



# JUNIOR ATHLETICS

JUNIOR SECTION (Girls and Boys 7-14 years old)



**Wednesday Evenings – 5.45pm to 7.45 pm**

**Yvette Williams Track, Lloyd Elsmore Park (entrance at 36-38 Cascades Road)**

**First Club Night: Wednesday 20th October 2021**

## Why Should You Join Us?

- Athletics is exciting, great fun – and can take you to the Olympics if you work hard!
- Athletics teaches skills that improve performance in other sports; athletes learn to run faster, jump higher and throw (or hit) further.
- Sport teaches children about co-operation, competition, fairness and being a good loser (or winner!).
- Sport helps children develop problem-solving and decision-making skills.
- Get some fresh air – and a break from devices.
- Great opportunity for children to make new friends.

## Registrations

**Season runs from 20th October 2021 to 30th March 2022**

**Register online at <http://www.pakurangaathletics.nz/>**

(You can join at any time during the season; registrations don't close)



## Can You Tell Me...

### What is Junior Track and Field? Is it just running?

Junior Track and Field includes a range of athletic events. At Pakuranga Athletic Club, children have the opportunity to participate in running races and relays over a range of distances (60m through to 1,500m, hurdles and race walks, depending on the age of the athlete), throwing events (discus and shotput, and an introduction to javelin), and jumping events (long jump and high jump).

### Who can join?

Junior athletics caters for all girls and boys born between the 1st of January 2007 and the 31st of December 2014.

If your child was born on or after the 1st of January 2015, they will qualify for our 'Tiny Tots' section. Check our separate information sheet for this group.

### When does the season start and finish?

The first Junior club evening for 2021/2022 is Wednesday the 20th of October. We have a break for Christmas/New Year, then start again in mid-January 2022. The last club evening of the season is Wednesday the 30th of March 2022. Weather permitting, there will be 21 club evenings this season. The club also has a Junior Cross-Country and Road running section that operates during the winter months (April to September). Check the club website for more information ([www.pakurangaathletics.nz](http://www.pakurangaathletics.nz)).

### What happens on a club evening?

Each club evening children are grouped with others of the same age and gender. Each group ('grade') generally takes part in four events – two on the track and two in the field. Club evenings start at 5.45 pm sharp. Junior athletes meet in their grades before moving off with the grade manager to the first event. The programme is complete by 7.30-8.00 pm (depending on the number of athletes attending and extent of parent support provided). The club evening programme is provided in a weekly newsletter emailed to member families.

### My child only wants to run, jump, or throw. Is that okay?

We encourage children to participate in all events to enable them to develop a broad base of athletic skill. The club evening programme and points system are set up this way. It is also universally recognised that specialisation at an early age is counter-productive; a balanced, all-round programme will produce the best results for athletes in the long term. However, children can participate in particular events only if they prefer.

### My child has never done athletics before. Are there opportunities to learn?

Yes. A series of pre-season and early season coaching sessions are available for children new to athletics at any age. These are free to registered members. Experienced coaches work with parent volunteers to teach children basic athletic skills and to refine their technique. Additional coaching opportunities are also available throughout the season, predominantly on Tuesday evenings and Sunday afternoons. These are advertised in the weekly newsletter and on the noticeboard on club evenings.



## Who runs the programme?

Everyone involved in the Junior Track and Field programme is a volunteer. The Junior Track and Field committee (who are parents of junior athletes) plan the weekly programme, organise the equipment, co-ordinate the activities and collate results at the end of each club evening. However, each club evening we also need help with setting up and packing away equipment, time-keeping/measuring, and running the BBQ. Parents are required to help out with these tasks on a rotational basis. If you are approached and asked to help, please do so with a smile.

## What does a grade manager do?

One grade manager is assigned to each grade. They take attendance, guide the group through their events, record results and offer lots of encouragement. Grade manager training is provided at the start of the season and committee members are available to offer advice and assistance on club evenings. Grade managing is fun and rewarding and a great opportunity to get up close to the action. Please let the committee know if you are interested in being a grade manager or sharing this role with another parent. You don't need to be an athlete yourself – you just need to be enthusiastic about seeing children enjoy sport.

## What should my child wear?

The Junior club uniform consists of:

- club singlet. This costs \$40 and is available from the equipment shed on Wednesday evenings.
- plain black or navy shorts.
- age patch. This will be given to you after registration and must be attached to the club singlet.

Children can choose to compete barefoot or in shoes. Spiked shoes ('spikes') are allowed to be worn by Grades 10 and above. 'Spikes' information sessions are held at the start of the season.

## What if it rains?

We are fortunate to have an all-weather track so club evenings go ahead each Wednesday except in very extreme weather. Cancellations are notified to all registered members via email and on our Facebook page from 2 pm onwards.

## Are there opportunities to compete against athletes from other clubs?

Athletics Auckland runs a series of interclub events throughout the season. These are advertised in our weekly newsletter and on the noticeboard on club evenings. Some are 'open' events that all registered athletes can attend. Others are club representative events where the club selects athletes to attend based on performance. In addition, some clubs around Auckland host free weekend Open Days. These are a great way to introduce athletes to competition in a safe, friendly environment. All registered athletes are also able to attend the Colgate Games, the national children's athletics event held over the summer holidays. Attendance at interclub events is completely up to the athlete – they can enter as many or as few of these events as they like.



### How does the points system work?

At the end of the season there are awards for performance for each grade. These awards are based on places (1st to 6th) achieved in club evening races and field events throughout the season. There is also a 'Sportsmanship' and 'Most Improved' award for each grade which is decided on by the grade manager. To congratulate them on their efforts, all athletes receive a participation trophy at the end-of-season prize-giving. Prizes, awards and treats are also given out at 'fun nights' throughout the season.

### What do the parents do while the children are taking part?

On club evenings and at outside events, a parent or guardian must attend at all times and is responsible for the behaviour of their child. This includes ensuring that they are not hindering the participation and enjoyment of other athletes and that equipment is being used correctly and safely. We also ask parents to offer encouragement and applaud the efforts of all athletes and to help with club evening activities as required.

### How much does it cost to join?

For 7-14 year olds, the Summer registration fee is \$150 for the 2021/22 Junior Track and Field season. (Note that it is the same amount irrespective of when this is paid during the season). Discounts are available for families with three or more club members living in the same household. The fee is made up of Athletics Auckland and Athletics New Zealand registration fees and the remaining amount is the contribution to Pakuranga Athletic Club and the Junior Track and Field section. The fees retained by the Junior Track and Field Section are used to cover prize giving and club night expenses, relay event entries, equipment purchases and fun night activities. Registrations are done online via the club website – look for the blue box on the home page.

### Can we come along and see what it's like before we sign up?

Yes. Come along to our free 'Have A Go' morning at the track on Saturday the 16th of October between 10am and noon. You are also welcome to come along to club evenings on the 20th or 27th of October and try out the activities before you register. You can register and join the section at any time during the season – registrations never close. However, just be aware that athletes are only eligible to earn points once they are registered and paid in full. Athletes are only entitled to attend two club nights free-of-charge and only registered members are able to take part in coaching sessions and be selected for relay teams. In fairness to other families who have paid their fees on time, this will be strictly enforced.

### My child has special needs. Can they still take part?

Of course! Please contact the Junior Track and Field committee ([pakrun@gmail.com](mailto:pakrun@gmail.com)) to discuss.

### I have more questions. Who can I talk to?

**Please contact the Junior Track and Field committee ([pakrun@gmail.com](mailto:pakrun@gmail.com) or call Tania on 0274 977433) or speak to a committee member on club nights.**