

Why does St Patricks Football Club (SPFC) grade?

We grade because:

- Place players at similar or equal ability to assist with enjoyment of the game.
- Encouraged by the Sutherland Shire Football Association (SSFA)
- Players develop at different times and ages. Annual grading ensures they are appropriately placed with players at similar development stages.

What Ages are graded?

Different policies for different ages:

- U6 are not graded. Focus is on discovering football and having fun.
- U7 and U8 are not formally graded. The club accepts nominations from parents who would like their child to play in a higher grade. Reference may be made to prior years development via prior years coach's report, should nominations be greater than needed for that team. Nominations are taken as part of the registration process.
- U9 to U16 are formally graded if the club has enough players to field more than one team in that grade. Note, if "not to be graded" the nominated player will be slotted by the registrar based on team sizes.
- Greater than U16 are not graded. Should a player wish to play in a higher grade they can nominate. Nominations are taken as part of the registration process.

Is Grading compulsory?

- No. If a parent/guardian does not wish to have a player graded please nominate at registration.
- If 'not to be graded' nominated players will be slotted by the registrar based on team sizes across the age.

Can they play with a friend?

- We believe participating in a team sport allows the players to form new friendships. Our key objective as a club is to ensure the player is playing at the appropriate skill level.
- Given U6, U7 an U8 are not formally graded teams can be formed in consultation with the club committee. ***Please be mindful once a player is in U9 to U16 formal grading will occur.***
- Teams older than U16 are usually formed based on friendship and players of each team will consult each other on the formation of these teams.

How is grading determined?

FFA Building Blocks	Ages	Players on Field	Competition Table	Formal Player Grading	Requests to have player in highest graded team (at Rego)	Opt out of Grading Day (at Rego)
The Discovery Phase	6	4 (no keeper)	No	No	No	N/A
	7	4 (no keeper)	No	No	Yes. If more than one team	N/A
	8	7 (inc Keeper)	No	No	Yes. If more than one team	N/A
Skill Acquisition Phase	9	7 (inc Keeper)	No	Yes. If more than one team	No	Yes
	10	9 (inc Keeper)	No	Yes. If more than one team	No	Yes
	11	9 (inc Keeper)	No	Yes. If more than one team	No	Yes
	12	11	Yes	Yes. If more than one team	No	Yes
Game Training Phase	13	11	Yes	Yes. If more than one team	No	Yes
	14	11	Yes	Yes. If more than one team	No	Yes
	15	11	Yes	Yes. If more than one team	No	Yes
Performance Phase	16	11	Yes	Yes. If more than one team	No	Yes
	17	11	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
	18	11	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
	21	11	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
	All Age	11	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
	Over 35	11	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
Over 45	11	Yes	No	Yes	N/A	

- U6 has team allocations based on player numbers. If a parent wishes to nominate a player to play with friends, please advise the registrar at registration time. The club will try to accommodate where they can based on team numbers.
- U7 and U8. The club accepts nominations from parents who would like their child to play in a higher grade. Reference may be made to prior years development via prior years coach's report should nominations be greater than needed for that team. Nominations are taken as part of the registration process. Remaining players in these ages will be allocated based on team numbers. If a parent wishes to have the player to stay in a team from the previous year, please inform the registrar. The club will try to accommodate where they can based on team numbers.
- U9 to U16 is determined from playing performance/development in the previous year along with performance on the pre-season grading process. The club's grading committee will complete the grading days.
- The club recommends players attend off-season player development clinics offered by SPFC or other clinics should they aspire to play in a higher grade. Refer our website and Facebook page on a regular basis for these opportunities.
- U16 and above are not graded but players can nominate if they wish to play in a higher grade. If aspirations are to play in a higher grade the grading committee may refer to prior player history at the club or other clubs.

When are the grading Days?

Grading usually occurs early to mid-February. These will be updated on the SPFC website and Facebook page in January. The SSFA requires all Clubs to submit teams by a certain date shortly after registration ends. We are also restricted for grading times/days by ground availability.

What if the player cannot attend grading day?

If you are unable to make at least one of the grading sessions then you must make an application, in writing, to the grading committee. Your email must be received prior to the scheduled grading session for you to be considered for a higher side. Please set out the reason(s) in your email why you are unable to attend grading.

What if I am a new player?

New players who do not grade or submit a nomination will be graded into the lowest team. The Grading Committee reserves the right to adjust this should a player be not playing at a similar development stage or based on team numbers.

How do we treat players who registered late?

If team allocations are full the player will be slotted in a lower graded team. The Grading Committee reserves the right to adjust this should a player be not playing at a similar development stage or based on team numbers.

How are team's graded in the association?

The SPFC Grading committee will nominate each team for a grade in their age group. However, the SSFA decides the grade of a team based on:

- previous year's performance (where applicable)
- grade suggested by SPFC
- number of teams in the age group; and
- introduction of new players to the team

If I want to bring an entire team to the club can they stay together?

For the initial year of coming to the club the team can stay together on the condition they can bring a full team. That is:

U6,U7 – at least 4 players

U8,U9 – At least 7 players

U10,U11 – At least 9 players

U12 and Up – At least 11 players

Important to note, after the first year, the clubs grading policy should be adhered to. As a condition of the club, players are required to play at similar or equal ability to assist with enjoyment of the game,

How do I find out grading results?

Team allocations are published on the club's website around two weeks after the grading process.

Please note, for U12 to U16 team allocations will be announced in a different manner. If required, a number of players will not be allocated to a team until after a more intense pre-season training process is finalised with the grading committee prior to announcement before round 2.

How do I become a coach/manager for the year?

The club takes nominations at any time if you wish to be a coach/manager. Please contact the club president. Coach/manager finalisation and additional invitations should a coach/manager not be in place by team allocation times will then be advertised via the website and social media.

During the season the club appreciates any support from parents at training or game day to assist in ensuring everything runs smoothly.

If my child does not make the highest grade can they assist a higher team when needed?

We encourage participation to ensure matches are not forfeited and also provide the opportunity for the players to gain further experience at playing at higher grades and with a different group of players.

SSFA have specific rules in regard to this. In summary:

- U6, U7, U8, U9, U10 & U11 can play in other teams at any time in their age group.
- U6, U7, U8, U9, U10 & U11 can play in other teams at any time to a limit of 2 years up in age. Some further points need to be considered for U10 and U11. Please refer to the rule book on SSFA website.
- U12 to U21 can play in a higher grade to a maximum of three games during the season. If more than this, they are then classified to be part of the higher grade and cannot play for the previous team. Some further points need to be considered for U10 and U11. Please refer to the rule book on SSFA website.

What if I disagree with the decision of which team I am placed in by the grading committee?

Any player may appeal a decision of the grading panel. If you wish to appeal a decision of the grading panel, you or your parents must notify SPFC's grading committee in writing of the appeal.

The grading committee will review the decision and will let you know if they either affirm or overturn the original decision.

The subsequent decision is final.