



This policy outlines Winchester HC's commitment to the development of young players as they are the future of our club and of hockey in general - the club will always endeavour to act in the best interests of the individual.

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

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 Long Term Athlete Development adopted within England Hockey's Single System.
2. The club will enforce that no young person under the age of 13 (on 1st January of the season being played) is to play in adult only competition.
3. The club will enforce the EHL regulation stating that a player must have reached the age of 15 to be eligible to be registered to play in the EHL.
4. Young players will not be called upon to play in adult only competition until it is in the best interest of the young player. If an adult team is short and the only option is a young player who is not ready either physically, mentally or socially, then the adult team will play short.
5. The club will abide by England Hockey recommendations regarding player eligibility and competition rules. Young people are defined as children not yet 18 years old.
6. The club recognises 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.
7. For young players eligible to be involved in adult teams, careful consideration will be given to ensure that the distance travelled is proportional to the likely pitch time for the young player. As a guide, it is suggested that players who will play less than half a game should not travel for longer than 60 minutes.
8. All selection will be made in line with the principles outlined in the EH Equity Policy and EH Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Hockey Policy adopted by this club (see EH7).
9. As much as practically possible, peer group teams will ensure that each member of the squad is given as equal as possible an 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.
10. Player development will follow the Club's Player Pathway principles.