Code of Conduct



Wells RFC

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INTRODUCTION

At Wells RFC, we operate in line with the core values:

Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship.

We are committed to developing a culture that lives and breathes the core values, is free of abuse, discrimination and harm, and where everyone feels safe and able to raise any concerns they have.

We are committed to developing an inclusive culture where it is safe and acceptable for everyone involved in rugby to raise concerns about any unacceptable practice, behaviour, wrongdoing or misconduct. This Code of Conduct and our policies and procedures, and the terms and conditions of any volunteer or employment agreement with the club, provide a framework in which clubs and participants can be empowered to create safe, respectful and enjoyable environments.

Everyone who is involved in rugby, whether as a player, coach, parent, spectator, or volunteer, is expected to uphold the Core Values.

THE CODE

This Code has been adopted by Wells RFC and will be referred to in this Code as the “club”. We aim to ensure that we can operate fairly, appropriately and in the best interests of everyone at the club, including its children and young people. This Code sets out the behavioural standards that members and other participants of the Club must meet.

This Code is a key part of our process for dealing with complaints of poor conduct. It sets the level of expectations when determining any need for formal or informal disciplinary procedures.

RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS

Everyone who participates in activities with the club has the right:

1) To enjoy safe participation in rugby, without fear of abuse or harm
2) To always be treated with respect and dignity
3) Not to be pressured into training, competing, or participating against their will
4) To be treated in line with the Core Values, as well as the expected values of the club
5) Not to be discriminated against based on their age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy or maternity
6) To challenge poor conduct and discrimination, both when witnessed and experienced
7) To make a complaint and/or raise a concern, and for it to be taken seriously and acted upon under this Code of Conduct

CONDUCT

Respectful conduct in rugby is paramount in creating a safe and inclusive culture where children and adults can develop in the sport. Inappropriate behaviour has a detrimental impact on the enjoyment and development of participants, and as such we expect the Core Values to be demonstrated by everyone.

The conduct described in this Code extends to conduct on the touchline, in and around the Club, and on all online platforms, including messaging and social media platforms. Good conduct on the touchline is expected at the Club from all participants.

To help the participants at the Club understand what is expected of them when they're taking part in rugby activities, we have outlined a list of good conduct, which is encouraged, and poor conduct, which is unacceptable, and contravene the Core Values. This list is not exhaustive, and we would encourage all participants to familiarise themselves with these behaviours.

BEHAVIOUR WE ENCOURAGE AT THE CLUB

Members of the club and any other participants are expected and encouraged to always:

Treatment of others

- Treat others with respect and dignity, including all officials, spectators, coaches and players, whether from the club or the opposition
- Treat each other fairly, and never discriminate, or show preferential treatment towards people, based on their characteristics [1]
- Be magnanimous in victory and gracious in defeat
- Be welcoming to everyone, whether they be children or adults
- Make sure feedback is positive and constructive and avoid negative criticism
- Accept responsibility for their actions and conduct

Challenging and reporting

- Never tolerate abusive, threatening or intimidating behaviour towards yourself or others. All instances of harassment and abusive or threatening behaviour should be challenged and reported to the club. This includes conduct on match days and non-match days.
- Work together to create a positive and welcoming club environment, where people feel confident in reporting and challenging poor conduct, and take responsibility for acting as role models and demonstrating best practice behaviours
- Never tolerate cheating, manipulation of competition, use of prohibited substances or methods, or unsportsmanlike conduct and take responsibility for setting good examples to players regarding these issues
- Encourage a healthy environment, where skill development, enjoyment and teamwork are promoted

[1] Here, “characteristics” refer to the protected characteristics listed in the Rights of Individuals section, point 5.

BEHAVIOUR WE ENCOURAGE AT THE CLUB

Members of the club and any other participants are expected and encouraged to always:

Working with children and adults at risk

- Be friendly, professional and positive role models to children and young people. For example, they should not be smoking/vaping or consuming alcohol when coaching and/or working with children or young people or engaging in any other behaviour that would be considered inappropriate
- Ensure that participants of the club are aware of their responsibilities to safeguard children and young people, and conduct themselves appropriately with other affiliates of the club
- Remember that children and young people get a wide range of benefits from taking part in rugby, and participation should not be centred around winning games but enjoying the sport and developing skills and fitness
- Take ownership in ensuring that they are up to date with all club rules, policies and procedures, and are always in keeping with the values of the club

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR AT THE CLUB

Members of the club and any other participants must never:

Treatment of others

- Engage in any abusive, threatening or bullying behaviour towards anyone at the club, or allow this behaviour to go unchecked and unreported
- Use inappropriate language towards participants of the club, including, but not limited to; sexually suggestive behaviour/language, unwanted/unnecessary physical contact and language or conduct intending to intimidate or threaten individuals
- Challenge, or encourage others to challenge, the decision of any match official
- Enter the field of play, unless instructed otherwise by the match officials
- Use any form of physical force or punishment towards players, spectators or anyone else
- Engage in any form of behaviour that may bring the club, or the RFU, into disrepute. This includes any form of behaviour that is not in line with the Core Values

Challenging and reporting

- Attempt to silence, intimidate or disregard, anyone who wishes to raise a concern regarding safeguarding, welfare, discipline, cheating or poor conduct

Working with children and adults at risk

- Allow allegations or comments made by a child or adult at risk regarding either safeguarding or welfare concerns to be disregarded or go unrecorded
- Allow children or young people to engage in inappropriate behaviour amongst one another, including but not limited to; bullying behaviour, sexually suggesting behaviour or language, intimidating or violent behaviour or discriminatory behaviour/language
- Allow children to carry out rugby activities unsupervised while at the club
- Use their position or influence to form inappropriate relationships with any child or adult at risk
- Use any type of physical or corporal punishment to discipline a child or adult at risk

WHO THE CODE APPLIES TO

This Code applies to all individuals who participate at the club, referred to throughout the document as “participants”, including anyone who:

- holds a role with the club, whether that is paid or unpaid; or
- is responsible for the care and supervision of a child or adult at risk who attends the club; or
- is involved with the club through a social aspect, such as a customer, member or spectator; or
- attends any club activity, whether that be on club premises or not, including spectating home and away matches.

The Code applies to participants whether or not club activity is taking place on club property, including away games and tours.

REPORTING AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- Report any behaviour you see, witness, or experience, that upsets you, or makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, to either the Club Safeguarding Officer, the Club Disciplinary Officer, the club Committee or the RFU
- Any breach of this Code may be dealt with in accordance with the club's own disciplinary process.
- Any conduct which is also a breach of RFU or other Regulations may also be reported to the club's Constituent Body and/or to the RFU.

If you wish to raise any concerns with the RFU, you can also email: speakup@rfu.com or visit the Speak Up page on the RFU website.

RELEVANT POLICIES

For further information about expected behaviours and other processes, this Code should be read in conjunction with the following policies and RFU Regulations:

- RFU Speak Up Policy
- Regulation 17 (Anti-corruption and betting)
- Regulation 19 (Discipline)
- Regulation 20 (Anti-doping)
- Regulation 21 (Safeguarding)
- RFU Safeguarding Children Policy
- RFU Safeguarding Adults Policy
- RFU Safeguarding Complaints Policy