



### **City of Birmingham Advanced Coaching Scheme and Development squad pathway**

#### **Foreword:**

This document seeks to identify the pathway for club swimmers, including disability swimmers (please also refer to see Swim21 Equity Statement on website) to access the Advanced Coaching Scheme as run by Birmingham City Council and also the development squad pathway as run by the City of Birmingham Swimming club. It outlines the aims, benefits, expectations and selection criteria for each squad and is primarily for reference for swimmers, parents and coaching teams from swimming clubs in the recognised Network of clubs in the West Midlands area. However it is important that the advanced coaching scheme does not exclude swimmers from clubs outside the network.

The overall aim is to strengthen the swimmer pathway across the Midland region. It is accepted that a key part of this pathway remains the communication between the City of Birmingham Coaching team and the network clubs coaching teams. The vision of the entire pathway is to not only provide an athlete pathway but to offer development for coaches from clubs as well. If we can achieve this then swimming in the West Midlands will be far better placed.

#### **The Aim –**

The aim of programme: To place swimmers on International Teams, in National Senior & Age/Youth finals and onto the English Talent programmes.

#### **ETHOS**

"I expect every swimmer to be a better swimmer in the future than they are today, whether that is in 1 day, 1 week, 1 month or 1 year.

Every day, in **and** out of the pool is an opportunity to become a better swimmer. A bad day, a missed session or anything below 100% commitment is an opportunity missed."

*Carl Grosvenor – Head Coach – Advanced Coaching Scheme*

#### **Benefits for the home club.**

The main benefit for a home club having a swimmer take this pathway is the recognition the home club will gain by being able to develop swimmers to a level where they can access a performance pathway and to also have these swimmers attain national and international recognition. There are many examples of swimmers taking the European and Commonwealth stage whilst still being a member of a home club and being an inspiration to others. It is recognised that some clubs are better able to develop swimmers due to pool time and squad numbers, and because there is the ability for the athlete to join at any point in the pathway, all clubs can gain benefit. The club also gains by having the swimmer available for Galas as detailed below. At no point does the City of Birmingham take away a swimmer from the home club, in fact it is desirable that the swimmer keep in touch with their club and from time to time train and compete for their home club. Occasions swimmers may need to return to their home club to train, and in this case the swimmer shall contact the home club head coach to check this is acceptable.

#### **Benefits for the swimmer.**

The swimmer will access specific coaching which is aimed at delivering the best possible success for that swimmer in line with the aims of the advanced coaching scheme.

- Swimmers will be required to compete for their home clubs in County Championships and Arena League and Junior League Galas. However swimmers may be competing at certain National or International events and the Head Coach may request the home club not to select the swimmer for a

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**Swimming**      ★      **Water Polo**      ★      **Synchro**      ★

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conflicting gala which may disadvantage them in succeeding at the highest level of competition possible. In the rare event that a National or International event conflicts with a County or League gala the Head Coach will contact the home club to discuss the best pathway solution for the athlete.

- Swimmers will only compete in events selected by the Squad Coach in order to maximise the development potential of the swimmer.
- There are a maximum number of 30 places available in both the Junior Squad and the Development Squad. There is a maximum of 20 places available in the Senior Squad, this is usually limited to a lower number to give greater support for each individual swimmer.

### **Attendance and Commitment**

It is important to understand the commitment required from the swimmer and the parents / guardians. It is demanding of both time from the parents / guardian and the swimmer and cannot be underestimated.

The number of sessions remains at the discretion of the Coaching staff and may be set on an individual swimmer basis with the aim of maximising the development of the swimmer. However the guide below gives good information about what may be expected. Additional sessions may be required in heavy periods of training. Land training is included with the session and must be attended.

### **Development Squad**

All swimmers on the Development Squad are expected to train with City of Birmingham for the 3 available pool sessions plus land work. Swimmers aged 9 are required to do an additional session per week with their home club. Swimmers aged 10/11 are expected to do an additional 2 sessions per week with their home club and swimmers aged 12 are expected to do an additional 3 sessions per week at home club.

### **Junior Squad**

- Aged 11      - 6 sessions per week
- Aged 12/13      - 7 sessions per week (including a minimum of one weekday morning)
- Aged 14      - 8 sessions per week (including a minimum of two weekday mornings)

### **Senior Squad**

- Aged 14/15      - 8 sessions per week (including minimum of two weekday mornings)
- Aged 16+      - 8-10 sessions per week (including minimum of three weekday mornings)

***Note – sessions are 2 hours duration plus land training of between 30-60 minutes***

### **The referral Process:**

- The City of Birmingham Advanced Coaching Scheme and Development squad will always look to work closely with home club coaches, parents and swimmers in regard to swimmers gaining a place on either the advanced coaching scheme or the development squad.
- It is in the gift of the home club to actively recommend swimmers to the Advanced Coaching Scheme or the Development Squad and this is highly encouraged.

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**Swimming**



**Water Polo**



**Synchro**



- Although referral by club coaches is preferred route, parents and swimmers may contact City of Birmingham coaching team direct. We will then organise a trial after informing the home club from which the trialist is coming about the process.
- The home club coach is always welcome to attend the trial session with their athlete.

**Selection**

- The trial will consist of one or a number of sessions in the City of Birmingham squad relevant to the trialist's age/ability.
- Trialists will be monitored throughout the trial by the City of Birmingham Coach. The Coach will be considering long-term potential of the swimmer based on our Club aims. It is important to note that achieved times are not the only criteria for selection.
- All the above are judged by the City of Birmingham Coach and remain at the discretion of the Coach.
- At the end of the Trial the City of Birmingham Coach will speak to the swimmer, parents or home club coach to either offer the trialist a place on the squad or inform them that there will currently be no such offer of a place, outlining reasons why and development requirements.
- Swimmers must have good technical ability, a positive attitude to training and competition and a desire to be the best they can be.
- Swimmers must meet the minimum training requirements as outlined in previous section.
- Swimmers and Parents must understand the commitment they are undertaking and the sacrifices required.

**Progress from Development Squad to the Advanced Coaching Scheme Junior Squad**

- Swimmers on the Development Squad will have been working purely on stroke technique, race skills and learning how to train effectively. Swimmers will only move from Development to Junior squads before the age of 11 in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Coaching team. When swimmers reach 11 years old the Coaching team will make a collective decision on whether it would be best for the swimmers development if they move into the Junior Squad or require a further year's development in the Development Squad. When swimmers reach 12 years old the Coaching team will make a decision whether the swimmer either moves into the Junior Squad or returns to their home club full time. Swimmers may be asked to return to their home clubs for a number of reasons: unsatisfactory attendance, poor attitude to training/competition or if the Coaching team believe the swimmer may not quite reach the level required to progress to the next level at City of Birmingham.
- Where a swimmer returns to their home club the Head Coach will make contact with the home club coach to explain the reasons and how the home club may wish to work with that swimmer at home club to maximise their potential.
- The maximum age limit in the Development squad is 12 years of age.

**Progress from Advanced Coaching Scheme Junior Squad to Advanced Coaching Scheme Senior Squad**

- Swimmers on the Junior Squad will have been continuing to work on stroke technique and race skills but should also have demonstrated a dedication to full time swimming training and ability to race fast when it matters. Swimmers will move from Junior to senior squad around the age of 14. Swimmers (more likely females) will be offered a place in the Senior squad at a younger age in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Coaching team.
- At age 14 the coaching team will make one of 3 choices. They will be to either:
  - Offer a full time place in the Senior Squad,
  - have one more year to develop in the Junior Squad (2 years ill not be accommodated in the junior squad),
  - Return to their home club full time.
- Places on the Senior squad will not be based purely on competition performance, but also on whether or not the Coaching team believe the swimmer has the potential to compete at the level required in the top squad of the City of Birmingham. This decision is made at the discretion of the Coaching team.

**Process of Exit**

We recognise that this part of any process is very uncomfortable for the athlete and their coach and this process seeks to explain how it should be handled in a respectful manner. Due to limited spaces being available within the City of Birmingham, should athlete's attendance, attitude or performance (training & competition) fall below the required standards then the following procedure will be followed to resolve the situation:-

- Athletes will be informed in writing of their failure to meet the required standards in relation to their attendance, attitude or performance (training & competition).
- Two "Reports" will be given throughout the season, the first will be around the Christmas time to cover the short course season, and one after the City of Birmingham open meet (Easter).
- Once the athlete has been informed in writing they will have a 3 month probationary period to rectify the problem, should the swimmers attendance, attitude or performance improve to the required standard then no further action will be taken.
- During any probationary period the coach will regularly review the improvements with the athlete to monitor and support them through the improvement.
- After 3 months should the athlete's attendance, attitude or performance not of improved then they will be informed in writing that they no longer have a place within the City of Birmingham SC.
- All the above are judged by the City of Birmingham Coaching team and remain at the discretion of the Coach.
- If an athlete returns to their home club, the head coach will contact the home club to advise of the best solution for the athlete.