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English
Schools'
Football
Association

POKÉMONTM



PRIMARY SCHOOLS'

CUP



The Pokémon Primary Schools' Cup 2024/2025

Toolkit for Competition Organisers
and Team Managers

The Pokémon Primary Schools' Cup 2024/2025







The Pokémon Company is on a mission to delight our fans through excellent products and meaningful experiences. We hope to help make the world a better place for everyone by creating opportunities to bond and grow through shared journeys and friendly competition. So, we're incredibly excited to now be part of this long-standing competition and hope young trainers from schools all over the country will take part, to enjoy their own shared journey, making new friends and memories along the way



What is the Pokémon Primary Schools' Cup?

The Pokémon Primary Schools' Cup is the largest primary-aged schools' cup competition in England, with over 5,000 school teams and over 50,000 children taking to pitches across England to play in this huge tournament.

The U11 Schools' Cup, U11 Girls' Cup and U11 Small Schools' Cup competitions provide a pathway for teams to progress through three rounds of competition. The top 24 teams will have the opportunity to travel to the National Finals, where the National Champions will be crowned. The competition embraces and promotes the ESFA's "15 Benefits" of schools' football including, but not limited to -

-  **Providing opportunities to develop positive relationships**
-  **Helping children to feel they are part of a team**
-  **Encouraging teamwork**
-  **Teaching respect**

The ESFA's partnership with Pokémon gives the Primary Schools' Cup competitions an exciting identity and creates new experiences for players and teachers alike.



How does it work?

The local District Schools' FA (this can be the local District Schools' FA, School Games Organiser, School Sports Partnership, etc) will run a tournament for the primary/middle schools within its membership using any or all of the categories listed.

How you do this will be determined by how many teams you have taking part. If you have a small number of teams, then you may be able to achieve this as a one day tournament. If you are working with a larger number of teams, then you may decide to run this via several qualifying tournaments which lead to a District Finals day.

The winners of the District Final will be invited to participate at the County Finals where the winners of other Districts from within the County will also be invited to compete.

Safeguarding

All tournament organisers are advised to produce a risk assessment for hosting their event(s) and to share it with the participating school teams. A risk assessment template can be downloaded from <https://schoolsfootball.org/for-associations/resources/> If the host organisation or participating schools have any safeguarding concerns, then please contact the English Schools' FA

Welfare Officers:

Emma Allen: emma.allen@schoolsfa.com | 07855 942337

Martin Duffield: martin.duffield@schoolsfa.com | 07852 276416

Categories:

The categories of competition that are offered are as follows:

- **U11 7-a-side School Teams' Cup**
(for boys and girls)
- **U11 7-a-side Schools' Cup for Girls**
(girls only competition)
- **U11 Small Schools' Cup**
To be eligible to enter the Small Schools' Cup, the affiliated school must have not more than 95 pupils on roll in Years 4, 5 and 6, and not more than 65 pupils in Years 5 and 6 (in total) as of 1st September, in the current playing season. Schools that qualify for the Small Schools' Cup may enter that competition OR the Schools' Cup for School Teams – not both. The ESFA has been given dispensation by The FA to operate a three-year age band in this competition only



Tournament Pathway and Date Structure

The tournament pathway of the ESFA Pokémon Primary Schools' Cup is as follows:

District Rounds

(Inter-School categories only)

September - December: the local District Schools' FA will stage a competition for schools in its membership. The winning schools shall be invited to compete at the County Finals.

County Rounds

By 01 February 2025: the local County Schools' FA will stage a competition for the District winners within its County SFA affiliated membership. The county winners will be invited to compete at the Regional Finals.

Regional Finals

By 29 March 2025: the ESFA will organise regional finals for the county champion teams. The winners and runners-up of the Regional Finals will be invited to compete at the National Finals in May.

National Finals

The ESFA and Pokémon will use best endeavors to secure a Premier League or Football League stadium to host the National Finals in May. The last few seasons have seen the finals held at Leicester City, Stoke City, Derby County, Coventry City and Birmingham City.

National Finalists 2023 - 2024

At the National Finals, in May, the 8 qualify teams in each category of competition, will be split into 2 groups of 4 teams and will play each once in the league phase. A win will earn 3 points, a draw will earn 1 point and a defeat will earn 0 points. The winners and runners-up of each group will qualify to participate in the national semi-final. The winners of Group A will play the runners-up in Group B and vice versa. The winners of the two semi-final fixtures will play in the national final to determine the champions of England. Extra time of 2 x 3 minute periods and penalty kicks will be used, if necessary, to determine winning teams in the knockout section of the competition. Participating teams will be required to submit a squad list with dates of birth, so the ESFA can check player eligibility. All appropriate documentation regarding the national finals will be sent to the national finalists before the school Easter holidays

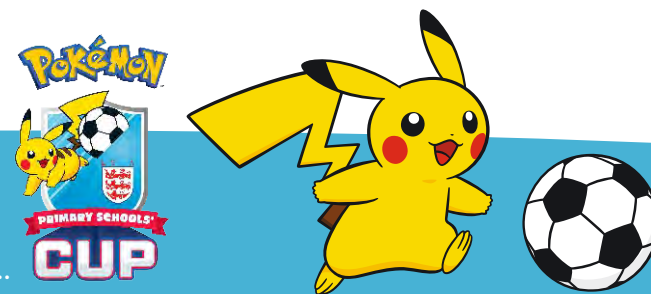


Rules

The ESFA recognises that some compromises regarding the rules may be required in order for local delivery to take place, but we encourage consistency where possible. The following are some important notes relating to the rules for you to adopt at your tournaments:

- The tournament is a 7-a-side competition
- Teams can select from a squad of 10 (three named substitutes are allowed for each match)
- Repeated substitutions are allowed in each match (so if a player comes off, then they become a sub)
- In the School Teams Cup and the Girls' Cup, players must be under 11 and over 9 years of age at midnight on the 31 August / 1 September in the playing season to be eligible to participate in this competition (school years 5 and 6 only)
- In the Small Schools' Cup, only pupils who are under the age of 11 and who are over the age of 8 years at midnight between the previous 31st August and 1st September shall be allowed to take part in these competitions. (Years 4, 5 and 6 only)

- A 60 × 40 yard pitch size is recommended (full sized pitches split into thirds or quarters is acceptable)
- 12ft x 6ft goalposts will be used (availability will dictate the size of your goal posts (7 ft high x 16 ft wide is acceptable and is age appropriate)
- Tournaments may be played on 3G or 4G pitches provided that the venue holds a valid test certificate and appears on The FA's register of artificial pitches - to view the register visit <http://3g.thefa.me.uk/>
- A size 4 ball shall be used
- Players' shirts shall be numbered where possible. It is acknowledged that some primary school football kits are not numbered
- In District and County Rounds, the host association will appoint the referees
- In the Regional and National Finals the ESFA will appoint the referees
- Matches will consist of two periods of seven minutes each (this will be dependent of venue availability and the number of participating teams)





- Teams should play in a league format followed by a knockout section (i.e. the winners and runners-up from each group will go forward to play in a semi-final, followed by a final)
- In the league phase, a win will earn three points, a draw one point and a defeat 0 points
- If teams finish level in the group phase, then the position shall be decided by goal difference
- If points and goal difference are level, then the position shall be decided by goals scored
- If teams are level on points, goal difference and goals scored, then the qualifying team shall be decided by a play-off (or a penalty shoot-out if time does not allow for a full play off)
- If scores are level at the end of a knockout fixture, extra time of three minutes each way shall be played. If scores remain level after extra time, the winners shall be determined by taking kicks from the penalty mark (FIFA rules)
- The rule relating to offside does not apply to this competition
- The 'retreat' rule relating to goal keeper kicks applies in this competition. This means that when a goalkeeper takes a goal kick off the ground, the opponents must retreat to their own half of the pitch unless the goalkeeper decides to take the kick early.



County Schools' FA Contact Details

The contact details for County Schools' FA Secretaries are listed below together with the Region in which each County is located within the ESFA structure

North Region

Association Name	Name	Email Address
CLEVELAND	Simon Carey	sicarey@sky.com;clevelandsfa@gmail.com
CUMBRIA	Paul Tickner	paultickner13@gmail.com
DURHAM	Keith Gilbertson	kgilbertson@hotmail.co.uk
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MERSEYSIDE	Eric Lang	mcsfasecretary@gmail.com
WEST YORKSHIRE	Thomas Walton	t.walton1950@outlook.com

Midlands Region

Association Name	Name	Email Address
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STAFFORDSHIRE	Mark Warren	warrenmark7@btinternet.com
WARWICKSHIRE	Kelly McKay	chair@wcsfa.co.uk;secretary@wcsfa.co.uk
WEST MIDLANDS	Martin Duffield	cuddlydudley@sky.com
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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	David Dent	david.dent@northamptonshiresport.org
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE	Sam Stretton	sam.stretton@ashfield.notts.sch.uk

South West Region

Association Name	Name	Email Address
CORNWALL	Ray Brown	ray.brownaTRACE@outlook.com
DEVON	Chris French	chris.french@devonfa.com
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SOMERSET	Jess Humphrey	jessamine.humphrey@somersetfa.com
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South East Region

Association Name	Name	Email Address
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HERTFORDSHIRE	John Annett	annettj@kls.herts.sch.uk
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Social Media

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www.youtube.com/c/pokemon
www.youtube.com/esfatv

For more information, please visit
<https://schoolsfootball.org/sponsors-partners/pokemon-schools-cup/>





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