

Major Sports Elite Academy

Parent Pack — Under 8s

A friendly summary of The FA's youth football rules and matchday guidance for parents. The official FA rules and Tandridge Youth League regulations take precedence.

Under 8s — what to expect

Same 5v5 format as U7 with the same retreat line and no-heading rule. Players continue to develop core skills as match intensity gradually increases.

- **5v5** with rolling, unlimited substitutions.
- **Retreat line** in operation; **no offside**.
- **No deliberate heading** (FA rule for U7–U11).
- **Equal playing time** remains a priority.
- **No published league tables or cups** at U8.
- Match length: two halves of up to **20 minutes**.
- Size 3 ball, 12 × 6 ft goals, 40 × 30 yd pitch, max squad 10.
- Training: Tuesdays & Thursdays 6–7pm. Matches: Saturdays.

Player welfare & safeguarding

- All coaches hold FA-recognised qualifications, in-date DBS checks, FA Safeguarding Children and Emergency First Aid certificates.
- We follow '**If in doubt, sit them out**' for any suspected head injury, with a graduated return-to-play.
- Concerns? Speak to our Club Welfare Officer or email info@majorsportselite.co.uk. In an emergency, call the police or NSPCC on 0808 800 5000.

Matchday essentials

- Arrive 20 minutes before kick-off for warm-up.
- Full club kit + **shin pads (mandatory — no shin pads, no play)**, water bottle and weather layers.
- Stand behind the designated spectator line — never near the goals.
- Positive encouragement for both teams; no coaching from the sideline.
- Respect the referee — they're often a young volunteer.

Frequently asked questions

How long is a match?

Two halves of up to 20 minutes (max 40 mins total) plus a short half-time break. Training is Tue/Thu 6–7pm; matches Saturdays.

Are league tables and trophies published?

No. The FA's Youth Development Phase does not allow published tables, cups or trophies at U7/U8. Results are recorded but not ranked.

Is heading the ball allowed?

No. The FA has removed deliberate heading from training and matches for U7–U11.

How do substitutions work?

Rolling and unlimited. A player subbed off can return later — this helps share game time fairly.

What kit does my child need?

Club shirt, shorts, socks, shin pads (mandatory), suitable boots/trainers, water bottle and weather layers. Goalkeepers wear a contrasting top.

What's expected of parents and spectators?

Follow the FA Respect Code: stand behind the spectator line, encourage both teams, respect the referee, leave coaching to the coaches.

What if my child has a head knock?

Tell the coach or first-aider immediately. We follow 'If in doubt, sit them out' and a graduated return-to-play.

Postponements due to weather?

Decision made on matchday morning. We notify parents and update the Fixtures page as soon as confirmed.

Who handles safeguarding concerns?

Our Club Welfare Officer — email info@majorsportselite.co.uk. Confidential, in line with FA safeguarding policy.

Official guidance

- The FA — Youth Football Rules: thefa.com/football-rules-governance/lawsandrules/youth-football-rules
- The FA — Heading Guidance: englandfootball.com/coaches/heading-guidance
- The FA — Respect Programme: englandfootball.com/run/Safeguarding/Respect
- Tandridge Youth League: fulltime.thefa.com