**STEPS TO ESTABLISHING CLUB/SCHOOL LINKS**

1.       Discuss within the club or school why you want to establish a link and what outcome you would like.  That should help shape how the link is formed.

2.       Decide which **primary schools you want to establish a link** with and appoint someone from the club to take on the responsibility for establishing and growing the relationship with the school. Look for a counterpart in the school to take on a similar role.

3.       Representatives from the club meet with the principal, parents and teachers that have a role in sport/games.

4.       Agree points of contact for the club and school.

5.       Outline the club’s work at youth level focusing on Code of Ethics, and all other youth events and activities.

6.       Establish what activities will be run by the club and school where both parties benefit.  Keep a record of this agreement.

7.       If the activity/activities will lead to an increase of Basketball players in the club or school make sure that everyone is prepared for the extra numbers.

8.       Provide a calendar of club events to the school and outline how the school could come on board.  Establish if the school has events that the club could take part in.

9.       Keep in regular contact with the school. Establish (and keep up to date) a Basketball notice-board in the school with information on club blitzes, events, international fixtures (posters usually available) and any other club events or activities.

10.   Liaise with the Regional Development Officer for your province in terms of any initiatives, courses or resources that may be available to the club and schools (Niall McDermott – [nmcdermott@basketballireland.ie](mailto:nmcdermott@basketballireland.ie) . This includes coaching courses (Introductory, Level 1, Table Official Courses)

11.   Build on the new partnership over time; review it and make changes as suits the club and school.  Consider any activities that will encourage children to play Basketball and stay in the sport.

**WHAT IS A CLUB/SCHOOL LINK?**

Basketball Club defines a club/school link as one where the club and school have met and recorded agreed activity/activities on a seasonal basis which sees the on-going participation of pupils and club members in Basketball.  This activity can be as small or as large as the club and school deem appropriate.  The reason that Basketball Club advocates club/school links is it:

-          Brings clubs and schools from the same community together rather than working in isolation

-          Opens up access for children to play sport after they have left school

-          Introduces children to Basketball

-          Improves coaching standards

In many cases a club/school link is designed around a club coach visiting the school. However that is only one form of a club/school link and it should be designed to meet the joint needs of the club and school. Any club/school link must be mutually beneficial if it is to be successful.  Basketball Ireland strongly recommends all clubs to forge links with schools and in particular primary schools.

**CODE OF ETHICS**

Basketball is fully committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of its participants.  Every individual in Basketball should at all times, show respect and understanding for participants’ rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the organisation and the guidelines contained in the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport.*In working with young people in Basketball our first priority is the welfare of young people and we are committed to providing an environment that will allow participants to perform to the best of their ability, free from abuse, neglect, bullying and intimidation.

All clubs and schools forming a partnership are encouraged to sign a ‘Club/School Link Agreement’.  This document has a strong Code of Ethics element to it and looks for the following information which is essential to have in place:

·         Club: Must have a Club Children’s Officer and Club Designated Person with training (details must be publically available online). .

·         School: Must have a Designated Liaison Person. The school must be satisfied that the coach complies with the school’s requirements around child protection in line with the Department of Education guidelines and Children First.

Any decisions made with regard to a child playing Basketball must be in the best interest of the child. This includes the club in which a child plays. Coaches and teachers are in a position of influence and it is important that children are encouraged to play Basketball where it suits their needs best – not that of the school or club.  The choice of club should be the choice of the child and parent only.

**COMMUNICATION**

It is vital that all parties involved know who the main point of contact is. This information should be clearly laid out in the **‘Club/School Link Agreement’**. It should include details of all people involved including the main point of contact for the club, the school and Irish Basketball. It may also be helpful to include the contact details of a coach if this part of the arrangement.

**COACHING**

The emphasis for coaching should be on fun and instilling a love for Basketball.    
Any coach or Sports Leader taking on a role in a school or club (irrespective of whether they are paid or not and whether they are provided by the club or employed by the school) must have a Basketball Ireland coaching qualification and a Code of Ethics Awareness Certificate (ROI). Coaching courses are regularly available from Irish Basketball and details can be found on <http://www.basketballireland.ie/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=73&Itemid=57> . The Code of Ethics Basic Awareness Course is run by the Irish Sport Council through the Local Sports Partnerships in the Republic of Ireland. A list of Local Sports Partnerships is available by [clicking here](http://www.irishsportscouncil.ie/Participation/). A list of courses run by Sport NI is available by [clicking here](http://www.sportni.net/PerformanceSport/coaching/coachingedworkshops).

**BUILDING THE LINK**

One of the main considerations for any club looking to build a club/school link is to consider how is the link going to be forged. It may not be enough to run Basketball in a school, children need to be encouraged to engage with the club. There are a number of ways in which this can be done and the club may want to focus on one or choose a range:

·         Run a ‘Cluster day’ where pupils get to try Basketball out

·         Hold a blitz for pupils on school grounds

·         Hold a blitz for pupils on club grounds

·         Flyer handed out to each child with club information

·         Visit from ‘top club players’ or international players to the school

·         Arrange to bring pupils to see international fixtures, Premier League fixtures.

·         Put up posters in the school with club information

·         Club newsletter circulated to children

·         Club open day for school pupils

In all cases, it’s vital to get the agreement of the school before any activities are run.  These agreed activities should form the basis of the agreed Club/School Link.

**BEING PREPARED**

Any club/school link will hopefully lead to an increase in the number of children playing the sport. It is vital that the club and school are prepared to deal with additional numbers. Some of the items below are areas for consideration in terms of being prepared:

**Club & School**

·         Introductory Coaching Course (for Teachers or for Volunteers): 8 hour pathway coaching course, required for the Level 1. Can be delivered in the school or club grounds. Price depends on number of attendees, negotiated directly with Basketball Ireland.

·         Review of current facilities: A Basketball Court is required to play the sport but you need to ensure that children can play safely in the area allotted. This also applies to the club where additional members may turn up to training – you need to have the space for them! Speak to your Regional Development Officer for advice.

**Club**

·         Parents provide an excellent source of volunteers to clubs.  Many clubs now insist on parents providing a ‘day of volunteering’ to the club when signing up their children.  Clubs often ask parents to stay throughout coaching sessions and subsequently ask them to get involved.  If your club needs additional manpower to cater for additional children, don’t be afraid to reach out to parents.

**School**

·         TY Basketball Programme: This programme focuses on two main areas of Basketball,Playing and , with leadership skills as the underlying theme.  This is delivered by a tutor who visits the secondary school for a day and a half.  Students are also expected to gain real-life practical experience in order to complete the programme and to gain certification.   ·         Parents: In many cases, particularly in primary schools, parents take a leadership role in overseeing and coaching hockey. Schools may often times have parents who have playing experience and coaching qualifications.  It’s worthwhile reaching out to parents to see who may be interested in getting involved.

**RESPONSIBILITITIES**

It is very important that everyone involved in the relationship is aware of what their responsibilities and roles are. This avoids confusion over who is doing what and will allow for all areas of the Club/School Link Arrangement to be discussed. There are some suggestions of areas to discuss below:

**School Responsibilities**

·         Provide access to the pitch or school facility for Basketball

·         Contribute toward the payment of the coach

·         Parents to be notified that pupils are taking part in Basketball

·         Pupils and teachers to be prepared for Basketball at an agreed time in an agreed place

·         Essential for the teacher to stay throughout the coaching session and to ideally take part

·         Teacher to sign the weekly Session Report (as produced by the coach)

·         Contact the coach in a timely fashion if a session has to be cancelled

**Club Responsibilities**

·         Provide access to the court

·         Ensure all pupils who attend coaching sessions in the club will receive a quality Basketball experience.

·         Host a blitz on club grounds

**Coach Responsibilities**

·         Focus on fun and instilling a love ofBasketball with all children

·         Record any accidents or incidents which need to be reported or dealt with accordingly

·         Complete a weekly Session Report, ask the teacher to sign it each week and store a copy

·         Contact the Designated Liaison Person in the school if any concerns over pupils arise

·         Contact the Club Designated Person if any concerns over club players arise

·         Keep in regular contact with Basketball Ireland.

**EQUIPMENT**

Equipment will be supplied by Ciaran O Sullivan the Development Officer.

Cluster Pack includes Basketballs, Bibs, Cones and a Pre-introductory Coaching Manual.

**INSURANCE**

It is vital that the club and school agree as to whose insurance policy the Basketball activity falls under.

**INCLUSION**

Basketball Ireland is committed to ensuring that equity is incorporated across all aspects of our sport. In doing so we expect that all clubs and schools acknowledge and accept the following:

·         Sports equity is about fairness in sport, equality of access, recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. It is about changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure it becomes equally accessible to everyone in society.

·         Clubs and schools respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and will treat everyone equally within the context of hockey, regardless of age, ability, gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, sexuality or social/economic status.

·         Clubs and schools are committed to everyone having the right to enjoy hockey in an environment free from threat of intimidation, harassment and abuse.

·         Everyone involved in Basketball has a responsibility to oppose discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity.

**OVERPLAYING**

There are a number of factors to be conscious of if children are playing in school and club. The needs of the child must come first and coaches, teachers and parents need to be aware of the dangers of overstretching players.

**Coaching Resources**

Below you will find a link to some useful coaching tips:

[www.coachesclipboard.net](http://www.coachesclipboard.net)

<http://youth.usab.com/coaches>

<http://basketballhq.com/>

<http://www.breakthroughbasketball.com/>

<http://www.fiba.com/pages/eng/cl/index.asp>

<http://www.strongerteam.com/blog/>

<http://jtaylorcoach.blogspot.ie/>

<http://changingthegameproject.com/>

<http://www.basketballwa.asn.au/index.php?id=70>

<http://www.basketballyukon.ca/player_development.html>

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