

DEVIZES RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



Affiliated member of
Dorset & Wilts. RFU

Member of the RFU
and England Rugby

Devizes RFC Academy – Policy Document

Aim

The aim of the Devizes RFC Academy is to provide a pathway for players to maximise their potential and transition successfully into senior club rugby.

Scope

The Academy Policy applies to the manager, coaches and players within the U16 and Colts (U17/U18) age groups.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to lay down guidance to all interested parties, predominantly those directly involved in Academy rugby at Devizes RFC, in relation to the general conduct, approach, rules, standards and commitments of the Academy.

Objectives

The objectives of the Devizes RFC Academy are:

- To fulfil the rugby and athletic potential of the individual player
- Adherence to RFU Regulation 15.5 and the Age Grade Code of Practice
- Create a structured environment for coaching to allow Academy players to train together
- To raise the profile of Colts rugby and retain players at this age group by making player participation in the Academy an aspiration for all junior rugby players at Devizes
- To provide rugby for players whose clubs cannot offer Colts rugby and recruit players new to the game

Structure

The structure of the Academy is as follows:

Academy Role
Head
Team Manager/Admin
Fixtures
Coach (U16s)
Coach (Colts)
First Aider

Safeguarding and Supervision

All players within the Academy are deemed to be Children under RFU Safeguarding principles and guidance therefore normal Club safeguarding policy for adults involved in the Academy apply. RFU Regulation 15 applies to all Academy players.

Specific additional Supervisory policy statements include:

- Any Academy player playing up with a Senior team will be offered the opportunity to have separate changing facilities

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- Coaches are to ensure that Academy standards of behaviour are established and maintained, particularly when in social situations
- When in a Clubhouse where alcohol is served, a suitable responsible adult will maintain supervision of Academy player behaviours, particularly of those who have not yet reached the age of 18

Playing Up/Playing Down Assessments

The Devizes RFC Academy will fully meet the requirements outlined in RFU Regulation 15.5 and 15.6 in relation to playing up/down and playing Adult rugby. The Academy will also follow the guidance outlined in the RFU Code of Practice 4 (An Individual Playing Up and Down).

Assessments will be completed and reviewed annually in accordance with RFU policy. These assessments will be detailed, appropriate and suitable, tailored to the individual and signed off by a suitably experienced and qualified Coach who knows the players. The responsible adult is the Academy Head. The assessments will be submitted when appropriate to the Dorset & Wilts RFU as the Constituent Body in accordance with stated procedures.

It is club policy that Academy players will be encouraged to focus on Colts rugby first and so are not available for adult rugby until they have passed their 18th birthday. Once a player reaches his 18th birthday his introduction to adult rugby must be managed by the Director of Rugby and senior men's coaching team in conjunction with the Academy Head. If there are exceptional circumstances for playing a 17 year old in an adult game the club will follow the required RFU assessment procedure for playing up to adult rugby as well as managing the introduction to adult rugby as above

Training Approach

Both to ensure training is performed in line with RFU Regulations 15.5 and 15.6 and to maximise coaching impact, the following training structure is to be followed:

- a) **Different age groups training alongside** when there is contact involved in the exercise - i.e. one coach delivering to the whole group, but players practicing within their own age group.
- b) **Different age groups training as one** when there is no contact but a focus on skills development, e.g. kicking practice, passing practice, touch rugby, fitness
- c) **Age groups training apart**, e.g. team runs, contact games.

Fixtures

Fixtures will be arranged throughout the season for the 2 teams within the Academy – the U16s and the Colts.

GMS management (added June 2021)

Note that the two teams must also be managed separately on GMS, rather than as a single combined entity (same issue as applies to combining Girls U13/U15/U18 teams for administrative ease).

Expectations of Behaviour

Devizes RFC expects its Academy coaches and players fully to embrace the Values of Rugby in all that they do – Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship. Nothing that they do, whether on or off the pitch, should bring either them as individuals, their team, the Academy or Devizes RFC into any form of disrepute.

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Responsibilities

The Academy Head is responsible for the implementation of this Policy and for its efficient communication to all within the Academy. The Academy Head should therefore develop and maintain suitable management procedures to ensure that all aspects of this Policy can be implemented in an effective and efficient manner. This includes all aspects of safeguarding of children.

Oversight

The Academy Head will report to the Director of Rugby in the first instance. If necessary the Director of Rugby will discuss any issues with other Club Officers, principally the Chair of Junior Rugby, the Club Safeguarding Officer, the Club Secretary and ultimately the Club Chairman.

This is a published document that may be used by Dorset & Wilts RFU as the Constituent Body or by RFU staff as a template to assess the Club's approach to the Academy.

Review

This policy is to be reviewed periodically or in the event of any significant change affecting the way Devizes RFC manages its Academy.

Approval

This policy has been approved by the Devizes RFC General Committee. The policy is held alongside other Club policies by the Club Secretary and published on the Devizes RFC club website.

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Author: Chris Butler

Junior Chair, Devizes RFC