

Team Selection Policy



At Williamstown Cannons we want to make the process of selecting our teams for each season as transparent as possible so that each and every child at our club is playing at a level appropriate to their ability, and that as a whole we are able to continue to develop strong teams across the various genders, ages and divisions.

At the heart of our selection process are the following philosophies:

- Enjoyment, fun, maximum participation, friendships and basketball development for all involved, including children, coaches, team managers and also parents.
- Williamstown Cannons, as a large and strong club in the Association, aims to field a team in every division with as strong a representation in Division 1 as is possible.
- Provide opportunities for junior players who wish to play more socially and those junior players who wish to play more competitively.
- Meet our responsibilities as a member of the broader basketball community to foster and develop players who strive to play basketball at a higher level.
- Inspire our junior players and parent community with good sportsmanship and a desire to achieve finals success across the age groups and divisions we are represented in.

Given that Williamstown Cannons is such a big club, it may be difficult to keep all parties satisfied. We must endeavor to give everyone a voice and be heard. With this in mind, open communication needs to be encouraged through conversations between players, parents, Team Coaches, Team Managers, the Age Group Coordinators and the Registrar. These conversations may take place in a number of ways such as email, phone calls, text messages or even face to face discussions.

As a club, it is desirable to have teams of eight to enable the club to cater to as many players as possible yet still allow for enough court time on game day. We also highly recommend that children play in their particular age group. We do understand though that from time to time there may be exceptions to these rules, however individual circumstances would need to be discussed with and approved by the Team Coaches in conjunction with the Team Selection Committee.

Criteria for team selections would include but are not limited to the following (in no particular order):

- Players skill and ability level
- Coachability, willingness to learn
- Attendance at training and games
- Behaviour
- Friendship groups
- Experience
- Parents willingness to help out (coach, team management, Committee involvement including specific roles such as Uniform and Clash Top Coordinator)
- Length of time at the club
- Siblings / families
- Special needs
- Suitable training times
- Age (top/bottom age group)

Additional policy guidelines to assist in the Team Selection process:

- a) Under 8 teams are about maximum participation and enjoyment – if there are insufficient children on the waitlist, the Registrar can advertise at local schools to generate interest and registrations. Friendship groups and the accommodation of siblings should be a high priority in team composition at this age group.
- b) Under 10 teams are also about participation, enjoyment and learning the basics. Whilst it is ideal to group children together who were all born in the same year, it is not necessarily essential at this age group and not yet essential to group by ability (although with top age teams, it may be preferable to begin to stream players into more developed Division 1 players vs developing Division 2 and Division 3 players which would incorporate new players). Friendship groups at this age level are still very important.
- c) Under 12s and up – at this age group it is ideal to begin to develop a two stream approach to the selection and composition of teams. Ideally, stronger and more developed players may be grouped together in order to field a strong Division 1 team (in the case of top age players) or a strong Division 2 team (in the case of bottom age players with the view of being a strong Division 1 team when they become top age). Developing players and those who are just starting out in Under 12 are better to be grouped together into teams to be fielded into lower divisions which match their skill level. It is a priority that all new players without experience are placed in the lowest division, no matter who their friends are. There may be exceptions which are dealt with on a case by case basis.

That being said, the composition of these teams should not be “set in stone” from here on in. Player movement between the teams, particularly in the Summer season at age group changes, may occur where a player from a developing team has improved significantly and warrants selection in the stronger team over a current player in the stronger team who may be struggling in the higher division. Additionally, any vacant positions in stronger teams should be filled by the best players in the developing teams and then the vacancies in the developing teams are filled from the waitlist. If players are struggling in a higher division, it is difficult to drop them into a lower division without the player’s parent’s consent. This needs to be dealt with on a case by case basis by the Age Group Coordinator together with the Team Coaches in the age group. It is preferable to do this when moving from one age group to the next such as before the Summer season each year. For example, Joey will be top age U12s next season, however will not cope with the pressures of Division 1, so he may be best placed in a Division 2 team.

For Boys U12 teams, another determining factor in team selection may be the game times. At the Altona Basketball Competition, U12 Boys Division 3 and Division 4 is played on Friday nights and U12 Boys Division 1 and Division 2 is played on Saturday mornings. Team Coaches and Age Group Coordinators will need to keep this in mind and advise parents when considering team selections for this age group.

- d) Association Representative Players (Rep players) - It is also important to take into consideration that children are eligible to try out and play representative basketball from Under 12 onwards. As a domestic club, coaches should encourage those players in their team who have potential, to try out for the representative competition. **The club will ensure teams are informed regarding tryout dates.**
- e) Any child who makes a representative team must play Division 2 or higher. Representative players cannot play in Division 3 or below. The Association Representative Player Rules are detailed in Section 6 GENERAL RULES of the “Junior Competition Rules” on the club website under “Forms, Rules & More” menu.
- Those players that play Representative Basketball for the ALTONA GATORS Basketball Club, are required to also play in their domestic leagues at Altona to be eligible.
 - Teams comprising of 3 or more VJBL Rep players must play Division 1, unless written permission is sought and granted, by the Junior Committee.
 - All Victorian Junior Championship League and Victorian Junior League 1 & 2 VJBL Rep Players must play Division 1.
 - Division 2 will be capped at 2 Rep Players maximum. No Victorian Junior Championship or Victorian Junior League 1&2 players will be allowed in this division without written permission.
 - Division 3 will have no Rep Players without written permission.
 - Players and teams playing out of their age group will still maintain their Rep status, and must play no lower than Division 2.
- f) Under 14s – guidelines as for Under 12s, however at this age group there is more emphasis on moving children between teams based on skill level. The timing of games can be problematic for children in this age group as games are played on Saturday nights in the Altona Basketball Competition. The club can expect some player movement either to another Association (such as Werribee) or for players and/or teams to request to move to a Williamstown Cannons team that plays at the Westgate Basketball Association which plays Saturday afternoons.
- g) Under 16s – at this age group there is a large number of players who drop out of basketball and therefore there is no Boys Division 4 and no Girls Division 3 as clubs simply cannot field sufficient teams to warrant these divisions. There are not normally many (if any) new players therefore lower division teams (ie. Girls Division 2) may have a mix of medium skilled (but not Rep) players and new/inexperienced players; unfortunately nothing can be done about this if there is not sufficient teams or players in the competition to warrant a Girls Division 3 or Boys Division 4. Sometimes medium skilled players are ‘forced’ into Division 1 simply due to the number of teams allocated for Division 1.

- h) U18s – There are usually 2 divisions in Under 18 Boys and no divisions in Under 18 Girls (Rep rules apply as per other age groups) due to the number of players entering the competition at this age. If the club has more than one team, it is preferable to have even or balanced talent between the teams. However, the selection of the team is mostly dictated by the players themselves as to who they would like to play with and whether there are any vacancies in a team. The players themselves usually decide the make up the teams. An adult must be present at games and training, as players are still junior players and training is optional. If there are any ‘spares’, the club will endeavor to slot them in into a team where possible. Teams in this age group can have up to 10 players in each team if there is not enough players to form an additional team. As games are played on Monday night’s for Boys and Wednesday night’s for Girls, plus the addition of study pressures with this age group, players can tend to be unreliable, so it is preferable to have a minimum of 8 players allocated to the team. Requests for “fill ins” from U16s from week to week is normal.
- i) Waitlist and New Players – especially relevant from Under 12 onwards, any new players to basketball should be accommodated into lower division teams to learn the rules and develop skills under less pressure (no matter who their friends are) which will be a much more enjoyable and rewarding experience. It may be a good idea to “grade” children on the waitlist by use of a “come and join in” training session to ascertain the child’s size and abilities in order to determine the best fit for team placement. Priority is given to any siblings on the waitlist and also returning players – refer to the Waitlist Management Policy for further details.
- j) Siblings request to play together – families may occasionally request that siblings be placed in the same team in order to accommodate family logistics and transport arrangements. In the Under 8 this is certainly a high priority when formulating team lists. To a certain extent, this request can also be accommodated in the Under 10 age group (and to a lesser extent older age groups). However if teams are already/or being considered for streaming into stronger and developing teams, accommodating this request should be considered carefully. Family logistics should not be prioritized over fairness to all players – ie. a younger sibling (particularly with less skills) should not be accommodated into a stronger team at the expense of a developing player who has played before, trained hard, would like an opportunity and warrants selection into a stronger team. In this instance, if families are desperate for their siblings to play together to accommodate family logistics, then BOTH siblings should be placed in the team suitable to the ability of the sibling with the lower standard.

In all instances, the coach has the final say as to whether to accept a younger sibling into the team. The club and/or parent cannot pressure a coach to take on a younger sibling. Of paramount importance is the safety of younger players at trainings and in games when they play against bigger players in the age group.

- k) Playing above the age group, fill in players and permanent fill in players – players asked to be permanent players or permanent fill ins for an upper aged team (ie. not in their own age group), must ensure they are not playing in place of a player who belongs in that age group. The Registrar must be notified of fill ins so they can be added to the team whether they are permanent or not. This is so that they are officially on record as playing and if more than 6 games are played as a fill in and the player may not have paid fees, a pro rata fee is charged by the club. Therefore, the coach can take a younger player on as a 9th player or fill a vacancy if applicable. The Rep player rule still applies regardless of the age of the player therefore a player cannot permanently play for or fill for a Division 3 or Division 4 side if they are a Rep player. It is recommended that players continue to play in their own age group, particularly if teams need to be filled and if teams need ‘talent’. This is reviewed on a case by case basis by the Team Coach, Age Group Coordinator and Registrar together.

Players who compete in two age groups, do not necessarily need to pay double fees, as the club pays fees per team not per player. However, this is contingent on the club having sufficient budget to accommodate this scenario. If players fill in and end up qualifying for finals in both age groups and there is a clash in finals times between the two teams, the player must be made aware that their priority is to play in the finals for their own age group.

- l) Girls playing in Boys teams (and vice versa in Under 14 and younger age groups) – In circumstances where this is absolutely necessary, permission may be sought from the Association for a girl to play in a boys team or vice versa. Permission needs to be obtained in advance of the player participating in the team so this arrangement cannot extend to last minute fill ins for teams.
- m) Movement between teams in the same age group - In the first 3 weeks of the season, players can be moved between teams in the same age group, however they can only play one game in that age group per round. After the first 3 weeks, the player belongs to the team he/she plays for in the 4th round, so cannot fill in for another team in the same age group, no matter what division.
- n) Team sizes – As a Club, it is ideal to have teams of 8 players as team competition fees and training venue hire fees are calculated on the basis of each team being an 8 player team. At times coaches may state that “I only want 7 in my team” however there is a risk that the team may run short due to holidays, sickness and other functions/commitments. Additionally, with only 7 fees being paid for a team, that team costs the club more than a team of 8. If a team has 7 players and there is a suitable player on the waitlist (taking into consideration skill level), then the club can insist that the coach takes an 8th player.

Team Selection Personnel



Williamstown Cannons Basketball Club Inc
Registered No A0031670Z

There is a 3 tiered selection process in order to pick the teams. The three levels of the Team Selection process and some of their relevant duties are as follows:

1. Team Coach

- The Team Coach is the first line of communication between the players/parents and the Team Selection Committee.
- The Team Coach needs to be aware of individual player needs or movement, as well as where his/her team hopes to play the following season.
- The Team Manager would be a useful assistant with these duties as well.

2. Age Group Coordinator

- The Age Group Coordinator is a member of the Team Selection Committee and attends meetings convened by the Registrar when required.
- The Age Group Coordinator needs to communicate with all coaches in their relevant age group.
- The Age Group Coordinator in conjunction with the coaches need to finalise any player movement, the balance of numbers and abilities of all the teams. The Age Group Coordinator must arrange a coaches meeting with all Team Coaches and Team Managers of teams in that particular age group to discuss and determine whether there needs to be player movement between teams or a reshuffle of teams.
- Where new teams are being formed, either from the waitlist, Under 8s or Under 10s, the Age Group Coordinator will need to contact parents directly and confirm whether their children are still interested in playing. The Age Group Coordinator is then responsible for developing a team list and sourcing/selecting a coach for the team.
- The Age Group Coordinator then reports back to the Registrar / Team Selection Committee with their recommendations of team lists, Team Coaches (and also ideally Team Managers), division placement for the next season and training time (or requirement for a change in training time).
- When registrations for the new season open, the Age Group Coordinator monitors the re-registrations for their age groups and asks Team Managers to follow up any players who have not yet re-registered for the next season.

3. Registrar

- The Registrar is a representative of the Williamstown Cannons Committee, chairs the Team Selection Committee and has the final say on the composition of all teams.
- The Registrar calls Team Selection Committee meetings, communicates with the Age Group Coordinators and makes decisions on any individual circumstances that may arise.
- The Registrar also acts as the Club Registrar and is the club representative who liaises directly with the Associations.

Team Selection Process



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An example of the selection process is as follows:

1. The Registrar will call a meeting of Team Selection Committee which incorporates the Age Group Coordinators. The Registrar will advise the Age Group Coordinators of the timelines for confirmation of team lists and division placement for the forthcoming season, and advises on issues relating to any potential team changes in regard to Association competitions (Altona vs Westgate), eligibility rules and criteria (such as Representative Player rules).
2. Age Group Coordinators send out emails to coaches in their age group to:
 - determine whether coaches are going to continue coaching and if not, can they suggest a replacement coach
 - determine the coaches view on their team in regard to any potential player movement and requests coaches take time to view other teams within their age group
 - advises the date, time and location of the coaches meeting for that age group
 - confirm the preference of the division placement for the next season (however their preference is not guaranteed and is at the discretion of the Association)
 - confirm with the coach their Team Manager for the next season (if possible)
 - confirm the training time for the team or a requirement to change training time and if a change is required, a preferred day and time
3. When prompted by the Age Group Coordinator, the Team Coach and Team Manager should confirm whether players are continuing on in the next season and whether the team is to stay together or if there is to be some individual player movement. Team Coaches should then take time to watch other Williamstown Cannons teams in their age group to become familiar with the skill level of other players in their age group.
4. The Team Coach/Team Manager should then communicate his/her thoughts to the players and/or parents to get their thoughts.
5. If staying together, the Team Coach will decide in which division to play the next season, confirm training time preference and inform the Age Group Coordinator.
6. If movement is to happen the Team Coach should advise the Age Group Coordinator and attend the Coaches Meeting for that age group to discuss this with fellow coaches in the same age group and make recommendations on where players should move to and the reasons why. The Age Group Coordinator is responsible for arranging a coaches meeting with all relevant coaches.

7. Conduct trials/grading sessions if required (*information on how to conduct a grading session is still being developed*).
8. A recommendation of the teams for the next season will then be worked out between coaches in the particular age group and the Age Group Coordinator with the Registrar/Team Selection Committee having the final decision and ratification of teams.
9. Players and parents should be kept in the loop as much as possible, especially if changes are to be made.
10. Team Coaches are responsible for advising individual players and parents on their team for the next season.

Timeline for the Team Selection Process

Round 10 of the current season - Team Selection Committee Meeting

- Age Group Coordinators then email coaches the current team lists for all teams in their age group and ask them to confirm whether players are continuing in their own team and also take the time to look at the other teams playing in their age groups at games.

By end of Round 11 – current players are confirmed in regard to continuing / not continuing, waitlist players confirmed in regard to interested / not interested.

By end of Round 12 – Age Group Coordinator and coaches of the teams in that age group have conducted a Coaches meeting to discuss any potential player movements and then preliminary make up of teams and divisions for the next season.

By end of Round 13 – Coaches have discussed the team changes with their players and parents and confirmed the teams with the Age Group Coordinator.

Round 14 of the current season – team lists confirmed with coaches and Registrar

Round 15 of the current season – team lists submitted to Associations

Related Policies

Waitlist Management Policy

Useful Resources

- Sporting Pulse Passport – Age Group Coordinators to have access and training on use of the Williamstown Cannons Membership database
- Proforma emails for use by Age Group Coordinators in order to make communication with Team Coaches, players and families more efficient
- Frequently Asked Questions Document