

## **INTRODUCTION**

**Southport Rugby Club is committed to providing the highest standards in Rugby and enjoyment to Mini's and Youth Players from the age of 5 to 18. We have both Boys and Girls Teams.**

Training Sessions and Competitive games against other clubs take place on Sunday mornings throughout the season which runs from September to April inclusive. All sessions are held in accordance with the continuum and schools and youth rules laid down by the governing body of the Rugby Football Union. (RFU). Our coaches are qualified to RFU level 1 and above. All players must be correctly registered with the club and the RFU which is a legal requirement for insurance purposes.

## **CONTENTS**

<b>The Partnership between Team Management and Parents</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
<b>Core Values</b>	<b>Pages 3 - 4</b>
<b>The Fair Play Codes</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Codes of Conduct –</b>	
<b>The Good Coaches Code</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>The Good Players Code</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>The Good Spectators Code</b>	<b>Page 7 - 8</b>
<b>The Good Match Officials Code</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>The Good Parents Code</b>	<b>Page 9</b>
<b>The Good Administrators Code</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<b>Child Protection – A Guide</b>	<b>Page 11 - 12</b>
<b>Why not become a volunteer?</b>	<b>Inside Back Cover</b>

**For further information and updates please visit our website [www.southportrfc.com](http://www.southportrfc.com) and watch our Notice Boards.**

## **THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN TEAM MANAGEMENT AND PARENTS**

**In Rugby Union The Partnership between Team Management and Parents is positively encouraged through:**

- Providing information on possible financial issues.
- Agreeing issues relating to Duty of Care (e.g. responsibility for travelling to and from games).
- Encouraging parents to attend coaching sessions and games and making them aware that the "win at all costs" ethos is not accepted in Rugby Union.
- Ensuring that parents have realistic aspirations for their child and are aware of his/her strengths and weaknesses.
- Informing parents about specialist equipment that is required (e.g. gum shields), and where it can be purchased from.
- Ensuring parents are aware of what is acceptable touchline behaviour.

**And above all:**

- Involving parents in peripheral activities, which make them feel they 'belong', especially if it involves expertise which is not rugby related.

# Core values

Introducing young people to the values of rugby union will provide a mindset that will stretch beyond participation in the sport. Much of the behaviour and attitudes that have defined rugby union are highly regarded both within and outside the sport. Regardless of any adverse changes in society, the RFU work hard to protect and promote the game's fundamental elements for the next generation. Qualities we believe Rugby Union provides:

**TEAMWORK** ♦ **RESPECT** ♦ **ENJOYMENT**  
**DISCIPLINE** ♦ **SPORTSMANSHIP**

## **TEAMWORK**

**Teamwork is essential to our sport.**

- We welcome all new team members and include all because working as a team enriches our lives.
- We play selflessly: working for the team, not for ourselves alone, both on and off the field.
- We take pride in our team, rely on one another and understand that each player has a part to play.
- We speak out if our team or sport is threatened by inappropriate words or actions.

## **RESPECT**

**Mutual respect forms the basis of our sport.**

- We hold in high esteem our sport, its values and traditions and earn the respect of others by the way we behave.
- We respect our match officials and accept their decisions.

- We respect opposition players and supporters.
- We value our coaches and those who run our clubs and treat clubhouses with consideration.

## **ENJOYMENT**

**Enjoyment is the reason we play and support rugby union.**

- We encourage players to enjoy training and playing.
- We use our sport to adopt a healthy lifestyle and build life skills.
- We safeguard our young players and help them have fun.
- We enjoy being part of a team and part of the rugby family because it enhances confidence and self esteem.

## **DISCIPLINE**

**Strong discipline underpins our sport.**

- We ensure that our sport is one of controlled physical endeavour and that we are honest and fair.
- We obey the 'Laws of the Game' which ensure an inclusive and exciting global game.
- We support our disciplinary system, which protects our sport and upholds its values.
- We observe the sport's Laws and regulations and report serious breaches.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

**Sportsmanship is the foundation rugby union is built upon**

- We uphold the rugby tradition of camaraderie with team mates and opposition.
- We observe fair play both on and off the pitch and are generous in victory and dignified in defeat.
- We play to win but not at all costs and recognise both endeavour and achievement.
- We ensure that the wellbeing and development of individual players is central to all rugby activity.

# The Fair Play Codes

The RFU have published the following Fair Play Codes, which help remind all of us why we enjoy being part of this great game:

- **The Good Coach's code**
- **The Good Player's code**
- **The Good Spectator's code**
- **The Good Match Official's code**
- **The Good Parent's code**
- **The Good Administrator's code**
- **Child Protection: A Guide**

With rugby at Senior level becoming so competitive, too often bringing with it a pervading culture of winning at all costs, it is vital that we do not forget the reasons why *young* players participate in and enjoy the game of Rugby Union. Not to mention the reasons why we want them to.

The idea of "fair play" should be a constant reference point for all those people involved in the ***mini and youth game***. To lose sight of this would be detrimental to everyone.

Southport RFC fully supports the spirit behind these guidelines and ethos that they engender within the game. These should be followed at every level within ***mini and youth rugby*** at this Club.

# Codes of Conduct

## THE GOOD COACH'S CODE

### **In rugby union, coaches of young players should:**

- Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching young players. Most learning is achieved through doing.
- Appreciate the needs of the players before the needs of the sport.
- Be a positive role model – think what this implies.
- Keep winning and losing in perspective – 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.

### **In rugby union, coaches of young players must:**

- Provide experiences, which are matched to the young players' ages and abilities, as well as their physical and mental development.
- Ensure all youngsters 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 good 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 your knowledge and coaching strategies are up to date and in line with RFU philosophy.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the policies and procedures outlined in the RFU Child Protection Guidance Booklet.

### **Important note:**

Coaches working with young players up to the age of 12 must follow the guidelines laid down by the RFU Rugby Continuum. Coaches working with young players aged 13+ must be aware of the Under 15 and Under 19 law variations, including those that apply to cross border matches.

## THE GOOD PLAYERS CODE

### **Players are encouraged to:**

- Recognise and appreciate the efforts made by teachers, coaches, parents, match officials and administrators in providing the opportunity for you 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 they are not being treated in a manner that is acceptable, then you have a right to tell an adult either at the rugby club or outside of the game.

### **Players should:**

- Play because you want to do so, not to please coaches or parents.
- Remember that 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 yourself and your team - both will then benefit.
- Recognise good play by all players on your team and by your opponents.
- Be a sportsman - win or lose.
- Play to the Laws of the Game and accept, without question, all referees' decisions.
- Control your emotions. Verbal or physical abuse of team mates, opponents, or match officials is not acceptable.
- Treat all players, as you would like to be treated. Do not interfere with, bully or take advantage of any player.

## THE GOOD SPECTATORS CODE

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 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.
- Respect the rugby club policy with regard to spectator behaviour.

### **In Rugby Union spectators should:**

- Remember 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, 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.
- Remember - **It's only a game!**

## THE GOOD MATCH OFFICIAL'S CODE

### 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 e.g. participation in the Entry Level Referee Award or Referee Education Evenings.

### 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.



## THE GOOD PARENTS CODE

### **Parents are encouraged to:**

- Be familiar with the coaching and training programme in order that you can ensure that your 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 your 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 your expertise.
- Share concerns, if you have them, with club officials.
- Be familiar with the Good Coaches Code. In particular:
  - Coaches should recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching young players.
  - Coaches should keep winning and losing in perspective, encouraging young players to behave with dignity in all circumstances.
  - It is important that parents support coaches in instilling these virtues.

### **Parents 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' abilities; 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.

## THE GOOD ADMINISTRATORS CODE

It is acknowledged that youth rugby will not progress without good quality administrators. Their contribution is essential to the development of all youth sections and the individuals within them.

### **In Rugby Union administrators should:**

- Encourage an environment within the rugby club whereby the opportunity to play rugby is offered to ALL youngsters.
- Encourage the concept of good sporting partnerships between young people, their parents, club coaches and officials.
- Involve young people in the decision making processes, where appropriate.
- Recognise that the rugby club has a 'duty of care' towards all young club members.
- Ensure that the club provide responsible supervision for all young people.
- Promote the concepts of fair play, respect and enjoyment. Discourage the 'win at all costs' ethic amongst the club community.

### **In Rugby Union administrators must:**

- Provide coaches with the opportunity to achieve governing body qualifications.
- Ensure that equipment and facilities are available for and appropriate to the requirements of the coaches and needs of the young players.
- Ensure that young players are registered under the RFU scheme.
- Ensure that the club coaching/playing programme reflects the RFU guidelines and does not expose the young players to the possibility of overplaying.
- Ensure matches are officiated by suitable, and preferably qualified, referees.
- Ensure that appropriate medical and first aid provision is always available.
- Promote youth sections as being an integral part of the club.
- Promote links with the local community, particularly schools.
- Ensure that the club community is aware of, and abides by the policies and procedures outlined in the RFU Child Protection Guidance booklet.

# CHILD PROTECTION: A GUIDE

This is intended as a guide for people involved in the coaching, management and development of Rugby Union within the club environment. It should be read by volunteers, parents and professionals alike, and in particular a new coach. You are introduced to the concept of child abuse in sport, in all its forms and are given ways of both recognising warning signs and acting on concerns.

Abuse is a powerful and emotive term. Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults and often by those they know and trust. The coach often holds this trust and may be at risk of misusing their power over the young players.

It is widely recognised that there are four main areas of abuse which coaches and volunteers should be aware of:

- **Emotional abuse**  
In general terms, emotional abuse occurs when adults persistently fail to show children due care, love or affection, where a child may be constantly shouted at, or threatened or subjected to sarcasm and unrealistic pressures.
- **Neglect**  
In general terms, neglect as a form of abuse occurs when a child's essential needs for food, warmth and care fail to be met.
- **Physical abuse**  
In general terms, this occurs when adults or even children, deliberately inflict injuries on a child, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. It also occurs when an adult gives children alcohol, or inappropriate drugs, or fails to supervise their access to these substances.
- **Sexual abuse**  
In general terms, girls and boys are abused by adults, both male and female, who use children to meet their own sexual needs.

There may, however, be an increased risk within many sports, including Rugby Union, for abuse to occur which does not necessarily fit into these categories. The unique culture and traditions of rugby, along with so-called stereotypical behaviour, whilst common to many team sports, may give rise to unacceptable behaviour leading to situations where abuse may occur or coaches and/or young players are at increased risk.

Safeguarding the welfare of our young players is paramount. As coaches and volunteers we have a moral and possibly a legal responsibility to provide the highest possible standard of care when we welcome young people into the game of Rugby Union.

Whilst there are many ways in which the welfare of young players can be safeguarded, this document does not go into detail and further guidance can be sought from the 'RFU/RFUW child and young player protection policy'.

You are advised to become familiar with ways in which you and your club can:

- Understand what child abuse means.
- Ensure good practice in the coaching of young players.
- Provide a safe environment for young people.
- Recognise abuse and provide a structure to deal sympathetically with concerns.