

# ESSENDON NETBALL GRADING POLICY JUNIORS



## 1. Philosophy and Commitment:

Our vision is to provide all local children the opportunity to participate in the sport of netball.

Our commitment is to promote, encourage and foster unity in our community netball club that allows its members to play netball and develop their netball skills in a fun, safe and fair environment, with the necessary equipment, facilities and personnel.

Our future is one that embraces diversity and equality. Essendon Netball Club encourages and welcomes all children in the community to participate in the sport of netball. We strive to create an environment where children feel they belong, play with familiar friends and meet new friends. A safe environment to have fun!

## 2. Aims and objectives:

The aim of the grading policy is to ensure that team grading is conducted fairly and effectively and in the best interest of the players and Club.

The objective of the grading system is to:

- Create teams of similar skill and ability
- Allow teams to play in a suitable competitive environment
- Allow Essendon Netball Club to be represented in multiple sections of the EDNA competition
- Allow opportunities for players to be eligible to play in a Representative competition

## 3. When will grading take place:

**Grading will occur during the first 3 weeks of training prior to the Winter Season.** There may be some movement between teams at the commencement of the season due to team balance.

Grading will be conducted by the Grading Committee comprising Head Coach, Coaches, Junior Registration Co-ordinator. All individuals hold a current Working with Children Check (WWC).

## 4. Grading:

### 4.1 Grading Criteria:

The following will be taken into consideration:

- footwork
- speed and agility
- ball handling skills
- attacking skills
- defending skills
- fitness
- versatility
- perception and cognition skills
- sportsmanship and attitude

## 4.2 Grading Process:

- Every child is treated as an individual member irrespective of previous team, grade or club
- Every child has an equal opportunity
- Feedback from coaches will be considered during the grading process

Grading sessions will primarily consist of on court game play, and possibly a number of netball drills. For various reasons, players may not necessarily play an equal number of quarters during these sessions.

Players will have the opportunity to trial in their preferred position, however they may also be asked to trial in a position that is not their preferred position.

Parents, players and non-coaches are **not** to approach assessors at any time during the assessment process in an attempt to influence grading and/or team formation.

New players to the Club will be included in grading and are therefore expected to attend the training sessions for their age group, so they can be assessed on their experience and skill level.

## U9

Players in U9 are **not** skills assessed. A request to play with friends will be accommodated if numbers allow.

Teams will be loosely ranked by the coaching committee based on age and previous experience.

Any U9 players who will be moving up to the U11 age group in the following year, will be reviewed towards the end of the current Spring Season (during game time) and in the first 3 weeks of pre-season training for the Winter Season of the year in which they will be moving up. This will be according to the U11 grading criteria.

## U11

Players will be graded via the process described in this grading policy as well as;

- Skills assessment
- Age
- Team balance (team positions)
- Friendships

U11 players will have the opportunity to make **one friendship request**. Please refer to the “*Friendship*” section of this policy for further detailed information.

## U13/U15/U17/Open

Players in this age group will be graded via the grading process described in this grading policy as well as;

- Skill set
- Age
- Team balance (team positions)

Players will have the opportunity to make **one friendship request**. Please refer to the “*Friendship*” section of this policy for further detailed information.

## 5. Friendship:

### 5.1 Requests:

Essendon Netball Club acknowledges that players enjoy playing with friends. Additionally, the Essendon Netball Club encourages players that end up playing outside of their friendship groups to embrace the opportunity to meet new friends.

U11/13/15/17/Open players are entitled to make **one friendship request**. **If there is a skill difference between players, then they will be ranked in a team suited to the less skilled player**. Requests will need to be submitted to the Head Coach/Grading Committee via [headcoach@essendonnetballclub.com.au](mailto:headcoach@essendonnetballclub.com.au), and agreed to by **both** parties. One-sided requests will not be considered.

## 6. Players playing out of age groups:

It is a general policy of the Club that all players play within their age group. There are some instances when a player may be selected for a higher age group. These include:

- Extra players are required in a higher age group to meet minimum team numbers
- A player's DOB is close to qualifying for the higher age group, they possess the necessary skills and experience to play in the higher age group, and there are other supporting reasons (e.g. the player has a history of playing with peers who will be moving to the higher age group).
- A player is performing at the same skill level as an older age bracket team and is the right fit for the older age bracket team. This decision is at the discretion of the Head Coach and must be supported by the parent/guardian. The player and parent/guardian have the right to refuse, in which case they will remain in their natural age group.
- In some circumstances the Club may choose not to fill teams by moving players up. For example, if there are no suitable players to move up or it will not be beneficial for players and teams to do so, the Club will try to source players externally.

## 7. Team Formation:

When forming teams, the aim is to achieve strength and balance within that team.

Teams will ideally consist of 9 players, a coach and team manager.

When assessing players and forming teams, mid-court, attack and defence positions will be taken in to consideration to ensure a fair spread of positions as well as;

- grading performance
- coach's assessment
- court position (preferred and non-preferred)
- friendships
- sportsmanship and attitude
- age

The outcome of the grading assessment is to develop teams that will be of a standard for each section of the EDNA competition. Please note, **there is no guarantee that EDNA will accept our team grading.**

Parental support and communication with coaches is required to ensure a smooth transition of players into new teams, by encouraging children to make new friends.

Team selectors have to find balance in a team and one change can affect multiple teams.

### 7.1 Final Announcement of Teams:

Players will be informed of their team via electronic Club News, Coach or Team Manager. Essendon Netball Club aims to do this as soon as practicable, however sometimes this may not happen until the week before the season starts.

Players who do not register within the advertised period of time will only be granted a position in a team if there are vacancies in the applicable age group. Once teams have been submitted to the EDNA Competition, any late registrations cannot always be accommodated. In this instance players may be placed on a wait-list.

All information pertaining to team formation and grading assessment is confidential and will not be discussed outside of the Committee.

Once teams are selected, they **cannot be altered** without good reason, **except** for the following circumstances:

- player leaving the club
- player unable to play due to injury
- special considerations agreed upon by the Head Coach and Netball Club President/Junior Registration Co-ordinator

There will be no team changes for players who wish to play with their friends or are unhappy with the division that their team is placed in.

Alterations to teams can only be made by the Head Coach and the Netball Club President/Junior Registration Co-ordinator. Any requests for team alterations must be submitted to [headcoach@essendonnetballclub.com.au](mailto:headcoach@essendonnetballclub.com.au).

## **8. Concerns:**

Whilst it is hoped that players and parents appreciate the difficulty of the grading and team allocation process, and accept the final decision made by the Grading Committee, an appeal may be made.

If a family considers that their child has been treated unfairly during the grading process and subsequent team allocation, they must submit their concerns in writing via email to the Club Secretary ([info@essendonnetballclub.com.au](mailto:info@essendonnetballclub.com.au)) and Head Coach ([headcoach@essendonnetballclub.com.au](mailto:headcoach@essendonnetballclub.com.au)) within 1 week of team postings. Members of the Committee will convene to consider any concerns and will advise the family of their response. No appeal will be discussed over the phone. The response from the Committee will be the **FINAL** decision.

**Important: The registration form submitted implies that families accept the selection process and decisions, and children will play in the teams in which they have been placed.**