

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS ON MOULSFORD SPORTS FIXTURES

This guide is designed to help parents and boys understand how Moulsford sports fixtures operate. All boys have the opportunity to represent the school between Years 3 to 8 and we aim to organise as many fixtures as we can for boys of all levels of sporting ability.

SPORTS CALENDAR & TEAM SELECTION

For **Years 3 and 4**, fixtures generally take place on Tuesday or Thursday afternoons, and they normally start at 2.30pm.

For **Years 5 to 8**, fixtures generally take place on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Timings depend on which school we are playing, but generally start between 2 and 2.30pm on a Wednesday. On Saturdays, fixtures may be in the morning or the afternoon, or sometimes an all-day tournament.

Fixtures are planned well in advance, and are published in the printed termly calendar, on the school website www.moulsford.com/media/calendar, and also on the sports website www.moulsfordsport.com. Any changes to fixtures will be communicated via the 'Week Ahead' and will be updated on the online calendar.

All boys are expected to be available for fixtures on Saturdays if selected to play for a school team. If a boy is unable to participate in games' sessions or a match fixture, an explanatory letter is required and should be emailed or delivered to the school office and the school matron.

Team groups are applicable to year groups as follows:

Year 3	Under 8
Year 4	Under 9
Year 5	Under 10
Year 6	Under 11 or Colts
Year 7	Under 12
Year 8	Under 13

For cricket, football and hockey, Years 7 and 8 are grouped together, and form teams 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc up to 8th. Years 5 and 6 may also be grouped together for cricket in Colts A, B, C etc.

Moulsford sports staff select teams on a fixture by fixture basis, and boys can expect to be moved up or down regularly. Selection is based on a wide range of factors, from current playing form to teamwork, and also on information discussed with the opposing team coach, amongst other variables. Team lists are published on the website approximately 24 – 48 hours before a fixture, normally following the final training session prior to that fixture. For a guide to the sports website and how to access team lists, please [click here](#).

We do appreciate that it is difficult for parents to plan logistics when the difference between Home and Away fixtures makes significant changes to the drop off and pick up timings, particularly on Saturdays. However, in order to give all boys the opportunity to play at the best level for their ability and to make fixtures as evenly matched and competitive as possible, it is essential that there is flexibility for team coaches to be able to alter team selection following that final training session, which in some cases is only the day before a match, eg Friday games session for Saturday fixture selection.

SPORTS FIXTURES

For weekday matches, all timings and logistics for the boys are looked after by the school, including coach or minibus travel to and from Away fixtures, unless otherwise agreed. Start times for fixtures are listed in the calendar.

For Saturday matches, transport to and from Away venues is always available, with various relevant options and times included on the team sheet on the www.moulsfordsports.com website. These are:

- a meet up time at Moulsford, to join the team transport (coach or minibus)
- a meet up time at the Away venue, if parents wish to take their son to the fixture themselves, which allows for team warm up time
- match start time
- approximate time of return to Moulsford

For all fixtures, on weekdays and on Saturdays, schools normally provide a 'team tea' after the match, and all boys are expected to stay for this important team-bonding aspect of a fixture.

At the end of Away fixtures boys are free to go home with their parents but they must inform the team coach before they leave.

For all Away fixtures, finish/return times are approximate, owing to match and traffic variables. This is especially the case for cricket. When possible, and if accurate information is available, parents will be informed of any severe delays. However, please bear in mind that sports staff are often driving the minibus and unable to make contact.

EXPECTATIONS OF PUPILS AND PARENTS AT ALL SCHOOL FIXTURES

Punctuality:

Please ensure that you are punctual for all fixtures, whichever transport and meet up option you choose. Fixture dates and times are included in the school calendar and on the school website. Departure and return times are detailed in the team sheets on the website.

School Uniform:

Pupils always wear school uniform to and from fixtures, including a school blazer but no cap, unless otherwise directed. Cricket matches are an exception to this, when whites and a blazer are worn.

Travel:

- At the end of away fixtures boys are free to go home with their parents but they must inform their team coach before they leave.
- Boys should not travel home with adults other than their parents, without their own parents' permission.
- Boarders' parents must contact the boarding house in advance if they are not returning to school after a midweek fixture.
- Boys must wear school uniform (excluding caps) unless otherwise directed.
- Please check the Team Sheets on the Sports Website. For Saturday matches, there is a meet time for minibuses leaving the school, and a meet time to meet directly at the Away School.

The Match:

- Boys must ensure that their games kit is clean and that they have all the equipment they need.
- As representatives of the school they should be on their best behaviour at all times and show good sportsmanship on the games field.
- Parents are to support their children and the opposition in a positive and encouraging fashion, see the 'code of conduct' for parents outlined below.
- Boys are expected to stay for 'team teas' after the game.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

The School fully appreciates the ongoing and valuable parental support at the numerous sporting fixtures and events throughout the year. This document is a gentle reminder of Moulsford's sporting ethos and our joint responsibility to uphold the core principles in terms of our attitude and behaviour before, during and after each sporting event.

Match day is inevitably an exciting occasion for all, but it can also be a highly charged affair with emotions running out of control when the stakes appear to be high.

At Moulsford our aim is to provide a sports programme that is based on positive, life changing ideals. We believe in the development of the whole child, the fostering of an 'active life' philosophy and the promotion of a lifetime investment in sport and physical activity. This sporting ethos celebrates enjoyment, equality of access, breadth of participation and excellence both on and off the field.

In order for our ethos to be upheld and our sports programme to be truly successful, it takes the cooperation of all involved; players, coaches, staff, spectators and parents. Having spent some time and effort reinforcing our sporting ethos within school I believe it is essential that we include parents and friends of Moulsford in this process.

The following points clarify what we believe to be the essential standards associated with Moulsford sporting culture. In effect it is a code of conduct for supporters but is intended to include you rather than alienate you and should be digested with this sentiment in mind.

Parents as role models

Parents and guardians have a responsibility to help make sure their child gets the most out of his playing experience. Parental support should always include positive reinforcement of both your child's performance and of their efforts. This is essential at an early age, to encourage strong self-esteem and a healthy development in general. Parents should aim to be positive role models, including the display of sportsmanship and the notion of fair play and by avoiding negativity of any kind. It is not acceptable for anyone to ridicule or chastise their child or others for making a mistake or for losing a game. Parents should encourage children to play according to the rules at all times.

Parent: Coach Alliance

The entire coaching staff is wholly grateful for the support, encouragement and assistance many parents provide, often driving long distances and rearranging busy schedules to cheer on the team on a regular basis. It is essential however that all parents and guardians agree to support their respective coach's decisions (even in the event that they do not fully agree with them) and do not act to undermine their efforts.

Coaching staff are open to discussion and would always wish for the speedy resolution of any issues or concerns but this process must take place in the correct manner and at the correct time. All parent - coach dialogue should be non-argumentative and constructive in its content.

As Director of Sport I believe that the Coach's judgement on issues such as selection must be accepted as final. However well you know your son, you cannot share the same overview of the whole team. The coach is best suited and entirely qualified to take all factors into consideration and make the right decisions for the team as a whole.

Parent to Parent respect

Parents and spectators have a responsibility to other parents and spectators. Personal gain and satisfaction should not be derived from a child's performance. Competition and taunting between parents is never acceptable, and no parent/spectator should ever feel embarrassed or disappointed by their team or child's performance. Good play should always be applauded, and disappointments should always be consoled. Remember that children learn best by example and praise should be bestowed on the efforts of both teams.

Parents/Spectators have a responsibility to themselves. The joy and pride associated with watching children learn and grow through sport should be experienced to the fullest, because life-long memories are being created before your eyes.

Your children play sport for their enjoyment, which in turn fosters a feeling of self-worth/ respect. Please help them in this endeavour by focusing on your child's efforts and personal achievements rather than purely on whether they win or lose.

To conclude, Moulsford parents, friends and supporters play an essential role in maximising the success of school sport. I hope that together we will achieve the very highest standards appropriate for this wonderful Preparatory School.

I look forward to your ongoing support and seeing you on the touchline.

M .Griffiths. (Director of Sport)
September 2017