



# The Poultry Club

## OF GREAT BRITAIN

# Young Person Guidance Notes

"As well as wishing to retain our young people; we also acknowledge the need to offer a fun and exciting programme. This is fundamental to everyone involved within the fancy" – *Daniel Nixon Poultry & Eggs Committee Chair*



Revision 1.0

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## Introduction

This guidance note has been published on behalf of the Poultry Club of Great Britain and is designed to assist those responsible for Shows and Clubs to engage young people in their activities. This note is advisory and is designed to be a supportive, go-to document.

The Poultry Club acknowledges the need to engage young people within the fancy as an important element of fulfilling its charitable objective to “*promote high standards in the keeping, breeding and exhibiting of pure-bred domestic poultry*”. At a national level, this is achieved at the National Show by way of the Junior Handling Competition and a range of age-appropriate junior activities – which prove to be extremely popular. However, this event can only ever attract a small percentage of our Junior Members and we feel that it is important to share best practice with clubs and shows, where these young people will be attending either locally or from further afield. This is part of our work to support and encourage young people already within the fancy and to attract new youngsters to join us.

As well as wishing to retain our young people; we also acknowledge the need to offer a fun and exciting programme. This is fundamental to everyone involved within the fancy.

## Penned Classes:

The majority of shows have extremely strong penned classes for juniors with numbers of entries often exceeding 20 – 30 birds at their shows. However, too many shows only offer a sole class for juniors – this could see a Sebright bantam being judged against an Asil, for instance. It is extremely difficult for the judge and also doesn't necessarily allow for the junior to learn the merits of their chosen breed. We have identified that it is fundamental to offer appropriate variety for junior members – therefore, we suggest on having the following classes open to junior exhibitors at affiliated shows:

- Soft Feather Male or Female;
- Hard Feather Male or Female;
- True Bantam Male or Female; and
- Waterfowl Male or Female.

Should space and interest allow, classes can be started for bantam and large varieties. However, a balance must be struck where there will be competition in the classes – no one (especially a junior) wants to be showing in a class where there is the only one exhibit. This balance could be reviewed year on year.

There are a number of juniors that are incredibly successful in the open classes and by all means this should be recognised and supported. However, appropriate balance should be allowed for all junior members including new and inexperienced members and those whose parents are not involved in the fancy - this will allow for progression to open classes once the junior feels that they are ready and when they have the confirmation that their stock is of appropriate standard.

Very often, the judge who picks up the junior classes is often the judge who is finished first. We feel that as much consideration should be given to the junior judge as is given to the championship judge – you need a judge that is able and comfortable to sit down with a junior member and explain the merits of their bird, in simple and easy terms. It is a particular skill and many of our judges do it very well; ensuring that young people go away smiling and having learned something – despite possibly not even being graded. Therefore, it is always prudent to ensure that the judge is comfortable and capable of completing the task in this way.

**Case Study:** Southport and Ormskirk Bantam Society have struck an excellent cord on their junior offering. They have a dedicated Junior Poultry, Waterfowl and Egg Show (schedule added as an appendix) where they offered an impressive 44 classes and is open solely to juniors. Not only does this allow for some excellent competition between junior members, it also allows for a community to be formed – friends to be made. This show is held alongside their Championship Egg Show and works by the way of having two separate halls within walking distance – perhaps, your society could instigate something similar?



## Junior Handler Classes:

Junior handler classes are fundamental to our junior membership; they allow our young members to understand and appreciate their chosen breed in an informal setting that is designed to be fun, encouraging and engaging. A number of shows hold extremely successful Junior Handler Classes, however – a number of shows are put off by the idea, whether it is due to lack of space, judges or a simple perception that it would be too difficult. It isn't!

As a junior, I got so much from the junior handler classes at local and national shows – from the hints and tips for getting the bird out of the pen, to the confirmation that my knowledge is sound and correct. It was also an opportunity to showcase my knowledge on all things poultry; everything from the standard to welfare conditions – information that I gauged from my Grandad, fellow fanciers, online and also in the standards book. Someone in a white coat taking an interest in this, really did spur me along – and I know it spurs our junior members along too.

The class, generally split into junior and juvenile sections, is designed to challenge the young person on the knowledge of their breed and to pose a number of questions prudent to their breed and also general husbandry relating to poultry as a whole. As the judge is speaking to the child and not necessarily judging the bird, it is recommended that young people only have one entry in these classes.

As mentioned above, a degree of effort must go into selecting the judge for this specific class. The judge should be informed that they have been selected to complete a Junior Handler competition and it would be expected for the show secretary to detail what this entails – the main reason for this is to ensure that the judge is comfortable and confident in completing the task in hand. Many judges are excellent at this job and take the same degree of pride judging the Junior Handler classes as they do judging the Championship Row – but it is also important to recognise that some are less comfortable in taking on the task.

It is advisable for the penning for the birds to be at waist height and to be on a single tier, preferably with a large amount of open space to the front – to allow for the judge and the young person to handle the bird and discuss it. Do remember that our junior members can be notably small, so this consideration must take place when the show is being built.

The judge should generally start off by introducing themselves to each child and noting their age and possibly where they are from in the country to gauge a good initial rapport; then they proceed to ask them to remove the bird from the pen. Younger members may have initial difficulty with this, dependent on the breed, and it is advisable to support them where necessary – and absolutely if they request it. Do remember, this is not a judging test – but a fun experience to showcase their knowledge.

Following this, the judge would proceed to ask the member a number of questions prudent to their breed – in the appendix, we provide a snapshot of questions that a judge may wish to ask, alongside a space to add additional comments and scores. We have split the sections into: knowledge of breed, quality of bird, involvement of exhibitor, show preparation and handling of the bird. It is advisable to have this document printed out for your judge on the show day, one per junior exhibit to be judged, to act as a guide for the judge. These questions are a suggested base and can, of course, be expanded upon – this will be subject to the young person, their age, their knowledge and naturally – their chosen breed. Using a consistent approach like this can also be useful when, as will happen from time to time, the judge is questioned by a parent who may not share their opinion on who should have won!

As noted above, this is not a judging test, but it is still an exhibition and there will still be a first, second and third place. This can be a very difficult decision, and therefore we recommend the use of a points system to highlight where the young person excelled and also where they could improve. It is recommended that the judge is available afterwards to discuss how the young person did and to offer guidance and tips for the next time around. Very often, judges also learn something too (even from the youngest of members!) – so, if this is the case, note it and thank them. As long as the judge is enthusiastic and encouraging and is willing to explain the reasoning and how they could improve next time, the class will be a notable success.

## Poultry Club Show Rules – where do juniors fall into this?

### The Poultry Club Show Rules clearly define that:

- A parent / guardian should remain in close proximity to any entrant in the junior / juvenile handling class; and
- Any judge in this section must have a steward in attendance.

These rules should be followed as they primarily protect the young person exhibiting, but they are also in place to protect adult members and societies. It is recommended that the stipulation of a parent/guardian being present is printed in the schedule and parents/guardians are reminded of this rule before the judging commences. This is a standard procedure across other organisations and societies.

### It is also important to acknowledge:

- PCGB Juvenile classes for Bronze Awards are open to juniors aged from 5 to 6 years on the day of the show; and
- PCGB Junior Handler classes are open to juniors aged from 5 to 16 years on the day of the show, and different age classes may be scheduled.

The PCGB publishes its Safeguarding Policy online at

[https://www.poultryclub.org/media/resources/files/PCGB\\_Safeguarding\\_Policy\\_Procedure\\_2018\\_v1.1.pdf](https://www.poultryclub.org/media/resources/files/PCGB_Safeguarding_Policy_Procedure_2018_v1.1.pdf).

### The purposes of this policy are to:

- To protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who attend or partake in any event or activity run by the Poultry Club of Great Britain.
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles to our approach to safeguarding.

Show societies are recommended to familiarise themselves with this document, they take appropriate action to safeguard you or vulnerable people and have sufficient policies and procedures in place to ensure this happens.



## What else could I do to support juniors at my show?

Juniors very often have an incredible time at shows; it is an opportunity for them to meet up with their friends and often to tuck into a full English/Scottish/Welsh/Irish (delete as appropriate) breakfast! However, shows can also encourage junior members in other ways – below are a number of ways your society can encourage younger members:

- Purchase medals for each junior exhibitor, whether they were placed or not, that is presented with the Trophies and top awards at the end of the exhibition. This will give them a degree of pride and will highlight their hard work, despite not possibly getting a card.
- Ensure that your respective junior sections have a trophy for “Best Junior Exhibitor” etc; this will allow for competition and will have a visual “end goal”. If your show doesn’t already have such a trophy, it would be recommended to speak to your membership and see if one could be donated - or if a number would be willing to support a junior award.
- Have a colouring in or make and do table in the show hall, or close by, for younger exhibitors. There are a number of poultry inspired word searches and colouring sheets online that could keep young people occupied whilst judging is taking place. At the National Show, we have a Treasure Hunt dotted around the Show Hall where young people are to find letters (in obscure places!) and spell out a word – this is a very fun activity and will get young people out and about, possibly exploring breeds they wouldn’t look at prior.
- Put a request in your schedule for junior help to collect judging slips and to place tickets and rosettes onto pens; it helps the committee out massively and hopefully engrains the young person within the committee.
- Make your show youth shaped – speak to your youth membership and hear their thoughts on how you can make your show more junior friendly. This could be by writing them a letter, speaking to them at an AGM or having a quick catch up with young people and their parents on show day. Their suggestions could help your show massively and could vary from having a more appropriate junior classes, a suggestion on activities or – a mere acknowledgment that the show is as they expect.

<b>Exhibitor Name:</b>		
<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Knowledge of Breed</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What breed is this bird?</li> <li>• Is this a cockerel or a hen?</li> <li>• And what colour is it?</li> <li>• Is it a bantam or a large fowl?</li> <li>• What are the special things about this breed?</li> </ul>		/20
<b>Quality of Bird</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are this bird's best points?</li> <li>• And do you know if it has any faults?</li> <li>• Do you know how old this bird is?</li> </ul>		/20
<b>Involvement of Exhibitor</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you hatch this bird at home?</li> <li>• What do you feed the bird on?</li> <li>• What kind of hen-house does it live in?</li> </ul>		/20
<b>Show Preparation</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did you have to do to get it ready for the show?</li> <li>• Did you have to wash the bird?</li> <li>• When did you get it ready for the show?</li> <li>• Does this breed need any special preparation?</li> </ul>		/20
<b>Handling of the Bird</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you show me how to get the bird out of the pen?</li> <li>• And how do you hold it when you've got it out?</li> <li>• Can you show me it's feet and toes?</li> <li>• And can you hold out a wing to check the feathers?</li> <li>• Can you show me how to put the bird back in the pen?</li> </ul>		/20
		<b>Total:</b>