

DORCHESTER RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB GUIDANCE FOR DEALING WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

Staff/volunteers who deliver sports activities to children/young people may occasionally be required to deal with a child/young person's, parent / spectators challenging behaviour.

These guidelines aim to promote good practice and to encourage a proactive response to supporting children/young people to manage their own behaviour whilst also promoting adults to behave as role models therefore encouraging children and young people positive behaviour. They suggest some strategies and sanctions which can be used and also identify unacceptable sanctions or interventions which must never be used by staff, volunteers, parents and supporters.

Managing Children/young people's behaviour

These guidelines are based on the following principles:

-  The welfare of the child is of paramount consideration.
-  All those involved in activities (including children, coaches/volunteers and parents/carers) should be provided with clear guidelines about required standards of conduct, and the organisation/club's process for responding to behaviour that is deemed unacceptable.
-  Children/young people must never be subject to any form of treatment that is harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading.
-  Some children/young people can exhibit challenging behaviour as a result of specific circumstances, eg a medical or psychological condition, and coaches may therefore require specific or additional guidance. These specific needs should be discussed with parents/carers and the child in planning for the activity, to ensure that an appropriate approach is agreed. Where necessary, additional support provided e.g. from external agencies, Children's Social Care services etc.
-  Sport can make a significant contribution to improving the life experiences and outcomes for all children and young people. Every child/young person should be supported to participate. Only in exceptional circumstances where the safety of a child or other children cannot be maintained, should a child be excluded from club activities.

Planning activities

Good coaching practice requires planning sessions around the whole group, but also involves taking into consideration the individual needs of each child/young person within the group. Coaches as part of the planning and preparation for a session should consider whether any members of the group have presented previously or likely to

present any difficulties in relation to the tasks involved or pose any risks to other participants.

Where staff /volunteers identify potential risks, strategies to manage those risks should be discussed with the relevant club official ie Manager, Safeguarding Officer or Chair person to ensure they are aware of the concerns. The management of challenging behaviour should be agreed in advance of the session, event or activity. The planning should also identify the appropriate number of adults required to safely manage and support the session, which may involve parents being in attendance in order to adequately respond to any challenging behaviour and to safeguard other members of the group and staff and volunteers involved.

When children/young people are identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require additional support, supervision or specialist expertise, this should be discussed with the parents/carers and where appropriate the child/young person to enable them to be supported to participate safely.

Agreeing Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviours

Staff, volunteers, children, young people and parents/carers should be involved in agreeing a 'contract of expectations' of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and the range of sanctions which may be applied in response to unacceptable behaviour. This can be done at the start of the season, in advance of a trip away from home or as part of a welcome session. This should also be discussed with a relevant club representative ie Manager, Safeguarding Officer and Chairperson

Managing Challenging Behaviour

When managing challenging behaviour, the response should always be relative to the behaviour displayed, be imposed as soon as practicable and be fully explained to the child/young person and their parents/carers. This should also be discussed with the relevant club representative ie Manager, Safeguarding Officer and Chairperson. In dealing with children/young people who display negative or challenging behaviours, coaches and volunteers might consider the following options;

-  Time out – from the activity, group or individual work
-  Reparation - the act or process of making amends
-  De – escalation of the situation – talking through with the child/young person
-  Increased supervision by coaches/ volunteers or parents being present

-  Use of individual 'contracts' or agreements for their future continued participation
-  Sanctions or consequences e.g missing a session, outing or game
-  Temporary or permanent exclusion

The following should never be permitted as a means of managing a child/young person's behaviour;

-  Physical punishment or threats of physical punishment
-  Refusal to speak or interact with the child
-  Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation
-  Being deprived of food, water, access to changing facilities or toilets or essential facilities

Note:

Coaches and volunteers should review the needs of any child/young person for whom sanctions are frequently necessary. This review should involve relevant club officials ie Manager, Safeguarding Officer and Chairperson, coaches, the child/young person and in some cases others involved in supporting/providing services for the child or family to ensure an informed decision is made about the child/young person's future participation. As a last resort, if a child/young person's behaviour continues to present a high level of risk or danger to himself or others, he or she may have to be suspended or barred from the group or club activities.

Managing parents/supporters challenging behaviour

These guidelines are based on the following principles:

-  All parents and spectators are expected to act as a positive role model to young players.
-  All parents and spectators should be familiar with and abide by The RFU Code of Conduct
-  All parents and supporters should remember that children play sport for their enjoyment and recognise the importance of fun when spectating games.
-  Acknowledge good individual and team performance from all players irrespective of which team they play for.
-  Respect match officials decisions.

Unacceptable Behaviour

-  Never verbally abuse young players, match officials, fellow spectators or coaches.
-  Do not approach coaches during a game.
-  Stay off the pitch at all times.
-  Use of foul, unacceptable language and intimidation is not permitted
-  Challenging official's decisions.
-  Physical contact with a child unless for safeguarding reasons; ie preventing serious injury, assisting and injured player, parent comforting a distressed or injured child or administering first aid.
-  Negative verbal behaviour ie booing, chanting, ridiculing or goading will not be tolerated.

Managing Challenging Behaviour

Negative behaviour can adversely affect young players behaviour it is therefore important that all adults, parents and supporters behave in a manner that promotes and encourages positive behaviour from young players. In dealing with adults that display unacceptable behaviour DRFC representative may consider the following actions;

-  Verbal warning by club official which could result in further actions set out below.
-  Asked to leave pitch side
-  Use of individual contracts or agreements for their continued participation
-  Temporary or permanent exclusion
-  Report to RFU

Note

Enjoyment of the game of rugby by young players, officials, parents and supporters is the primary aim of this guidance.