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| **Football Open Development Comp Yr 5/6**  Wednesday 19th November 2025  10:00 – 14:00 | Tooting and Mitcham FC  Imperial Sports Ground  Bishopsford Road  Morden SM4 6BF |

**Booking**

* This is a Development Competition event.
* Schools may choose EITHER a Borough Championships OR a Development Competition per each sport category, on the initial booking date of:
* Monday 15th September 2025 at 5pm
* Schools may then book onto the other event, should they wish to for another set of children, on the open booking date, a week later on:
* Monday 22nd September 2025 at 5pm
* If an event is full, schools will be placed on a waiting list and be notified of this.
* MSSP will contact schools should places become available in the build-up to events.

**Age**

* Year 5/6

**Squad**

* Maximum of 10 players. 7-a-side matches.

**Eligibility**

* Mixed event – no gender requirements.
* School squads should be familiar with the competition rules before attending this event, although umpiring will be appropriate for the level of competition.
* The intent and principles of the competition have been designed to support pupils learning of the game and not be restricted by enforcement of the rules. We anticipate that many children may not have played competitively before and aim for children to learn more about the sport throughout the day.
* There is also an Open Football Borough Championships event being delivered this year. Please consider the most appropriate event for your pupils to attend before registering.
* Schools cannot select the same pupils for the Development Competition and the Borough Championships. In the instance that a Championship team player has also played in a Development Competition team, the team will not be able to progress to a group winning position.
* If our football events exceed their capacity for school entrees, priority will be given to schools who are not registered for the Football Borough Championships.
* It is our aim to ensure all schools can access at least one of the events.

**Kit & Equipment**

* All schools MUST provide their own First Aid kit along with a first aid qualified member of staff.
* Please provide own warm up balls. Match balls are provided.
* The competition will be played on Astro-grass pitches.
* Trainers/Astro and moulded boots are allowed. No metal blades or studded boots will be permitted.
* Shin pads are compulsory.
* Players of the same team should wear the same colour tops/bibs.
* Jewellery must be removed.
* It is advised that if eyewear is essential, it should be made from plastic rather than glass.
* The penalty spot will be at 6.5 yards and a 1m rule in place for players to strike the ball from within.
* A size 4 match ball will be used. Schools should provide their own balls for warm up.

**Competition Format**

* 7-a-side matches.
* Round Robin groups followed by seeded groups to play other like-placed teams.
* Results will be recorded.
* Points awarded are: 3 for a win, 1 for a draw and 0 for a loss.
* Group placing determined by: points accrued, goal difference, goals scored.

**Draw Format**

* Initial draw will be unseeded. Teams will then be placed in subsequent groups dependent on how they placed in the first groups.
* Each match will be 8 minutes with no half time.
* There will be a 2-minute break between group matches.

**Awards**

* Medals and trophies will not be awarded at this Development Event.
* Placings certificates will be awarded for group winners across all groups.
* REFSPECT winners - Certificates
* Participation certificates will be presented to all participants.

**Results**

* Results will be recorded at this event.
* An event report will be available on the webpage under news section after the event.

**Winner's Pathway**

* There is a planned pathway to London Youth Games from this event.

**Staffing and Spectators**

* Staff must complete a team-sheet before on upon arrival.
* Spectators will be permitted but must always remain behind touchline barrier.
* All staff attending the event must have enhanced DBS clearance and have been fully vetted by their primary school. DBS numbers.
* Staff will be asked to keep score during the games.
* At public sites such as parks we will section off an area for the public where parents that are not with the school party may spectate from.
* On any school sites: Spectators will not be permitted entry to any school/private sports facilities. Primary schools must inform parents in advance when inviting students to take part.  All staff attending the event must have enhanced DBS clearance and have been fully vetted by their primary school. DBS numbers, full name and school will be required in advance by the host school.

**Rules – Football: Open Development Competition Year 5/6**

* **Heading is no longer allowed in primary school age matches. See rules and guidance links below.**
* 7 a-side matches
* Size 4 ball
* Teams must be ready to play within two minutes before scheduled kick off time.
* Rock-Paper-Scissors to be played between captains to decide who kicks off.
* A goal cannot be scored direct from a kick-off.
* After a goal is scored there will be a restart with a centre kick by the conceding team.
* Overhead throws and underarm roles can be made for any re-introduction to play EXCEPT corners, where the ball is placed and kicked in.
* Opposition players must be five yards away from where corners and throw-ins are taken.
* Free kicks are direct (unless awarded for a deliberate header – see new heading rules). Free kicks must be taken from where the offence was committed, opponents must be 5 yards from the ball. A goal can be scored straight from a direct freekick. (But not a central restart.)
* Outfield players are permitted in the goal area. Players can move anywhere on the pitch.
* The ball is allowed overhead height.
* The taking of ANY penalties will be subject to the ‘one metre’ rule. Players will have a maximum run-up distance of one metre, rather than one-step, to take the shot. The referee will indicate the 1 metre line with a line marker.
* The ‘roll-on-roll-off’ rule applies to substitutions. Any number of substitutes, without being named, may be used at any time with the permission of the referee. A player who has been replaced may return to the playing area as a substitute for another player.
* If schools bring B teams, players may not swap between teams once the competition has started.
* Substitutions can only be made during stoppages in play and with the approval of the referee.
* **Children must not slide tackle.**
* A free kick may be awarded if the referee deems a player to be sliding regardless of if contact is made with the ball or not.
* There is no offside.

**Goalkeepers**

* Goalkeepers can only handle the ball in the penalty area.
* The goalkeeper may leave the goal area however a freekick kick will be awarded against the keeper if they handle the ball outside this area.
* When the goalkeeper takes a goal kick, opposing players **do not have to** retreat to the halfway line.
* The goalkeeper cannot kick the ball from hand or drop the ball from hand to kick.
* Pass-backs (if a defender passes back to the goalkeeper) are not allowed.
* If the Goalkeeper picks up a pass from their own player, a direct free kick will be awarded from one metre outside the penalty area in line with the position of the infringement.
* The goalkeeper must introduce the ball into play from either rolling or throwing the ball or playing it from along the floor.

**Heading**

* Heading is no longer allowed in primary school age matches.
* Deliberate heading of the ball is banned during matches for U11s and below.
* If a player deliberately heads the ball, the referee will award an indirect free kick to the opposing team.
* If this occurs in the penalty area, the indirect free kick is taken from the nearest point on the edge of the penalty area.
* If a header occurs, but the opposing team still benefit from the advantage, the referee will play on. Please remind your players to play to the whistle.
* For more information: <https://schoolsfootball.org/playing-by-the-rules/fa-regulations/>

**First Aid**

MSSP will have a basic first aid kit and qualified person at all events but will not be available to tend to less urgent first aid, as they will be delivering the event. As part of the school’s risk assessment a qualified first aider should always be with the school team (including travel) to tend to their children during the event.

**Team-sheets**

To help us support our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion aims, all school teams must complete and submit the attached **MSSP Event Entry - EDI Team sheet** to register for this event. We do not require the children's names, just initials or first names are fine. This data is vital to help us improve equity and access for all. We want all Merton students to be able to represent their schools in activities they enjoy and, in an environment, where they feel a sense of belonging. The data you provide us will help us to review and improve our offer as we strive to achieve this.

**Risk Assessments**

Please see the **Risk Assessment** in the 'Resources' section on the event webpage for event specific planning and considerations.

*mertonssp.org.uk/competitions*

**REFSPECT**

MSSP values the contributions by all those involved in making our events a **FUN,** safe and enjoyable environment for children to take part in sport. To ensure our events continue to be successful we promote our REFSPECT campaign. We expect everyone attending our events to maintain respect for the rules, officials, opponents, teammates and themselves. Only designated staff and volunteers will be allowed on the side-lines. All spectators are to remain behind the barriers, providing positive support and encouraging a fun and fair event.

If any staff, adults or children are deemed to be in breach of our REFSPECT codes of conduct they will be asked to leave the event, and the Head Teacher of the relevant school will be informed immediately.

For more information about REFSPECT and codes of conduct for attendance at our events, please [**click here**](https://mertonssp.org.uk/refspect/)

*mertonssp.org.uk/refspect*

**Photo Consent**

Photographs will be taken at this event by staff members from MSSP and may be used for promotional material. If you have any children that do not have permission to be photographed, please inform a member of staff before the start of the event.

Please ensure your school only take photographs of their own students and do not share any photos of other children on social media without consent from that school.

**Social Media**

For information and updates from our events, please follow and use the platforms below:

**Email:** [info@mertonssp.org.uk](mailto:info@mertonssp.org.uk)

**X:** [x.com/MertonSSP](https://x.com/MertonSSP)

**Instagram:** [instagram.com/mertonssp](https://www.instagram.com/mertonssp)

**MSSP Duty of Care**

MSSP have a duty to take all measures that are reasonable in the circumstances to ensure the health, safety, wellbeing and welfare of all participants and any other attendees involved in the relevant event. MSSP have tried to ensure that all reasonable steps have been taken in its duty of care being discharged, and to the requisite standard of care, MSSP have ensured the following guidance and actions have been adhered to and carried out:

That the advice of the UK Government and public health authorities has been followed

That the bespoke guidance and protocols issued by the relevant NGB, federation and/or umbrella organisation (if applicable) have been followed.

**Safeguarding and DBS**

MSSP acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and the requirements of the Partnership’s host organisation, the Harris Federation.

We recognise that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. We aim to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children and young leaders:

have a positive and enjoyable experience of sport or physical activity at MSSP events in a safe and child centred environment are protected from abuse whilst participating or officiating at MSSP events.

All MSSP staff at the event are fully vetted and enhanced DBS checked. It is the schools’ responsibility to ensure any staff and volunteers who attend the event comply with the host venue safeguarding and welfare policy and can provide documentation to support this on request.

If you have any concerns about a child at our event, please make sure you say something. The MSSP safeguarding team contact details will be on display at all events or for more information on who to speak to please [**click here**](https://mertonssp.org.uk/contact/)

*mertonssp.org.uk/contact*

**Comments, Compliments and Complaints**

MSSP aims to deliver a first-class service to all its stakeholders. We see all feedback, whether good or bad, as a valuable way for us to learn and improve. Therefore, we welcome all comments, compliments and complaints. For further details, please [**click here**](https://mertonssp.org.uk/comments-compliments-and-complaints/)

*mertonssp.org.uk/comments-compliments-and-complaints*