



Dear parent/guardian,

I have some important information to share with you in advance of the new junior football season commencing in September 2025.

Firstly, we have introduced a new payment system after registering your child. This will now be via a link on the registration form, to sign up to GoCardless, whereby you can either pay in full, or via a payment plan to suit your needs. This system will reduce club administration and will help us manage club finances and compliance.

Previously, the registration fee was kept separate from subsequent payments for training throughout the year, and individual teams would each manage their training subs back to the club. This year, the payment plan that you sign up to will also include training fees for the whole football season. This brings the club in line with FA guidance and best practice, in terms of payments and finances being managed by the club, and not individual coaches within the club. Please note, subs will still be requested and managed by age group coaches, for the likes of referee fees/tournament fees/kit payments as required.

In addition to administration and compliance benefits, the club has also made this change following the sad closure of Queen Margaret's School. The club relied extensively on the school's astro turf facilities during the winter period, and as such, the closure has hit the club hard in terms of finding suitable and local alternative venues. Following extensive searches and enquiries, the club has now made arrangements with Selby High School and Huntington School for the use of their astro turf facilities. However, the new fees for these facilities, represents an increase in our training costs, compared with the rates that were offered by Queen Margaret's. As such, we have had to increase our fees accordingly.

Therefore, based on a 1 x child payment, in full at the start of the season, the new registration fees for U7-U15 is £115. This is based on the following core changes:

24/25	25/26
Registration: £60	Registration: £65
Training: typically £40, via two payments of £20	Training: £45
Admin fee: not applicable, but reconciling payments previously involved significant amounts of volunteer time, and also resulted in some players, playing and attending matches without paying, who were therefore not insured to participate in training or matches.	Admin fee: £5, required to cover GoCardless transactions and payment plans.
Total: £100	Total: £115

Whilst the new payment plan in this example, reflects a 15% increase against last season, as a club, we are still incredibly good value for money, when compared with other local clubs and their annual



fees. Furthermore, most other local clubs also combine their registration and training fees together, and have done so for quite some time, so our new approach brings us in line with this.

We have also offered the use of spreading the cost of the registration payment, so the payment does not need to be made in full at the start. Via GoCardless, you can sign up to a direct debit, which allows the payment to be broken down as required. You will see however, that for this, a small additional fee is applied by GoCardless, for managing the payment plan.

Moving on from finances and following on from the new training facilities already mentioned, we have some important updates to make around training times and locations.

Effective from this October (2025), running through to the end of March 2026, the following age groups, will be moving to a Friday night training session (noting that some already regularly train on a Friday night).*

- U9's
- U10's
- U11's
- U12's
- U13's
- U14's
- U15's

*Beyond U8's, training on a 'cage' type facility is not large enough for training needs, which ultimately restricts the club on available facilities, as teams will then require 1/3 of a larger pitch. Therefore, we have been able to source a 'cage' for U7's/8's at York Sport, and the current U16's have free use of a local facility that is available to them, so they aren't currently affected by the above changes.

I appreciate that for many of you, this will be an inconvenience, and a change from your previous training day. Unfortunately, we are reacting to a situation that is outside of our control, and which ultimately highlights the lack of available pitches to be used by community sports clubs.

We do not know yet about the long-term status of the facilities at Queen Margaret's School, and we will continue to review this situation, should the facilities ever be brought back into use for us to hire. We will also continue to monitor other potential venues as the season progresses, to see if better options present themselves. Ultimately, whilst perhaps not ideal for many of you, we were faced with a situation whereby seven out of ten age groups would not be able to train during the majority of the football season, and this clearly would not be a viable option for the club.

Please direct any initial enquiries regarding this through your age group manager. Confirmed time slots/training venue in line with the above, will be provided by your age group manager.

Many thanks for your understanding and support,

Wheldrake Juniors Football Club Committee.