



## Taunton Rugby Football Club Coaches Code Of Conduct

We ask all of our coaches to achieve the minimum standard as soon as possible;

- **E-learning Introduction to Safeguarding** (required to process DBS)
- **Current DBS** (renewed every 3 years)
- **Play It Safe (Safeguarding)**
- **Headcase – Online Concussion Awareness** (annual renewal recommended)
- **Age related courses or E-learning** (available on RFU coursefinder)
- **England Rugby Coaching Award** (minimum of 1 coach per age group in U13+)

➤ All rugby coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person with who they work with, and treat them equally within the context of rugby union. Do not behave in a way that discriminated against gender, race, sexuality or disability.

➤ All rugby coaches must place the physical and emotional wellbeing of all young players above all other considerations, including the development of performance. Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when officiating or coaching young players. Provide verbal feedback in a positive way at all times. Explain decisions – most young players are still learning. The relationship that a rugby coach develops with the players with whom they work MUST be based on mutual trust and respect. Do not overtly criticise young players or use language which may cause the player to lose confidence or self esteem.

➤ All rugby coaches should abide by the Half Game Rule, guaranteeing every player half of a match as a minimum.

<https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/coaching/age-grade-rugby/half-game>

➤ All rugby coaches must recognise that it is illegal for players under the age of 18 to drink alcohol. Do not drink alcohol before you coach, or while you are coaching young players. Do not smoke when you are working with young players and do not engage in any inappropriate contact with young players.

➤ All rugby coaches must encourage young players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance. Do not tolerate verbal abuse or bad language from players or supporters. Be a positive role model. Never at any time, under any circumstances should force be used to check a young players aggressive behaviour towards you or his/her fellow players.

➤ All rugby coaches must recognise that safety is paramount. Ensure that all equipment and facilities are safe and age appropriate. As rugby is a physical game, DO NOT join in, you are too big, this includes not holding tackle bags! However in order to reach or coach certain situations, a degree of physical contact is sometimes necessary. When this arises tell the player beforehand in order to gain their consent. All rugby coaches must ensure that all activities undertaken are appropriate to the age, maturity, experience and ability of the young players. Do not allow a young player to continue playing if you have doubts about their physical or mental fitness to undertake.

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- Do not change or shower in with young players – agree a timetable with the other coaches and use alternate facilities if available. Do not be alone with young players at any time – if a young player comes into the room you are in ensure another adult is present or if they wish to speak in confidence, leave the door open. Do not make sexually explicit remarks to young players even in fun.
- For everyone's protection, do not give a lift to a young player unless there are other young players or adults in the car and the parents are aware.
- DO NOT take a young player to your home. Where mixed teams compete away from home a player should always be accompanied by at least one male and one female adult.
- Do not administer First Aid unless qualified to do so. Any player injured during a match or training session should be treated with extreme care by someone qualified to do so. It is extremely important in the case of neck and back injuries that the player is not moved in any way and if in doubt an ambulance called immediately. Under NO circumstances should a player complaining of neck or back injuries be moved by those unqualified to do so and the use of a stretcher should NEVER be considered.
- Children MUST NOT be left unattended after training/matches and it is the coaches responsibility to contact parents should such a situation arise.
- Coaches must familiarise themselves with Taunton RFC Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons Policy, and know what to do should a safeguarding situation arise. Report in writing to the Club or CSO, behaviour by adults which you feel contravenes RFU Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policies. For example.
- Verbal bullying by coaches/parents/spectators.
  - Physical Abuse by coaches/parents/spectators.
  - Inappropriate or aggressive contact by an adult to a young person.
  - Verbal abuse directed at you by young people or adults.
- If you accidentally hurt a player, or cause distress in any manner, or the player appears to respond in a sexual manner to your actions, or misunderstands / misinterprets something you have done, you must report the incident to the Club Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible. This must also be supported by a brief written statement. Parents will also be informed of the occurrence by the CSO.
- This code of conduct should be read in conjunction with the guidance set by the RFU Player Welfare (RugbySafe), RFU Codes Of Practice & Regulations 9, 15 & 21.

**RFU Codes Of Practice**

<https://rfu.widen.net/s/pdrvtigbdf/231005-age-grade-rugby-codes-of-practice>

**Player Welfare (Rugby Safe)**

<https://www.englandrugby.com/run/player-welfare>

**Regulation 9 (Player Safety)**

[Regulation 9 – Player Safety | Rugby Football Union](#)

**Regulation 15 (Age Grade Rugby)**

[Regulation 15 – Age Grade Rugby | Rugby Football Union](#)

**Regulation 21 (Age Grade Rugby)**

[Regulation 21 – Safeguarding | Rugby Football Union](#)



## **Taunton Rugby Football Club Coaches Code Of Conduct - Refereeing**

When refereeing young players, it is recommended that match officials / coaches refereeing consider the following;

- Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when officiating young players.
- Provide verbal feedback in a positive way during games.
- Appreciate the needs of the players.
- Be a positive role model.
- Recognise that safety is paramount.
- Explain decisions – most young players are still learning.
- Do not tolerate verbal abuse from coaches, players or spectators.
- Do not shower/change in the same area as young players.
- Do not be alone with the young players at any time.
- Do not check studs without the coach being present.
- Do not administer First Aid unless no other qualified First Aider is present.
- Do not allow a young player to continue if you have any doubts about their fitness.
- Do not engage in any inappropriate contact with young players.
- Do not make sexually explicit remarks to young players even in fun.

ALL coaches and volunteers have a responsibility to protect the children from child abuse and themselves from wrongful accusations.





## **Taunton Rugby Football Club Coaches Code Of Conduct – Vigilance**

There are four main types of abuse. Coaches should ensure they are aware of and do not tolerate any of the following;

**NEGLECT** - In a rugby situation neglect may occur when;

- Young players are left alone without proper supervision.
- A young player is exposed to un-necessary heat or cold without fluids or protection.
- A young player is exposed to an unacceptable risk of injury.
- Unexplained change in appearance or injury, illness. Eg. bruising in unusual areas.
- The child is dirty, unkempt or without correct safety equipment  
Eg. Gumshield.

**EMOTIONAL** – In a rugby situation, emotional abuse may occur when;

- Coach or parent provides repeated negative feedback.
- A coach repeatedly ignores a young players efforts to progress.
- Coach or parent repeated demand performance levels above those the young player is capable.
- Spectator shouting negative comments about performance.

**SEXUAL** – in a rugby situation the close proximity of coaches and others to young people provides opportunities for potential abusers to exploit a position of trust to sexually abuse or groom.

**PHYSICAL** – In a rugby situation, physical abuse may occur when;

- Coaches expose young players to exercise/training which disregards the players capabilities.
- Coaches expose young players to injury due to over-playing, over-training or fatigue.
- Coaches expose young players to alcohol, or give them the opportunity to drink alcohol below the legal age.
- Coaches expose young players to performance enhancing drugs and recommend that they take them.

All adults who work with young people are in a position of trust, which has been invested in them by the parents, the sport, the club and by the young people.

In this position of trust it must be recognised that there are certain boundaries in the coach/player relationship that must not be crossed.

This mutual trusting relationship could mean that a child discloses highly sensitive and personal information to you. It is important that this is always handled in the correct manner in order to protect both the child and yourself.

If a young person tells you that someone either in or out of the rugby environment is abusing him or her you should ;

- LISTEN – Do not prompt or add words.
- REASSURE - Make sure they understand telling you was the right thing to do.
- BE HONEST – Explain that you will need to tell someone else in order to help and protect them. Parents/Carers will have to be informed unless doing so could lead to harm.
- SPEED – Immediately share your concerns with the Club Safeguarding Officer or Assistant Club Safeguarding Officer. In their absence contact the RFU Safeguarding Team on 0208 8316655 or the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000.
- RECORD – Accurately record on an incident form (link below) what the child has said to you and what action you have taken. The Club Safeguarding Officer can help you with this.  
<https://webform.clue.co.uk/RFUSafeguarding>
- CONFIDENTIAL – Confidentiality is vital and information MUST ONLY be shared with the Club Safeguarding Officer and nominated officials

For further information please contact the Club Safeguarding Officer

Samantha Wallis – [besafe@tauntonrfc.co.uk](mailto:besafe@tauntonrfc.co.uk)

Document reviewed and amended by  
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