REGULAR COACHING IS VITAL FOR YOUNG GOLFERS TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE THEIR GAME.
SECTION 6

Coaching & Activities

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REGULAR COACHING IS VITAL FOR YOUNG GOLFERS TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE THEIR GAME AND THIS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED AS PART OF A STRUCTURED PROGRAMME AND DELIVERED BY A PGA QUALIFIED COACH.

COACHING AND OTHER ACTIVITIES AT CLUB LEVEL ARE A VITAL PART OF A JUNIORS’ DEVELOPMENT AND PROVIDE A SOLID FOOTING FROM WHICH PLAYERS CAN PROGRESS WITHIN THE GAME.

Through the provision of coaching and fun activities, juniors are encouraged to continue their participation and develop their skills, which then creates an active, healthy junior section. Other activities which can be conducted include golf games and skills challenges (individual or team), which provide friendly competitive interaction.

For specific details on running sessions and the types of activities which should be undertaken, golf clubs should consult with their PGA qualified coach. England Golf and the Golf Foundation provide structured activities and skills initiatives to support junior development (see Section 9 for further details).
Bank of Equipment

Golf clubs should consider holding a bank of equipment to loan to juniors free of charge as many beginners attending coaching sessions may not have access to equipment and parents may be reluctant to pay until their child has shown a certain level of commitment.

A PGA qualified coach can provide guidance on the types of equipment that should be available and this should be appropriate to the age and size of the junior golfer. Clubs which are inappropriate, (for example too heavy), may have a detrimental effect on the development of the golfer.

Junior Coaching Plan

AS PART OF A GOLF CLUB’S JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN, THERE SHOULD BE A COACHING ELEMENT TO ENSURE THAT JUNIOR GOLFERS DEVELOP ALONG A STRUCTURED PATHWAY. THE PLAN SHOULD INCORPORATE THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

- Details of coaching personnel - their required qualifications and volunteer support available.
- Frequency and times of sessions – consultation with the juniors may be required to ensure activities are actively attended. Sessions should be regular throughout the year.
- Session content.
- Age and ability of attendees.
- Funding Information.

It is recommended that the Head PGA qualified coach should have an input into the coaching programme and that volunteer coaches are utilised where appropriate in order to maximise the number of junior members that can attend coaching sessions.

If a golf club does not have a PGA qualified coach, the services of a local coach should be sourced.

For details of coach : participant ratios, contact the PGA (see Section 9).

Question: HOW ACTIVE ARE YOUR JUNIOR MEMBERS? IF THEY ARE NOT ATTENDING JUNIOR COACHING SESSIONS AND ACTIVITIES, HAVE YOU FOUND OUT WHY?
Coaching & Volunteer Qualifications

Volunteers, such as Junior Organisers and parents have the opportunity to take courses which will enable them to support a qualified coach as below:

- **Golf Foundation Workshops**
  The Golf Foundation provides a series of leadership workshops that support the programmes designed to encourage more youngsters into golf in school and at the golf club. Training is available through the Tri-Golf and Golf Xtreme workshops, whilst volunteers at a golf club can assist the PGA coach with Junior Golf Passport activity sessions by attending the Junior Golf Leaders Workshop (see Section 9 for further details).

- **PGA Coach Education Programme (ASQ Level 1 in Golf)**
  The Level 1 golf coach qualification is ideal for Junior Organisers’, parents, interested volunteers, sports leaders and school teachers. This is the first qualification of the coaching pathway and will enable volunteers to assist Level 3 coaches delivering aspects of sessions to beginners, normally under direct supervision. A Level 1 coach is able to interpret session plans and deliver aspects within the plan, ensuring that the relevant coaching points are covered and participants are safe and engaged throughout. The qualification is competency based and the training is split into home study and tutor contact time. Courses take place at venues across England, for further details contact the PGA direct at opencoaching@pga.org.uk or to arrange access to a course contact your local County Golf Partnership.

**Practice**

Juniors should be encouraged to practice on a regular basis ideally as part of a structured coaching programme. Practice will help the juniors to focus and improve different aspects of their game and can be conducted in a fun and interactive way.

Below is some simple advice that can be given to juniors to ensure they get the most out of their practice:

- Do not be tempted to hit too many balls in a limited amount of time – quality not quantity.
- Always go through your pre shot routine.
- Do not practice when you are physically or mentally tired.
- Do not continue to practice if things are going badly and progress seems unattainable.
- Only practice for short periods of time in adverse weather conditions – consistency will be far harder to achieve.
- Always practice shots that are relevant to your own game.
- Practice on the golf course can be very useful – try selecting an alternative club to the one you usually use.
- Practice helps build up repetition and confidence.
COACHING STRUCTURES ARE IN PLACE AT COUNTY, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL FOR TALENTED PLAYERS.

County Golf Partnerships and County Unions/Associations can advise of what opportunities are available at county level (see Section 9 for further details).

England Golf has a national coaching structure which includes performance and age related squads. Performances in the major amateur tournaments are carefully monitored by the England Selectors and form the primary basis for squad and team selection. Other factors include recommendations from county and regional coaches, outstanding handicap achievement, squad trials and guidance from national and regional orders of merit (see Section 9 for further details).

Fact:
38% OF GOLF CLUBS OFFER 25+ SESSIONS OF COACHING THROUGHOUT THE YEAR TO THEIR JUNIOR CLUB MEMBERS

Golf Club Membership Questionnaire – England Golf
CASE STUDY

EATON GOLF CLUB, NORFOLK

SUCCESSFUL JUNIOR GOLF ACADEMY

The Eaton Eagles Junior Golf Academy is a structured development system for junior golfers between the ages of 6 and 16 years, with varying levels of experience in golf. Lessons take place over weekends and offer a progressive group environment for children to develop into golfers. Groups are restricted to a maximum of 8 children per class ensuring they are with others of similar age and ability, each having dedicated tuition time within a safe and fun environment.

Saturday sessions are split by age and ability, with the earlier groups being for older, more experienced golfers and the later sessions for the youngest children, with opportunities to progress to other groups. The Sunday sessions are for more experienced children with handicaps who are members of the club, and tee times are reserved after the lessons allowing the juniors to go onto the course. Places in the academy are booked per half term, with the cost therefore calculated on that basis. Once children have a place in the academy it is theirs for as long as they want, which helps to provide a familiar and competitive environment, enabling friendships to be formed and sustained.

In terms of quality, I have a strong belief that juniors should have access to the best coaching, as opposed to being left in the hands of ‘beginner coaches’. Therefore to ensure they don’t miss out on any opportunities I deliver all the sessions and activities. Since the start of the academy numbers have progressed rapidly, 6 children turned up the first week I took over and we now have 8 full groups of 8 children, plus a waiting list.

I also believe that parents like to (and will) pay for structure, safety in small numbers, variety, and a consideration to the needs of the specific children taking into account age and ability. Initially a few were unhappy to pay for the groups when they knew that they were going to be unable to attend some of the sessions, however once the term was underway the benefit of having smaller, more closely linked groups became clear.

Most weeks I run the same lesson for every group and tailor the learning outcomes and expectation levels to the ability of the group. This means that only one session needs to be planned per week, which saves a lot of time. I also use the Golf Foundation’s Tri Golf game cards for inspiration with games and challenges set for the juniors, rather than always focusing on technical points which are then forgotten by the next week. The challenges are all outcome driven, with suggestions offered as to how they can be achieved with a competition to conclude each session.

Since joining the club we have achieved GolfMark, set up a junior committee and severely changed our junior membership pricing structure to accommodate the new younger golfers and enable them to feel a part of the golf club. It’s a great indication of how the golf club has changed their attitudes and procedures to make the most of their situation.

Volunteers help out with Eaton Eagles golf days and I am always open to having level one volunteers and coaches with me. We have also recently taken on a PGA Trainee in the shop who will be assisting on Saturdays with the academy.

Philip Pearson
PGA Coach

“I think the key to running a great academy is to structure the groups into age and ability booking for a term to keep the numbers consistent and ensuring that the children receive a high level of inclusive, fun, outcome based coaching.”

Philip received the 2012 Golf Foundation Sinclair Award: for the PGA Professional who, across the UK, has made the most significant contribution to the development of grass roots and junior golf.
Summary

Coaching sessions and other activities should provide juniors with the opportunity to develop their golfing and personal skills.

Golf clubs should use the services of a PGA qualified coach to ensure juniors are given quality instruction on the fundamentals of the game.

Volunteers can gain qualifications to support coaches, enabling more juniors to access sessions and activities. This can also reward the volunteers within the golf club.

It is important that juniors are aware of the importance of quality practice sessions which will enable their games to develop.

Golf clubs should be aware of the opportunities for talented golfers at county and national level and promote accordingly.

The PGA provides opportunities for coach development at county level through County Golf Partnerships (see Section 9 for details).