

BVSS Policy on Players Moving to Higher or Lower Age Groups

Policy in place as of April 11, 2016

The BVSS has a responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of our athletes, and to make decisions that are in the best interest of the participant and our Association.

While BVSS **strongly prefers and recommends** that players participate in their age appropriate division, the Association recognizes that from time to time, it may be necessary for underage players to “play up” an age group or older players to “play down”.

An assessment of whether to move a player to a different age group team will occur if a parent or guardian of a child makes a request outlining the rationale in writing to Registrar (registrar@bvsoccer.ca) and there is a space for a player on a team in the other age group.

Playing with friends or other family members is not considered an adequate reason for moving a player to a different age group team

The decision about whether to move a player to a different age group team will be made by the Player Evaluation Committee, a subcommittee of the technical director and two other coaches or board members.

Older Players Play Down

The request for older players to “play with a younger age group” should include a note from the family physician or other suitably qualified person indicating the rationale and advisability for making this decision.

The exception is that children in grade 12 may participate in the U18 house league so long as they are no more than one year older than their peers.

Younger Players Play Up

Advancement requests will only be considered where a player’s skills are CLEARLY exceptional in relation to other players in their age group and the player meets all identified criteria (physical skills, mental and emotional development).

While the request is being considered, the respective player should participate in the age appropriate age group.

The assessment of whether younger players will play up by the Player Evaluation Committee will consider:

- Skills – whether the player has the requisite skills for the higher age group
- Physicality – whether the player is physically robust enough for the higher age group
- Mental and emotional maturity, coachability, commitment and ability to handle greater game and practice requirements
- Player numbers in the higher age group and whether moving the player to a higher age group, either temporarily or permanently, might limit or reduce opportunities of players in that higher age group.

Younger players have more time to develop in age appropriate level and it is the small steps and details that lead to a solid foundation. The wider the foundation, the taller the tower.