



CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATION FRIDAY NOVEMBER 26 2021

IF THIS COMMUNICATION HAS BEEN DELIVERED TO THE WRONG PERSON IN YOUR SCHOOL/CLUB PLEASE FORWARD TO THE HEAD COACH OF U14's RUGBY

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY. Capacity is becoming an issue and it is important to be discerning in your nominations. Although broad based, it remains a performance programme. Large numbers can have an impact on frequency of sessions and quality of delivery.

Dear Coach / Teacher,

As you will be aware, the **Bristol Bears Rugby Academy** Under 13s programme was placed on hold due to Covid-19. The decision was made to delay the process of nomination until sufficient time had passed to provide coaches, teachers and players themselves with enough time to monitor and assess progress,

The **Bristol Bears Rugby Academy** U14's Aspire Programme (formerly DPP) will commence in January 2022. The players will be offered an opportunity to further their rugby development through a series of coaching sessions with their similarly minded peers.

To replace the usual Induction, programme a video will be sent to parents once they have been accepted and registered onto the programme. The boys will then have a session dedicated to U14s at their allocated centres in the week beginning January 3 2022

This stage represents the first step on the **Bristol Bears Academy** pathway and is aligned to the **Bristol Bears Academy** purpose; “to provide a high quality, individualised, player development experience, encouraging lifelong participation in the game and enabling those with potential to be clearly identified.”

Bristol Bears Academy places great value on county rugby and works very closely with Bristol Schools Rugby Union (BSRU) and the Somerset Rugby Union. Boys are selected for the county at Under 15 and 16 from **Bristol Bears Academy Aspire and Excel**.

The process of application for the programme has been designed in order that the players take responsibility for their involvement in the programme, rather than the nomination from the coach/teacher being the only interaction. This is not only a good indicator of the boy's intent and commitment, it is also a first step towards them taking responsibility.

With that in mind the teacher/coach should complete the link to the nomination form by **FRIDAY December 3 2022**.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf6ZnG8JnhbTfic5UwRI6CdXSLB5RbfrBHOcWTrU9RCZ94-CA/viewform>

Once the Teacher/Coach Nomination has been received an on-line registration link will be provided for you to send out to those players, and cross-referenced against your nominations.

With regards to the last point, the parents will be briefed to refrain from completing the application for the boys, or from enforcing the boys complete it. **It is very important that the player applies because he wants to apply.**

Please find below, a description of many "desirable attributes" which align to be a Bear, and which will assist you and other coaches/teachers in identifying the players. It is not anticipated that the players will be able to do everything on the list, but they must have 1 or 2 physical or technical/tactical attributes which they perform exceptionally well and should be able to demonstrate many of the others.

The date of birth should also be considered when making a choice. In the past it has been a certainty that 75%+ of the players put forward were born in the first 6 months of the season. This is due to Relative Age Effect (RAE), which favours children born in the first two quartiles of the Academic Year or Age Grade season. Where boys are of a similar ability it would be worth looking at DOB to assist in making the decision.

Attitude is the number one factor in talent ID. If you have an ultra-talented player who fails to turn up regularly, listens poorly and/or are disruptive, then they should not be recommended to the programme.

It is also important for the confidence of the players and your own **personal integrity** that they do not give cause to be exited from the programme for poor behaviour, lack of basic skills, fitness or game understanding and we would ask **you to carefully consider who you recommend**. If you require further advice, please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss it further.

BE DISCERNING when identifying the players, **Bristol Bears Academy** has grown its programme from 175 boys aged 13 to 15 in 2013 to over 900 boys aged 13 to 16 in 2019. However, there are some issues over capacity and should there be too many boys we will have to reduce the number of sessions (e.g. every other week) OR for the first time, exit some – a situation we would prefer to avoid. Whilst understanding that coaches are reluctant to select a small number of their squad, we have had the situation where 20 boys from one club have been put forward. We no longer have the capacity to accommodate those numbers.

PLEASE NOTE: More 'nominations' can be made at any time in the future (U14/15/16). Boys develop and mature at different rates and players and newcomers arrive, therefore the door is always open for new players to apply.

Please can you advise any player you feel suitable to access the programme that you have put them forward and they will be receiving a registration link from you shortly.

When players have applied, they will be sent details

We very much look forward to working with the boys towards achieving their potential.

Many thanks and kind regards



Gary Townsend
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WHAT IT TAKES TO BECOME A YOUNG BRISTOL BEAR

Listen & Act

The player

- listens to instructions and carries them out
- shows progression in his learning
- has a go?

Determination

The player

- shows determination to compete
- knows how to win & how to accept failure or defeat
- looks forward to new challenges as a learning opportunity

Work

The player

- never stops working in training or games even when tired
- never looks for or makes excuses

Play

The player

- has good spatial awareness
- has the vision to see opportunity
- can exploit opportunities (decision making)
- is creative

Attack

The player

- uses footwork to beat defenders
- manages contact & offload from the tackle
- is dynamic and carries the ball forward with intent



**BRISTOL
BEARS**

Defence

The player

- safely knows how to/is able to tackle off both shoulders, stopping the ball carrier.
- The player is able to contest possession on the floor after a tackle
- Enjoys defending

Character

The player shows elements of

- grit
- self-control
- zest
- social intelligence
- gratitude
- optimism
- curiosity

Courage

The player

- puts himself in the way in defence (even if physically small)?
- Enjoys physical confrontation on the field
- Embraces 'failure' as a necessary component of future success

Leadership

The player

- offers ideas on tactics/strategy
- encourages other around him
- leads through words or actions
- is disciplined/focussed/calm

Physical

The player

- has one stand out physical attribute -
**POWER/SPEED/
AGILITY/STRENGTH**

Hands & Feet

The player

- can consistently catch – even when pass is inaccurate
- times the pass so receiver has the best chance of controlling & using the ball
- is accurate in passing & well directed (off both hands)
- can kick the ball accurately to the intended target area
- can select the appropriate kick for the situation
- can kick goals