

Hythe Town Youth FC

ETHOS



HYTHE TOWN
YOUTH

1. Introduction

Hythe Town Youth FOOTBALL CLUB (the “Club”) is run by volunteer members of a Committee elected each year at the Annual General Meeting.

This document explains the Club’s ethos and philosophy. It outlines what players and their parents/guardians can expect the Club to provide and, in turn, what the Club expects of players and their parents/guardians.

The main aim of the Club is to provide equal opportunities for players to play football and to have fun. The Club will avail a structure for the children to improve their game, to socialise, compete and prosper within a safe and sound environment.

The Club is proud to have achieved the Football Association’s Charter Standard. The Football Association (FA), in conjunction with various bodies, has drawn up the following set of criteria for clubs wishing to reach Charter Standard:

- A written constitution (which you can read on our website)
- FA DBS checked volunteers
- All Coaches to have minimum of FA level 1 Coaching Course
- Commitment to attend in-service training
- Acceptance and promotion of Codes of Conduct
- Commitment to provide football and equal opportunities for all

This ethos is an adaptation of the FA’s suggested policies.

The Club’s Committee meets regularly and any parent/guardian of a player is entitled to request to attend an meeting and offer suggestions for the running of the Club.

The Club survives due to the efforts of the volunteers who contribute substantial amounts of time and effort and it is vital that all members of the Club (the players and their parents/guardians, or their friends and family) support them. With this in mind, Section 6, Codes of Conduct for Spectators, is of particular importance.

2. Ethos – a summary

Hythe Town Youth FC is a family football club that represents and supports the local community within football. The club’s aim is to encourage enjoyment and friendship through shared sporting experiences.

We strive to improve every player’s footballing skills and develop their physical, psychological and social skills to make them happy, competent, confident players and young people.

The squads are managed fairly and give equal opportunity for all members to participate in matches throughout the course of the season. Players, where possible, will be grouped together by ability.

We aim to provide football for all whilst maintaining a safe environment with recommended coach/player ratios appropriate to the age groups of our players.

We will actively discourage barriers and divisions forming within the club by forming a player

movement procedure at Coach & Committee level.

Parents, coaches and supporters are encouraged to praise effort and attitude, not just celebrating results or goal scoring achievements. The club supports and strongly encourages the FA Respect campaign. The club is ultimately a local football club and we will enjoy our moments of success. However, we will not base our coaching style and player involvement on winning alone.

3. Philosophy – Coaching

Our philosophy encourages players to prosper and improve their football abilities so that they continue to play team football for as long as they enjoy it. The aim is to achieve a balance where our teams are successful in both winning and involving every child who wants to play team football.

The club aspires to coach a 'Pass and Play' style of football.

Coaches and parents/guardians should give time and space for players to make mistakes and guide them through alternative options that may prove more successful.

Players should be exposed to all positions on the pitch up to U12s.

Players are encouraged to experiment using both feet equally.

Coaches need to recognise and build players' confidence and self-esteem.

Coaches, players and parents/guardians should show self-control over their winning ambitions and behaviour.

Coaches should be aware of their younger squad players and make allowances to incorporate these players within all the teams, matches and training.

Coaches are encouraged to openly discuss and improve their knowledge of football in order to offer the players the best possible guidance throughout their development.

The club will support coaches with further training and cover the financial cost of courses in return for a commitment of at least 2 years to the Club. The Club will be entitled to all/part reimbursement of cost should the agreed commitment not be fulfilled.

In age groups Under 12 and below, the emphasis is placed on participation and enjoyment. Additional goals are the acquisition of football skills and the nurturing of physical and emotional development and well-being.

Where two or more sides are formed in the same age group, regardless of their divisional standing, it is the wish of the Club that the sides will be picked by the coaches to form teams of equal ability players.

For age group's Under 13 through to Under 18, the Club aspires to provide players the opportunity to play in the highest level within the available leagues. Grading is determined by the performance of these age group teams in matches over the season and greater emphasis is placed upon individual and team performances.

Where there is a single side in any age group, selection of the side is the responsibility of the appointed coach.

Where two or more sides are formed in the same age group and in different Divisions, coaches are empowered to work together to select teams. This is to be based on the coaches' judgment and perception of the players' abilities, potential, development, attitude, commitment and the need for team balance.

4. Philosophy – Squad Management

Ensuring our players feel secure and benefit from bonding as part of a group, the Club aims for age groups to train on the same day giving the opportunity for players to communicate with Managers/Coaches of all teams within their age group.

All players need to be registered and cleared with the appropriate League Registrations Secretary before they can participate in club activities due to insurance restrictions.

All training sessions must be run with a minimum of two first aid trained and DBS checked coaches.

Where parallel teams are available, Managers should aim for squads selected in September to stay together until March.

Exceptions to the above may arise if through consultation with player/parent/coach it is decided changing teams is beneficial for the player.

Players can be shown preference for favourable commitment and attitude, and will not necessarily have priority based on ability or team position.

All substitutes will ideally play a minimum of a third of a match. Managers may therefore choose to select less players for each fixture allowing more match time per player.

Teams should be entered into leagues suitable for their ability and coaches are encouraged to offer training or friendly matches if large numbers of players do not have fixtures. The Club will ensure that no team will play in the same division of their league in competition with fellow Club members.

U11s players should be rotated between teams so they improve and learn from each other.

U11s new players will only be offered a place in the squad should the number of players allow this. The Coach can enrol additional players to attend training session should the coach player ratio allow this.

U12s and above will be given the opportunity to take part in open trial selection offering the possibility of playing for a higher league.

For U12 age groups and above, the Club will hold trials at the end of season for new players. Existing players will be offered a position in another team if the coaches feel that they will get more game time at a different level.

If there is no space within a team, a player can train with them at a reduced cost, subject to the player/coach ratio requirements being met.

5. Codes of Conduct – Players

A player's behaviour on and off the field reflects the image of the Club and affects how other people view the Club. Therefore, the Club has adopted the FA's Code of Conduct for players as follows:

It is expected of Club players to promote the highest standard of sportsmanship; see that 'Fair Play' be paramount at all times; and ensure that the 'spirit' of the game is not abused.

Players of the Club should seek to shake hands with their opponents and the referee/game leader at the end of each game.

All Club players must observe the highest standard of behaviour when representing the Club or attending an event/activity organised by this or any other club.

A player who allows the expected level of behaviour to fall may be subject to disciplinary action. Examples of the most common types of unacceptable behaviour are:

- Abusive behaviour or language;
- Threatening behaviour;
- Violent conduct;
- Provocative, rude or obscene language.

Any player found to be in breach may have their membership suspended or, in certain cases, may be expelled from the Club.

Players should treat victory with humility, and defeat with dignity.

At all times during a game, the decisions made by the referee appointed to officiate, qualified or unqualified, will remain final. Players failing to accept his/her decisions may be considered in breach of the above and, in addition to any punishment imposed by the official at the time, may be liable to have their membership suspended or cancelled.

For teams U16s and above, fines awarded by the FA following disciplinary action by the referee will be payable by the player.

It is expected that all Club members will conduct themselves in a manner that is both honourable and in keeping with the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship. They will not indulge themselves in tactics, either by word or action, that are likely to bring the game, this Club or the League in which it plays, into disrepute.

All players will abide by the rules of the FA and its constituent youth leagues.

6. Codes of Conduct – Spectators

Junior football has changed noticeably over the last 20-30 years. The actions and behaviour of parents, guardians or spectators that were accepted as normal many years ago are now actively discouraged as being detrimental to the efforts of the coaches and the development of the children.

The Club's Committee has therefore adopted the FA's Codes of Conduct for Spectators as follows:

It is the aim of this Club to promote the highest standards of sportsmanship and fair play and to ensure the 'spirit' of the game is not abused.

Any adult taking part in any activity organised by this club, or attending such an activity with the club as a guest of another, shall conduct themselves in an exemplary manner.

Adult behaviour must be of the highest standard to set the correct example to the players.

Players should expect advice, encouragement and support and not be embarrassed or humiliated by the adults watching them.

Adults should NOT shout, swear, argue, become violent or use sarcasm. Wherever possible players who require help should be assisted and encouragement to overcome difficulties given.

Should any spectators be 'booked' by the referee, they are responsible for paying any subsequent fines.

Adults SHOULD:

- Always look for aspects to praise rather than rebuke.
- Praise good behaviour to show adults value it.
- Praise effort and performance rather than simply achievement, most often in the case of a victory.
- Emphasise the importance of involvement, winning second.
- Display patience.
- Ensure players have a clear understanding of the standard of behaviour expected.
- Help players understand the rules, talk to them, not at them.

Matters of team selection, including the playing of substitutes, remains the sole responsibility of the team's manager/coach and his/her decision will remain final. Any parent or guardian or person associated with a playing member who attempts to unduly influence the team manager/coach with regard to team selection shall be in contravention of the Spectators Code of Conduct above and may be dealt with accordingly.

At all times, during a game, the decisions made by the referee, qualified or unqualified, appointed to officiate will remain final. In many cases newly qualified referees, often young in years, are appointed to youth matches in order to gain experience and these officials should be given encouragement and support.

Any parent or guardian or spectator (associated to a playing member) whose behaviour is considered to fall below the required standard may result in the membership of that player being suspended or cancelled.

Any complaint regarding the opposition, referee, spectators, or any other aspect of the game must be dealt with by the team manager/coach. If the matter is considered serious enough the Club Secretary will inform the appropriate authority. It is not acceptable for individuals to take the law into their own hands nor should anyone contact the league or the FA directly.

All parents/guardians and spectators shall abide by the rules of the FA and its constituent youth leagues.

7. Welfare – Child Welfare

The Club's Child Welfare Officer is Sara Cave.

We take the welfare of our players/junior club members very seriously and strive to follow the guidelines of the FA.

The Management Committee has agreed on the following points for Child Welfare:

- The Club has a duty of care to safeguard from harm all children (defined as a person under 18) registered with it. The Club will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in the club through adherence to the Child Welfare guidelines adopted by it.
- Abuse can take several forms including neglect, physical, sexual and emotional abuse.
- The Club will work to ensure that:
 - the welfare and safety of the child involved in any training or competition activities is paramount;
 - all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
 - staff and volunteers are aware of the guidelines and are able to make informed and confident responses to specific child welfare issues.
- The Club recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and will therefore take all reasonable steps to ensure unsuitable people are not used by the Club.
- It is not the responsibility of anyone working in the Club to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the team's coach and/or the Club's Child Welfare Officer and the appropriate authorities.

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young sports people in vulnerable positions. The Club should be vigilant and any concerns must be reported to the coach and/or the Club's Child Welfare Officer.

If you have any concerns or would like further information, please contact your team coach, the Child Welfare Officer or any other club member, and your conversation will be treated in confidence.

If you are worried about sharing concerns regarding child welfare, you can contact social services or the police direct; or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or Childline on 0800 1111.

8. Welfare – Anti-Bullying

The Management Committee regards bullying in any form as unacceptable behaviour and it will not be tolerated. Bullying can take many forms, physical, verbal, indirect or via social media. It usually arises:

- When it is carried out deliberately
- When it is repeated over a period of time
- When children become vulnerable and unable to defend themselves

Bullying in any form is not acceptable at Hythe Town Youth FC. Every effort is made to deal with both victim and bully in a sensitive way acknowledging the need for confidentiality, sensitivity and a sympathetic, fair and firm approach. No child should live in fear of another.

Club coaches and helpers have a critical role to play in watching out for, and dealing with, bullies and incidents of bullying. Parents/guardians will be kept informed of any action and the strategy used to combat any form of bullying.

Usually it is sufficient for a coach or helper to show disapproval of an individual child's inappropriate behaviour.

Withdrawal from the training session or match is the most commonly used sanction, however if the problem persists then the Management Committee has agreed that the following steps should be taken;

- The Coach/helper talks with the child if necessary withdraws them from match or training session;
- The Coach discusses concerns with Committee before taking further action;
- Coaches may have an informal discussion with parents /guardians about behaviour causing concern.

If unacceptable behaviour persists, the Coach/Committee will inform parents/ guardians and request a meeting to discuss the problem. As a result of the meeting, further strategies to combat problem behaviour will be devised and monitored

Fixed term or permanent exclusions are a final sanction for the severest behavioural problems

9. Grievance Procedures

The Club expects players, their parents/ guardians and other spectators to respect the Codes of Conduct described above. Nevertheless, there may be occasions when someone feels aggrieved and therefore the Committee has agreed that the following steps should be taken by anyone wishing to make a complaint:

- In the first instance, the person should discuss the issue with the team manager/coach.
- If the issue concerns the behaviour of a member of another Club then the matter should be raised with the Club Secretary. It is not acceptable for individuals to take the law into their own hands nor should anyone contact the constituent youth league or the FA directly.
- If the issue concerns the behaviour of one of the Club's players then the matter should be taken up with the Welfare Officer.
- If the issue is about a perceived departure from the Club's ethos, philosophy or Codes of Conduct, and if the matter is not resolved following the discussion with the team manager/coach, then the person should raise the matter with the Club Secretary and request that it is discussed by the Club's Committee.

10. Data Protection

Players' details are held on a club database and in some cases team database. Registration details are also held by the appropriate League. Players' details are not passed onto any other parties.