**Richmond Canoe Club**

**Information for parents of novice juniors**

Racing Canoeing is a great sport and Richmond Canoe Club is primarily a (flat water) racing club. We have a number of GB representatives in long distance racing (known as marathon) and we have an active sprint group (sprint is the flat water racing seen at the Olympics).

The junior induction course is designed to introduce young people from 11 -16 to paddlesport with a view to competing in flat water racing; but before we can race we must be safe and this course is the start of that process.

**Over six sessions** participants will paddle both canoes and kayaks using single and double ended paddles (all will become clear). At the end they will be ready to move on to the next group and develop their paddling.

Throughout the course we will use the British Canoeing Paddlepower scheme. this rewards progression for young paddlers and we will hope to get participants to level two or three during the induction course. Further details are here: <https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/courses/paddle-power/>

Pre-requisites:

Participants must be able to swim at least 100m

Equipment/Clothing:

All specialist equipment (boat/paddle/buoyancy aid) will be provided by the club. Paddlers need to ensure they are appropriately dressed for the conditions:

* + A pair of plimsoles or beach shoes is ideal. Initially trainers can be used but they will get wet and degrade and are clumsy in the boats.
  + Sports clothing is ok but thermal base layers work very well in all but the hottest conditions.
  + A hat/cap in the sun
  + Lightweight cagoule or waterproof
  + Kit to change into after the session to warm up

Further paddling at the Club, for most juniors, takes place on Saturdays throughout the year, and, on one or two weekday evenings over the period April to September.

The Club supplies dedicated coaches and all equipment (boats, paddles, life jackets).

The purpose of paddling at the Club is to prepare for going to races.

Races are organised with 2 age categories (Under 10 and Under 12), and thereafter a Divisional system for juniors and seniors, all mixed together, at 9 different levels.

Races take place on Sundays, and are located at other Canoe Clubs (almost all within a 1h drive from Richmond). We go to races at least once a month.

Going to races is, obviously, good for the body.

However the ultimate benefit is one of personal development....... dealing with the unknown (no paddler knows in advance how a race will evolve); mixing with paddlers from other Clubs; spending time outdoors; spending time away from School work, home, and digital stuff.

Races demand + reward + promote a positive, outgoing, attitude.

Parental support (transport of son/daughter, and, in time, boats!) so that going to races becomes a family outing provides the extra ingredient that makes it all happen.