



EPPING TOWN FC
PARENT HANDBOOK
2025/26



CONTENTS

- 1. WHO WE ARE**
- 2. WHAT WE DO**
- 3. TRAINING SESSIONS**
- 4. EXPECTATIONS OF PLAYERS**
- 5. EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS**
- 6. STREAMING**
- 7. KIT AND EQUIPMENT**
- 8. COMPLAINTS AND WELFARE CONCERNS**
- 9. CONTACTS**



1. WHO WE ARE

Our youth football club was formed in 1975, which means we are celebrating our 50th birthday this year!!! The club was originally named Garnon Rangers Football Club and started with three boys teams.

We have grown rapidly in recent years, and now have 34 youth teams, including seven girls teams. We have three or four teams in several age groups, especially at 5v5 and 7v7 playing formats. Our youth teams play in the Brentwood Community Football Alliance League, the Echo Junior Football League, the Essex County Girls League, and the Junior Premier League.

The club also has three adult teams, playing home games at Stonards Hill. For the first time in the club's history, we will have an adult women's team. They will play in the Essex County Women's Football League this season. Our men's First team plays in the ProKit UK Essex Olympian Football League, and our Sunday team plays in the Essex Sunday Corinthian Football League.



2. WHAT WE DO

We are a grassroots community football club. Our primary objective is to provide opportunities to all in our local community to play football and to support their football development in a safe, fun, positive and pressure-free environment.

We support players and teams of all abilities. We have a Saturday morning football school for boys and girls who do not currently play in a team. We have teams playing in the top divisions in our leagues. And we have everything in between.

In addition, we run goalkeeping training and Special Education Needs sessions. And we have adult men's and women's teams that provide pathways for players in our junior teams to continue playing for Epping Town at senior level.

Having multiple youth teams in an age-group allows us to take advantage of streaming, where we form and maintain teams based on ability. Streaming has been proven to maximise player development and enjoyment of the game.



3. TRAINING SESSIONS

All our teams have a midweek training session on a third-generation artificial grass pitch (3G), either at Epping St John's School (ESJ) or Epping Upper Clapton Rugby Club (UCRC), between 6pm and 9.30pm each Monday to Thursday.

Each of our teams is coached by volunteer coaches who hold FA coaching qualifications. All of our coaches have Safeguarding and First Aid certificates and are DBS checked. We hold regular continuing professional development (CPD) sessions to support coach development and to ensure our players receive consistent and high-quality coaching.

Our youngest players are generally allocated earlier training times, and our older players are generally allocated later training sessions. Larger training spaces are allocated to teams with larger player numbers and older players.

An additional Saturday morning 3G training session is available to many of our younger players.



4. WHAT WE EXPECT OF OUR PLAYERS

We expect the following of our players:

- Regular attendance at training, arrival at training sessions on time, listening to the coach's instructions and feedback, putting effort into training, being kind to teammates, and not disrupting the coach's session delivery
- On matchday, playing to the best of their ability for their team
- Respecting teammates and coaches, opposition players and coaches, and the referee and other officials
- Being respectful in victory and in defeat; shake hands with opponents at the end of the game
- Listening to and responding to the coach/manager
- Appreciating that the coach makes decisions in the best interests of the team
- Talking to someone they trust or a Club Welfare Officer if they are unhappy about anything



4. WHAT WE EXPECT OF OUR PLAYERS

Action may be taken against players who fall short of our expectations, which may include:

- Being asked to apologise
- Being excluded from a training session (temporarily or for the remainder of the session) or, in a game, being substituted
- Receiving reduced game time*
- Receiving a warning regarding behaviour
- Being excluded from the club

Your team manager should communicate ongoing issues regarding behaviour, attitude or attendance to you so that both you and our coaches can work to resolve them.

** We have a policy of providing equal game time in teams up to u11, and a minimum of 50% game time at u12 and above. However, exceptions to equal game time allocation may be made in some circumstances, including injury, poor conduct during games or training, and a poor attendance record.*



5. WHAT WE EXPECT OF OUR PARENTS

We are collectively responsible for providing a positive environment for our players.

We expect the following of our parents:

- Always remember, children play football for fun.
- Please do not coach from the sidelines. Let your coaches do the coaching. They have spent a lot of time preparing training sessions and game plans. They know your child's strengths and development points. Trust them and avoid confusing your child with mixed messages.
- If you have questions, do ask the team manager. But please wait until after the game or training session. We encourage our managers to share their insights on player development and playing style with you so they will be happy to chat with you, which will allow you to also discuss and work on development points with your child.
- Respect referees, managers and players on both teams. Mistakes will happen and decisions will sometimes go the wrong way. That is part of football.
- Applaud and support good play from both sides.



5. WHAT WE EXPECT OF OUR PARENTS

- If you feel aggrieved by the behaviour or decisions of others, please do not try to resolve it yourself. There are processes at all levels that allow grievances to be heard and addressed. However, there is often insufficient (or conflicting) evidence for us or the FA to punish wrongdoers. So, rather than escalating a situation in front of our children and becoming part of the problem, please take out your phone and start recording the incident. Video evidence is very powerful and far more likely to result in just outcomes.
- Never enter the field of play without permission. Your coaches have a relationship with your child and have experience dealing with injured or upset players. If you are needed on the field, a coach will ask you to come on and assist.
- Never engage in abusive, insulting or offensive behaviour or language. We promise to protect your children while they are in our care, so we will not accept them being exposed to poor adult behaviour from anyone. Where inappropriate behaviour or language is reported to us, we will consider action, including one or more of the following:
 - issuing a verbal warning
 - a meeting with one of our Club Welfare Officers or other club officials
 - the undertaking of an FA education course
 - requiring the parent to not attend future games
 - requiring the parent and child to leave the football club



6. STREAMING

- Where we have multiple teams in an age-group, we aim to allocate our players to teams of similar ability and to continually monitor and adjust teams where appropriate to maintain this balance.
- When inviting you to register your child to play with us, we noted that while each player is initially allocated to a specific team, their registration is to Epping Town FC.
- We stream our teams because we know that player development and enjoyment of football is maximised where children are playing with and against players of similar ability.
- Our coaches assess player development on an ongoing basis using the FA's four corners model, which focuses on technical, physical, psychological and social development characteristics.
- Where a player is not being challenged enough, we will move them to a team playing at a higher level. And where a player is at risk of losing confidence and enjoyment of football due to their development being at a lower rate, we will consider moving them to another team to allow their confidence and enjoyment of the game to grow.
- Streaming can evoke negative reactions from parents. But we do it because we are here to develop your child's football and we know that streaming drives very positive development outcomes.
- Streaming shouldn't come as a surprise to you. In particular, where our coaches identify that a player may benefit from playing at a lower level, your team manager should communicate this to you, identify development points and commit to updating you prior a final streaming decision being concluded.



7. PLAYING KIT

- Home kit (shirt, shorts and socks) is provided to every player
- Away shirts may be purchased, at the discretion of and funded by individual teams
- Football boots and shin pads must be worn at every training session and game

Football boots for 3G:

- 3G pitches are designed for football and have a long pile turf that gives a realistic grass feel while also being able to withstand heavy use
- Players must use boots with studs on our 3G pitches. This ensures the fibres don't become compressed and damaged
- Bladed boots can cut through the synthetic turf causing serious damage. They can also result in player injury
- Flat-soled and astro turf trainers are not suited to 3G pitches as they have reduced grip and may damage the 3G surface

ACCEPTABLE FOOTWEAR

Artificial Ground (AG) Boots



Metal Studded Boots



UNACCEPTABLE FOOTWEAR

Flat-Soled Indoor & Astro Turf Trainers



Bladed Boots



Generic Sports Trainers



8. COMPLAINTS / WELFARE CONCERNS

Our coaches have a duty of care to ensure safety and welfare of children in their charge. Recognising warning signs of potential abuse or neglect is crucial for early intervention.

If you have welfare concerns related to any child:

1. Make sure they are safe. If you believe a child is in immediate danger, call the police.
2. Report your concerns in confidence to our Club Welfare Officers (CWOs) Mark Betts or Claire Sprent (contact details below). Our CWOs will help in determining how your concerns should be addressed.
3. Consult with the County FA Welfare Officer at safeguarding@essexfa.com. They can provide guidance and support.
4. Contact the NSPCC helpline, if appropriate (0808 800 5000 or help@nspcc.org.uk)
5. Contact Children's Services, if appropriate. Contact details can be found on the local authority website.

Never assume that someone else has taken action or raised a concern.

By recognising warning signs and taking appropriate action, football coaches can play a vital role in the safeguarding and welfare of the children in their care.



9. CLUB CONTACTS

Most queries can be resolved by your team manager.

Other club contacts:

Head of Football:	Richard Chick	07855 031 287
Head of Girls Football:	Andrea O’Loughlin	07841 490 926
Secretary:	Chrissy Ellsom	07939 511 735
Treasurer:	Amelia Harris	07508 561 345
CWOs:	Mark Betts	07734 961 212
	Claire Sprent	07946 206 196
Chairman:	Tomas O’Loughlin	07920 507 386

website: eppingtowafc.com

instagram: [eppingtowafc](https://www.instagram.com/eppingtowafc)

Please support and show your appreciation for your team managers, coaches and club officials. They all give up their time (much of their work goes unnoticed in planning and preparing for games and training sessions) to make your child a better footballer and to make grassroots football in Epping possible



THANK YOU FOR YOUR
SUPPORT

