

Abberley Hall School Fixture Policy

Our aim at Abberley Hall School is to provide a sufficiently demanding fixture list whereby boys and girls can enjoy the challenges that their sport provides them. We are keen to make our fixture list as diverse as possible. In addition, we are to remain aware that fixtures form part of the learning process not the end product.

Fixture Organisation

MRK is to organise fixture list with JAP to input for the girls.

MRK (for boys) and JAP (for girls) to liaise with opposing schools at least a week before each fixture by email.

Team Selection

Team selection needs to be the result of a consultation amongst relevant year-group coaches as well as the head of the specific sport – there may be certain ideas that need to be taken into consideration when selection is done. Children may be placed in certain teams for specific reasons such as development potential / behaviour / opportunity etc. Thus, each selection is not unilateral but one based on the sharing of ideas. Our policy regarding 'A' teams at any age and in any sport is to generally select our strongest team. At other levels there is room for more flexibility in varying the team selection to give others a chance. Discussion goes on amongst coaches about who to select for particular fixtures and every week a fresh assessment is made. We try to tread the fine path between encouraging excellence and giving opportunities for all, but it is simply impossible to please everyone all the time. We may have internal matches on games afternoons, which offer great competitive opportunities for many girls and boys.

In addition, we must take into consideration the strength of the opposition when selection is made. Opposing schools will be liaised with on a consistent basis. Our fixture list is a mixture of bigger and smaller schools. We often need to select accordingly to play a team that does not fit neatly into a category of A/B/C. This will seek to ensure that matches are competitive and children are given appropriate opportunities.

It must be understood that **team selection and management at any level is the prerogative of the team coach or coaches. On no account must any parent try to influence team selection.** Parents and children may, of course, speak to a coach about how a child is getting on and how he or she might make further progress. When parents do try to influence or criticise team selection, it makes the coach's job very difficult. Only the coach is in possession of **all** the information needed to select a team. Only the coach knows **all** the children and their attributes and needs. It is vital that he or she is able to make selections even-handedly and independently of parental ambition, wishes, or judgement. However strongly a parent feels about their child, if they do try to interfere it undermines the authority of the coach, to the detriment of the team and all the individuals within it; this must not happen.

Team Sheets

All teams are to be put onto the server by 6pm on Monday (for Wednesday fixture) or Thursday (for Saturday fixture) by the year group leader of the particular sport.

Captaincy

The selection of captain is made on merit by each team coach. The U13A/1st Teams and U11A/Colts A may have a regular captain, but other teams in the school may well rotate the captaincy throughout the term. It may often be the case that the captain for the match will be the player who has worked the hardest leading up to the match.

Fixture rules

As an initial idea, the home team should indicate what the format of the fixture should be, and then agreement needs to be made with the away team. If there is a disagreement, the home team should set the playing conditions.

In addition, there are some basic principles that Abberley Hall coaches should never be swayed away from: all fixtures should be played to win, but with the understanding that the process of how we win is more important than the result itself; all matches should be played within the rules or laws of the sport – however, we **must** be adaptable in our **application** of these rules or laws in relation to age and experience; all decisions should be

based on making the game a fair contest.

In addition, scores should never be allowed to get out of hand. We have a responsibility to discuss with the opposition coach any changes that need to be made to the fixture in play to make it a fair contest. This would include all the points below:

substituting stronger players;
changing positions;
utilizing weaker members of the team in more prominent roles;
lessening the numbers of the dominant team;
creative refereeing / umpiring.

Hosting schools

For a home fixture, our teams need to remember that they are hosts and should act accordingly. Staff should be available to meet and greet the opposition when they arrive on site.

All children should be correctly dressed at all times. Behaviour at Match Tea is an integral part of the fixture experience and should be seen as such by the children involved. Staff should ensure that the children in their team are looking after the opposition and that all behaviour is controlled. The end of the fixture and the opposition leaving are times when the team should be together looking after our visitors. The children will be free to leave after they have been dismissed by the member of staff in charge of their team, usually after saying goodbye to the opposition at their minibus/coach.

Travelling to an opposition school

Behaviour on the journey and behaviour at Match Tea are integral parts of the fixture experience and should be seen as such by the children involved. For an away fixture, our pupils need to remember that they are guests and should behave accordingly. All children should be correctly dressed at all times.

All children should return on the school transport unless their parents have arranged with the staff that they will return independently.