

ELTHAM NORTH JETS BASKETBALL CLUB

Team Selection Policy – V8.0 effective 24/9/2026 – Review Date 24/9/2028

Club Philosophy

Eltham North Jets is a family-oriented junior basketball club that aims to provide a safe environment where players of all abilities will have fun, learn and be challenged. From first timers to budding champions, Eltham North Jets have a place for everyone.

Placing players in a team or grade appropriate to their skill level plays a significant role in achieving these objectives. The club appreciates the different standards of all players and offers to accommodate players of all skill levels, and has demonstrated success in progressing those players with aspirational skillsets into representative basketball.

1. Team Selection Objectives

The objective of Eltham North Jets is to field competitive teams in all grades in each age group. Fielding competitive teams leads to broader engagement and enjoyment of the participants and has demonstrated solid retention of players year over year.

Considerations will be made to special requests; however, these may not always be possible to achieve due to a variety of reasons including (but not limited to) logistical constraints, team size, skill level, experience, and age group balance.

2. Team Selection Process

2.1 Timeline

Season	Registration Period	Player Review Period	Team Selection Period	Team Notification	Season Commencement
Autumn	Late Oct – Early Nov	Jul – Nov	Nov	Mid Nov	Feb (following year)
Spring	Late May – Early Jun	Feb – Jun	Jun	Late Jun (post Grand Final)	July (current year)

2.2 Selection Authority

The Operations Manager will be responsible for selecting teams. They will be supported by other members of the committee where required.

It is not an automatic progression that teams and coaches will remain the same from season to season due to differing ability, ages, total number of players in each age group and other factors.

Trials may not always be possible due to court availability or other reasons. If trials cannot be run, the club will utilise coaches' feedback, parent/guardian requests, and PlayHQ statistics.

2.3 Selection Criteria

The club will consider the following when selecting teams:

1. Ability, skill and attitude as determined by coaches
2. Overall team balance
3. Input, feedback and advice from all coaches in the age group (where able to be met)
4. Overall numbers of players in age group
5. Overall commitment level of players including training attendance
6. Friendship and social requests (see Section 3 for age-specific application)
7. Teams will generally have between 7–8 players per side, dependent on total registered players in the age group

2.4 Registration Requirements

- Players that have not paid the upcoming season's registration fee will not be placed in a team.
- Requests made after the club's official registration cut-off date will NOT be considered.

3. Friendship & Social Consideration Framework

The club recognises that basketball is a social sport and that friendships play an increasingly important role in player retention and enjoyment — particularly as players progress beyond younger age groups. This section establishes how friendship considerations are applied at each stage of development and formalises the concept of a "Friendship Team" for older age groups.

3.1 The Balance: Grading vs Friendship

The club's approach to team selection balances two factors — **competitive grading** and **friendship/social connection**. The weighting between these two factors shifts as players move through age groups:

Age Group	Primary Consideration	Secondary Consideration
U8 – U14	Skill development and appropriate grading	Friendship requests accommodated where practical
U16+	**Friendship and social connection**	**Team viability and reasonable competitive balance**

This reflects a broader shift in community basketball: as players progress beyond U14, outside of elite-level competition, the primary driver of participation and retention becomes social connection. The club's selection approach acknowledges this reality.

At **all age groups**, friendship requests are welcomed and considered. The difference is the **weight** they carry relative to grading.

3.2 U8 – U14: Grading-Led Selection

At these age groups, teams are formed primarily through the club's standard grading and selection process (Section 2). Friendship requests are considered and accommodated where they do not compromise team balance or appropriate skill-level grouping.

- Parents/guardians may submit friendship requests via the PlayHQ registration form.
- The club will make best efforts to accommodate requests, but grading and team balance take precedence.

3.3 U16+: Friendship-Led Selection

At U16 and above, the club will actively seek to build teams around friendship groups. Competitive grading becomes a secondary consideration — the priority is ensuring players are enjoying their basketball and playing with the people they want to play with.

3.3.1 What Is a Friendship Team?

A Friendship Team is a team formed primarily around a group of players who have indicated through the registration process that they wish to play together. For a group to be recognised as a Friendship Team:

- Mutual intent: The players within the group have submitted friendship requests for each other during registration. Requests should be broadly mutual — meaning the group is self-identified, not one player requesting to join others who haven't requested them.
- Viable numbers: The group has enough players to form a team (minimum 6, ideally 7–8). The club may place additional players into a friendship group to bring numbers up to a viable level, **at the clubs discretion**.
- Submitted through registration: Requests must be submitted via the PlayHQ registration process. Verbal requests or requests made through coaches will not be considered.
- Coach or Team Manager identified: The group must have a parent/guardian willing to take on the role of coach for the friendship team. The club will work with the group to identify this person, but if no one is nominated within 7 days of team announcement, the club reserves the right to restructure.

3.3.2 What Is NOT a Friendship Team?

To provide clarity, the following are **not** considered Friendship Teams:

- A group of players assembled primarily to create a competitively dominant team. If the club reasonably determines that a request is motivated by "stacking" rather than genuine social

connection, the club will not recognise the group as a Friendship Team and will apply standard grading.

- A group where requests are largely one-directional (e.g., one or two players requesting to join others who have not reciprocated).
- A group formed after the registration deadline through informal or verbal arrangements.
- Any arrangement that explicitly or implicitly seeks to exclude a specific player from a team. Friendship teams are about who players want to play with, not about who they don't want to play with.

3.3.3 Player Protection — No Player Left Behind

The club has a responsibility to **every** registered player, not just those within established friendship groups. The following protections apply:

- Friendship teams cannot push players out. The formation of friendship groups must not result in any player being left without a viable team, or being placed in a team that falls below minimum numbers.
- The club will build around, not just for, friendship groups. Where friendship teams are formed, the club will ensure that remaining players are placed into balanced, viable teams — not simply allocated to whatever is left over.
- Players not in a friendship group are not disadvantaged. A player who does not submit friendship requests, or whose requests cannot be met, will be placed through the standard grading process. They will not be deprioritised or placed last.
- The club retains final discretion to redistribute players between teams where the formation of friendship groups would leave other teams unviable (below minimum numbers) or create a significant competitive imbalance across the age group.

3.3.4 How Friendship Teams Are Formed — Process

8. During registration, players/parents submit friendship requests via PlayHQ. There is no limit on the number of requests.
9. After registration closes, the club identifies natural friendship groupings based on mutual requests.
10. The club assesses whether each group meets the Friendship Team criteria (Section 3.3.1).
11. Recognised friendship groups are formed into teams. Where groups are slightly under minimum numbers, the club may add players in **at its discretion**.
12. Remaining players (those not in a recognised friendship group) are placed through the standard grading process.
13. The club reviews the overall age group to ensure all teams are viable and reasonably balanced in numbers.
14. Teams are announced per the standard notification process (Section 6).

3.3.5 Late Registrations & Post-Announcement Changes (U16+)

- Late registrations that impact team balance will be managed at the club's discretion.

- The club may place late registrations into existing teams or redistribute to maintain viable team sizes.
- Where a post-announcement change is required, affected families will be notified in writing with rationale.
- The club will seek to minimise disruption to established friendship groups where possible, but viability of all teams takes precedence.

4. Team/Player Placement Requests (General)

- Verbal requests by parents/players or requests made to or through coaches will NOT be considered.
- Parents or players must submit requests via the PlayHQ website during the registration process.
- While every consideration is given, not all requests can be met.
- Requests made after the club's official registration cut-off date will NOT be considered.
- Final decision regarding team/player placement is at the discretion of the Operations Manager.

5. Early Age Group Step Up

- Verbal requests by parents/players or requests made to or through coaches will NOT be considered.
- Parents are required to notify the club formally during the registration process, stating the age group requested and reasons supporting the request.
- The coaches for both the existing age group and the target age group will consider:
- Player numbers in both age groups to allow for viable team selection.
- Player skill level and readiness.
- Final decision regarding higher age group step-ups is at the discretion of the Operations Manager.

6. Team Notification

Once teams are finalised, teams, coaches and training times will be circulated via email from the Operations Manager. This will be done as per the timeline laid out in Section 2.1.

7. Post-Announcement Changes

The club acknowledges that changes to teams after announcement should be the exception, not the norm. However, the club reserves the right to make post-announcement adjustments where:

- A late registration or withdrawal creates an unviable team size.

- At the clubs discretion where unforeseeable circumstances arise.
- A team is left without a coach or team manager.

In all cases:

- Affected families will be notified in writing with rationale.
- Training arrangements will be maintained where possible.
- The club will seek to minimise disruption.

8. Disputes

The club acknowledges that the grading and player placement process is inherently subjective and that it is inevitable that some people will not be satisfied with all decisions made.

Should a legitimate dispute arise as a result of the grading process:

15. Parent/Player notifies club via email (disputes email address available on website).
16. Parent/Player completes the dispute form (available on website) prior to the completion of the second grading game of the season.
17. Club reviews complaint on merit.
18. Club provides feedback on decision in writing to Parent/Player.
19. Club decision is final.

9. Policy Anti-Abuse Clause

Friendship requests must be made in good faith. If the club reasonably determines that friendship requests have been coordinated to manipulate team composition for competitive advantage (rather than genuine social connection), the club reserves the right to:

- Decline the requests.
- Redistribute players at its discretion.
- Apply the club's disciplinary process to those involved.

Document Control

Version	Date	Author	Changes
6.0	—	—	Previous version
7.0	July 2026	[Author]	Introduced Friendship & Social Consideration Framework (Section 3). Added U16+ friendship team formation process & controls. Added post-

			announcement change provisions (Section 7). Added anti-abuse clause (Section 9). General restructure for clarity.
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This policy is subject to review and amendment by the Eltham North Jets Basketball Club committee.