

CASTLEKNOCK GAA CLUB FOOTBALL NURSERY

“How should we coach children at the Nursery and **Why?”**

- Before 11 the children are not mature enough to understand or cope with a 15 –a-side game.
- Attention span is very short, golden rule “Little talk and plenty of action”.
- Give plenty of praise
- Be encouraging and patient

SKILLS

Skill Emphasis – Bilateral (Both sides) Fundamental Motor Skills & Bilateral and Basic Sports Related Skills

- Punt Kick (Straight Kick, Hard Foot, off Laces)
- Catching (Body Catch)
- Bouncing The Ball (4 steps, Bounce, 4 more steps)
- Evasion Skills (side-steps, rolls, change direction)
- Hand Pass/Fist Pass

WARM –UP GAMES

These Games will help the children develop their Evasion Skills.
All tag games and rules are available on www.castleknock.net

- Tag Ball “Knock-Out”
- Tag Ball “Stuck in the Mud”
- Irish Bull-Dog
- Grab the Tail
- Under-Over
- Here, There, Everywhere...

SKILL DRILLS & PRACTICES

Players will beg for a game at every opportunity, yet their technique is best improved through individual, paired and small group work. Coaches can “Spot & Fix” problems at this time. This is where we do our best and most valuable coaching.

Bilateral (Both sides of body Left & Right)

- Paired Practice (Building in Pressure e.g. No. of passes in 1 min)
- Relay Races
- Drills (Building in Pressure e.g. Races, Scores, Fun-Races)

FUN GAMES

- No Man’s Land
- Skittles / Target Practice

MATCHES

- Full Games (9 v9)
- Small sided Games (3 v 3), allows for more touches of the ball, more space to play in, less crowding and confusion.
- Conditioned Games – e.g. “No solo”, “Weaker sided only”. Thought must be given to why conditions are set, how they will work and the reasons must be communicated to the players.
- Children will look to the Coach for indication of Performance. A help for the children is when the Coach “commentates” on the Match. This helps the children make decisions during the Match.
- Encourage the children to look up when in possession and choose the right option (e.g. passing rather than shooting)
- It is difficult to get them to tackle properly but encourage them to attempt the block down
- They usually enjoy being asked Questions and this should give a coach plenty of opportunities to check for understanding

TYPICAL SESSION

9.40 – 10.00 – Coaches meet & set up pitches

10.00 – 10.10 – **WARM-UP**

TAG BALL “KNOCKOUT”

- Mark out 2 Grids 25 steps x 25,
- Use various tag games available on www.castleknock.net

10.10 – 10.40 – **SKILL WORK**

Introduce routines that will concentrate on 1 maybe 2 skills

- Focus on the **Pick-up**
- Show proper Technique- *Long stride into ball, Bend back and Hands together in front of Ball, Scoop ball up into hands*
- Children practice in pairs first, then in a relay-race set-up
- Both sides of body (Left & Right)

10.40 – 11.00 – **MATCH**

- 9 V 9 on the Full Pitch
- Coach/Referee commentates on the match
- No specialist positions, Keep rotating
- 1 hop only
- Focus on the Skill Practiced to day by awarding **SKILL POINTS** for correct execution of the Pick-up.
- E.g. A child who picks the ball up properly gets 2 points added to their teams score