



Market Harborough Rugby Union Football Club

Mini and Junior Section

Policy of Best Practice

Teamwork	Discipline	Respect	Sportsmanship	Enjoyment
Teamwork	For without it, the game being interdependent and reliant on others (of all shapes and sizes), there would be no game.			
Discipline and Respect	For without them, particularly taking into account the game's physicality, there would be damage and injury to participants and a breakdown in authority. The game teaches life skills.			
Sportsmanship	For without it, respect, honour, fair play and friendships will be lost.			
Enjoyment	For the game, at all levels, is to be fun, healthy, inclusive and entertaining for all – players, officials and supporters alike. Participation in the game brings enduring friendships and a family atmosphere. There is no segregation. This together with teamwork creates rugby's special camaraderie.			

“Rugby union is an inclusive game, for all shapes and sizes, in which teamwork, discipline, respect and sportsmanship provide a healthy, physical sport, which develops life skills and lifelong friendships, whilst providing fun and enjoyment for all its participants”

RFU Rugby Core Values Task Group 2009

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Our aim is that all young people enjoy the game in a safe enjoyable setting.

The following section sets out Good Practice Procedures which all those involved in the delivery of the game of rugby union to young people should adhere to.

Codes of Good Conduct for Coaches and Officials

Codes of Conduct will ensure that all children and young people and the individuals who work with them will enjoy the game in a safe environment.

When working with young people coaches and officials must adopt the following guidance:

1. They must always be publicly open when working with young people. They must avoid situations where the adult and an individual child are alone and/or unobserved, e.g. individual skill session after a team training session. They must work in pairs and never alone with a group or individual.

2. Rugby is a physical game. Situations will occur when, in order to teach or coach certain techniques, it is necessary to make contact with the player. However the following must apply:

- Parents and young players must be made aware of situations in which this may happen when they join the club.
- Physical handling must only be used for safety reasons or where there is no other way of coaching the technique and always with the permission of the child/young person and their parent/carer.

3. Any contact or touching which is inappropriate (not directly related to the coaching context) or is aggressive is poor practice and is unacceptable.

4. If groups are to be supervised in changing rooms, always ensure that individuals work in pairs, and that gender is appropriate. Children/young people must not change at the same time or in the same place as adults.

5. Where mixed teams compete away from home they must always be accompanied by at least one male and one female adult.

6. Volunteers and professionals must respect the rights, dignity and worth of all and treat everyone with equality.

7. Coaches must place the well-being and safety of the player above the development of performance. This means that coaches must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Avoid overplaying of players (particularly talented players). All players need and deserve equal opportunity to play and to rest.
- Remember that children/young people play for fun and enjoyment and that winning is only a part of it.
- Motivate youngsters through positive feedback and constructive criticism.
- Ensure that contact skills are taught in a safe, secure manner paying due regard to the physical development of young players.

- Never allow young players to train/play when injured. If unsure, err on the side of caution.
 - Ensure equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate to the age and ability of the players.
- 8.** At least one coach per age group must hold a current RFU coaching award or a recognised award. All other coaches should hold a current RFU coaching award or be working towards one.
- 9.** Coaches must keep up-to-date with knowledge and technical skills and should be aware of their own limitations. Coaches must only work within the limitations of their knowledge and qualifications.
- 10.** Coaches must ensure that the activities which they direct or advocate are appropriate to the age, maturity and ability of the players.

COACHES' CODE OF ETHICS

- 1.** All rugby coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child and young person with whom they work and treat them equally.
- 2.** All rugby coaches must place the physical and emotional wellbeing of all young players above all other considerations, including the development of performance.
- 3.** The relationship that a rugby coach develops with the players with whom they work must be based on mutual trust and respect.
- 4.** All rugby coaches must ensure that all activities undertaken are appropriate to the age, maturity, experience and ability of the players.
- 5.** All rugby coaches will encourage young players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
- 6.** All rugby coaches should clarify with the young players (and their parents/carers) what is expected of them both on and off the rugby field and also what they are entitled to expect from the coach.
- 7.** All rugby coaches should work in partnership with others within the game (officials, doctors, physiotherapists and sports scientists) to ensure the wellbeing, safety and enjoyment of all young players.
- 8.** All rugby coaches must promote the positive aspects of the sport e.g. Fair Play. Violations of the Laws of the Game. Behaviour contrary to the spirit of the Laws of the Game or relevant regulations or the use of prohibited techniques.

(A) THE GOOD MATCH OFFICIAL'S CODE

Match Officials should:

- (a) Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when officiating players.
- (b) Provide positive verbal feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner during games.
- (c) Emphasise the spirit of the game.
- (d) Appreciate the needs of the players before the needs of the sport.
- (e) Understand the physical and behavioural development of players.
- (f) Be a positive role model. Set an example, and as such, comments should be positive and supportive.
- (g) Look to self-improvement e.g. participation in training courses.
- (h) Recognise that the safety of players is paramount.
- (i) Explain decisions – all players are still learning and parents will understand the game better.
- (j) Always penalise foul play.
- (k) Play advantage whenever possible in order to let the game flow.
- (l) Show empathy for the age and ability of players.
- (m) Be consistent and objective.
- (n) Be familiar with the Good Spectator's Code and ensure that verbal abuse from players, coaches or spectators is not tolerated and is dealt with by club officials immediately.
- (o) Be aware of, and abide by, the RFU Child Protection Guidance policies and procedures.
- (p) Officiate to the rules laid down in the Rugby Continuum and keep themselves updated on rule changes.
- (q) Check that the home Club or School has provided a qualified first aider, ambulance access has not been obstructed and that appropriate equipment is available along with someone trained in its use before starting play.
- (r) Before training sessions and matches check that studs and other clothing are in accordance with the IRB Laws of the Game.

(B) THE GOOD COACHES' CODE - Coaches of players should:

- (a) Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching players.
- (b) Understand that most learning is achieved through doing.
- (c) Appreciate the needs of the players before the needs of the sport.
- (d) Be a positive role model – think what this implies.
- (e) Keep winning and losing in perspective – encourage players to behave with dignity in all circumstances.
- (f) Respect all referees and the decisions they make, even if they appear to make a mistake, (remember it could be you refereeing next week) and ensure that the players recognise that they must do the same.
- (g) Provide positive verbal feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner to all players, both during coaching sessions and matches.
- (h) Provide rugby experiences which are matched to the players' ages and abilities, as well as their physical and behavioural development.
- (i) Ensure all players are coached in a safe environment, with adequate first aid readily to hand.
- (j) Avoid the overplaying of the best players by using a squad system which gives everybody a satisfactory amount of playing time.
- (k) Never allow a player to train or play when injured.
- (l) Ensure good supervision of players, both on and off the field.
- (m) Recognise that players should never be exposed to extremes of heat, cold or unacceptable risk of injury.
- (n) Develop an awareness of nutrition as part of an overall education in lifestyle management.
- (o) Recognise that it is illegal for players under 18 to drink alcohol or for those under 16 to smoke. Coaches should actively discourage both.
- (p) Ensure that their knowledge and coaching strategies are up to date and in line with RFU philosophy.
- (q) Be aware of, and abide by, the RFU recommended procedures for taking young people on residential tours at home and abroad.
- (r) Be aware of and abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the Policy and Procedures for the Welfare of Young People in Rugby Union.
- (s) Coach to the rules laid down in the Rugby Continuum and keep themselves updated on rule changes.

(C) THE GOOD PLAYER'S CODE - Players should be encouraged to:

(a) Recognise and appreciate the efforts made by coaches, parents, match officials and administration in providing the opportunity to play the game and enjoy the rugby environment.

(b) Understand the values of loyalty and commitment to adults and team mates.

(c) Recognise that every player has a right to expect their involvement in rugby to be safe and free from all types of abuse.

(d) Understand that if an individual or group of players feel they are not being treated in a manner that is acceptable, then they should tell an adult either at the Club or School or outside of the game.

(e) Play because they want to do so, not to please coaches or parent.

(f) Remember that skill development, fun and enjoyment are the most important parts of the game.

(g) Be attentive at all training and coaching sessions.

(h) Work equally hard for themselves and their team – both will then benefit.

(i) Recognise good play by all players on their team and by their opponents.

(j) Be a sportsman – win with dignity, lose with grace.

(k) Play to the iRB Laws of the Game and accept, without question, all referees' decision even if they appear to make a mistake.

(l) Control their emotions. Verbal or physical abuse of team mates, opponents, coaches, match officials or spectators is not acceptable.

(m) Treat all players, as they would like to be treated themselves. Do not interfere with, bully or take advantage of any player.

(D) THE GOOD PARENT'S CODE - Clubs and Schools should encourage Parents to:

(a) Be familiar with the coaching and training programme in order that they can ensure their child is fully involved and the coaches are aware of their availability.

(b) Be familiar with the teaching and coaching methods used by observing the coaching and training sessions in which their child participates.

(c) Be aware that the Club or School has a duty of care to ensure the safety of players and therefore, where appropriate, assist coaches with the supervision of the players, particularly where numbers are large and there is a need to transport players to away games.

(d) Be involved with Club and School activities and share their expertise.

(e) Share concerns, if they have them, with Club or School officials.

(f) Be familiar with the Good Coaches' Code contained in the Rugby Continuum. In particular be aware that:

(1) coaches should recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching players; and

(2) coaches should keep winning and losing in perspective, encouraging players to behave with dignity in all circumstances.

(g) Support coaches in instilling these virtues.

(h) Remember that young people play rugby for their own enjoyment not that of their parents.

(i) Encourage young people to play - do not force them.

(j) Focus on the players' efforts, rather than winning or losing.

(k) Be realistic about the players' abilities; do not push them towards a level that they are not capable of achieving.

(l) Provide positive verbal feedback both in training and during the game.

(m) Remember that persistent, negative messages will adversely affect the players' and referee's performance and attitude.

(n) Always support the Club and School in their efforts to eradicate loud, coarse and abusive behaviour from the game.

(o) Remember young people learn much by example.

(p) Always show appreciation of good play by all players both from their own Club or School and the opposition.

(q) Respect decisions made by the match officials, even if they appear to make a mistake, and encourage the players to do likewise.

(E) THE GOOD SPECTATOR'S CODE:

Clubs and Schools should encourage Spectators to:

- (a) Act as positive role models to all players.
- (b) Be familiar with, and abide by, the RFU Child Protection Guidance in relation to verbal and emotional abuse.
- (c) Respect guidance from the Club or School with regard to spectator behaviour.
- (d) Remember children play sport primarily for their own enjoyment, not for that of the spectators.
- (e) Acknowledge good individual and team performance from all players irrespective of the team in which they play.
- (f) Respect match officials' decisions, even if they appear to make a mistake – remember, they are volunteers providing an opportunity for players to play rugby.
- (g) Never verbally abuse players, coaches, match officials or fellow spectators: such behaviour can create a negative environment for players and their behaviour will often reflect this.
- (h) Acknowledge effort and good performance rather than 'to win at all costs'.
- (i) Verbally encourage all players in a positive manner, shouting 'for', not 'at', the players.
- (j) Encourage all players irrespective of their ability - never ridicule any individual player, regardless of the team in which they play.