HESWALL GOLF CLUB

JUNIOR POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Introduction

We are delighted to welcome Junior members to Heswall Golf Club. The Club has a fantastic Junior Programme that fully integrates with the rest of the Club. We seek to ensure that young golfers can develop their skills while enjoying the game safely, creating the foundation for a lifetime of golfing pleasure.

Golf is a sport built on respect, integrity, and etiquette. To maintain the friendly and welcoming atmosphere of Heswall Golf Club, we ask all Junior members to follow these guidelines. Don't worry about remembering everything immediately - this document is here to help you navigate the Club and enjoy your time here.

The document also emphasises the importance the Club places on safeguarding, in particular our Junior members and the responsibility placed on parents and guardians to play their part.

At Heswall Golf Club our objective is to ensure that all Juniors have a fun, safe and positive experience when playing golf.

The aim of our Junior Policy is to give Junior golfers the opportunity to progress to their potential and to equip them with golfing skills that can be used and enjoyed for the rest of their lives. As an example, we believe that allowing Juniors with the required golfing handicap to play in adult competitions is a good thing. The policy describes the conditions placed on Junior golfers, to ensure their safety on the course and whilst using the practice areas.

1. Membership

1.1 Membership is open to boys and girls aged from 10 – 18 upon successful application. All Juniors will be invited for interview with a member of the Club Membership Committee and the Junior Organiser. All Juniors must attend with their parent(s)/guardian(s).

The interview process is an important first step in membership of Heswall Golf Club and provides an opportunity for applicants and parents / guardians to understand their role in delivering our Junior Policy. No offers of membership will be given until **all** the required documentation has been completed and returned to the Club Office.

1.2 The Club has 3 age categories within the Junior Section. The purpose is to ensure the safety of Junior golfers and also to recognise their developing maturity and experience on the course and within the Club. The three age groups are:

Category A: Children aged 10 to 12
Category B: Children aged 13 to 15
Category C: Children aged 16 to 18

Junior golfers move formally between category on renewal of their membership, ie 1st January each year. However in practical terms the stipulations in Section 2 will apply based on date of birth, subject to the proviso explained in section 2.2. For example, a young person who has their 16th birthday in February will renew their membership in the preceding January as a member of Category B, but from their birthday in February will have access to the course as set out for Category C.

1.3 Transition to Full Membership at age 18

- Juniors do not automatically become full members at age 18.
- Applicants must be proposed, seconded, and interviewed by the Membership Committee, with recommendations from the Junior Committee.

1.4 Junior membership is reviewed annually: Juniors who do not actively participate or support competitions may not have their membership reviewed.

1.5 Junior Boy Members are restricted to 75 in total.

2. Access to the Course and Practice Facilities

2.1 Juniors are not allowed to play on the course before age 10 even if accompanied by an adult who may be a member of the Club. They may use the practice facilities only under adult supervision.

2.2 Juniors can play the course from age 10 with the conditions below. These conditions are based on the assumption that Junior members continually develop their competence and maturity as they progress through the age categories. However, the Junior Organiser has the option to hold a Junior Member back in a preceding category should they consider a need, e.g. based on the experience and behaviour of individual Junior golfers.

2.3 Category A: Children aged 10 to 12. An accompanying adult is required to walk around the course with ALL Junior golfers in Category A. The accompanying adult is responsible for the supervision and care of the Junior golfer.

Accompanying adults do not need to be members of the Club and provided the accompanying adult is known to each Junior golfer they may supervise more than one in a playing group.

Accompanying adults are responsible for the behaviour and safety of the Junior golfers they are with. They should be fully conversant with the guidance on etiquette contained in this document and posted elsewhere in the Golf Club. An induction meeting for new Junior members and their parents/guardians is also an integral part of this policy.

2.4 Junior members in Category A may not use the practice facilities without parental supervision under any circumstances.

2.5 Category B: Children aged 13 to 15. Junior golfers in Category B may play without a supervising adult but can only do so with prior written parental consent. They should carry a mobile phone so they can call either a parent or the Pro Shop / Clubhouse if the need arises. If a parent chooses not to give consent, then adult supervision is required. They may not play alone on the course but can play with another Category B Junior member or any other member but not a Junior in Category A.

2.6 Junior members in Category C may play alone without a supervising adult.

3. Playing Times

Note - Formal competition times are those blocked off for competition entry only. In the main these are Tuesdays for Ladies competitions and Saturdays for Men's competitions, but other cases may apply.

<u>Weekdays</u>

3.1 During the week Juniors can play anytime outside of Ladies Tuesday formal competition times, where tee times are available. However, Thursday is a very busy informal Club competition day for both ladies and men and while times may be available, they should be avoided where possible for your own enjoyment. Seek guidance from the Junior Organiser or Pro Shop if unsure.

3.2 Only Category B & C Juniors with appropriate handicaps can play within formal competition tee times and in doing so must enter the competition subject to eligibility. During the week this is relevant to Junior girls.

3.3 If Juniors are playing within an informal competition they must follow the documented eligibility criteria.

3.4 Outside of competition Juniors should make every effort to buddy up with other Juniors (or known adults) rather than playing alone thus increasing tee time availability for all.

Weekends

3.5 Juniors can play anytime where tee times are available outside of any formal competition.

3.6 Only Category B & C Juniors with appropriate handicaps can play within formal competition tee times and in doing so must enter the competition subject to eligibility.

3.7 If Juniors are playing within an informal competition they must follow the documented eligibility criteria.

3.7 Outside of competition Juniors should make every effort to buddy up with other Juniors (or known adults) rather than playing alone thus increasing tee time availability for all.

3.8 On Sundays during the summer there are Junior competitions when a timed tee slot is reserved for entry.

4. Junior eligibility criteria for taking part in Club Competitions

4.1 The criteria below are in accordance with, and supplement, Club Rules (Bye Law 11c). They are intended as a practical guide to Juniors' eligibility to take part in club competitions and will be kept under review by the Golf Committee in the light of experience and the changing profile of Junior membership overall. For the purposes of this guidance:

- all references to 'handicap index' mean a World Handicap System (WHS) handicap index.
- all references to 'Juniors' mean boy or girl Juniors unless otherwise stated.

4.2 Men's and Ladies Competitions:

4.2.1 Juniors with the necessary handicap index are eligible to play.

4.2.2 Juniors with a handicap index of 20.0 or less may book in advance for Saturday competitions but only for tee times after 12.30. For other Juniors they may book at the discretion of the Club Professional and must book through the Pro Shop once the timesheet for the competition has closed. Generally, for all competition days - Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday - Juniors can only book tee times after 12.30.

4.2.3 Junior Members may play together in adult competitions any time after 12.30 and must be accompanied by an adult full member.

4.2.4 For individual Medal or Stableford competitions, Juniors must pay a Junior entry fee and will be eligible to win Junior prizes only. The Junior may win a voucher prize for the Pro Shop if they have played in at least 3 Heswall club competitions within the previous 12 months prior to the date of entry. Juniors with a handicap index of 5.0 or less will also be eligible to win Board or Trophy honours (but not the main voucher prizes) if they have recorded 8 qualifying scores within the 12 months prior to the date of entry but must pay the adult entry fee.

4.2.5 Men's and Ladies Knockout Competitions: Juniors with a handicap index of 20 or less are eligible to play.

4.2.6 Mixed Competitions: Juniors with a handicap index of 28.0 or less are eligible to play.

4.2.7 Mixed Knockout Competitions: Juniors with a handicap index of 20.0 or less are eligible to play.

4.2.8 Two Generations Trophy Competition: Juniors with a handicap index of 28.0 or less are eligible to play and win, if they have played in at least 3 Heswall Club Competitions in the previous 12 months prior to the date of entry. Juniors with a handicap index above 28.0 may enter and play in the competition but cannot win.

4.3 Junior members whose primary club is not Heswall are eligible to win Board or Trophy Honours (but not the main voucher prize) if they have recorded 8 qualifying scores within the previous 12 months prior to entry date of which 5 scores must have been in competitions at Heswall Golf Club.

5. The Club can exercise discretion to amend the policy for a Junior at its own volition or upon request from a Junior, and their parent(s)/guardian(s). This exercise of this discretion will be the responsibility of the Chair of Golf or Chair of Membership depending on specific circumstances.

6. Golf Etiquette & General Behaviour

At Heswall Golf Club, a Junior Organiser is appointed by the Club Council to oversee the Junior Section and ensure all Juniors receive the support they need.

The Rules of Golf include guidelines on etiquette. If you don't have a copy, ask the Junior Organiser for one. Key etiquette points include:

- Be courteous to other golfers. If unsure, allow others to play first.
- Do not play until the group ahead is at a safe distance.
- Avoid distractions, do not talk, move, or stand too close when someone in your group is playing a stroke.
- Do not walk ahead of your playing partners for safety reasons.
- Always repair pitch marks on greens and replace divots to help maintain the course.
- Rake bunkers after use and leave the rake in the centre of the bunker or as guided by the Club.
- Play a provisional ball if you are at risk of losing a ball in order to avoid unnecessary delays if that turns out to be the case.
- Observe a 3-minute search time whether in competition or not.
- Avoid skipping holes unless you are certain no one will be delayed behind you.
- Be aware of other golfers on the course, avoiding unnecessary noise / movements that might distract them

7. Safety First

Safety is our top priority.

- Never play a shot if someone is in front of you on the course or practice ground.
- Avoid standing in another player's line of sight.
- Do not play alone at twilight and always ensure someone knows where you are.

8. Pace of Play

Slow play is a significant issue in golf and detracts from the enjoyment that golfers experience.

- Keep up with the group ahead of you. If you fall behind, allow the group behind to play through.
- Be ready to take your shot when it's your turn.
- Mark your scorecard on the next tee while your playing partners are teeing off.
- Position your clubs near the exit of the green to allow for a quick transition to the next hole.
- Play "Ready Golf".

9 Respect for Others

- Golf is a quiet sport. Keep noise to a minimum on the course and around the clubhouse.
- Only shout 'FORE!' if necessary for safety reasons.
- Avoid gates slamming while crossing the Wirral Way.

10. Practice Guidelines

- Be mindful of others when using the practice facilities.
- On the chipping green, do not hit balls off the green or take full swings that cause large divots.
- Always check that your shots will not endanger other players before hitting.

11. Dress Code

All Junior members and accompanying adults are required to adhere to the Club dress code. The Code is displayed in the Changing Rooms and is available on the Club website. The key requirements of the Code are:-

- Not permitted: Jeans, trainers, tracksuits, untucked shirts.
- Shirts: Must have a collar and be tucked in.
- Shorts: Must be tailored.
- Headwear: Remove hats inside the clubhouse.
- Outerwear: Remove waterproofs and avoid walking around in socks.
- Mobile Phones: Allowed only in case of emergency.

12. Junior conduct in the Clubhouse

- The pro shop is for business, avoid loitering or blocking customer access.
- Juniors must always be respectful to staff and club members. If treated unfairly, report it to the Junior Organiser rather than arguing.
- After purchasing food or drinks, take a seat instead of gathering around the bar.
- All outdoor clothing caps/waterproofs must be removed before entering the club house.
- Junior members in Category C may use the Snooker Room but only if accompanied by an adult.

13. Supervision & Parental Responsibility

- Club staff and professionals are not responsible for supervising Juniors. Parents should ensure Juniors are collected before dark.
- Parents and Juniors should agree in advance on who they are allowed to play with.

14. Insurance & Personal Responsibility

- Juniors should ensure they have personal liability insurance, especially for third-party claims.
- Golf equipment should be insured against theft.
- Do not leave golf clubs unattended, store them securely in the pro shop if necessary.

15. Bringing Guests to Play

- Juniors may bring a guest, and the guest must be registered at the Clubhouse before play, provided:
    - The guest is a member of a recognised golf club.
    - The guest has a handicap.
    - The guest pays the green fee in the pro shop.
    - The junior host is responsible for their guest’s behaviour, ensuring they follow the dress code and etiquette.
    - An individual guest can only play 6 times in any 12 month period.

16. Wirral Junior League & Junior Events

- The club participates in a number of matches each year in the Wirral Junior League. Each team consists of 6 players playing in pairs.

Junior Christmas Dinner

- The annual Junior Christmas Dinner, held in the Clubhouse, is a highlight of the season, featuring an awards presentation and a fun evening for all junior members. The Junior Captain elect is also announced at the Dinner
- Attendance is encouraged!

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