

Reviewed and Updated: Stephen Jones 2025 Next Review: June 2026

WRL RESPECT Code of Conduct

Rugby League prides itself on being a family game which is inclusive, uncompromising and passionate, and the principles of RESPECT, set out the obligations on all participants to maintain the game's high standards. The game will take positive action to ensure that high standards of behaviour are always maintained in Rugby League.

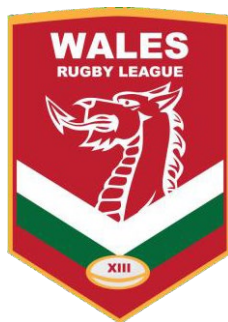
RESPECT sets out the standards of behaviour that the game expects from the entire Rugby League family. Rugby League is passionate about, and prides itself, on its reputation as "The Family Game" and as such, will take responsibility to ensure that this reputation is maintained and improved. Rugby League is an inclusive sport, is committed to the principles of equal opportunities and will not tolerate any form of discrimination.

In order to uphold these values participants in the game of Rugby League - players, parents, spectators, coaches, match officials, other volunteers and administrators of all ages - should:

- Discourage all instances of unsporting behaviour, foul or illegal play, or acts of violence, both on and off the field.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their age, ethnic origin, gender, special needs, including learning and physical disabilities, class or social background, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, colour or political persuasion.
- Accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for children, safeguard their wellbeing and protect them from abuse and poor practice.
- Condemn the use of recreational and performance enhancing drugs and doping practices; their use endangers the health of players and is contrary to the concept of fair play.

Important - Every person who attends a Rugby League match does so with the permission and license of the home club and / or league.

Breaches of this Code of Conduct may result in penalties up to and including a fine, loss of team match points and suspension.



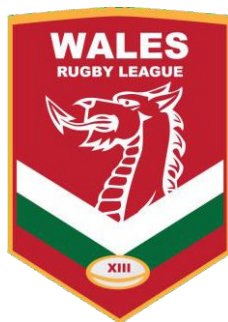
PLAYER

Be a good sport. Respect all good play whether from your team or the opposition and shake hands with and thank the opposition players and officials after the game - win, lose or draw.

- Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit. Make every effort to develop your own abilities.
- Always respect the match officials' decisions.
- Make every effort to be consistent with Fair Play and the Laws of the Game. Never get involved in foul play.
- Honor both the spirit and letter of the competition rules and live up to the highest ideals of ethics and sportsmanship; avoid gamesmanship and respect the traditions of the game.
- Never engage in disrespectful conduct of any sort including swearing, obscene gestures, offensive remarks, taunting or other actions that are demeaning to other players, officials or supporters. Treat others as you would like to be treated.
- Care for and respect the facilities and equipment made available to you during training and competition.
- Safeguard your health - don't use any illegal or unhealthy substances.
- Recognise that many officials, coaches and match officials are volunteers who give up their time to provide their services. Treat them with the utmost respect. Remember, without them you do not have a game.
- Do not bet or otherwise financially speculate, directly or indirectly, on the outcome or any other aspect of a rugby league match or competition in which you are involved.

COACH

- Actively discourage foul play and unsporting behaviour by players.
- Seek to maximise the participation and enjoyment for all players regardless of ability.
- Avoid the tendency to over-use a talented player; treat all players as equals, regardless of their talent.
- Show concern and caution towards all sick and injured players. Follow the advice of a doctor and/or physiotherapist to the letter when determining when an injured player is ready to recommence training or playing.
- Teach players that an honest effort and competing to the best of their ability is as important as victory.
- Encourage players to respect and accept the judgement of the match officials.
- Never engage in public criticism of officials.
- Always maintain appropriate, professional relationships with players at all times and in all situations.
- Make a personal commitment to maintain an accurate knowledge of the rules of the game and keep abreast of current coaching methods; maintain or improve your current accreditation level.
- Always consider the health, safety and welfare of the players.
- Teach young players to realise that there is a big gap between their level of play and the professional game; do not coach them as if they are professionals.
- Ensure that your coaching reflects the level of the competition being played; do not be a "win-at-all-costs" coach.
- As coach, conduct yourself at all times and in all situations, in a manner, that demonstrates leadership, respect for the game of Rugby League and respect for all those that are involved in the game - the players, officials, the fans, the parents, the referees and the media.
- Abide by the Coach Code of Conduct.



MATCH OFFICIAL

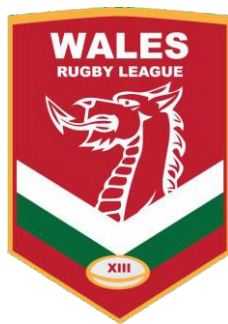
- Apply the laws of the game with complete impartiality.
- Prepare fully for a match, both physically and mentally.
- Conduct yourself both on and off the field with the utmost integrity.
- Set a good example by the way you dress, speak and act towards players, coaches, officials, parents and spectators.
- Place the safety and welfare of the players above all else.
- Be alert to minimise dangerous physical play, fair or foul, especially in junior matches.
- Respond swiftly to all instances of unsporting, foul or unfair play.
- Show concern and caution for sick and injured players.
- Be accountable for your actions.
- Accurately report any misconduct including breach of
- RESPECT to the appropriate authorities.
- Avoid any situation, which may lead to a conflict of interest both on and off the field.

PARENT / SPECTATOR

- Do not force an unwilling child to participate in sport.
- Remember that children participate in Rugby League for their own enjoyment, not yours.
- Understand that sport is part of a total life experience, and the benefits of involvement go far beyond the final score of a game.
- Condemn all violent or illegal acts, whether they are by players, coaches, officials, parents or spectators.
- Respect the match official's decisions - don't complain or argue about decisions during or after a game.
- Behave! Unsporting language, harassment or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Encourage players to play by the rules and to respect opposition players and officials.
- Never ridicule or scorn a player for making a mistake - respect their efforts.
- Participate in positive cheering that encourages all the players in the team; do not engage in any jeering that taunts or intimidates opponents, their fans or officials.
- At all times, follow the directions of the Ground Manager and other match day staff.
- Never arrive at a game under the influence of alcohol, never bring alcohol to a game, and only drink alcohol, if it is available at the ground, in the designated licensed area.

VOLUNTEER AND ADMINSTRATOR

- Always operate to the principle of "friendship first - competition second".
- Ensure that all operations are under the supervision of appropriately qualified staff who have been through the required recruitment and selection checks.
- Ensure that all staff understand and adhere to the Code of Conduct.
- Ensure that all equipment and facilities meet safety standards.
- Encourage all participants to remember that sport is enjoyed for its own sake - play down the importance of awards.



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

After consultation with children and young people this is what they would like to see from others involved in the game:

- Keep training and games fun - winning is not the primary objective for young people playing the game; having fun is.
- Everyone makes mistakes. There should be no undue criticism of any player who makes a mistake - encouragement reaps more benefits.
- Coaches should not lose their temper.
- All adults should be role models in everything they do - do not swear, abuse officials, show unsporting behaviour, encourage foul play, enter the field of play, drink, smoke or use electronic cigarettes or vape when around children and young people.
- Report any incidents of bad behaviour.

After consultation, children and young people agree to:

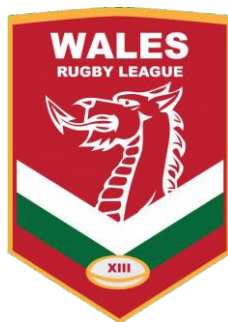
- Give 100% effort at all times.
- Encourage team-mates who make mistakes.
- Not argue with the referee.
- Listen to the coach.
- Play as a team.
- Dress smartly.
- Welcome all new players, from all backgrounds, whether or not they have played before.
- Treat the other team with RESPECT.
- Attend all training sessions when possible.
- No bullying.

SANCTIONS

Note - Clubs are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents, carers of players, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators.

1. No persons attending a match shall:

- Use offensive or obscene language to any player, coach, referee, touch judge, official or other spectator.
- Enter the field of play during the course of a match without the prior approval of the Touchline Manager appointed by the home club and / or league.
- Dispute the decision of a match official either during or after a match.
- Assault or act with aggression to any persons.
- Behave in a way contrary to this Code of Conduct and/or the spirit of the game.
- Behave in a way which disturbs the enjoyment of the match by any other persons or brings discredit to the home club and / or league and the game of Rugby League.
- Act in such a way as to exhibit intolerance towards individuals or groups, due to their gender, age, race, disability, religion, faith, sexual orientation or any other visible or non- visible difference, either by language or other conduct, to any other persons.
- Refuse to accept the reasonable direction of the Touchline Manager, official of the home club and / or league, or official of the team or club which that person or persons are supporting.



2. Persons contravening Rule 1 may be reported by the Touchline Manager to the Team Manager or other official of the team, which that person or persons are supporting.

Where a team does not have a Team Manager present, a request or direction from the Touchline Manager to any official of the team or team's club shall for the purpose of this Code be regarded as a direction to the Team Manager.

3. The Touchline Manager and / or Team Manager must advise the offending person or persons of the relevant breach of the Code. The Touchline Manager must note the details of their report to the Team Manager on the reverse of the Official Team Sheet.
4. In the event that the inappropriate conduct continues, the Touchline Manager and/or Team Manager may request offenders to immediately leave the ground. This should also be noted on the Official Team Sheet.
5. In an event that the offenders refuse to obey the direction of the Touchline Manager and / or Team Manager, the Manager may direct the referee to terminate the match. In the event that the match is so terminated, the league's committee may, at its absolute discretion award the competition points to the non-offending team or declare that neither side shall be awarded competition points for that match.
6. Clubs which do not exercise control over their players, parents, carers of players, coaches, officials or spectators may be called upon by the league to accept responsibility for their actions and penalties based on the following guidelines may apply (in addition to penalties which may be imposed by the league's management).

Penalty Guidelines

Note - Please note that these penalties may be imposed in addition to any disciplinary action taken by a playing league.

FIRST OFFENCE - A fine not exceeding £150 and / or loss of competition points and/or suspension of the player from playing and / or suspension of the offenders from attending future matches.

SECOND OFFENCE - Suspension of the player and / or team and / or club from the competition, on a temporary basis.

THIRD OFFENCE - Suspension of the player and / or team and/or club either for the remainder of the season, or permanently. The above penalties are guidelines only and the relevant disciplinary body has the discretion to step outside of the guidelines if: (a) it feels that in the light of the aggravating and mitigating factors present it is appropriate to step outside of the guidelines; or (b) it has previously advised.

the Club or relevant individual that it will apply a higher sanction next time that Club / relevant individual appears before it.

Breaches of this Code of Conduct may cause a match to be stopped!

Breaches of this Code of Conduct by WRL Member clubs or players will be dealt with through the usual WRL Disciplinary system.

ENJOY YOUR TIME IN RUGBY LEAGUE