



Changes to the IAPS U11 Netball Tournament format for 2026

The IAPS Sport and Pupil Experience Committee has made an important decision regarding the IAPS U11 Netball Tournament format for the 2026 season.

At the Committee meeting on Tuesday 11th February 2025, it was agreed to revert the IAPS U11 tournament back to a traditional 7-a-side format.

IAPS has worked closely with England Netball to support their approach to junior netball, which led to the adoption of the Bee Netball format for the U11 tournament. Many schools have embraced this philosophy, benefiting from its focus on player rotation, teamwork, and ensuring all squad members remain engaged.

However, based on feedback from schools and event hosts, it is clear that the Bee Netball format does not align well with the demands of a competitive tournament structure. Schools and hosts have faced significant logistical challenges under this format, and the Committee and IAPS recognises the need for a solution that balances inclusivity with competitive progression.

What will change from 2026?

IAPS will adopt a **dual approach** for U11 netball, giving schools the opportunity to choose the format that best suits their needs.

U11 Netball Tournament (Traditional 7-a-side format)

- Regional qualifiers leading to a finals event
- Standard 7-a-side rules, ensuring consistency with the U13 pathway

Bee Netball Festivals

- Standalone events designed to celebrate the best elements of Bee Netball
- Emphasis on full squad participation, rotation, and coaching
- Scores recorded and medals awarded
- A festival-style experience, including music and interactive elements

Please note: Schools may enter **either** the 7-a-side tournament **or** a Bee Netball Festival, but not both.

Why this approach?

This decision reflects:

- **Listening to schools** – This change is a direct response to feedback from member schools about what works best.
- **Supporting Bee Netball** – We remain committed to offering Bee Netball to schools that benefit from it, while recognising its limitations in a tournament setting.
- **Maintaining balance** – The overall number of IAPS netball events will remain the same in 2026, split across both formats to keep events sustainable and well supported.



Next steps

This new format will be introduced for the **2026 season**, and its effectiveness will be reviewed before planning the 2027 calendar. Your feedback will be invaluable in shaping the future of IAPS netball.

Further details on the 2026 tournament and festivals will be shared with schools in due course.

If you have any questions, or if your school is interested in hosting a Bee Netball Festival, please contact **sport@iaps.uk**.