



POLICY FOR U18's PLAYING IN ADULT TEAMS

INCORPERATING YOUNG PLAYER AND PARENT CODES OF CONDUCTS

1. Introduction

IMPORTANT: Players are restricted by England Hockey from participating in adult hockey leagues until they reach their 13th birthday.

Young individuals playing club hockey are often introduced to senior teams and development sides, allowing them to gain experience playing with and against older players. This step up can be pivotal to their hockey playing career but can be a daunting experience. Bicester Hockey Club has a duty of care towards young players.

Note. Young players are anyone under the age of 18 years old.

2. Bicester Hockey Club Responsibilities to Young Players

General

- To strive to create an environment where sport is fun, enjoyable and fair play is encouraged.
- To provide positive role models for young players.
- To take any allegations, concerns, or suspicion of misconduct seriously and respond in a fair and appropriate manner.
- To work to avoid situations where adults (other than their parents/guardians) could be alone with a young player.
- To avoid placing excessive amounts of pressure in young players. Whilst there may be competitive situations, emphasis should be development and having fun.

Responsible Persons

Coaches are responsible for organising and running training sessions and will be responsible for any young players present. They will have appropriate training and have passed a DBS check.

Team Captains are responsible for team organisation including selection, match planning and leading the team on the day or appointing a suitable person to do so. They will have passed DBS check. The match day captain will be responsible for any young players on their team.

Team Mentor will be appointed by the team captain to support young players who are new to the team. They may themselves be a young player.

Club Captain will provide support to team captains and coaches. To act as point of escalation or mediator as required.

Welfare Officer will advise on matters concerning safeguarding and welfare and take action as necessary. To coordinate DBS checks and first aid training as necessary. To promote England Hockey best practice and Code of Ethics and Behaviour within Bicester Hockey Club.

Selection, Training and Matches

- A captain will consult with parent/guardian and young player prior to first selection for adult team.
- Team captains will be mindful of individual needs when transitioning a young player between teams. The reason for the decision should first be discussed with the young player and their parent/guardian.
- Team captains and coaches will be mindful that hockey may not be the players priority, and this should be respected.
- Provide team protective equipment including face masks for short corners and goalkeeper kits where young players do not possess their own. To ensure that young players wear appropriate equipment including mouthguards and shinpads when training or playing matches.

Changing Rooms

When using changing rooms before or after games:

- Young players will not be pressurised to change or shower in public.
- Adults should not spend time alone with young players particularly in the changing rooms.
- Team briefing /debriefing when held in the changing rooms should be separate from changing to give young players the opportunity to leave if they wish.

Communication

- Nominated parent/guardian should always be included in any communication to the young player.
- Official communication such as selections will be managed through Pitchero to ensure compliance with UK data protection laws.
- If using team social media or message groups, any young player included will also have a parent/guardian as part of the group. Groups should be limited to hockey discussion and captains will be responsible for moderating content which may not be appropriate for young players.
- Should a face-to-face meeting be required the parent/guardian will be requested to attend and a second representative from Bicester Hockey Club should always be present.
- Photos of a young player will not be posted on social media or used for publicity without parent/guardian permission. This consent will be recorded on Pitchero.

Transportation

- For away games the captain is responsible for arranging transportation (if required) to and from Cooper School or a mutually agreed meeting point with the parent/guardian.
- Young players will not be left alone to make their own way home or to wait for a lift following training or games without the express permission of parent/guardian.
- All drivers providing transport arranged by the club will hold a full driving licence.
- Adults should not transport young players alone unless express permission of parent/guardian has been provided.
Young players should not be taken back to an adults home.

3. Young Player Responsibilities

- To abide by the Bicester Hockey Club Players Charter and the rules of hockey
- To take responsibility for their own behaviour on and off the pitch
- With captain consultation to be willing to play in different playing positions and for different teams
- Take responsibility for wearing protective equipment when participating in training or matches. As a minimum this should include shin pads, mouthguards, face masks (for defending short corners) and goalkeeper equipment (if playing in goal).
- To communicate availability for games and training
- To not smoke, drink alcohol or take drugs of any kind (other than prescription) whilst participating in Bicester Hockey Club activities

4. Parent Responsibilities

- To encourage the young player to abide by Bicester Hockey Club's Player Charter and the rules of hockey
- To support the young player whilst avoiding placing excessive pressure on performance
- To support the young player in learning that honest effort and teamwork are more important than victory
- To ensure the young player has suitable clothing and equipment to participate
- To pay subscriptions and match fees promptly
- To arrange transportation of the young player to and from the Bicester Hockey Club
- To support participation in training and matches where possible
- To allow the young player to participate in after match teas where possible
- To show respect for umpires, officials, coaches, captains, players, spectators and other members of the hockey community
- When spectating to act as an ambassador for Bicester Hockey Club and to conduct themselves in a manner which promotes the sport and club
- Unless participating in the game as a player or an official parents/guardians should spectate from designated spectator areas/ behind fences/barriers as applicable
- To applaud good play by both teams and to not ridicule or shout at player, umpires, coaches, captains or other spectators
- To respect decisions made by captains and coaches and to raise concerns in a polite and considerate manner to the appropriate Bicester Hockey Club official (see section 5)
- To show appreciation and respect that the majority of individuals involved in the running of Bicester Hockey Club are volunteers
- To provide information which may impact on the young players wellbeing on and off the pitch to the appropriate team captain. This will be treated as confidential but with permission it may be necessary to share with other captains and the Welfare Officer

5. Communication Pathway

Should a young player or parent/guardian have any questions or wish to raise concerns, then they should follow the communication pathway below. Should this be in relation to an individual in one of these positions then they can reach out to the next level.

