

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are delighted that your daughter has opted to be involved in the hockey programme at Down High School. Whilst involvement in the programme requires significant commitment on the part of our pupils we also believe it brings them many benefits. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank you as parents for your ongoing support in the many forms that takes.

In order to keep you informed there are number of areas we would like to highlight at this early stage of the season:

Training

All girls involved in the extra- curricular programme are asked to attend training regularly. Training sessions, both in terms of their number and content, are designed to prepare the girls for the demands of our competitive fixtures. After school sessions finish close to 4.30pm. The days allocated to each team for training are posted on both the hockey website and the hockey noticeboard.

Injury

Despite the fact that hockey is a non -contact sport some injuries are inevitable; the safety of our pupils is of paramount concern.

In order to prevent injury a range of personal protective equipment is available to pupils in sports shops. Of all these items shin pads and gumshields are the most important. We strongly recommend pupils wear shin pads and strongly recommend that pupils wear a gumshield to both training and matches. This is in line with safety recommendations stated by Ulster Hockey, Irish Hockey and the IHF.

Transport

For away games a private hire bus or school minibus will generally be provided to transport pupils. This bus will normally pick up and drop off pupils at the following stops provided they are en route to our destination – Downpatrick Bus Depot, Crossgar (Mace), Saintfield (Belfast Road bus stop or the roundabout top of the town). Pupils will be informed of timings before they leave school on a Friday or the day before in the case of midweek fixtures. During the return journey pupils may make contact with parents via mobile phones regarding arrival times. It is expected that all students will wear school PE uniform when travelling to away matches. Similar arrangements are in place for senior training on Wednesdays with drop offs in Dundrum and Clough. Parental letters are required for this session.

Cancellations

Every attempt will be made to notify of any cancellations as soon as possible. Parents and pupils should check the website or contact their captain prior to leaving home for hockey matches, particularly during periods of inclement weather.

Any other significant updates regarding hockey in the school can be found at www.dhs-hockey.weebly.com

Thanks again for your support,

Miss B Heaney (Head of Girls' Physical Education)