



CLUB CODE OF CONDUCT

SEPTEMBER 2023

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INTRODUCTION

At **HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM** (the Club) we operate in line with the RFU's core values:

Teamwork • Respect • Enjoyment • Discipline • 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 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 RFU's Core Values.

THE CODE

This Code has been adopted by the Club to ensure 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 should 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 EXPECT AT OUR CLUB

Members of our 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
- 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

BEHAVIOUR WE EXPECT AT OUR CLUB (CONTINUED)

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 OUR CLUB

Members of our 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 at 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 THIS CODE APPLIES TO

This Code applies to all individuals who participate at our Club 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 participating in home and away matches.

The Code applies to participants whenever or wherever Club activity is taking place or when/where the reputation of the Club could be adversely affected by a member's behaviour.

REPORTING

Report any behaviour you see, witness, or experience, that upsets you, or makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, to either:

- the Club Safeguarding Officer safeguarding@fulhamrugby.co.uk
- the Club Disciplinary Officer discipline@fulhamrugby.co.uk
- the Club Chairman chairman@fulhamrugby.co.uk
- the Club Secretary secretary@fulhamrugby.co.uk
- any member of the Club's Executive Committee
- the RFU safeguarding@rfu.com

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- Any breach of this Code may be dealt with in accordance with the Club's own Rules and Disciplinary Processes
- Any conduct which is also a breach of RFU Regulations may also be reported to Middlesex Rugby (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 RFU POLICIES & REGULATIONS

For further information about expected behaviours and other processes, this Code should be read in conjunction with the following RFU 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](#)