

MCHC Junior Hockey Frequently Asked Questions

NB: Please note that "Juniors" refers to children in Years 5-12 at school. If your child is in Year 3 or below, then please see the "Hook in2 Hockey" section of our website. If your child is in Year 4, they may play in our club-based "Grads" competition (see "Hook in2 Hockey" section) OR J5/6 Grade. Please contact us to decide which of these options is appropriate for your child.

How do I register?

All of our registrations are done online. Registration will be available [here](#) early in 2016.

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. 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 8.00-9.30am, and J7/8 games starting between 9.00-10.30 am. Games take approximately one hour, with players required to be at the ground about half an hour before the starting time.

J9/10 games are played on Sunday mornings, usually starting between 8.30-10.30am, and take about 70 minutes. J11/12 games are played either on Friday nights (5.30-8.30pm starting times) or Sunday mornings (8.30-10.30am starting times), or sometimes a mixture of the two, depending on the grade. Again, players need to be at the ground about half an hour before the starting time.

Where do they play?

Junior Hockey is organised on a "home and away" system, with teams playing each other twice during the season, once at "home" and once "away" (at the opposition's home ground). Because of our extensive Hook in2 Hockey 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 and J11/12 grass games, which are played on a Sunday, are played at Melville. Teams in A grades (and some A Reserve or A Promotion) may have the chance to play their home games on Melville turf.

What time/night do they train?

Training nights are usually Tuesday and/or Thursday, HOWEVER this will depend on the availability of the team's coach. As all of 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 (eg J5/6), we have several teams, so we need to divide the players up. We do this by watching them during training for the first three weeks, and then we ask all players to attend Grading Day (usually held on a Saturday in mid to late March). At Grading Day, younger players (J5/6 and J7/8) complete a series of skills tests, and then play some short games, observed by a group of experienced club members who act as selectors. Older players (J9/10 and J11/12) play games and are also watched by the 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.

In 2014, we had Junior players from 96 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 also 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 on training nights. Alternatively, there are several specialist hockey shops in Perth who have a wide range of equipment. Hockey International, in Railway Parade, Leederville, 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 on Registration Day and Grading Day to take impressions 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 [here](#). Hockey sticks cost \$50 upwards and shinpads \$10-\$15. Your child will also need a playing uniform, consisting of a club shirt, club socks and white shorts (all boys and J5/6 girls), or maroon skirt (for girls in J7/8 and above). 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 \$200 worth of fees per child aged 5-18. Please contact us for more information.

When does training start?

Training will begin the first week of March. You will receive further information regarding specific days and times once your child is registered.

When does the season start?

The season begins after the April school holidays.

When does the season finish?

The final round of games is usually in the first week of September. Teams in J7/8 and above may have 1-2 weeks of finals after this, depending on where they finish on the ladder.

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. The weekend of 20-22 August is also a General Bye, to coincide with the "Borders Weekend" or "Mid-term Break" at many private schools.

I have more questions...

If you have any other questions, please e-mail the Junior Co-ordinator, Emma Bell (juniors@melvillehockey.com)