

Buckingham United Soccer Club

“Play Up” Policy

Buckingham United believes, that in almost all circumstances, players develop better at their age appropriate level than at an age level above. However, the club recognizes that, although rare, some talented players may be ready to be considered for the next age level within the club’s competitive team structure.

National guidelines recommend that players at the U14 age and above be placed on teams according to skill level and/or desired level of competition. Players at the U13 level and below should, as a general rule, be rostered on their age appropriate first team. For the player in need of a higher level of competition, Buckingham United recommends that the player guest play with teams within the club and take advantage of opportunities in other advanced programs that are considered club neutral such as ODP, Union Juniors, etc.

- Playing up is the exception rather than the rule in youth soccer. It is reserved for exceptional players who possess the skill, soccer knowledge and physical and emotional development of an older player.
- When it is appropriate for soccer development, the opportunity for the exceptional player to play with older players shall be considered. For the purposes of this policy, the exceptional player shall be defined as being a player, on the “A” (or top) team, who ranks in the top 1/3 of the older age groups potential roster (based primarily upon tryout performance and prior coaching evaluations) for which he/she desires to play.
- Requests to “Play Up” must be made in writing to the Club President or Director of Coaching at least 14 days prior to the first tryout date. The Club President and/or Director of Coaching will review the request with the appropriate Coaching Staff.
- If permission is granted to tryout at an older age group, the player MUST pre-register for and attend at least one tryout with their age appropriate group. Then, with the permission of the President or DOC, the player must pre-register for and attend the tryout at the older age group for evaluation purposes. (Based upon an evaluation with the age appropriate group, the President/DOC may deny the player a tryout with the older team).
- Honesty, integrity and the welfare of all BUSC players shall be the overriding factor in this and all requests presented to the staff.
- A player should not be pushed to play up by parents/coaches in an attempt to accelerate their ascension to the top of the soccer pyramid.
- The final decision as to whether a player is permitted to ‘play up’ lies with the President of Buckingham United after consultation with the Director of Coaching, coaches, and others as deemed appropriate. All tryout results, coach’s evaluations and other factors in rendering a decision remain confidential and are not distributed by the Board.
- Approval must be requested and granted annually for any player seeking to play up.

- Approvals/denials associated with requests to play up will not be motivated by any action to intentionally strengthen/weaken a particular team.
- Playing up under the appropriate circumstances should not be interpreted as a permanent decision and preclude a player from playing in his or her own age group when it is evaluated to be in the best interest of the player's development. The Buckingham United play-up policy is focused on the best long-term interests of the individual player and the club. Playing-up is an ongoing process with no assurance for renewal for following seasons. Therefore, the player is required to repeat the process seasonally.
- Players will not be allowed to 'play up' on teams that are not first teams. In very special circumstances, as a result of registration/tryout numbers, the Club may seek volunteers to play up in order to complete a team roster. This is only used on rare occasions in order to field a team.
- All decisions are final. There is no process to appeal a decision to deny permission to play up.
- The President, Director of Coaching or team coach will communicate all decisions made by the Board with respect to playing up.
- The above guidelines serve to give general direction to the Board and do not necessarily cover all unique situations presented for consideration.
- To apply to play up, please use the O365 form link. Please [click here](#) to be directed.

Please direct all questions about this policy to either the President or the Director of Coaching and President.