

# GIRLS BEST PRACTICE

## 8 Principles for Success

We have put together this guidance document to show how your golf club can encourage more girls to enjoy the game. These 8 Principles for Success were devised by [Women in Sport](#) but have been adapted specifically to the needs of golf clubs. They reflect the insight gained from the activity at Elsham GC, Cosby GC and other clubs with busy girls sections.

### 1 No judgements – around what you need to wear to start playing golf

- a. A relaxed dress code for beginner golfers can make your club feel more welcoming to girls. Decide what dress code is appropriate for your golf club and devise a set of guidelines for new players.
- b. If applicable, do communicate what is unacceptable attire at your club (e.g. jeans) as well as giving clarity on what is allowed e.g. hoodies, leggings or flat soled trainers. Fewer dress restrictions will make your club feel more friendly.
- c. Do communicate if your golf club has an alternative dress code for competitions. Explain the difference in what is required for training/practice wear, compared to a more formal competition kit. Ensure kits are accessible and affordable to new players.
- d. Examine your golf club's existing structures and remove any possible discrimination towards girls.

### 2 Invoke excitement and promote the women's golf game

- a. Show that golf is a fun and social way to enjoy the outdoors. Themed sessions at Halloween, Easter & Christmas can help juniors of whatever ability to have fun while learning the game.
- b. Arrange varied away trips and social events such as, bowling, mini golf, Pizza nights or a Christmas party.
- c. Promote the women's golf game by televising women's golf competitions at the clubhouse during major golfing events.
- d. Organise trips to women's golf events e.g. speak to your Golf Foundation RDO and the LET to see if you can attend UK-based Women's Golf events.
- e. Look at social media influencers such as The Jazzy Golfer. Consider nominating an ambassador (an older girl or adult member) within the women's section to support new players as they start out in golf. This could involve promoting the club, the coaching programme and acting as a positive role model to encourage the girls.
- f. Explain that golf is a game for life and is a sport that stays with you for a lifetime and can be played at any age.

## 3 Clear emotional reward

- a. Reward participation, such as an on-course grading system for playing 6 holes or progressing to a different tee, or regular play.
- b. Encourage girls to set their own personal goals (with the help of the Junior Organiser or coach) such as hitting a ball 100 yards, practising golf 2-3 times a week, or to gain a handicap.
- c. Acknowledge successes by awarding Skills for Life medals, trophies, or set up a course grading system with certificates for progress.
- d. Provide an adapted handicap system with shorter tees to keep motivation.

## 4 Open eyes to what's there and promote sociable golf

- a. Golf can be a very social sport, with lots of opportunities for social interactions to form lasting friendships.
- b. Increases self-confidence by learning and committing to a new activity.
- c. Golf can show girls how to deal with challenges and build emotional resilience by learning how to deal with setbacks.
- d. Gain a new challenge – set goals for each season.

## 5 Build into existing habits

- a. Organise opportunities for girls to bring a friend to include existing friendships. Trial activities with local girls groups such as Brownies or Girl Guides.
- b. Allow social media in sessions. Consider setting up a social media page for your girls' golf section and invite girls and parents to run the page (with adult supervision and club guidance).
- c. Organise non-golfing activities out on the course, such as a scavenger hunt or picnic stop?
- d. Consider allowing music during sessions. For example, ask the girls to create their own playlist, reward a girl who has achieved or scored the most on a game by picking the next song.
- e. Offer creative activities such as decorating golf clubs, golf balls or Fancy Dress events.
- f. Consider finishing coaching sessions with social time in the Pro-shop or clubhouse with drinks and snacks.

## 6 Give girls a voice and choice

- a. Find out / survey what time works for the girls.
- b. Create girls only coaching sessions and team formats for girls (such as GolfSixes League or series of competitions with girls from other local clubs.)
- c. Utilise Golf Foundation resources such as the Junior Golf Passport scheme to create personalised learning programmes rather than simply focusing on competitive golf.
- d. Form a Girls' Committee (where girls and parents can feel represented) and create leadership roles and opportunities within it such as Girls Captain & Vice Captain.
- e. Ask the girls to help/lead/design the coaching sessions.

## 7 Champion what's in it for them

- a. Encourage opportunities to develop leadership skills through volunteer coaching.
- b. Encourage Ambassador roles and create committee positions such as a Girls Captain.
- c. Discuss wider career opportunities in the golf industry or share the wider benefits of the sport.

## 8 Expand image of what 'sporty' looks like

- a. Explain that you don't need to be sporty to play golf and there is no required level of fitness to enjoy the game.
- b. Advise that there is not a set body image needed for golf.
- c. Show there are a variety of role models and players who have different body shapes (look at pictures of Solheim Cup Team for inspiration.)
- d. Encourage your existing girl golfers to be Ambassadors so they can be someone new players can relate to.

# Communication

Even with the very best intentions, implementing changes can sometimes cause challenges. Increasing communication between your girls section and club members can help to avoid potential areas of conflict. Here are our suggestions as to how your golf club can ease the transition and acceptance of changes at your golf club.

Devise a code of conduct guide to educate parents and players around the rules and expectations at your golf club.

Create a Girls Committee to liaise with the club welfare officer, and Women's sections to improve cohesion at the club.

Examine existing club structures to see if they are inadvertently discriminating against girls. For example is there a handicap system in place for girls? If not, consider creating one.

Create a junior handbook that gives guidelines to the junior section. Include advice on clothing guidance but ensure that the club is aware of these to avoid areas of conflict between members and girls.

Introduce a buddy system whereby older golfers can support the girls at competitions or club events to show them the ropes and encourage confidence.

Finally, if you do encounter problems developing your girls section and need advice please contact your local Golf Foundation Regional Develop Officer for support. The Golf Foundation believes creating a vibrant and successful girls section is achievable for golf clubs. We understand that changing club structures and culture takes time, but creating an inclusive diverse junior section will benefit your golf club and show the wider community that golf is an inclusive activity that welcomes everyone.