

# Parents' Frequently Asked Questions: Heading at the U10 & U11 National Tournaments

## Introduction

The Premier League, in collaboration with designated research and technology partners, is conducting analysis at the upcoming U10 and U11 National Tournaments (26-29 May 2026) to further understand heading demands in the Foundation Phase.

This analysis forms part of wider work to inform the Premier League's position on heading in the Foundation Phase. This work includes stakeholder consultation, wider scientific and medical insight and Games Programme analysis.

## What is happening?

The Premier League has collaborated with a company called PlayerData and Puma who together have created an instrumented football to collect data during normal match play. An instrumented ball, is a football with in-built technology that can provide information on measures such as ball speed or spin rates.

The data received from the football has been independently tested and verified by researchers at Imperial College London in a laboratory environment, and we are now moving to a phase of on-field testing. The purpose of this study is to collect information on Player's ball interactions, including heading frequency.

## What is this study about?

The study is looking at heading in young players' matches so the Premier League can build a better evidence base and help inform future guidance and player welfare practice.

## What will my child need to do?

Your child will play football as normal. They will wear a vest with a small tracking device during matches, and the match ball will also contain a device that records ball interactions. There are no additional physical procedures or interventions. Other than wearing the vest, it is unlikely your Child will be aware of any changes.

## What information is being collected?

The study collects data about ball interactions, including heading frequency, and some match and movement data from the tracking device and the ball.

## Who is collecting the information?

The technology is being provided by a company called PlayerData, and their staff will be on site to support with data collection and analysis. All personnel involved in the study will comply with Premier League safeguarding requirements.

## Will my child be identified in the results?

No. The research data will be pseudonymised, which means names are not needed for the research itself. Any findings will be reported in a way that does not publicly identify individual players.

## Who will be able to see the data?

Only authorised Premier League staff and approved research partners involved in the project will have access. Data may also be shared with clubs after the event for performance insight.

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## **How will the data be stored?**

Data will be handled in line with data protection law and Premier League governance requirements. It will be stored securely and kept only as long as needed for the project and reporting.

## **Is taking part compulsory?**

No. Participation is voluntary. A player or club can withdraw at any time without penalty, and this will not affect taking part in the tournament itself. Please advise the staff at your Club if you do not wish your child to take part.

## **Who can I contact if I have questions?**

If you have any questions, please contact [ElitePerformance@premierleague.com](mailto:ElitePerformance@premierleague.com).