



# St Pats Baseball Club

## Policy on Team Grading

St Pats Baseball Club aims to provide a fun and safe environment for children of both sexes to learn and enjoy the game of baseball and develop their skills in the game, teamwork, sportsmanship and self-esteem. The club provides the opportunity for players of all skill levels to participate in and enjoy the game of baseball and has a proud history of developing players who go on to represent their district, state and country at the highest levels of the game.

To do this successfully, St Pats has adopted a merit based policy of grading players into teams primarily based on the ability and aptitude for playing baseball that the players demonstrate. The policy also acknowledges that enjoyment and participation are key reasons for children playing any sport and are fundamental to children continuing to participate in playing baseball.

To this end, the club committee will consider all requests from parents and players to play in a particular team to be able to enjoy their sport with friends or to play with siblings etc. It should be realised however that there are circumstances where this is not possible because of the club's duty of care to ALL players and participants.

The following guidelines are used by the club and are published to help all participants understand how teams are determined:

1. The committee will endeavour to create teams with between 9 and 12 players. The preferred number of players in a team is 10 - 11 for all age groups to maximise participation and provide for player injury, illness and/or other absences during the season.
2. Prior to determining teams, all players are listed in groups based on their birth age.
3. For teams U12 and up, teams will usually be graded when there is more than one team. Where this occurs, the make-up of each team is determined by a trial process.
4. The trial process is designed to allow all players to demonstrate their skills, athleticism & knowledge of the game. For most age groups, there will be a minimum of one & preferably two trials to assess the players. The outcome of the trial process will be submitted to the committee for final grading in conjunction with any other relevant factors consistent with these guidelines.
5. Current CSJBA representative level players (Winter Development program – Sydney Championship and Associations Cup) will normally be graded into the highest graded team entered by St Pats in competition. In exceptional circumstances and for player development, the committee reserves the right to grade these players into the second highest graded team where their game time in the higher graded team may be limited by other, higher graded representative players.
6. Teams are initially drawn up based on all players playing in their true age. Parents may request that their child plays out of their age group. This should be done at registration and the reason for the request recorded. This request will be considered but may not be able to be fulfilled due to a number of reasons including player numbers.

7. Players who have played out of age in the previous season have no guaranteed right to play in the same team in the current season.
8. True age players registered by the cut-off date set by the committee are unlikely to be displaced from a team by a player wishing to play out of his/her age group.
9. Teams will be drawn up to include requests for friends playing in the same team where such requests will not unduly affect the balance of team numbers and depending on the assessment of player skill levels.

### **Players playing out of age group**

1. Parents may request that their child plays out of their age group. The committee will consider parents' request that their children play out of their age based on the following criteria:
  - If the request results in there being a shortage of numbers (ie. less than 10) in the player's true age team, then the committee is not likely to grant the request.
  - If the committee considers that it is acceptable for a player to play out of age where a request is made, all players in the true age team will be advised of there being a chance to play in a higher age group. If more players express interest in playing out of age, then there are places in the higher team, then preference will be given to players based on the following:
    - Players having played in the older team in the previous season.
    - The player having a sibling or close friend in the team.
    - The trial process.
2. Where there are insufficient player numbers to form one or more whole teams in an age group, then the committee will look at the possibility of having players play out of age to form whole teams.
3. The committee will inform parents of age groups where players are to be asked to play up a grade. Should more players request placement in the higher age group than places are available, then preference will be given to players based on:
  - Players having played in the higher age group in the previous season.
  - The player having a sibling in the team.
  - A trial process organised by the club committee.

Please note that while the committee makes all endeavours to grant player and parent requests, circumstances will arise where this is not possible. In these circumstances, the committee will use the above guidelines and accepts the responsibility of making decisions based on the overall outcome for the club and its duty of care to all participants.