

Linton Aztec FC



Club Game Time and Selection Statement

Our approach

At Linton Aztec FC, we want players to enjoy football, feel valued and develop in a positive and supportive environment.

We recognise that children and young people develop, communicate and experience football in different ways and at different rates. We aim to create an environment where:

- Players feel included and respected.
- Effort, learning and enjoyment are encouraged.
- Players feel a sense of belonging within the team and club.
- Communication with players and parents/carers is open, clear and respectful.

Our approach to recruitment, selection and game time evolves across different age groups and playing environments, but our values and expectations remain consistent across the club.

Player recruitment and selection

Our club aims to provide opportunities for players to access football in a way that is positive, safe and appropriate for their development.

At younger age groups (U10 and below), recruitment remains as open and inclusive as possible, with a focus on participation, learning and enjoyment.

As players get older, approaches to selection may become more structured depending on squad sizes, league environments and the developmental needs of players. Decisions may consider factors such as:

- Player wellbeing and readiness.
- Attendance and availability.
- Confidence and development needs.
- Creating a balanced and positive team environment

We aim to communicate decisions clearly and respectfully with players and parents/carers. Where changes or challenges arise, we aim to support players positively and help them continue to feel involved within football.

Game time and participation

The club strongly encourages equal playing time at younger age groups (U10 and below), where participation, enjoyment and development remain central to the football experience. As football environments become more competitive at older age groups (U13 and above), playing time may vary more across matches or periods of the season. Rather than an abrupt shift, we advocate an evolving approach to match time and selection (at U11 and U12). All players should continue to feel valued, supported and meaningfully involved.

Game time may be considered:

- Within individual matches,
- Across several weeks, or
- Across the season depending on the age group and playing environment.

Factors that may affect game time can include:

- Attendance and availability.
- Readiness
- Wellbeing.
- Confidence and development needs
- Engagement and behaviour in training.
- Squad size and matchday environment.

We encourage coaches to communicate openly and appropriately with players in age-appropriate ways so they can better understand decisions and continue to feel valued and supported.

The role of coaches

Our coaches are expected to create positive, inclusive and respectful football environments where players feel safe, supported and able to develop.

- Coaches should apply the club's approach consistently and communicate decisions appropriately and respectfully with players and parents/carers.
- Where possible, decisions should be supported by more than one adult to help ensure fairness and consistency, particularly where potential conflicts of interest may exist.
- The club committee and welfare officer are available to support coaches where needed and to help maintain consistency across teams and age groups.
- Where approaches or behaviours are not aligned with the club's values or agreed expectations, the club will work supportively with coaches and volunteers to address this appropriately and help maintain positive environments for players.

Communication

This statement will be shared at the start of the season and made available through the club's usual communication channels.

We encourage respectful conversations away from matches and training environments where possible, as this helps create calmer and more constructive discussions.

Players should also be given opportunities to ask questions, be heard and understand decisions in ways appropriate to their age and needs. Players are encouraged to share how they are feeling about their football experience where appropriate.

Managing questions and disagreements

We understand that questions around selection or game time can happen within youth football. Where they arise, we ask parents/carers to speak with the coach or team manager early, as conversations usually resolve questions or issues quickly and respectfully.

If further support is needed, concerns can be raised with the club committee or club welfare officer. The club will aim to:

- Listen respectfully to concerns raised.
- Respond proportionately and fairly.
- Communicate decisions clearly.
- Keep children's wellbeing and development central to conversations and decision-making.