

MESSC Instructional Soccer Program

The Kindergarten Instructional Program introduces children to the game of soccer and is offered each year to students enrolled in Kindergarten in the Mason School District.

The First Grade Instructional Program focuses on developing basic soccer skills and is offered each year to students enrolled in First Grade in the Mason School District.

Practices are conducted in the fall (September and October) and the spring (April and May). MESSC schedules three scrimmages for each team in both the fall and the spring.

The teams in the Instructional Program are modeled after the Second and Third Grade ESSL teams: parents as coaches, 6-12 players per team, 6 players on the field (including a goalkeeper), and each player plays at least half of every game (except in cases of injury or late arrival).

The teams in the Instructional Program use the same rules as the Second and Third Grade ESSL teams, with a few exceptions. The rules variations are:

- a) six periods in the scrimmage (six minutes per period)
- b) one or two coaches from each team on the field
- c) repeated "do overs" until the player gets it right

Using six short periods per scrimmage helps balance playing time (each player must play at least half of each scrimmage) and accounts for the limited stamina of the younger players.

It helps to have two coaches on the field, one at each end. They can be more effective in preventing "swarms" and getting things set up correctly for kick offs, goal kicks, corner kicks, throw ins, etc.

Since the scrimmages are supposed to be part of the instructional process, the referees will let a player keep trying until he or she gets it right. That primarily affects throw ins, but it also applies to kick offs, goal kicks, and corner kicks.

Please note: participants in all MESSC programs must wear shin guards and appropriate footwear during all practices and games. Participants may wear sneakers, gym shoes, or turf shoes (no metal cleats and no center toe cleat).