

## Don't forget our young golfers!

### Advice on re-starting junior golf

The Golf Foundation changes the lives of young people through an introduction to golf. Last year it introduced just under 50,000 young people to golf clubs across England, Scotland and Wales.

Following the announcement of the government allowing golf clubs in England to re-open on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May, the Golf Foundation has produced the following advice for clubs and PGA Professional coaches to help promote a safe return to the game for juniors.

**The key message for all clubs is to ensure that junior members or golfers involved in coaching programmes are given fair access to play the course.** We understand that tee times will be at a premium, but the current climate provides a great opportunity for children to participate in sport whilst other options are currently closed to them and their families.

### Accessing the Golf Course

1. Safe environment and family inclusion
  - Golf Club staff should check with young players that they are aware of all current safety instructions, flag & bunker/course restrictions.
    - i. 2 juniors from different households are permissible providing one is above the age the club sets to act as 'supervisor'.
    - ii. 2 juniors from the same household who are both under the club's 'supervision' age should have an accompanying parent/guardian from same household.
  - There will also be requirements to consider for the safeguarding of children whilst out on the course. Please ensure the supervising parent/guardian or junior is aware of the club's protocols before they play.
2. Allocate dedicated tee times to juniors
  - Please consider allocating dedicated tee times to juniors on days and times traditionally allocated to young golfers at your club e.g. Sunday afternoons.
3. Consider 6 or 9 holes
  - Although exercise is now unlimited, aiming to play golf between 60-90 minutes will be looked upon favourably by parents who may have to accompany their child on the course, as well as by your adult members.
4. Rules to support positive pace of play
  - Some children might still be learning the game but will benefit from playing on the course. Changing some rules will be advantageous (such as after 2 failed attempts to get a ball out of a bunker, it can be thrown out). It's important that children enjoy their experience and don't feel pressured or concerned about their game.
5. Think about the non-golfing parent
  - Consider how you communicate the booking procedure of tee times, whether this is online or via another way. Some parents may be unfamiliar with this process as in the past their PGA Professional or Junior Organiser may have led/coordinated access to the golf course.
6. Parental Involvement
  - Promote to parents the opportunity of accessing the course, particularly the physical and mental benefits of participating. Parents either playing with, or accompanying their child on the course could form part of their own exercise routine. Remind them that they are not there to coach but to encourage, ask great questions and enjoy the time together.

The importance of accessing the course for children has been demonstrated through initiatives (such as GolfSixes League) which have created a love of the game, a desire to play more golf and ultimately an increase in junior membership of golf clubs. It's vitally important that these children and juniors continue to access the game even in this time of restrictions in order to keep the game thriving. For more, see [www.golf-foundation.org](http://www.golf-foundation.org)