

## Academy Athlete Pathway

### Fundamental Athletes (Under11, school year 4&5)

Athletes can join the academy at any age and England Athletics guidance is to give all athletes who are under 13 multi-skilled coaching. At both the Fundamental (U11) and Foundation academy (U13) they will receive coaching in a range of skills, movement patterns, speed, endurance and coordination which will give them a good grounding of abilities as they further their athletic career.

Athletes in the Fundamental academy are encouraged to attend the weekly academy session and participate in the Wessex track and field league in the summer and cross country leagues and sportshall in the winter. The competition focus at this stage is on fun, teamwork and participation. Other competition opportunities are available to U11 athletes through club opens and county championships. More information on these can be found in the competition guides on the website, <https://www.southamptonathleticclub.org.uk/wordpress/fixtures/>

### Progression from Fundamental U11 to Foundation U13 (school year 6&7)

When athletes change school year in September to year 6 we move them into the Foundation Academy into the Foundation Academy. This is an important move and U13 athletes get exposed to more athletic events particularly in track and field season.

From April we encourage the Foundation, Year 6 & 7 athletes to explore the event level training. This will be done with discussions between coaches, parents and athletes. At this stage athletes are encouraged to try multiple events and if available different coaching groups. We encourage them to try them all and find one that they like. We also ask event level coaches to attend Academy sessions to give expert training nights.

By the end of August we expect all year 7 athletes to have moved into the event level coaching and have left the Academy. While we don't want to see them leave we do like to see them progress in their athletic career.

The competition focus at this stage is still on fun, teamwork and participation. In addition to the leagues for U11s, U13 will also be able to compete in the Lower Age Group Youth Development League (LAG YDL). The YDL is a slightly more competitive league and the focus is on winning as a team.