



GRASSLANDS FOOTBALL CLUB HANDBOOK

WE WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME PLAYERS, PARENTS AND COACHES TO ANOTHER GREAT SEASON WITH THE GFC REP PROGRAM. PLEASE KEEP THIS HANDBOOK CLOSE THIS SEASON AS IT CONTAINS MANY OF THE ANSWERS TO ANY QUESTION OR CONCERNS YOU MAY HAVE. IF YOU CANNOT FIND THE ANSWERS IT WILL GIVE YOU DIRECTION ON WHERE TO GO FOR THOSE ANSWERS.

HERE ARE A FEW GENERAL REMINDERS TO KEEP CLOSE AT HAND.

If your child cannot attend a practice or a game, or will be late, please contact the coach so they are aware of missing players. No coach likes to get to a game expecting a full team and only end up with half of their players!

Players should arrive min. 30 minutes prior to game time whenever possible. This allows players time to warm up beforehand.

Let the Coach do his/her job. Remember, above all else, you are a parent first and last. Do not coach your child ever. Be respectful and supportive of coaching decisions, all of which are intended in the best interest of each child.

As parents, please refrain from approaching and/or talking to referees. If you have questions or concerns about the referee, please forward these concerns to the coach or Rep Director who will ensure that your concerns are dealt with in an appropriate way.

Complaint protocol

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your soccer experience, please do the following:

- a) Wait 24 hours until emotions have calmed, and discuss the matter (ex. Fair play, referees' calls, etc.) in a calm tone with your coach/Rep Director.
- b) They will ensure that your concerns are expressed to the appropriate people. If the concerns involve your coach, attempt to resolve them with him/her first. If you have no success contact the Rep Director, they will contact all parties involved within 48 hours and attempt to resolve the issue.
- c) At any time, if you wish to bring up any general issues of concern please feel free to email us at info@grasslandssoccer.ca. The Office Manager will generally see these within 48 hours. Please make sure to provide a return email or contact information with your concerns. As only those people that provide e-mail address or telephone number can be contacted for follow-up.

Thank you for your attention to the above information. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.



GENERAL GUIDELINES

Fees

- ☐ Rep team fees on top of house league fees will apply to each player and must be paid before a uniform is issued and names are put on the official roster. GFC understands that not everyone is capable of paying all fees at one time therefore; we will accept post-dated cheques that bring the players up to date before the last day of season. If you are paying in installments it must be done in the form of cheques, **cash installments will not be accepted.**
- ☐ Rep Team fees include practice time, field preparation/rentals for games and costs for officials, ASA insurance, team photo and tournament entrance fees and possibly apparel. There may be additional fees that will be the responsibility of team members. Teams will have the choice to fundraise as a team to cover additional costs or to add up the costs at the end of season and split the total balance of all fees owed between all team members. If you do not pay your portion of the balance you will not be permitted to play for GFC until such time as your invoice has been cleared.
- ☐ **Hotels, food and travel costs are also extra costs that are the responsibility of the player.** GFC will not be helping to cover these costs.
- ☐ Individual GFC teams may choose if they would like to fundraise or to pay fees etc., in any case it is suggested that each team appoints a team treasurer in order to help out the team manager and make sure everyone is adhering to the rules.

Attendance

- ☐ It is important that players attend all practices and games. Please let your coach know in a timely manner if you are away due to sickness, etc.
- ☐ If a player is not attending practices at an 80% rate they will be suspended from the team roster.



Playing-Up Policy

- ☐ While the GVC recognizes, and fully supports youth player development is, with rare exception, best served by players playing at their own age level, the association also recognizes that in some rare instances a player may qualify to play up a division. Accordingly, the policies covering under-aged players are as follows:
- ☐ If a player wishes to try out at an older age level when a team of his own age level exists, the following criteria must be met.
- ☐ A written request must be sent into the board of directors by the player's parents stating the request.
- ☐ A player who is being considered for playing up an age group must have a high degree of technical skill which is transferable to playing situations. A player's individual skill must meet or exceed the technical abilities of other participating players within the age group the player wishes to play at. This will be evaluated by the coach of the requested age group and the GSA technical director.
- ☐ A player must surpass most other players in their own age group in physical strength, technical skill and speed, and have the ability to blend in with the players of the intended age group.
- ☐ A player must surpass most other players in their own age group in game awareness and general knowledge of the game, and have the mental strength to deal with older and physically superior opponents.
- ☐ A player must be able to interact socially with players of the intended age group.
- ☐ A player must desire to play at this level, not just the parent.
- ☐ **By leaving a division to play a player cannot leave that team short of players. If that occurs the request will not be granted no matter the qualifications of the player.**
- ☐ A player cannot play in two divisions, but may practice with other teams on approval of the Board.
- ☐ It is recognized that on any team there will be stronger and weaker players, the expectation that the stronger players assist the weaker in skill and development and that the stronger players learn to recognize the importance of team play and mentorship.
- ☐ Playing up for convenience to parents will not always be considered as an argument. It is the player's perspective we only consider.



PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

This year as a PARENT I agree to...

- ☐ Follow the steps for registering your child each year before the deadline; make sure all information is correct. **Make certain payment is made, or a subsidy form is filled out and returned, before the deadline. Players will not be placed on a team until they have registered and paid.**
- ☐ Do not force an unwilling child to participate in sports; team sports need committed players.
- ☐ Do not over-commit your child; if your child is already playing other team sports please make sure that they have time for this one
- ☐ Ensure the player arrives at practices and games on time and with appropriate gear, including team jersey, shorts, shin guards, soccer socks and cleats (outdoor) or approved field athletic shoes (indoor).
- ☐ Model good sportsmanship - show respect for all players, coaches, game officials and the laws of the game.
- ☐ Be encouraging and enthusiastic towards all players and acknowledge the good plays of ALL players, on both teams.
- ☐ Inform the coach and or manager if their son or daughter cannot attend practices or a game.
- ☐ Come out to games and practices - the coaches and players love the extra encouragement and support.
- ☐ Be willing to work with the coach if there are discipline problems on the team. Discuss any difficulties with the manager or coach.
- ☐ **Remember that children are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment, not yours.**
- ☐ Encourage your child to play by the rules.
- ☐ Teach your child that honest effort is as important as victory, so that the result of the game will be accepted without undue disappointment.
- ☐ One should never berate or question your child's performance, rather discuss in private with the coach any concerns of your child's performance, be the supporting parent, let the coach be the coach.
- ☐ Recognize the value and importance of volunteer coaches. They give of their personal time and money to provide access to sport for your child.
- ☐ Show my appreciation of volunteer coaches by allowing them to coach my child without interference (i.e. **NEVER coach your child from the sidelines**)
- ☐ Applaud good plays and effort by members of your team **and** by members of the opposing team.
- ☐ Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth sporting activities.
- ☐ Between the exuberance of the winner and the disappointment of the loser, we find a person called an **Official**. All referees strive for the same objective: to watch every move of every player, and to call the game to the best of his or her ability. Do not publicly question the officials' judgment, and never question their honesty. They are a symbol of fair play, integrity and sportsmanship.

Above all, let your child be what he or she is ... a child



PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

This Year as a PLAYER I agree to...

- ☐ Arrive at games and practices on time with all of the appropriate gear.
- ☐ Perform up to your potential - be ready to try your best.
- ☐ Listen to the coach and try to learn new skills. Practices go most smoothly when everyone respects the coach and the other team members.
- ☐ Keep a positive attitude towards your team members - **remember this is a "team sport"**.
- ☐ Maintain a positive and polite attitude towards your teammates, your coach, the opposing teams and referees.
- ☐ Be generous when you win
- ☐ Be gracious when you lose
- ☐ Be fair no matter what the cost
- ☐ Obey the laws of the game
- ☐ Work for the good of your team
- ☐ Accept the decisions of game officials
- ☐ Honestly and wholeheartedly applaud the efforts of your teammates and opponents.

For Parents and Players

Respecting the Referee

Game officials are necessary and important for all soccer games. It is imperative that the coaches, players and parents show the utmost respect for all game officials at all times. Any physical or verbal abuse will not be tolerated. Coaches should be aware that it is their responsibility to control their players and supporters (i.e. parents). Failures to do so may result in discipline.

Parents, coaches and players do not have a right to question the referee. However, if there is a significant problem with the officiating (i.e. the ref does not see that an opposing player is constantly tripping players) the coach may calmly and politely approach the referee at half time or after the game to draw attention to the problem, keeping the comments both constructive and positive.

Referee conduct that is seriously questionable should be reported to the league in writing.

REMEMBER THE REFEREE IS ALSO SOMEONE'S CHILD AND A PERSON.



Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

Grasslands Football Club is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of its members. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable within our teams. We believe it is important that Coaches, Administrators, Team members and Parents should, at all times, show respect and understanding for the welfare of others. Our Anti-Bullying Policy was created with our entire Club in mind. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at any practice, game or other ASA sanctioned event associated with our soccer program. If bullying is reported to any parent or player, they should immediately report the incident to their respective coach, team coordinator, or any GFC Board member who will ensure the complaint is investigated and dealt with promptly and effectively. We will promote a *TELLING atmosphere*. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is taking place is expected to report the incident, as indicated previously.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as conduct, gestures or comments which are insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, malicious, degrading or otherwise offensive to a player, group of players and/or teammates, and which create a hostile or intimidating environment, or which negatively affects a player or player's performance. Bullying is harassment, intimidation by means of any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents that results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying can be:

- ☐ Emotional- being unfriendly, excluding or intentionally ignoring someone
- ☐ Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- ☐ Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures or other slurs
- ☐ Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- ☐ Homophobic remarks or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- ☐ Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing, taunting or tormenting
- ☐ Any communication via internet, including but not limited to, use of social networking sites to send email, text messaging, internet chat room dialogue, video and any other communication by use of computer or cell phone

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Nobody deserves to be a victim of bullying; everybody has the right to be treated with respect. As a club we will take bullying seriously.



Objectives of this Policy:

All children and parents, officials, coaching and non-coaching staff, volunteers and committee members should know what the club policy is on bullying, and understand what they should do to report incidents involving bullying.

Procedure to Report Bullying

Any bullying incidents should be reported to your child's coach. Coaches will attempt to resolve the problem through various options given to them. Parents will be informed. (both the aggressor and victim)

- ☐ For more serious incidents, or when a coaches' action does not stop the inappropriate behaviour, the incident will be referred to the Rep Director who may take more extreme measures such as temporary suspension of team privileges.
- ☐ In cases where harassment or bullying continues despite warnings, the issue will be referred to the Board of Directors. The Board will agree on appropriate action, which may include permanent suspension from the club. All Board decisions are final.
- ☐ After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- ☐ If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.



Responsibilities of the Team Manager

Each and every Rep Team will have a Team manager

- Obtain the game schedule(s) and advise the team. Collect team member's information for the purpose of contacting them in regards to tournament information, games etc.
- When possible, reserve a block of hotel rooms in advance for tournaments, collect fees from players for tournament costs before tournaments, work with coaches and Rep Directors to plan tournament registrations for the upcoming season.
- Communicate to team members and their parents any information regarding canceled games, rescheduled games, and events such as tournaments, club events such as team photos and meetings.
- Inform opposing team officials, coordinator and referee scheduler of any cancelled games, re-scheduled games, time and field changes. This must occur before noon on the day previous to the game.
- Distribute at the beginning of the season, and retrieve at the end of the season, team equipment, which includes:
 - ☐ Team jersey, goalkeeper's shirt and gloves
 - ☐ Jersey numbers must be recorded against a player's name
 - ☐ Players Cards: Team manager will make sure every player on the team is issued a player's card and will keep all players cards together and make sure they are available for officials at every game or tournament if needed.
- It is imperative that this equipment, which is assigned to your team for use only by your team, be returned in whole and in re-usable condition at the end of each season.
- Both the manager and the coach are expected to advise any parent that may be interfering with the game and or the referee that he or she is committing a serious infraction of the rules of soccer, and that the parent could be requested to leave the field of play.
- Collect all fees from parents and make sure everyone is up to date, if fees are not paid it is the team manager's duty to inform players that they will not be granted playtime unless all fees are up to date.
- The manager is encouraged to obtain help from parents of players. Everyone is expected to help.



Expectations for our Coaches

- ☐ Develop my players to the best of their abilities. Be a motivator and challenge them, but be patient.
- ☐ Hold my players accountable for the **Player Expectations** which include their financial commitment to the team/club.
- ☐ Withhold a player from team activities if the player (parent) fails to meet their team/club financial obligations unless there is an arrangement made with the team/club.
- ☐ Hold my parents accountable for the **Parent Expectations** which include their financial commitment to the team/club.
- ☐ Conduct myself as a responsible adult when dealing with the Players; both legally and ethically.
- ☐ Plan and supervise practice sessions that are instructive as well as fun.
- ☐ To motivate and teach with positive reinforcement.
- ☐ Abide by the rules, policies, and procedures of the Team and Club
- ☐ Ensure that players wear their uniforms and training gear in a proper and complete fashion. Socks should be pulled up and jerseys tucked in whenever in uniform, not just during the game.
- ☐ Work to develop as many players as possible on state, regional, and national teams.
- ☐ Display a positive attitude towards all players, parents, and officials.
- ☐ To treat players and parents with respect and conduct myself in a professional manner.
- ☐ Refrain from making negative comments to any players, coaches, or parents.
- ☐ Develop positive "life" qualities (i.e. discipline, teamwork, etc.) in Players.
- ☐ Respect the game officials and their decisions.
- ☐ Take total responsibility for the actions of players on the field.
- ☐ When traveling with the team: · remain aware of my players' whereabouts and behaviour. · Set schedules and inform players of all activities.
- ☐ Provide genuine cooperation to coaches within my team's age group.
- ☐ Not discriminate against anyone.
- ☐ Refrain from using profane or vulgar language in the presence of Players.
- ☐ Provide honest and truthful evaluations of the Player's skill.
- ☐ Be responsible for cleaning up the field or bench area (both home and away) after practices or games, and for returning all equipment to its proper place. · All coaches are asked to help in monitoring the activities that take place at the practice fields, and to assist in keeping fields clean, safe and secure.



Player Contract for Season

- ☐ I, registered with the Grasslands Football Club, hereby agree to all terms set down in the following:
- ☐ I will contact the coach in advance if unable to attend a practice, and agree that a practice cannot be missed without adequate reason or I may forfeit time in the next game.
- ☐ I will contact the coach in advance if unable to attend a game, and agree that a game cannot be missed without adequate reason or I may forfeit playing time in the next game.
- ☐ I will voice any and all concerns directly to the coach. This will be done outside of game time, unless it involves an immediate safety or health issue.
- ☐ I will not swear, argue or be confrontational with other players or coaching staff or my playing time will be forfeited. If I display poor attitude or a lack of effort my playing time will be forfeited.
- ☐ I will attend every game in full uniform, which includes a team uniform, shin guards, socks and cleats or approved field athletic shoe.
- ☐ I will not be late for practice or games without an adequate reason or I may forfeit playing time. I will contact the coach if I am going to be late. I will arrive at all games 30 minutes in advance of game time.
- ☐ I will participate with all teammates in important decisions and abide by the majority vote.
- ☐ I will play all tournaments that my team enters, and all games that my team is signed for, unless I am unable to do so with good reason.
- ☐ I will play by fair play codes: integrity, fairness and respect - these are the principles of fair play. With them, the spirit of competition thrives, fueled by honest rivalry, courteous relations and graceful acceptance of the results.
- ☐ I will be generous when we win, be gracious when we lose, be fair no matter what the cost, and obey the laws of the game.
- ☐ I will never argue with the official's decisions and accept the decisions of game officials with good grace. I will conduct myself with honor and dignity and wholeheartedly applaud the efforts of my teammates
- ☐ and opponents.
- ☐ We will work out any problems between myself and other players. In the event that the differences cannot be worked through, and affect other team members, we will then seek out the coach's aid in resolving the situation. We will not wait until the coach is forced to step in.
- ☐ Always thank the referee after the game
- ☐ I have read and understand the above and will comply with all rules and regulations as stated.

Date: _____ Player: _____

Coach: _____



PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I (we) have read the handbook titled GRASSLANDS FOOTBALL CLUB HANDBOOK 2022. I (we) have read the handbook from cover to cover and understand and agree to the guidelines and policies set forth. I (we) also understand that the policies and procedure may change throughout the year. Should I (we) have any questions regarding any policies or procedures, I (we) understand I (we) should contact a member of the Board or Head Coach for appropriate answers. I (we) will support the coach's decisions with any and all aspects of my child's playtime, playing position and I will not coach my child from the sidelines. I (we) understand there is Zero Tolerance of Bullying, Fighting and Disrespect towards other Players, Coaches, Officials of both GFC and Opposing Teams. In the event that I (we) fail to abide by the rules and policies set forth in this handbook we are fully aware that we may be asked to leave the program.

I (we) understand that if I (we) do not return the GFC jersey(s) in good condition that I (we) will be charged \$60 to cover replacement costs. I (we) understand that if I (we) fail to pay, my child will not be allowed to play for GSA/GFC until my (our) account is in good standing.

Parent Signature

Date

Parent Name

BOTH PLAYER CONTRACT AND PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT **MUST** BE SIGNED AND RETURNED TO THE TEAM MANAGER PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD TEAM PRACTICE.