

Frequently Asked Questions
for Parents of Junior Rowers at IoERC

Version 1.0

Last Updated: 2025-11-02 by Sam Roberts

Who is the Junior Rowing Coordinator?

The current Junior Rowing Coordinator is Katie Jugg.

How should I communicate with the Junior Rowing Coordinator?

Communication with the Junior Rowing Coordinator takes place on two platforms, WhatsApp and FitClub.

The WhatsApp group is an informal channel for group communication between the Junior Rowing Coordinator and parents. Your child should not join the WhatsApp group. For safeguarding reasons, the Junior Rowing Coordinator will never directly message your child.

To be added to the WhatsApp group, please contact the Junior Rowing Coordinator with your details, along with the details of any other parents or guardians who you would like to be added.

FitClub is the platform used at IoERC to manage outings and equipment bookings. When your child joins the club, an account will be created on FitClub that can be used to mark your child as Available/Not Available for each upcoming training session. Based on this information, the Junior Rowing Coordinator will plan the sessions. To help them with this planning, ***please make sure that your child's availability is updated no more than two days before the training session.*** The Junior Rowing Coordinator will send an automated email via FitClub prior to each session, containing the session plan.

If you'd like to speak directly with the Junior Rowing Coordinator to discuss your child's rowing ambitions or progress, or anything else – please either catch them before or after a training session, or message them via WhatsApp to arrange a chat.

When and where are the Junior Rowing Training Sessions held?

There are two Junior Rowing Training Sessions each week, held on Saturday 09:00 – 10:30 and 10:30 – 12:00 at the IoERC site. The Junior Rowing Coordinator will let you know which one your child should attend.

There is a Junior Gym Training Session each week, held on Wednesday 18:15 – 19:45 at King's School Ely gym. The Junior Rowing Coordinator will let you know whether your child should attend.

How do I get to the IoERC site?

You need to find Kiln Lane, a private road off Prickwillow Road in Ely. From the centre of Ely, take the Prickwillow Road, and turn right into Kiln Lane about 200m past the mini-roundabout junction with Lisle Lane.

The Kiln Lane turn is signposted "WA Cooke & Sons" among other things. If you reach the Ely Sailing Club you've gone too far.

Once you're on Kiln Lane follow it down over the level crossing (slowly – there are quite a lot of potholes) and there is a car park on the right. From the car park, follow the footpath to the right of the low brick offices (not the low-level public footpath). You should see a gate with the IoERC name on it.



Figure 1: The IoERC site.

How do I get to King's School Ely Gym?

Drive past Ely Cathedral down The Gallery. Just past the Cathedral to your left is a parking bay. On the right wall there is a gate that will be opened at the start and end of the gym sessions.

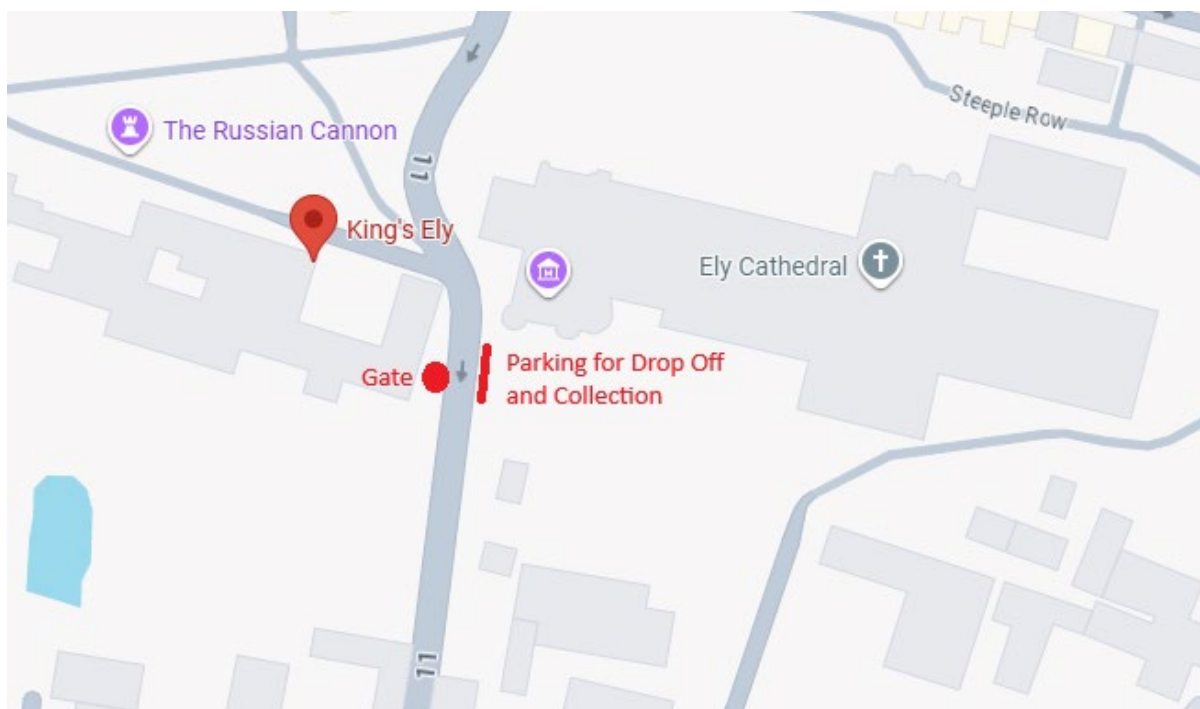


Figure 2: The King's School Ely Gym

Can my child arrive by bike?

Yes. We have facilities where bikes can be locked up during a session. You can cycle to the club either via the above route for cars, or along the riverside meadow from Ely.

What should I do during my child's training session?

If you'd like to have some involvement with your child's rowing, please speak with the Junior Rowing Coordinator. There is always a need for helpers at the start and end of a session, and there may be an opportunity for you to join a coach on a launch (coaching boat) to watch the training and have a discussion.

Please note that – although parent helpers are always welcome – for insurance reasons please only help under the supervision, or with the approval, of the Junior Rowing Coordinator. If you'd like to help out more, please speak with the Junior Rowing Coordinator and they will be happy to help show you how!

Alternatively, there is a clubhouse on the IoERC site with WiFi (password is on the noticeboard), tea and coffee. There is sometimes cake available, and you're more than welcome to assist in increasing the availability of cake 😊. There are usually other parents and club members around to chat with.

Toilets are available in the changing room block. Please note that for safeguarding reasons, during Junior Training Sessions the changing rooms themselves are restricted to Juniors.

It's also fine if you'd like to leave the site during the training session, but please make sure that the Junior Rowing Coordinator has your contact details in case of an emergency.

What clothing and kit are essential for rowing?

For training sessions in warm weather, the ideal clothing is lightweight and breathable, such as a T-shirt or vest, shorts, or leggings. A cap and sunglasses can help to reduce glare.

Please apply sunscreen appropriately – there is no shade while on the water, and you can receive double the sunlight from surface reflections.

For training sessions in colder weather, multiple thinner layers are preferable to thicker clothing, as they can be removed if necessary once you are warm from exercise. A warm hat is important. Waterproof socks can be very nice (look for brands such as Sealskinz and Ottershell on Amazon). It's possible to row in gloves, but typically better to just brave the cold hands.

Loose hoodies and fleeces, especially ones with a wide front pocket, are discouraged – hands can get caught in the pocket while rowing and cause a hazard.

Whatever the weather – ***your child should always bring with them a complete change of warm clothing in their bag.*** At some point in their rowing career, they will fall in, and this can be very cold even in summer. If this happens, they will be brought back to the club and will need to change quickly into dry warm clothes.

IoERC-branded clothing can be purchased from Sigma Embroidery (https://www.sigmaembroidery.co.uk/clubs-groups-shop?filter_catid=66&start=0).

For racing at British Rowing Events, your child will be required to wear IoERC racing clothing, available from Stitch Rowing (<https://stitchrowing.com/collections/isle-of-ely>). You can order this directly, but it is usually ordered periodically in bulk by the club to reduce delivery charges. If you'd like to be included in that, you should receive a message before the next order is placed.

Long hair should be tied back. If your child wears glasses, they should not be loose – a rubber strap attached to the arms should prevent them from falling into the water.

Especially in warmer weather – but for every training session – ***you should always bring a full water bottle.*** An ideal water bottle can be opened, used and closed with one hand (so that you don't need to let go of oars and risk instability).

What other kit is useful for rowing?

The most useful kit item for a rower is a *rigger-jigger*. This is a small spanner, ten millimeters on one end and thirteen millimeters on the other.

This is not essential straightaway (and the club has several), but as your child progresses – and particularly if they race – they will need to rig and derig boats. The rigger-jigger has the right sizes of spanner needed for that.

A rigger-jigger is about £7.99 on Amazon, although you can get ones with ratchets for a bit more.

Blisters and callouses on the hands are an unfortunate but expected consequence of choosing rowing as a sport. Zinc oxide finger tape is about £4.99 per roll on Amazon and can cover blisters while keeping hands flexible enough to row with no problem.

There are lots of other fancy things to ~~waste~~ spend money on with rowing – none of them are necessary to begin with, and you can learn about them later if you want.

What are the expectations for races?

As well as the scheduled Junior Training Sessions, the club will periodically arrange opportunities for your child to enter races hosted by IoERC, and external races hosted by other clubs.

These will be discussed with your child during training sessions, and with parents via the WhatsApp group. Your child can indicate their availability for these events via FitClub in the same way as for training sessions.

Please note that (especially if your child has been training in a crew), there is an informal expectation that they will make themselves available for these events – they are ultimately the purpose of the training.

Entry into races is organized by the Junior Rowing Coordinator. If you or your child have requests or preferences regarding race events, please contact the Junior Rowing Coordinator.

The club typically enters events that are relatively local, including the Winter League on the River Cam in Cambridge, St Ives Regatta, Bedford Regatta, St Neots Regatta and Sudbury Regatta – but also other events on an ad-hoc basis.

You will be expected to arrange transport for your child to and from these events. Lift-sharing can be informally arranged by parents via the WhatsApp group. The events are typically a great day out for parents and families as well. Food trucks and coffee huts are typically available.

Your child may be required to help before and after these events – there is quite a lot of work involved in derigging the boats and trailering them to the event, and detrailing and rerigging afterwards.

Please note that – although parent helpers are always welcome – for insurance reasons please only help under the supervision, or with the approval, of the Junior Rowing Coordinator. If you'd like to help out more, please speak with the Junior Rowing Coordinator and they will be happy to help show you how!

What opportunities are there for me to get more involved with the club?

IoERC carries out many activities, and holds many events, throughout the year that rely on volunteer support from club members – and support from parents is also very welcome.

This can range from general help getting boats on and off the water during training sessions, or baking a cake to share out afterwards, to helping run a barbecue at an IoERC-hosted race, to driving a boat trailer to an external race.

Parents may also apply to become members of the IoERC club committee and assist in the running of the club – it's great to have these voices involved.

And of course – you'd be very welcome to take up rowing yourself as a senior member! Our senior members have a wide range of experience and fitness levels, and we offer adult learn-to-row courses.