



From the Director of Sport and PE: Pete Bignell

16 October 2020

Dear Parents,

It has been superb to see so many boys out participating on a Saturday in either Rugby or Cricket this half term and below is next half term's programme of activity.

Saturday Sporting Philosophy:

We have decided to provide a **focus towards the Lent term sports for the second half of Michaelmas** in order to help prepare boys for the term ahead. If we still find ourselves in a position where we cannot offer inter-school fixtures in the Lent term we will look to blend Michaelmas and Lent term sports into the wider school programme from January.

We feel that by continuing to provide a full Saturday Sport offering within our Abingdon 'Year Group Bubbles' we will continue to allow boys the opportunity to build team spirit, resilience and develop leadership skills; ultimately keeping our School culture of sport on Saturday in place.

Michaelmas 2nd Half Term's Offering:

In order to facilitate a range of sports across 7 different 'bubbles' we will continue to alternate the offering each week as shown below.

Year Group	7 November	14 November	21 November	28 November	5 December
1 st Year		Hockey		Hockey	
2 nd Year		Hockey		Hockey	
3 rd Year	Football	Hockey	Badminton, Cross County & Water Polo	Football	Hockey
4 th Year	Hockey & Rowing	Football, Hockey & Rowing	Badminton, Cross County & Water Polo	Football & Rowing	Football, Hockey & Rowing
5 th Year	Football & Rowing	Football, Hockey & Rowing	Badminton, Cross County & Water Polo	Hockey & Rowing	Football, Hockey & Rowing
Lower 6 th	Football, Hockey & Rowing	Football & Rowing	Badminton & Cross County	Football, Hockey & Rowing	Hockey & Rowing
Upper 6 th	Football, Hockey & Rowing	Football & Rowing	Badminton & Cross County	Football, Hockey & Rowing	Hockey & Rowing

Boys will be able to choose to participate in the sports they wish to; however, from the 4th Year we would like boys to only choose Football, Hockey or Rowing if it is their Core Sport. We do hope that through this offering they will develop the life skills mentioned above as well as continuing to enjoy the Saturday Sport on offer this half term.

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For Football & Hockey we will group boys into teams on a Saturday and play a **recognised competitive form** as set out by the relevant National Governing Body's and their COVID-19 roadmaps. For Rowing, boys will be grouped into crews to access the water, whilst Badminton, Cross Country and Water Polo are one-off sessions based either on game play or an opportunity to run a more challenging off-site location.

Whilst we are endeavouring to offer a competitive programme, we fully appreciate some boys who have already been playing competitive sport under National Governing Body guidance outside of school with their club or County sides, which do not have the 'Year Group Bubble' restrictions, may wish to continue with this. Under the present situation we will be understanding of this decision, however once inter school sport returns the School expects all boys to be available for sports fixtures within their own Core Sport or Other Half option.

Your son will receive a sign-up form via e-mail later today and I encourage you to discuss the Saturdays with him before he completes the form; **the deadline for making his choices is Sunday 18 October at 5pm.**

Logistics:

Where possible, the fixtures will operate in the morning; with the aim of allowing boys, families and staff to maximise the weekend. However, availability of the Hockey ATPs and the Football 3G at Tilsley Park means this is not always possible; exact timings will be on the sign-up sheet the boys receive.

We will ask boys to attend in **Abingdon Sports clothing**, bring a water bottle and their **own equipment**; this way we can reduce the amount of equipment that boys potentially share. We will not be providing food after the fixtures.

We will **publish 'team sheets'** on a Thursday prior to the Saturday so that boys and parents are fully aware of the logistics so please ensure your son checks his inbox on a Friday.

In order to maintain our 'Year Group Bubbles' and meet social distancing rules we require parents to **drop boys off** and pick up is as follows:

- **Football @ Tilsley Park** – Tilsley Park Car Park; boys then come onto the 3G through the open air gate.
- **Football @ Cox's Field** – Abingdon Prep School; boys then use the bridge onto Cox's Field & go to their designated pitch.
- **Hockey @ Tilsley Park** – Tilsley Park Car Park; boys then come onto the ATPs & go to their designated pitch.
- **Rowing** – Boat House; boys are to be dropped off on Wilsham Road.
- **Badminton** – Faringdon Road Coach Park; boys then head to the Sports Centre.
- **Cross Country** – Dorchester Car Park between the Abbey & St Birinus Catholic Church; boys are dropped off and register in Year Group Bubbles
- **Water Polo** – Faringdon Road Coach Park; boys then head to the sports centre.

Unfortunately, **parents will not be allowed to come onto the School site to watch the games** but I am sure you can fully understand why this is necessary.

We have also made the decision **not to operate the Saturday Bus service** this half term. Although we appreciate that this might limit the opportunity for a few boys on a Saturday we feel that in the wider context, combined with early Saturday morning starts, it is in the best interest of the boys.

Key Sports Contacts:

Each sport has its own member of staff directly responsible and I would encourage parents where relevant to contact these staff if the need arises; these staff are identified on the sports pages of the website. That being said, please feel free to contact myself with any sporting enquiry, my email is pete.bignell@abingdon.org.uk and my office number is 01235 849087.

Yours sincerely



Peter Bignell, Director of Sport & PE