



**RFU**

# **RETURN TO RUGBY ACTIVITY**

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## **RUGBY CAMPS GUIDE**

**For Organisers within the Game & 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Party/Commercial Providers**

**Dated: June 2021**

# **RUGBY CAMPS GUIDE** (For Organisers)

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This updated and consolidated guidance is for organisers at member clubs, educational institutions, Constituent Bodies (CB) and 3<sup>rd</sup> Party/Commercial providers. There is separate guidance for those that are responsible for approvals (mainly CBs).

This guidance is in 3 sections:

- a) Rugby Camp Expectations
- b) Rugby Camp Checklist
- c) Summer Activity Framework 2021

It will support anyone organising and delivering a rugby camp at any time and specifically during the summer of 2021 when out-of-season regulations have been changed due to the impact of Covid-19. We strongly recommend all organisers to use this guide as the template for their Rugby Camp activity.

***Please note, all activity and regulations are dependent upon progress of the government 4-step Roadmap throughout 2021 and potentially beyond. All rugby activity must remain in line with this and therefore modifications will be made to the information in this guide if required.***

# 1. Rugby Camp Expectations

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A Rugby Camp is a short, multi-activity opportunity for young people to enjoy a sporting experience outside of the usual in-season rugby programme. Taking place mostly in half terms and academic holiday periods, the emphasis is on social, recreational enjoyment and 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 to participate in general sports activity or simple team building and bonding. However, they are not an excuse to extend the playing season, to overburden players or to run over-ambitious fitness programmes.

All activity must be run in line with all elements of Regulation 15 (Age Grade Rugby) including mixed age and Out of Season Activity. See section 3 for specifics regarding Summer 2021 activity.

The RFU is keen to help those staging rugby camps to put on safe, quality, enjoyable and appropriate programmes for young people playing or interested in playing the game. The expectations related to childcare, safeguarding, quality of activity and player safety/welfare are no different from what we do during weekly rugby activity.

The fact a rugby camp may take place at a non-traditional rugby time of the week, month or year is not an excuse to relax on these. If anything, they are even more important with the rugby infrastructure at the venue likely to be less accessible and the time the players are involved being greater.

## **Rugby Camps run by 3<sup>rd</sup> Party/Commercial Providers:**

There are a number of commercial providers beyond the RFU membership running Rugby Camp activity throughout the year. Clubs and institutions will sometimes have 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Commercial organisations run Rugby Camp activities at their venue. It is essential that all the information in this Guide is still followed, so forwarding on the document is a good idea, as they will not be on the same game communication channels.

Our experience shows most 3<sup>rd</sup> Party/Commercial providers want to align completely with the regulations, practices and guidance of the National Governing Body for rugby in England. This ensures they show the quality of delivery, a safety-first focus and are considering their risk exposure and liabilities as a business.

In the past, some operators have not followed the regulation and approval processes. The RFU strongly encourage and will promote that all parents check an activity is fully approved before booking their children onto a Rugby Camp. If you are one of these providers, you should expect a higher degree of scrutiny on your application, as you will be less known to the approver as those from within the game.

As business entities, 3<sup>rd</sup> Party/Commercial organisations will also need to have their own insurance and be liable for activities they are running. This is also something to check is all in order beforehand.

We highly recommend that any club/institution host of a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party/Commercial camp check that the provider has addressed everything in full and met the approval, quality and safeguarding expectations you would have for your regular activities. As mentioned above, most 3<sup>rd</sup> Parties will welcome this scrutiny to ensure they are doing the right thing and to demonstrate their credibility.

Some clubs have asked commercial providers to sign a delivery/lettings agreement in the past. This has proved useful to both parties in confirming commitments and that the provider is responsible for all areas of delivery before, during and after staging a fun, high quality Rugby Camp for everyone.

## 2. Rugby Camp Checklist

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There are important elements to consider when planning and delivering a Rugby Camp. Working to these demonstrates rugby's focus on player welfare and safety and encourages players and parents to keep returning to the game.

It is essential that the lead delivery organisation takes full accountability for implementing these; in the case of a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party/Commercial provider on a club/institution site this is their responsibility.

The longer the Rugby Camp, the more important it is that there is a clear and detailed plan covering these areas. When the camp involves an overnight residential element, safeguarding in particular becomes crucial.

### a) Approvals

The first port of call is to gain approval from your CB to run the Rugby Camp. In so doing, you will need to demonstrate that the proposed camp adheres to RFU Regulation 15 (see [www.englandrugby.com/regulations](http://www.englandrugby.com/regulations)).

CBs will have their own process for approvals, available on their CB website. While there may be some differences between CBs, the core of their process will be consistent across the CB network. Approval is delegated to CBs so they can apply their local knowledge of the playing programme and population and the venues involved.

An application for approval will require clear information about the key considerations listed below. It is essential that approval is applied for as early as possible in the planning process. The CB will be able to provide advice related to a planned Rugby Camp and ensure that it both aligns with the local playing calendar and the regulations.

For 3<sup>rd</sup> Party/Commercial providers, approval is required from the CB/county body where your camp is running. If you are staging a Rugby Camp in more than one county, this approval is required from each CB involved.

### b) Key Contact Name and Details

The key contact 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.

### c) Coaches, Qualifications and DBS

Coaching is one of the main elements of a rugby camp. A coach who at least holds the England Rugby Coaching Award or previously RFU Level 2 Award 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.

All coaches should be RFU trained/qualified to Kids First Contact, RFU Level 1 Award or equivalent. Organisers

must ensure their staffing complies with the requirements of the RFU's DBS process. This is no different from standard practice in clubs, schools and colleges throughout the season and essential with the contact time between participants and staff involved.

The content of the sessions must be appropriate to rules played by the age group of the players and provide a good balance of activity and rest. If the Rugby Camp is out of season, the regulations must be followed which define permitted activities. The coaching arrangements, including the recommended adult to child ratio for an age group, should meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety.

All coaches should display high standards of behaviour. The coaches should provide a child centered rugby experience whilst adhering to the Core Values of Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship.

3<sup>rd</sup> Party/Commercial providers will often use semi-professional/professional players to coach on their camps, sometimes from overseas. It is vital to remember that high quality playing skills are significantly different from high quality coaching and safeguarding skills; and that these individuals should also satisfy all the requirements outlined above.

#### **d) Safeguarding Plan**

A safeguarding plan for the Rugby Camp should be produced; again this is no different from all rugby activity and what we all expect from responsible adults when we hand over our children. It should be developed with reference to RFU Safeguarding Policy, RFU Safeguarding Toolkit, RFU Regulation 21 and RFU Regulation 15 in addition to the organisation's own Safeguarding Policy.

The purpose of the plan, in conjunction with risk assessments, is to ensure that children are safe at the camp. Some questions to consider:

- Who is your safeguarding lead? Is this person clearly identifiable to all involved?
- Do you have contact details for parents/carers?
- What happens if there is an accident or injury? Has consent been obtained, in writing, for emergency medical treatment in the absence of a parent/carer? (See Section e)
- Has photography consent been obtained?
- How will you manage the use of the facilities (eg. changing rooms, showers, outdoor areas) with a potential mixed age/gender group or other public usage on the site?
- Do you have the correct ratio of adults to children?
- Are organisers and staff able to demonstrate good safeguarding understanding throughout the camp?
- What is the plan in case of extreme weather conditions?
- Do parents/carers have an opportunity to discuss any non-rugby related issues which may affect their child's participation e.g. any child protection issues or other issues of additional vulnerability?
- Will children who have additional vulnerabilities (for example dyslexia, autism, learning or physical disability) be able to participate without fear of any discriminatory behaviour?

If your Rugby Camp includes a residential element, then the safeguarding plan should be further enhanced. The principles and practices outlined in the RFU Touring with Children are a good place to start and can be found on the safeguarding section of the England Rugby website – see below.

Further information relating to safeguarding, including the RFU Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Toolkit, is available on <https://www.englandrugby.com/governance/safeguarding>. It is imperative that anyone running a Rugby Camp should be up to date with all of this information.

## **e) First Aid Provision & Player Welfare**

Any Rugby Camp and other rugby activities should have the appropriate first aid/immediate care provision in place. There should be an appointed first aid lead for the camp/activity and organisers need to have plans in place to ensure provision is covered should a coach/staff member need to attend to an injury/incident.

The level of provision for a specific camp/event will depend on the level/type of activity and be determined as part of the activity and venue risk assessment. The provision should comply with the RFU's First Aid/Immediate Care Provision Guidelines.

Rugby Camp and other rugby activity organisers should have a medical emergency action plan in place and have a process for recording injuries/incidents. Prior to the camp/activity, the organiser should also request that parents/carers provide details of any relevant medical information, emergency contact details and consent (in writing/via an online form) for emergency medical treatment in the absence of a parent/carer. There should be a process in place to ensure that any medical information is stored/recorded appropriately and securely.

Rugby Camp and other rugby activity organisers should ensure that coaches, first aiders and staff members are aware of the HEADCASE concussion guidance, including the 'if in doubt, sit them out' principle and ensure that parents/carers are informed of any suspected concussions and the Return to Play programme.

For more information on the HEADCASE concussion guidance and Return to Play visit <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/playing/headcase>.

More information on general player welfare guidance and best practice is available on <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/playing/player-welfare-rugby-safe>.

## **f) 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 coaching and activity programme and health and safety plans are vital to make sure you have all bases covered in every eventuality.

RFU Risk Assessment advice and a tool for completing a rugby risk assessment for your activity is available at <http://englandrugbyinsurance.co.uk/risk-assessment-tool>.

For 3<sup>rd</sup> Party/Commercial providers who may be running camps at different locations, it is important that a risk assessment is venue specific, not generic. Approvers will review this.

## **g) 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 Rules of Play and within the Age Grade Regulations?

## **Additional Support**

The RFU Codes of Practice provide information on how to ensure enjoyable and safe rugby experiences and environments. This includes information related to Rugby Camps.

We recommend taking a look on <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/coaching/age-grade-rugby/codes-of-practice>.

# RUGBY CAMPS CHECKLIST

(based on Age Grade Codes of Practice)



**1. Am I clear on the rationale for running a rugby camp? Is it player-centred and does it support player development rather than fitness training in preparation for the new season?**

**2. Have I ensured that the very young participants are not only attending for parental convenience but also for their development and enjoyment; and is the programme of activities suitable for the child?**

**3. Am I following the Code of Practice concerning the maximum training times per age group (Code 2) and mixed age grades (Code 5)?**

**4. Have I received approval from the Constituent Body (CB) or County Schools Union (CSU) in which my camp is located?**

**5. Is everyone notified about the Key Contact who has overall responsibility for the camp? Are their names and contact details visible before, during and after the camp?**

**6. Are all coaches qualified with a current enhanced DBS and do I have at least one ERCA/Level 2 coach to devise, supervise and lead the coaching programme?**

**7. Have I made sure that coaches are not working in isolation and with appropriate supervision in case of injury or something unanticipated?**

**8. Have I scheduled a range of activities in line with the RFU Out of Season? Is there an appropriate balance of play and rest? Does the plan have player development at its centre?**

**9. Is there a safeguarding plan in place, with a safeguarding lead? Is there a first aid plan in place, with a first aid lead?**

**10. Have I completed a risk assessment for the camp and each of the venues that will be used?**



### 3. Summer Activity Framework 2021

There have been a number of changes to the Age Grade regulations, as a result of Covid-19. These relate to the end of the 2020-21 season, the out-of-season period in 2021 and the 2021-22 season.

All of the changes are outlined in detail in the Age Grade Changes document. This can be found in the On-Field Guidance of the Return to Rugby page at <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/running-your-club/coronavirus/return-to-rugby>.

Included are changes to the activity permitted in the summer of 2021; the out-of-season period. The normal regulations have been suspended for the summer and an activity framework which enables more activity in a safe way to take place has been put in place for June to August activity.



## RETURN TO RUGBY SUMMER ACTIVITY GUIDE

@AgeGradeRugby @ERrugbycoach @englandrugbycoach  
     
**APRIL 2021**

|                                                                                                                                                             |                           | JUNE                                                          | JULY                                                        | AUGUST                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>TRAINING</b>                                                                                                                                             | <b>FREQUENCY</b>          | 1-2 SESSIONS PER WEEK (INC GAME)                              | 1-2 SESSIONS PER WEEK (INC GAME)                            | 1-3 SESSIONS PER WEEK (INC GAME)                                                                        |
|                                                                                                                                                             | <b>INTENSITY</b>          | LOW – MEDIUM                                                  | MEDIUM                                                      | MEDIUM - HIGH                                                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                                             | <b>TYPE</b>               | GENERAL FITNESS AND SKILLS<br>MAX 20 MINUTES CONTACT PER WEEK | RUGBY FITNESS AND SKILLS<br>MAX 30 MINUTES CONTACT PER WEEK | POSITION/ GAME SPECIFIC SKILLS<br>MAX 40 MINUTES CONTACT PER WEEK<br>MAX 20 MINUTES CONTACT PER SESSION |
|                                                                                                                                                             | <b>TIME</b>               | 45 – 60 MINUTES + ACTIVATE                                    | 45 – 75 MINUTES + ACTIVATE                                  | 45 – 90 MINUTES + ACTIVATE                                                                              |
| <b>FIXTURES</b>                                                                                                                                             | <b>TAG</b>                | U7 – U18 BOYS & GIRLS                                         | U7 – U18 BOYS & GIRLS                                       | U7 – U18 BOYS & GIRLS                                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                                                             | <b>READY4RUGBY</b>        | U9 – U18 BOYS & GIRLS                                         | U9 – U18 BOYS & GIRLS                                       | U9 – U18 BOYS & GIRLS                                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                                                             | <b>X RUGBY</b>            | X                                                             | U14 - U18 BOYS<br>U15 & U18 GIRLS                           | U12 - U18 BOYS<br>U13, U15 & U18 GIRLS                                                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                             | <b>ADAPTED FORMAT</b>     | X                                                             | X                                                           | U14 – 18 BOYS<br>U15 & 18 GIRLS                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                                             | <b>FIXTURES/FESTIVALS</b> | 1 X FIXTURE/FESTIVAL PER FORTNIGHT                            | 1 X FIXTURE/FESTIVAL PER FORTNIGHT                          | 3 X FIXTURE/FESTIVAL                                                                                    |
| THIS SHOWS THE MAXIMUM ACTIVITY PERMITTED EACH MONTH. FESTIVALS ARE LIMITED TO A MAXIMUM OF 4 TEAMS. ALL MATCHES ARE FRIENDLIES DUE TO BEING OUT OF SEASON. |                           |                                                               |                                                             |                                                                                                         |

Please see the dedicated Summer Activity page at <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/running-your-club/coronavirus/summer-activity> for all of the details.

**ALL Age Grade activity** must follow the Summer Activity Framework to remain within regulation. This includes Rugby Camp activity throughout June to August 2021.

Summer Rugby Camps must observe **ALL current social distancing and facility requirements**, to keep everyone involved safe from transmission risk and to ensure rugby supports the easing of lockdown.

These are covered in full at <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/running-your-club/coronavirus/return-to-rugby> and the Helpdesk FAQs at <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/running-your-club/club-support-centre/helpdesk-faqs>.

## **a) Applying the Summer Activity Guide to Rugby Camps**

The volume, intensity, type and length of rugby activity in a Rugby Camp must align to the guide as closely as possible. This is no different to a normal summer where the regulations for out-of-season activity must be applied with the defined content and scope of activity being appropriate for the age of the players.

### **Frequency and Time**

The rugby content of a camp can include the total time permitted under the Summer Activity Framework for a week.

In June, up to two sessions of up to an hour each are allowed per week. Therefore, in a June Rugby Camp, 2 hours of active rugby training can be included over the period of the camp. This increases to 2½ hours in July and 4½ hours in August to ensure alignment with the Summer Guide.

This does not include the Activate warm up time which can be added on top, as well as non-rugby activity.

We acknowledge that for Camps longer than 1 or 2 days, this can spread the rugby element out thinly. This is not vastly different from the usual out-of-season regulations which still require the regulations on individual training session time and daily training time to be followed. However, we need to recognize this and some flexibility to enable a good basic amount of rugby activity to take place each day/half day is appropriate.

Approvers will support this daily base level of rugby activity but will still look for a balance with other types of activity within the camp programme. The checks and balances in your safeguarding and coaching programme risk assessments should demonstrate how you will manage this.

Please see the Balance section below on how to build a programme around the physical rugby activity of the camp.

### **Intensity and Type**

The level of intensity of the activity in a Rugby Camp can increase as the summer progresses towards the new season in September. This is as defined in the Guide and designed to support the gradual return to rugby in September.

Contact training is permitted at all age groups who play contact rugby. This is less restrictive than a usual summer and must be applied with player safety always at the forefront of the plan. However, contact activity must be to the length of time per week defined in the Summer Activity Guide; from 20 minutes in June rising to 40 minutes in August.

### **Balance**

The key to applying the guide in a Summer Rugby Camp is balance. As per the introduction to this guide, a Rugby Camp is not a high-intensity training or playing environment.

While rugby is at its core, a variety of activity in the programme is essential. This will maintain interest and engagement by younger, less experienced participants and support understanding/development in older,

more experienced players.

A good programme will ensure a balance of activities, so we highly recommend designing your timetable to include all elements of the following list. This will also help with ensuring the rugby element is in line with regulations, both in a normal year and in summer 2021.



### Key Links:

[RFU Regulations \(Reg 15 – Age Grade & Reg 21 – Safeguarding\)](#)

[RFU Safeguarding](#)

[HEADCASE Concussion Toolkit](#)

[RugbySafe Webpages](#)

[Risk Assessment Tool](#)

[Age Grade Codes of Practice](#)

[Return to Rugby and Age Grade Changes](#)

[Summer Activity Framework 2021](#)

[Helpdesk FAQs](#)

