



Development Program

Information Pack 2026 Season





Development Program

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1. Program Overview

What is the Development Program (DP)?

Every year, we organise a Development Program (DP) for children selected to join the club's graded teams, which actively participate in the local Football Canterbury (FC) competition on weekends, usually securing spots in Division 1* within their respective age groups. The selection process for the DP occurs annually through a grading system, typically held in November/December, attracting the participation of 500+ players during the 2025 trials.

The DP offers an excellent opportunity for your child to receive coaching from qualified and club-approved football coaches. Training sessions are held at our home ground, the Waterfront Drive Sporting Ground within Callan Park, from Tuesday to Friday. Sessions are a mix of game training, situational training and skill practice.

Focus on player development is central to our philosophy, as we believe fostering players is the key to sustaining a child's interest and engagement in the sport. In our program, teams train twice a week with club coaches, and for weekend games, they are led by a parent volunteer coach and manager. DP coaches adhere to the club's annual coaching plan for each age group, with pre-season meetings for team coaches and the Technical Director, along with an induction for all players conducted by the Technical Director.

**The club reserves the right to recommend team placement to FC; however, the final decision rests with FC.*



2. How to Join?

The only way to secure a spot in our DP is by participating in our grading sessions.

For U8-U11, there will be one grading session involving agility, coordination, dribbling, shooting, and gameplay. U12-U16 will have two grading sessions, covering agility, coordination, dribbling, shooting, and three different gameplay scenarios.

During each grading exercise, each child is typically assessed by 3-6 evaluators who mark selected criteria within specified categories.

It's important to note that results from one year are not transferable to subsequent years; therefore, all players must undergo grading annually. If selected, you will be required to pay **the DP program fee, as outlined in the current letters of offer.**

If selected, you will be required to complete the DP registration form and pay the DP fee. The details for this are outlined in your letter of offer. Please note that this registration is only for the DP; you will also be required to complete the competition registration and pay the associated fees for that.





3. Why Join?

Professional Training

Each team will have two (2) training sessions per week for 18 weeks, led by a professional football coach. These sessions are meticulously organized based on our development plan and tailored to the age and specific needs of each team member. Our club coaches manage and conduct these sessions, prioritizing the growth of both football and human skills over match results.

Priority Training Access

All training sessions take place at our home ground, the Waterfront Drive Sporting Ground within Callan Park, where all necessary equipment is provided.

Competition Exposure

Playing with like-minded individuals, players are able to compete at a higher level which aids in football development. Teams are nominated into the most suitable competition for the group, usually being the Division 1 in their age group.





4. Mindset



Psychological attributes of a player in Development program

Mental Characteristics

1. Tactical Awareness
2. Decision Making
3. Concentration

Work Ethic and Discipline

1. Commitment
2. Discipline

Teamwork and Communication

1. Communication Skills
2. Team Collaboration

Adaptability and Learning

1. Coachability
2. Versatility

Resilience and Mental Toughness

1. Resilience
2. Mental Toughness

Positive Attitude

1. Sportsmanship
2. Passion



5. Key Outcomes (U8-U12)

Technical & Tactical Goals (U8-U12)

- Enhance long-term endurance, specifically focusing on the aerobic system, with a strong emphasis on game play.
- Develop speed-related aspects, particularly reactions and frequency, to enhance overall agility.
- Practice and refine individual game skills, incorporating them into chains of reactions and varying playing conditions.
- Execute learned tasks with increased speed, under more challenging conditions.
- Conduct purposeful training sessions to organize team play in both offensive and defensive scenarios, highlighting independent tasks aligned with player functions.
- Foster qualities such as dedication, independence, and responsibility through coaching.
- Instruct players in the rotation of positions, involving transitions between roles (e.g., attacker to midfielder, midfielder to defender, and vice versa).
- Translate training skills into match conditions for effective performance.
- Instil basic communication among players, emphasizing phrases like "drop back" and "one-two" etc.
- Practice offensive game combinations, emphasizing passing and combination scenarios for strategic play.
- Develop a versatile player capable of playing in multiple positions
- Provide experience as a goalkeeper



5. Key Outcomes (U13-U16)

Technical & Tactical Goals (U13-U16)

Including outcomes from the U8-U12 age groups and:

- Master at least one offensive and defensive system of the game to enhance tactical understanding.
- Instruct players on the basics of pressing and effective strategies to overcome it during play.
- Foster qualities such as responsibility, independence, dedication, a sense of cooperation, creativity, initiative, and courage.
- Utilise the rules of the game strategically, including exploiting the offside rule in defensive play and overcoming it in offensive play.
- Emphasize the ability to instantly switch attention and movement from the defensive phase to the offensive phase and vice versa during games.
- Train players to handle diagonal ball transfers and demonstrate constructive ball collection in the defensive phase.
- Conduct analysis of both successful and unsuccessful team actions to facilitate continuous improvement.
- Achieve the first peak in the development of general endurance for improved overall stamina.
- Maximize the development of all types of speed, including reactions, frequency, and agility.
- Master all individual game skills in various playing conditions to ensure versatility and adaptability.

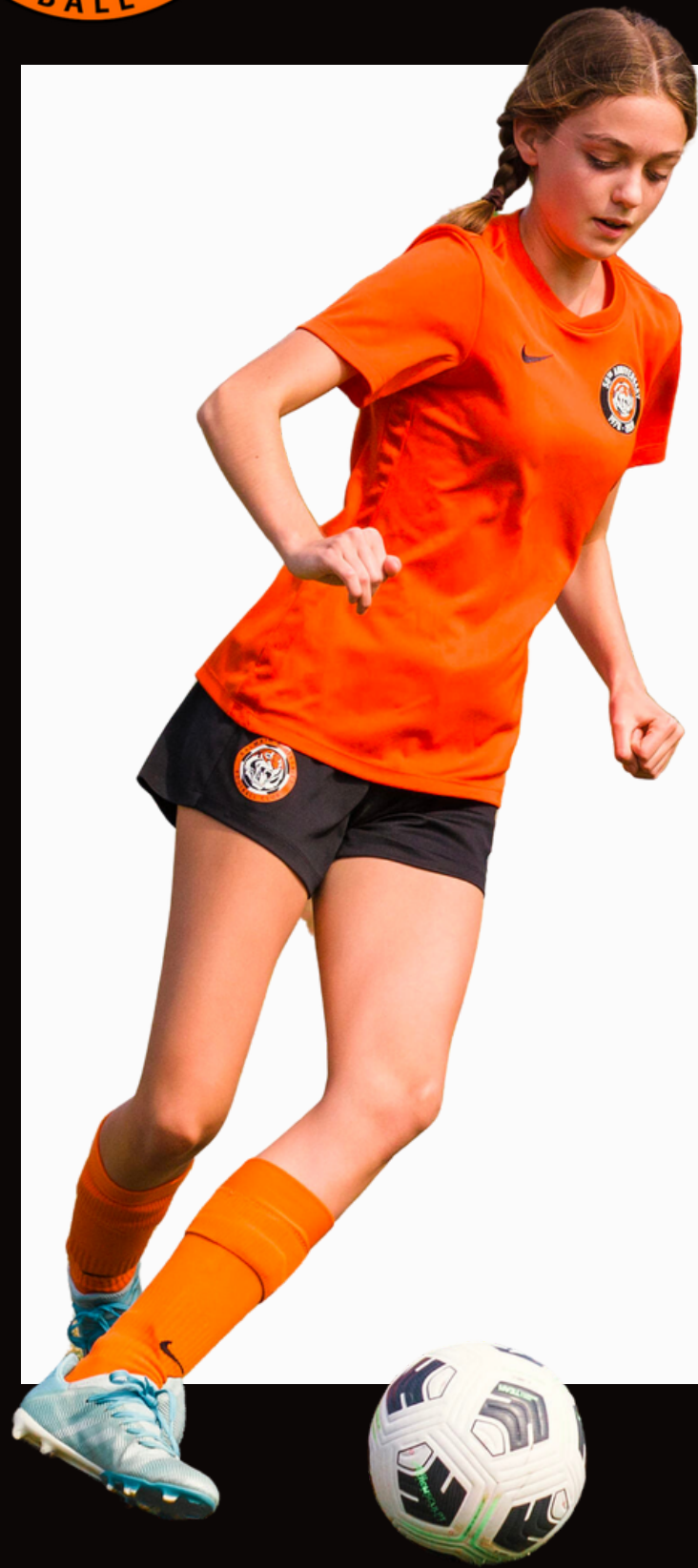


6. Team Characteristics

1. Fluid formation with clearly defined roles in each position.
2. Players are comfortable with ball circulation, quick passing, and creating space.
3. Capable of transitioning quickly from defence to attack and back to defence.
4. Players are able to cover for their closest teammates and temporarily swap playing positions.
5. Have a communicative team leader who is able to control the game.
6. Players are able to execute pass-and-go scenarios whenever the situation requires.
7. The team is able to utilise the rules of the game strategically, including exploiting the offside rule in defensive play and overcoming it in offensive play. (11v11 format)
8. Always offer at least two players as potential receivers of a pass.
9. If pressing is used, it is "started" by the closest player to the ball, and all players join in tightening their position to the potential attacker nearby.
10. The ability to utilise the width and depth of the playing field.
11. In the defensive phase of the game, all players return to their defensive shape under the ball.
12. Compactness between defenders and attackers.



7. Program Details



2026 Program

- Up to 36 training sessions in 2026 (2 sessions per week)
- 18 weeks of training from March to August
- Key dates:
 - **Induction Night:** 2nd March (video call)
 - **Size N Go Night:** 3rd - 6th March (Ultra Football, schedule TBC)
 - **Full Program:** 17th March - 21st August 2024
 - **Break #1:** 31st March - 20th April 2024 (ground shutdown + school holidays)
 - **Break #2:** 6th - 20th July 2024 (school holidays)

Teams are not discouraged from organising another session with a parent volunteer coach, for further enquiries in this matter please contact radim@balmainfootball.com.au to organize field allocation.



8. Extra Programs

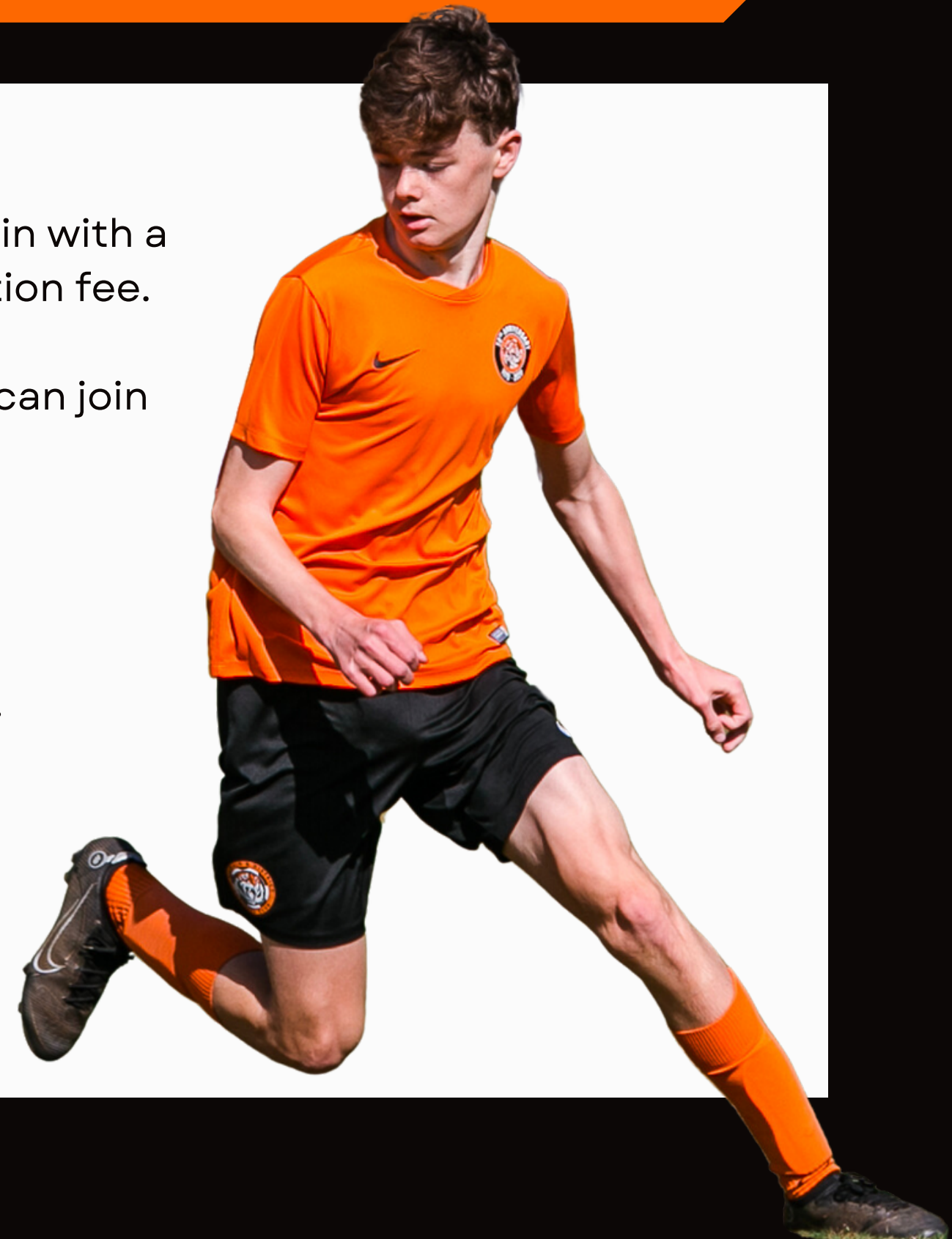
Goalkeeper Training

For all dedicated Goalkeepers and rotating Goalkeepers in DP, registration to train with a specialised Goalkeeper Coach during the program is included in the DP registration fee.

Goalkeepers outside of DP who want to join the specialised Goalkeeper training can join at an additional cost.

Pathways Program

Players not selected for a graded team but are eager to enhance their skills through additional training, may want to consider joining the Pathways Program. The training conditions and environment are identical to those of the graded teams, with a greater emphasis on individual improvement of football skills. Please note that sessions are limited to a maximum of 16 participants.





9. 2026 Calendar



Development Program Calendar 2026						
	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26
1	S	W IWC Grounds Closed	F Week 4 Training	M	W Week 13 Training	S
2	M DP Induction Night	T IWC Grounds Closed	S	T Week 9 Training	T Week 13 Training	S
3	T Size N Go Night	F Good Friday	S	W Week 9 Training	F Week 13 Training	M
4	W Size N Go Night	S Easton Saturday	M	T Week 9 Training	S	T Week 16 Training
5	T Size N Go Night	S Easter Sunday	T Week 5 Training	F Week 9 Training	S	W Week 16 Training
6	F Size N Go Night	M Easter Monday	W Week 5 Training	S	M School Holidays	T Week 16 Training
7	S	T Holiday Camps	T Week 5 Training	S	T Holiday Camps	F Week 16 Training
8	S	W Holiday Camps	F Week 5 Training	M King's Birthday	W Holiday Camps	S
9	M	T Holiday Camps	S	T Week 10 Training	T Holiday Camps	S
10	T	F School Holidays	S	W Week 10 Training	F School Holidays	M
11	W	S School Holidays	M	T Week 10 Training	S School Holidays	T Week 17 Training
12	T	S School Holidays	T Week 6 Training	F Week 10 Training	S School Holidays	W Week 17 Training
13	F	M School Holidays	W Week 6 Training	S	M School Holidays	T Week 17 Training
14	S	T Holiday Camps	T Week 6 Training	S	T Holiday Camps	F Week 17 Training
15	S	W Holiday Camps	F Week 6 Training	M	W Holiday Camps	S
16	M	T Holiday Camps	S	T Week 11 Training	T Holiday Camps	S
17	T Week 1 Training	F School Holidays	S	W Week 11 Training	F School Holidays	M
18	W Week 1 Training	S	M	T Week 11 Training	S	T Week 18 Training
19	T Week 1 Training	S	T Week 7 Training	F Week 11 Training	S	W Week 18 Training
20	F Week 1 Training	M	W Week 7 Training	S	M	T Week 18 Training
21	S Pre-Season Matches	T Week 3 Training	T Week 7 Training	S	T Week 14 Training	F Week 18 Training
22	S Pre-Season Matches	W Week 3 Training	F Week 7 Training	M	W Week 14 Training	S
23	M	T Week 3 Training	S	T Week 12 Training	T Week 14 Training	S
24	T Week 2 Training	F Week 3 Training	S	W Week 12 Training	F Week 14 Training	M
25	W Week 2 Training	S ANZAC Day	M	T Week 12 Training	S	T
26	T Week 2 Training	S	T Week 8 Training	F Week 12 Training	S	W
27	F Week 2 Training	M	W Week 8 Training	S	M	T
28	S Pre-Season Matches	T Week 4 Training	T Week 8 Training	S	T Week 15 Training	F
29	S Pre-Season Matches	W Week 4 Training	F Week 8 Training	M	W Week 15 Training	S Presentation Day
30	M IWC Grounds Closed	T Week 4 Training	S	T Week 13 Training	T Week 15 Training	S Presentation Day
31	T IWC Grounds Closed		S		F Week 15 Training	M





10. Training Schedule

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TRAINING SCHEDULE 2026					
TUESDAYS	WFD 1A	WFD 1B	WFD 2A	WFD 2B	SIDE
4:00pm - 5:00pm	U8A	U8B	U9A	U9B	
5:10pm - 6:10pm	U10A	U10B	U11A	U11B	
6:20pm - 7:20pm	U12A	U12B	U13	U14	
7:30pm - 8:45pm	U15	U16			
WEDNESDAYS	WFD 1A	WFD 1B	WFD 2A	WFD 2B	SIDE
4:00pm - 5:00pm	U8G	U9G	U10G		GK - U8-U10 Girls
5:10pm - 6:10pm	U11G	U12G	U13G		GK - U11-U13 Girls
6:20pm - 7:20pm	U15G	U14G	MAKE UP GAMES		GK - U14-U16 Girls
7:30pm - 8:45pm		U16G			
THURSDAYS	WFD 1A	WFD 1B	WFD 2A	WFD 2B	SIDE
4:00pm - 5:00pm	U8A	U8B	U9A	U9B	GK - U8-U10 Mixed
5:10pm - 6:10pm	U10A	U10B	U11A	U11B	GK - U11-U13 Mixed
6:20pm - 7:20pm	U12A	U12B	U13	U14	GK - U14-U16 Mixed
7:30pm - 8:45pm	U15	U16			
FRIDAYS	WFD 1A	WFD 1B	WFD 2A	WFD 2B	SIDE
4:00pm - 5:00pm	U8G	U9G	U10G		
5:10pm - 6:10pm	U11G	U12G	U13G		
6:20pm - 7:20pm	U15G	U14G	MAKE UP GAMES		
7:30pm - 8:45pm		U16G			





11. Wet Weather

As with most sporting grounds, Callan Park may be closed by the council in the event of poor weather.

When the ground is closed, the information will be available on the [Inner West Council website](#) by 3:30 pm. Even if the council leaves a ground open, our Club may choose to close the ground if deemed unsuitable and dangerous for players.

If the ground is closed, training will move to an online session with players being invited to join a Microsoft Teams call led by a DP coach. Sessions can and may be a mix of theory and physical exercises. Later in the season, we will have recordings of teams playing in training and use these videos in the online sessions.

Wet weather video sessions are for players wanting to learn more. Sessions are not mandatory.

If wet weather is announced, the team manager or coach will inform the team and provide the details for the online session. Typically the online session will be at the same time as the team's regular training.



12. Behaviour Policy

Summary

The **BDFC Development Program Behavior Policy** outlines a structured approach to address both minor and major behavioural issues among participants. The policy emphasizes the importance of maintaining a positive and respectful environment during training sessions and games.

Minor Behavioral Issues

Issues such as talking during instructions, minor teasing, failure to follow warm-up techniques, and other disruptive behaviours. Consequences for these issues include verbal warnings, reminders, and potential loss of training time. Timeouts are implemented for repeated minor offences. Repeat offenders, accumulating 5 minors in the same category in a season, may face classification as major behavioural issues.

Major Behavioral Issues

Issues such as physical aggression, verbal abuse, continuous defiance, deliberate cheating, and damaging or vandalizing property. Consequences for major issues range from verbal warnings to immediate removal from practice, temporary suspension, and mandatory meetings with parents/guardians. Severe cases may lead to exclusion from the Development Program.

The policy underscores the importance of promptly addressing behaviour issues, seeking improvement through communication, and maintaining a safe and respectful football environment. All decisions are subject to the discretion of the Technical Director and the Development Committee, ensuring fair and consistent application of disciplinary measures.



13. Parent Involvement

Parental involvement in community-level kids' sports is crucial for the overall success and positive experience of young athletes. Key aspects of parental involvement in the football journey of their child:

1. **Supportive Presence:** Parents should attend games to show support for their children. A positive and encouraging presence from parents contributes to a child's confidence and enjoyment of the sport.
2. **Communication:** Open and effective communication between parents, coaches, and organisers is essential. Parents should be aware of training schedules, fixtures, and any changes in the program.
3. **Positive Reinforcement:** Encourage a positive and constructive attitude. Offer praise for effort and improvement rather than focusing solely on winning or losing. Positive reinforcement helps build a child's self-esteem.
4. **Respect for Coaches and Officials:** Parents should model respectful behaviour toward coaches, officials, and other players. Disputes or concerns should be addressed through appropriate channels rather than in a confrontational manner during games and training. More details about this is in our Behaviour Policy.
5. **Transportation and Logistics:** Assist with transportation to training and games. Being reliable in terms of drop-offs and pick-ups helps ensure that children can consistently participate in the program.
6. **Healthy Lifestyle:** Encourage healthy habits at home, including proper nutrition and sufficient rest. A child's overall well-being contributes to their performance on the field.



13. Parent Involvement



7. **Respect for Other Players:** Teach children to respect their teammates and opponents. Parents can instil values of fair play, sportsmanship, and teamwork, emphasizing that success is not solely about individual achievements.

8. **Attending Workshops and Meetings:** Attend parent meetings and workshops organised by the club. These events provide valuable information on the program's philosophy, rules, and expectations.

9. **Equipment and Gear:** Ensure that children have the necessary equipment and gear to participate. This includes proper attire, football boots, shin pads, and any specific equipment required to play.

10. **Balancing Expectations:** Help children find a balance between sports and other aspects of life, such as academics and social activities. Avoid placing undue pressure on children to perform at the expense of their well-being.

11. **Creating a Positive Environment:** Foster a positive and inclusive environment within our club and program. Encourage friendships among teammates and promote a sense of community among parents.



14. Punctuality

Arrival and Punctuality Expectations

Players are an integral part of any team, and their commitment begins with punctuality. Arriving 15 minutes prior to training sessions and a minimum of 30 minutes before matches is a basic expectation. This ensures that everyone has sufficient time to prepare mentally and physically for the upcoming session or game.

Training Session Etiquette

A structured approach to training starts with players gathering in front of the grandstand before the session begins. This designated meeting point serves as the starting line for preparations. The emphasis is on being ready to begin the training session promptly at the scheduled time. This discipline fosters a focused and efficient training environment.

Match Day Warm-Up

The significance of a well-executed warm-up cannot be overstated, especially on match days. The warm-up routine should go beyond mere physical activity; it should engage both the mind and body. Incorporating ball-related exercises is crucial, ensuring that players are not only physically prepared but also mentally tuned in for the challenges ahead. Further details on equipment and preparation guidelines will be communicated to parent volunteer coaches and covered in online coaching education sessions throughout the season.



15. Supporting Resources

[Annual Plans](#) for the Development Program

[Program Plan](#) – How the annual plan is structured and categorized

[BDFC Heading Policy](#) provides a comprehensive framework for enhancing the safety of heading techniques, emphasizing education, proper technique, and careful management of potential head injuries, ultimately prioritizing the well-being of young football players.

Balmain and District Football Club's official [YouTube channel](#). Watch highlights, how-to's, interviews, training tips and more.

[Football NSW Insurance](#) applicable to our players

[Club Policies](#) - Balmain & District Football Club aims to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for all Members participating in football.

Any additional information can be found on our club website - www.balmainfootball.com.au





16. FAQs

What equipment is required, and how can it be obtained?

Black training uniform from Ultra football, boots and shin pads are required for each training session

Is there a registration fee, and what does it cover?

Yes, a special fee on top of the regular season fee is described in the letter of offer. More info about season fees at www.balmainfootball.com.au

How are team placements determined?

Football Canterbury will be ultimately responsible for team placement into divisions, we as a club can only recommend. But we do have a good track record of A teams in Division 1.

Is there a policy for inclement weather or cancellations?

Yes, the grounds can be closed by the club or by the council. Details about ground status are updated daily by 3.30pm via [Sporting Grounds Status IWC](#)

How can parents provide feedback or address concerns?

The best way is via email or via organised meeting with Technical Director