



SQUAD INFORMATION

UKFA PHILOSOPHY

“We want to help children develop elite behaviours in terms of their performances on & off the pitch”

<https://www.uk-fa.com/about>

KIT / EQUIPMENT

(Parents this is vital, please ensure the kids are sent to football fully prepared)

All squad players **must** have the current UKFA kits (from Integrity Sports) so everyone looks professional at training and at games / tournaments. If your child has lost a shirt, shorts or socks, please replace them.

Integrity Sports Website – <https://insportshk.com/ukfa>

Password – ukfa2021

The **orange** squad kit must be worn on the designated squad training day.

The **yellow** academy kit must be worn on all other days (non-squad training).

The **blue** goalkeeper kit must be worn to goalkeeper training only.

Coaches will always let the team know ahead of upcoming matches / tournaments which kit to come wearing, but remember to always bring the other colour shirt as spare.

Players **must** wear shinpads to all training sessions & matches / tournaments.

If players do not come wearing shinpads, they won't be allowed to participate in training or matches.

Players must remove all jewellery e.g., watches.

Always bring plenty of water to training and matches.

Players must always bring any necessary medications (e.g., inhalers).

All of this is for safety & there is no exception.

Players must bring their football to all training sessions and matches, and it must be the correct size. The wrong size is hugely detrimental to player development:

- U7-U9 players (born 2015 or after) – size 3 football.
- U10-12 players (born 2012-2014) – size 4 football.
- U13/14 players (born 2011 or before) – size 5 football.

PLEASE ENSURE YOU WRITE YOUR CHILD'S NAME ALL OVER THEIR FOOTBALL OTHERWISE THEY WILL ALL GET MIXED UP AT TRAINING AND WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND AT THE END.

PLAYERS CODE OF CONDUCT

(these are minimum standards that must be met at all times)

- **If you are late** – **DO NOT WALK** to the pitch, run to the pitch with your ball & drink.
- **Carry your own stuff** – Mum, Dad, Auntie do not carry your belongings, you do.
- **Coach & Player Handshake** – The first thing you must do when arrive at training / matches is head over to the Coach and greet each other with a handshake or first pump. It is a great sign of respect & it shows the Coach you are focused & ready.
- **Hard work** – You must give 100% effort all the time (*not just when coaches are watching*).
- **Focus** – Listen to & watch your Coach and teammates (*soak up information*).
- **Desire to improve** – If there is something you aren't good at, don't hide it, don't sulk about it – improve with practice, repetition & a desire to accomplish & a belief you can do anything.
- **Positive attitude** – If you make a mistake, don't worry, sulk or dwell on it – learn from it. Mistakes are part of the development process. If you never make a mistake, that means you aren't pushing yourself or trying difficult / new challenges.
- **Help teammates** – Encourage at all times, don't moan or blame. If someone does something "wrong" explain why it was incorrect & show them what they could do next time. Leaders lift others around them. Moaners & blamers are excuse makers.
- **Responsibility** – You are in charge of being prepared for class (not mum, dad or auntie). Ensure you have the correct kit, football, shin pads, footwear and drink. You oversee your belongings, if you leave anything behind, that's your responsibility, not anybody else's.
- **You are always representing yourself & UKFA** – Always show great behaviour & respect for venues, teammates, coaches, the opposition and referees. If anyone isn't showing acceptable levels of behaviour and respect, they will get one warning, any further issues and they will be out of UKFA. We won't allow anyone to affect UKFA's reputation.
- **Sportsmanship** – At training or matches / tournaments, be humble in victory & gracious in defeat. Never gloat, taunt or ridicule. Never refuse to shake hands with the opposite players and coaches and never use profane language or gestures.
- **Practice football in your own time** - either individually or with friends. The more hours you spend with a football the better. Watch football live & on TV too.... observe the pros in action.

PARENTS (TRAINING & MATCHES & GENERAL INFO):

Squad players **must** train a **minimum** of 2 days. **(1 of those days must be the designated squad training).**

If your child is going to miss training, please let Jon & the team's Coach know asap (prior to training) via a private WhatsApp message. We understand sickness & injuries happen and we can adjust our training plans if informed in good time, but if we are not told, it affects session plans. Communication is key.

In the lead up to a match, if your child is not feeling well or is injured, please let us know asap so we can plan ahead. DO NOT message us Friday night or Saturday morning. If they are still unwell or injured by Thursday night, then tell us then so we have time to arrange a replacement.

Please sit back & ENJOY the process - People get far too stressed out about the results in youth football. It always ends up with the kids not enjoying it. We want to help create young problem solvers on & off the pitch that will go on to do big things in their futures. If we just give them all the answers or tell them what to do, they are never going to grow independently or think for themselves. At training and matches just listen to your kids play...it can be a beautiful thing to hear them discover, plan and organise.

Please don't judge "success" on game results. Judge success on individual & collective improvements over the course of the season, that's what we will do as an academy. Winning isn't always shown by the score line. Any positive score line / result will be a by-product of the hard work and dedication made by

the players & coaches at training, and the support, encouragement, patience and understanding both players and coaches receive from you as parents.

THIS IS WHAT WE NEED YOU TO DO TO SUPPORT US AS COACHES

- Please ensure the players are at training & matches / tournaments on time.
- Please ensure the players have all the requirements clothing & equipment.
- At training or at matches please feel free to encourage and cheer the players but please **DO NOT** instruct / direct them at any time. They should only be listening to the Coach & their teammates. Too many voices & instructions are so confusing for kids.
- Please **DO NOT** place yourself on the same side of the pitch as the coach & players. Please position yourself on the opposite side and respect the Coach & Player space.
- At matches / tournaments please conduct yourself in a manner that you would want your kids to behave. Do not moan at the referees or organizers. If there is an issue with a referee, opposition coach, player or parent, it's the UKFA coach's responsibility to deal with this. If people cannot watch their kids play a fun sport without moaning, then they should not come.
- We want your kids to have responsibilities at a young age, and we hope you want that too. Therefore, please help us by emphasising to your kids that they are in charge of preparing and looking after their football kit and equipment.

ISSUES (THE 24-HOUR RULE)

Over the course of 1 whole year there's bound to be times where you may not be happy with something, whether that's related to training or a decision / player selection. The Coach will always be happy to answer any questions or help to explain a decision. But please implement & respect the [24-hour rule](#).

The [24-hour rule](#) is in place, so you have time to take a step back & reflect. Then, if after 24 hours there is still an issue, please send a written or verbal message the coach with your question / query. This allows the coach time to send you an in-depth thought-out response, rather than asking them on the spot. There is usually a perfectly good reason for all coaching decisions that perhaps you weren't aware of on the day but allowing us time to explain can quickly clear things up.

Pitch side on the day of matches / tournaments **is not the time or the place to raise issues**. Tensions are often higher than normal, and coaches have many kids and responsibilities to take care of at the same time. Likewise, at training (before, during, after class) we have lots of responsibilities so that's not the time to discuss any issues.

If the issue can be resolved at that point, then great but if not, then please contact the UKFA owner (Jon) who will look into the matter from both sides and try to resolve it.

The [24-hour rule](#) is also there for the Coach. We always want individuals & the team to do well & show improvement. Sometimes we may feel frustrated with a situation & want to bring it to your attention, but again we will wait 24 hours, giving us time to reflect on it before deciding what to do.

STYLE OF PLAY

We will play a style of football that will be focused on the **long-term** development of the players, never on the short term. We will aim to ensure players are comfortable first and then dominant in 1v1 situations all over the pitch. We will aim to ensure players are comfortable playing out from the back (from goalkeeper, to defender, to midfielder, to the forwards). We aim to ensure all players are comfortable playing in any position within the system.

This means we will play football that will be challenging and risky in the short term, but so beautiful and recognisable to observe in the long run.

Any team can boot the ball long and score....**but** can they confidently pass the ball around and cut the opposition open? We will aim for the latter.

Any big physical kid can belt the ball with power over the head of a physically smaller goalkeeper in a massive goal....**but** can they confidently beat a player 1v1 and score a goal like Messi with precision? We will aim for the latter.

This will take plenty of practice, patience, perseverance from the players, coaches, and parents. Everyone will need to be understanding and supportive with the fact that playing this style won't happen overnight and mistakes will happen at training and at matches. None of the players will be blamed for making a mistake if we asked them to try something difficult. All that we ask is the players give it their best.

Squad coaches will be keeping players and parents informed about what they will be trying to implement at training and matches (and why) over the course of the season.

SELECTON CRITERIA FOR MATCHES / TOURNAMENTS

Just because your child is part of the squad that doesn't mean they will be automatically selected for matches / tournaments. To be selected, your child obviously has to be available to play on the day. As soon as we find out about any games, we'll check everyone's availability first before selecting players.

For those kids who are available to play, they will need to show the Coach they deserve to be selected for the upcoming game. Coaches will select players based on the following:

- Players' training attendance record
- Players who show commitment & effort for themselves & the team & show a positive attitude.
- Players who show willingness to try difficult challenges & don't shy away.
- Players who show great focus on the coach & their teammates.
- Players who put the team before themselves & will play in any position for the Coach.
- Players who show the most improvement, technically, tactically and physically.

If your child isn't selected for an upcoming game, it's probably because they didn't do all of the above, and the Coach will be happy to explain this to you if you have any questions. The coach will let the individual players know what they need to do to be selected in the future.

PLAYING TIME AT MATCHES / TOURNAMENTS

If your child has been selected for a match / tournament, we will provide everyone with equal playing time. Please do note that there are situations where this won't happen...for example, if players arrive late, or they warm up without any focus or effort, then they obviously won't start until they are fully prepared, therefore they won't get as much time as the kids who have prepared and are focused. Also, if we feel kids are not giving 100% or listening to the Coach or their teammates, then we will take them off. Making mistakes is 100% ok, and kids won't be subbed for that so long as they are trying their best.

PLAYING POSITIONS / SUBSTITUTES

We believe in gaining as much experience as possible all over the pitch therefore, the kids will be played in multiple positions on the pitch. The U10A & U12A Golden League teams will be the groups where we'll have slightly more set positions. Football is a team sport, and the team comes first, above any individual

player. If the coach asks someone to play in any position, then we fully expect them to do it to their best without any questions. Any players demanding to play a certain position or moaning about having to play in a specific position won't play, they will stay as a substitute. When players are a substitute, they should be focused on the game and assisting their teammates, communicating any appropriate instructions. Substitutes who are not focused on the game or are asking the coach when they are coming on, simply won't be coming on.

REGISTRATION FOR THE LEAGUES & \$100 MATCH DAY FEE

In previous seasons we have not charged a fee for match days. The only thing that needed to be paid for was the registration fee of \$300 to the Hong Kong Junior Football League which helps towards the running of the league (to cover pitch hire, the league secretary and referee costs). This season, we must charge a small fee of \$100 each time your child **plays** for UKFA. There is a huge amount of time & planning put into Saturdays and we have multiple coaches to arrange, and hours of coaching salaries to cover. The overheads occurred on Saturdays over previous seasons were huge, and we made significant losses because it was free to play. The fee of \$100 will massively help us cover our running costs. We hope you understand. At the end of each month, we will message you with your child's match fees for that month. For example, if your child plays two times in October (October 7th & October 21st), then you will need to pay \$200. You will only be charged for the Saturdays your child is selected to play.

MOVING UP, DOWN OR OUT FROM THE SQUAD

A lot can change in a year. Players can improve beyond all recognition and likewise players can plateau or regress if they are not working as hard as others. If we have an "A" and a "B" team, a player's position in those teams is not set for the year...that wouldn't be fair on anyone and can stifle effort and drive and it's not realistic to the world we live in.

If your child starts the season on the "A" or "B" team, that's because we feel it's the most suitable team for them at the time. However, if a player from the "B" team is working really hard and progressing, then there's every chance we will trial them in the "A" team and move them up if they deserve it. Likewise, if an "A" team player isn't working hard enough, not showing effort, drive or focus, then we may move them down to the "B" team.

If a player is really showing no sign of effort or improvement and they are falling behind the rest of the team, then we may have to remove them from the squad completely. This rarely happens because we will always try to guide and help the players, and we will always warn the player and the parents about the issue and give them time to improve. However, if there is no improvement, we will remove them from the squad if we think that's the best thing to do. There are always non squad players improving, looking for their opportunity, so it's up to the current squad players to make sure we know they belong.

END OF CALENDER YEAR & END OF SCHOOL YEAR FEEDBACK

As we have grown and have more top-quality coaches on board, we are now able to provide you with more feedback about your child's development. As always, we will continue to be on hand to answer any questions you may have over the course of the season, just contact us if you need anything. At the same time, we will still provide your child with feedback and tips at training, but we can now provide you with a more formal assessment of your child's progress. Upon request, we will provide you with a written assessment at the end of the upcoming term (December 2023). This should help to provide you and your child with more of an understanding of what they are doing well and what they need to work on and how to achieve this. We can repeat this process at the end of the school year too (June 2024).

UKFA COACHES PROMISE / AIM

We will work incredibly hard to help your child improve as an individual on & off the pitch. We aren't just here to make them better football players, we are here to help them become responsible, respectful and hardworking young adults.

We will encourage and challenge the kids to push them out of their comfort zone.

We will aim to create a fast-paced & exciting session where the kids can be creative & express themselves while working as hard as possible.

If you ever hear/see us being hard on a child or a group, it's most likely because we feel they aren't giving 100% or listening. It won't be because they made a mistake trying their best. We believe in your kids (that's why they are in the squad) therefore, nothing is more frustrating for a Coach than when someone isn't giving it their all or listening.

If a player isn't trying hard or listening and spoiling the class or wasting time for others, we'll sit them out and it's likely they won't play at the weekend.

We believe honesty is always the best policy and if a player isn't meeting the standards of effort required, we will tell them. This isn't to be mean; this is to help them understand what we expect. If an issue continues, we will raise this with you so together we can try to resolve the matter.

RESPECT THE COACHES

Just like the kids, no two coaches are the same. We have different personalities, ways of teaching & communicating but we all have the same goal of helping to improve your kids on & off the pitch. If we raise any concerns, it's only to help the kids in the long term. It would be easy not to be open & honest with players about concerns, but that helps no one.

As coaches we are always having hours of lengthy conversations about players & we will always help each other & will often consult you about issues / thoughts. While we are not perfect (no one is) and not every single decision may be the right one in your eyes, we will always do what we think is best for each player.

If you have any problems with a coach, please out of respect don't air any judgement or thoughts publicly. That's not an appropriate or good example for the kids. We want to ensure a positive atmosphere and environment for all. Please raise any issues through the appropriate channels (directly with the coach or with the owner).