



Introduction to Mini and Junior Rugby at Newbury Rugby Club

Welcome to the Youth Rugby handbook which has been produced to let you know as much as possible about Youth Rugby at Newbury Rugby Club (NRFC).

We are very proud of our reputation as one of the leading Youth Rugby Clubs in the Country. Year on Year we strive to improve our delivery of rugby, ensuring it's safe, fun and competitive to create enjoyable and successful rugby to boys and girls from 5 years through to 16 years with a defined path thereafter to Colts and Senior Rugby.

Rugby Coaching is delivered by our dedicated and experienced coaches who follow the guidelines of the RFU Continuum, which outlines in detail how the RFU require Rugby to be coached and played in the Mini and Youth age groups.

We have numerous mini tournaments with other clubs every year and finish the season with our very successful festivals for both Minis and Junior's. These events always show Newbury Rugby Club at its best and it is something we work tirelessly towards throughout the season and our hard work is often rewarded with success on the pitch.

We are always grateful to our sponsors who help us to fund and manage a membership in excess of 500 players. We are proud to promote Newbury Rugby Clubs Mini and Junior Section as a development pathway for all levels of player.

We hope you find this guide useful, and encourage any feedback you have (good or bad),

We look forward to seeing you at the club soon and enjoy your season!

Dave Smith
Director Youth Rugby NRFC



A Word from the President

A very warm welcome to all of you visiting Monks Lane, the home of Newbury Rugby Football Club.

At Newbury we are very proud of the excellent facilities that we provide and we are equally proud of the strengths and success of our Youth Rugby Section.

Now in its 31st year, our Youth Rugby section has gone from strength to strength and it is the largest section of Newbury Rugby Football Club. Last season the numbers of children participating reached an incredible 530. That is a remarkable number of boys and girls and all the parents who give such tremendous support.

This includes at least one qualified Coach for each squad and a Manager to organise each team. As we all know any Rugby Club couldn't run without all this wonderful voluntary assistance and our Newbury Youth Section has a great number of very committed and dedicated 'mums and dads' who give a lot of their time for the benefit of Newbury RFC.

It was not, of course, like this for Newbury RFC when it was founded in 1928. At that time games were played at St Barts Grammar School and it was not until 1932 that the Club found a permanent home which many of the members thought was the well known public house, The Rokeby Arms. In 1932 Newbury moved to Pinchington Lane but members had to wait until 1958 for a Clubhouse to be built on the site. Most members were still visiting The Rokeby Arms! In 1996 we moved from Pinchington Lane, in a westerly direction passing The Rokeby Arms, and relocated less than one mile away to our present facilities at Monks Lane. It should be noted that, sadly, The Rokeby Arms has now been demolished so there is no excuse to make an early exit from the bars and catering facilities at Newbury Rugby Club!

Apart from Newbury's Youth Rugby, the game is also played at Colts and Senior level. Newbury field not only a well established 1st XV but also other senior teams together with an all-important Colts and Development organisation which is so important for those players making the transition from Junior rugby to the Senior level. Not forgetting the same transition is also there for the girls who can progress through to our successful and enthusiastic Newbury ladies.

At Newbury it is one of our main objectives not only to produce a high standard of enjoyment and rugby from Youth Rugby to the Colts and Senior levels, but especially to provide the opportunities for Newbury 'boys' to progress through the Club and play from Junior to Senior level.

All of us at Newbury wish our Vice Chairman of Mini and Junior Rugby, his Committee and hard working colleagues, another season of success in helping to create our vision of one of continuing development and progression both 'on and off' the field where all members and visitors will enjoy their 'Newbury experience'.

David Smith
President



Newbury Rugby Football Club General information and Guidelines for New and Existing Members

- We have squads at every age group from Under 7 to Under 16. We do not accept children under the age of 5.
- Training takes place on Sunday mornings from 10.15am to 12 noon but this may vary according to your particular coach or manager, so please check timings with them.
- Matches usually take place at the same times. If the match is an away fixture the children are taken to the venue by parents, so this can mean an earlier start. Each manager should have the relevant map or details of how to reach the venue. Sharing lifts is often a good idea.
- We usually allow a new member to have two 'taster sessions' before the parent joins the Club officially so that the child can see if he/she will enjoy the activity. It is important that the membership is in place before a game is played as this ensures insurance for the player. Membership is taken out in the name of an adult rather than the child and in doing so the adult agrees to abide by the Rules & Regulations of Newbury RFC.
- Newbury RFC Kit is available from the Club shop and there is some second hand kit available, although this is increasingly difficult to get hold of. A shirt is the most necessary identifying piece of kit. Shorts and socks need only be navy blue to start with, not necessarily Club sportswear.
- The Children must be accompanied at all times by an appropriate adult as this increases their enjoyment and our social environment! It also ensures that in the unlikely case of injury, there is someone there who can reassure the child. NRFC actively encourages parents to stay and support rather than "drop and go".
- First aid equipment is carried by all managers and Ally Pankhurst – Newbury RFC's Rugby Coordinator - is our designated First Aider at the Club. His mobile number is 07771550494. **We encourage parents to volunteer and qualify in first aid to assist coaches in the age groups.**
- Pitch layout – A map of the pitch layout (see page) is posted at the entrance to the club. This map along with the pitch allocation chart, found on the club information board, lets you know where your age group will be on that day training or playing. This does change sometimes to accommodate special events or unusual weather. **Please check the information board to when you arrive for the activity.**
- Changing facilities – Changing facilities are also allocated each week on the same chart information board and are available for those that require them. Midweek the Youth section change in dedicated changing facilities that are completely separate from the adult changing.
- Clothing – At all ages it is most important to keep warm and dry so please make sure the children are dressed appropriately at all times, remember they can always remove layers. A hat and gloves are often forgotten and these can be absolutely necessary on most winter days.

- Boots – Suitable footwear is required but not necessarily boots, please ask your age groups coach for more information. **Boots with blades must not be worn by players of Newbury RFC Youth Section.**
- Mouth Guards – Are compulsory for U9 to U16 and we strongly recommend for the U7s and U8s. We have an arrangement with OPRO Mouthguards who supply suitably CE marked guards which can be self moulded or 'made to measure'
- We are guided by our Ground Staff in respect of weather and pitch conditions and in periods where they advise playing is not safe we must accept their decision in the interests of **safety first always.**
- **Sign and agree to the Rules and Regulations of Newbury RFC.**

Girls' Rugby (12–18)

Newbury RFC run a separate section for girls between the age of 12 and 18 (from the U12 age group the girls cannot play in the mixed youth teams).

The Club caters for girls who are U11 but they will only be allowed to train; no contact is allowed until they are in the U12 age group.

Girls' rugby started formally as a section during the 2003/04 season and is going from strength to strength with many of the girls playing at County and Regional levels.

Training is at the same time as the boys. The emphasis is on the contact game but we do cater for girls who wish to play more of a tag game. The Girls play games as part of 'cluster' team called the Berkshire Barbarians, joining with Reading and Slough to compete in the regional U15 and U18 leagues.

NRFC is committed to Girls' and Women's Rugby, we develop and support all Girls and Women who wish to play.

For more details please

Contact: Malcolm Darvell
Tel: 07990594575



Mini & Junior Club Rules

Newbury RFC is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all its members. The club believes that it is important that members, coaches, administrators and parents associated with the club should, at all times, show respect and are encouraged to be open at all times and to share any concerns or complaints that they may have about any aspect of the club with the Age Group Manager, or an Officer of the Club ie President, Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer or Vice Chair of Youth Rugby.

As a member of Newbury RFC you are expected to abide by the following rules:

- All members must play within the rules and respect officials and their decisions.
- All members must respect opponents.
- Members should keep to agreed timings for training and competitions or inform their coach or team manager if they are going to be late.
- Members must wear suitable kit – for training and match sessions, as agreed with the coach/team manager.
- Members must pay any fees for training or events promptly.
- Junior members are not allowed to smoke on club premises or whilst representing the club at competitions.
- Junior members are not allowed to consume alcohol or drugs of any kind on the club premises or whilst representing the club.
- Abide by the clubs general rules and regulations.



Coaching Policy of NRFC Mini & Junior Section

Our Objectives:

- Introduce the game in a safe and friendly environment
- Develop the skills of the children progressively - according to their ability, using appropriate coaching methods and in accordance with RFU Guidelines.
- Introduce the Laws of the Game
- Encourage a good standard of behaviour on and off the field
- Encourage fair play and good sportsmanship.
- Encourage respect across age groups whatever players' ability.

The Basics - Do's and Dont's:

- Don't forget that safety is the club's first (and last) consideration
- Do remember that children play rugby for fun
- Do remember they are here for their enjoyment - not yours
- Do give everyone a fair crack of the whip
- Do train all players according to their abilities and in accordance with RFU Coaching Guidelines.
- Don't force players to do things they do not want to do

Child Protection

Do not:

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with young players away from others
- Take young players alone on car journeys, however short
- Take young players to your home

You should never:

- Engage in inappropriate physical contact, including horseplay
- Share a room with a player
- Permit any form of inappropriate touching
- Permit players to use unacceptable or explicit language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a player, even in fun

- Agree to meet a player on your own, outside the context of the normal coaching or mentoring process
- Allow allegations made by a player to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon

Risk Assessment – Our Coaches/Managers will check:

- **Safety of Playing Area:** They will check that the area is safe to use before every session. If there are risks, report them to the Duty Officer.
- **Safety of Kit and Equipment:** They will check that the kit and equipment the players are going to use is safe before every session. If there are risks, report them to the Duty Officer.
- **Attendance Register:** Manager will have an attendance register of all players present at every session/match.
- **Players' Medical Information:** All Managers must have details of all players' pre-existing medical conditions with you at all sessions, including those who are "sampling" rugby.
- **Players' Contact Details:** All Managers must have contact details for all players with the age group at all times, including for those "sampling" rugby.

Skills and Methods

The club encourages coaches to find and develop coaching methods that are appropriate to their players and to the age group. From time to time the club issues guidance to coaches. The key is that training must be safe and fun, and the sessions must be varied to keep the players interested

Coaching and Playing: Coaches will ensure they take due care in:

- The avoidance of overplaying of players
- Using a squad system
- Ensuring development comes first, winning second
- When coaching contact skills ensure safety first
- Ensure players over all welfare is considered and if a coaching team feel a player is not fit to partake in an activity reserve the right to withdraw the player for their own safety and that of others.
- Never allowing injured players to train or play
- Ensuring all equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate
- Never coaching law violations
- Never overtly criticising players - their confidence is paramount.

The following is provided to all volunteers, in addition to more general guidance and advice. The contents should be seen a compulsory for all.

Volunteers

- Volunteers must be properly supervised, they cannot:
 - Assist at training until they have completed a Volunteer Details Form
 - Be left in sole charge until they have been CRB checked



Newbury RFC Codes of Conduct

The Good Players Code of Behaviour:

- Play to Win but **NOT** at all costs. Winning is the object of playing any game but playing safely and for fun is more important.
- Recognise and appreciate the work of Coaches, Match Officials, Managers and Parents in giving the opportunity for you to play and enjoy safe and fun rugby.
- Understand the values of loyalty, respect and commitment to team mates and adults.
- Understand that as a young player (s) you should be treated in a manner that is acceptable and you have the right to tell an adult either at the Rugby Club or elsewhere that if this is not happening.
- Observe the Laws of the Game. All games need rules to guide them. Without laws, there would be chaos. Make an effort to learn the laws, so you understand the game better. This makes you a better player. The laws are designed to make the game safe and fun to play and fun to watch. By sticking to the laws, you will enjoy the game more.
- Respect Opponents, Team mates, Referees, Officials and Spectators. Fair Play means respect. Without opponents there can be no game. They have the same rights as you have, including the right to be respected. Your team mates are your colleagues. You form a team in which all members are equal. Referees are there to maintain discipline and Safe and Fair Play. Always accept their decisions without arguing, and help them to help you enjoy the game more. Officials are also part of the game and must be respected accordingly. Spectators give the game atmosphere. They want to see the game played fairly, but must also behave fairly themselves.
- Accept Defeat with Dignity. Nobody wins all the time. You win some, you lose some. Learn to lose graciously. Don't seek excuses for defeat. Genuine reasons will always be self-evident. Congratulate the winners with good grace. Don't blame the referee or anyone else. Determine to do better next time. Good losers earn more respect than bad winners.

- Promote the Interests of Rugby. Think how your actions may affect the image of your club, your friends, coaches and parents. Encourage other people to watch it or play it fairly. Help others to have as much fun from Rugby as you do. Be an ambassador for the club and the game.
- **Most importantly be safe, have fun and play rugby to the level you feel you can.**

Parents and Carers Code

We would like all players and spectators to abide by the following rules and most of all have fun.

Parents and Carers are ENCOURAGED to:

- Respond promptly to e-mails sent out by coaches concerning the availability of players
- Be familiar with the teaching and coaching methods used by observing the sessions in which your child participates.
- Be involved with club activities and share your expertise.
- Share concerns, if you have them, with club officials.
- Encourage your child to learn the rules and play within them.
- Discourage unfair play and arguing with officials.
- Help your child to recognise good performance, not just results.
- Never force your child to take part in sport.
- Set a good example by recognising fair play and applauding the good performances of both teams..
- Never punish or belittle a child for losing or making mistakes.
- Publicly accept officials' judgements.
- Support your child's involvement and help them to enjoy their sport.
- Use correct and proper language at all times.
- Stay off the pitch

Parents and Carers 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.

- **Spectators Code**

Spectators SHOULD:

- Spectators are a very important part of the game and shall at all times conform to accepted standards of good sportsmanship and behaviour.
- Remember children play sport for their enjoyment not yours.
- Acknowledge good individual and team performance from all youngsters irrespective of the team for whom they play.
- Respect match officials' 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.
- **Respect the RFU Code of Conduct for Spectators.**

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 with regard to spectator behaviour.

Equity and Fairness Policy

- NRFC Mini and Junior Section is committed to ensuring that equity is incorporated across all aspects of its development. In doing so it acknowledges and adopts the following Sport England definition of sports equity:
- "Sports equity is about fairness in sport, equality of access, recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. It is about changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure it becomes equally accessible to everyone in society".
- The club is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy their sport in an environment free from threat of intimidation, harassment and abuse.
- All club members have a responsibility to oppose discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity. The club will deal with any incidence of discriminatory behaviour seriously. All incidents or complainants should be addressed in writing to the Secretary and the Child Protection Officer.