



RESPECT AND INCLUSION

PLAYER PATHWAY

COACHES COMMITMENT TO PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

The overall purpose of the Phoenix Player Pathway is to provide the opportunity for any player within their age group to explore a desire to move teams within the Phoenix Youth setup.

Not every age group has more than one team, therefore this will not apply across the whole club, but there may be circumstances where a player can explore the possibility of playing up an age group, or in the scenario of team expansion and club growth of adding teams in the future.

Every player and parent have the right to decide what is best for them and their own personal development. We are fortunate that we have more than one team within some age groups and thus the option is available for movement across each team, should several considerations be satisfied.

Our philosophy at Phoenix has been centred around **respect and inclusion**. It is each coach's agreement that for players to develop, they require a healthy number of minutes playing and at a level that is generally matched to their own ability. It is also recognised that friendships also play a big part in such decisions which is equally respected.

Phoenix U13 age group for example has three teams participating in Dorset Pool 2, Pool 4 and Pool 6 respectively. This provides a broad level of ability for players and squads to be aligned to the respective standard.

We are keen to emphasise that this pathway is not solely designed to move all the high ability players to the highest ranked team, it is also to provide a choice for players to look at ways of achieving the maximum from their time at Phoenix by aligning their own ambitions for playing more minutes and excelling within an environment and level suited to them. Again, friendships play a part and is not always centred around ability. Fundamentally, we all want each player to be happy, valued and enjoy their football.

To participate in the player pathway, we request that parent(s) approach their coach and discuss their thoughts and ambitions for their son/daughter. This will then be raised amongst the coaches within the relevant age group and discussions held to achieve the best outcome for the player. There is a target to respond back to the parent(s) within 10 days. Note that there are 'transfer windows' even in grassroots football so there may be a delay in registration transfers, so expectations need to be realistic.

It requires to be said that not all requests may be granted, as there are other considerations to consider, such as existing squad size. There is little gain in moving teams only to be met with a similar situation at their current team. However, to date there has not been a structure in place to support such conversations and the Phoenix Player Pathway now provides this.