



Junior Selection Policy

This policy demonstrates Basingstoke Hockey Club's commitment to the development of young players as they are the future of our club and of hockey in general and that the club will always act in the best interests of the individual as well as supporting England Hockey's Player Pathway system, namely: -

The England Hockey Player Pathway provides an environment that helps all junior players realise their potential, whether that means they are the best club player they can be, seek a lifelong commitment to the game through coaching or volunteering or perhaps go on to represent England or Great Britain at junior or senior level.

This policy's aim is to ensure that our junior members are given every opportunity to reach their full potential whatever level that may be (*international, regional, county, social or otherwise*).

The policy relates to junior members under the age of 18 as of 1st September of each playing season and therefore eligible to play in a junior side for that season. It relates to selection for those junior age groups (*U18s, U16s, U14s, U12s, U10s, U8s and U6s*) and **is not** concerned with selection of juniors for adult teams. This information can be found in the '**Junior Development Selection Policy**.'

It should be noted that junior sides cover two age groups.

Selection and development within the Junior selection will be overseen by the 'Junior Playing Committee'. The committee meets when required and is chaired by the Youth Co-ordinator and will include the Director of Hockey, Lead Junior Coach, Welfare Officer and appropriate youth managers/coaches.

This policy states:

1. The club will take a long-term view of the development of all its young players in line with the principles of, and adopted within, England Hockey's Player Pathway.
2. The club will abide by the England Hockey centralised calendar and the priority this provides to ensure that young players at each stage of their development are given the opportunity to play and train at the right level for them without being overplayed;
3. All selection will be made in line with the principles outlined in the EH Equality Policy (Found within the Code of Ethics & Behaviour – RESPECT) and EH Proud to Protect - Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Hockey Policy adopted by this club.
4. The junior selection is responsible for developing junior players in a positive, friendly, fair and age appropriate coaching and playing environment. The club will achieve this through the following participation policies:
 - a. Junior players will primarily train and play with their own age group;
 - b. Where the 'Junior Playing Committee' decide that a player's development would benefit, they could be invited to attend the training of higher age group. In making this decision, consideration will be taken of:

- a player's all round playing ability including skills, attributes and attitude towards the game;
 - the emotional maturity of the player;
 - a player's physical development;
 - the opinions of the junior player themselves and their parents/guardians.
- c. Only players in the older part of an age group, will be invited to attend an 'older age group' training session *e.g. an U9 will not be invited to attend an U12s training session.*
 - d. The inclusion of younger players at a older age group training session should not have a detrimental impact on the coach's ability to deliver an age appropriate training session to that age group;
 - e. Players who train with an 'older age group' remain part of their age group team, training with them and playing in their tournaments and matches. They are not automatically selected for the older age group matches;
 - f. Where a youth manager is short of players to fulfil a fixture, they may ask the coach from the younger age group for a player to 'play up' for that specific fixture. This player should be selected from the older part of the younger age group to ensure that they are physically capable of playing with, and against, players up to three years older than them and to ensure equal opportunity of selection. Inclusion of a younger player in an older age group fixture should not impact on the ability of the younger team to fulfil their fixture;
 - g. Younger players should not be selected for an older age group over players in that age group. Available players within that age group should always be selected and played first regardless of ability;
 - h. Where the 'Junior Playing Committee', in conjunction with parents/guardians decide that a player would benefit from playing with a 'younger age group', they can train and play for the age group below their chronological age. This will only apply to players in the lower part of an age group *e.g. an U13 may play for the U12s but not an U14.*
 - i. The decision to allow a player to play for a younger age group may be based on levels of emotional maturity, physical development or specific individual needs. A player will not be asked to play for a younger age group simply based on their skill level;
 - j. Where a player is training with a younger age group, they should be given equal opportunity to participate in matches with that younger age group;
5. As much as practically possible, age group teams will ensure that each member of the squad is given as equal as possible amount of pitch time per match or per event to ensure every individual has the opportunity to develop. Winning is important but is a short-term gain. Where a squad has too many players, youth managers will rotate players to ensure everyone has the opportunity to develop;

6. Subject to the availability of appropriate coaches, the club will offer hockey training to children from when they start full time formal schooling (e.g. year R school year). This will be delivered as a separate Under 6 age group session and delivered with the following principles:
 - the safety of all children training will be the primary concern and all children participating should be able to:
 - i. listen within a small group;
 - ii. follow simple instructions given by the coach.
 - If a coach feels that a year R child's inclusion is detrimental to the safety of other participants, they may be asked to delay their start until later in the season and/or the parent/guardian may be asked to directly support them on the pitch during training sessions;
 - As there are no specific competitions catering for under 6s, children in this age group and in school year R, will not be selected to play in under 8 competitions due to safety considerations centred around their physical maturity, inability to sustain concentration during matches and listen to instructions from umpires;
 - Children in this age group and in school year 1, whose parents want them to play, may be selected to play in under 8 competitions if the coach deems it appropriate. However, parents/guardians will be made aware that they will be playing with, and against, children three years older and physically developed;
7. In exceptional circumstances, for the benefit of the junior section as a whole, the Junior Playing Committee may deem it necessary to ask players to permanently move to play and train in a team that is different to their chronological age. This is purely based on player numbers across the section to give maximum pitch time to all young players. Parents/guardians and young players being considered for this will need to agree for this to happen. Selection is based on age and characteristics outlined in 4b.
8. The membership secretary will control playing administration. Details of players who have not paid their subscriptions or owe the club funds will be relayed to the DOH and Youth co-ordinator ; **PLAYERS WILL NOT BE SELECTED** until all payments due are made.
9. The Youth co-ordinator's decision is absolute.