

Cambridge South Hockey Club

Junior Handbook

Welcome to Cambridge South Hockey Club Juniors (CSHCJ)! Here is some useful information. For other more general information, subs, registration forms, policies etc please go to [the website](#).

About Training

We have a dedicated team of qualified coaches, ably supported by parent and player volunteers who coach the Junior section. All training takes place at Long Road 6th Form College (CB2 8PX) or the St Mary's pitch just a little further along Long Road where there is plenty of free, onsite parking. Training times are all on the website.

Visit Spond to see which date training starts and ends. Note that sessions start at 9:00 (Sat – U8/U10) and 18:15 (midweek – U12/U14) but we ask that players turn up 15 mins earlier so we can have good warm-up and make full use of the pitch time. Please remind your children that they should not enter the pitch or begin any hockey activities until a supervising coach is present.

Parents of U8s and U10s must stay onsite for training and matches – or clearly delegate to a named contact (on Spond) who will be present.

On midweek evenings, although it is reasonable that older children arrive/leave independently, we have sometimes been concerned about kids waiting in the dark for long periods without supervision and seen some unsafe behaviour, especially on the St Mary's access road. Please discuss road and personal safety with your children and be aware we will not be monitor them outside the pitch/training.

Occasionally training is cancelled – normally only due to frozen pitches or extreme weather e.g. thunderstorms, strong gales. Check Spond before you travel if frost or extreme weather is forecast.

Goalkeeper Training

If your son or daughter is interested in trying out as a goalkeeper, talk with the coaches. There is dedicated goalkeeper training for both boys and girls and plenty of club goalie kit to protect them. Some children alternate between goalkeeper training and outfield training – there is no need to commit to one or the other.

What kit do I need?

All sticks, balls and equipment are provided, but players may bring their own stick if they have one (please label clearly). Players require comfortable sportswear and trainers with grippy soles and should bring a water bottle. **Mouthguards and shinguards are strongly recommended for all players** and warm, grippy gloves in winter. Coaches may ask your child to miss out on some or all of training if they do not have a mouth guard. There are often

snap-fit mouth guards available to buy from the junior shed if you forget one – ask the organising club volunteer.

Everyone receives a purple club t-shirt when they join. This should be worn for matches together with navy shorts or skort and purple socks (plain purple socks are available for purchase from the junior shed). In cold weather, base layers to be worn under the club uniform are recommended. Additional club kit can be ordered via the club website.

Spond

When you registered with the Club, you should have received an email invitation to join the Spond platform, which can be accessed via a mobile app or through a web browser. The Club uses [Spond](#) to send out communications regarding training and fixtures, to register attendance, to request payments and to store emergency contact and medical information. Please ensure your and your child's details are kept up to date on Spond. Tips on using Spond are at the back of this handbook.

Fixtures & Matches

All fixtures are on Spond. We put them up as far in advance as we have notice so you can get them in your calendar but timings are often not available until much closer to the day. They will show as starting at 00:00 until we have this information, at which point Spond will be updated. In general, development tournaments run 10-3 ish on Sundays (youngest children first, eldest at the end of the day). Likewise, if fixtures change or are cancelled this will be shown on Spond.

We have different kinds of fixtures on offer for different groups of players. We aim to give all players the chance to play competitive hockey at a level that suits them. Match levels range from most to least competitive. In reality, in our region this manifests as Tier 1, Tier 2, and Development games with the In2 Hockey tournaments thrown in.

- **Development Festivals/U14 Festivals:** Everyone will be invited to play in these festivals (although stronger players may be asked to step aside or to play up an age group so that they still get to participate whilst remaining in the spirit of the development tournaments). These are friendly, welcoming events. The pitch sizes are small and no one (except for the kids) keeps the score! There are usually 4-6 of these events each year, always on Sundays and within an hour's drive of Cambridge.
- **England Hockey Cup Competition:** for U14 boys and girls. A knockout competition in which you get to go through at least two rounds of competition, more for the winners! Full pitch. Varied locations.
- **Area League:** some age groups will take part in Tier 1 or Tier 2 league competitions, with entries depending on player availability and judged year to year. This is a bigger commitment and we hope players selected for these teams will be able to play consistently throughout the year.
- **In2 Hockey:** this is an annual competition, run in the spring, at an area level for U10 and U12 age groups. It is 'the big one' with medals to win! We can enter both cup (higher) and plate (lower) level teams and is the one time that the selection process will be focussed on putting out our very strongest team. There is the opportunity for qualifying for a regional competition too.

- **Friendly fixtures:** We arrange a number of ‘friendlies’ throughout the season against local clubs for U10 players and older. These give players a chance to prepare for more formal competitions and often to play on a larger pitch than they would meet at the development events.

Skills development in a friendly environment

This gives our players excellent opportunities to develop their skills. It is worth noting that our fixtures are almost always on Sundays and are **additional** to training. This contrasts with some other local clubs which often ‘train’ more than once a week but actually use one of those sessions for matches.

The coaches will select teams for matches based upon availability (as shown on Spond) and appropriate ability. PLEASE keep availability updated. We will endeavour to confirm team selection by the Thursday before the fixture at the latest. The club uses Spond as the “source of truth” for fixtures’ availability.

Socials

We try to arrange a few social gatherings over the season. This is great fun for the children, and also a nice opportunity for parents to get to know each other away from the hockey pitch. It would be amazing if parent volunteers can step up to organise socials – often it works well to go to the park/for a meal after development tournaments.

How can my son/daughter progress at Cambridge South?

Many children just enjoy the weekly training and regular club tournaments. However, some players are keen to play more, and South can help support your child find the right opportunities for them.

As a smaller club, we do not ‘set’ our players and celebrate our inclusive attitude to hockey. If your child is a particularly strong player and you think they would enjoy being stretched, it may be possible to train with an older age group - please reach out to your age group lead if you feel this would benefit your child.

In addition to the Junior training and matches which cater for children in year 9 and below, players are eligible to join senior club hockey training from the age of 13. We have a good track record of supporting our juniors to transition to the senior club and are thrilled to see so many thriving there and reaching the very top squads. **This can be a real bonus of playing at South** – rather than holding our juniors back to strengthen younger teams, players get the experience of playing at a higher/senior level which can be enriching socially as well as for their hockey game.

Progression to Senior Hockey: Each year we will speak to parents of Year 9 players to discuss the move up to senior hockey and there may be opportunities to join senior training/attend senior summer pay and play sessions beforehand. 13-year-olds are eligible to play in senior teams; 12-year-olds can play in a Development Team (CSHC’s Men’s and Women’s lowest teams are Development Teams).

Our policy is that interested players over 12 years old who express an interest and who are already playing County/County Development hockey will be invited to have a go at training (and potentially be available for selection) with the senior development teams. If your player doesn't do County but you would like them to be considered for senior hockey before year 10, please speak to your age group lead.

Hockey Camps: There are also several independent companies who offer excellent holiday hockey camps which we strongly encourage attending. We are not affiliated with them but will sometimes post flyers when they are sent to us.

County Hockey and Talent Academy: England hockey have a 'Talent System' to recruit the best talent to the sport's higher levels.

South runs junior hockey until U14 level (meaning the whole school year that the player turns 14). Up until that age, County Hockey is the key route to develop talent outside your school or club.

We have a great 'hit rate' for South players being selected to be part of the Cambridgeshire County hockey setup. Cambs Hockey run sessions through the summer at which they coach and assess players then select players to join either their Development training or County Squad training which goes on through the winter. Ask your age group lead or a lead coach if your child is keen and interested and they will be happy to discuss whether your child is of a suitable standard to join County sessions. County assessments usually welcome kids in Y6 or above.

Please don't be intimidated by County hockey – the summer sessions are welcoming and a good opportunity to get affordable coaching over the summer months. Players are assessed during those sessions and the strongest selected for County development or main squad at the end of the summer. Sign up via <https://cambs hockey.co.uk/getinvolved> to find out more. (The website is a bit outdated and their comms have historically been very poor, so contact them by email and ask those already in the system if you want to know more. We will pass on any info they send us as a club.)

For the bigger picture and information about the Talent System, visit [England Hockey](#) to find out more about the national structure of the hockey talent system. For the very strongest players there is the opportunity to train at a Regional Centre from age 14.

Who to contact if you have questions?

Use Spond messaging to get in touch. For enquiries before you join, Ellie Raffan (junior coordinator) or the CSHC Secretary via the contact form on the website are the best people to contact. Once your child has joined, your first point of contact should usually be your age group lead. They are likely to be the 'host' of your training session on Spond.

For more detail about key club policies on issues such as Safeguarding, Welfare, Photography and our Code of Ethics please [visit the website](#) where you will also find key contacts, including our safeguarding lead's contact information.

Reporting of injuries

In order to collect meaningful data, England Hockey requires clubs/associations to complete the England Hockey online 'Injury Monitoring Form' following injuries sustained that require one or more of the following:

- Treatment from a first aid specialist (e.g. Team doctor/ first responder)
- Hospital treatment
- Subsequent visit(s) to a GP

Please complete the form found on the [England Hockey website](#) for any injuries sustained which meet one or more of the criteria outlined above.

Would you like to get involved?

Cambridge South Hockey Club is a volunteer led club and there are lots of opportunities to get involved with Cambridge South Juniors. We train, support and pay our coaches and assistant coaches. We also welcome parent volunteers to help with training - especially for the U8 and U10 sessions. You don't need to commit to every week. There are also opportunities to help with the administrative side of things e.g. confirming fixtures, running tournaments, communications etc. If you have a skill, spot a gap that you think you can fill or just want to chat about how you can be more involved let us know!

We hope your child(ren) have a great season playing for CSHC Juniors. Don't forget there are lots of senior teams, including social vets hockey, if parents would also like to play.

Tips for using Spond

We use [Spond](#) to communicate and also to invoice for payments e.g. subs. This is the one place where you will find all the information about training and matches and where other key information will be posted e.g. if training is cancelled, who is selected for a match.

How to:

1. Set up Spond for CSHC Juniors

<https://help.spond.com/en/articles/28550-installing-spond-s-team-management-solution-spond-app>

2. Sync with your calendar.

- The app can be synchronized with both iCal (iOS) and Google Calendar (Android). You can also set reminders for events that you are attending.
- If you declined this option the first time you downloaded Spond, your preferences can be changed in your profile in the app (the profile icon in the top left corner).
- If you can't find the calendar you wish to synchronise with in Spond's calendar settings, you need to add the calendar into the devices accounts:
 - iOS: Phone settings > Passwords and Accounts > Add account > Enable 'Calendar'
 - Android: Phone settings > Account > Add account > Enable 'Calendar'

3. Indicate your availability for training or matches

- You will be invited to indicate your child's availability for training or matches.
 - For training, the default is 'Attending'. Please click on 'Decline' if your child is not able to attend.
 - For fixtures, the default is unanswered. Please indicate your child's availability by selecting 'Attend' or 'Declined'. It is really important to provide accurate availability as early as possible to enable coaches to select the most appropriate team for the fixture.
 - If availability changes you can simply go back into the event and alter it.

4. Message your age group rep or coach.

- Please be considerate when leaving comments. If the whole group doesn't need to see your post, please either:
 - 'Send message to hosts' within the event. Use this if you have questions specifically for the coach or age group rep.
 - If you only want to message 1 person, click on their name and select the 'Message' option.

5. Turn notifications on/off

- Every single invitation will give you the option of turning off notifications for comments. There could be several reasons as to why you would like to turn this off, for example you may find that the comment field is used too much or if the content is of no interest to you.
- You can turn off the notifications if you enter the event or group in the app. Choose the "More" tab to the top right corner, and then "Stop push notifications". You will no

longer receive comments (alerts) from this particular event if you choose this option, but you can always change your mind. This process is done in the same way.