



2026-27 LEAGUE SPECIFIC RULES - PLAYING CONDITIONS

Please see Future Fit, FA Mini Soccer Handbook and SCORY for full rules and regulations. The below is a selection of some key rules relevant to each age group.

BOYS & GIRLS	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11
Max Format	3v3	5v5	5v5	7v7	7v7
Game Length	4 x 10min	2 x 25min	2 x 25min	2 x 25min	2 x 25min
Ball Size	3	3	3	3	3
Substitutes	N/A	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling
Offside	No	No	No	No	No
Throw Ins	No	No	No	No	No
Pass or dribble in	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Back Pass Rule	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Retreat Line	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Power Play	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Deliberate Heading	No	No	No	No	No

BOYS & GIRLS	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16
Max Format	9v9	9v9	11v11	11v11	11v11
Game Length	2 x 30min	2 x 35min	2 x 35min	2 x 40min	2 x 40min
Ball Size	4	4	5	5	5
Substitutes	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling
Offside	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Throw Ins	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pass or dribble in	No	No	No	No	No
Back Pass Rule	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Retreat Line	No	No	No	No	No
Power Play	No	No	No	No	No
Deliberate Heading	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



Some selected rules in more detail:

Deliberate Heading:

Deliberately heading the ball is an offence punishable by an indirect free kick. The indirect free kick is taken at the point where the ball was deliberately headed, except: Where a player deliberately heads the ball within their own penalty area, the referee will stop the game and restart with an indirect free kick to the opposition from the nearest side line of the penalty area where the offence took place.

Pass or Dribble In instead of throw in:

- The ball must be stationary at the touchline and opposing player must be at least 5 yards away.
- Pass in – Pass the ball to a teammate
- Dribble in – Kick the ball to yourself and continue to dribble.
- A goal cannot be scored directly from a kick in – I.E. The kicker only touches it once
- A goal CAN be scored directly from a dribble in – even if it is only the same player who took the initial kick in – In other words as long as their initial touch has brought the ball into play, they can shoot and score with their second touch.

Squad Registration Sheets

- Every player must have prior approval on the FA's competition portal to play in the Hightown League.
- Each team must have with them a copy of their squad registration sheet to hand to the opposing team before Kick Off. The opposing team is entitled to keep this copy for the duration of the match. Every player must be included on the registration sheet.
- The pictures must be legible and less than 12 months old.
- The onus/requirement is on the team to provide proof of identity of their players when requested to do so by a Hightown JFL official.
- You may use an electronic device to show your squad registration sheet but this must be treated in the same manner as if it were a paper hard copy. Therefore the opposing team can retain possession of it for the duration of the game.
- The league can provide laminated copies of your squad registration for £10 if required.
- If no squad registration is exchanged or there is a dispute regarding a player – then it must be brought to the attention of a HJFL official* no later than half time (or as soon as practicable considering specific issue with a substitute for example)
- See below for relevant HJFL officials from each venue. This DOES NOT include the referee. (See venues)
- The management committee will have the final decision on matters based on evidence presented and previous precedents.



Respect Barriers

- Each team at all venues are now required to supply and erect their own respect barriers prior to each game.
- Any team without a barrier will be required to use one supplied by the league for a non-refundable £10.
- Only two officials are allowed pitch side of the respect barrier – but must stay off the touchline.

Spectators/Touchlines

- Each team and associated coaches, parents, spectators must be on opposite sides of the pitch and stay on one side through the duration of the game. No person is allowed behind either goal at any time.
- You are responsible for every adult on your touchline. If there is a person unknown to you on your touchline, you must bring this to the attention of a HJFL official immediately as this is a clear safeguarding concern.
- Any team repeatedly found to leave litter on the touchline will have their membership revoked.

Fixtures/Cancellations

- Any team unable to fulfil a fixture on the scheduled date (as circulated) will be liable for full match fee.
- It is a FA requirement that teams fulfil the fixtures for their current league before beginning a new league. (ie – winter league must finish before summer league starts) Any teams failing to do this will have their F.A. affiliation revoked.
- In the likelihood that fixtures are cancelled in the season due to weather – the designated catch up game days will be as follows;
 - Saturday Teams – Evenings of Monday & Tuesday
 - Sunday Teams – Evenings of Wednesday & Thursday
- Match Fee's etc are based around a minimum number of games being played in a season, so if a team states they are unable fulfil these fixtures on the dates provided then they are still responsible for their relevant match fee.

Score recording/Goal Difference

- Hightown JFL will never use Goal Difference to determine a league placing.
- If teams are level, league placings will be determined by the result of the game between the two teams. If that was a draw then the committee will determine the outcome, Eg. Play off, shared etc.
- All results from Ages 7-11 will be recorded as 1-0, 1-1, 0-1 regardless of the real score.
- Ages 11-16 scores will not exceed 9.



2026/27 VENUES

Hightown Venue	Sandy Lane Playing fields, Sandy Lane, Hightown, Liverpool L38 3RN
Car Parking	Traffic is controlled by stewards whose instructions must be adhered to at all times. Entrance to the site is via Hightown Village and no traffic to pass via the single path farm road on the Gorsey Lane entrance. Upon entering the car park, the flow is One Way and cars will be directed where to park based on the time and size/type of vehicle. Any persons found parking in the surrounding roads or entering via the farm road, will be refused access to the site as this is a current condition of usage in the lease agreement. There is very limited parking so it is imperative people park considerably and take one space only.
Upon Arrival / HJFL Officials	Managers must check in at the reception kiosk. This is an FA requirement to ensure each team has a relevant safeguarding officer present. Here you will pay your match fee, be given your pitch number and referee details. The nominated officials at Hightown will be at least one of either Adam, Stephen or Linda Phillips
Pitch & Respect Barrier	Each team must now provide their own barrier to erect and dismantle before and after their game. Team members/associates must stay on their own touch line behind the respect barrier. No person is allowed to stand within the penalty area width behind the goal. Even if it is their 'own goal'. One coach & one assistant only can stand in front of the respect barrier but at no time to enter onto the pitch. There must be no litter left on your touchline.
Goals & Nets	The goals and nets will be provided and already in place at Hightown and to be left in situ
Health & Safety	The playing fields are surrounded by a car park & drainage ditch. RTA Laws remain present. It is imperative children are not left unsupervised at any time. Barriers are in place to provide some protection/partition, but HJFL take no responsibility for damage or injury caused on site. Children present remain the responsibility of associated parents and coaches. Do not allow children to swing on the crossbar. Each goal has sufficient ground pegs to prevent falling in high wind but there is a risk of serious damage or injury if 'swung' on. The ground is suspect to natural wildlife interference such as rabbit/mole holes. They are checked regularly but each manager to ensure the pitch is checked prior to kick off and a steward notified if repair needed. No Dogs allowed at the venue (except service dogs). No smoking/vaping on site.
Behaviour	Hightown is a 'zero tolerance' private venue and access may be withdrawn at any time if a person or teams behaviour is deemed to bring the HJFL into disrepute.

Buckley Hill, Carr Lane & Meols Park Venues	<u>Buckley Hill Lane, Netherton, Liverpool L29 1YB</u> <u>Carr Lane, Ainsdale. Southport. PR8 3ED</u> <u>Meols Park, Southport. PR8 6JU or PR8 5HL</u>
Car Parking	There is very limited parking at the venues and some restrictions in the immediate vicinity. It is therefore advised to park a short distance away in the roads surrounding the venue and walk in via the multiple entrances. Please be respectful to residents and other road users.



Upon Arrival / HJFL Officials	Managers must check in at the reception desk. This is a FA requirement to ensure each team has a relevant safeguarding officer present. Here you will pay your match fee (unless otherwise instructed) and be given your pitch number and referee details. The nominated officials at Buckley Hill will be at least one of either John Burton or Paul Kirkby The nominated officials at Carr Lane will be at least one of either Barrie Marshall, Billy Neilson or Trevor & Izzie Davies.
Pitch & Respect Barrier	Every team must provide and erect their own respect barrier two meters from your own touch line. Team members/associates must stay on their own touch line behind the respect barrier. No person is allowed to stand within the penalty area width behind the goal. Even if it is their 'own goal'. One coach & one assistant only can stand in front of the respect barrier but at no time to enter onto the pitch. There must be no litter left on your touch line.
Goals & Nets	Buckley Hill – Goals will already be in place however the first/last team on each pitch will be responsible for a Goal net, Corner Flags and a refuse bin. To be assembled/returned as instruction upon check-in. Carr Lane – The first and last team on each pitch will be responsible for assembling/disassembling their goal/'nets, corner flags and refuse bin as instructed at check-in. Meols Park - The first and last team on each pitch will be responsible for assembling/disassembling their goal/'nets, corner flags and refuse bin as instructed at check-in
Health & Safety	Children present remain the responsibility of associated parents and coaches. Do not allow children to swing on the crossbars. Each goal has sufficient ground pegs to prevent falling in high wind but there is a risk of serious damage or injury if 'swung' on. The ground is suspect to natural wildlife interference such as rabbit holes. They are checked regularly but each manager to ensure the pitch is checked prior to kick off and steward notified if repair needed. No Dogs allowed on the touchline (except service dogs) HJFL take no responsibility for damage or injury caused on site.
Behaviour	Any person behaving in a manner which brings the HJFL into disrepute will be asked to leave the venue. Whilst Buckley Hill/Carr Lane/Meols Park is a public field, if the person involved refuses to adhere to the request their associated team will have their fixtures voided and relevant sanctions imposed.



2026/27 LEAGUE SPECIFIC RULES - GENERAL

Player Registration	All players must be registered on the FA Competition Portal and approved to play in the HJFL. It is imperative that the child in question is registered with the correct name and DOB with the club official having checked the passport or birth certificate – not just relying on details provided by the child/parent themselves. A player can only be registered for one team per age group at a time playing in the Hightown JFL. Girls can be dual registered to play for a boys & girls team up to and including U11. After which prior consent is required by the relevant FA.
Squad Registration Sheet	• Every team must have with them, an up-to-date squad registration sheet using the template on the FA Competition Portal • The photographs must be recent and legible. • It is the leagues preference that the Squad Reg Sheet is printed. • This must then to be handed to the opposition manager prior to kick off for them to retain for the length of the game if so desired. • If using an electronic device to show the team sheet – this must also be handed to the opposition as if it was a paper copy. I.E. If you want to show the opposition the team sheet on your mobile phone – you must be willing to allow them to have your mobile phone for the duration of the game. • It is your own team’s responsibility to prove the children playing are registered and ID supplied to a HJFL official if requested. • If no squad registration sheet is received, then you must alert a HJFL official prior to the start of the second half or as soon as practicable. This is in addition to the referee – See HJFL officials on each venue tab. • Any team failing to provide a squad registration sheet will automatically forfeit the result, but it is requested the game continues its full course.
Transfers	• Every transfer will be considered by the HJFL committee who have right to approve or reject the request based on the HJFL ethos and values. We will always try and encourage as many children to play as much football as possible. Factors to consider will be such: 1. The reason for transfer 2. The impact/fairness on any ongoing competition 3. The impact of players from both respective teams 4. Exceptional circumstances • Players can only be registered for one team per age group in the Hightown League • Transfers are NOT permitted once 75% of the winter league games have been completed. • After 75% of the winter league games have been completed, a player wishing to transfer to another team in the Hightown league must have his registration cancelled on the WGS, 6 weeks after which, he becomes a ‘free agent’ and can join another team under the rules of ‘free agents’. This rule is to deter player movement/poaching during a season. • Any one team cannot sign more than one player from the same team during a season. • ‘Free Agents’ – i.e. a player who is not signed to a team already in the HJFL can be registered at any time in the season – again with consideration of fairness of any ongoing competition. • Elite players registered with an academy are permitted to play in the Hightown league up to and including under 11. Elite players age 12 and above cannot play in any grassroots football.
Colour Clash	We have no ‘home and away’ so each team is to have with them a set of bibs. If in the event of a colour clash then a team will wear bibs as decided by a toss of a coin.
First Aid	Each site has a De-Fib, but each team are responsible for general first aid kit



Match Balls	Each team must provide a sufficient quality match ball – see new FA Future fit policy re size ball.
Unfulfilled Fixtures	Individual games cannot be re-arranged without prior agreement from the HJFL committee. If you are unable to fulfil the fixture, then you will forfeit the result and still be liable for Match fee. This is because the match fee's are set at the start of the season based on a minimum number of games being played. It is a FA requirement that a team must finish all their scheduled games in a tournament/league before joining another league.