



Springfield Lakes Netball Club

# 2026 Grading & Team Selection Policy

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## Our Club's Commitment

At Springfield Lakes Netball Club (SLNC), grading is a vital part of preparing for a successful season. The grading process helps ensure that players are placed in teams where they can develop their skills, enjoy fair competition, and build positive team experiences. By carefully assessing players' abilities and team dynamics, we aim to create balanced teams that give everyone the best opportunity to grow and enjoy their netball.

## Grading Information

At SLNC grading is undertaken on all U10+ players. Players will be informed of dates and location of the grading sessions via email, social media pages and club website.

Note: WDNA Competitive competition is U11 and above and Non-Competitive competition is U10 and below. The U10 grading is about getting the players familiar with the process and starting to group players with similar skill levels.

Depending on the age group there will be 1-2 grading sessions that will be held in mid-February. Dates and times of grading change each year, specific information for each season will be available on our club website. Players are graded on their assessed skill, commitment level and ability to fit into various team combinations to achieve team balance. Please see **grading criteria** on how players are assessed during the grading process.

Age groups with larger cohorts of players may have longer and/or multiple grading sessions to allow for adequate time on court.

Note: Players aged 6-9 years old do not grade and will be placed in teams grouped by birthdate. These age groups are about learning skills, having fun and making new friends. Friendship requests can be made for this age group by completing the [Friend Request form](#), a parent/guardian from all requested players must complete a form and submit by 15th Feb each year.

## Pre-Grading Sessions

Get ready for grading sessions will be held prior to official grading starting. These are not compulsory but are about preparing players for the grading process after having a break from the previous season. Tickets to these sessions must be purchased via the Eventbrite link shared with all registered players. Details on these sessions will be sent via email and promoted on our social media pages and website. Attendance of these sessions can only be by Netball Connect registered players of SLNC.

## Grading Panel

To uphold the integrity and fairness of the team selection process, SLNC has established clear guidelines for the composition and conduct of its grading panel.

- Each age group's grading panel includes a head grader (Development level accredited coach), an experienced coach, and an external grader. The inclusion of an external selector is essential to ensure that all decisions are made equitably and independently.
- To further safeguard impartiality, the grading coordinator is responsible for identifying and preventing any conflicts of interest; graders must not be parents, guardians, or relatives of any players within the age

group they are assessing. Where possible, they also cannot be coaches of that age group for the incoming season. Prior to each grading session, nominated graders meet with members of the executive committee to review the grading process and address any potential areas of concern.

## Grading Process

The grading process is designed to ensure fair and accurate assessment of all players, enabling graders to form balanced teams that reflect both individual skill and overall team dynamics. The following guidelines outline the steps and expectations for grading sessions.

- Players will only be able to grade if they have registered via Netball Connect for SLNC and paid a min. of 50% registration fees. This ensures players are covered for injury insurance.
- Upon arrival at grading, players will check in at the table located in front of entry. Each player will have their allocated number marked on their left arm and right leg using a texta.
- The SLNC Registrar will generate draft games via an official 'trials' system, which will then be transcribed onto scoring templates for each grader. Players position nominations are made at the time of registering. If a player wishes to change their nominations this must be done via email to [registrations@springfieldlakesnetballclub.com](mailto:registrations@springfieldlakesnetballclub.com) a minimum of 48 hours prior to the advertised grading session for their age group.
- Players will participate in multiple round-robin matches.
- Grading will commence with a warm-up session, followed by continuous gameplay. Matches will proceed until selectors are confident, they have adequately assessed all players.
- Graders will be seated on the side of the court opposite parent observers to ensure independent evaluations. Each time a player takes the court, selectors will assign a skill rating between 1 and 5 (with 1 being the highest) based on performance.
- Players are expected to take the court **at least twice** during a grading session, covering their two nominated positions. They may also be asked to fill other positions as required to address absences or gaps. The number of times a player takes the court is also monitored by the age group coordinators.
- Age group coordinators will allocate positions for grading games using the game templates provided by Registrar. Near the end of the session the grading panel may change names to test combinations or different positions on court.
- The amount of court time a player gets is directly related to their nominated positions and the number of players who have nominated for the same position. i.e. Goal positions are always very popular, so players with these positions often receive less game time to defense or mid positions.
- At the conclusion of grading, performance assessments will be collated and averaged. Selectors will then meet as a panel of three to review player combinations and team dynamics.
- Players are graded based on their year of birth. No age exceptions requests are accepted **prior** to grading. If a player has the ability to play in a different age group this will be noted by the grading panel and discussed with parents/guardians once the grading process has concluded.
- Attendance at grading sessions is compulsory. Players who are unable to attend without providing prior notification cannot be assured placement in a team that accurately reflects their playing ability. Please see the Grading Absentee section for more information.

- The grading panel reserves the right to hold additional grading sessions if required.

This process is intended to maintain transparency and consistency throughout the grading process. By adhering to these guidelines, we aim to provide every player with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their abilities and ensure the formation of competitive, well-balanced teams

## Grading Criteria

Selection decisions will be based mainly on performance, specifically footwork, speed/agility, ball handling, attacking, and defending skills and on court decision making. However, we will also consider:

- attendance at grading session/s (commitment)
- good sportsmanship (values)
- coachability
- abiding by our club's Code of Conduct on and off the court (behaviour)
- social dynamics, including friendships and potential conflicts.

FOOTWORK/SPEED and AGILITY	PASSING/ BALL HANDLING	ATTACKING SKILLS	DEFENDING SKILLS	DECISION MAKING	ATTITUDE
Landing and foundation	Looks before passing	Offers strong leads to the ball	Pressures player with the ball	Makes good decisions under pressure	Works hard
Use of speed	Passes are accurate	Preliminary work	Stays balanced on feet	Selection of correct options	Enjoys the game
Does not bunch up around court	Moves to the ball to receive	Finds space	Moves in for intercept	Communication with teammates	Umpires call
Change of Direction/Speed	Appropriateness of pass	Visual awareness	Stays in play (no infringements)	Stays in play	Attitude to others

## Grading Absentee

We recognise that unforeseen circumstances may occasionally prevent players from attending grading sessions. However, participation in grading is compulsory, as it is a critical part of preparing for a successful season. Being present allows our graders to make the most informed decisions regarding team placement.

Please be aware that players who are unable to attend either grading day will be allocated to a team based solely on coach's feedback from previous season (where available) or where there may be a space for nominated position, which may not fully reflect their abilities or preferences.

Players who are unable to attend their allocated grading session must complete the [Grading Absentee form](#) at

least 48 hours prior to the scheduled grading time.

## Team Selection

The primary objective of team selection is to create balanced and competitive teams that provide all players with the opportunity to develop their skills and enjoy the game.

Team selections panel consists of the Executive Committee, Grading Co-Ordinator and Registrar.

The following principles guide the process:

- **Fairness and Transparency**  
Team selections are based on player performance during grading sessions, previous coach feedback, and overall team dynamics. The team selection panel aims to ensure that each player is placed in a team that reflects their ability and supports positive experiences.
- **Consideration of Player Positions**  
While every effort is made to accommodate preferred positions, team balance and positional requirements may necessitate flexibility.
- **Commitment to Development**  
Teams are structured to promote growth, teamwork, and fair competition across all grades.
- **Final Decisions**  
The team selection decisions are made collectively and are final. These decisions are guided by the best interests of the club and its players

## Squads

Where there is a large cohort in a specific age group, the club may announce squads before final team lists are released. Forming squads provides greater flexibility and fairness during grading and team selection. Rather than assigning players to permanent teams right away, the team selection panel and coaches can use squads to observe players in various combinations and positions. This approach allows for more thorough assessment and helps ensure that, when teams are finalised, each player is placed as accurately as possible according to their abilities and team fit.

Those age groups with squads announced will receive an email from SLNC announcing

- Players in each squad
- Squad training times and location

## Team Announcement

Team announcement will be made by email to the registered netball connect email provided by SLNC registrar to each player. Parents/Guardians are asked to please check junk/spam folders regularly.

The email will provide coaches' name and details and first name and last initial of each player. It will also include a link to the team Facebook page for parents/guardians and have details on training times and court location.

The team Facebook page will be the main communication channel for the coach and team manager. It is the

responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure they have joined this group to be kept up to date on information pertaining to the team. If you have not received an email by training start date, please check your junk/spam folder first before contacting [netball@springfieldlakesnetballclub.com](mailto:netball@springfieldlakesnetballclub.com)

While reviewing team placement please consider:

- This grading and team selection policy, where integrity and fairness of the team selection process is paramount and this process is overseen by an experienced team of committee members, graders and coaches with a high level of experience and qualifications.
- Every player has different skills and attributes compared to other players and the ultimate goal for players in **community netball** is centered around participation, enjoyment, and personal growth rather than elite performance.
- Take players through this document to help them understand and embrace the team they are in.
- Encourage players to embrace their new team as an opportunity to learn from a different coach and gain new skills, build friendships, and develop leadership qualities by supporting teammates and promoting respect and sportsmanship.
- Although a player may have been selected for representative netball, other Springfield Lakes Netball Club players who have chosen not to participate at that level may be graded higher based on their performance during the selection process.
- Please consider the 'right to disconnect' for our SLNC Committee and resist contacting the club after team announcements have been made.

**In previous seasons, SLNC has received aggressive emails with ultimatums from parents/guardians. Please note, these emails will not be tolerated and requests to review placements and demand team movement will be politely declined.**

The grading and team selection process involves a significant amount of time and effort from our dedicated volunteers. Every decision is made with care to ensure fairness and balance across all teams.

It is important to remember that this is **not representative netball**. Our focus is on enabling players to enjoy the sport they love in a **fun, respectful, and competitive environment**. While we strive to create balanced teams, the ultimate goal is participation, enjoyment, and fostering a positive club culture.

Springfield Lakes Netball Club is run entirely by volunteers who generously contribute their time and expertise. We ask all members and families to respect the process and support the club's commitment to fairness and community spirit.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Executive Committee

- Ensure players are informed about and understand the selection criteria and basic processes for grading.
- Trust selectors judgement and provide advice around known team dynamics where applicable.
- With the grading coordinator, finalise teams from outcomes of the grading process, using previous Coaches Feedback to assist where applicable.
- Announce teams via email

### Grading Panel

- Make fair and unbiased decisions based on the selection criteria.
- Liaise with the Executive Committee around any player changes post selection process.

### Players

- Make yourself familiar with the selection criteria and clarify any concerns with the club prior to grading dates.
- Notify the club via absentee form if you are unable to attend any of the grading sessions.
- At check in, your allocated a player number will be written on your left leg and right arm. Once checked in, move over to the court ready to do your best!
- Phones and any other electronic devices must remain in bags at all times.
- No photography or video recording is allowed at any time. You will be asked to leave the session if this occurs and you will not be allowed to continue grading.

### Parents

- Please stay on site with your player as grading may finish early for some younger age groups, depending on numbers.
- Please do not approach selectors or umpires.
- Please do not call your player over during grading or 'coach' from the sidelines
- Please do not enter the court unless there is a medical emergency with your child.
- No photography or video recording is allowed at any time. You will be asked to leave the location if this occurs.