



2026-27 YEL League Regulations

1. England Accreditation and requirements of clubs, club officials, team contacts and coaches

(A) England Accreditation and entry requirements of clubs (See YEL Rule 2)

(i) Any club that is not England Accredited, will not be admitted/re-admitted into the league at the AGM, with the exception of a newly formed club – see Regulation 1A(ii)

(ii) Any application from a new club, that has not played previously in any other league, and/or has been in existence for less than twelve months, will still be eligible to have their application considered. If accepted they will have twelve months from the date of acceptance into the league to achieve England Accredited status.

(B) Club Officials and Team Contacts (See YEL Rules 2.1)

(i) All club officials must be listed on the FA Portal. One person cannot hold more than two of the executive club official roles – Chair, Secretary, Treasurer & Welfare Officer. This must be kept up to date throughout the season.

(ii) No person can be entered as a team coach for more than one team per playing day.

(iii) As part of the leagues parent County FA rules, each team playing in the YEL must have at least two coaches with in-date qualifications registered to the team on FA Club Portal who should be present at YEL organised matches and all training activities as specified below:

Coach one (C1): must hold ALL of the following:

- In-date accepted DBS
- FA Level 1/Introduction to Coaching Football (I2CF) Qualification (Min)
- In-date Safeguarding Children Course / Recertification
- In-date Introduction to First Aid in Football (IFAiF)

Coach two (C2): must hold a minimum of the following:

- In-date accepted DBS
- In-date Safeguarding Children Course / Recertification
- In-date Introduction to First Aid in Football (IFAiF) OR In-date FA Sudden Cardiac Arrest Module AND In-date FA Concussion Module

(iv) All coaches **must** have their photo uploaded to FA Club Portal.

(C) When new team applications are submitted for approval by the league they must be in accordance with the following criteria:

(i) Any club/team found to be using the term 'academy' or similar in their name or associated social media will not be accepted into the league or, if already a member club, will have their membership immediately revoked if they are found to be using the term during the season.

- (ii) A team name should only be the club's name followed by one additional word.
 - (iii) A clubs Saturday and Sunday teams cannot use the same name at the same age group.
- (D) **CLUBS** – At the AGM clubs will cease to be members of the YEL/have their application/reapplication declined if the club:
- (i) Has not entered at least one team by the day prior to the AGM
 - (ii) Has an outstanding debt which has not been cleared by the day prior to the AGM
 - (iii) Has not fulfilled any other requirement for membership

2. Player registrations, transfers and numbers of registered players permitted per team/squad (See YEL Rule 18 & 20.F)

- (A) Subject to meeting eligibility requirements players can be registered to play for both a YEL Saturday and YEL Sunday team.
- (B) **Player transfers** will only be completed when the league receives either of the below with a reason for the transfer request;
 - An agreed 7-day Notice of Approach (NOA) waiver clearly sent Club Sec to Club Sec, or
 - A copy of 7 Day NOA sent Club Sec to Club Sec dated to show 7 days has passed – the transfer will then be completed on day 8.
- (C) Players should only be registered using their legal first name and surname only. No abbreviations and no middle names are needed to assist in preventing duplication of players in the system.
- (D) With the exception of 3v3 and 5v5, the maximum number of players permitted by the YEL to be registered on the FA registration system for each team can be no more than double the number of players in the age format the team is playing in.

3. Match day requirements - Player ID/Squad List Checks, Team Sheets, Match returns on Full-Time

- (A) An official team squad list (downloaded from FA Club Portal) must be produced by each team before each match and can be printed or shared on a mobile device. An ID check must then be carried out by means of calling the players in and checking them off against the photos/names on the squad list. The squad list should NOT be given to the referee in place of a team sheet.
 - (i) When either team fails to carry out a player ID check prior to the start of the game in any YEL scheduled fixture, the match will be passed to the YEL Discipline team for consideration. **Please ring the YEL Gameday Hotline on the day and seek advice. You must also email the YEL Office – office@yelonline.com – within 24 hours of the official kick off time, to give a detailed account of the reason why the ID check was not completed.**
 - (ii) Any individual team failing or refusing to show player ID prior to the game starting will be classed as the offending team and deemed to have cancelled on the day. The opposition must follow the same procedure otherwise they could also be classed as an offending team.
 - (iii) If it is found that neither team attempted to show valid Player ID prior to the start of the game, both teams will be fined up to the maximum permitted in the YEL Rules and the fixture declared void.

(iv) A player not listed on the squad list **MUST NOT** play. A YEL representative have the authority to check the squad list before or after a match. Any team that does not have a player on a squad list and allows that player to play in any YEL organised game will be referred to the YEL Discipline Team.

- (B) Team sheets **MUST** be provided for ALL games where there is an officially appointed YEL referee. A Team sheet **MUST** be given to the officially appointed YEL referee **BEFORE** the match starts. Each team sheet **MUST** display the full name of the player and their shirt number.
- (C) All teams from 7v7 upwards must complete a Match Return **on Full-Time** for all YEL organised games (friendlies and competitive matches) within 48 hours of the advertised kick off time. Any team failing to complete a match return in full within the timeframe will be fined **£25 for the third** and subsequent offences. They will also be referred to their club Secretary and may have fixtures suspended until completed.
- (D) The result of all games from 5v5 upwards, must be reported to the league either by automated text or entry on full-time website, within 3 hours of the advertised kick off time.

4. Grounds

- (A) All clubs are encouraged to provide changing room facilities. A minimum requirement is that there must be toilet facilities on site for the use of the teams, match officials and spectators. Failure to have these facilities in place may render the ground not fit for purpose and YEL clubs/teams will not be permitted to use the venue for YEL organised matches.

5. Kick off times

- (A) The following **default KO times** will be set by the league on full-time

3v3	9am
5v5, 7v7, 9v9, 11v11	10am
Midweek	6pm

- (B) The following are the **permitted KO times**

Mini Soccer (up to 7v7)	9am-12.30pm
Mini Soccer midweek	6pm-6.30pm
Youth Soccer (9v9 & 11v11)	9am-2.30pm
Youth Soccer midweek	6pm-7pm

*midweek KO times can be amended, if both teams agree

- (C) **With 10 days (or more) notice** the following rule must be adhered to:

When changing to a KO pre 10am	Travel more than 30 mins	Opposition approval needed
	Travel less than 30 mins	Opposition approval NOT needed

*travel distance is to be calculated home ground postcode to away ground postcode using AA routefinder or similar

- (D) **With 9 days (or less) notice** the opposition, referee and league must all agree to any proposed changes to KO time or venue regardless of travel distances. If agreement cannot be reached the YEL reserves the right to insist the game goes ahead at the scheduled venue and kick off time.
- (E) Where the home team pitch is not available it is the home team's responsibility to firstly, attempt to locate a suitable alternative pitch or, if one cannot be found, offer the away team the opportunity to host the match.

- (F) It is the home team's responsibility to ensure full-time is accurate so referees can be appointed correctly.

6. Home team responsibility

- (A) An Officer of the home Club must provide full particulars to the opposition of the **location, access to the ground, kick-off time, playing colours of the home team and location of the nearest AED at least 5 clear days prior to the date of the game**. If not provided, the away team must contact the YEL Office to advise.

- (B) (i) The home team must contact the appointed referee within **within 24 hours of receipt** of appointment prior to the game. The game will only be deemed confirmed once the home team receives contact back from the referee. If no response, and all contact methods tried the home team/club must contact the YEL Office no later than Thursday-**10am** prior to the game to advise.

(ii) If for any reason the game is postponed, it is the home team's responsibility to contact any appointed match official to notify them that the game has been postponed. It will not be deemed confirmed until the referee has responded that they have received the message.

(iii) The YEL will endeavour to appoint an official YEL referee up to **11am** on the Wednesday prior to the game. The home team must use the appointed YEL referee unless agreed otherwise with the league 10 or more days in advance. If they refuse or attempt to stand down the referee, the matter will be referred to the YEL Discipline team. From 11am on Wednesday if your allocation changes from 'TBC' to 'none' then no referee has been assigned by the league, please source your own referee or club official.

(iv) Deadlines may be extended for any Cup game semi-finals and the league will endeavour to source a referee wherever possible for these games.

(C) (i) **Weather related postponement (Communication with the Opposition)** - It is the home team/club's responsibility to liaise with the opposition either on the day or prior, regarding the potential of reversing the fixture BEFORE the game is postponed. Any decision made on the day of the game to postpone should be made as early as possible and the distance the opposition are travelling should be a deciding factor on the latest time contact needs to be made by. The match will not be deemed as postponed until the opposition team contact has acknowledged receipt of the information.

(ii) **Weather related postponement (Communicating with the Referee)** - It is the home team/club's responsibility to contact the appointed referee to advise the game has been postponed. The match will only be deemed postponed when the referee acknowledges receipt of the information.

7. Restrictions around the pitch on match day

- (A) Nobody is permitted to be behind either goal during a YEL organised game

- (B) Coaching staff and substitutes must be on the opposite side of the pitch to the spectators/supporters. Spectators must be behind the RESPECT barrier/line. The referee shall request everyone to abide by this regulation and report any team not adhering.

- (C) Referees and assistant referees are not permitted to coach players during the game (warm up and half time excluded). Referees will report any team infringing this regulation.

8. Start of season

WINTER SEASON – No earlier than Saturday 5th September 2026

SPRING SEASON – No earlier than Saturday 9th January 2027

9. End of season

Winter Season Ends 13.12.2026 (Play Offs/Final fixtures may be scheduled for 9-10.01.2027 at the discretion of the league or if League Emergency Plan is in force)

Spring Season Ends 30.04.2027 unless extended by the league. May is scheduled for cup competitions and any remaining play-off games only. Official season end is 31.05.2027

10. YEL Awards

- (A) All teams finishing the Winter and Spring seasons as Champions, Runners-up or fair play winners shall be invited to attend one of the YEL Awards Days to celebrate their success. Each invited team that wishes to attend will be required to contribute towards the cost of hiring the presentation venue by purchasing a minimum of 25 tickets. If teams who are champions or runners-up choose not to attend but still wish to receive medals, they are required to make a payment: of Champions - £75 as a contribution towards the cost of the venue. Runners Up - £50 as a contribution towards the cost of the venue.

11. Referees

- (A) The YEL reserves the right to appoint experienced referees to officiate fixtures where a team is flagged as 'red' on the YEL traffic light system. (See YEL rules for rates)
- (i) Where the offending team is the home team they will pay the ref fee in total to the referee before the game.
- (ii) Where the offending team is the away team, the home team will pay the usual ref fee and the away team will pay the 'top up' direct to the referee before the game.
- (B) Referees MUST be aged 18 or older (14 if being appropriately qualified/FA registered) and assistant referees MUST be 16 or older (14 if being appropriately qualified/FA registered).

12. Postponement

- (A) **Postponement of a match due to the pitch condition** - If a game is postponed due to condition of the pitch, the away team may offer a suitable alternative. Every avenue should be explored, within reason, to get the game played on the appointed day within one hour of the scheduled KO time either home or away BEFORE the match is postponed.
- (B) **Postponement of a match due to school activity** - If a match is to be postponed due to a school activity, it is the team manager's responsibility to provide a list of each player, the event that they are taking part in and the time of the event and send it to the YEL Office – office@yelonline.com. The cancellation may be processed as an on the day cancellation.
- (C) **Postponement of a Spring season fixture** – When a home team cancels a Spring league fixture, the YEL reserves the right to reverse the fixture, should it be rearranged, which may include a midweek date. First cancellations will cease to be available from April 1st. Any postponement of a league fixture scheduled for April 1st onwards will be treated as an on the day cancellation by the postponing team and will be referred to the YEL Discipline Team.

- (D) **Postponement of a Winter season fixture** – When a home team cancels a Winter league fixture, the YEL reserves the right to reverse the fixture, should it be rearranged. First cancellations will cease to be available from December 1st. Any postponement of a league fixture scheduled for December 1st onwards will be treated as an on the day cancellation by the postponing team and will be referred to the YEL Discipline Team.
- (E) **Postponement of a YEL Organised friendly**
Friendly games can be cancelled without penalty and will not count as a first cancellation.

13. Emergency plan for the conclusion of a season

The league reserves the right to put together an emergency plan to ensure that the season is completed which may include mid-week fixtures. Saturday teams will have midweek fixtures scheduled on Tuesday as a default, Sunday teams will have midweek fixtures scheduled on a Thursday.

- (A) **U9s to U11s** - The FA rules permit three competitive events. The YEL have one during each of the Winter season and Spring seasons and also a cup competition. If not already concluded, these will finish on the date set under League regulation 10 and the table finalised at that point. The only two exceptions to this would be:
- (i) If a play-off game is required and this will be at the discretion of the league. The league's decision will be final.
 - (ii) If a team has ONE game left and it affects the Champion/Runners Up position. Teams who have TWO or more games left at the end date of the season will NOT play those games and the table will be finalised as of the end date of the season.
 - (iii) The league reserves the right to schedule midweek games.
- (B) In the spirit of fair play, the league reserves the right to schedule fixtures at 3G venues for the final games to try and ensure that as many of these games as possible affecting titles, promotion and relegation are concluded. Teams will be expected to play at these venues even though some may not be close to the original home team's ground.
- (C) Any team has the right not to switch a fixture to a YEL organised 3G surface and choose to keep the fixture on the scheduled date at the original home venue stated on Full-Time; However, should the game not go ahead for weather reasons or any reason over which the home team had control, the game will NOT be rescheduled and it will be referred to the YEL Discipline Team where the match may be awarded to the away team.
- (D) As a gesture to both teams, the league will pay for the cost of the hire of the venues. The only condition to the YEL paying for the venue is that the league set the kick off times as some may need to be scheduled in the afternoon.
- (E) If the league is unable to secure a 3G venue, the fixture will be scheduled for the original home venue and (G) above will not apply.
- (F) Under this Emergency Plan, once a game has been scheduled by the league, any cancellation by a team will be considered by the Discipline Team

15. Postponement Grid

- (A) The YEL Discipline Team has the right to investigate any failure to fulfil a fixture and impose whatever penalty the rules allow. The penalties in the table below will be followed by the YEL Discipline Team; however, they may be disregarded where a club/team has been formally warned as to its future conduct.
- (B) If the Home Team is unable to provide a pitch due to weather conditions, the away team will have the option to offer an alternative pitch and the original home team would be expected to provide good reason to the YEL Discipline Team should they be unable to accept this offer.
- (C) Postponement grid for competitive fixtures for the Winter & Spring seasons. The cancellations reset to zero at the start of the Spring season.
- (D) Unplayed games at the end of the season will be referred to the league discipline committee who reserve the right to make a final decision as they see fit.
- (E) The YEL reserve the right to judge specific cases on their own merits and may need to operate outside of these standards if they deem fit.

	Notice Received	Admin charge	Further sanctions
1 st Cancellation	48 hours (or more) before KO		No
	Less than 48 hours before KO		2 Points deducted match rescheduled
2 nd Cancellation (and any further cancellations)	48 hours (or more) before KO		3 points deducted and match rescheduled *if time permits
	Less than 48 hours before KO	£25	3 points deducted and match rescheduled *if time permits

16. Teams wishing to play up a year

In order for an existing YEL team to be considered for playing up a year, the team must be folded on Scoreline and a new team application submitted for the correct new age group with the agreement to play the whole period from September to May in the upper age group

17. Play Off Matches

(i) The league reserves the right to arrange play-off games at the end of each season for any U9 teams upwards who finish a league in joint position for Champions or Runners Up

(ii) The match will be played at the ground of the original away team if a neutral venue is not provided.

(iii) If the play off involves three teams in a three way play off, the league will decide on the venue based on home matches played.

(iv) (a) Unless notified by the league, play off matches will be played over the standard time period for the age group.

(iv) (b) Any team that cancels a play-off game for a non-weather/school event/religious related reason will be referred to the YEL Discipline team where the postponement will be dealt with according to the Postponement Grid (Regulation 16) attracting a fine and the game being awarded to the opposition unless it is deemed by the league that there are exceptional circumstances.

(v) Should the scores be level at the end of the normal period of play, the result will be a draw and the league position will be shared – ie Joint Champions or Joint Runners Up.

(vi) **THERE WILL BE NO EXTRA TIME OR TAKING OF PENALTIES TO DECIDE A 'WINNER'**

(vii) NOTE: Shared Runners Up does not automatically guarantee promotion for both/all teams on equal points.

18. Fines and Discipline

Failure to comply with these regulations may result in a fine in accordance with the league rules fines tariff (see YEL Rules) and the team/club being referred to the YEL discipline team who reserve the right to impose further sanctions which may include the suspension of fixtures.