

SCWGFL Handbook

Incorporating Policy Statements and Club Guidance

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SECTION 1 – THE LEAGUE

1.1 League Communications

At SCWGFL we have a traditional committee format but with the added benefit of Age Group Officers (AGOs).

The AGOs run Whats App groups for Team Managers, Team Coaches and Team Secretaries where you can ask day-to-day questions of the AGOs and Peers. If you aren't part of your age group's Whats App group please [contact your AGO](#) to be added. The groups are part of a Community so that key messages can be shared with all Coaches.

The League Secretary will regularly communicate with Club Secretaries and the League Fixtures Secretary will also do the same with Club Fixtures Secretaries. Contact with the League Officials should come via your Club Officials, as detailed in our League rules. [Contact details for all our League Officials are available on our website.](#)

The League Management Committee (LMC) should provide Clubs with the information they need to take part in the League. This handbook is that information. Please refer back to it regularly.

1.1.1 AGM

The AGM runs the first week of July and is the point at which any changes to the Rules, Constitution or inclusion of new member clubs can occur. This also ratifies the LMC for another year.

Each member club is permitted to send 2 delegates to the LMC, but clubs can only vote once.

1.1.2 SCORA/Y

As for all FA Leagues our overarching rules are those within the FA Standard Code of Rules for Adults/Youth (SCOR/Y). [The current season's SCOR/Y can be found on our website.](#)

This is reviewed by the League annually, in the Spring, and submitted to the FA for approval (and to incorporate any rules changes they may have). It is circulated to teams in advance of the AGM.

1.2 Managing your Club within the League

1.2.1 Website

On the [SCWGFL website](#) you can find our League contact details, Club contact details and information about what we expect from Clubs in the League.

1.2.2 League Management System (LMS)

The SCWGFL LMS houses

- Applications to play in the next season
- [A directory of Club Fixture Secretaries](#)
- A register of your Club Officials and teams (which feeds the directory)
- Access to our invoices and charges system
- [A directory of tournaments](#)

Club Secretaries should have access to the LMS but if you have forgotten your password or your access is not working please [email our League Secretary](#).

1.2.3 FA Club Portal

The FA have replaced elements of the Whole Game System with Club Portal. If your Club has attached you to your team as a Team Manager, Team Coach or Team Secretary on Club Portal you will have access to see your team members and download your FA squad list.

Your Club Officials have access to more areas on Club Portal to affiliate with SCFA, link teams to the League and submit player registrations to the League.

1.2.4 FA Full-Time

Full-Time is an FA system for managing fixtures and results for League (and Cup) fixtures.

Anyone can view basic fixtures information and results without logging onto Full-Time but if your Club has attached you to your team as a Team Manager, Team Coach or Team Secretary on Club Portal you can [logon to Full-Time](#) to manage your team(s) match reports. (Match reports should be completed within 72 hours of the match – SCORY/A 21A.)

Signing-in

If you haven't been sent a link then your login address and password will be the same as your personal FAN account. If you can't remember that you can choose the 'forgotten password' link.

[Guide to signing in to Full-Time](#)

When you first have Full-Time access, or you change your email address, you will need to verify your email address. This is separate to verifying your email address on your FAN account. If you don't verify your email you won't receive fixture updates. If you haven't received an email to verify your email address please [contact our League Secretary](#).

Primary Contact

If they've verified their email address each Team Manager, Team Coach and Team Secretary should get a weekly email (on Mondays) showing your fixtures for the next 28 days. On this email one person is listed as the Team's Primary Contact – this can be your Fixtures Secretary or a team contact. The opposition should always send fixture details to the Fixtures Secretary.

[Guide to changing the Primary Contact](#)

Results SMS

Two Club/team officials can be set up to receive the results SMS. Both Home and Away teams must reply to the text, in the format laid out in the text, by 4.30pm. After that the League will lock results and you may receive a charge (SCORY/A 21B).

If you have access to update Full-Time for your team you can change the SMS contact yourself:

[Guide to changing the SMS contacts](#)

Sometimes a contact's mobile number may not be showing but it is in their FAN account. This is often because they have a space in their number. Regardless it usually sorts itself if you delete the number in the FAN account, save, and then re-add the number (with no spaces).

1.2.5 Club Accreditation with England FA

All Clubs within, or joining, the Competition must have started their England Football Accreditation and complete this by the end of the 2024/25 season. Accreditation is updated each season and Clubs must remain Accredited to play in the League. At the end of the 2024/25 season any Club without England Football Accreditation will be removed from the Competition if staying within the Competition would cause the League to lose England Football Accreditation status. If the Competition would not lose its status the Club will be given 12 months extension.

1.2.6 Confirmation of Fees for 2024/25

The annual fees per team are unchanged this season:

- £90 for 11v11
- £80 for 9v9
- £70 for 7v7
- £60 for 5v5

We do not charge to register players.

From the 2024/25 season we will not charge a new Club to join the League, nor will we charge a new team a joining fee.

SECTION 2 – REGISTRATIONS

2.1 Registering players

Your club will have its own method of managing Club membership. Players are then submitted for League registration via Club Portal. Your Club Registrations officer will not be able to do this unless the player:

- is in the right age group;
- has an up-to-date photo attached; and
- either their parent/carer has a mobile phone number attached to the parent/carer's FAN or
- if the player is 16+, they must have their own contact details on their FAN.

As a player turns 16 they are unlikely to have access to their FA account. Their linked parent should update the player's contact details, through the parent's FA account and then the player can use their own email address to access their own FA account.

Parents might not use their FAN accounts regularly so it may be helpful to share this link with them:

[How to change or add your phone number on your FAN account](#)

[How to add an email address to 14-16 year old's FA accounts](#)

2.2 Dispensations

Any youth player can play in the age group above them (see the table in SCORY 18C) and Club Portal is set up to allow these registrations.

If a parent/carer wants their child to play up 2 years, or down a year, it is their responsibility to seek a dispensation from the FA. They can now do this from the parent/carer's FAN account, but it can take a while.

Once the dispensation is through the Club Secretary/Registrations Officer should send a copy to:

- SCFA and ask them to attach the player to the relevant team;
- the League Registrations Officer, so they are able to approve the registration.

2.3 International Clearance

Clubs, Leagues and The FA are bound by FIFA rules on International Clearance. International clearance is required for any player over the age of 10 who is seeking to register for a club in England and has previously been registered for a club abroad (including the other Home Associations), or who is a foreign national seeking to register for the first time in this country.

International clearance is applicable at all levels of the game.

The other Home Associations includes Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

FIFA has provided clarification that this also covers all individuals under the age of 18 arriving into the UK as an asylum seeker or refugee and wishing to register for a football Club in England.

Please look at the FA website for further information, or contact SCFA for support. This is not an area the League has any say in. [Click here for FA information on International Clearance.](#)

If a club plays a player who has not received IC then the Competition can impose fines, deduct points or award matches as necessary.

2.4 Dual Registration

You can register a player in 2 different age groups within your Club/our League but players can only be registered for 1 team in each age group. For example in a single club a player may only register for U12 Red, and not for U12 Blue. They could register for U12 Red and U13 Red.

Players may play in their age group for one club, and a different age group for a different club. For example an U12 player who is already signed for Club A U12, can sign for Club B U13, as long as Club A does not have an U13 team in our League.

2.5 Player Transfers

If your player was with another Club last season but has not registered with that Club for the existing season you can register them as normal.

If your new player is transferring part-way through the season and already registered to another Club it is best practice to contact the existing Club. When you submit the registration to the League the Registration Secretary will not be able to register the player to your Club for 7 days. You can ask the existing Club to agree to waive the 7 days and allow an immediate registration. If they say yes you should [forward this agreement to the League Registrations Secretary](#). Otherwise the League Registrations Secretary will begin the process and the old Club will receive an automatic notice from Club Portal. They have 7 days to object and then the player can be registered.

If you cancel a registration the player cannot play in the competition for 7 days (SCORY/A 18P).

Clubs should pay particular attention to transferring players eligibility to play in the League Cup (League Cup Rule 6) and any competition deciders (SCORA 18K, SCORY 18L).

2.6 Deadlines for registration

You must have the relevant minimum of number of players for your age group registered 14 days before the start of the season or you may receive a charge (SCORY/A 18Biii). **The 2024/25 season starts on 8th September 2024 so you must have your minimum registered by 25th August 2024:**

Format	Minimum
5v5	5
7v7	7
9v9	9
11v11	11

During the season new players must be registered by 6pm on a Friday in order to play matches that Sunday. You should submit your registration by 9pm to give the League time to process the registration. No player should take part in a League fixture unless they are registered and appear on your FA Club Portal squad list (SCORY/A 18A).

Registrations should be submitted to the League before midnight on the last day of February. The LMC will consider exceptional cases in March (for example if your goalkeeper leaves and you need to register another keeper).

If a player is turning 16 after this deadline and wishes to register for an Open Age team once they turn 16 then this can be pre-arranged before the deadline.

2.7 Player Registration Limits

Format	Maximum registrations
5v5	16
7v7	16
9v9	20
11v11	25

However, remember you may only play a maximum of 5 substitutes in each specific match (7 substitutes for 7v7).

2.8 Obtaining clearance for trans and non-binary players

You will need to e-mail Funke Awoderu Funke.Awoderu@thefa.com at the FA for individualised advice, as each request is on a case-by-case basis.

2.9 Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) for certain kinds of medication

The list of controlled substances which require a TUE can be commonplace, such as medication for asthma. [FA Anti-Doping Guidance](#). As the League does not have access to players medical records clubs will need to manage this.

2.10 Player eligibility

The FA, via their Standard Code of Rules, allows registrations from girls and boys in any youth league up to and including the U18 age group. The League is, therefore, open to all players to register for their respective age groups. Our expectation of Club Officials is to operate within these guidelines, using a common-sense approach, with the emphasis on fair play, not only to their own registered players but also to other member Clubs.

2.11 Other eligibility criteria

We suggest that your Club Secretary/Registrations Officer reads Section 18 of SCORY / SCORA in its entirety. It contains more information on contract and pathway players, the dates age groups are determined, etc.

SECTION 3 – SEASON SET UP

3.1 Divisions

Our draft constitution will be circulated to Clubs pre-AGM, for the Clubs to ratify. Our AGOs will create this in conversation with Coaches, considering the previous division, previous season and player changes. Post-AGM AGOs will consult with Coaches, via the Whats App groups, on any necessary changes and where relevant we will seek approval from the Club Officials.

Our usual approach in younger age groups it is to make Divisions regional. U12 and up, should expect to be placed in more ability-based Divisions, which will require a willingness to travel, as we are a Sussex-based League, we know it's challenging balancing geography and ability.

After the Constitution is finalised we create the divisions in Competition Portal, it is checked by SCFA and then synchronized to Full-Time by the central FA team. We cannot do this until all teams are affiliated so please make sure you do this as early as possible.

3.2 Creating Fixtures

Matches are allocated on standard fixture grids. The League will rearrange fixture dates to accommodate Cup matches but it is not within a Club's remit to change a League fixture date unless playing their bye or bringing a fixture forward – in agreement with the League Fixtures Secretary.

Fixtures are created around closed dates and Cup dates. The League Fixtures secretary will also review any dates you noted on the application form where your pitch availability is restricted and work around those, where possible.

Teams should, however be available to play each weekend of the season (SCORY/A 20B), even if a gap shows in your schedule to begin with. If you have a Home fixture when you no longer have a grass pitch then you have the option to reverse the match or book an alternative venue but we would expect you to play the fixture.

If a Club has 2 teams in the same division the League will try to set their initial fixtures so that only one team plays at Home each week. If a Club has 2 teams in the same age group and different divisions, but the divisions are equal size, the League will try to do the same. Clubs should be aware that should a fixture need to be rearranged they could both end up at Home on the same date.

The League will not be able to amend your Club fixtures so that your Club has an even number of Home and Away fixtures each Sunday.

The League must give 5 clear days' notice of any changes to fixtures. This means we may make changes up until 9pm on Monday evening (SCORY/A 20B). It is very rare we do this - most fixture changes should be in place on Sunday evening, when we have results in. If you haven't been allocated a fixture by 9pm on Monday then we won't give you a fixture for that Sunday – unless both teams agree.

County Cup fixtures take priority over League fixtures. If your County Cup fixture does not go ahead it will rollover to the following weekend and we will adjust your League schedule accordingly.

3.3 Playing dates

	U8 – U11	U12+, inc Open Age
Season starts	8/9/24	8/9/24
Autumn Half-term closed dates	27/10/24 3/11/24	27/10/24
Christmas closed dates	22/12/24 29/12/24 5/1/25	22/12/24 29/12/24 5/1/25
Spring Half-term closed dates	16/2/25 23/2/25	16/2/25
Mother's Day closed date	30/3/25	30/3/25
Easter closed dates	6/4/25 13/4/25 20/4/25	13/4/25 20/4/25
Season ends	25/5/25	25/5/25

We realise that as Easter falls near Mother's Day this leaves a large break in fixtures. We do not wish to make these mandatory fixture dates but please remember that teams can bring forward any fixture to a closed date, if both teams agree (see below).

Competitive age groups should bear in mind that you may be asked to use some closed dates if there is a backlog of fixtures nearer the end of the season.

Where possible divisions will finish around the end of April but there will be some fixtures in May.

3.4 Kick Off Times

- Open Age: 2.00pm (1.30pm during months November to February - may extend to 2.00pm if grounds have flood lighting)
- U8 to U18: between 10.00am and 2.00pm

Our kick off times are set with the players welfare and travel times in mind. If you agree with another Club to play earlier or later, on the same day, this is not an issue. Away teams are, however, within their rights to refuse a kick-off time outside of the above.

Kick off times for League Cups used to be earlier, to account for extra time. This season we are removing extra time from League Cup fixtures, to bring us in-line with County Cup rules.

3.5 League Cup

Each age group from U12 up will be entered into a Formal Cup Competition – the SCWGFL Challenge Cup. This will be run at the default player format for the age group for example U13 will play at 9v9. If you are in a development division, playing a smaller format, you will not be drawn in the Cup fixtures.

We're really pleased that some of our age groups are so large, but it does mean that more rounds of the League and County Cup need playing – taking some teams out of division matches for 10-12 weekends. We're also conscious that some teams in the lower divisions feel their teams may be demotivated playing a Premier team in the first round of the Cup. We may bring the Premier / Championship teams into the League Cup later in the competition for some age groups (League Cup Rule 7), if we feel it will benefit the schedule.

Our League Cup dates (below) have been planned around the County Cup dates. If you do not progress in the Cup, or have a bye for a round, we will likely put in a division fixture for your team.

	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16	U18	Open Age
Round 1	6/10	29/9	22/9	6/10	29/9	20/10	6/10
Round 2	10/11	10/11	20/10	10/11	1/12	24/11	8/12
Round 3	12/1	26/1	15/12				
QF	2/3	2/3	2/2	26/1	2/2	26/1	2/2
SF	23/3	23/3	9/3	9/3	2/3	23/3	16/3
Final	Saturday 10/5	Saturday 10/5	Saturday 10/5	Saturday 10/5	Saturday 17/5	Saturday 17/5	Saturday 17/5

For League Cup matches we expect you to reverse the match if your pitch is unplayable (League Cup Rule 8). To maintain the Cup schedule, if there is a chance your pitch will not be in use please discuss an alternative plan with your opposition in advance. We had many instances last season where a pitch was deemed unplayable on a Saturday afternoon, the opposition offered a pitch, but the original hosts declined. If this happens in the 24/25 season a charge may be raised.

Should a pitch for a Cup fixture be unplayable (and unable to reverse) twice in a row the venue will be changed to the opposition's ground.

From the 2024/25 season extra time will no longer be used for League Cup fixtures, which brings us in-line with County Cup rules. If the score remains the same at the end of normal time it will go straight to penalties (League Cup Rule 9).

3.6 Double-Header Matches

The LMC has given the League Fixtures Secretary the authority to manage Double-headers on the LMC's behalf, if the League Fixtures Secretary feels it is necessary.

- Double-headers are two separate matches.
- You may have different starting teams and substitutes for each match.
- They will only take place in competitive age groups where it is essential all fixtures are completed.
- There will be a 30-minute interval between the end of the first match and the beginning of the second match, subject to agreement of both team officials and match officials.

- The club hosting the double-headers will notify the opposing team (and others as required in the Handbook) of the kick-off times and usual details for both matches.
- The club hosting the double-headers will arrange / supply the referee for both matches unless mutually agreed. The referee shall receive two match fees with the total cost shared equally by the competing clubs.
- Pitch fees should be shared by the Clubs – but this should be agreed in advance (the host cannot book a 3G without agreeing the cost with the visitors).
- Matches will be given separate kick-off times so you will receive two separate results SMSs and need to submit two separate match returns on Full-Time.
- Duration of matches:
 - Open Age: 25 minutes each way (50 minutes per match)
 - U18: 25 minutes each way (50 minutes per match)
 - U16: 25 minutes each way (50 minutes per match)
 - U15: 25 minutes each way (50 minutes per match)
 - U14: 25 minutes each way (50 minutes per match)
 - U13: 25 minutes each way (50 minutes per match)
 - U12: 20 minutes each way (40 minutes per match)

3.7 Number of players, match length, pitch and goal size

Age Group	Max Players Per Team	Format/Pitch Size	Minutes Per Half	Rec. Goal Size to be Used (in feet)
U8	5	5v5	20	12x6
U9	7	7v7	20	12x6
U10	7	7v7	25	12x6
U11	7 / 9	7v7 / 9v9	30	12x6 / 16x7
U12	7 / 9	7v7 / 9v9	30	12x6 / 16x7
U13	9	9v9	35	16x7
U14	11	11v11*	35	21x7
U15	11	11v11	40	24x8
U16	11	11v11	40	24x8
U18	11	11v11	45	24x8
Open Age	11	11v11	45	24x8

- The FA recommends that U13/U14 playing 11v11 should be on a smaller pitch than U15+ (see SCORY 18C)
- Non-competitive age groups may play 4 quarters as long as the playing time remains the same.
- Maximum match-day squad size is maximum players + 5 substitutes.
- The [FA Handbook for mini-soccer](#) may be useful for 5v5 and 7v7 players and parents/carers.

Substitutes

In U11-Open Age, teams may use up to 5 substitute players. If a player is substituted they may return to the pitch as a substitute. Essentially this means you have 5 extra players and you can swap them in and out as necessary. You must wait for the Referee to acknowledge the substitution at an appropriate break in play before making the swap.

In Mini-Soccer (5v5 and 7v7) you can use any number of substitutes however the matchday squad is capped at twice the team size – 5 substitutes for 5v5 and 7 substitutes for 7v7.

3.8 Reduced Numbers Matches

Clubs are reminded that teams are expected to field the minimum number of players (SCORY 20D).

In circumstances where you have the minimum required number of players, but this is less than the number set out in the competition you have entered (for example if you only have 9 players for an 11 a side fixture), while you can ask opponents to reduce their numbers to match, there is no obligation on them to do so. In these circumstances, as in all SCWGFL fixtures, we ask that teams exercise common sense, taking into account the relative strength of your opponents, to ensure matches are fair and competitive.

If you are aware that you may not have the required number of players to fulfil a fixture you should contact your opponents, **and AGO**, immediately.

3.9 Facilities

- It is the responsibility of the Home team to ensure that there are adequate toilets **and** changing rooms, which are adjacent to the grounds used for the game (SCORY/A 20A).
- All pitches must feature a respect barrier, or in situations where there is a stadium a demarcation of players, coaches and spectators.
- All pitches must be appropriate for the age group playing.
- Clubs should not charge entry to grassroots games in any of our age groups.

3.10 Summer Tournaments

- The LMC recommends that Clubs do not run Tournaments in May as it can be a busy month trying to fulfil final fixtures, and is when our League Cup Finals are held.
- Clubs and teams should give priority to their League fixtures where a tournament overlaps with the League season.
- The League will promote Tournaments, that are being held after the season finishes, on our social media platforms. We will host a list of all member Clubs' tournaments on the LMS, with a warning note for those held during the season.

3.11 Trophy events for non-competitive age groups

The League may run trophy events in some non-competitive age groups. A 'trophy event' is a set of competitive fixtures. There is no actual trophy and medals will not be available for every event.

U11s – 6-week period

- Two trophy events, run simultaneously, which may be split by 7v7 and 9v9 format, or by location if everyone plays 9v9
- Divisions of 4 teams (or less), within a trophy
- Weeks 1-3 – teams play everyone in their division
- Week 4/5 – winner of each division plays in quarter or semi-final (depending on numbers), within their trophy group
- Week 5/6 – one final for each trophy group
- Weeks 4/5/6 – for teams no longer progressing their division fixtures will be reversed for development fixtures.
- A standard medal may be given to finalists. This will not be equivalent to the competitive age groups
- The League and winning Club may publish their success but no scores, or who they beat. For example 'Our U11s were victorious in the SCWGFL Autumn Blue Trophy.'

- All rules below will be followed.

U10s & U9s – 4-week period

- Divisions of 4 teams (or less)
- Each division is a separate trophy event
- Weeks 1-3 – teams play everyone in their division
- Week 4 – top 2 in the (unpublished) table play to decide the overall winner. This will be a reversal of their previous fixture in the division. The other 2 teams in the division will have their earlier fixture reversed for a development fixture.
- There will not be medals.
- The League and winning Club may publish their success but no scores, or who they beat. For example 'Our U10s were victorious in the SCWGFL Autumn Blue Trophy.'
- All rules below will be followed

U8s – 2-week period

Due to the short window for a competition, lower number of teams across a large County, and that this is probably the first few games girls have played, the League will not run any trophy events.

All non-comp age groups

- Non-published points will be allocated with 3 for a win, 1 for a draw and 0 for a loss.
- If a match is postponed this will not be rearranged and the fixture will be recorded as a 0-0 draw. If the play-off is recorded as a draw the teams will be drawn from a hat to decide who progresses to the final. If the final is postponed both teams will share the title.
- Any team failing to fulfil a fixture will go through the League charges process. In this instance, to ensure the trophy event is completed within the trophy period the League Fixtures Secretary will award the walkover and 3 points before the charge is complete.
- If a team cannot fulfil a play off or final fixture their opponent from the previous round / a replacement from their group will be invited to play instead.
- Your team should be available for all fixture weekends in the trophy period, as some fixtures won't appear until we have results in.
- You cannot use your bye for a trophy event as it is a competitive fixture. If you have already used your bye for a date which later becomes part of the trophy period you can ask the opposition if they would bring the match forward or you will have to forfeit the fixture.
- If the play off, or final, ends in a tie, then the game will go to penalties with no extra-time. Each team will take 5 shots using different players. If still equal, the shootout will continue on a sudden-death basis, initially using players who have not already taken a penalty. Only players who were on the field at the final whistle may take penalty kicks in the shootout. No player shall take more than one penalty kick until each team member has taken one penalty kick. If further kicks are required, the same principle applies, and the sequence will remain the same.
- Outside of penalties, the total number of goals scored will not be a deciding factor.
- In the case of any ties at the top of tables, uneven numbers of teams in divisions, or uneven numbers of divisions in a trophy the League Fixtures Secretary will decide who progresses.
- Trophy divisions will be decided by the League Fixtures Secretary, in discussion with the Age Group Officer and may be based around location or previous form.
- We would still expect the fixtures to be played with a development football ethos in mind.
- Individual fixture results and league tables will not be published. Team or Clubs doing so will be charged under SCORY 21D.
- The League Management Committee shall have the power to appropriately deal with any contingency not provided for in these rules, including the imposition of any penalties.

SECTION 4 - FIXTURES

4.1 Arranging the Fixture

4.1.1 Sending match details

Your initial inter-Club communication should be between your Fixtures Secretaries. Their contact details can be found on the [League Management System Directory](#). Your Club Fixtures Secretaries should be the main point of contact as they have an overview of all Club fixtures and League requirements.

The Home Club Fixtures Secretary should email the visiting Club Fixtures Secretary, copying in the Referee (if one is appointed) with:

- KO time
- Pitch location
- Pitch type
- Available facilities/parking
- Kit colours
- Manager on-the-day contact details

For Open Age teams the AGO **must** be copied in on Fixture details. To reduce email overload we ask you not to copy in AGOs for other age groups but the Home Club must update the kick off time, and venue, on Full-Time. This helps with Referee Allocation, fixtures administration and will show in the Matchday App for both teams (and spectators).

Anyone with Team Manager, Team Coach or Team Secretary access on Full-Time, for the Home team, will be able to change the kick-off time and update the venue (if necessary). This will create an automatic update email. Clubs may decide that the Fixtures Secretary manages this, or the Team, but we need it to show the correct information.

Home Clubs must share these details 4 clear days before the fixture (SCORY/A 20C). For avoidance of doubt the League expects this by 8pm on the Wednesday before a Sunday fixture.

From the 2024/25 season the FA advise that for Open Age fixtures the opposing Club must confirm receipt and give notice of its kit colours (including goalkeeper) at least 2 days prior to the playing of the Competition Match (SCORA 20C).

It's more than likely the coaches/teams have met before, or at least are part of the age group What's App group, so will of course be in closer communication. However it is important that the League rules are followed.

4.1.2 Reversing a fixture

For League Cup matches we expect you to reverse the match if your pitch is unplayable (League Cup Rule 8). To maintain the Cup schedule, if there is a chance your pitch will not be in use please discuss an alternative plan with your opposition in advance. We had many instances last season where a pitch was deemed unplayable on a Saturday afternoon, the opposition offered a pitch, but the original hosts declined. If this happens in the 24/25 season a charge may be raised.

For division matches we would also ask you to reverse matches where you are able to.

You do not need to email the League Fixtures Secretary if you are reversing your fixture, although **your Club Fixtures Secretary should include the AGO when agreeing this with the opposition.**

- The Home and Away teams will not be altered on Full-Time – this is a friendly agreement between Clubs and the fixture remains. The official host should change the venue on Full-Time, which will help with Referee allocation;
- the original Home team is still the official Home team;
- your SMS text will not know the match is reversed so please enter the results as if you are still the original Home/Away team;
- the original Home team should pay any match official fees/provide a parent referee;
- the original Home team should pay pitch costs, if there are any - so should approve the costs before a booking is made. If they are unable to approve the costs the reversal cannot be made. Teams may choose to share costs to enable to fixture to be played.
- If you reverse the first fixture between two teams and agree that the second fixture will also be reversed, the League will not amend the second fixture – you need to do this. We recommend that the official host of the second fixture updates the venue in Full-Time, to the agreed host's venue. This will help plan referees and act as a reminder when the fixture date approaches.

4.1.3 Postponing a fixture for a planned event (using your bye)

Teams may postpone one League division match per season, without charge (using your bye). Any team asking to postpone for Remembrance Sunday, Bonfire events, Brighton Marathon, being mascots or the equivalent should use this option.

Following the introduction in the 23/24 season the process has changed for the 24/25 season. **You do not need to seek agreement from your opposition but you do need to give us longer notice.**

The Club Fixtures Secretary should [email the League Fixtures Secretary](#), and AGO, giving the date you wish to use your bye. This should be sent with at least **14 days' notice** and is not confirmed until the League Fixtures Secretary acknowledges it. To be clear, if the match is on 15/12 you should email by 10am on 1/12.

The League Fixtures Secretary will move the fixture, block that date out for the relevant team, and make any changes they deem appropriate to maximise match play in the relevant division.

Clubs must email their bye request by midnight on the last day of February, although they may use the bye for any date before the end of the season.

This is not available for any Cup matches.

4.1.4 Failure to fulfil a fixture

If you are unable to play your fixture due to illness, lack of players, lack of Coaches, etc you should **email the League Fixtures Secretary, the AGO, the opposition Fixtures Secretary and any Match Officials** to say you're unable to fulfil the fixture. The League will Postpone the match and, to ensure consistency, our Fines Secretary will raise a charge through the League Management System. Clubs/teams will have the opportunity to reply with mitigating circumstances before a decision is made to reschedule or charge/award points. Please reply P-P if you get a results SMS.

Before choosing this route you could consider bringing the match forward or asking your opposition to play with less players.

If you are unable to play due to pitch conditions please make this clear so we can reschedule asap, and remember to reply P-P if you get a results text. On washed-out weekends our League Fixtures Secretary is unlikely to reply to your email but you will get a Full-Time email with your reschedule details.

If you are unable to play you should email the League before your kick-off time (as it shows on Full-Time). Please do not make us have to chase you on Sunday evening - this will result in a charge (SCORY 20Eii/SCORA 20Eiii).

Late 'cancellations'

To avoid unnecessary journeys, please ring and speak directly to the opposing team of a postponement or unfulfilled fixture in addition to the above emails.

Exceptions

Priority is given to school activities (SCORY 18Oi/SCORA 18Ni). If you have a squad of 17 and you know that 10 of them are on a school trip in a couple of months' time the League may consider rescheduling the fixture. You should inform the League that you are unable to fulfil the fixture as early as possible and we will ask you to provide evidence from the school. Please be aware that if you have a squad of 17 and only 4/5 are on the trip this may not be the route for you. Do however, remember that you could consider bringing the match forward or asking your opposition to play with less players. For a Cup match the evidence must be provided at least 7 days in advance of the fixture (League Cup Rule 5B) but in both League and Cup matches the earlier the notice the more efficiently we can plan fixture changes.

Ideally teams should have a couple of coaches but if you are unable to play because your Coach is on an FA course (ie UEFA C) you can also use the above route and send in evidence of your course dates.

These exceptions are not guaranteed. If you don't tell us until the day then a charge will be raised which you will need to reply to with your mitigating circumstances.

4.1.5 Bringing a match forward

If there is a pressing reason to play during the week before the planned Sunday, and both teams agree the new date and time, this can be arranged. The Club Fixtures Secretary must email the League Fixtures Secretary (copying in the Opposition Fixtures Secretary) so they can sanction the change and amend it on Full-Time. We are a Sunday league so matches should predominantly be played on Sundays but understand that occasionally fixtures need to be played on Saturdays, or mid-week for pitch or player availability. If a Referee has already been assigned please keep them informed of the change and be aware that they may not be able to make your new date/time. Early notice will mean they can be assigned to another fixture.

If you want to play on a closed date over one of the holidays you can do so if both teams are in agreement. Again, please forward agreement from both Fixtures Secretaries to the League Fixtures Secretary (copying in the relevant AGO). An alternative fixture may be put in on the day you have 'freed up' so this cannot be used instead of a bye.

If you notice you have a gap in fixtures for the coming weekend or in a couple of weeks' time, and a suitable game can be brought forward, you can also contact us using the above process.

If you have a gap in fixtures further in the distance please don't ask for the gap to be filled – this will happen when we are rejigging other fixtures – to avoid re-work.

4.1.6 Rescheduling fixtures / Awarding points

If your match was postponed by the League for pitch conditions it will be rescheduled for the next date both teams are free.

If the postponement could result in a charge for yourself, or the opposition, our Fines Secretary will be investigating that. The fixture will only be rescheduled, or the points awarded, once the Fines Secretary confirms this.

Sometimes your match may not be rescheduled immediately. It's unlikely that we've forgotten but more likely we're waiting on the next Cup round, or similar, to make more efficient amendments. Unless both teams have a mutual gap in the next week please be patient.

4.1.7 Fixture changes

Please don't assume you have no fixture on a certain weekend unless you have played your bye or it is a closed date. You should be available for fixtures every weekend of the League season. We have until 9pm on Monday evening to change fixtures (SCORY/A 20B).

It is very rare we do this – we did it a handful of times last year due to results being late in when trying to plan, or to County rollovers due to bad weather. We understand late decisions can be frustrating but we are considering more factors than just your match. If you are unable to fulfil such a fixture the late arrangements will not be considered mitigating circumstances.

County Cup fixtures take priority over League fixtures. If your County Cup fixture does not go ahead it will rollover to the following weekend and we will adjust your League schedule accordingly. SCFA will not amend their fixtures until office hours on the Monday, but knowing that they will roll their fixtures forward we amend the League fixtures in anticipation of their reschedule. This does mean your opponent for next Sunday may change this Sunday evening but it also means we can keep Monday fixture changes to a minimum.

4.2 Matchweek checklist

Monday	If you are listed as Team Manager, Coach or Secretary on Full-Time (and have verified your email address) you'll get an automated email, around 8pm, with a list of forthcoming fixtures.
	9pm – if the League haven't given you a fixture for Sunday then they won't do so. [SCORY/A 20B]
Wednesday	If you are playing at Home this Sunday you should have communicated the fixture details by 8pm. [SCORY/A 20C]
	Your match report should be completed within 72 hours of your match. The League will lock the reports on Wednesday evening and raise a charge for missing reports/information [SCORY/A 21A]

Sunday	Any postponements should be communicated to the opposition Fixtures Secretary, AGO and League Fixtures Secretary by your kick-off time. [SCORY 20Eii/SCORA 20Eiii]
	Both teams should show their FA Squad list downloaded from Club Portal before the start of the match. [SCORY/A 20I]
	Both teams should reply to their results SMS by 4.30pm – this is to avoid any conflict over the result. If a text isn't received they can update this online. The League will lock the results soon after and raise a charge raised for missing results. [SCORY/A 21B]

4.2.1 Full-Time emails

If you're not getting Full-Time emails when fixtures are updated – or the weekly update – this is most likely to be one of three reasons:

- Your Club hasn't attached you to the team as a Manager, Coach or Secretary in Club Portal
- Your email address isn't up-to-date on your FA account
- You haven't verified your email address in Full-Time

If you are attached to your team, and your email address is up-to-date in your FA account, please email secretary@scwgfl.com and ask the League to re-send the Full-Time Email Address Verification email.

If you still have difficulty you can contact [the Grassroots Technology support team](#).

4.2.2 Squad Lists

Only players registered with the League can play in League games (SCORY/A 18A). You must show the opposing team your squad list, downloaded from FA Club Portal, before the match starts or the League may raise a charge (SCORY/A 20I). This can be a paper copy, or a PDF on the Team Coach's phone but you should never send the opposition coach an electronic copy.

Showing your team plan, or squad list, on your team management app is not valid. Only the FA Club Portal download shows League registered players. This is why an up-to-date photo is essential when registering a player.

Anyone with a Team Manager, Team Coach or Team Secretary role can download their team list from Club Portal – you can keep it as a PDF on your phone or print it:

[How to download a Squad List](#)

A Team Coach or Team Secretary should list who started/was subbed as part of the Full-Time match report (SCORY/A 21A). This will help you prove player eligibility in Cup matches or season deciders.

4.2.3 Results SMS

On the day of the match your team will receive a text. You must reply to this by 4.30pm when the League will lock the results and may raise a charge if you haven't replied (SCORY/A 21B). Mid-week fixtures should reply by 10pm. If the results are locked your text will be declined, nor will you be able to update the score on the Full-Time website.

If you have a late kick off please let your AGO know, and update the kick off time on Full-Time so we can try and leave it unlocked.

Your reply is usually in the format H-A but please check the text for instructions. If you receive a text for more than one team there will be a code to add, and if it is a Cup game it will ask for results of penalties, please use the exact format the text shows. A postponed match should be P-P.

Please don't include any messages. This does not come to a person to review. It autofills the result in Full-Time but only if it is in the correct format.

Up to two people can get the text – they must have a Team Manager, Team Coach or Team Secretary role in Club Portal and an up-to-date phone number on their FA Account.

Anyone with a Team Manager, Team Coach or Team Secretary role can update who gets the results SMS:

[Adding an SMS Results Contact](#)

[How to change or add your phone number on your FAN account](#)

4.2.4 Match Report

Full Team Details and Statistics must also be entered on to Fulltime within 72 hours of the fixture (SCORY/A 21A). For the avoidance of doubt we expect this to be completed by 8pm on Wednesday. Failure to do so will result in a charge being issued to the Club.

Your score will already appear in Full-Time since you texted the result in. You still need to submit marks for the FA and League and then you must list who played. You can also choose to record data on your players. Teams playing in non-competitive formats MUST NOT record their goal scorers. Scores are not displayed for non-competitive formats.

If an official Referee was assigned to your fixture their name will appear automatically. **If a parent/carer or Club volunteer refereed you must enter their name and choose the appropriate role from the drop-down list (SCORY/A 23H).**

[Guide to submitting Match Results](#)

Matchday App

The FA Matchday App does not always synchronise fully and does not capture league marks. As you must enter the league marks to avoid a charge (SCORY/A 21A) we recommend that if you use Matchday then you also sign-in to Full-Time, check the information has come across, and enter the required League information.

SECTION 5 - CHARGES

Charges and fines are implemented to ensure that teams and players adhere to the rules and regulations set by the league. These serve as a deterrent for failure to comply with league policies.

By enforcing charges and fines, the league maintains fairness and integrity within the sport, helping to uphold its reputation and ensuring that all participants are held accountable for their actions.

5.1 List of charges

A full list of Competition charges can be found in Schedule A of SCORY and extra Cup charges at the end of the Cup section, this includes the maximum fine for each offence.

Throughout this handbook we have referred to the relevant part of SCORY you could receive a charge for. Your Club Secretary, as a minimum, should be familiar with the charges you could incur as a Club/team.

5.2 Charges Process

If a League Official, or AGO, informs you a charge will be raised please do not engage them in further communications about this.

We follow our charges process to ensure that all Clubs and Teams are treated fairly and consistently, and within League rules, throughout the season.

Our Fines Secretary will issue the charge electronically, through the League Management System, in due course. Please use this for all responses. Please ensure that all correspondence is professional and polite in its tone, we understand that charges and fines are unwelcome and unsettling however, as a league we will not tolerate the use of rude or discriminatory language towards League Officials or other Teams and Clubs.

When the charge is received you will be able to accept or deny the charge and submit mitigation. Each charge is reviewed on a case-by-case basis and, based on the information and evidence submitted by all parties, charges will not always result in fines. Outcomes of the charging process can be rescheduling, awarding points or monetary fines.

If you fail to formally respond the charge will be reviewed based on the information supplied initially by the League Official or AGO.

The amount of the fine can vary depending on the severity of the offence, number of offences for the same offence or based on the mitigation offered, it is determined by a set tariff schedule or at the discretion of the governing body.

Fines should be paid within 14 days in accordance with SCORY 6(i)/SCORA 6(J). Fines not paid within the required limit will result a penalty being issued (the initial fine doubling) and in fixtures being withdrawn until such time as the outstanding fines are paid.

Please note that Clubs have the right of appeal to the County FA in accordance with SCORY/A 7, as follows:

Any appeal against a decision of the Management Committee must be lodged with the Sanctioning Authority within 14 days of the posting of the written notification of the decision causing the appeal, accompanied by a fee of £ 35.00 (Senior) or £ 30.00 (Junior) which may be forfeited in the event of the appeal not being upheld.

A copy of the appeal must also be sent to the League Secretary. The procedure for the appeal shall be determined by the Sanctioning Authority, in such respect the Sanctioning Authority may (but is not obliged to):

- (i) invite submissions by the parties involved; or
- (ii) convene a hearing to hear the appeal; or
- (iii) permit new evidence; or
- (iv) impose deadlines as are appropriate.

Any appeal shall not involve a rehearing of the evidence considered by the Management Committee.

No appeal can be lodged against a decision taken at an AGM or SGM unless this is on the ground of unconstitutional conduct.

Please note that if the LMC is required to vote on a charge, any committee members with a vested interest / link to the Club(s) involved will not be involved in this decision-making process in order to maintain transparency and integrity within the SCWGFL.

SECTION 6 - Match officials

6.1 Appointing Referees

Our Referees Appointment Secretary will appoint most Referees on Monday but may do so until Friday, if they become available. A League-assigned Referee has priority over any Referee the Club/team assigns so please make any Referee, you book separately, aware they are on a standby basis until then.

You should update the kick off time and venue on Full-Time as soon as you can so Referees can be assigned efficiently - we are often able to give a Referee more than one fixture.

The Home Club Fixtures Secretary should confirm match details to the Referee by Wednesday evening, at the latest. If the fixture is postponed the Home Club should phone the Referee to make sure that they are aware. Please also let the Referee Appointment Secretary know so they can be re-assigned.

6.2 Club/Team Referees

We know that there is a shortage of Official Referees and the FA are working on this at a Nationwide and County level.

If you are not assigned an official Referee you will need to ask a Parent/Carer to take this role. This person becomes a Match Official and should be treated with the same respect. Parent referees/Team Managers should report 'any incidents over and above standard on field incidents' to Discipline@sussexfa.com and also make the Club Welfare Officer, Chair, Secretary and Fixtures Secretary aware. Facts should be detailed and clear and you can include photos or video. You should not include opinion or previous history.

Parents and Carers who are acting as Match Officials do not need an FA DBS. **The Home team should record their name in the Full-Time match report (SCORY/A 23H).**

For 9v9 and 11v11 matches both teams will need 1 Parent/Carer to be linesperson. They may consider the [free FA online module Assistant Refereeing](#) if they do this regularly.

Considerations when using Home referees

We appreciate that some parents/carers undertake Referee training so they can support their own team. Please be aware that to complete your qualification you will need to complete 5 matches wherever the FA/League assigns you.

It's not best practice to have the same referee every time a particular team plays at Home and can cause more issues between sides. We would suggest that if you do have parents/carers refereeing that you rotate them between age groups and teams where possible.

6.3 Official Referee Fees

Match fees are inclusive of travel costs. Referees should be given the choice of bank transfer or cash and should be paid before kick off.

- Open Age - £40
- Under 18 - £35
- Youth (11-a-side) - £30
- Youth (9-a-side) - £30
- Youth (7-a-side) - £25
- Youth (5-a-side) - £25

SECTION 7 - Welfare and Safeguarding

7.1 Coaching Qualifications and Certificates

To affiliate with SCFA each team must have a manager or coach with:

- an up-to-date DBS (renew every 3 years)
- an up-to-date Safeguarding Children Certificate

Football England Accredited Clubs must have one manager or coach per team with:

- an up-to-date DBS (renew every 3 years)
- Introduction to Coaching in Football (or equivalent/higher qualification)
- Up-to-date Safeguarding Children Certificate (renew every 2 years)
- Up-to-date Introduction to First Aid in Football (renew every 3 years)

As a Football England Accredited League we encourage all teams to be accompanied to fixtures by a manager or coach with all of the above.

7.2 Conduct

Clubs are reminded of the [FA Respect Codes of Conduct](#). These apply to, and should be communicated to all players, coaches, officials and spectators competing in SCWGFL competitions. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes the conduct of Managers and Coaches with their own players. Poor conduct will not be tolerated within our League.

7.3 Kit and safety equipment

- All players must wear shinpads and appropriate footwear for the pitch ([Law 4](#)). Please make sure that anyone taking a turn in goal is wearing goalkeeper gloves.
- From the 2024/25 season teams playing within the Competition will not be allowed to wear white shorts.
- It is against League rules for players to have their names displayed on their playing strip at a Youth level (SCORY 19).
- Colour Blindness Guidance – the FA has released new guidance to Referees to consider colour blindness in players and match officials. Be aware that Referees may ask you to change kit, where there is apparently no colour clash.

Jewellery

Players must remove all jewellery. Although we understand that this is quite a contentious issue, our priority is the safety of all our players and we are governed by the FA Laws of the Game on this.

The [Laws of the Game - Law 4: The Players' Equipment](#) states:

1. Safety

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous.

All items of jewellery (necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, leather bands, rubber bands, etc.) are forbidden and must be removed. **Using tape to cover jewellery is not permitted.**

The players must be inspected before the start of the match and substitutes before they enter the

field of play. If a player is wearing or using unauthorised/dangerous equipment or jewellery the referee must order the player to:

- remove the item
- leave the field of play at the next stoppage if the player is unable or unwilling to comply

A player who refuses to comply or wears the item again must be cautioned.

Please make your players (and their parents) aware that this won't be as simple as a yellow card and then back on the pitch – they won't be allowed back on the pitch if the jewellery isn't removed. Please do not put our Referees in a difficult position, it is their role to uphold the Laws of the Game.

We know this may be difficult for some of your younger teams, who may have had new piercings recently. All we can suggest is asking parents to hold off on new piercings until the Summer break so that when football starts again they can be easily removed.

False, or long, Nails

SCFA advised us: 'There is no specific guidance for nails as such, however if the Referee deems them dangerous then they would have grounds to ask them to be removed or trimmed.'

Again, if this arises we would ask you to respect the Referee's decision.

Glasses / Spectacles

Whilst the FA recommends Polycarbonate lenses we recognise this may be an issue for children playing in grassroots football. Therefore we encourage referees officiating in grassroots youth football to be tolerant over glasses. However the individual referee has to show concern for all those playing in that game and if s/he feels there is something dangerous in the glasses i.e. sharp edges, etc, then in order to protect players and also the wearer him/herself s/he has the authority to say the glasses can't be worn.

Insurance

We approached Marsh Sport, who provide Club insurance bought through the FA to ask what would happen if their was an accident involving jewellery or any of the above:

'...the legal liability insurance package is placed on the basis that member clubs and leagues follow the FA rules & regulations. As such if a club knowingly allows players to participate in breach of these rules, for example wearing items of jewellery against the FA governance, it is possible the insurance policy may not respond if there is an incident and a legal claim attempted against the club.

'Whilst the insurance policy is designed to protect members from allegations of negligence, the club and committee members could be left exposed if a claimant can prove the club has acted negligently.'

5.5 Insured's Obligations

It is an important condition to the **Insurer's** liability, under this **Policy**, that the **Insured** will throughout the **Period of Insurance**:

- (a) comply with all legal requirements, regulations, rules and guidelines imposed on the **Insured** by any competent authority (including for example the Health & Safety Executive, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, and any sporting or industry governing body);

7.4 Welfare Considerations

Please also be aware of any issues that may affect your particular team or age group:

- Girls' teams should consider having a boot bag, or similar, available with period products, wipes, spare knickers and shorts as periods can be quite unpredictable to begin with.
- You may have players with Special Educational Needs and you should discuss with their Parents/Carers how we can meet their needs and how this should be communicated with the rest of the team or match officials (if at all). Your Club Welfare Officer can provide advice and support here.
- You should ask Parents/Carers if your players have any medical needs and keep any necessary equipment to hand.
- You should also ask if any of your players should NOT be included in photos.

Videos and Photos

Sometimes you may wish to video your match or take photos for training or marketing and communication purposes. FA advice is that if you plan to film a match, always contact your opposition club before match day to check that they do not have any player(s) who are subject to court orders or considered to be at risk.

[Click here to download the FA guidance on the FA website.](#)

Emergency action plan

You should have a copy of your Club's emergency action plan, for the relevant venue, to hand. Remember your opposition coaches and parents may not be local so a physical copy, to give them if an incident happens, can help them access local medical support.

Weather conditions

SCFA regularly share considerations, recommendations and updates on hot weather, thunderstorms or extraordinary weather predictions with Club Welfare Officers and Club Officials. Please seek guidance from your Club Welfare Officer.

Heading Guidance

Please remember that from the 2024/25 season, [U8s and U9s will not be able to head the ball in matches](#). You may find the [FA Handbook for mini-soccer](#) useful.

7.5 Welfare Issues

Whilst there is a wealth of information on [Safeguarding on the FA website](#) you should raise any concerns or queries, no matter how small, with your Club Welfare Officer who will be able to offer advice, guidance and support.

Issues with other teams should also be raised via your own Club Welfare Officer, although you should make your AGO aware (if appropriate).

If issues are escalated to the League / SCFA we cannot make any decisions until SCFA has completed their investigation.

Our process for reporting Welfare and Disciplinary issues is due to change. We'll update this handbook and communicate any changes with Clubs.