



# Court Grammar School

INTEGRITY • HUMILITY • COMMUNITY

## **AFL/W Specialist Academy Handbook 2024**

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## AFL ACADEMY HANDBOOK

### **History:**

The AFL/W Academy Program was established in late 2017 to improve the opportunities afforded to the surrounding community in relation to specialized coaching and training for students involved in AFL football. With the support of the local community clubs, the WAFC, and affiliated WAFL clubs, a program aimed at providing “elite” opportunities to students was developed.

### **Aims:**

The AFL/W academy program strives to provide an “elite” environment for students, and to create a structured program that enables them to fast track their football development. Students are able to begin the AFL/W Academy at Year 5, where they are introduced to modern coaching techniques designed to improve their skill acquisition. Following on from this, students progress through different “stages” of the Academy where a holistic approach provides them with a strong foundation to excel in both their life and football career.

Whilst our main focus is on developing students understanding and skills to become competitive athletes on the AFL field, we also emphasise the importance of other roles within the AFL Community that are of significant value to the game as a whole. Within our programs in Years 9 and 10 we provide opportunities for our students to develop the knowledge and skills required to become effective coaches, umpires, or admin staff within the AFL Community, and are available to help students network with the wider AFL Community to pursue these pathways. We proudly encourage our students to become leaders within our schooling community and beyond, empowering them to be confident to make decisions of their own on and off the field, and to be accountable for these decisions.

For students driven to succeed at an elite level we have strong links with AFL and AFLW clubs, as well as, community clubs to provide pathways into the WAFL and WAFLW systems.



## **Our Philosophy:**

The pedagogical goals behind the development of the AFL/W Academy Program reflect a holistic approach to education. We strive to produce quality footballers, academically achieving students and outstanding people. Our AFL Specialist staff are driven by a passion for education and football with a focus on bringing them both together. This passion focused our attention on the need for students to be successful, confident and independent learners.

At the heart of all AFL activities and programs is the promotion of the following core values:

- Striving for Excellence
- Individual Development
- Teamwork and Cooperation
- Humility
- Integrity
- Community
- Respect for others

The AFL/W Academy focuses on the latest developments in the AFL with a strong emphasis on game performance. Students engage in meaningful learning experiences, which are relevant to the current development objectives of themselves and the group.

Being a skill based sport our main focus is on developing the core skills of kicking, handpassing and marking using industry relevant techniques and strategies. The academy has an emphasis on developing game sense in students to better understand how to play the game, as well as, building an understanding of strategies and tactics, and when to apply them to the benefit of their team on game days.

The Academy focuses on teamwork and building quality, workable group dynamics and relationships. This aspect is further exemplified by the participation on teams in various events and competitions throughout the year. Students' high level of focus, engagement and achievement in the AFL/W Specialist Academy activities are a direct product of the strong and mutually respectful relationships built with others in the Academy as well as the AFLW Specialist staff at Court Grammar School.



## **Academy Programs**

### **Junior Program: Year 5-6**

A skill acquisition program is based on the principles of current literature on athlete learning:

- A massed-based approach to skill development
- Correct marking, kicking, handballing and tackling are the core themes of every session
- AFL fundamentals and technique are very hard to reteach after the age of 12.

Our core ethos for this program is 'No amount of running or fitness training can compensate for quality skill acquisition'.

### **Colts Program: Year 7,8,9**

The game sense program is based on developing traditional basics of the game and current AFL ball movement patterns.

- High quality coaches expose students to game style drills that will transfer their learning from training to competition, to ensure athletes move the ball towards goal the most efficient and effective way
- Traditional basics of the game are drilled into students to ensure team orientated athletes are developed
- Implementation of the ever-changing games styles and ball movement used in AFL
- Familiarisation of WAFL development squads game styles.

### **Senior Program: Year 10,11,12**

When the AFL/W Academy students reach year 10, they will have the opportunity to be part of the AFL/W Academy during a 3 period allotment. In Yr11, they will also have the opportunity to be involved in the annual AFL/W Academy Melbourne tour. The tour occurs over the extended July holiday period and provides students with access to the following;

- AFL club tours
- Play in competitive matches against a variety of Victorian schools
- Opportunities to listen to information provided by AFL talent recruiters
- Opportunities to listen to information provided by AFL player managers
- Watch live AFL matches at both major arena's (MCG and Marvel Stadium)
- Meet and greet with past and present AFL and AFL/W players



## Student Expectations:

All students enrolled in the AFL/W Academy are held accountable for their behaviour within the Academy and the school as a whole. We encourage all our students to develop individual responsibility and responsibility to the group. We believe that the development of this ethos makes for a cohesive and successful group as well as a confident, mature young members of our community.

Students are required to:

- Wear appropriate school uniform **(Please note: AFL Academy students are required to change from their school shirt into their AFL Academy shirt for each practical session and to change back to their College shirt at the conclusion of each practical session.)**
- Wear appropriate AFL attire, including CGS Football shorts, to all AFL classes and games (students are encouraged to bring football boots and mouthguards to school for practical AFL classes)
- Attend additional training sessions when required
- Attend all school based AFL matches
- Attend to all academic responsibilities and strive for their best
- Be role models in all classes
- Participate in all AFL activities
- Participate in fundraising as required
- Meet all course and assessment requirements

## Trials:

Trials for the AFL/W Specialist Academy are held in the Gymnasium and on the College oval.

Trials will involve;

- Basic exercise testing as completed by the AFL Draft Combine
- Basic skills analysis for kicking, handballing and marking
- Game sense activities

If you are interested, apply through the link on the homepage of the AFL/W Academy website.



### **Selection Criteria for Year 5 & 7 AFL/W Specialist Academy:**

Students will be ranked and final selection based on the following data:

1. Trial
2. Academic results in Physical Education and teacher judgements.
3. Attendance and Behaviour Data.

The Head of AFL/W Academy will determine which students will be invited to join the AFL Specialist Academy. New students (enrolled after the commencement of the year) who would like to join the AFL Specialist Academy will be assessed on an individual basis by the Head of AFL/W Academy. If no places are available then a waiting list will be created.

### **Selection Criteria for Year 8, 9 and 10 AFL/W Specialist Academy:**

Students will be selected to continue from year to year or new students added to the AFL Academy based on the following key criteria. With the initial ranking determined from criteria one and further fine tuning based on the additional criteria items.

1. Trial
2. Attendance and Behaviour Data.
3. Participation in extra-curricular activities.

New students (enrolled after the commencement of the year) who would like to join the AFL Specialist Academy will be assessed on an individual basis by the Head of AFL/W Academy. If no places are available then a waiting list will be created.

### **Identification of Students NOT Maintaining Good Standing:**

Students that are not maintaining high standards of academic achievement and performance can be identified through one or more of the following criteria:

- Ongoing poor performance in ALL subjects
- Repeated incidents of assigned work not being completed to the best of their ability.
- Deterioration of behaviour standards that impacts on their class performance and/or the performance of other members of the class.
- A failure to achieve an appropriate standard for attributes as presented on students end of semester reports (Left hand side)



Students will be identified by the teacher for potential removal through the Head of AFL/W Academy.

### **Removal from the Academy:**

Students who are experiencing difficulties meeting the course requirements will be placed on an appraisal program that involves a further probationary period. During this time issues with the student progress will be identified to the student, with appropriate strategies for improvement. If at the end of the probationary period the student has been unable to show significant improvement the student will be removed from the academy and returned to the mainstream cohort. Students will be given plenty of encouragement prior to this taking place and parents will be contacted before any movement occurs. At any time students or parents may discuss their progress with any member of the AFL Specialist Academy staff.

### **Review Process and Removal from Class or Academy:**

The following procedures should be implemented when looking at reviewing students' placement in the AFL/W Academy:

- Identify student(s) to be reviewed and discuss intention with the Head of AFL/W Academy and Year Coordinator
- A letter is to be sent home indicating the areas of concern that have been identified and how this may constitute a breach of the conditions for maintaining a position in the AFL/W Specialist Academy.
- The student will be given a negotiated period of time to show improvement prior to any further review.
- A meeting with the parent and student should be arranged to explain the circumstances and make sure that they understand the requirement to improve and the impending removal from the program if this cannot be achieved.

### **Mid Year Review:**

At the conclusion of each semester all student positions in the AFL/W Specialist Academy will be reviewed with reference to their reports. This will provide an opportunity for additional students to be added to classes if room is available.

