

Ashford Rugby Football Club

ARFC Parents, Spectators and Guardians Code of Conduct

Date: May 2026

Review Date: May 2027



1. The Good Parent's code

In Rugby Union coaches and administrators both fully acknowledge that parents are an integral part of the partnership, which ensures that young players enjoy their involvement in the sport and experience an environment in which they can flourish.

- I. Parents/carers should be advised that it is not acceptable to drop children, under the age of 14, off at the club without adult supervision including walking to and from the club unaccompanied.
- II. Be familiar with the coaching and training programme in order that they can ensure that their child is fully involved and the coaches are aware of their availability.
- III. Be familiar with the teaching and coaching methods used by observing the sessions in which your child participates.
- IV. Be aware that the club has a duty of care and therefore, where appropriate, assist coaches with the supervision of the young players, particularly where numbers are large and there is a need to transport youngsters to away games.
- V. Acknowledge the value and importance of volunteer referees. They give time freely. Do not abuse match officials, however much you disagree with their decision, emphasise respect for the referee by not questioning their decision/s.

- VI. Recognise that children play for fun. They are not miniature professionals or internationals. Encourage all players and applaud their efforts.
- VII. Teach the children that taking part and trying their best is more important than the result of the match.
- VIII. Be involved with club activities and share your expertise.
- IX. Share concerns, if you have them, with club officials.

It is important that parents support coaches in instilling these virtues.

2. The Good Spectator's code

Young rugby players are impressionable and their behaviour will often reflect that of adults around them. In Rugby Union we welcome spectators on our touchlines who embrace the ethos of the game as one of fun, enjoyment and skill development.

At Ashford Rugby Club spectators are encouraged to:

- Act as positive role models to all young players.
- Be familiar with, and abide by, the RFU child protection guidance in relation to verbal and emotional abuse.
- Respect the rugby club policy with regard to spectator behaviour.

In Rugby Union spectators should:

- I. Remember children play sport for their enjoyment not yours.
- II. Acknowledge good individual and team performance from all youngsters irrespective of which team they play for.
- III. Respect match official's decisions. Remember, they are volunteers providing an opportunity for youngsters to play rugby.
- IV. Never verbally abuse young players, match officials, fellow spectators or coaches. Such behaviour can create a negative environment for young players and their behaviour will often reflect this.
- V. Acknowledge effort and good performance rather than the "win at all costs" ethic. Verbally encourage all youngsters in a positive way. If you do want to shout make sure it is 'for', not 'at', the players.
- VI. Condemn bad language, rude behaviour and violence.
- VII. Encourage all youngsters irrespective of their ability – never ridicule any individual player, regardless of the team they play for.

- VIII. Stand away from the touchline. You must not enter the field of play during a game unless asked to do so by the referee.
- IX. Remember, when you are supporting your team, you are representing the Club.
- X. You are subject to the laws of the game. You can be cautioned, reported, sent away from the ground, and suspended from attending any matches.
In the event that any player/spectator/parent/guardian contravenes any of the items listed above, disciplinary actions could be carried out.
- XI. Remember - It's only a game!

For further information contact the Club Safeguarding Officer or Assistant Safeguarding Officer.