



HEADINGTON SCHOOL OXFORD BOAT CLUB

2025 - 2026

With Compliments:
Chris Hermes: Head of Rowing
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HEADINGTON SCHOOL OXFORD BOAT CLUB



Headington has established itself as one of the top rowing schools in the United Kingdom. Rowing was first introduced here in 1991 and since then, the boat club has grown to include all years in the school. Membership in the boat club ranges from complete beginners to Junior World Championship standard. Headington School Oxford Boat Club (HSOBC) is a competitive club with a recreational facility for the younger squads. There has been a Headingtonian representing Great Britain at the last four Olympic Games including at London 2012 where Katie Greaves raced in the GB Women's Eight and Lily Van Den Broecke won gold in the LTMA Coxed four. Katie went on to win a silver medal rowing in the eight again at Rio 2016.

Ryan Demaine (Head Coach) and Chris Hermes (Head of Rowing), are supported by seven professional rowing staff. Over the last twenty years, Headington has become one of the top rowing schools in the country having won numerous National and Henley medals and seen many students gain U19 international selection.

J12s (Year 7) to J18s (6th Form) are encouraged to row and participate in what is one of the school's most competitive clubs, both domestically and internationally. Over the last fifteen years, Headington has had an average of three girls per year representing Great Britain a number of whom have won medals at the World Junior Rowing Championships and the Youth Olympics. The reason for this success lies in Headington's training ethos which relies on fun and commitment for those who participate in the boat club. Most of all, enjoyment of the sport is encouraged by coaches as an essential element in success.

Many things contribute to the success of the Boat Club, the foremost of these being:

- The ethos that our rowers are Athlete-Scholars.
- The partnership with Oxford Brookes University whereby any innovations in sports science are available to the girls.
- The coaching staff are some of the most experienced on the UK rowing circuit.
- And most importantly, the girls and parents who are the life and soul of the club.

Should you wish to enrol your daughter into the boat club the J12 Squad is available to U3 girls and our 'Fast Track' learn to row program is run for girls from L4 to U4. 5th and 6th form girls who wish to join the boat club without any previous rowing experience are accepted at the discretion of the Head of Rowing. Please don't worry if your daughter is not that 'sporty', her 'sportiness' will develop as she takes part and begins to enjoy rowing.

Why row?

Rowing is a challenging sport which offers young people the opportunity to have fun in an outdoor environment. However, as rowers' skills develop and they become passionate about the sport, a desire to compete is nurtured. This, coupled with the sense of identity and camaraderie within the sport, makes rowing one of the true great team sports. In addition, rowing helps girls to develop as individuals, encouraging them to develop qualities such as self-motivation, personal responsibility, tolerance and a will to improve and succeed.

At Headington School we encourage girls to develop at their own pace. Headington has a squad system that allows girls to develop their skills with people of similar ability. Once girls are sufficiently capable they progress into the next squad.

Rowing and academic performance

Boat Club members have, on the whole, also been high achievers academically. Many of our rowers have gone on to Oxford and Cambridge University as well as Ivy League Colleges in the US. Several rowers have attained prefect status each year at the school too. Those who initially struggled academically (when they were younger) have found that rowing has helped them organise their time, while ensuring they have a fit and focused mind and body. Rowing is a sport that requires girls to take ownership of their time, commitments, academic work and overall well being. To this end, girls who row gain skills that help in a wide range of areas especially in their academic lives. There is no need for people to worry about rowing affecting GCSE's or A-Levels as our rowers are supported in maintaining strong academics, we work in lockstep with the academic staff at the school and if there are deadlines, exams or other academic pressures; the rowing staff are only too happy to support and help their athletes achieve their academic goals by changing sessions to suit the girl's academic requirements.

Chris Hermes
Head of Rowing

Fees Information

Termly fees for this season (inclusive of VAT):

Year 7 (J12): £305 in the Autumn and Spring terms and £341 in the Summer term,

Year 8 (J13): £362 in the Autumn and Spring terms and £420 in the Summer term,

Year 9 to 6th Form (J14 to Senior): £433 each term

All members of the boat club need to have completed the [rowing parental consent Google](#) form before starting a new season with HSOBC.

All Year 7 and new Year 8 and 9 rowers get 4 free training sessions before having to commit to the boat club. Following this trial period the girls will be charged the full termly fee which covers costs for the remainder of the term.

The rowing fees include all tuition for land training and water sessions including use of all HSOBC facilities, provision of all boats and equipment and individual insurance and coaching. The additional costs of races including entry fees, transport to and from these events and items are charged to the school bill in addition to the rowing fees and are capped at £60 (inc VAT) for non-residential events.

Please note that spaces may be limited and we encourage parents to complete the parental consent form as soon as possible to secure a place in the boat club.

Enrolment Information

All enrolment information is emailed out to parents by the Head of Rowing and can be obtained by contacting him directly. You can also find enrolment information on the [HSOBC website 'joining' section](#). If you have any questions about enrolling your daughter into the boat club please do not hesitate in contacting the Head of Rowing by email at chermes@headingtonschool.com.

Rowing Training Time Table Overview:

Summer clocks: Autumn 1st Half and Spring 2nd Half and the Summer term.

Week Days: Gym session: 4pm to 6:15pm. Water session (W): 4pm to 6:30pm.

Weekends: Water session: 8am to 12pm (Note different times for J12s, J13s and 'Fast track' may apply).

Winter clocks: Autumn 2nd Half and Spring 1st Half:

Week Days: Land session (L): 4pm to 6:15pm. No afternoon water rowing session.

Weekends: Water session (W): 8am to 12pm (Note different times for J12s, J13s and 'Fast track' may apply).

For winter, all mid week water sessions become land sessions.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Attendance
*J12					Gym	Water		50%
**J13s		Water		Water	Gym	Water		60%
J14s		Water	Gym	Water		Water		75%
J15s	Water	Gym	Water	Gym		Water	Water	80%
J16s	Gym	Gym	Water	Gym		Water	Water	90%+
Seniors	Gym	Gym	Water	Gym		Water	Water	90%+

*J12s to choose 1 of the weekend water sessions.

** J13 to choose 1 week day and 1 two hour weekend water session

Training sessions are set out so that, if girls do music, they can attend music, and rowing on an alternate day. We also encourage girls in the younger years to do as many other sports as possible: This will allow them to develop much needed skills that are transferable to rowing.

We strongly encourage Year 7 to 10 rowers (J12s to J15s) to do other sports in school as these skills will enrich their rowing and vice versa.

Transport arrangements:

For week day training sessions:

- Monday to Thursday water sessions: Bus departs from the school gym no later than 4:10pm. Parent collection from the Boathouse is at 6:30pm

For Rowing Head Races and Regattas:

- Girls must use school transport to all events unless alternative arrangement have been made with the Head of Rowing. Please keep an eye on the boat club website for details.
- Rowers can go back with parents after the event but parents must inform the Head of Rowing about this arrangement and no rower is to leave an event before the boat trailer has been fully loaded for its return to Oxford.

Boarders:

- Transport back to school on weekdays (as well as to and from the river on weekends) will be provided for boarders where possible. The boat club will liaise with the boarding houses when making transport arrangements.

Return transport for non-boarders

- Transport back from the river during the week and to and from the river on weekends may be available for non-boarders if there is space. If you are really struggling with a certain pick up day or time at the river please contact the head of rowing (chermes@headingtonschool.com)

J12 Rowing

Enrolment

All girls enrolling into HSOBC:

- Please complete the [parental consent and registration form](#).
- Once enrolled the boat club will invite your daughter to do a capsized drill and swimming test. The boat club runs these as part of its safety program; they take about 45-60 minutes to complete and are held in September. The proposed dates for the capsized drill and swimming assessment will be outlined at the start of term. Please ensure your daughter attends them as there may not be another opportunity to do the drill.

Training & Notification

Beginners are introduced to the J12 rowing squad where the basics of rowing are taught. Here, the emphasis is on fun and the sessions look to teach athletes the very basics of sculling (Rowing with two blades/oars). Key skills which are developed during this time include posture; core stability; and basic sculling technique, but most importantly competence in a boat by teaching the girls how to control, steer and move a boat while being aware of other boats around them.

The J12 training timetable is detailed below:

Seasonal Rowing and Other Sports

The J12s will only row from September to the October half term and then from the February half term through to the end of the summer term. Fees are charged on a termly basis and average out over the year. Please note that due to the inclusion of additional water sessions, these are covered in the fees. The J12s are strongly encouraged to do another co-curricular sport in addition to their rowing to develop their general athleticism. The Friday gym sessions will continue throughout the year.

Sessions:

Friday: 4:15pm to 6pm at School gym and ergo rooms. (These continue throughout the year)

Saturday: 2-3 slots in the day between 1pm and 5pm at the river (Autumn 1st Half)

2-3 slots between 1pm and 5pm at the water (Spring 1st Half & Summer term).

The rest of the week is left free for girls to pursue other extracurricular activities.

The sign-up for the Saturday time slots is organised by the head coach of the J12 Squad in conjunction with the Head of Rowing and all details will be given to all girls enrolled in the J12 Squad and their parents in the first weeks of term.

There are also J12 training weekends and a half term mini-camp scheduled for the Autumn and Spring terms.

For a week by week training timetable please see the boat club calendar which can be found on the HSOBC web page.

The boat club does reserve the right to change these times but notice of any late changes will be given on the boat club website or via email

Attendance

For U3 girls the boat club offers one land training session during the week (Friday) and one water session during the week as well as another water session on Sundays. The boat club expects girls to maintain a 50% attendance record at both the gym and water sessions to ensure that they develop along with their peers over the course of the year.

In addition to this, we strongly encourage girls to do other activities whilst in U3. As the boat club is normally oversubscribed it is important for J12s to attend these 2 sessions so that they are equipped with the necessary skills to attend rowing and to train and compete safely. If girls are ill or simply have too much work, we understand that attendance may slip, however the boat club reserves the right to terminate a J12's membership with the club if they fail to consistently maintain their attendance.

Racing

The J12s may do some racing during the season, the main events of the year are:

- Maidenhead Junior Regatta (May).
- Blenheim Palace Junior Regatta (June)

J12 races are unfortunately few in number during the Summer, however the boat club is committed to finding appropriate competition for the J12 girls even if this is internal competition only.

HSOBC is very fortunate that many of the parents regularly come and support at races and this support is greatly appreciated. At many events we will have the HSOBC gazebo and parents are welcome to bring along drinks and picnics.

For more information on J12 rowing here at Headington, including what to expect in the first weeks of term and some FAQs, please see the HSOBC website and the J12 Rowing Information booklet which was emailed out to all U3 parents at the start of term. This can also be obtained by emailing the Head of Rowing.

Fast Track (L4 to U4 New Starters)

Enrolment

All new 4th Form girls enrolling into HSOBC:

- Please complete the [parental consent and registration form](#).
- Once enrolled the boat club will invite your daughter to do a capsized drill and swimming test. The boat club runs these as part of its safety program; they take about thirty minutes to complete and are held in September. The proposed dates for the capsized drill and swimming assessment will be outlined at the start of term. Please ensure your daughter attends them as there may not be another opportunity to do the drill.

Training

The Aim of the Fast Track program is to teach basic sculling technique to our new starters who are too old for the J12 (U3) Squad so that they can begin training and rowing with their own year group as soon as possible. To this end there is a dedicated Fast Track coach who will oversee the girl's technical development on the water. As the girls become more confident and their technical skill in the boat improves they are gradually introduced to rowing with their own age group.

So that the Fast Track girls have the best chance of reaching the required skill level on the water to join in with their own age group the program runs in the Autumn Term while it is still light enough to go on the river after school.

The Fast Track training timetable will be determined once the number of fast track rowers has been confirmed but will include a mixture of land and on-water training but will most likely consist of three after school sessions and both mornings over the weekend.

The J13 and J14 Squads (L4 and U4):



Training

J13s row from September to October half term and again from February to July (the Friday session will run through the whole year) while J14s train all year round.

In the J13 and J14 squads (L4 and U4 respectively) a competitive sculling focus is developed and encouraged. Girls are encouraged to participate in various J13 and J14 head races (time trial) and regattas (side by side racing). Girls are selected for crews based on their attendance, their ability to move a small boat and their technical skill and physical capacity (please see the club selection policy)

Competitive work geared towards the events that the girls compete in is incorporated into their everyday training but there is still a heavy emphasis on fun and we ensure that the training is at the correct level of intensity for full enjoyment of the sport to be maximised. Sculling technique and basic rowing fitness; including core stability, flexibility and aerobic fitness, continue to be built on from the previous year.

Please see the training timetable which outlines when these squads will be training (Page 5).

If the mid week training session is at the river then it will run from 4pm to 6:30pm (with transport available to and, if needed, from school) while mid week training sessions held at school run from 4pm to 6pm. Saturday and Sunday sessions are always held at the river (weather permitting) and run from 8am to 10am and 10am to 12pm both days.

The boat club reserves the right to change these times but notice of any changes will always be given on the boat club website.

Attendance

The J13 and J14 Squads compete in a number of races throughout the season and girls who attend sessions on a regular basis will have an opportunity to race (see attendance quotas in the table on page 5).

At this stage in your daughter's rowing career it is important that she is given time (especially on weekends) to do school work and to pursue other extracurricular activities. Therefore we only ask:

- J13 to attend one Saturday session (8am to 10am or 10am to 12pm).
- J14 girls: Will be asked to attend both Saturday and Sunday (8am to 12pm).
-

Racing

The J13 and J14 Squads race a number of Head Races (time trials) and Regattas (side by side racing) throughout the season. The main events of the year are:

J13

South of England Indoor Rowing Championships
Maidenhead Junior Regatta
Blenheim Junior Regatta
Peterborough Junior Championships
Kingston Regatta

J14s:

National Sculling Head
South of England Indoor Rowing Championships
The National Schools Regatta
Peterborough Junior Regatta
HSOBC Training Camp in France

While those listed are the main events we enter every year there may be other opportunities throughout the season for your daughter to race, please see the rowing calendar for more information on all the events we are looking to enter.

HSOBC is very fortunate that many of the parents regularly come and support at races and this support is greatly appreciated. At many events we will have the HSOBC marquee available and parents are welcome to come and support and to bring along drinks and picnics.

Available for J14 to J18 rowers: the HSOBC Training Camp is held every year for one week over the Easter break at Temple-sur-Lot in the south of France. More information on the Training Camp will be sent to all rowing parents in the first term of the school year and can be found on the HSOBC website.

J15 (L5) and J16 (U5) Squads:



Training

While Sculling is still very much the primary focus, J15 girls are also introduced to Sweep rowing (with one blade/oar). A full competitive program is introduced where girls are able to compete in a wide range of Head Races and Regattas. The focus here is on building; endurance (aerobic and anaerobic), flexibility and core stability and on developing good sculling and sweep technique.

Technique and quality rowing sessions are incorporated to ensure that the girls are well conditioned for rowing. Runs, ergo and circuit work are all important in the conditioning of the girls to compete. By doing this, a strong sense of camaraderie and identity is built. Furthermore, there is a strong focus on organisation to help girls with their work.

Please see the training timetable which outlines when these squads will be training (Page 5).

If the mid week training session is at the river then it will run from 4pm to 6:30pm (with transport available to and, if needed, from school) while mid week training sessions held at school run from 4pm to 6pm. Saturday and Sunday sessions are always held at the river (weather permitting) and run from 7:50am to 12:15pm both days.

The boat club reserves the right to change these times but notice of any changes will always be given on the boat club website

Please see the training timetable which outlines when these squads will be training (Page 5).

Attendance

We ask that J15s and J16s attend at least 3 of the 4 week day sessions on offer between Monday and Friday. We expect that girls will be interested in doing another co-curricular activity in school or use this time for revision. Please note that over the last 11 years, J16s have had to train 4 days a week. There is enough time to do academic work, another co-curricular activity and row on this new, 3 day timetable. If your daughter cannot attend training please let the coaches know **5 days in advance** so that transport, equipment and staffing can be planned. Racing is only available to those girls who attend sessions regularly (3 days during the week and Saturday and Sunday).

The boat club reserves the right to terminate a girls membership or disallow her from racing with HSOBC should she fail to attend sessions regularly. If girls do not attend sessions, they might not be signed on for the following term as these positions can be filled by girls who truly want to row and get the most out of it.

Racing

The J15 Squad race a number of Head Races (time trials) and Regattas (side by side racing) throughout the season. The main events of the year are (These are subject for change and only list key events):

- National Sculling Head
- Schools Head of the River
- Wallingford Regatta
- The National Schools Regatta
- GB v France trials
- HSOBC Training Camp in France

While those listed are the main events we enter every year there will be other opportunities throughout the season for your daughter to race, please see the rowing calendar for more information on all the events we are looking to enter.

HSOBC is very fortunate that many of the parents regularly come and support at races and this support is greatly appreciated. At many events we will have the HSOBC marquee available and parents are welcome to come and support and to bring along drinks and picnics.

Available for J14 to J18 rowers, the HSOBC Training Camp is held every year for one week over the Easter break at Temple-sur-Lot in the south of France. More information on the Training Camp will be sent to all rowing parents in the first term of the school year and can be found on the HSOBC website.

Selected girls may go to the J16 GB vs France trial at the end of the season. Please see page 14 in this book and the rowing calendar on the Boat Club Website for more information.

Selections to Events

Please note that Headington School Oxford Boat Club has a selection policy. Please see this policy as it highlights how Headington do their selections.

Senior Squads (Selected U5, and all L6 and U6):



Training

Small boat rowing is vital to the success of all J16 and Senior rowers at Headington and a lot of time is spent in single scull and pair sweep boats throughout the winter. Running, ergo work, swimming, circuit work and weight training (only under strict supervision) all contribute to allowing athletes to attain high standards of racing. Headington J16 and Senior boats are selected very carefully with regard to what events would most benefit the girls at the various races we compete in throughout the year.

So that the training we do is as effective as possible we have, through our partnership with Oxford Brookes University, begun to offer Blood Lactate, Haemoglobin and Hydration Testing to the J16 and Senior Squads (No physiological testing is being undertaken due to Covid-19). The results of these procedures provide information to individual rowers about their fitness improvements and can be used to set appropriate training intensities in order to maximize training effectiveness as well as reducing the risk of injury and overtraining. Participation in these tests is purely voluntary and is not a required part of the J16 and Senior training program. If you want your daughter to take part you must complete a parental consent form which can be found on the Boat Club Website along with more detailed information.

Selected girls also have the opportunity to attend the various GB assessment and trial weekends throughout the year, where, if they prove to be successful they may represent Great Britain at one of the following: The World Junior Championships, the Coupe de la Jeunesse, the GB vs France Match (J16 only) or the Home Countries Regatta (England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales).

For girls aspiring to the junior Great Britain team, there is obviously a much greater demand on time and training. A GB Selection standard has to be met before girls may be put forward for GB trials. For more information on GB trials please see page 14

Please see the training timetable which outlines when these squads will be training (Page 5).

If the mid week training session is at the river then it will run from 4pm to 6:30pm (with transport available to and, if needed, from school) while mid week training sessions held at school run from 4pm to 6pm. Saturday and Sunday sessions are always held at the river (weather permitting) and run from 7:50am to 12:15pm both days.

The boat club reserves the right to change these times but notice of any changes will always be given on the boat club website

For a week by week training timetable please see the boat club website

Attendance

We require a **90%+ attendance** for J16 and Senior girls in the boat club. If your daughter cannot attend training please let the coaches know **5 days in advance** so that transport, equipment and staffing can be planned. Racing is only available to those girls who attend sessions regularly.

The boat club reserves the right to terminate a girls membership or disallow her from racing with HSOBC should she fail to attend sessions regularly. If girls do not attend sessions, they might not be signed on for the following term as these positions can be filled by girls who truly want to row and get the most out of it.

Racing

The J16 and Senior Squads race a number of Head Races (time trials) and Regattas (side by side racing) throughout the season. The main events of the year are:

- Fours Head of the River
- National Sculling Head
- Schools Head of the River
- Women's Head of the River
- The National Schools Regatta
- Henley Women's Regatta
- Henley Royal Regatta
- HSOBC Training Camp in France

While those listed are the main events we enter every year there will be other opportunities throughout the season for your daughter to race, please see the rowing calendar for more information on all the events we are looking to enter.

HSOBC is very fortunate that many of the parents regularly come and support at races and this support is greatly appreciated. At many events we will have the HSOBC marquee available and parents are welcome to come and support and to bring along drinks and picnics.

Available for J14 to J18 rowers, the HSOBC Training Camp is held every year for one week over the Easter break at Temple-sur-Lot in the south of France. More information on the Training Camp will be sent to all rowing parents in the first term of the school year and can be found on the HSOBC website.

Selected girls will also attend GB Junior Squad trials throughout the season. Some J16s may also be selected to attend the GB vs France trial at the end of the season. Please see page 14 in this book and the rowing calendar on the Boat Club Website for more information.

Great Britain Trials

Every step towards getting a Great Britain Junior World Championship, Coupe de la Jeunesse, GB vs France or Home Countries shirt are steps that build the trialling athlete towards being a more and more effective rower. This very positive kick back is why it is so important for Headington to have people attending the various camps, training days and trials that are run by the GB Junior Squad. Gaining GB selection is not easy but the process is exciting, rewarding and fun. The chance to travel; race with rowers of a similar and very high standard and to compete at the highest level in junior sport is an accolade well worth striving for.

The Trial system starts in November at the Early Identification Trials in Boston, Lincolnshire. Here, girls who make the minimum ergo standard are invited to race over 5km in a single scull. Those who do very well are invited to a camp, traditionally held in Nantes, France. This largely Lottery funded camp teaches essential skills in rowing but also helps the attendees in planning for their future rowing career.

The next set of trials are in February and are also generally in Boston, Lincolnshire. On the Saturday of the trials, girls are again raced over 5km in a single scull and on the Sunday, they race over the same distance, but in various pair combinations (often dictated by the GB chief coaches).

For both of the Boston trials overnight accommodation is organised and as with all Headington events girls are required to use school transport.

Girls who do well at the Long-Distance trials in November (cancelled for 2020) and February here are invited then to Spring Assessments and the GB Small Boats Regatta (April). At the Spring Assessments, girls are trialled for Munich Junior. The select few who end up going to Munich Junior regatta have their first taste of international competition (again, partly lottery funded). This regatta sees top crews from all around Europe competing over two days in different boat categories. GB uses this regatta to ascertain the strength of its squad; and to get an idea as to which boats it should consider for World Junior Championships.

The Small Boats Regatta (Usually held at either Dorney Lake or the National Water Sports Centre, Nottingham) is an ideal opportunity for the best of Great Britain's Juniors to have a high standard domestic regatta and to showcase their ability to the GB Junior Squad coaches and selectors. All the races are side by side over 2000m in both singles and pairs.

After all these trials, camps and training days, everything in GB junior rowing comes down to the Final Trials (July). Here, the girls race to secure themselves a spot in the squad for the Junior World Championship. To reach this level, girls have to be extremely dedicated and determined as well as a consistent performer and an exceptional boat mover. Just being invited to Final Trials is very impressive and to make it into a GB vest is a truly great achievement. Those who don't make the Junior World Championship Team may also be selected for the Coupe De La Jeunesse.

The Coupe is a European Regatta and traditionally most European rowing countries will race here. Again, this is a very high standard event.

All those competing at final trials are also eligible for selection to the Home Countries Regatta team. Here, girls are able to represent England racing against Ireland, Scotland and Wales. There is also a standalone England trial for some boat classes which Headington will aim to attend.

For J15 and J16 squads the system is slightly different. Although some J16 girls are encouraged to go to the trials described above, many from these year groups will have their first experience of GB trials at the GB vs France Match selection trials (June) where combinations will race a one off 2000m race. The winning boat traditionally becomes the boat that will represent Great Britain against the French later in the summer.

While a high level of organisation, hard work and skill are required to have any success in the Great Britain Junior Trials system it is an incredibly rewarding experience and we strongly recommend that our senior rowers try for international selection.

Rowing Clothing, Food Requirements and Equipment further information

General Training Kit: This can be purchased from any sports store.

You daughter will need:

- 1) She will need HSOBC rowing kit for racing and training.
- 2) Additional specialised training kit (not cotton) but fabric that keeps the body dry (Polyester / Breathable). This can be purchased from any running / sports store.
- 3) A change of clothing and a towel to be brought to all training sessions.
- 4) Trainers / running shoes (for both land and water sessions).
- 5) We recommend Converse shoes or similar to wear at the boathouse and at regattas, these are cheap, extremely durable, machine washable and wearing these are the river and at races will protect more expensive running shoes and trainers from wear.
- 6) Visor / Cap for all sessions.
- 7) Warm kit.
- 8) Sports-bras are essential items of kit!

Rowing Specific kit:

Your daughter will require the following kit: CrewRoom provide the following:

HSOBC uni-suit (lycra)	ZipTec Top	HSOBC Cap/visor	HSOBC Leggings	Turtle Shell/Fleece
J13s & J14s need 1. J15s – Snrs need 2.	J14s need 1 J15s to Snrs need 2.	Need 1.	J13s & J14s need 1. J15s – Snrs need 2.	J15s to Snrs Need 1.

Girls will be prevented from rowing if they are not appropriately dressed for the weather conditions: if it is cold your daughter will be expected to have leggings or track suit bottoms, a long sleeve top and a cap to keep warm, if it is hot she will need sunscreen and a cap. If any girl is deemed not to be dressed appropriately for the weather, the coaches reserve the right to prevent her from going afloat. **Please respect their decision as they have your daughter's well being in mind.**

Kit is ordered from Crewroom during two order windows each year (January & July). Information on how to order HSOBC kit will be sent out by email to all registered boat club parents ahead of each order window.

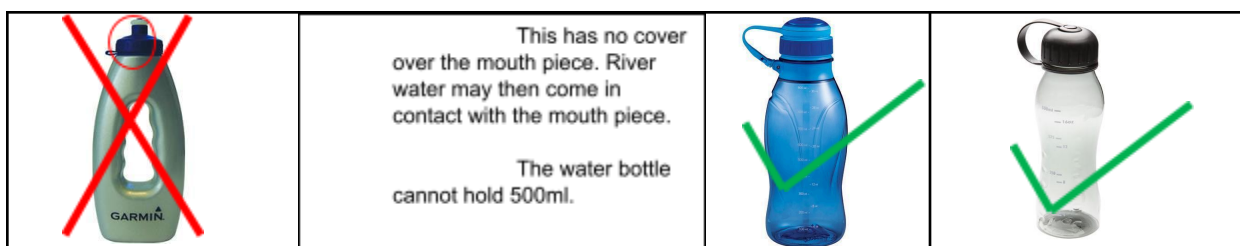
J16s to Seniors Kit Requirements:

In addition to this, Seniors will need:

- 1) A heart rate monitor, ideally with a GPS. We recommend the Polar M400 or Polar V800 as the gold standard. Girls should use this every single session otherwise they will not get the benefits of our training regime.
- 2) Weightlifting shoes: Ideally the Reebok CrossFit Nano 5.0 or newer.

Hydration:

Whatever the training might be, a water bottle is essential and girls will be prevented from training if they do not bring their own (**Girls are NOT allowed to share water bottles**). We strongly recommend that your daughter's water bottle can hold at least 500ml and it must have a cover over the mouthpiece. Water is not enough to replace lost fluid as a result of training; your daughter will need to have some 'squash/high juice', electrolyte replacement fluid or carbohydrate drink in her water bottles. Please ensure that your daughter uses a new water bottle each week or if it is a proper training water bottle that these are cleaned and disinfected regularly.



Nutrition:

It is important that girls have good food to eat between sessions at the weekend. Girls will also need to have a light snack for immediately after training in the evening. J16s and Seniors will need pasta, a piece of fruit (e.g. a banana), and a cereal bar for between sessions (please avoid sugary food such as cakes and chocolate). This will ensure that girls are able to recover and benefit fully from the training.

We suggest a roll/sandwich with protein, a portion of fruit and something with dairy for between sessions. After session, we expect girls to have something within 30min of training.

A nutrition talk may happen for girls and parents in the Autumn term.

If your daughter is a vegetarian, a protein supplement is essential. Please make sure it is from a reliable source.

Tools:

Rowers will need:

- 10mm and a 13mm spanner (Rigger jigger)

Coxes will need the following:

- 2x 10mm and 13mm spanners.
- A small adjustable spanner.
- 5m tape measure.
- Flat head and cross head screwdrivers.
- Blue electrical tape (this can be taken from the boathouse stock).

Communication with the Boat Club:

The Rowing Web Page:

The main area is the notice board which can be accessed from the main webpage. Select the squad that is appropriate to your daughter for relevant notices.

Week by week information about training will be available and any updates to the training calendar will be listed.

Please ensure that you look at the page on the days of training as the location of training may change at short notice if there are adverse weather conditions. Please note that if there are adverse weather conditions, we will update the web page as soon as we know what the situation is.

Spond

Spond is a sports team management app. J14 to Senior rowers will be added to the HSOBC Spond group and communication from coaches to athletes will be done via the Spond and day to day organisation will be handled in this way including updates to training times and locations.. All Spond messages are visible to parents too.

The Parents Committee:

The Boat Club has a parent committee that meets every half term. Year Representatives attend these meetings and are a direct link to the parents and coaches. If you have any concerns, please raise these with the year reps. If you have further questions about training or rowing, *you may contact the year reps who will be able to answer your questions*. They will forward any emails to coaches if they cannot answer the queries.

Please note that the parents reps are not there to arrange lifts, find lost kit or general day to day dealings with the boat club. Ultimately girls, from the J12 squad to the senior squad, need to take ownership of their kit and day to day training needs.

Please do not email the coaches directly, you may however email chermes@headingtonschool.com if you have any questions about your daughter's rowing (Please make sure that you have read the selection policy first if you are inquiring about crew selections) and **Mr Hermes** will get back to you.

Frequently Asked Questions

I've heard rowers train very hard, is this true?

Yes they do. That is not to say that training hard is not fun or good for the girls. When the girls start rowing, the emphasis is on fun and enjoyment as well as learning new skills (There is no point doing a sport you don't enjoy!).

From J14 upwards the shift is more towards performance and racing crews for the bigger events. Selection, regardless of age, is on ability and performance. Here the success of an athlete is very much a reflection of their commitment and the amount they train. It is therefore important that you encourage your daughter to attend sessions so they can get the most out of the club.

Can my daughter do another sport or another activity?

Definitely! If your daughter does another sport, we would encourage her to continue doing so. The boat club actively encourages girls to gain other skills and experience other training environments and competitions. It is however important that girls follow the training quotas as these provide leeway for girls to do more than one sport or activity.

If your daughter does music or choir, we encourage them to continue doing so. Many of the Boat Club's members are very talented and participate in these activities and the Boat Club encourages them to continue doing so. These practices are often on a Monday (subject to change) so juniors can do the Friday rowing session.

If your daughter is in the **J16 or Senior age group**, she needs to keep in mind that missing one session a week does have an impact by the end of the year. If she misses a session, she will need to make up for this on a Friday. We often see that girls who do not make the top boats have a far lower attendance record than those who do make the top boats. It is therefore important that girls in the J16 to Senior age group prioritise which sports they wish to do or at least understand that competing for a place in the top boats may not be possible however we are very proud of our 2nd and 3rd and sometimes 4th crews who also have an amazing experience in the summer racing season.

In the Autumn, and Winter terms, we do encourage the older girls to participate in other activities. It is however important that in the Spring and Summer terms, they ensure they are following the full training program.

Between Rowing Camp and National Schools', it is vital that those who put themselves forward for selection for Top/Lead Boats (The 1st and 2nd boats in each age group) attend training regularly as the training program is specifically designed to get girls to peak for National Schools. There are also vital race preparation and race strategy sessions that the athletes will do to ensure that they are equipped to race at the National Schools' Regatta. Please do not organise any activities over the weekend training for your daughter in the three weeks leading up to this event.

What about the Duke of Edinburgh Award which is just before the National Schools Regatta?

There is often a DoE award a week before the National Schools Regatta. The school have arranged with the boat club that those who wish to do the award can do this in Autumn Term of the same year. This allows athletes to prepare for the event while also being able to gain this valuable award.

Why is attendance important?

Rowing is a sport everyone can be successful in but as girls progress through the school regular training is required to realise that potential.

At the top end of the J15 to Senior squads; girls who do not attend sessions may put themselves and others at risk as they have not been conditioned to row to the standard of their potential crewmates. Furthermore, they could be denying opportunities to girls who really want to row but the crew cannot train due to regular absences. Rowing is a physical sport. Headington incorporates top coaching methods to minimise the possibility of injury, so it is important that we are able to see girls on a regular basis so as to ensure the correct training takes place.

The boat club reserves the right to terminate a girls membership or disallow her from racing with HSOBC should she fail to attend sessions regularly. If girls do not attend sessions, they might not be signed on for the following term as these positions can be filled by girls who truly want to row and get the most out of it.

Attendance quotas:

J12s:	50%
J13s:	60%
J14s:	75%
J15s:	80%

What monitoring is there of the girls?

Headington is widely regarded as one of the most professional junior programs in the United Kingdom. While many of our opposition increase the duration, intensity and number of their weekly rowing sessions, the Boat Club believes that a girl's academic progress and her own well-being must come first. Headington has turned to Sports Science to ensure that quality, not quantity, of training is the key focus for our rowers.

All training programmes are carefully structured and progressive and the coaching staff monitor each girl's development and performance. A detailed log is kept on every training session; crew and results the girls achieve. This is then used later for crew selection but also to track personal development within the sport.

Adolescent girls grow at different rates and these factors are taken into consideration when they are training. Therefore we may take height, weight, arm span and heart rate measurements of the girls to help us monitor them. Lactate Threshold Testing may be done for the senior girls to ensure the quality of their training is maximised.

Do Juniors have to Undergo Drugs Testing?

The Sports Council for Great Britain Drugs Testing Unit has been increasingly active at junior and senior events in recent years. It is extremely unlikely that a junior (U19) would be tested at a domestic regatta, but should one of our rowers be singled out for testing, it is beyond our control. More recently, two Headington Girls were tested at the GB trials. Please ensure that, should your daughter be taking medication, your doctor has been notified that she is an athlete and may get tested (J15 to J18s). A junior (Under 19) would not be tested without a member of the Headington coaching staff being present. If you, as their parent, are present at an event where your daughter is being tested, you will be asked to accompany your daughter if you wish. Please ensure that you speak to the Head of Rowing if you have any questions as there are strict guidelines which the boat club is required to follow.

What do I do if there are adverse weather conditions?

Rowing is not cancelled for bad weather unless the coaches consider it too dangerous to row. Please keep in mind that we can not control the weather nor predict it perfectly. We row in rain, snow and wind. However, if there is fog we will not risk going afloat. Sometimes the fog lifts after an hour and sometimes it doesn't. In which case, girls will do team building activities by the river. Headington does not row when there is lightning as it is too dangerous and girls will be prevented from going afloat.

We cannot always determine what the river conditions are until we get down to the river. On Saturday and Sunday we only arrive at the river at 8am. We do not go out on the river if:

- The visibility is low (fog).

If there is fog, we will often wait to see if it lifts. During this time, the whole group will do a circuit or game of some description. These circuits and games are important so please do not feel that it is a waste of time if your daughter does not get onto the water.

- The river levels are too high (see HSOBC web page). Training may be moved to the training hut or girls may be asked to go down to Dorney Lake. In which case, girls will be asked to meet at Headley Way to catch a school bus there. Rowing will then be from 7am to 2pm or 7am to 12pm depending on the sessions. This only applies for J14s to J18s.

The river levels can pose a problem. Godstow is a flood plain, and this proves to be problematic in that sometimes the lock keepers will allow the water levels to rise onto our reach. On other occasions, the lock keepers will allow water to continue flowing and the water levels remain low. If it has been raining continuously for over a week, it is likely that the river will be **RED FLAGGED** (weir board river status). Please look at the web page before setting off in the morning, or the evening prior to rowing as we may have made changes to training times and locations.

Weir board river statuses:

If it is **red**, there is DEFINITELY NO ROWING for J13s and J12s.

If **amber/orange** a risk assessment will be done and then a decision will be made as to whether or not a crew may boat.

If **green** there still could be hazardous conditions which prevent rowing

Often these statuses are not updated immediately, as the lock keepers have not updated their systems by 8am. So it is left to the **Head of Rowing** and **Water safety advisor** to state whether or not it is safe to go onto the water. If it is not safe, these rowers will be taken up to the training hut where they will complete their session. In all cases we follow the HSOBC safety plan which will be followed with regards the flow rate on the river.

- If it is too windy. Wind speed may have different effects if the direction changes. Again a risk assessment will be done, and then crews may or may not be allowed to boat.

You may find that when we arrive, the water levels are high, & or it is too windy. This is beyond our control and please understand that we cannot predict what the water will be like (wind speed can have different effects due to the direction). It is therefore important that girls always bring running shoes to all sessions so that land training can be undertaken.

[Will my daughter be racing?](#)

HSOBC is a competitive club with a recreational facility for its J12 members. In 2007, Headington introduced a selection policy (Please see Selection Policy see below) for all squads and reserves the right to de-register girls who fail to meet the minimum selection standards required to row in the club. Most of the girls in the club want to race and we are tremendously successful. We have girls who have represented Great Britain at the GB vs France J16 Match, Junior European Championships, Junior World Championships and the Youth Olympics.

For J12s, racing is not always offered, however, if the Head of Rowing assesses crews to be of a suitable standard to race girls will be encouraged to compete. The juniors (J13s/J14s) and upwards will start being entered into races if they have attended sessions and met the minimum standards that the club requires.

Crews are selected for racing on attendance, ergo time trials results, swims and run results (see selection policy). The final selections are based on seat racing and other water based tests. These are the most important results. Prior to a crew being entered, the Heads of Squads explain to the Head of Rowing which individuals should race, and what boat types they will be racing. Once this is done, the Head of Rowing will have the final say and a crew will then be entered. The coaches at Headington School are trained professionals with years of rowing and coaching experience. They all have qualifications to coach rowing and are closely monitored by the Head of Rowing (Who is himself an international Rowing Coach). Headington School prides itself on the standard of its coaches. It is therefore important to trust and respect the decisions made by the coaches.

Every coach monitors every training session and a detailed log is kept for selections and for tracking athlete progress. All selections are discussed at coaches meetings where the Head of Rowing will question these selections. Thereafter, the Head of Rowing will make the final entry. Races and crews are selected for the club to succeed as a whole, not simply to target a specific individual's success. Please feel free to question our selection policy if you have any concerns. However, interference with our selection policy, or intimidation of our coaches, or rallying of negative support amongst the parent group will not be seen as constructive or conduct acting in the best interests of the club or your daughter. If this happens, the boat club reserves the right to terminate a girl's membership with the club. To this end, please speak directly with the Head of Rowing if you have concerns about selections.

Please respect these decisions. Selections will not be changed after they have been entered, unless injury, illness or poor performance leading up to the event has occurred. Please note: Crews are only selected on ability and what they have demonstrated, NOT to give someone a "chance in the "A" boat".

[What is the parental involvement?](#)

Rowing is a team sport and if a member of a crew is late or fails to turn up, it disrupts the whole crew. It is important therefore that you make sure your daughter attends any sessions that she is supposed to, and that she arrives on time.

HSOBC is very fortunate that many of the parents regularly come and support at races and this support is greatly appreciated. At larger events we have the HSOBC marquee, and many parents bring drinks and picnics and make race days very social occasions. We also organise regular social events and fundraising functions.

There are several social and fundraising events throughout the year which are great opportunities to get to know other parents within the club and be part of the HSOBC community.

Prior to racing, please leave the coaches to do their job and do not assist with blades or boats. If the coach needs assistance, they will ask.

I hope this information gives you a small insight into the boat club. The members of HSOBC love their sport and have a very good rapport with the coaching team. We aim to make it a rewarding and enjoyable sport for everyone. If you have any unanswered questions or would like any further information, please don't hesitate in contacting me. You can also see the Headington School Oxford Boat Club web page for further information: www.hsobc.co.uk

Sincerely yours,

[Chris Hermes](#)

[Head of Rowing](#)

[E-mail: chermes@headingtonschool.com](mailto:chermes@headingtonschool.com)

HSOBC at a glance

J12 Squad (U3):

- Rowing takes place from Sept – Oct half term and Feb half term to the end of the year.
- Primary activity is sculling with emphases on learning basic key concepts of rowing.
- A sculling test and swim test must be done in order to row.
- Secondary activities include running, stretching, swimming and fun circuit work.
- Ergo work simply focuses on teaching athletes about technique.
- Short pieces may be done to condition J12s for possible ergo regattas and regattas in the summer.
- Core stability and flexibility are primary focuses at this age.

J13 and J14 Squads (L4 and U4):

- J13 Rowing takes place from Sept – Oct half term and Feb half term to July. J14 rowing is over the full year
- Primary activity is sculling with emphases on low intensity training in 1x, 2x, 4x (Sculling test must be done and passed in order to start rowing and race at any regattas). A very important part of this is to encourage the girls to be confident in smaller boats thus following the British Rowing World Class start guidelines.
- After a period of basic conditioning, training loads increase in respect to that which is required for racing. It is unsafe and unhealthy for girls not to be conditioned for racing, so from December onwards, interval training will occur particularly for J14s.
- Secondary activity in running, stretching, cycling, swimming and for anaerobic activities – fun ball games that require short intensity sprinting with rest periods (interval work).
- An ergometer fitness trial may be conducted every 3 weeks (Preferably on the Concept 2 ergometer machine), and the details are encouraged to be recorded for future reference.
- Focus on flexibility and skill.
- Focus on circuit training and core strength.

J15 Squad (L5):

- Primary activity in sculling with an introduction to sweep oar rowing on both sides of the boat. They may compete in sweep or sculling events.
- Secondary activity on progressive resistance and endurance training.
- Cross training activity to form an integral part of the weekly schedule.
- Still a focus on core strength (stomach and lower back).
- An ergometer fitness trial must be conducted every 2/3 weeks (Preferably on the Concept 2 ergometer machine), and the details must be recorded for future reference.
- Flexibility tests and conditioning.
- Organic and muscular-skeletal screening to identify problems that may be adversely affected by continued participation in sculling/rowing development programs (especially with regard to early identification of possible back problems).
- Girls only get the opportunity to race if they have been attending sessions.

J16 and Senior Squads (U5, L6 and U6):

- Sweep oar rowing may now be the primary activity for those having completed the sculling apprenticeship and at the appropriate stage of physical development.
- Advanced race preparation and skills for the following year need to be stressed, as this age group will be the "feeder" for the first team.
- Continued sessions of sculling and cross training to be part of the training plan.
- Advice on health maintenance, personal care and nutrition to be available to all rowers.
- Strength and conditioning programs are an essential part of the training program.
- Still a focus on core strength (stomach and lower back).
- An ergometer test may be conducted every 2 weeks (Preferably on the Concept 2 ergometer machine), and these are recorded for future reference.
- Continuing education on health maintenance and nutrition to be provided.
- Rowers who are enthusiastic for future prospects should be guided into clubs or Universities that would suit their development both educationally (Degree etc) and in terms of rowing (if they wish to continue after school).



HEADINGTON SCHOOL OXFORD BOAT CLUB

Selection Policy 2025 – 2026

Pg: 2. Club selection policy.

Coxes.
J12s.
J13s.
J14s and J15s.
J16s, Development and Seniors.

Outlines the selection policy for those wishing to row at Headington School Oxford Boat club. Although HSOBC endeavours to accommodate everyone wishing to row; if the operational capacity of the squad in question is exceeded the boat club reserves the right to select athletes based on the selection criteria outlined.

Pg: 3 – 5. Selection policy towards events.

Outlines the selection policy for events (rowers and coxes) at Headington School Oxford Boat Club.

Any queries regarding Boat Club selection should be directed to the Head of Rowing via email (chermes@headingtonschool.com)

Please note: the boat club reserves the right to select all members within the boat club. Members entering the school in the L4 to U6th form will first need to speak to the Head of Rowing (chermes@headingtonschool.com) regarding arrangements for their rowing.



Headington School Oxford Boat Club Selection Policy

Season: 2025 – 2026

Selection Policy: Squads.



All crew selections are at the professional discretion of the age group coach and in conjunction with the Head of Rowing's approval. Crews must be submitted to the Head of Rowing prior to entry and can only be employed if approved by the Head of Rowing. The Head of Rowing has the final say on selections. These selections are final and will not be changed unless illness, injury or a drop in performance requires changes. By signing the parental consent form, parents agree to these selection policies.

Cox Selection Strategy:

J13s to Seniors.

All coxes will need to demonstrate the following:

- Boatmanship (Handling and awareness).
- Use of a wide range of calls within a race plan or training session (Linked to what the race / coach requires). A recording is required. Responsiveness to coaches is important.
- Race strategy.

All Coxes are assessed by the Head of Rowing and Heads of Squads. Please note, there is a limit as to how many coxes can race at each regatta. This is determined by the crews we enter.

J12s:

Capacity	Seats available	Coaches
No limit	No limit	1-2
There is no limit to the number of girls which are allowed in the J12 age group. Girls will be split into manageable safe groups.		

As there is a high demand for girls to row at Headington, we encourage girls to attend sessions. We do however understand that at this age, girls are involved in a number of different activities and we strongly encourage this. If a girl's attendance drops below 50% on an ongoing basis (half a term), the boat club reserves the right to withdraw her from the boat club as she is at risk of falling behind her teammates. When selecting boats for events, the following will be considered:

- Attitude to training.
- Responsiveness to coaching.
- Attendance: 50%
- Potential to move on.

A capsiz drill and swim test will need to be completed before girls can row on the river.

Before they are allowed to race:

J12s need to demonstrate that:

- 1) They can row safely.
- 2) They can quickly and safely manoeuvre a boat.
- 3) They can follow coach/race marshal instructions.

No J12 rowers will be allowed to race if the Head of Rowing feels that the crew will not be able to complete the course safely.

J13s:

Capacity	Seats available	Coaches
40	40	1-2
For Health and Safety reasons, the capacity allocation for the J13s is as listed above.		

If the numbers for the J13 squad are exceeded, the top athletes may be selected according to the capacity listed above. This will be done formally at half term, (October) by contacting parents to update them on their daughters progress where on the following will be considered:

- Attendance: 60% & attitude to training.
- Physiological ability: Run, and Ergo.
- Responsiveness to coaching

No J13 rowers will be allowed to race if the Head of Rowing feels that the crew will not be able to complete the course safely.

Please note:

All coxes are expected to attend all training sessions with the School. For J15s to Seniors, between September and February, the Senior Coxes may be asked to cox the J12s, J13s and J14s.

All entries for events are at the discretion of the Head of Rowing.

Crews will be selected on ability ie: A coxed quad (5 rowers) will have top 4 girls rowing and the top cox coxing. HSOBC does not enter "A crews" with weaker members in the boat to simply "give them a chance of being in the top boat". This would only result in poorer development for all rowers.

J14s and J15s:

Squad	Capacity	Seats available	Coaches
J14	35	35	1-2
J15	35	35	1-2
For Health and Safety reasons and the capacity of the gym; allocation for the J14s & J15s is as listed above.			

If the numbers for the J14 or J15 squads are exceeded, the top athletes will be selected according to the capacity listed above. This will be done formally at half term, (October) by contacting parents to update them on their daughters progress where on the following will be considered:

- Attendance: 75% (J14s) and 80% (J15s).
- Physiological ability assessed through testing.
- The sculling trials ranking will link to the Pairs / Doubles Matrix.
- A matrix will be raced to assess rankings.
- Seat Racing will be used for further rankings.

J15s will start sweep rowing when the Head of Rowing and the Head of Squad assess that it is safe for girls to do so.

J16s, Development and Seniors:

Squad	Capacity	Seats available	Coaches
J16 & Dev	No limit	No limit	1-2
Snr	16	16	1-2
For Health and Safety reasons and the capacity of the gym; allocation for the J16 and Dev and Seniors squads are listed above.			

If the numbers for the J16, Development or Senior squads are exceeded the top athletes will be selected for each group according to the capacity listed above. This will be done formally at half term, (October) by contacting parents to update them on their daughters progress where on the following will be considered:

- Attendance: Greater than 90%+.
- Physiological ability assessed through testing.
- The sculling trials ranking will link to the Pairs / Doubles Matrix.
- A matrix will be raced to assess rankings.
- Seat Racing will be used for further rankings.

Senior 1: Cut off Ergo: To be part of the 1st team selection squad.

October Rate 24 2km: Ergo cut off for the Senior Squads 07:50.0.
February Rate 26 5km: Ergo cut off for the Senior Squads 20:00.0.
Or Top 16 (excl. Cox) for each ergo cut off.

By April: To be considered for selection for 1st 8+ 7:38.0 2k ergo

The training groups listed above will be continually re-assessed and will remain fluid throughout much of the season until final crew selection ahead of the Summer racing season.

Note: Seat racing/matrix and speed on the water will always be the final determining factor for selection into the senior squad.

All selections are at the professional discretion of the Head of Rowing, Head Coach and the Heads of Squads. Events can be found on the club calendar.



Headington School Oxford Boat Club Selection

Season: 2025 – 2026

Selection Policy towards events (J14-Seniors).



Selection for all events takes into account the best interests of the boat club. No selection "gives an athlete a turn in a 'top' boat" at the expense of other rowers or crew members. You are welcome to query selections, however publically challenging a selection or any intimidation of coaches will result in rowers being withdrawn from the boat club.

Priority Events:

Please note: Priority events are those in which the boat club will develop the training program and selection dates towards. The priority events are:

Event	Approx Time of Year	Who it involves	Location of event
Henley Royal Regatta The National Schools Regatta:	June/July May/June	J15s to Seniors. 13 seats. J14s to Seniors.	Henley Dorney Lake
Henley Women's Regatta	June	J15s to Seniors	Henley
Wallingford Regatta	April / May	J15s to Seniors	Dorney Lake
Schools Head	March	J15s to Seniors	London
Women's Head	March	J15s to Seniors	
Scullers Head	March	J14s to Seniors. Selected J13s may be involved.	Dorney Lake
Summer Term: various local regattas	May - July	J13s and J14s	Various
Overseas Tours (considered): European Tour/Camp Head of the Charles (USA)	December October	J16s to Seniors Selected J15s to Seniors	Europe Boston, USA
Rowing Camp	April	J14s to Seniors	France

Please be aware that if your daughter is unable to attend a priority event this will affect her eligibility for top racing crews.

How are selections done?

Coxes

Land Based assessments for coxes:

Weight: A cox should be within 5kgs of race weight naturally: **55kgs for J16s to Seniors is the race weight.** If a rower is not within this weight range, they may be asked to row rather than cox. Coxes should be natural coxes and not have to diet to get down to weight. This is a safety and wellbeing requirement of the boat club

Coach and crew: The cox will need to communicate with the coach as to what is required during land training and this will then need to be reinforced during training by the cox. The cox will be required to help the coaches with running land training sessions. The cox will need to demonstrate the ability to give clear instructions to the crew in the safe handling of equipment while on the land.

Water Based assessments for coxes:

Steering and Boatmanship: As the steersman of the boat, they are held responsible for any damage or injury caused by their boat. Steering is vital, and every time the rudder is on, the boat slows down by approximately one foot per stroke. The lines coxes take can win or lose a race. On a straight 1km or 2km race course, the cox is expected to steer a straight line in the middle of the lanes. During head races, demonstrating good use of the stream, reading the wind and water conditions, selecting the fastest possible lines with the minimum use of rudder. If there is a cross wind, the cox will need to compensate accordingly. During training, steering on the correct side of the river, selecting safe lines with minimum use of the rudder.

Recordings:

Coxes are expected to own their own Dictaphone and use it at most sessions and all races. Coxes should record every race and should be able to present a Dictaphone recording on request, be it a session or a race. It is an essential part of their development and continued selection. The ability to follow race plans, or emphasise aspects of the stroke to get the most out of the boat are assessed. Tone is important. The ability to keep calm and get the most out of the crew is important.

Summary: rowing is objective in its assessment

Headington Coaches are currently or have in the past been involved with the selection process for numerous J16 GB France Matches; GB Coupe de la Jeunesse; GB World Junior Championships and Youth Olympics. These are international teams that undergo the highest scrutiny in selections. The same standards and scrutiny are applied by the Headington coaches when selections are made within HSOBC.

Over the course of the season a squad ranking is formed by the coaching team using all available data at their disposal, these rankings are continually re-assessed and will remain fluid throughout much of the season until final crew formations ahead of the Summer racing season. This ranking is used as the basis for the water crew formation process as described below.

Ergometer times, seat racing results, single sculling trials and seat matrix results allow coaches to make decisions based on results from a stop watch (It never lies). They cannot be disputed as these are the results that the rower has produced. In sports such as running, one can rank runners from fastest to slowest. In a rowing matrix, it produces the same ranking. In Seat Racing, a result is produced: A is faster than B.

Attendance

Headington School Oxford Boat Club encourages rowers to participate in a number of different activities. However, as they move up through the squads, the boat club recognises that in order for one to master a discipline such as rowing, one cannot miss training in favour of several other disciplines and expect to compete to a high level. To this end, as the rowers develop through the age groups, their attendance, if they wish to be successful, should increase in proportion with the challenges that will face them on the water. I.e. As a novice, one water and one land session a week is enough to enable them to be competitive in their local competitions. As a Senior however, following the full training programme will enable girls to be competitive at the National Schools Regatta, Women's Henley and Henley Royal Regatta as well as the GB Trials.

For those who want to excel in rowing, the attendance requirements listed above ensure that they will be able to be competitive in the events at which the club competes. **If girls do not meet the attendance requirements, the boat club reserves the right to deregister them from the boat club or disallow them from racing or from attending training camps.**

No one is exempt from the attendance quotas. Coxes are required at all sessions (within the attendance requirements) and will need to support the coaches where necessary.

The Crew Formation Process

- 1) **The Strategy:** Head of Rowing and Head of Squads discuss the selection strategy for the squad. Rowers are seeded based on data obtained from previous assessments (Ergometer, sculling results, and seat matrix/racing results). The goal of the selection process is to form the fastest crews possible for racing.
- 2) **The assessment:** The Head of Rowing, Head Coach and Coaches will run the crew formation process, the basis of this will be the squad rankings formed over the course of the season and will utilise seat racing, lineup swaps and matrices. Telemetry may also be used to assess senior rowers.
- 3) **Coaches Meeting:** The Coaches, Heads of Squads, Head Coach and Head of Rowing will discuss the selections. The head of the squad has an open question/answer critique of what has been selected. In this way, every possible eventuality is discussed and questioned.
- 4) **Further assessments:** if needed, further assessments may take place: see point 2 then point 3. If not, see point 5.
- 5) **Time Trial:** Once results are obtained, the top boats may do a time trial (usually 2 * 1000m at race pace) to obtain % of predicted Gold Metal Times. This may be used to assess the viability of a crew for a priority event
- 6) Ultimately the **coach's eye** is the final determining factor in this process in conjunction with that of the Head of Rowing.
- 7) **Priority events:** only those who have met the performance standards set by the Head Coach and Head of Rowing will be entered into these key events.
- 8) Boats are not limited to a year group: Younger girls in different age groups will be used to strengthen older age group boats.
- 9) If at any stage the Head Coach or Head of Rowing believes that a change to a selected crew will result in a faster boat this will be tested and if necessary the crew will be changed.

Assessment Dates:

All the important assessment dates can be found on the rowing calendar. Please note that additional assessment dates are produced on the rowing training program. The assessment dates outlined on the rowing calendar are the deadlines for coaches to submit results to the Head of Rowing and must therefore be adhered to by athletes who wish to be selected.

Head Races Selections: Done in January and during the February Half Term. Please see calendar dates. Those missing from selection dates should notify coaches by the first week in October.

J12 and J13s: Crews are formed using a ranking of the girl's abilities on the water, however at this early stage in the girls' rowing careers J12 and J13 crews at races will tend to have a larger range of abilities across all racing crews in order to help facilitate the rowers' development and race experience.

J14s: Ergometer results and sculling trials. A doubles matrix or seat racing may be used.

J15s to Seniors: All data recorded up to this point will be used. If needed, seat racing or a pairs/doubles matrix will be used.

Regatta Season Selections: Done in March/April, on Rowing Camp and during the Summer half term

They are listed as **HSOBC Crew Formation** on the boat club calendar and should not be missed.

J14s: Doubles Matrix (normally days one and two of rowing camp but may also take place beforehand).

J15s to Seniors: Done in the build up to rowing camp. Normally the first days of the April Holidays to ensure that all selections are done before rowing camp. The boat club may need an additional day(s) at rowing camp to finalise selections.

Those who wish to be selected to race at Priority Events need to attend the selection dates outlined on the boat club calendar. The boat club understands that some people have various commitments throughout the year, and these may clash with some of the Final Trials dates. Should this happen, the boat club will need to know about any clashes by the first week in October. **NOTE: All selections are subject to change. Dorney lake is not always available. Other venues may be used for trials including on our own water.**

Factors out of Coaches Control:

There are factors that are out of the coach's control when doing selections. One would ideally like to be able to select crews as outlined in *The Selection Process*. There are however the occasions when the following occur:

- 1) Illness / Injury within the boat club is so widespread that it makes it impossible to tie in/link all the athletes to one another in the selection process.
- 2) Weather conditions are such that Dorney Lake and our own stretch of river are un-rowable for weeks on end (As was the case in 2023-2024).

In these cases, the boat club will not be able to fully seat race or complete a full pairs matrix that links all rowers. The coaches will make a professional judgement on data that they have collected to that point. Coaches deal with athletes on the water or on the rowing machines on a daily basis. In the boat club, more so than any other sport, coaches get to know the athletes ability: How they perform under pressure, how they react to increasing workloads or how they make technical changes. These are taken into account.

What parents often do not appreciate is that coaches have regular meetings to discuss the strengths, weaknesses and potential of all squads and athletes. 99% of the time, the selection process outlined above confirms what the coaches already know. It is therefore important to respect and trust the decisions made by coaches, who ultimately have to pass all selections through the scrutiny of their fellow coaches and the Head of Rowing before the crew is entered for racing.

What happens if the coaches get the selection wrong?

This is impossible! The stop watch never lies and the selection process is such that there is no room for error. Those who have risen to the top of the group through the selection procedure and ongoing assessments are those who earn a place in the "Top" boats.

How do I make a query about selection:

Feel free to contact the head of rowing (chermes@headingtonschool.com) if you have queries about the selections made while keeping in mind that, as professionals, the coaches' selections have already undergone the scrutiny and questions from the Head of Rowing and fellow coaches. All crew selections have been passed and approved by the Head of Rowing and any complaints or queries should be directed to the Head of Rowing in writing via email.

Please be aware that crews will not be selected to; "Give someone the chance to be in the top boat". Such selections do not benefit the development of the rowers within a squad.

The final arbiter of all selections is the coach's eye.

The Head of Rowing and Head Coach have the final say on all selection and reserve the right to change crews using all information at their disposal with a view to forming the fastest possible crews / boats