



*The Football Association has proposed that the following extracts from
FA Rules and Regulations be included in County Associations
at the discretion of each Association*

REGULATIONS OF THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Section C. Rules relating to Players

4. Age Ranges and Provisions Relating to Players Under 16 Years of Age

(a) Children not registered in the Programme for Excellence

The following provisions apply to children not registered in the Programme for Excellence.

Children Under 6 Years Old

- (i) A child who has not attained nor will have attained the age of six as at midnight on 31st August in a playing season shall not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play, in a match of any kind in that playing season.

Children permitted to play Mini-Soccer only

- (ii) A child who has not attained nor will have attained the age of nine as at midnight on 31st August in a playing season shall not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play, in a match between sides of more than seven players in that playing season. Such children shall only play in a match played according to the "Laws of the Game – Mini-Soccer" as amended for particular age ranges by the Council from time to time.
- (iii) A child who has attained the age of nine but who has not attained nor will have attained the age of ten as at midnight on 31st August in a playing season shall not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play, in a match between sides of more than seven players in that playing season. Such children shall only play in a match played according to the "Laws of the Game – Mini-Soccer" as amended for this age range by the Council from time to time.

Children permitted to play Eleven-a-Side or Nine-a-Side

- (iv) Any child may play in a match between sides of eleven players according to the Laws of the Game or between sides of nine players according to the "Laws of the Game – 9 v 9", save for those specifically prohibited from doing so pursuant to this Rule.

Sanction Provisions

- (v) The consent of The Association or of the relevant Affiliated Association or Associations shall be required pursuant to Rules B1 and/or B7 as appropriate for any Competition involving children who have not attained nor will have attained the age of 14 as at midnight on 31st August in that playing season. Such Competitions (whether for Mini-Soccer, nine-a-side or eleven-a-side matches) shall only be allowed where participants are restricted by age range, such age ranges being "Under 7", "Under 8", "Under 9", "Under 10", "Under 11", "Under 12", "Under 13" and "Under 14". The age ranges shall be defined to include all children (subject to clause (i) above) who have not attained nor will have attained the ages of 7,8,9,10,11,12,13 or 14 respectively as at midnight on 31st August in the relevant playing season.



Where the age ranges and their respective definitions do not apply on a compulsory basis pursuant to this Rule, a Competition, where age ranges are used, shall be allowed only where such age ranges are defined by reference to midnight on 31st August in the relevant playing season.

Age Brackets

- (a) A child in the age ranges Under 7, Under 8, Under 9, Under 10, Under 11, Under 12, Under 13, Under 14 and Under 15 must not play and shall not be permitted, or encouraged to play, in a match where any other player is older or younger by 2 years or more than that person.
- (b) To play in an Under 18 age bracket competition the player must have achieved the age of 15 by midnight on the 31st of August of the playing session.
- (c) To play in an open age competition a player must have achieved the age 16.

Gender of players in Under 11 matches

- (vii) A child in the age ranges Under 7, Under 8, Under 9, Under 10 and Under 11 may play in a match involving boys and girls.

Priority for School Activities

- (viii) Priority must at all times be given to school or school organisation's activities in accordance with the recommendations of the "Memorandum: Children of School Age and School Games" whilst a pupil is receiving full-time education in accordance with the Education Acts.
- (ix) All Clubs and Competitions, excluding those whose matches are played on Sundays, shall include in their rules a provision to the effect that the availability of a pupil must be consented to by the Head Teacher.

(b) *Players of School Age Registered in the Programme for Excellence*

- (i) Players who reach the age of nine years during the academic year and who are in full-time education may register with a recognised and licensed Centre of Excellence through the procedures established by The Association Regulations.
- (ii) It shall be a breach of the Rule for a Centre without a valid licence to coach and train players of school age who are in full-time education, and registered through the registration scheme or for a licensed Centre of Excellence to play against any Centre which is not licensed apart from a school. The licensing authority for Centres of Excellence shall comprise representatives as determined by The Association and which shall lay down regulations and guidelines by which the Programme for Excellence is run.
- (iii) It shall be deemed to be misconduct for any Club or Club Official to induce any player of school age registered with a separate Club or Centre of Excellence to leave school for the purpose of signing a contract of employment.