

MCHC Junior Hockey Frequently Asked Questions

The “Juniors” section of MCHC refers to all children aged approx. 4 to 18yrs who play Minkey, Grads and the Hockey WA Junior Competition of J5/6s to J11/12 (refers to player’s school year). If your child is in Year 3 or below, then please see the “Minkey” section of our website. If your child is in Year 4, they may play in our club-based “Grads” competition (see “Minkey” section) OR J5/6 Grade. Please contact us to decide which of these options is appropriate for your child.

The following information refers to J5/6s to J11/12s.

How do I register? All our registrations are done online. Registrations open in February.

<http://www.melvillehockey.com/register/>

My child has never played before. Does that matter? No, not at all! Because we are a big club, we have several teams in every age group, allowing us to have a team to match everyone’s level of ability/experience. It is never too late to start, we have beginners of all ages.

What grade will my child play? Junior Hockey year levels/grades are based on school year. So the J5/6 year level is for players in Years 5 and 6 at school (and some Year 4 students), J7/8 is for Years 7 and 8 and so on. Therefore, players spend two years in each year level (except those who started J5/6’s in Yr 4 – they complete 3 years). If your child is in a school year that doesn’t match their age (for example they have been accelerated a year, or delayed starting school), then they can play either in their school year, or in the year that would match their chronological age. Each year level is then further divided into grades (A, A Reserve, A Promotion, B, C) depending on the skill level and experience of the players.

When do they play? J5/6 and J7/8 games are played on Saturday mornings, with J5/6 games typically starting between 8.00am - 9.30am, and J7/8 games starting between 9.00am - 10.30 am. Games take approximately one hour, with players usually required to be at the ground about half an hour before the starting time. J9/10 games are played on Sunday mornings, usually play anytime from 8.30am until lunch, and take about 70 minutes. J11/12 games are played on Friday nights (5.30pm - 8.30pm start times). Again, players need to be at the ground about 30 to 60 mins before the game.

Where do they play? Junior Hockey is organised on a “home and away” system, with teams playing each other twice during the season, usually once at “home” and once “away” (at the opposition’s home ground). Because of our extensive Minkey and Grads program, our grass fields are not available for most of Saturday morning. Our J5/6 teams play their “home” games at Stevens Reserve, in Fremantle. Our J7/8 players play some home games at Melville, and the remainder at Fremantle. J9/10 grass games, are played at Melville. J9/10 A’s, A Reserve and J11/12s play their home games on the Melville turf.

What time/night do they train? Training nights can be Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, depending on the availability of the team’s coach. As all our coaches are volunteers, we need to fit in with their work/study/family commitments. We also need to spread teams across weeknights to make sure everyone has enough space to train safely. Coaches will try to choose a day and time that suits the majority of the team. Teams may train once or twice a week, depending on the age level and grade of the team, and the availability of the coach and players.

Where do they train? All Junior teams train at our home ground, Morris Buzacott Reserve in Kardinya, either on the turf or on the grass, depending on their age/grade.

How do you allocate children into teams? Within each year group (e.g. J5/6), we have several teams, so we need to divide the players up. We have a grading process that runs over 4 or 5 weeks ending with a Grading Confirmation Day (usually held on a Saturday in mid to late March). These grading sessions consist of fitness, skills and games, which are age appropriate with the players observed by a group of experienced club members who act as selectors.

Can my child play with his/her friend? Where possible we try to accommodate requests for players to be together, especially in J5/6 grade. Club Policy is that where two players are graded differently by the selectors, then if they wish to play together they will be placed in a team according to the lower grading. Last season, in 2017, we had Junior players from 90 different schools, so every team has a real mixture of students. We believe playing at Melville is a great chance to meet new people and make new friends!

What equipment do they need? All players require a hockey stick, shin pads and mouthguard. These are essential to ensure player safety. A uniform is required for game days, but not for training (just wear comfortable sportswear – t-shirt, shorts/skirt and long socks). Please remember a drink bottle for training and games, and also sunscreen, particularly at the start of the season when the weather is still very hot.

Where can I buy the equipment? The club has a small range of sticks, shin pads and hockey bags available for sale at our own Uniform Shop. Alternatively, there are several specialist hockey shops in Perth who have a wide range of equipment. Hockey International, at 10/267 Scarborough Beach Rd, Mt Hawthorn, is a club sponsor and they will be more than happy to help you out. Mouthguards can be organised through your child's dentist, or we have a dental prosthetist who comes down to the club for a week of the grading sessions to take impressions and to produce a custom-fitted mouthguard for your child. You can also buy ready-made mouthguards at some chemists and sports shops, although these do not provide the same level of protection as a custom-made version.

How much will it cost? You can see our membership fees for the current season at <http://www.melvillehockey.com/register/fees.php> Hockey sticks cost \$50 upwards and shin pads \$10 - \$40. Your child will also need a playing uniform, consisting of a club shirt, club socks and white shorts (all Minkey & Grads), maroon shorts (J5/6 - J11/12 boys) or maroon skirt (J5/6 - J11/12 girls). Occasionally we have some second-hand uniforms available. If you are worried that your child may not be able to play because of the cost, please speak to us. We can organise payment of fees by instalment if this will help. If you have a Health Care Card or Pension Concession Card, you can apply to your local council for a Kidsport voucher, which will cover up to \$150 worth of fees per child. Please contact us for more information.

When does training start? Training with your team begins once teams are announced the week after grading finishes.

When does the season start? The season begins the week after the April school holidays.

When does the season finish? The final round of games is usually early September. J5/6s don't play finals but J7/8s to J11/12s if they finish top 4, will play 1 or 2 weeks of finals.

Are there games during the school holidays? What about Public Holidays? There is a General Bye for all teams on the Labour Day long weekend in June, and three weekends off during the July school Holidays. A weekend in August is also a General Bye, to coincide with the "Boarders Weekend" or "Mid-term Break" at many private schools.

I have more questions... If you have any other questions, please e-mail Colleen Bentley, the Junior Co-ordinator (juniors@melvillehockey.com)