their development. At this time, the coaches can also discuss the current wait list to determine the best fit for all the players and teams concerned. Once this conversation has concluded the age group, via Head of Year approval will decide who (if appropriate) can be moved for development reasons internally, and who should be invited in from the wait list to join

the team that then requires them. If there is either no wait list, or the current wait list does not have players available of a particular ability to seamlessly integrate into the age group (where in doing so would cause wider streaming issues) then via Head of Year and Head Coach and/or Head of Football, an external advert would be allowed in order to target a particular level of player.

6.1.5 Multiple Player Recruitment / Recruitment due to Teams moving from 5v5,7v7,9v9,11v11.

Should a year-group need a larger recruitment drive, which could be due to many reasons as listed below:

- 6.1.5.1 Expansion of an age group, spaces available for new whole teams
- 6.1.5.2 Teams expanding from a smaller format to the next larger format (for example, 9 to 11 a side - squads of 12 moving to up to 16)
- 6.1.5.3 Multiple leavers at one time, thus filling in the gaps.

The current waiting lists should be immediately reviewed and discussed, and then contacted to join based on team requirements as listed in the 'Individual Team Recruitment' section.

Also, as per the 'Individual Team Recruitment', if there is either no waiting list, or everyone has been found a place for from the waiting list, or the current waiting list does not have players available of a particular ability to seamlessly integrate into the age group (where in doing so would cause wider streaming issues) then via Head of Year and Head Coach (HC) and/or Head of Football (HoF) an external advert would be allowed in order to target a particular level of ability of a player/s.

If you wish to create an external advert, please contact you HoY to request this is created and then shared on our social media channels.

6.1.6 Squad and Age Group Sizes.

To enable us to manage the logistical challenges regarding training and playing spaces; we have created a maximum quota of players and teams per age group within our club. These are:

Age group	Format	Recommended number of players per team	Maximum number of teams per age group	Maximum number of players per age group
Under 7	5-a-side	7	6	48
Under 8	5-a-side	7	6	48
Under 9	7-a-side	9	5	48
Under 10	7-a-side	9	5	48
Under 11	9-a-side	12	4	48
Under 12	9-a-side	12	4	48
Under 13 and above	11-a-side	16	3	48

6.1.6.1 **The recommended number of players in each team in the table above should be seen as a guide.** The numbers are based upon having sufficient players to fulfil fixtures, whilst also ensuring that players have sufficient playing time.

6.1.6.2 The maximum number of players per age group is not permitted to exceed the 48 stated above without the permission of the Club Committee.

6.1.6.3 The size of teams may occasionally have to increase beyond the numbers recommended, due to unforeseen circumstances. When this happens the Head of Year should notify the Head Coach and Head of Football that this has taken place.

6.2 Player Selection (Streaming).

In accordance with our club philosophy, we believe that the best environment to develop our players as footballers and as young people; is to play and learn with players of a similar ability.

To this effect we 'stream' our players into teams based on our coaches' assessments of a player's abilities within their age groups (in the first instance) prior to the start of each season and select players for teams based on this. This can be done through discussion between coaches and their Head of Year, or the assessment can be made with an open informal trial, or training session(s). This approach is no different to the environment children face in schools, where after an assessment, students will be placed in sets to help them learn, develop and achieve at an appropriate level.

Streaming can happen at any time due to many different reasons and scenarios. Because of this there is never one set rule that can be followed; however, a robust process must be followed to ensure players are developing at the right level and being streamed correctly.

On the player registration form, new or returning players and their families can see that when they register for the upcoming season; they are joining WGCYFC (the club) and not a specific team within the club. This is to support our ability to place players in the team we feel is most appropriate for their development and must be respected by players, families, and coaches alike.

The **Head of Year** for each age group, is entrusted in organising these player reviews across each team and age group takes place at the break at the end of the calendar year.

Our collective age group coaches are fully entrusted in making these decisions in accordance with our club philosophy. Should a Head of Year wish to involve our Head of Football and/or Head Coach in these discussions, where debate may be ongoing over the appropriateness of the streaming of a player, then they can do so.

There will be opportunities for players to move between teams as the season progresses, depending on the rate of their development or for the good of the player (as determined by the coach in collaboration with the player, their family and the Head of Year) and only where permitted by league rules. Wherever possible; our preference is to avoid wholesale changes for the sake of change during the course of the season.

Please note: this approach still supports our desire to put the development and well-being of each individual player at the heart of any decision. Ultimately any decision on moving a player from their current team, shall be determined by all four corners of the FA model, although a decision may be weighted in favour of one or more corners (i.e. Technical, or Technical **and** Physical) .

If in a rare occurrence a whole team within an age group collectively develop further than the team above them within our age group structure; then this team will then be considered the higher team and streaming will be adjusted within the age group to reflect this.

For U7s starting their football journey with us; if the club concludes that it is not in the best interest of players to participate in competition through the league; then we reserve the right to withdraw players, or if necessary, a team, from league competition and replace matchdays with additional training sessions. In effect this team would become a development squad. This would create a more rewarding learning environment to help develop players and then the participation in competition would then be reviewed throughout the season.

Please see our recruitment and streaming policy which will support you in managing this challenging area running a youth football club. This is available in the information section of the club website.

6.3 Player Development and the England DNA Development Phases

As part of The FA's England DNA model (part of which is the four-corner model already explained) we also want to help our coaches appreciate the age-related phases listed below and ensure their coaching approach, reflects these phases:

1. In the **Foundation Phase** (ages 5-11); All our players experience playing in different positions, so every player learns all the skills necessary to develop in the game.
2. As players move into the **Youth Development Phase** (ages 12-U16) players will specialise positions more as they transition through 9v9 to 11v11 football. It is important that whichever stage our coaches are delivering within, that we give our players the best opportunities to develop to the best of their abilities.
3. By the time our players enter into the early ages of the **Professional Development Phase** (ages 17-21) it's important that we support these players to be ready for the next stages of their football journey as they move into adult football.

In simple terms: the four-corner model helps give us the framework to plan a session or manage a matchday. The DNA phase helps us to ensure the goals we set are appropriate to the development phase of the players that you coach.

It is also important to ensure we include the **FA's four-corner development model** in our coaching and not focus only on their technical understanding. It is important that all our players are supported to grow their skills and knowledge through a variety of ways that including their social, physiological, and psychological corners. We encourage an emphasis on use of small-sided-games to develop learning, where players have as much contact with a ball as possible and the opportunity to learn at their own rate.

6.4 Matchday Playing Time

We should always aspire to give all our players equal playing time over the course of the season, to enable all our players to be given equal opportunity to learn. We should always adhere to any league rule regarding minimum playing time for player per match.

It's essential that you give every player the chance to learn and improve. **Keeping a stronger player on the pitch for longer might help you win a game, but it takes away practice time for a player who needs more time to develop.** Your short-term view could be stunting the development of a player who could be just as strong in the longer-term.

6.5. Playing 'up' an age group.

In accordance with the rules of the FA, where permitted in our participating leagues and in accordance with our club philosophy; the club is happy for a player to play 'up' a single year group. Coaches wishing to request an age group change must be able to evidence to the Football Development Sub-Group that playing a player in an older age group is the best way of improving the individual players development.

To enable the player to play in an older age group; the coach must be able to demonstrate that the player is:

- i) Tactically superior to players in their own age group or demonstrate superior technical ability players in their own age group.
- ii) Physically capable to compete with players in the older year group.

iii) Consistently excelling in one of the corners of FA the four-corner model as well as the Physical corner where they must be physically capable to compete with players in the older year group.

Final decisions on such requests sits with the Chair the Football Development Sub-Group.

The only exception to this rule is if an additional player is needed to play up a year to enable the club to field a team where otherwise the team will not have sufficient players to represent the club and for the players to enjoy their football.

In that case, the player and their family must be happy for the player to play in the age group above. The player must also be capable of meeting the physical requirement of this rule.

The appropriateness of players playing a year above will be reviewed after discussion with the age group coach.

7. Coach Admin Responsibilities

As you would expect, there are some key tasks which are required to be carried out efficiently to ensure that everyone knows what's going on.

7.1 Pre-season:

7.1.1 You must complete the Code of Conduct acceptance survey by 1st July prior to the start of the next season. As previously mentioned, any coaches not completing this will be unable to undertake any coaching on behalf of WGCYFC or with WGCYFC players under the banner of the club.

7.1.2 Ensure all players registrations are completed from all players and all families have organised their membership payments.

7.1.3 Communicate with players or their families (older age groups) on your plans for the season and the times, dates, and locations for when pre-season training will commence.

7.1.4 Ensure that you request your preferred training venue, time and day to your Head of Year as soon as possible when asked. **Please note: this does not guarantee you will be allocated your requested slot**, so please wait until your day and time has been confirmed to you before sharing this information.

7.1.5 Ensure you request any new/replacement training equipment to our Equipment Manager when asked and by the promoted deadline. The number of balls, bibs, cones, first aid kit or other equipment available depends on age group/size of each squad. Coaches are responsible for the safe keeping of all club equipment. All equipment remains the property of WGCYFC at all times and must be returned when requested at the end of a season.

7.2 During Season:

7.2.1 The main administration functions required during the season revolves around pre and post-match tasks as dictated by your respective league. Details for this can be found in the respective league appendix.

7.2.2 Home fixture admin:

Liaise with your age group Pitch Coordinator to confirm your kick off time and then add this time to Mitoo as soon as possible.

Contact your opponents with the matchday information for matches taking place at Ridgeway.



Whether you email, text or WhatsApp your opposition and the Referee (or their parent/carer), please be sure to reinforce the key information included in the facility information image we produce each season.

It is hugely important that the facility rules are made very clear to all visitors and of course adhered to by our own families and visitors.

Please also be sure to request that visitors complete our evePass app AND the NHS T&T sign in is also used by all visitors to Ridgeway.

7.2.3 You may wish to include the Referee (if already appointed) on the same message or adapt the text to send them/their parent their own bespoke message. If you have not been allocated a referee by the league, then please log your request on the club 'Referee Request' WhatsApp group. Please ask your Head of Year to request you are added to the group.

7.2.4 Don't forget to inform your team of all the details too!

7.2.5 Away fixture admin is relatively straightforward as you will usually only be confirming venue details, meeting times and which kit and boots to wear with the players you coach/their families.

7.2.6 Recording Match details on Mitoo

It is a league rule (and a punishment which will incur a fine) to ensure that you have recorded all match details on Mitoo by 6pm on the day after your match. You will need to do this for all league fixtures, home or away. For cup matches; you will be instructed by your League Fixtures Secretary of administration regarding Cup matches.

Please be sure to familiarise yourself with the league rulebook – in particularly the section detailing fines which could be incurred due to poor administration by you as coach.

It is club policy that any fines incurred by the club from the league for not entering match details by the 6pm deadline will be paid by the club, but the amount will be removed from your next match expenses claim.

7.3 Matchday responsibilities

7.3.1. To pay the match official the correct amount before the game begins. Please check the with your Head of Year to determine the Referee fee for your age group.

7.3.2. To claim back match official fee using the Referee request link. This must be done by 6pm on the Friday before your fixture.

7.3.3. To nominate parent/guardian of one of the player's to be match day delegate to ensure appropriate behaviour within line of the FA Respect campaign.

7.3.4. To nominate parent/guardian to run the line for teams playing 9v9 and 11v11 formats of the game.

7.4 Post-league Season Training and Admin:

7.4.1 The official end of our club season is 31st May each year. Training beyond the end of this time is at your discretion and needs to be communicated to the families of the players you coach, as this will vary from team to team across our age groups. Please ensure that you communicate your plans for the end of your training and matches to your Head of Year and you player families in advance to avoid confusion.

Unless communicated otherwise by the club committee: training will need to take place at venues where there is not a pitch hire charge or if costs are incurred; then they will need to be self-financing as these costs are not covered by annual membership fees.

Unless otherwise communicated by the club committee: any Referee required for any friendly fixture will not be paid for by the club and must be self-financed within your team.

Ridgeway is usually available to hire. Please liaise with your Head of Year if you have any questions over summer training.

To ensure that the committee are aware of the plans across the age groups; all coaches must indicate their intention to continue in their role for the following season to their Head of Year and Head of Football no later than one month before the published deadline for player registration for the following season.

7.5 Registration Period

Over recent seasons we have implemented a registration deadline to ensure coaches and Heads of Year know the expected player numbers per age group. This is usually 31st May. It is the coach's role in ensuring annual subscriptions and payments (including multiple child discounts) are communicated to families in time to register for the following season.

8. Emergency Aid.

8.1. If a player is injured during training or a match, the emergency first aider, should be the first responder to the injured party. Remember that during a match, the first aider can only come onto the field if invited to do so by the match official.

8.2 The current FA guidance regarding Covid restrictions encourages supervisory adults to provide immediate care where possible. If the situation requires a trained emergency first aider to act, then it is the responsibility of the coach to act.

8.3 Should an ambulance be called, then please be sure to provide them with the address of the venue you are coaching at.

8.4 When arriving at a venue which is new to you, please be sure to check that the location of the nearest Automate External Defibrillator (AED) is known to you, and the process for accessing this.

8.5 For activities at Ridgeway, the AED can be found inside the sports centre.

9. Club Committee contacts.

A full list of current committee members can be found on the club website. Please remember that our committee members are volunteers like yourself and are not expected to respond until they have time available. However, they are all keen to help the running of our club, so will endeavour to support you wherever possible.

10 Welfare/Safeguarding Policy

10.1 The welfare of all our players is everyone's responsibility and any concerns should be reported to our Club Safeguarding Officer, whose details are available on the website and will be shared by your Head of Year.

10.2 It is expected that all WGCYFC coaches keep their FA safeguarding requirements current. Although you will be reminded by both The FA and the club, it is your responsibility to ensure that your qualifications do not lapse. **Should your qualification lapse, then you will be immediately suspended from delivering on behalf of the club until this qualification has been completed.**

11. Disciplinary/Complaints policy and procedure

In the rare occurrence that someone linked to your team wishes to make a complaint, then we have a complaints procedure which can be found on the website. The player, families and coach codes of conduct all explain the recourse to any individual found to have acted outside of these expected behaviours should a disciplinary panel be convened following any concern formally reported.

12. Social Media Policy

This will be available on the website for the 21/22 season.

13. Communication

For the most part our club communicates primarily through use of WhatsApp.

It is important as a coach that you **appropriately** message the **appropriate** group. The club is run by volunteers who do not wish to be bogged down in messages that aren't applicable for them and nor will peer coaches, Heads of Year or families.

If you are not familiar with how to privately message as a response to a group message, please familiarise yourself with WhatsApp functionality before replying.

As a club coach, you will be invited to the following groups:

i) Your individual team's group.

Solely for use for you (and team admin).

ii) A Year Group Info group.

Solely for use for club administrators to contact the coaches in year group.

iii) A Year Group Coaches group.

Solely for discussion amongst coaches from same year group.

iv) A Coaches replies & questions group.

For all coaches and club officials to post and ask pertinent questions regarding running of the club, matches, etc...

v) Announcements only/Club News group.

Solely for use for club administrators to contact the coaches of the whole club.

14. Fundraising and sponsorship

14.1 A number of fundraising events are held over the course of the year to enable club subscriptions to be minimised as much as possible allowing the club to be accessible to all. It should be understood that all coaches are to support these events to the best of their abilities.

14.2 It is also important that club try to encourage local businesses to sponsor teams from WGCYFC. Again, to help reduce club subscriptions for all. Each season our club partnerships manager will circulate sponsorship packages through Heads of Year and age groups. Please help wherever possible to promote sponsorship opportunities for your age group or team.

15. Families' Forum(s)

Engaging with players' families is a hugely important part of the coach's role. We recommend that you organise an event at least once a year near the start of the season to explain your plans for the year ahead. We would also recommend a follow up meeting in Jan/Feb to address any issues or revisit your plans for the second half of the season.

16. Player Medical Information

16.1. As a coach, please ensure you make the players and/or parents of the players of your team that it is essential that, as a coach, you have an up to date list of pre-existing medical conditions of all the players. If you are not provided with this information prior to commencing coaching, then please contact your Head of Year.

16.2. In the case of certain medications, such as inhalers, it may be prudent for parents to provide a spare inhaler each season for their child, to allow the coach to store in their kit bag for matches/training. However, it must be emphasised to the parent or player that it is their responsibility to ensure there is an inhaler at training or a match.

17. Coaches' Learning and Development.

During the 21/22 season, we hope to be able to launch two learning and development programmes for our coaches. The intention is that we can share the existing knowledge within our coaches in the club amongst us all, as well as creating learning, development, and support opportunities – some of which may be new information to coaches however experienced.

More information on this will be communicated to coaches during the season.

18. End of season awards

Our awards presentation day usually takes place in June. At the event each player from each team will be presented with a memento (usually a trophy or medal) for being part of our club for that season and a coach will be expected to give a short summary of the season gone.

Each team in the age group will also be asked to select a Most Improved Player, Players' Player, Player of the Year and The Welwyn Way award. Only these awards shall be announced and presented as part of the club awards. **No other awards may be presented by coaches as part of this event.** This is because we wish to ensure consistency across our age groups and unfortunately in previous years, some coaches have used the stage to give out additional awards, creating an inconsistency within age groups.

More information on our plans each year will be communicated to you towards the end of the season.

19. Thank you, good luck and enjoy!

On behalf of all the players you will work with and their families, we hope that you will help us in our intention of providing the best learning environment possible.

There is lots of help available to you, so please ask the relevant person if there is ever anything you are unsure of.

Thank you again for giving up your time, good luck and we hope you enjoy being a coach at Welwyn Garden City Youth Football Club.