



# Lethbridge Soccer Association LFC Program Evaluation Process



In Partnership with Vancouver Whitecaps Football Club



# What are 'Evaluations'?

The LFC Evaluation process has one goal, to assist in placing players on teams that will help them meet their development needs. Ensuring that all players have an environment that accommodates their current level of ability and motivation is the best way to keep them involved in the sport for years to come.

Once players have registered online, they will receive instructions with time & venue for their specific LFC Evaluation. Players are asked to arrive at the selected venue at least 15 minutes before their start time to sign-in. They will then receive a numbered pinnie and be placed in a team to play a number of scrimmages over the allotted time period.

During LFC Evaluation process and in the interest of fairness players will receive no additional technical or tactical coaching from the LFC staff operating on those evenings. Players and parents are asked to realize that these evenings are a not normal practice structure but done in a way to create as equal playing field as possible for all involved.

There will be LFC Technical Staff in attendance taking notes and identifying the players performance whilst at the evaluations.

Following the evaluation there will be decisions made on which program or team it is suggested players compete in for the upcoming season.



# Ways We Identify Players

We use the LFC Evaluation process as one of the ways to identify the current level of technical, tactical, physical and psychological abilities for a player. However, this is not the only way we determine those ability levels. In previous years these evaluations or tryouts have been used as the sole identifier in selecting teams, however, we recognize that these methods are not always the sole and most comprehensive way to evaluate players. There are several reasons for this:

**Limited Scope of Performance:** Tryouts usually take place over a short period, often just a few days, which might not accurately reflect a player's long-term potential or consistency. A player might have an off day during the tryout, affecting their chances unfairly.

**Pressure and Nervousness:** Some players might not perform well under the pressure of a tryout situation. Nervousness can lead to underperformance and not accurately showcase a player's true abilities.

**Inadequate Opportunity to Showcase Skills:** Not all skills and qualities can be evaluated effectively during tryouts. Players might not get the chance to demonstrate their decision-making, communication, leadership, and other essential attributes that are crucial for teamwork.

**Lack of Context:** Tryouts often focus on individual skills and athleticism, but soccer is a team sport that requires players to work well together. A player who shines individually during a tryout might not necessarily integrate well into a team's playing style or strategy.

**Developmental Factors:** Youth players are still in the process of developing physically, mentally, and emotionally. A player who might not excel at a particular age might go through a growth spurt or a skills breakthrough later, which tryouts might not account for.

**Specialized Roles:** Soccer teams require players with a range of skills and roles. A tryout might not be able to identify players who are well-suited for specific positions or roles that are not commonly tested in a standard tryout scenario.

**Long-Term Development:** Player development is a gradual process. Focusing solely on tryouts might ignore players who might not excel immediately but have the potential to grow into strong players over time

To aid this process LFC use other information to help identify players including:

**'Continuous Assessment Protocol',**

**'LFC Coach Player Reviews'**

**'Technical Director Recommendations'**



# Evaluations Evenings – What We Are Assessing

During a youth soccer player evaluation evening, evaluators assess various aspects of a player's skills, abilities, and potential to determine their suitability for different teams or levels within the club or organization. These evaluations help coaches place players in appropriate teams based on their individual strengths and weaknesses. Based on the CSA LTPD model, here are some of the key factors that evaluators typically assess:

## Technical Skills:

**Dribbling:** The player's ability to control and maneuver the ball while moving.

**Passing:** Accuracy and technique when distributing the ball to teammates.

**Shooting:** The player's ability to take accurate shots on goal.

**Ball Control:** How well the player receives and controls passes or long balls.

**Heading:** Ability to direct the ball with the head during aerial challenges.

## Tactical Understanding:

**Positioning:** How well the player understands and maintains their position on the field.

**Decision-making:** Ability to make quick and appropriate decisions based on game situations.

**Awareness:** Awareness of both their teammates' positions and the movements of opponents.

## Physical Attributes:

**Speed:** Sprinting ability and overall pace on the field.

**Agility:** Quick changes of direction and maneuverability.

**Endurance:** Ability to maintain performance throughout the game.

**Strength:** Physical strength and ability to hold off opponents or win physical challenges.

## Psychological Traits:

**Mental Toughness:** Ability to handle pressure and setbacks during games.

**Focus:** Ability to stay attentive and engaged throughout the match.

**Confidence:** Demonstrating self-belief in their abilities without being overly arrogant.

## Other Possible Areas:

### Game Understanding:

**Movement off the ball:** How the player positions themselves to create passing options and open space.

**Defensive Skills:** Tackling, intercepting passes, and marking opponents.

**Offensive Contribution:** Involvement in attacking plays and creating scoring opportunities.

### Teamwork and Attitude:

**Communication:** How well the player communicates with teammates on and off the field.

**Team Play:** Willingness to pass and work in coordination with others.

**Work Ethic:** Dedication, commitment, and willingness to improve.

**Coachability:** Ability to take instructions and apply them to their play.

### Overall Performance:

**Decision Making:** How the player performs in game situations and adapts to different scenarios.

**Consistency:** The player's ability to perform at a consistent level over time.

**Loyalty:** Players that have been within the LFC program for multiple years.

The emphasis on certain aspects may vary based on the player's age, level of play, and the playing philosophy of the LFC.



# LFC Evaluations – What Happens Afterwards?

Following the Evaluation evening, there will be approximately a 2 week wait until you and your child receive an email of whether they have been selected to LFC.

We understand this can feel like a lengthy time for your child, however, as a club, we believe in giving all information out at the same time across all age groups.

## **Players That Are Selected For LFC:**

You will receive an email with the name of your selected team, age, tier, your Head-Coaches information and a registration link for payment. Details on the start date for your team will also be included in the email.

Payment for the season will be used as acceptance of the LFC roster spot. Players that do not wish to accept the roster spot are asked to contact the soccer office ASAP.

## **Players That Are Not Selected For LFC:**

If your child is not selected to a LFC team will have spot saved for them on a LSA team. The parent will need to contact the LSA Soccer Office to take that spot. Details of team, age-group, Head-Coach, registration link for payment and start date will be included in an additional email.



# LFC – The Development Journey For Players

We understand that as your child embarks on their youth soccer journey, you may have questions about the ups and downs they will encounter along the way. It's important to recognize that a player's developmental journey in soccer, like in any sport, is characterized by various phases of progress and challenges. This may mean that your child doesn't get selected for their desired team or program, even if they have in the past. This ebb and flow is a natural part of their growth and learning process. Here's why this may happen from time to time:

**Physical and Emotional Growth:** Youth players are constantly growing, both physically and emotionally. These changes can impact their coordination, strength, speed, and overall performance. As they go through growth spurts, their bodies might need time to adjust to the changes, affecting their game temporarily.

**Skill Acquisition:** Developing soccer skills is a gradual process. Players need to practice and refine their techniques over time. They might experience periods of rapid improvement, followed by plateaus where progress seems slower. This is completely normal and doesn't mean they're regressing; it's just a phase in their skill acquisition journey.

**Tactical Understanding:** Understanding the tactical aspects of soccer, like positioning, decision-making, and teamwork, takes time. Players might struggle to grasp certain concepts initially but could experience breakthroughs with the right coaching and experience.

**Confidence and Self-Belief:** Confidence can be fragile, especially in young athletes. Players might experience periods of doubt or lack of self-belief, which can impact their performance. Conversely, they might also go through phases of high confidence where they perform exceptionally well.

**Competition and Pressure:** As players move up through age groups, competition becomes tougher. The pressure to perform can lead to both positive and negative outcomes. Some players thrive under pressure, while others might feel the weight of expectations.

**Injury and Recovery:** Injuries are a part of any sports career. A player's journey might be interrupted by injuries, requiring time for recovery and rehabilitation. While injuries can be frustrating, they can also teach resilience and the importance of taking care of their bodies.

**External Factors:** Factors outside of soccer, such as school, social life, and family situations, can influence a player's mindset and focus. These external factors can lead to fluctuations in performance.

Remember, the developmental journey is not linear. It's a collection of experiences, setbacks, successes, and learning opportunities. The key is to encourage your child to stay committed, patient, and open to learning from every situation. Emphasize the importance of effort, perseverance, and a growth mindset. The downs are just as essential as the ups in shaping them into well-rounded athletes and individuals.

Support them with positive reinforcement, and let them know that setbacks are stepping stones toward improvement. Celebrate their successes, no matter how small, and remind them that growth takes time. By understanding and embracing the ups and downs of their soccer journey, you're helping them develop essential life skills that will benefit them far beyond the soccer field.

# LFC Development – Evaluation Process



Register For LFC Evaluations

Receive email with further instructions

Attend LFC Evaluations

Receive LFC Evaluation Email

Approx 2 weeks after evening

**Selected To LFC**

- Notified of selected LFC Team & Tier
- Given 2 weeks to register and pay fees
- Season starts

**Not Selected To LFC**

- Parent to contact Soccer Office to have child placed on a LSA Team
- Given 2 weeks to register and pay fees
- Season starts