

# 1 CLUB & SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

The following regulations and recommendations are for Clubs and Schools to follow. Failure by Clubs or Schools to observe the regulations may invalidate the compulsory insurance cover provided by the RFU. In contrast, recommendations represent best practice and Clubs and Schools must endeavour to follow these.

## REGULATIONS

### 1.1 PLAYER REGISTRATION:

Clubs must ensure that all Mini-Midi players complete and return registration forms to the Constituent Body's Youth Registration Official within 45 days of their first joining a Club. Team managers may be required to produce, for inspection, registration cards for each player when participating in competitive matches and should therefore take registration records and copies of any special age dispensations issued by the RFU to each match so they can confirm the ages of their players to the match official or the coach of the opposing team, if requested.

### 1.2 CHILD PROTECTION:

- (a) The Policy and Procedures for the Welfare of Young People in Rugby Union, issued by the RFU in conjunction with the RFUW and the NSPCC are to be considered part of the Rugby Continuum. Clubs and Schools should be familiar with the Policy and Procedures and must endeavour to put its recommendations into effect.
- (b) Clubs and Schools should ensure that:
  - (1) the Codes of Good Practice in the Policy and Procedures for the Welfare of Young People in Rugby Union are drawn to the attention of their coaches and match officials;
  - (2) the Codes (promoting fair-play amongst parents, spectators, match officials and coaches) contained in each Section of the Rugby Continuum are circulated to the relevant persons involved with Mini-Midi Rugby at their Club or School;
  - (3) a Child Protection Policy, conforming to the RFU's recommendations, has been produced and that its existence is communicated to all involved with Mini-Midi Rugby;
  - (4) their Club child protection officer(s) complete the RFU's "Best Practice and Child Protection" Distance Learning Course available via the RFU website [www.rfu.com](http://www.rfu.com) (Community Rugby pages) or by telephoning Twickenham (0208 831 7454); and
  - (5) all adults at their Club and School involved in delivering Mini-Midi Rugby complete a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure Form.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1.3 COACHING:

- (a) The RFU strongly recommends that Clubs and Schools ensure their coaches acquire and develop coaching skills which are appropriate for the age grades they are coaching. This ensures improved playing standards throughout the game, reduces the risk of players suffering injury, increases consistency in the development of youth rugby and adds to the enjoyment for players.
- (b) Coach training comprises a combination of attending RFU-approved coach education courses (leading to a qualification), supplemented by attendance at coaching seminars and regular reading of coaching materials and viewing of coaching videos. For further information on up-to-date products email: [coachingyoungplayers@rfu.com](mailto:coachingyoungplayers@rfu.com) or visit [www.rfu.com](http://www.rfu.com) or call free phone 0800 834551.
- (c) Clubs and Schools are strongly advised that qualified coaches supervise all persons who do not hold current coaching qualifications appropriate to the age grades they are coaching. Details of RFU-approved coach education courses can be obtained from your Constituent Body or Rugby Development Officer and include:
  - (1) Mini Tag Rugby courses (<half-day) where all attendees receive a certificate of attendance and supporting resources, qualifying them, to coach Mini Tag Rugby (Under 7 and Under 8); and
  - (2) Mini-Midi coaching courses (2 days) leading to a qualification to coach Mini Rugby (Under 9 and Under 10) and Midi Rugby (Under 11 and Under 12).
- (d) The RFU recognises that at Schools the game may be taught by those in possession of a Teachers' Certificate of Education who, having completed their probationary year, are fully qualified teachers. However, each School is recommended to pay close regard to its health and safety responsibilities in assessing the adequacy of its teacher's rugby coaching capabilities. This may include sending teachers on RFU-approved coach education courses.
- (e) The RFU recommends that the months of September and January are used by Clubs and Schools to help coaches develop their coaching skills and, as appropriate, to qualify themselves to coach their current age grade or to prepare for coaching another age grade the following season. While team coaching/training sessions and competitive matches may continue to take place in January, this should not prevent coaches from engaging in such education activities and Clubs and Schools should give priority to coaches' education during these months.

#### **1.4 HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

- (a) Every Club and School should have close regard to its health and safety responsibilities and carry out and record formal risk assessments each season to ensure the safe and competent coaching of the rugby. Further guidance on the provision of a safe rugby environment can be obtained from the RFU by contacting James Winterbottom at Twickenham by e-mail at [jameswinterbottom@rfu.com](mailto:jameswinterbottom@rfu.com).
- (b) The RFU strongly recommends that Clubs and Schools have suitably qualified first aiders present to provide immediate assistance to any player who is injured, whether during training sessions or during competitive play against outside opposition.

#### **1.5 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.

#### **1.6 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.

