

REIGATE RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Colley Lane, Reigate, Surrey



Codes of conduct

The RFU has developed Codes of Conduct to help ensure that all adults clearly understand the acceptable standard of behaviour towards children and young people within the rugby setting. Reigate Rugby Football Club Minis section (“RRFC Minis”) expects coaches, officials and young players within the club, together with parents and spectators to adhere to the following standards:

- a) Coaches code of conduct
- b) Players code of conduct
- c) Parents code of conduct
- d) Spectators code of conduct
- e) Officials code of conduct

These codes of conduct are set out on the following pages and are available on-line at the club’s website (www.reigaterugby.co.uk). The club reserves the right to impose sanctions in respect of breaches of these codes.

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a) Coaches code of conduct

In Rugby Union coaches of young players must:

- Provide experiences that are matched to the young players' age and ability, as well as their physical and mental development.
- Ensure that all young players are coached in a safe environment, with adequate first aid readily to hand.
- Avoid the overplaying of the best players by using a squad system, which gives everybody a satisfactory amount of playing time.
- Never allow a player to train or play when injured.
- Ensure that there is appropriate supervision of young players, both on and off the field.
- Recognise that young players should never be exposed to extremes of heat, cold, or unacceptable risk of injury.
- Develop an awareness of nutrition as part of an overall education in lifestyle management.
- Recognise that it is illegal for young players under 18 to drink alcohol.
- Ensure that their knowledge and coaching strategies are up to date and in line with RFU philosophy and expectations.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the RFU recommended procedures for taking young people on residential tours at home and abroad.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the policies and procedures outlined in the RFU Child Protection policy (in particular with regard to prohibited practices, described in section 2 of that policy).

In Rugby Union coaches should:

- Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching young players, and understand that most learning is achieved through doing.
- Appreciate the needs of the players before the needs of the sport.
- Be a positive role model.
- Keep winning and losing in perspective and encourage young players to behave with dignity in all circumstances.
- Respect all referees and the decisions they make (remember it could be you refereeing next week) and ensure that the players recognise that they must do the same.
- Provide positive verbal feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner, to all young players both during coaching sessions and games.

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b) Players code of conduct

In Rugby Union young players should:

- Play because they want to do so, not to please coaches or parents.
- Remember skill development, fun and enjoyment are the most important parts of the game.
- Be attentive at all training and coaching sessions.
- Work equally hard for themselves and their team and both will then benefit.
- Recognise good play by ALL players on their team and by their opponents.
- Be a good sportsman - win or lose.
- Play to the laws of the game and accept, without question, all the referee's decisions.
- Control their emotions. Verbal or physical abuse of team-mates, opponents, or match officials is not acceptable.
- Treat all players, as they would like to be treated. Do not interfere with, bully or take unfair advantage of any player

In Rugby Union young players are encouraged to:

- Recognise and appreciate the efforts made by coaches, parents, match officials and administrators in providing them with the opportunity to play the game and enjoy the rugby environment.
- Understand the values of loyalty and commitment to adults and team mates.
- Recognise that every young player has a right to expect their involvement in rugby to be safe and free from all types of abuse.
- Understand that if an individual or group of young players feel that they are not being treated in a manner that is acceptable, then they have a right to tell an adult either at the rugby club or outside of the game.

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c) Parents code of conduct

In Rugby Union parents of young players should:

- Remember that young people play rugby for their own enjoyment not that of their parents.
- Encourage young people to play - do not force them.
- Focus on the young players' efforts rather than winning or losing.
- Be realistic about the young players' ability, do not push them towards a level that they are not capable of achieving.
- Provide positive verbal feedback both in training and during the game. Remember that persistent, negative messages will adversely affect the players' and referee's performance and attitude.
- Always support the rugby club in their efforts to eradicate loud, coarse and abusive behaviour from the game.
- Remember young people learn much by example.
- Always show appreciation of good play by all young players both from your own club and the opposition.
- Respect decisions made by the match officials and encourage the young players to do likewise

In Rugby Union parents of young players are encouraged to:

- Be familiar with the coaching and training programme in order that they can ensure that their child is fully involved and the coaches are aware of their availability.
- Be familiar with the teaching and coaching methods used by observing the sessions in which their child participates.
- Be aware that the club has a duty of care and therefore, where appropriate, assist coaches with the supervision of the young players, particularly where numbers are large and there is a need to transport youngsters to away games.
- Be involved with club activities and share their expertise.
- Share concerns, if you have them, with club officials.
- Be familiar with the Coaches code of conduct and in particular that coaches should recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching young players.
- Ensure coaches keep winning and losing in perspective, encouraging young players to behave with dignity in all circumstances.

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d) Spectators code of conduct

Young rugby players are impressionable and their behaviour will often reflect that of adults around them. In Rugby Union we welcome spectators on our touchlines who embrace the ethos of the game as one of fun, enjoyment and skill development.

In Rugby Union spectators should:

- Remember that children play sport for their enjoyment not yours.
- Acknowledge good individual and team performance from all youngsters irrespective of which team they play for.
- Respect match official's decisions. Remember that they are volunteers providing an opportunity for youngsters to play rugby.
- Never verbally abuse young players, match officials, fellow spectators or coaches. Such behaviour can create a negative environment for young players and their behaviour will often reflect this.
- Acknowledge effort and good performance rather than the "win at all costs" ethic.
- Verbally encourage all youngsters in a positive way. If you do want to shout make sure it is 'for', not 'at', the players.
- Condemn bad language, rude behaviour and violence.
- Encourage all youngsters irrespective of their ability – never ridicule any individual player, regardless of the team they play for.

In Rugby Union spectators of young players are encouraged to:

- Act as positive role models to all young players.
- Be familiar with, and abide by, the RFU child protection Guidance in relation to verbal and emotional abuse⁽¹⁾
- Respect the rugby club policy with regard to spectator behaviour.

(1) Emotional abuse may occur when coaches, volunteers or parents:

- Provide repeated negative feedback
- Repeatedly ignore a young player's efforts to progress
- Repeatedly demand performance levels above the young player's capability
- Over-emphasise the winning ethic.

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e) Officials code of conduct

Match officials are an integral part of the development of young players. They have a responsibility to ensure that games are managed in such a way as to ensure both the safety and enjoyment of all players. Equally, match officials should gain respect from players, coaches and spectators through the quality of their officiating.

In Rugby Union match officials must:

- Recognise that the safety of young players is paramount.
- Explain decisions - all young players are still learning.
- Always penalise foul play.
- Play advantage whenever possible in order to let the game flow.
- Show empathy for the age and ability of young players.
- Be consistent and objective.
- Ensure that verbal abuse from players, coaches or spectators is not tolerated and is dealt with by club officials immediately.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the RFU Child Protection Guidance policies and procedures.

In Rugby Union match officials should:

- Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when officiating young players.
- Provide positive verbal feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner during games.
- Emphasise the spirit of the game.
- Appreciate the needs of the young players before the needs of the sport.
- Understand the physical, social and psychological development of young players.
- Be a positive role model. You set an example and, as such, comments you receive should be positive and supportive.
- Look to self-improvement, eg. Participation in Mini/Midi or National 15-a-side courses.

Remember:

- Officials working with young players up to the age of 12 must officiate to the rules laid down in the RFU continuum and must keep themselves updated on rules changes.
- Officials working with young players age 13+ must officiate according to the under 19 and Under 15 Law variations and keep themselves updated on relevant changes.