



WIGTON RUFC

Junior Rugby Handbook Policies and Guidelines

Season 2020 to 2021





Dear Parent,

On behalf of Wigton RUFC I would like to welcome you and your child to the club and provide you with some information about our activities. The club provides opportunities for young people between the ages of approximately 6 to 18 to receive rugby football coaching and/or competition in Cumbria. All coaching is by qualified coaches who are trained and have been screened for their suitability for working with young people.

We welcome parents to all training and competitions and value your support. We are keen to try and involve parents in the club and would like to invite anyone who is interested in helping (in any capacity) to speak to a member of the coaching team at the training sessions.

Training takes place on Sunday from 10.30 to 11.45 am and is held at Wigton RUFC, Lowmoor Road, Wigton. Players will need boots, socks, shorts, and protective clothing where appropriate (see details further on).

Arrangements should be made for your child to travel to and from training sessions and matches. We appreciate it if children can arrive promptly and are collected promptly at the end of the session. If somebody else is to collect your child please let the club know before hand.

With this letter you will find details of the clubs policies and the RFU rules that govern how rugby is delivered for children at Wigton. These documents enable the club to provide a secure and supportive environment for your child to learn and progress in the sport of Rugby. We therefore, ask that all members and visitors abide by these rules and guidelines whilst attending matches, training sessions or club functions. Please note that the Club Constitution, Child Protection Policy and Insurance documentation can be viewed on the Clubs notice board.

If you would like to talk to someone at the club about the information contained with this letter, or your child's involvement with the club on Sundays. A list of current coaches and their contact numbers is printed overleaf.

We look forward to meeting you at some point in the future.

Player Safety and Playing Kit

All our players are insured via the RFU for all club activities providing those activities abide by the rules, regulations and recommendations contained within the IRB laws of the game and the RFU variations for each age group.

For this insurance to be valid players must be up to date members of their club and that club must hold a current up to date RFU registration for the players concerned.

If these conditions are not met by those involved in club activities all those taking part may not be covered by this insurance and the club will not allow those players to take part in club activities.

All playing kit and protective clothing should comply with current RFU and IRB regulations and guidance. Information concerning these can be found on the *RFU web site* at www.rfu.com or by *contacting our local Rugby Development Officer Liam Nicholls*. A summary of this information and further advice is given below.

The club provides shirts for the younger players but parents/guardians should make sure their children are equipped with white **cotton** shorts and green/white socks. (Bought from behind the Bar or see Amanda/Hilary) The older teams are provided with club shirts for matches.



Clothing

- All clothing must comply with IRB law 4 and players must abide by the decisions of referees/coaches concerning appropriate or safe clothing.
- A player must not wear any item that is sharp or abrasive or that is normally permitted by Law, but in the referee's opinion is liable to cause injury to a player.
- In normal conditions children should wear rugby/football boots, rugby socks, rugby shorts (**not nylon shorts**) and a rugby shirt.
- When it is hot and sunny and the ground is hard please provide sunscreen, plenty of fluids (water) and trainers instead of boots.

- When it does get cold and wet, staying warm makes training a more enjoyable experience (clothes can always be removed to cool down) so players should dress in layers adding any of the following: Tracksuit bottoms, T-Shirt, Sweatshirt/Tracksuit or Waterproof Top, Woolly hat or gloves to grip the wet ball and a change of clothing and footwear.

Boots/Studs

- Studs should conform to IRB Law 4.3 and these must be in good condition and without sharp edges or ridges.
- Players must not wear a single stud at the toe of the boot.
- BSI rugby studs are vastly preferable and ok unless completely worn flat. Rubber studs and rubber blades are ok unless very damaged. Football studs are not ideal but the player can continue and play with them if they are not worn or sharp.
- Referees/coaches can and will ask players not to play/train if studs are considered dangerous or likely to cause injury.
- **Only trainers and astro trainers when playing on the Astro turf pitch (if pitches are unplayable training will be on the astro turf)**

Protective Clothing

- Players may wear body armour and protective clothing.
- The RFU does not encourage or discourage the wearing of head guards, body armour or other protective clothing except to recommend that all players wear an appropriate gum shield (made from a dental impression of the players teeth) and shin guards.
- Players/parents should be aware that opinion is divided on the issue of head guards and body armour, which offers obvious protective benefits but may encourage players to enter situations that they would not otherwise entertain.

If you are in any doubt about the safety of any item of kit or clothing please check to make sure the item carries IRB approved logo that signifies that it is safe for use in rugby union activities or the relevant kite mark. If in doubt please ask one of the coaches.



Information for Individual Age Groups

Under 8's

Players in these age groups play a non-contact version of rugby called Tag Rugby. The games and activities taught are designed to introduce the basic concepts of the game and promote running, passing and evasion skills as well as team skills.

Under 10's

For children whose 10th birthday falls within the period 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021.

Players play a modified version of rugby union and are gradually introduced to tackling, scrummaging and the lineout.

Contact is introduced in a controlled and safe way and the emphasis is on learning the basic skills involved in the game.

Players will experience playing in all positions within the teams.

Under 12's

For children whose 12th birthday falls within the period 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021

Players play a modified version of rugby union and are gradually introduced to the competitive lineout and scrum.

Under 13's, 14's & 15's

For children whose 13th, 14th or 15th birthday falls within the period of 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021. Players play the 15-players version of the game subject to amendments made by the RFU.

Activities are controlled by the variations to the law of the game as issued by the RFU. Further details are available from the club or from the RFU. The club recommends that all payers and parents/guardians become familiar with these variations.

Coaches should:

- Avoid overplaying players by using a squad system and never allow injured players to train or play.
- Ensure that enjoyment and fair play come before winning and never coach law violations.
- Never overtly criticize players but provide feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner.

The Club environment:

A Safe environment benefits young players and coaches alike

- All coaches and volunteers must undergo a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure check.
- Coaches will hold (or be working towards) the appropriate RFU qualification and abide by the coaches code of conduct. They will be encouraged to stay-up-to-date on safe coaching practices.
- Records of attendance, consents and accidents will be kept along with contact details in case of emergencies.
- All members of the club shall abide by the club's child protection policy and the procedures for dealing with suspicions of abuse. All matters or concerns should be raised with the club's Child Protection Officer s(CPO) Amanda or Mark Evans.
- Parents/guardians are actively encouraged to become involved with the club and share their knowledge and expertise.



Recognising the signs of abuse

Abuse may occur either within or outside the rugby environment and may manifest itself in the following ways:

Outside the rugby environment –

- Unexplained injury, weight loss or unkempt appearance
- A young player describing abusive acts involving him/her
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or sexually explicit behaviour or sexually explicit language
- Difficulty making friends

NB: It is not the responsibility of coaches or volunteers to deal with abuse outside the rugby environment but it is their duty to report concerns.

Within the rugby environment –

- Continuous negative feedback or the ignoring of effort
- Demanding unrealistic performance or an over emphasis on winning
- Players left without proper supervision or subject to unnecessary cold or heat
- Players exposed to an unacceptable risk of injury
- Bullying by players or coaches or other adults
- Over playing/training or inappropriate physical involvement
- Exposure to alcohol or drugs
- Inappropriate sexual language or touching or exposure to inappropriate sexually explicit material

Child Protection Guidelines

Safeguarding the welfare of our young players is paramount

This document is intended as a guide for those involved in rugby union at Wigton. It introduces an awareness of child abuse in sport and gives ways of recognising the warning signs and acting on concerns.

Child abuse is a term to describe the ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults and often by those they know and trust. There are 4 main areas of abuse to be aware of in a sporting context: -

1. Emotional Abuse

Occurs when adults persistently fail to show due care or where a child may be constantly shouted at or threatened or subject to sarcasm and unrealistic pressure.

2. Neglect

It is a form of abuse that occurs when a child's essential needs for food, warmth and care are not met.

3. Physical Abuse

Occurs when adults and children deliberately inflict injuries, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. It also occurs when an adult gives children alcohol or inappropriate substances or fails to supervise access to these substances.

4. Sexual Abuse

Is the abuse of children by adults who use them to meet their own sexual needs



Due to the unique culture and traditions of the game there may be an increased risk within the rugby union which may give rise to unacceptable behaviour leading to the risk of abuse.

The coaches and volunteers within the club accept that they have a moral and possibly legal responsibility to provide the highest standard of care when welcoming people to Wigton Junior Rugby and the game of Rugby Union.

Further details and guidance can be obtained by referring to the RFU Safeguarding policy from the RFU web site (www.rfu.com)

Club guidelines for good practice

1. Always be publicly open when working with young children.
2. Situations will occur in teaching rugby skills and techniques that require contact to be made with a player. Coaches must tell the player beforehand and ask if they have any objections.
3. Always ensure that the gender of adult supervision is appropriate and that adults work in pairs within the changing area.
4. Male and female helpers should accompany mixed teams.
5. Adults must place the safety and well being of the players above all other considerations.
6. Never spend excessive amounts of time alone with players or take players alone on car journeys or take players to your home.
7. Never encourage inappropriate physical contact including horseplay, permit any inappropriate touching or permit any use of unacceptable or explicit language.
8. Never allow allegations made by a player to go unchallenged or unrecorded or not acted upon.

WIGTON RUFC – PARENT’S CODE:

Parents should:

- 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.
- Be familiar with the teaching and coaching methods used by observing the coaching and training sessions in which their child participates.
- Be aware that the Club 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.
- Be involved with Club activities and share their expertise.
- Share concerns, if they have them, with Club officials.

- Be familiar with the Good Coaches’ Code contained in the Rugby Club. In particular be aware that:

Coaches should recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching players and Coaches should keep winning and losing in perspective, encouraging players to behave with dignity in all circumstances.

- Support coaches in instilling these virtues.
- 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 players’ efforts, rather than winning or losing.
- Be realistic about the 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 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 players both from their own Club and the opposition.
- Respect decisions made by the match officials, even if they appear to make a mistake, and encourage the players to do likewise.

WIGTON RUFC – PLAYERS CODE:

Players should:

- Recognise and appreciate the efforts made by coaches, parents, match officials and administrators in providing 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 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 players feel they are not being treated in a manner that is acceptable, then they should tell an adult either at the Club or outside of the game.
- Play because they 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 themselves and their team – both will then benefit.
- Recognise good play by all players on their team and by their opponents.
- Be a sportsman – win with dignity, lose with grace.
- Play to the IRB Laws of the Game and accept, without question, all referees' decisions even if they appear to make a mistake.
- Control their emotions. Verbal or physical abuse of team mates, opponents, coaches, match officials or spectators is not acceptable.
- Treat all players, as they would like to be treated themselves. Do not interfere with, bully or take advantage of any player.

WIGTON RUFC – COACHES CODE:

Coaches of players should:

- Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching players.
- 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 – think what this implies.
- Keep winning and losing in perspective – encourage players to behave with dignity in all circumstances.
- 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.
- Provide positive verbal feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner to all players, both during coaching sessions and matches.
- Provide a rugby experience that is matched to the players' ages and abilities, as well as their physical and behavioural development.
- Ensure all 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 good supervision of players, both on and off the field.
- Recognise that 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 players U18 to drink alcohol and those U16 to smoke. Coaches should actively discourage both.
- Ensure that their 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 Policy and Procedures for the Welfare of Young People in Rugby Union.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the RFU recommended procedures for taking young people on residential tours at home and abroad.

WIGTON RUFC – MATCH OFFICIAL’S CODE:

Match Officials should:

- Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when officiating players.
- Provide positive verbal feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner during games.
- Emphasise the spirit of the game.
- Appreciate the needs of the players before the needs of the sport.
- Understand the physical and behavioural development of players.
- Be a positive role model – set an example, and as such, comments should be positive and supportive.
- Look to self-improvement eg. Participation in training courses.
- Recognise that the safety of players is paramount.
- Explain decisions – all players are still learning and parents will understand the game better.
- Always penalize foul play.
- Play advantage whenever possible in order to let the game flow.
- Show empathy for the age and ability of players.
- Be consistent and objective.
- Be familiar with the Good Spectators Code and ensure that verbal abuse from players, coaches or spectators is not tolerated and is dealt with by the club officials immediately.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the RFU Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults in Rugby Union policies and procedures as well as those adopted by Wigton RUFC.
- Check that the home club 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.
- Before training sessions and matches check that studs and other clothing are in accordance with the IRB Laws of the Game.

WIGTON RUFC - SPECTATORS CODE:

Spectators should:

- Act as positive role models to all players.
- Be familiar with, and abide by, the RFU Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults in Rugby Union policy and guidance in relation to verbal and emotional abuse.
- Respect guidance from the Club with regard to spectator behaviour.
- Remember children play sport primarily for their own enjoyment, not for that of the spectators.
- Acknowledge good individual and team performance from all players irrespective of the team in which they play.
- Respect match officials' decisions, even if they appear to make a mistake. Remember, they are volunteers providing an opportunity for players to play rugby.
- 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.
- Acknowledge effort and good performance rather than 'to win at all costs'.
- Verbally encourage all players in a positive manner, shouting 'for', not 'at' the players.
- Encourage all players irrespective of their ability and never ridicule any players, regardless of the team in which they play.



I have read and understand the policies and guidelines contained in this information pack, and agree, to abide by the details contained therein

- **PLAYERS SAFETY AND PLAYING KIT**
- **INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUAL AGE GROUPS**
- **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN GUIDELINES**
- **WIGTON RUFC – PARENT’S CODE**
- **WIGTON RUFC – PLAYER’S CODE**
- **WIGTON RUFC – COACHES CODE**
- **WIGTON RUFC – MATCH OFFICIAL’S CODE**
- **WIGTON RUFC – SPECTATOR’S CODE**

I consent to my child travelling by any form of public transport, coach or motor vehicle hired, driven by a Wigton Youth Official to an event in which the team is participating.

I authorise the leader of the party, or any other Wigton Youth Official accompanying the party who may be present, to consent to such medical treatment (including inoculations, blood transfusions or surgery) which in the opinion of a qualified medical practitioner may be necessary during any period of time when my child is with Wigton Youth Rugby and away from direct parental control and direction.

Photography, Video/DVD/Web or other image recording

You may or may not give consent via your website account for photographic or video images of your child to be taken whilst taking part in the activities for Wigton Junior Rugby or for publicity purposes or displays in the club house. I understand that any consent is subject to the policies of Wigton RUFC.

I have read the GDPR policy and accept that some of my child’s details will be used for coaching and game times only as needed

Membership of £55.00 (£58 if paid over four consecutive months) is payable at the start of the season through the website.

This is to cover the insurance of your child. Your child will not be able to participate in any training or any games until this insurance fee has been paid.

