## HEADLINE:
- No heading in training in the foundation phase (primary school children)
- Graduated approach to heading for children in the development phase U12-U16
- U18 heading drills should be reduced, to take into consideration the heading exposure in matches
- Don’t over inflate the footballs: use the lowest pressure authorised by the Laws of the Game

## HEADING GUIDANCE

### Age Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Ball size</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Frequency of heading in any one training session</th>
<th>Game context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Up to 5v5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Up to 5v5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Up to 7v7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U10</td>
<td>3 (from 1/6/2020)</td>
<td>Up to 7v7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Up to 9v9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**U12**
- Heading remains a low priority and our expectation is that heading should not be introduced at this stage.

**U13**
- Heading remains a low priority and our expectation is that heading should not be introduced at this stage.

**U14, U15, U16**
- Heading drills should be reduced as far as possible, taking into consideration the heading exposure in matches.

**U18**
- Heading remains a low priority – 1 session per month & max 5 headers

The Foundation Phase DNA aims to provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for young children. Priority at this age is fun, engagement and the mastery of both the body and the ball. In today's modern game, children will play on smaller pitches, with less players and with the retreat line rule to encourage players to play through the thirds. There is now a greater emphasis at all levels to retain and love the ball and you will see very few headers in the game of Mini Soccer.

Coaches should use the time they have with players to maximise enjoyment and development of other skills, particularly the fundamentals of working with the ball in their hands and feet.

Focus should be on learning to master the ball and the body through fun activities.

The Youth Development Phase DNA continues to provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for young players. The priority as players get older is still fun, engagement and mastery of both the body and the ball.

Players at this age are ready to cope with more decision making, which is reflected in the challenges provided in both training and games. This will still be done within an environment that is both supportive and positive.

While there may be a small increase in the number of headers seen in the game at this age group, it will remain a low priority when compared to other technical aspects of the game.

Coaches should continue to use the time they have with players to maximise the development of other key skills seen more regularly in the game at this age.