**A Policy for managing challenging behavior**

These guidelines aim to promote good practice and are based on the following principles:

* The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.
* Children must never be subject to any form of treatment that is harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading.
* The specific needs a child may have (e.g. communication, behavior management, comprehension and so on) should be discussed with their parent/carer and where appropriate the child, before activities start.
* Where appropriate it may be helpful to record the details of any agreed plan or approach and provide copies to all parties.
* Every child should be supported to participate.

Consideration to exclude a child from activities should apply only as a last resort and after all efforts to address any challenge have been exhausted, in exceptional circumstances where the safety of that child or of other children cannot be maintained.

**What is Acceptable and what is Unacceptable**

Staff, volunteers, children, young people and parents/carers should be involved in developing an agreement about:

* What constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behavior (code of conduct)
* The range of sanctions which may be applied in response to unacceptable behavior.

This can be done at the start of the season. It should involve the views of children and young people to encourage better buy in and understanding. Where challenges are anticipated in light, for example of a child’s impairment or other medical condition, a clear plan/agreement should be established and written down. Ensure that parents/carers understand the expectations on their children, and ask them to reinforce this ahead of training or a game.

Managing Challenging Behavior In responding to challenging behavior the response should always be:

* Proportionate to the actions you are managing.
* Imposed as soon as is practicable.
* Fully explained to the child and their parents/carers

In dealing with children who display negative or challenging behavior, staff and volunteers might consider the following options:

* Time out - from the training or game.
* Reparation - the act or process of making amends.
* Restitution - the act of giving something back.
* Behavioral reinforcement - rewards for good behavior, consequences for negative behavior.
* De-escalation of the situation - talking with the child and distracting them from challenging behavior.
* Increased supervision by staff/volunteers.
* Sanctions or consequences e.g. missing an outing or match –
* Temporary or permanent exclusion.

The following should never be permitted as a means of managing a child’s behavior:

* Physical punishment or the threat of such.
* Refusal to speak to or interact with the child.
* Being deprived of food, water, access to changing facilities or toilets or other essential facilities.
* Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

**Physical Intervention**

Staff/ volunteers should consider the risks associated with employing physical intervention compared with the risks of not employing physical intervention. The use of physical intervention should always:

* Be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent a child injuring themselves or others, or causing serious damage to property.
* Aim to achieve an outcome that is in the best interests of the child whose behavior is of immediate concern
* Form part of a broader approach to the management of challenging behavior.
* Be the result of conscious decision-making and not a reaction to an adult’s frustration.
* Employ the minimum force needed to avert injury to a person or serious damage to property - applied for the shortest period of time
* Used only after all other strategies have been exhausted
* Be recorded as soon as possible using the appropriate organizational reporting form and procedure.

Parents should always be informed following an incident where a coach/volunteer has had to physically intervene with their particular child Physical intervention must not:

* Involve contact with buttocks, genitals and breasts.
* Be used as a form of punishment.
* Involve inflicting pain

A timely de-brief for staff/volunteers, the child and parents should always take place in a calm environment following an incident where physical intervention has been used. Even children who haven’t directly been involved in the situation may need to talk about what they have witnessed. There should also be a discussion with the child and parents about the child’s needs and continued safe participation in the group or activity.

**Disciplinary Process**

The process for children should be more informal than for an adult. The process needs to be simple and easy to understand. A children/youth disciplinary should be as soon after the event as possible with minimum delay.

Please be aware that a player ordered-off the field of play becomes immediately provisionally suspended and are unable to take part or be selected for any further match until their disciplinary case has been concluded.

The matter should be dealt with as promptly as possible, particularly if the player indicates an intention to plead not guilty. This prevents the player if found not guilty from serving a period of suspension that they need not have served

**U6 - U13**

The RFU believes that for disciplinary matters for U13s or below, the player’s coach/manager is in the best position to understand the circumstances and deal with the matter providing the most effective child-centric solution. The primary aim at this level should be teaching young players about the RFU’s Core Values and the high standards expected of them. Coaches should work closely with the player’s parents sharing concerns they have about the player and agreeing how these can best be addressed.

If the sanctions agreed between child/coach and parents are not successful in changing a child’s behavior, then the coach should refer to the RFU’s guidance on discipline in age grade rugby to give further sanctions.

**U13 - Colts**

At Club U13 – U18 level, most disciplinary issues will be dealt with by the Club’s Disciplinary Officer or Panel, consisting of up to three members experienced at dealing with young people. The Club should obtain a copy of the match official’s report as soon as possible following the match. As stated above, the player is provisionally suspended until his/her hearing takes place.

On receipt of the match official’s report the Club must report the matter to the CBYDS within 48 hours. Reporting of incidents is essential to the correct functioning of the disciplinary process. The CBYDS will be able to provide advice and assistance in relation to the hearing process and procedure if required.

Signed: M T Stalder Club Secretary Date: 13/01/2019