



RUGBY CAMPS – A SIMPLE GUIDE FOR ORGANISERS

A Summer Camp is a short, multi-activity opportunity for young people to enjoy a sporting experience in the off-season with emphasis on social, recreational enjoyment and is an opportunity for young players to experience the game in a different way from the usual activity of the rugby season. A rugby camp can offer the opportunity for new and existing players the chance to participate in general sports activity or simply team-building and bonding. **Summer Camps however, are not an excuse to run weekly training or fitness sessions in preparation for the new season and activity must be run in line with all elements of Regulation 15 (Age Grade Rugby) including mixed age and Out of Season Activity.**

The RFU is keen to help those staging rugby camps to learn from best practice and put on safe, quality, enjoyable and appropriate programmes for young people playing or interested in playing the game. We have a number of models of good practice to share and below are six important elements to consider. Working to these leads to the positive experience, which encourages players and parents to keep returning to the game.

1. Approvals.

The first port of call is to gain approval to run the summer camp from your Constituent Body. In so doing, you will need to demonstrate that the proposed camp adheres to RFU Regulation 15 (www.englandrugby.com/regulations) along with the key considerations listed below.

2. Key Contact Name and Details

This is an important role with ultimate responsibility in ensuring the camp follows safeguarding best practice, RFU regulations and ensures that the programme is enjoyable and player centred. The key contact should be visible before, during and after the camp, have the right skills and credibility for the role and be experienced in organising, promoting and leading the team of people involved in making the camp safe and appropriate for the participants.

3. Coaches, Qualifications and DBS

Coaching is one of the main elements of a rugby camp. All coaches should be a minimum of UKCC/RFU Level 1 qualified and that they have a current enhanced RFU DBS - good practice says "no DBS, no coach". This is no different from standard practice in clubs throughout the season. A coach of at least Level 2 standard should devise, lead and supervise the coaching programme to ensure that it is pitched at the right level and coached at the right quality for the players. The coach to player ratio should be 1:10.

4. Welfare and Safeguarding Plan

A safeguarding plan for the summer camp should be produced; again this is no different from club activity and what we all expect from responsible adults when we hand over our children. In this document the following should be addressed.

- Who is your welfare and safeguarding lead? Is this person clearly identifiable to all involved?
- How will you ensure the young people are safe?
- Who will be acting in loco parentis?
- What happens if there is an accident or injury?

5. Risk Assessment

Many rugby camps, especially those run outside the season or in holidays, take place when the venue is otherwise unused or at a venue that is not usually a rugby union venue. Organisers need to carry out a full risk assessment of the facilities to ensure that the camp has all the amenities on hand that make it a safe, high quality experience for everyone concerned. In addition, a risk assessment of your programme and plans is vital to make sure you have all bases covered in every eventuality.

6. Delivery Programme and Timetable

Rugby camps often include very mixed groups. It is vital to take account of age, ability, fitness, gender, and player expectations. Safety is a prerequisite and progression should be at the core. Does your delivery plan cater for this? Does it ensure all those involved have the right balance of play and rest, contact and non-contact (especially in hot, dry summer months on rock hard grounds), intense and light activity, competition and development? If you have young players, are you coaching to the new Rules of Play and within the Age Grade Regulations?

If in doubt please seek guidance from your RFU Rugby Development Officer.