



Pickering Brook Netball Club  
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## **Pickering Brook Netball Club Grading Policy**

### **Aim**

Pickering Brook Netball Club is committed to ensuring team grading is conducted fairly and effectively. The aim of this policy is to ensure grading of teams is undertaken in this manner, and in the best interests of the Club and players.

### **What Is Grading?**

Grading is the process of establishing the composition of our teams to compete in the Kalamunda Districts Netball Association (KDNA) winter competition.

The aim of grading is to form teams that have a balanced group of players of similar ability levels across all playing positions. Grading will also be influenced by the number and ages of players registered with the Club each year.

### **Why Do We Grade Our Teams?**

Netball is a graded, competitive sport, from the age of 11 with representative opportunities. To ensure the best chance of success for all our teams and the greatest level of enjoyment and development for our players, it is necessary to grade players into teams with players of similar ability.

Stronger players always enjoy the challenge of harder, faster competition and may not develop to their potential if graded to a lower team.

Similarly, players who are placed in teams above their ability will also not develop to their potential when being constantly overshadowed by more talented players around them. In such situations, these players can quickly become disheartened and lose self-esteem.

Players and parents should also be aware that success for a team one year does not always ensure they will remain together the following year. Due to the nature of change, new registrations and differing development rates of all players from season to season, player movement in and out of such teams may still occur.

Players and parents are urged to be objective and reasonable in their expectations, and to encourage their children to be happy in their chosen sport no matter what team they are ultimately placed in.

Players and parents are encouraged to be supportive of the grading committees' final decisions.

### **Playing With Friends (Graded Teams Only)**

Requests from both players need to be in writing at the time of registration stating the reasons. Please be aware however, that the Grading Panel will only consider such requests provided both players are of a similar ability. For the reasons outlined under "Why Do We Grade Our Teams?", grading of players based on their playing abilities is important to ensure their appropriate placement in teams for the ultimate benefit of those players.

Should it not be possible to grade two friends in the same team we encourage those players to accept their new team and make new friends. Once the season starts children usually settle in quickly and enjoy their netball and the support of parents is greatly encouraged to ensure this occurs smoothly. Parents and players alike are encouraged to enjoy the experience of meeting new friends where team changes occur.

### **Players Playing Out Of Their Age Group**

The general policy of the Club is that all players play within teams of their own age group. However, on occasion, there may be exceptions to this rule.

During grading, should the Grading Panel identify a player of exceptional talent for whom a team of similar ability does not exist within their own age group, then that player may be offered the opportunity to play in a higher age group. In addition, should the Club have insufficient player registrations in adjacent age groups to form full teams, players may be requested to play up an age group in order to form a team of composite age. In such instances, the players asked to play up an age group will be selected based on them being of similar ability to the other players in the team in which they will be placed.

## **Grading of Each Age Group**

### **Net & Set – 5 to 8 Years**

Players aged within the Net & Set age groups, playing in the modified, non-competitive competition are not graded.

Requests to play with friends will be accommodated where possible, depending on the overall number of registrations in each age group. Requests relating to team placement of Net-Set-Go players must be made in writing, via email to Pickering Brook Netball Club at the time of player registration.

The Club, however, encourages players to join as individuals so players and parents get to meet new friends – this process also makes it more comfortable when they enter a graded playing age group at 11 years and above.

### **All Players Go, Juniors & Upwards**

All players in Go, Juniors & upwards will be required to attend grading sessions.

## **The Grading Panel**

Our Grading Panel will undertake all grading on behalf of the Club. The Grading Panel consists of Coaches, the Club President, and an invited Independent Grader to assist with the grading process.

## **Grading Criteria**

In assessing the overall skills of a player within an age group, the Grading Panel will take into account:

- a) Footwork
- b) Speed & agility
- c) Ball Handling Skills
- d) Attacking Skills
- e) Defending Skills
- f) Perception/Spatial Awareness
- g) Sportsmanship & Attitude
- h) Overall on-court effort
- i) Willingness to try various positions as per coach requests

## **The Grading Process**

### **(a) Coach's Evaluation**

At the end of each winter season, each coach will be asked to provide a written evaluation of each player in their team. This evaluation covers areas such as skills, attendance at training and games, teamwork and attitude. All such reports will remain confidential and be viewed only by the Grading Panel and the Club's Executive.

### **(b) Paper Grading**

For age groups where there will be no Practical Grading session/s. The Grading Panel members will assess the coaches evaluations when considering team placement.

### **(d) Practical Grading**

Each Practical Grading session shall be watched by at least three (3) members of the Grading Panel and one independent member of KDNA. Practical Grading may include a number of activities including various netball training drills but will always include a session of actual on-court match play.

Players presenting for Practical Grading shall be formed into teams for the purposes of this on-court game. Players shall trial in two (2) positions that they have nominated, but may be asked to trial in other positions, either to make up a team, or because the Grading Panel would like to see how they perform in those positions. Where players are asked to fill other positions during grading, they will still have an opportunity to play in each of their nominated position/s during the selection process.

For a number of reasons, it may not be necessary or possible for all players to play an identical numbers of quarters during the grading session.

### **Failure To Attend Practical Grading**

If a player is unable to attend practical grading, the player or parent/guardian must notify the Club President prior to grading. Placement into a team for this player will be based upon Paper Grading and, where applicable, Coach's Evaluations. All players are strongly encouraged to ensure that team placement is as accurate as possible.

### **Formation of Teams**

In order to form teams, the Grading Panel will consider the coaches evaluation, the independent member of KDNA's evaluation, paper and/or practical grading session to determine final player placement.

Only players who have completed their registration along with the relevant payments and have attended any relevant grading sessions will be placed in a team. If players express an interest to play with PBNC via the EOI form after grading sessions have taken place, we will invite players to register only as suitable places become available.

All grading decisions of the Grading Panel are final & must be respected.

### **Announcement of Teams**

Once the grading process has concluded and the teams have been formed teams, they will be announced via e-mail.

Ideally this will occur within one (1) week of the final Practical Grading session taking place.

### **Nomination of Teams to KDNA**

Following the formation of teams, the Grading Panel will determine an appropriate grade under which to submit the team for registration with KDNA (E.g. Div 1 or Div 2). Whilst the Grading Panel determines these grades based on their assessment of the team during the grading process and with the team's best interests and abilities in mind, these are only recommended grades for KDNA nomination purposes.

Ultimately, KDNA will determine the final grading of a team and will make this decision by assessing the merits and ability of teams from our Club versus those submitted by all other clubs, where necessary & a designated grading period at the commencement of each winter season.

On occasions, the Grading Panel may also recommend that an entire team be nominated for a competition of a higher age group to ensure they are provided with an appropriate level of competition. Such nominations will be made only after consultation with that team's coach and ratification by the Club's Executive.

### **Coaching Appointments**

All teams will have coaches appointed by the Club. Each coach (or their manager) will contact players/parents to organise training sessions. Coaching appointments will be determined by the recommendation of the PBNC Committee and based on qualifications, suitability, availability and commitment to continue with Coach Education and development. It is preferred that all Coaches will complete at least a beginner coaching course (dependant on experience) prior to taking up a position.