



Diamond Creek Women's Football Club

1 Background

In recent seasons, the NFL has permitted clubs to allow players to play below their age group, often to the expressed disappointment of DCWFC parents. Moreover, DCWFC families have expressed their concerns and objections to this practice given the heightened level of risk it poses to their children and to the fact it creates an uneven and uncompetitive playing field.

DCWFC policy is that junior players play within their natural age group. Thus bottom and top age players stay within their age group. The reason for this is to support their natural football development by playing against similar age, talent and physical sized players.

However it is acknowledged that under special circumstances, a player can request to play up an age group or be considered to play as an over age player (assuming league rules allow this). This request should be in writing and explain why the player wants to play outside their age group. Just because a player requests an exemption does not mean it should be granted. Any decision against Club policy must be suitably justified.

For Under 12, 14 and 16's the letter should be addressed to the Junior Vice President, however for Under 18's, where VWFL and NFL rules allow a 16 year old to play open age football, the letter should be addressed to the President or Senior Head Coach.

2 Process

Under 12, 14 and 16

1. The Junior Vice President will discuss the players request with the Coaches of the two teams affected i.e the team where the player should play for and the team the player is requesting to play for.
2. The Coaches will assess the players request from the following conditions:
 - a. Their physical ability to play at the requested age group;
 - b. Their mental maturity to play at the requested age group;
 - c. Other reasons given to play outside their age group eg friendship groups, relationship with Coach etc.
 - d. The effect on team numbers by either leaving or joining the team; and
 - e. The Coaches opinion on the player.
3. After consultation with the coaches and the Junior Vice president a final decision will be made. The Junior Vice President will then inform the player and her family of the Club decision.

Under 18

Given a 16 year old player can play VWF or NFL Women's football, the decision for the player to play open football will be addressed by the Senior Coach and the President.

1. The Senior Coach and President will assess the players request from the following conditions:
 - a. Their physical ability to play at the open age football;
 - b. Their mental maturity to play at open age football;
 - c. The effect on team numbers by either leaving or joining the age group; and
 - d. The Senior Coaches opinion of the player.
2. The Senior Coach or President will then inform the player of the decision. This decision is binding.