



Wimbledon Hockey Club – Junior Kit & Inclusivity Policy

1. Purpose of this Policy

This policy sets out Wimbledon Hockey Club's approach to kit worn by junior members when training or playing at the club. It sits primarily under our Inclusivity value, with a strong and direct impact on Belonging and Self-Determination.

Our aim is simple: every junior should feel welcome, equal, and part of Wimbledon Hockey Club the moment they arrive.

2. Our Values

This policy is guided by our three core values:

- Belonging – Every member should feel that they are part of one club, one community, regardless of background or school.
- Inclusivity – No child should feel excluded, singled out, or disadvantaged because of where they go to school or which teams they represent elsewhere.
- Self-Determined – Juniors should feel confident and comfortable in their own identity at the club, free from perceived hierarchies or expectations.

3. Background and Context

We recognise that many of our junior members also play hockey at school or represent other teams, and we celebrate this involvement. However, we have observed that a significant number of juniors attend Wimbledon training sessions wearing school or representative kit.

While this may feel natural or convenient, it can unintentionally create challenges for inclusivity and belonging within the club environment.

4. Impact on Inclusivity and Belonging

We ask parents and junior members to consider the following from the perspective of a child arriving at training:

- What might it feel like to turn up and see most players wearing kit from particular schools?
- Does this create an immediate sense of division between those who attend certain schools and those who do not?
- Could a child feel singled out, different, or 'outside the group' if they are not part of those schools?
- Might there be a perception of bias, hierarchy, or favouritism based purely on what kit people are wearing?

Even when unintended, visible signals like school or representative kit can influence how young players perceive themselves and others. This can undermine the welcoming, neutral, and inclusive environment we are committed to providing.

5. Wimbledon Mode

When juniors are playing or training at Wimbledon Hockey Club, we want everyone to be in “Wimbledon mode.”

This means that, visually and emotionally, the club environment should feel unified and club-focused.

Acceptable Kit at Wimbledon Sessions

When attending training sessions or matches at Wimbledon Hockey Club, junior members should wear:

- Wimbledon Hockey Club match kit, or
- Wimbledon Hockey Club training kit, or
- Plain kit (no school or representative branding)

Kit Not to Be Worn at Wimbledon Sessions

- School hockey kit
- Representative kit

This applies to all on-pitch activity and, where possible, arrival at and departure from sessions.

6. What This Policy Is (and Is Not)

This policy is:

- About creating a sense of unity and belonging
- About removing visible barriers between members
- About ensuring all juniors feel equally valued

This policy is not:

- A criticism of schools or representative programmes
- A judgement on a child’s ability, background, or experience
- An attempt to limit opportunities outside the club

7. Support and Practical Considerations

We understand that practical challenges can arise (e.g. travelling directly from school). Where this happens, we ask families to do their best to change into Wimbledon or plain kit before taking part in club activities.

If access to kit is a concern, the club is committed to working with families to find supportive solutions.

8. Understanding and Practical Flexibility

We understand that many junior members arrive at Wimbledon Hockey Club directly from school or other sporting commitments. We appreciate the effort families make to support busy schedules, and we recognise that changing plans can sometimes feel inconvenient.

However, this context does not change the club's view on the importance of creating an inclusive and unified environment. Where possible, we would much prefer members to take a moment to use the changing rooms and change into Wimbledon kit or plain kit before joining the session.

We also recognise that, in some cases, this may mean a player arrives slightly late to the session in order to facilitate changing. This is acceptable and supported, and coaches will prioritise inclusivity and belonging over strict punctuality in these circumstances.

The visual and emotional impact of everyone being in "Wimbledon mode" is significant, and taking a few extra minutes to change helps ensure all juniors feel equally part of the club from the moment they step onto the pitch.

9. Shared Responsibility

Creating an inclusive environment is a shared responsibility between the club, coaches, parents, and players. By aligning on this policy, we help ensure Wimbledon Hockey Club remains a place where:

- Everyone feels they belong
- Differences are respected but not dividing
- Juniors can focus on enjoying hockey, learning, and being part of one club

10. Review

This policy will be kept under review, with feedback welcomed from junior members and parents to ensure it continues to support the best possible experience for all.