



Accrington Stanley



ASFC

Player/Parent Handbook

Accrington Stanley

Accrington Stanley Football Club

Academy Vision

The Academy at Accrington Stanley want to Provide Home grown Players for our First team Squad or to provide players who can be sold on by the club to support both the running of the club/Academy.

We will be looking to recruit primarily in the 'Lancashire' region and surrounding areas.

We will be following the Club Vision and looking to develop technically, physically and tactically astute players.

Accrington Stanley Football Club not only intends to further develop players technical ability and innovative skills, but also further educate players in match play including tactical awareness understanding and decision making skills.

The Programme will incorporate sessions on 'Game Specific' aspects, where the coach will relate the objectives and observations from games into the session. This will enable the coach to identify specific needs of individuals and the team in terms of strategies, tactics and player awareness in line with the Club Football Philosophy.

The Academy Programme will also provide its players with the opportunity to attain a fitness level requisite of an elite athlete and develop knowledge and understanding of diet and nutrition.

The Academy Programme is designed to produce the players of the future for Accrington Stanley Football Club and with the continued development of the Academy holistic programme this will ensure it continues in the future.

Dedication, Loyalty, Friendship and Teamwork from all those associated with the Academy and Club, will enable Accrington Stanley Football Club to provide the avenue and learning environment for the development of players on the Academy Programme, through the Professional Youth Development Phase (League Football Education) Programme and into the Senior game of Association Football.

Our responsibility to the future of this club is to give budding talent the very best opportunity to flourish; we want to make this Academy such a place where today's talent can be the game's future.

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The Academy Football Playing Philosophy

The General Playing Style:

Accrington Stanley Football Club Academy will 'mirror' the playing philosophy of the Club First Team through the specified phases of the Academy Programme. We will be using a variety of formations in Each Phase to develop natural progression in to the Pro- Development phase.

- **Academy Foundation Phase (U9 – U11):** 'Let the game be the teacher'

Fundamentals in the development of young players:

Players will be encouraged to develop their ball mastery skills through organised practices experiencing participation with the emphasis on fun and enjoyment. Coaching staff will take into account maturation and physical development in developing practices that meet the needs and demands of all players taking into consideration motor learning development, movement patterns and skill. The coaching and games programme will encourage players to be imaginative through 1v1 situations allowing young players the opportunity to be creative without the fear of failure. They will be asked to play a variety of positions to develop overall game understanding.

Preferred formations for this phase are: **5v5** – (1-3-1 and 2-2) **7v7**- (3-2-1 and 2-3-1) **9v9** – (3-3-1-1 and 3-2-3)

- **Youth Development Phase (U12 – U16):**

Players will be encouraged through organised practices to develop their technical skills and tactical awareness. Coaching staff will introduce the playing philosophy of the Clubs first team, playing efficiently, economically and effectively, playing out from the back whenever possible and through the thirds of the pitch, progressing and penetrating with the emphasis on creating space & goal-scoring opportunities from central and flank areas. Coaching staff will introduce the defensive strategies taking into account player Roles and Responsibilities (nearest defending player); Concentration (switch on); Compactness (team shape); Communication (awareness and information).

All players will be aware of their need to contribute to both the defending & attacking strategies of the team, demonstrating flair, variety, cleverness, intelligence and understanding of When, Where and How to attack and create goal-scoring opportunities through efficient and effective possession.

Preferred formations for this phase are: **9v9** – (3-3-1-1 and 3-2-3) and **11v11** – (4-3-3), which can be flexible and rotate in to (4-2-3-1/4-5-1) with players adapting to their roles and responsibilities within these.

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A Commitment to Winning (Promoting a Winning Mentality)

Our 10 values will be at the heart of everything we do:

- **Honesty** - we will be fair, truthful and morally upright.
- **Integrity** - we will be steadfast and adhere to high principles and professional standards.
- **Trust** - we will give people confidence in the good qualities of the Club, especially fairness, honour and ability.
- **Commitment** - we will be devoted and dedicated to the Club, the players, the fans and our Community.
- **Pride** - we will recognize the importance of all the Club's efforts and achievement; that have made Lancashire and our Club great.
- **Respect** - we will have high regard, recognition and appreciation for everyone we deal with.
- **Quality** - we will strive to have the highest standards we can in everything undertaken by the Club.
- **Value** - we will provide value for money.
- **Success** - we will be driven and focused on achieving individual, collective and Club success.
- **Character** - we will be courageous, straight talking and entrepreneurial together with all our other qualities and values that is what will make Accrington Stanley distinctive.

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Code of Conduct for Players

Academy players of compulsory school age

Both the Player and the Player's parents/guardians understand that the Club is committed to the Player's well-being, future development and realization of potential, but that the level of achievement ultimately reached cannot be guaranteed.

In registering the Player at its Academy, the Club, the parents/guardians and the Player agreed to the following Code of Conduct.

The football club agrees to provide:

- A safe environment in which the Player can learn and develop without fear of abuse.
- Medical screening, monitoring and support for the Player.
- A structured football learning programme, appropriate to the age, ability and growth of the Player.
- Participation in football matches arranged or approved by the Football League.
- Trained, screened and qualified coaching and other staff and facilities as determined by the rules and regulations governing Youth Development.
- Guidelines to the Player and parents/guardians on the best ways for them to contribute to the Player's football and personal development.
- Educational support in conjunction with the Player's school to ensure the continued academic and personal development of the Player.
- Regular communication and reports to the Player and parents/guardians on the Player's progress.
- A Code of Conduct and rules for its Academy.

The player agrees to:

- Attend the Academy regularly and punctually, behave with self-discipline and give notice of and reason for any absence.
- Show respect for Academy staff by greeting and shaking hands before joining any activity.
- Ensure that all equipment is accounted for as directed by Academy staff.
- Show respect for kit provided by the Academy and ensure that it is kept safe.
- Practice the techniques and skills taught by the Academy and attempt to apply them in matches.
- Participate in football matches outside normal school hours only as specified by the Academy.
- Attend school regularly and punctually, complete school assignments and behave at school as at the Academy.
- Follow a lifestyle appropriate to development - spending leisure time positively; eating, drinking, relaxing and sleeping sensibly.
- Adhere to the Club's Code of Conduct and rules for its Academy.

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The parents/guardians agree to:

- Encourage and help the Player meet targets, including this Code of Conduct and the Club's Code of Conduct and rules for its Academy.
- Respect the Academy staff and encourage the Player to listen, not contradicting information from the coaching staff, understanding that the club is working to a curriculum.
- Support for the Player without pressure, praise hard work and refrain from criticizing lapses.
- Set a good example for the Player.
- Respect the opportunity given to the Player and not approach or permit any other person to approach any other Club during the currency of the registration except as allowed under the rules and regulations governing Academies.
- Respect kit provided by the Academy, ensuring it is kept safe and the Player's name is clearly labeled inside each item.
- Communicate with the Academy staff, keeping them informed about matters affecting the Player.
- Adhere to the Club's Code of Conduct and rules for its Academy.

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Supporting Fair Play of Academy Players

Players

When playing football, I will:

- Always work hard to be the best player I can be, even if we're losing or the other team is stronger
- I will play fairly - I won't cheat, complain or waste time
- Never be rude to my team-mates, the other team, the referee, spectators or my coach/team manager
- Follow the rules and accept decisions made by the referees and other officials
- Shake hands with the other team and referee at the end of the game and all staff before leaving
- Listen to my coach and respect what he says
- Follow instructions from my coach, not my parents
- Try my best to achieve my learning objective

I understand that if I do not follow the code, action may be taken by Accrington Stanley.

Parents and Spectators

I will:

- Remain outside the field of play and behind the Designated Spectator Area
- Never engage in, or tolerate, offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour
- Always respect the match officials' decisions
- Applaud effort and good play as well as success

In addition, when attending youth games I will:

- Remember that children play for FUN and development
- Let the coaches do their job and not confuse the players by telling them what to do
- Understand that the club has a detailed coaching curriculum and playing philosophy
- Encourage the players to respect the opposition and match officials
- Never criticise a player for making a mistake -mistakes are part of learning

I understand that breaches may result in action being taken by Accrington Stanley and/or The FA.

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Attitudes & Ethics

Fair Play

It is concerned with:

- Not breaking rules deliberately
- Not seeking to gain an unfair advantage
- Not exploiting situations for one's own selfish desire
- Not taking unacceptable actions: intimidation, direct aggression, verbal abuse, disagreement with official or anyone else in authority

Fair play is associated with justice and integrity which means all of us having responsibility to keep rules in order to ensure a good game for everybody.

Why do we need rules?

In order to: -

- Provide a structure to enable us to play the game
 - Provide equality when an infringement occurs to restore balance to the game
 - Protect all players. If players wilfully violate the rules of the game they are intentionally violating the good of all players because they place self interest above the good of all.
 - Provide a guide to conduct. The problems presented in a game by our opponents are obstacles to our success. Conduct rules serve the interest of all players. Thus it is important that all young players learn as soon as possible that rules are essential to enjoying the satisfaction of the game.
- Violating these rules brings the game into disrepute and destroys the very essence of why we play the game.

Preparing Mentally for Achievement in Sport

- Look good, feel good, play well – develop the image of a good player
- Be positive about yourself
- Set yourself, with the help of your coach, a number of small achievable targets on the route to excellence
- Build a positive support group – family and friends who reinforce your belief
- Become a continual learner – listen to the coach and show you can put advice into action
- Enjoy practice – it is the key to success on match day
- work on mental toughness so you can concentrate for the full game
- Beware of negative self talk after a mistake – learn the discipline of letting go and recovering
- Be strong enough to take responsibility for your mistakes – don't blame others
- Listen and learn from positive criticism – it is part of developing Excellence
- Concentrate on personal excellence and let results take care of themselves
- Accept team responsibility – look at how to help players around you
- Develop composure – deal with incidents calmly, don't react emotionally and lose control
- Develop as a whole person – excellent players are excellent people

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•Put football into perspective – ‘an enjoyable life experience, possibly a career, definitely not life or death’

The Youth Development Programme is not only about improving a player’s technical ability and the effective management of their lifestyle it is about the complete sporting attitude of everyone involved. This is at all levels, from the volunteer, coach, player and parent to the enthusiastic supporter.

Play Fair

1. Always play in a sporting and friendly way
2. Play to win but play fairly
3. Play because you want to and not because you are forced to – **Enjoyment is essential**
4. Learn the rules, accept them and play by them
5. Never argue with the referee
6. Respect your opponents and their supporters
7. Never swear
8. Never cheat or play act
9. Never tell a player from either side he is no good or mock him for making a mistake
10. Do not overreact when your team scores
11. Be a good loser as well as a winner
12. Shake hands with your opponents
13. Do your best at all times
14. Encourage your team and supporters to respect players, officials, coaches and supporters from both teams.

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Parents Guidelines

Things for Parents to Consider

- Ensure children get plenty of rest i.e. early to bed before a game
- Try to let children take responsibility for cleaning footwear
- Try to let children take responsibility for kit, i.e. packing bags
- Informing coaches in plenty of time if children are ill or cannot make games or training
- Try to get to matches and training sessions on time
- Try to ensure children practice any new skills (practice makes permanent)
- Monitor children's behaviour
- Please do not give your child advice on football related issues as these may conflict with what the coaches are trying to educate your son with and may lead to confusion and related self esteem issues.

Training nights

- Please try to arrive early
- Make sure your child has drinks with him
- Please do not enter the playing area at ACCROSS
- Please make arrangements to pick your child up afterwards
- Make sure your child knows the arrangements for the match or next session

Match Days

The Academy is organized for the development of the players and in this case the result is secondary. Therefore, as parents do not become frustrated or begin to give advice to players or indeed the referee if you feel the result is going the wrong way. For U9's to U11's small-sided games of 5v5, 7v7 or 9v9 will be played. The U12s will play a mixture of 9v9 and 11v11 and all other age groups will play 11v11.

When attending Academy games home or away, please watch from the designated areas. Do not encroach upon the coaches' area. If asked to move to another area, please comply.

Players

Players are expected to maintain high standards on and off the field. Anyone whose personal conduct is not of a high standard will be dealt with in the appropriate way. Anyone cautioned or dismissed from the field of play will be reported to the Football League and the agreed disciplinary procedures enacted.

Players at times will be asked to play in different positions. This again is part of the learning process.

Players who it is felt would benefit from playing in a higher age group would be asked to move to a higher age group following parental consultation and approval.

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Dress Code

Players are expected to report for a game dressed in the Club tracksuit and/or match kit, as directed by the age group coach. Boots should always be kept clean for matches and training sessions. Boots should not be worn to enter any building.

Game information

If the players are unable to attend training prior to the weekend fixture please ensure that the player/parent makes contact with the relevant coach to confirm the player's involvement, venue and travel arrangements.

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Reporting Injuries Foundation & Youth Development Phase

Any players that need to make an appointment to see a physio **must** contact the Academy Physio (see details below) at the earliest opportunity with a description of the injury.

Academy Physio: Tony Tompos

Contact number: 07818443394

Contact Email Address: tony.tompos@accringtonstanley.co.uk

An appointment time with the physio will then be given either on a Wednesday or Friday Evening.

A Physiotherapist will be present at all training sessions and games for assessment, advice and rehabilitation if required. *Assessments and treatment will be done at Accrington and Rossendale College.*

It is important to note that only players (injured prior to training / games) who have made an appointment will be assessed.

Match Day

If you are injured playing away you must report your injury: (See contact details above)

Injuries must be reported between 1pm and 2.30pm on the day of the game. An appointment will be made for the injury clinic on the Wednesday or Friday evening, where you will be assessed, treated and given further appointments.

It is very important that you put ice on the injury every 2 hours for 15 minutes, while you are waiting to hear from the physiotherapist. This will significantly reduce the swelling around the site of the injury.

NB. For all head injuries do not follow these guidelines as these should be immediately reported to your coach.

If you are injured playing at home, an ASFC physiotherapist will see you and give you treatment advice and then you must report your injury (See contact details above)

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Injuries must be reported between 1pm and 2.30pm on the day of the game. An appointment will be made for the injury clinic on the Wednesday or Friday evening, where you will be assessed, treated and given further appointments.

Please note. If you attend the next training session after a game with an injury that you have not reported you will not be seen. As a result you will not be able to play in the game at the weekend and will see me on the following Wednesday.

Reporting Injuries Foundation & Youth Development Phase

Training night

If you are injured at training you must always report your injury to your coach and the physiotherapist. The physio will assess you, give you treatment advice and arrange an appointment for you at the injury clinic on a Wednesday or Friday evening if required. Under no circumstances should you go home without seeing the physiotherapist.

Other

If you have been injured at school or any other time away from Accrington Stanley you must report your injury: (See contact details below)

Academy Physio: Tony Tompos

Contact number: 07818443394

Contact Email Address: tony.tompos@accingtonstanley.co.uk

An appointment will be made for the injury clinic on the Wednesday or Friday evening, where you will be assessed, treated and given further appointments.

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Review Process

Reviewing and Reflecting is a very important process of deep learning. Our young players receive constructive feedback throughout the season on developmental areas in which they can improve.

The players are reviewed using the '4 corner model' which is based on the Technical, Tactical, Physiological & Psychological aspects of the game and is in line with our coaching curriculum. Also as part of the review Sports Science/Medical and Educational concerns can be highlighted so that the development of the whole person is considered in line with our philosophy.

The 6 Weekly reviews are held for the Youth & Professional Development Phases only and 12 Weekly Reviews are held with each player across every phase.

Breakdown of 6 Week Reviews

The 6 weekly reviews are composed by Youth and Pro Development Phases and are then electronically sent to the Academy player or uploaded to Pro Football Support. If a player has no internet access then a hardcopy is printed and given to the player at a training session. If a player or the parent has a concern or query about the review then they can arrange to have a meeting with the appropriate people at a convenient time. Additionally if the age group coach feels the need to speak with a player and/or parent then a meeting will be arranged and will include the Phase Lead Coach.

Breakdown of the First 12 Week Review

The 12 week reviews are sent out to the player prior to an arranged meeting so that they can digest the information given and can ask questions to the appropriate staff at the arranged meeting. This meeting will take place at a training session with the age group coach and Phase Lead Coach. This will take place with the player and coaches only.

The 12 week review meetings are held at a training session at an allocated time slot in which every player has an opportunity to discuss their development. The players receive a 10 minute time slot but can be allocated more on request. If the parent has a concern or query about the review then they can arrange to have a meeting with the age group coach and Phase Lead Coach at a convenient time. As with the six week review, if the age group coach feels the need to speak with a player parent then a meeting will be arranged and will include the Phase Lead Coach.

Parent/Player Meetings

These will take place twice per season and will involve the player, the parent and age group coaches and a member of the Academy Management Team. In this meeting the players will be given individual performance targets to enable their development to continue. An allotted time slot will be sent to the parents by email or text message prior to the meeting taking place.

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Information on Training and Matches

During the season it is likely that some games and/or training sessions will be 'in doubt' normally due to pitch or weather conditions.

- In respect of home games, the pitches are inspected early each Sunday. There are various ways that Parents/Guardians, Players & Coaches can be informed if the game is on or off:
- Parents / Guardians may receive an email or a text from their coaches from ASFC informing them of games cancelled
- Information may be posted on Accrington Stanley FC Academy Website
- With regards to training sessions an assessment will be made as early as possible and the information distributed as above.

The same procedure will apply to away fixtures; the club will contact officials from the opposing club and relay information via the same channels.

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Emergency Contact Telephone Numbers

In the event of an incident occurring that requires immediate attention the first consideration is for the safety of the young players.

It must be ascertained what is required to ensure and maintain their safety and any actions taken are done clearly and calmly.

Listed below are emergency telephone numbers.

Name	Job Title	Mobile Number	E-Mail Address
Keith Brown	Academy Manager	07855 959532	keith.brown@accringtonstanley.co.uk
Dmitri Lavrinovic	Head of Coaching	07726 273026	dmitri.lavrinovic@accringtonstanley.co.uk
Naz Ali	Youth Administrator	07814752328	youth@accringtonstanley.co.uk
Dave Fitzgerald	Youth Development Phase	07710 405340	david.fitzgerald@accringtonstanley.co.uk
Duncan Fearnhead	Foundation Phase	077010 35599	duncan.fearnhead@accringtonstanley.co.uk
Tony Tompos	Academy Physio	07818443394	tony.tompos@accringtonstanley.co.uk
Mark Charlesworth	Head of Recruitment	07745474588	charliems@sky.com
Mark Turner	Safeguarding Officer	07885080147	mark.turner@accringtonstanley.co.uk

FA/NSPCC Help Line	0808 8005000
Local Police Station	01254 353749
Child Protection Unit	01254 398731