 **CLIFTON ROBINSONS GIRLS’ HOCKEY ACADEMY**

**What the Academy is about**

The Academy has been set up to help accelerate the progress of school-aged players from ages 12 to 18 with identified potential and commitment towards high performance (defined as National League and international competition)

We seek to help the girls develop the technical, tactical, physical and psychological knowhow to fulfil their potential. The Academy will look in some depth at the aspects of hockey that other forms of training rarely have time to consider. As a result, the overall theme for the Academy is **Focus, Resilience and Fun**.

**How it is structured**

There are 2 elements to the Clifton Robinsons Hockey Academy that reflect the age and stage of the players.The first is a coached sessions for ages 12 to 16 primarily for athletes at the talent development stage of the EH Pathway and the second is a mentoring programme primarily for athletes training and playing regularly in Clifton Robinsons teams that equate to the performance development and elite performance stages of the EH Pathway.

**Clifton-Robinsons Mentoring Programme**

The Mentoring Programme is part of Junior Academy. Junior players (not all!) are often quiet, unsure of boundaries and reticent to participate in higher performing groups. This may hold back their progress. The aim of the mentoring programme is to provide a knowledgeable ‘go to’ person that can help the young player become comfortable more quickly in their new environment, relax and so focus on the hockey! The mentor can also provide a friendly face if there is some emotional or practical issue that they do not want to broadcast. We don’t envisage this to be a formal activity and it may only be a few minutes a session which might become a 10 minute catch up every so often.

From a practical perspective…

**What the ‘Club’ will do**:

* Team Coaches help identify mentors (with the time, the right manner and experiences) and match them with junior players.
* Team Coaches set up the links with an introduction about the process\*.
* Advise parents/guardians of the process.+
* Provide Mentors with some support eg initiate DSB checks, be available for consultation, discussion etc\*\* where needed.
* Help review the process and progress with mentors and players as appropriate+

\*Mentor Support Group may also assist with these introductions as appropriate.

+ Mentor Support Group to action.

\*\*Mentor Support Group can offer support to a mentor as required.

In principle, each Mentor will be ‘allocated’ a player by the coach and seek to **build rapport** by**:**

* Understanding the **needs and motivations** of the player: Who are they, and why do they want to progress?
* Creating high quality **athlete-athlete relationship:** Prioritise trust, respect and honesty.
* Enhancing **communication:** Put time and effort to promote clarity, focus on the individual, listen and check for understanding.

**The Mentees**

* Junior players in the 1’s will be mentored on a 1 to 1 basis by a 1’s senior player.
* Junior players in the 2’s but training 1’s will be mentored by a 1’s senior player and the mentor will also need to retain a link into the 2’s as determined by the 2’s Coach.
* Junior players that are in the 2’s will be mentored by a 2’s senior player, ideally on a 1 to 1 basis.
* Junior players in the 3’s will ideally be mentored by a 3’s senior player. This is more of an introduction to the mentoring process and may not necessarily be 1 to 1. To start with Abi Porter will work with Georgie Killingbeck to support the players in the 3’s by familiarising them with the mentoring process, acting initially as mentors and, as the season progresses, draw in other senior players in the 3’s who wish to take up the role of mentor.

**For the Mentor**

We do not wish this to be onerous, but it needs to be done well to be of value. Some specific actions that may be of use to a mentor:

* Introduce yourself, link up at each session, be a friendly face within the squad and an approachable point of contact.
* Ask the player to share any specific goals that they are working towards. Maybe help with goal setting. Be another point of contact other than the coach who they can chat to around setting and reviewing playing goals.
* Ask the player to share any specific challenges they are facing in this group. Possibly offer advice around time management with school/club/performance commitments (Ideally a senior player, other than the coach, who’s been through that process). Probably need to have established a rapport before addressing this.
* Take a short time during the training session to observe the player.
* Help ensure that player is enjoying their time with us at Clifton and continues their hockey playing career post 18 in whatever form that takes.

The approach taken by the mentor will undoubtably tailored to the needs of the mentee.

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**For the Parent/Guardian**

Parent/Guardians will be advised of the programme and their consent will be sought for it to proceed by Mike Leatt. Whilst they will not be directly involved, the Club would wish parents to feel comfortable in approaching the Mentor Support Group should a need arise.

**Clifton Robinsons Coached Academy Sessions**

**Selection**

Selection for the Academy

**The Programme Content**

The programme draws on England Hockey’s and other sports research in developing players for high-performance environments. Specifically, through playing hockey, we aim to help each athlete develop a mindset that:

* Maximises their ability to take control of their own progression.
* Develops technical consistency using mental skills (imagery, self-talk, goal-setting).
* Improves decision-making through a better understanding of the game.

**Sessions**

Sessions will be run throughout the hockey season on a weekday to avoid clashing with adult hockey training and EH performance Centre weeks. It will be run early evening, ideally from 6.15 for 1 hour 45 minutes

**Hockey Homework**

We will expect the girls to prepare for and reflect on their Academy training sessions by completing a short, structured task between sessions. This will require access to a computer and use of Excel. Communication will be by e-mail according to safeguarding guidelines.

**Athletes’ Commitment**

You have been invited to attend the Academy following a combination of coach’s recommendation. progress to date and what we’ve seen of you on the pitch. We ask for full commitment – this is not a dip-in and dip-out opportunity. It is important that each athlete can and wants to commit to developing a much greater understanding of how to take control of their own hockey performance. We intend to have fun, but we want you to come to sessions with your game head on! If you think this isn’t for you right now – that’s absolutely fine. CRHC will still support your development during usual training and match-play – just let us know.

**Cost**

There is a small charge of £20 per player to cover additional costs of these sessions which will be collected automatically through Club Buzz after you accept the invitation.

Please complete the attached form to accept the invitation to the CRHC Girls’ Academy by 29 Sep and return it to ……

Mike Leatt

Annex:

1. Application Form