



Barwon Heads Football Netball Club
Junior Football Handbook
Season 2024

About Barwon Heads Football Netball Club

Key BHFNC football facts

- Established: 1922
- Mascot: Seagulls
- Senior men's football premierships: 2022, 2019, 1993, 1972/3/4, 1957
- Senior women's football premierships: 2018
- Senior teams: senior & reserves men, senior & reserves women, U18 men
- Junior teams: U19 girls, U16 boys, U14 girls, U14 boys, U12 boys, U12 girls, U10 girls, U10 and U9 • Auskick: 100+ participants
- Home ground: Howard Harmer Reserve, Bluff Rd
- Secondary home ground: Barwon Heads Village Park

Our Purpose

The Barwon Heads Football & Netball Club (BHFNC) aims to provide the best possible environment for members to experience a community sporting club promoting participation, achievement and contribution.

Our Mission

To be recognized as a competitive, community and value orientated, professional, fun and successful sporting club, equally admired for on-field and off-field achievements.

Our Vision

We recognise that the club is greater than any one individual therefore, our vision for success incorporates a variety of components. Our aspirations are:

- To be an organisation which runs smoothly and professionally with ample resources and quality facilities
- To have qualified and accredited coaches, working in cohesion, to develop skills and people
- To have players in the senior age groups, who are acknowledged as role models for junior members for their sporting ability and social behaviour
- To be committed to coaching and training and to have established a style of play that promotes on-field success
- To have a supporter base consisting of playing and non-playing members who actively contribute to the club
- For the club to be acknowledged as making a contribution to the broader community
- For all members of the club to consistently display our core values
- To have the full support of local businesses who are eager to sponsor and promote/support us
- To have a stable leadership group who are positive, enthusiastic and open to change
- To have a club environment which is full of energy, commitment and is a great place to be
- For our club to be acknowledged as a leader in our league & region

Our Values

Enthusiasm and Commitment

- We train hard, play hard and have fun
- We contribute positively both on the field / court and within the club

Respectfulness and Accountability

- We respect all players, officials, spectators and members
- We maintain a high standard of personal behaviour
- We respect the decisions of the coaches and umpires

Teamwork and Collaboration

- We play and train as part of a team
- We volunteer and take up roles to achieve the best outcome for the club

Development and Excellence

- We win cleanly through spirit, talent and discipline
- All players are given the opportunity to reach their potential
- Development of all players, umpires and coaches remains a unique feature of our club

BHFNC committee

The BHFNC operates under an elected Committee. The Junior arm of our football and netball club reports direct to the club committee. To find the most up to date details of our committee, click [here](#).

Code of conduct

The BHFNC code of conduct applies to each player upon registering. You can find the code of conduct in full on our website [here](#).

Child Safety Policy

Barwon Heads Football & Netball Club is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who participate in football and netball and access the Clubs' services.

We have in place and adhere to the Child Safe Code of Conduct which can be found at <https://barwonheadsfnc.org.au/junior-football-policies/>

Play Welfare Support

AFL Barwon in partnership with Read the Plan and the Committee for Geelong introduced the Creating Mentally Healthy Sporting Clubs and Communities, in 2022. The Framework aims to empower clubs with information, tips and resources to help clubs and its members both on and off the field and court to navigate mental health.

In 2023 BHFNC Junior program introduced a Junior Player Welfare Officer who supports our club and members in the areas of mental health and wellbeing for our sporting club. This role will continue to play an important part in offering space to support mental health and wellbeing, particular for our young people.

Read the Creating Mentally Healthy Sporting Clubs and Community Framework [here](#).

Junior football committee

The 2024 Junior Committee members including key roles:

- **Ted Mithen:** Junior Boys coordinator, AFL Barwon & Senior committee liaison,
- **Nicole Bacely** Junior Girls coordinator, AFL Barwon liaison
- **Sally Mackie** Junior Player Welfare Officer

Committee Members:

Luke Woods	Brooke Cheel
David Webb	Luke Hill
Mel Kiwi	Duncan Buller
Rob Mackie	John Grigg
Kirsty Tweddle	

Purpose of the BHFNC junior committee

- To manage the junior football program at BHFNC in alignment with the One Club philosophy and the junior football priorities
- To enable all aspects of junior football to have a voice: competitive & non-competitive ages, boys, girls, coaches, umpires, team managers, families
- To report back to the BHFNC senior committee
- To raise sufficient funds for the junior football program to run
- To communicate to the junior football community on behalf of BHFNC

Program priorities

Our priorities for the Junior Football program are:

- **Player Retention** – providing an environment that fosters a fun, supportive and constructive environment for players, is essential for building strong club culture and, players who want to stay at our club.
- **Player Development** –we are focused on developing all players who have a desire to improve and better themselves, not just the stronger players.
- **Player Welfare** – we recognise that football and the BHFNC play a variety of roles in people’s lives, and we strive on creating a positive environment where all members feel safe.

Winning games and playing finals indicates the success of the program priorities. BHFNC wants to instil a winning culture in our teams, but never at the expense of Player Retention, Player Development or Player Welfare.

Non-competitive years u9/10/12s

In all junior teams, we aim to maximising and emphasis game-day participation and enjoyment. This aligns to our club values and program priorities, as well as ALF Barwon's policies, ensuring we support our junior players to build on and develop their football skills, nurturing physical and emotional development and, overall wellbeing.

AFL Barwon's junior football program is structured by competitive and non-competitive years. All under 9, 10 and 12 players play in a modified version of the game based on age and gender. This includes no ladders, or finals and no recording of best players or goal kickers.

You can find AFL Barwon's match day guide [here](#).

Team selection

Within teams, it is expected that matches are evenly shared amongst players irrespective of skill level. Where there are multiple Barwon Heads teams in non-competitive age groups, the club will select teams based on a set criteria. Team selection occurs at the start of each season by the junior committee and, in conjunction with team coaches. This process occurs on a yearly basis and teams do not automatically 'roll over' each year.

In the event of multiple Barwon Heads teams within one age group the following guidelines will apply –

- U/9's : teams selected based on year level, ie. top age team and bottom age team
- U/10's : teams selected evenly as per the below criteria
- U/12's : teams mixed across year levels, ie. top age U/12's mixed evenly with bottom age U/12's across the teams

Selection criteria:

- Teams will be comprised of equal numbers (to as equal as possible)
- Child(ren) of a coach will play in those coaches team
- If teams are based on school year level then the year level teams will be selected as evenly as possible based on players ability and size
- If mixed across year levels, teams will be made as evenly as possible and matched in terms of skill level and size.

Where practical, teams of the same age group will train together. **This will be dependant of coaches and ground availability.**

Player rotations

AFL junior football rules state that at least every quarter, player rotation must occur to provide opportunity in several positions including interchange. Every player must play a minimum of 50-75% of a game.

BHFNC requires that junior teams follow AFL Barwon and AFL policies and rules of rotating junior players across multiple positions.

Player rotation plays a critical part in our two key priorities in **Player Development and Player Retention**, and therefor this policy should be upheld at all times regardless of game outcomes or scores.

Player Numbers & Replacements

Depending on various factors such as team numbers, school holidays, injury/illness etc, teams may be short of players and require replacements from other teams. In these instances, the following guidelines should apply –

- Where possible a player should be sought from the age group below, ie. An U/9 fills in for and U/10 and an U/10 fills in for an U/12 etc, rather than replacements being sought across the same age group. A replacement player from a higher age group is not allowed.
- Opportunities to act as a replacement player in other teams should be evenly shared – the same player(s) should not be sought for multiple games as a replacement each or most weeks.
- Replacement players should not be sought or used unless they are required – two players on interchange is sufficient to not require replacements.
- Players of similar size and ability should be sought as replacements for the players being replaced.

Competitive years u14/15/16/18s

Like our non-competitive years, we aim to maximising and emphasisers game-day participation and enjoyment aligned to our program priorities. Recruitment and retention are fundamentals of a sustainable club and building a pathway for our junior players, to senior football.

Team Selection

The process for initial team selection of competitive age groups where there are more than one team, is completed at the start of the year. The team coaches along with the junior committee are responsible for initial squad selection. Where applicable, the committee may seek advice from an independent selector.

The committee will apply the following principles when completing the team selection process:

- Teams/squads will be comprised of equal numbers (to as equal as possible)
- Team selection will be based on appropriate skill level for a players football development
- Child(ren) of a coach will play in that coaches team (where appropriate)

Where there are multiple teams in competitive age groups, our club policy is to select and align players to teams based on their skill level. Throughout the year, coaches will be responsible for team selection on a weekly basis and will do so based on but not limited to; **skill, development opportunity, training attendance and attitude.**

It's important that parents and players of competitive years understand the expectation that, where there are multiple teams, player movement between teams of the same age group can and, is likely to occur from week to week.

Training Style

An 'all of club' approach to training is the recommended approach for each junior team. Our training principles are:

Skill Development

Fitness maintenance

Match simulation

Key learnings from previous weeks

Game education and knowledge building

The training environment is one that allows all players the opportunity to develop their skills and work on game craft. Our coaches will call on parents for help and often where applicable, ask parents to attend training.

Player Development

In accordance with AFL Barwon and AFL policies as well as the key priorities of Player Development and Player Retention, the player rotation guidelines (position + game time) outlined above for non-competitive grades also applies to the competitive grades.

Aligning to our values of **Excellence and Development**, teams must aim to meet minimum game time standards so that we continue to develop players however, it is acknowledged that the demands of competitive football in higher grades may make the application of a specific minimum standard impractical.

Player Rotations

Player rotation plays a critical part in our two key priorities in **Player Development and Player Retention**, and we strongly encourage our competitive years teams to apply a modest approach to allowing players to opportunity in several positions including interchange.

Player Numbers & Replacements

Depending on various factors such as team numbers, school holidays, injury/illness etc, teams may be short of players and require replacements from other teams. In these instances, the following guidelines should apply –

- Where possible a player should be sought from the age group below, ie. An U/9 fills in for an U/10 and an U/10 fills in for an U/12 etc, rather than replacements being sought across the same age group. A replacement player from a higher age group is not allowed.
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- Replacement players should not be sought or used unless they are required – two players on interchange is sufficient to not require replacements.
- Players of similar size and ability should be sought as replacements for the players being replaced.

Grading of teams

The Club submits an estimated grading of each junior team to AFL Barwon so they can schedule the first 4 matches of the season. AFL Barwon grading of teams takes place during this period. At the completion of grading, teams are placed in the most suitable division and the remaining fixtures will be released. It can be hard to plan for but it is worth it as it ensures that games are not too one-sided (in either direction).

Club communications

The clubs preferred method of communication for players and families is via multiple methods including:

- Email: to the email address/es supplied upon player registration
- Website: barwonheadsfc.org.au
- Social media
 - Facebook: Barwon Heads FNC Juniors (we would encourage you to join this group as it is a good source of instant news)
 - Twitter: @BHFNCSeagulls
 - Instagram: [barwonheads_juniorfooty](https://www.instagram.com/barwonheads_juniorfooty)
 - Email: juniorfootball@barwonheadsfc.org.au

Team specific communications will be established by each team. A mix of social media, SMS, email and WhatsApp are generally used – please talk to your Coach or Team Manager about the preferred methods for your team.

How to register

We will notify families via Facebook when registrations open. Registrations are required as early as possible to enable the junior committee to make informed decisions on team numbers.

Register at <https://barwonheadsfc.org.au/membership/>.

It's a two-step process:

1. Register with Play HQ to be recognised by AFL Barwon and covered by player insurance
2. Join and pay for your BHFNC player membership

Both steps need to be completed by Round 1 of the respective year.

Volunteer roles

Each team requires many volunteers to enable kids to play football. Volunteer roles that need to be filled are:

- Coach
- Umpire (U9-U14)
- Team manager
- Trainer/ first aid
- Runner (U12+)
- Water carriers
- Interchange steward (U14+)
- Scorer
- Timekeeper
- Team Photographer

All helpers require a Working With Children check which is a free application process accessed via <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/individuals/applicants/how-to-apply>

What to expect on Game Day

Uniform

The Club will provide each player with a guernsey that must be returned at the end of the season. Players are required to supply their own royal blue socks and shorts, which can be purchased online at <https://shop.locosportswear.com.au/collections/barwon-heads-fnc>

Any items worn underneath the uniform (eg 'Skins' compression tops or shorts) are optional and must match the skin tone of the player. DeGrandi and Target have been known to sell a cheaper brand of compression shorts.

The Australian Dental Association recommends a custom-fitted mouthguard for all Australians who participate in contact sport or sports with high risk of dental injury.

Merchandise

BHFNC supporter merchandise orders (eg hoodies, beanies, polo shirts etc) can be purchased any time throughout the year. Browse and order via this website: <https://shop.locosportswear.com.au/collections/barwon-heads-fnc>

Concussion

BHFNC supports the guiding principle of 'if in doubt, sit out'. The BHFNC concussion policy is as follows:

1. Any player who suffers a head knock or possible concussion must be immediately removed from the field and assessed by the team First Aider.
2. The First Aider should utilise the HeadCheck app to assess the player's condition, **if unsure**.
3. Should the HeadCheck app advise that the player should not continue, they must be withdrawn from the match and parents are advised to seek a medical assessment. Participation in the following week's game can only occur with explicit permission from a parent communicated to the coach or team manager.
4. If a player has a concussion diagnosed by a health professional their return to training and play must be managed by a health professional in line with the [Australian Concussion Guidelines for Youth and Community Sport](#)

Return to full contact training requires a medical clearance and cannot occur before day 14 after the initial incident.

Return to competition requires a medical clearance and cannot occur before day 21.

These guidelines are designed to protect our players by ensuring proper assessments and actions are taken in the event of injuries, particularly concussions.



Head Knock Response Guide

A QUICK GUIDE ON HOW TO RESPOND TO HEAD INJURIES DURING JUNIOR FOOTBALL GAMES

1. RECOGNISE



- BE VIGILANT ON THE SIDELINE.
- INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO THE OPPOSING TEAM'S FIRST AIDER.
- TEAM UP WITH OTHER PARENTS

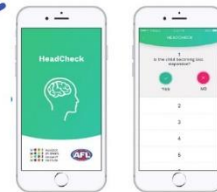
SIGNS TO WATCH FOR:
 HEAD KNOCKS, LYING MOTIONLESS,
 LACK OF PROTECTIVE ACTION,
 GRABBING AT HEAD, STUMBLING,
 SLOW RECOVERY, CONFUSION,
 FACIAL INJURY.

2. REMOVE



REMOVE THE PLAYER FROM PLAY
 IMMEDIATELY

USE THE HEAD CHECK APP



THE HEAD CHECK APP IS A TOOL TO HELP
 WHEN YOU ARE UNSURE. IT CAN BE USED
 AT THE FIRST AIDERS DISCRETION.

3. REFER



OPTIONS FOR REFERRAL: PARENTS,
 AMBULANCE, EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT
 OR MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL

4. REVIEW



PARENTS SHOULD SEEK A
 PROFESSIONAL DIAGNOSIS

5. RECOVERY



RECOVERY GUIDELINES AFTER A
 CONCUSSION DIAGNOSIS:
14 DAYS SYMPTOM-FREE BEFORE
 RETURN TO CONTACT TRAINING AND
21 DAYS BEFORE RETURNING TO
 COMPETITIVE SPORT.

REMEMBER



IF A HEAD KNOCK OR POSSIBLE
 CONCUSSION OCCURS, THE PLAYER
 NEEDS TO BE TAKEN FROM THE FIELD
 AND ASSESSED.

IF IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT

Issues resolution

AFL Barwon Vilification & Escalation Policy

Should anyone on your team experience vilification, the Club will support them and escalate to AFL Barwon if desired. The process for vilification and other grievances is to contact Nicole Bacely (junior girls footy) or Ted Mithan (junior boys footy). They will respond and escalate appropriately and in the required timeline.

Match day issues

In the unusual occurrence of players and spectators behaving inappropriately towards players, umpires or coaches, prevention is certainly more effective than a cure.

Incidents can be prevented or minimised in the following ways:

- Our team managers reminding families to never abuse umpires or other team players, volunteers or spectators, even if provoked. The way we act in these situations directly influences the way our kids act. Therefore, it is vital that even if others go low, we go high.
- BHFNC coaches and parent umpires should meet and greet their opposition coach and parent umpire before each game, wish them well and remind them that we are all here to enjoy a fun game of footy. Our umpire should state at this time that the game will be played to the age-appropriate rules and free kicks will be paid (eg no tackling to ground, no sling tackles, no abuse etc)
- The BHFNC parent umpire should pay free kicks against any player from either team who deviates from the rules, and any time they receive inappropriate sledging or abuse from any player or spectator from either team.
- If issues arise during the game, the coaches should meet at the next break to highlight the issue and ask that it be addressed.
- The parent umpire can give yellow cards with/without report or red cards with report.
- In extreme cases if the above steps have been taken and the safety or wellbeing of our players or umpires are still at risk, the Club will support your decision to end the game.

Umpire Respect

BHFNC under no circumstances will tolerate umpire abuse. We pride ourselves on being a club that respects and celebrates umpires and, we encourage our young players to feel confident and comfortable taking on the role of an umpire for our younger teams.

We as a club, stand with the AFL and AFL Barwon on their quest to improve the match day environment, making it a more supportive and positive environment for all.

To learn more about the Umpire Respect campaign, visit the website [here](#).

We encourage coaches, team managers and all parents to report any abuse of umpires via our email juniorfootball@barwonheadsfn.org.au.

Key contacts

Junior football enquires: bhfncjuniorfooty@gmail.com.au

General enquiries, registration queries: Angie Spinks, Club Administrator, admin@barwonheadsfn.org.au

Policies:

AFL Barwon Junior Match Guide	<u>DOWNLOAD</u>
AFL Barwon 2024 Junior Football Age Groups	<u>DOWNLOAD</u>
Junior Football Team Manager Guide	<u>DOWNLOAD</u>
AFL Barwon Cyber Safety Policy	<u>DOWNLOAD</u>
Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct	<u>DOWNLOAD</u>
AFL Barwon Junior Coaches Code of Conduct	<u>DOWNLOAD</u>
AFL Barwon Players Code of Conduct	<u>DOWNLOAD</u>
AFL Barwon Parents & Spectators Code of Conduct	<u>DOWNLOAD</u>