

KILLORGLIN RUGBY CLUB.



CODE OF ETHICS CODES OF CONDUCT

&

CHILD WELFARE POLICIES

CONTENTS.

1. CLUB ETHOS / OVERVIEW

2. OVERVIEW OF CODE OF ETHICS & SOURCES

3. CODES OF CONDUCT & GUIDELINES

- 3.10: Code for Players
- 3.20: Code for Parents
- 3.30: Code for Coaches
- 3.40: Code for Spectators

4. DECLARATION OF INTENT

5. CHILD WELFARE POLICIES

- 5.10: CHILD ABUSE & CATEGORIES
- 5.20: REPORTING PROCEDURES
- 5.30: RESPONSE TO CHILD REPORTING
- 5.40: MINI RUGBY
- 5.50: APPOINTMENT & ROLE OF CLUB CHILD WELFARE OFFICERS

6. GUIDELINES FOR BEST PRACTICE.

1 CLUB ETHOS / OVERVIEW

- It is the ethos of Killorglin Rugby Club, as a rugby club affiliated to the Irish Rugby Football Union, (IRFU), to actively promote rugby football as a positive contribution to the development of each individual in our care.
- Involvement in rugby is an opportunity for mental, physical and emotional development which is further enhanced if the Age Grade, ((Youth), player is guided and instructed by an informed, enlightened and caring coaching structure, working within an acceptable ethical framework.
- Killorglin RFC aims to establish and maintain high standards of ethical behaviour in its coaching structure and practice, by developing and following procedures for protecting the interests of Age Grade players.
- It is the policy and ethos of Killorglin Rugby Club and the IRFU to safeguard the welfare of our Age Grade players.
- Killorglin Rugby Club and the IRFU recognise and accept that in all matters regarding Child Protection, the welfare and protection of our Age Grade players is a priority.

2 OVERVIEW OF CODE OF ETHICS & SOURCES.

- (a) It is the Club policy of Killorglin RFC to maintain its high reputation for ethical behaviour and fairness in the conduct of its activities.

In most cases decisions as to what is ethical or fair are clear cut, and will be obvious to any reasonable person.

In some situations, however, there may be an element of doubt, or ambiguity arises.

To help in these circumstances, and to protect and guide the individuals within the club, it is necessary to have a written Code of Ethics.

- (b) This written Code of Ethics, together with any subsequent amendments, forms part of the Regulations of Killorglin Rugby Club and should be used in conjunction with the Club's and the IRFU's Codes of Behaviour. Age Grade Rugby is deemed by Killorglin RFC to be the Youth section of the club as defined in the Club Constitution.

- (c) The club will be aided in its objectives by reference to:

- The IRFU Child Welfare Policy Document
- The IRFU Codes of Conduct
- The IRFU Long Term Player Development Document
- The IRFU Guidelines on Mini-Rugby
- The Irish Sports Council- Code of Ethics.
Good Practice for Children's Sport
- Any subsequent amendments to these documents.

- (d) This Code of Ethics was written with specific reference to Age Grade/ Youth coaches and players.

Most aspects of this Code are also applicable to all other people involved in the game, e.g. club officials and assistants.

Therefore all officials should be aware that this Code also applies to them and should familiarise themselves with the Code.

- (e) For the purposes of clarification the term “officials” will be used in this document, to mean all adults with either supervisory, coaching or management responsibility for players. The purpose in this document is to provide the guidelines for the behaviour of adults who are responsible in a club capacity.
- (f) This Code is part of the Killorglin Rugby Club / IRFU policy on Child Protection.

It is to be read in conjunction with the Irish Sports Council's, “Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport”. Adherence to these guidelines is intended to protect officials, coaches, Under – age players and the game of Rugby.

- (g) On receiving and reading this document officials must sign the Declaration of Intent, and hand the Declaration to the Club Youth Officer. This signed Declaration will be retained as part of the Club's records.
- (h) The Killorglin Rugby Club Code of Ethics is drawn up with reference to the documentation named above. It is intended as a working model for our club, and is not suggested as a replacement, or a dilution of these documents. At all times the club will be guided by the IRFU structures.
- (i) More information on the Code of Ethics is available on the IRFU website, the Irish Sports Council website and from the publications itemised at (c) above.

DISCLAIMER.

This Code of Ethics is issued by Killorglin Rugby Club to assist, guide and encourage its membership to achieve Best Practices for the benefit of all of those involved in the Game of rugby.

Members of Killorglin Rugby Club should however take their own advice as may be appropriate.

Killorglin Rugby Club cannot accept responsibility for supervising members and in particular disclaim liability for damage, loss to person or property arising from any neglect, default or omission by any member, or person acting on behalf of Killorglin Rugby Club.

3 CODES OF CONDUCT & GUIDELINES.

- Young people are the lifeblood of any sport and Irish Rugby is no different to other sports in this regard.
We want to welcome young people into our club so that they can enjoy our great game.

It goes without saying that parents are entitled to know that their children are involved and playing rugby in an environment that respects young peoples' safety, health, welfare and dignity.

- **What to look for when you join a club**

- Recruitment of leaders
- Child Welfare initiatives
- Safety and Best practice models in the club
- Adult to player ratios
- Training & playing schedule
- Selection, inclusion, playing and development
- Player registration and membership
- Codes of Conduct for players, coaches, spectators, parents and referees

- **What do we expect of our players?**

- All players to be registered and to have their registration cards with them at matches.
- Membership fees to be paid on time as part of the player insurance.
- To be committed to the training and playing schedule of the club.
- To have the right attitude towards training, playing, team mates, leaders, selection and representing the club.
- To respect the Ethos, Laws of the Game and traditions of rugby.
- To have the appropriate training and playing kit:
For matches:
Club jersey/ shorts and sock and gum shield (properly fitted)
For training:
Jersey/ socks/ shorts/ gum shield – ensure kit is warm and safe (no zips/ strings or sharp edges etc.)

- **What do we expect of officials?**

- Should be recruited through the club recruitment policy.
- To go through relevant screening re: child welfare & vetting.
- Be appropriately qualified.
- Plan and prepare for matches & training sessions.
- Be fair when dealing with players and particularly when dealing with selection and inclusion issues.
- Set the right example and be approachable at all times

- **What do we expect of parents?**

- Always support your child in his/her efforts – don't let your ambitions rule their experience.
- Ensure your child has the required kit whether training or playing.
- Attend matches and training as much as possible.
- Volunteer to assist the club when available.
- Ensure you and your child are on time for sessions/ matches and especially when collecting your child after such events.
- Respect the club and volunteer efforts – join the club!
- Adhere to the Code of Conduct of the club.

- **What is expected of clubs?**

- Have a policy on child welfare, recruitment, best practice, selection, training and fixtures.
- Ensure adherence to all Codes of Conduct.
- Ensure all coaches are appropriately qualified.
- Appoint a Child Welfare Officer and ensure access for appropriate training.
- Committees (youth and mini) to meet regularly to ensure adherence to all club policies.
- Strive to create a safe environment for all rugby activities

The IRFU have a set of guidelines, Codes of Conduct, to ensure that all participants in the Game of rugby are aware of their responsibilities, to treat each person with dignity and ensure enjoyment of the Game.

These Codes of Conduct are central to the structure of Killorglin Rugby Club, and are intended as a working model for our club.

As a club we strive to achieve the highest standards of fairness, discipline and equality, ensuring the safety of all those in our care.

3.10 CODE FOR PLAYERS

Respect the “Game of Rugby” and play within the laws of the Game.

Accept the referee’s decision and let your captain or coach ask any relevant questions.

Play with control. Do not lose your temper.

Always do your best and be committed to the game, your team and your club.

Be a “good sport”. Applaud all good play whether by your team or the opposition.

Respect your opponent. Treat all players as you would like to be treated. Do not “bully” or take advantage of any player.

Rugby is a team sport and make sure you co-operate with your coach; team mates and members of your club.

Remember that the goals of the game are to have fun, improve your skills and feel good.

At the end of the match thank your opponents and the referee for the match.

Always remember that you owe a duty of care to your opponents. Tackle hard but fairly, do not intend to hurt your opponent.

Winning and losing is part of sport: Win with humility – lose with dignity.

As part of the team it is important that you attend training regularly and listen to your coach and help your team.

As a team sport it is important to understand that all members are important to the team!

Remember you are representing your team, club, family and the Game of Rugby.

3.20 CODE FOR PARENTS

Remember, young people play rugby for their enjoyment, not only yours.

Encourage your child always to play by the Laws of the Game.

Teach young children that honest endeavour is as important as winning, so that the result of each game is accepted without disappointment.

Help young people to work towards skill improvement and good sportsmanship.

Set a good example by applauding good play on both sides.

Never ridicule, humiliate or shout at young players for making a mistake or losing a match.

Do not place emphasis on winning at all costs.

Do not force an unwilling child to participate in the playing of rugby. If the child is to play, he/she will do so in good time through your encouragement.

Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from rugby.

As a spectator do not use profane language or harass referees, coaches or players.

Do not publicly question the referees' judgement and never their honesty.

Recognise the value and importance of volunteer referees and coaches.

Identify and acknowledge the good qualities of the Game of Rugby and uphold these values.

Remember you and your child's contribution to the Game of Rugby is very important to the IRFU and be proud of your contribution.

Understand the value of team sport and the importance thereof.

3.30 CODE FOR COACHES

Remember that as a coach of an “age grade team” you are to act in “loco parentis” and to that extent your duty of care is more onerous than that of a coach to an adult team.

Lead by example - young people need a coach whom they respect.

Be generous with your praise when it is deserved. Never ridicule or shout at players for making mistakes or losing a match.

Teach your players that the Laws of the Game are mutual agreements which no one should evade or break.

Prepare young players for inter-class and inter-school activities.

Be reasonable in your demands on the players’ time, energy and enthusiasm.

Ensure that all players participate in matches. The “average” players require and deserve equal time.

Remember that young players play for fun and enjoyment and that skill learning and playing for fun have priority over highly structured competition. Winning is not the only objective.

Develop player and team respect for the ability of opponents, as well as for the judgement of referees and opposing coaches.

Insist on fair play and disciplined play. Do not tolerate foul play, fighting or foul language. Be prepared to take off an offending player.

Encourage young players to develop basic skills and sportsmanship. Avoid over specialisation in positional play during their formative years.

Set realistic goals for the team and individual players and do not push young players into adult-like competitions.

Create a safe and enjoyable environment in which to train and play.

Do not over burden younger players with too much information.

Make a personal commitment to keep yourself informed on sound coaching principles and methods, and on the principles of growth and development of young people.

Be aware of the effect you have on growing children.

Never criticise the referee and touch judges during or after a match in front of players or spectators.

Always thank the match officials and if they have made decisions which require clarification, discuss the problems after everyone has changed.

Seek and follow the advice of a doctor in determining when an injured player is ready to play again.

Ensure that proper equipment and facilities are available at all times.

Be responsible and ensure you uphold the ethos of the game and the IRFU.

Attend coaching courses.

Support the Code of Ethics and all policies regarding Children in Sport.

Ensure you and your players are proud of your team, club and efforts during the season.

Each coach will be obliged by Killorglin Rugby Club and the IRFU to sign a Declaration of Intent acknowledging their intention to adhere to the Code of Ethics as they apply to Youth Rugby.

3.40 Code For Spectators

Remember that although young people play organised rugby they are not "miniature internationals".

Be on your best behaviour and lead by example. Do not use profane language or harass referees, players or coaches.

Applaud good play by the visiting team as well as your own.

Show respect for your team's opponents. Without them there would not be a match.

Condemn the use of violence in all forms at every opportunity.

Verbal abuse of players or referees cannot be accepted in any shape or form.

Players or referees are not fair targets for ignorant behaviour.

Encourage young players to play by the Laws of the Game.

Spectators can contribute to the enjoyment of the event and all involved.

Be proud of your club and the Game of Rugby.

4 DECLARATION OF INTENT

Every rugby club is required to act in accordance with the regulations and guidelines in this document and to sign a Declaration of Intent to that effect.

All age grade volunteers (coaches/managers/referees and/or any team assistants) are to receive a copy of the Child Welfare document and after reading the document sign the Declaration of Intent page and hand it to the Club Child Welfare Officer for record keeping in the club.

It is important to note that clubs are responsible for the recruitment and screening of volunteers & therefore must have suitable policies in place.

**IRISH RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION
Declaration of Intent**

I, _____ (Coach/ Manager / Assistant)

Date of Birth ___/___/___ (day / month. / year)

Of Killorglin Rugby Club

I hereby, acknowledge that I have received a copy of the IRFU Child Welfare Policy Document. I also acknowledge that I have read this document and hereby declare my intention to adhere to the IRFU's Child Welfare Document and Policies regarding Child Welfare in the IRFU

I will also support initiatives by the IRFU& the Irish Sports Council & on matters relating to Children's Sport in Ireland

Signed _____

Date _____

Received on ___/___/___ **by** _____
(Club Child Welfare Officer)

All age grade volunteers (coaches/ managers/referees and/or any team assistants) to receive a copy of the Child Welfare document and after reading the document sign this page and hand it to the Club Child Welfare Officer for record keeping in the club.

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5.0 CHILD WELFARE POLICIES

The value of a Child Welfare Policy

- Sets policies to ensure enjoyment; inclusion and fair play.
- Promotes properly recruited and qualified coaches.
- Allows the appointment of Child Welfare Officers to represent the interest of the players.
- Supports the policies and initiatives regarding child awareness and children in sport.
- Recognises the importance of the player registration scheme.
- Highlights the Codes of Conduct.
- Encourages respect and dignity for all participants.
- Supports sportsmanship and fair play

5.10 Child Abuse / Neglect & Categories

- Complaints or suspicions of abuse relating to an Age Grade Player wherever and whenever arising must be reported to the relevant Branch Child Welfare Officer without delay who must take immediate steps to safeguard the Age Grade Player and to refer the complaint or suspicion of abuse to the Statutory Authorities and to the National Child Welfare Officer
- Procedures for making, investigating and determining complaints about abuse (Including confidentiality conditions) should be prescribed in writing, published so that they are readily available to everyone and followed as soon as possible upon receipt of a complaint
- A Sports Leader, (i.e. coach, assistant, club member, official) against whom a complaint relating to abuse of an age grade player is made to one of the Statutory Authorities should stand aside as a Sports Leader until after the relevant determination has been made.
- The National Child Welfare Officer must be notified by the relevant Branch Child Welfare Officer of all allegations of abuse relating to a Sports Leader or Employee and all questions from the National Child Welfare Officer must be answered immediately.
- It is not the role of the person who conveys a complaint or suspicion about abuse of an Age Grade Player to determine the guilt or innocence of the accused but every complaint must be made and acted upon without delay.

Categories of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Is any form of non-accidental injury that causes significant harm to a child, it also occurs when an adult gives children alcohol or inappropriate drugs or fails to supervise their access to these substances

Child Neglect

Neglect is normally defined in terms of omission, where a child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to affection from adults or medical care.

It may also include neglect of a child's basics emotional needs.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point.

Emotional Abuse

Is normally to be found in the relationship between an adult and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. It is rarely manifested in terms of physical symptoms.

Sexual Abuse

Occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.

It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexual inappropriate ways.

5.2. REPORTING PROCEDURES.

Reporting Abuse

- Should an age-grade player be at risk of harm, it is the duty of those in a position of responsibility to take the necessary steps to remove the risk and to ensure that all procedures are undergone in accordance with statutory guidelines.
- **Leaders should be aware of the signs and types of abuse with the following points being central to the success of this effort**
 1. Knowledge of the behavioural and physical indicators.
 2. Knowledge of the appropriate action and response to be taken.
 3. Vigilance and avoidance of all situations conducive to risk;
 4. Open, trusting & cooperative relationships within the Club and with parents / guardians and others concerned with children's welfare.

Reporting Procedures for Child Abuse

- Remember that reporting suspected child abuse in good faith is not the same as making an accusation of abuse i.e. **reporting does not mean accusing.**
- Responsibility for the investigation of child abuse cases suspected or otherwise, lies with **the HSE and the Statutory Authorities.**
- Clubs or Branches should not carry out their own internal investigations into cases where child abuse is suspected. Any person who knows or suspects that a child is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed has a duty to convey his/her concern to the Local Health Authority.
- It may be appropriate for a person to discuss concerns they have with another person in the club e.g. Club Children's Officer, or should the concern relate to this person, then the Branch Children's Officer- it is advisable that all inquiries are made directly to the local Officer of the HSE.
- The type of discussions referred to above would most likely happen in cases where no specific allegation of child abuse has been made, but the concern is based on emotional behaviour and/or physical indications of a particular child
- Should there be an allegation against a club member – the Club Children's Officer must be informed so that suspension of the person against whom the allegations have been made, from activities which involve age-grade players, may be carried out until the conclusion of an investigation by the Statutory Authorities.

- All concerns and allegations made should be carefully recorded and ensure confidentiality is maintained at all stages.
- In the case of a suspension, the official being suspended should be formally notified by senior personnel within the Club
- A Club member against whom an allegation of abuse has been made should be informed that this is not an accusation and that the procedures being undertaken are in accordance with statutory guidelines. He or she should be assured that all information will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner within the Club
- The Club member should be made aware of the general nature of any allegations made against him/her (except in the case of child sexual abuse allegations) and of any allegation being made known to the Statutory Authorities.
- The Leader concerned should be afforded the opportunity to present a formal response to the allegation to senior personnel in the Club. From this point onwards the matter should only be dealt with by the Statutory Authorities.
- In the case of an allegation of child sexual abuse, it will be necessary to withhold the name of the child and the precise details of the allegation, in the interest of confidentiality and child protection. Where possible inform the parents/guardians of the child unless in doing so the child will be further endangered

5.30 Response to a Child Reporting

- Deal with any allegation of abuse in a sensitive and competent manner through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem.
- Stay calm and do not show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying and take it seriously.
- Permit the child to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.
- Reassure the child that he/she was right to tell, and that he/she will be helped.
- Alleviate feeling of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement on the person against whom the allegation is made.
- False promises should not be made such as saying no-one else will be told.
- Indicate what should happen next, such as informing parents, club children's officer reporting to statutory authority etc.

- Any and all consultations with others should be entirely confidential and should not involve investigative procedures.
- Write a detailed account of any discussion regarding alleged or suspected abuse, as soon as possible after the discussion has taken place.
- **Send the details to the local HSE and the IRFU Child Protection Officer.**
- 41
- Do not trivialise child abuse issues or trivialise or exaggerate what the child has told you.

Key Points

- Should you witness or receive information that leads you to believe that a serious breach of this Document has occurred; you are required to bring the matter to the attention of the relevant management body, be it Club, Branch or Union.
- No further action is to be taken on your part, and no information is to be provided to others, save as provided below.
- If you have evidence of an illegal activity that directly relates to the Game, you are obliged to inform the Gardai and you should notify the Branch and the I.R.F.U. of that fact.
- You are not to discuss the matter with persons not already involved except with the express permission of the investigating authorities.
- You are required to give every assistance possible to the Gardai, or to the appropriate Committee of the IRFU in the investigation of the matter, and to assist with any necessary steps being taken by them in relation to the matter.

5.40 MINI RUGBY

Code of Ethics

All volunteers involved with mini rugby (in any capacity) must read the [IRFU Child Welfare Policy Document](#) and sign the Declaration of Intent contained in it.

The signed copy of the Declaration must be handed to the Club Child Welfare Officer for record keeping in the club or school.

Clubs are responsible to ensure that all their volunteers involved in age grade rugby adhere to all aspects of the IRFU policy on Child Welfare.

Code of Conduct

All participants in Mini Rugby are to adhere to all aspects of the [IRFU Code of Conduct](#) for Players / Coaches / Parents and Spectators.

Ethos

The ethos of Mini Rugby is to introduce the game of rugby in a safe and enjoyable manner ensuring participation and inclusion. In line with the [IRFU Long Term Player Development \(LTPD\) Pathway](#) the principle of players first must apply at all times.

Fixtures

Blitz days or club days ensuring inclusion and participation are encouraged rather than the running of competitions, leagues or cups resulting in over competitiveness and/ or behaviour problems on and off the field. All fixtures to take place in a blitz day or club day format and to be arranged in conjunction with the Branch Mini Rugby Committee.

Blitz days (Branch approved competitions)

May only be arranged by application to your Branch Mini Rugby Committee. These may be arranged by Region, by Areas, or by each Province.

Mini Rugby Committees will have a season plan to assist with arranging Blitz days or events. They will also provide information on protocols and procedures for hosting these.

Age limit and stages must be confirmed prior to the start of Blitz days and clear indications should accompany all invitations. Club coaches/ managers must be able to give proof of eligibility (event or Blitz day registration form) before his/her team's first match in the event/Blitz day. Before the start of the event a referees / coaches briefing must take place to clarify all arrangements e.g. stages, format of play and safety. Should there be any concerns over safety (e.g. ability to scrum) matches will then be played at the next lower stage.

Eligibility

Eligibility - Mini Rugby is a participation sport.

Date of eligibility for participants is Age Categories as specified by the IRFU.

Clubs eligibility is not confined to current Youth eligibility regulations.

Playing over age players is illegal and immoral and will lead to coaches, teams, schools or clubs being banned from future events.

Registration

All players must be registered with their Club and proof of registration is required to ensure players play in the right age category.

Correspondence

Any correspondence regarding Mini Rugby must be directed to the Branch Mini Rugby Committee

Maximum playing time

Consideration must be given to clubs/teams with small numbers and or no reserves to prevent/avoid exhaustion and or the risk of injuries.

**5.50 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE
CLUB CHILD WELFARE OFFICER.**

A Club Child Welfare Officer will:

- Act at all times in the best interests of Age Grade / Youth Players
- Be intimately familiar with the provisions of the Code and Policy and the Guidelines and with such further information and requirements as may be provided or put in place by the IRFU.
- Communicate with the appropriate Branch Child Welfare Officer on any matter on which the Club Child Welfare Officer considers it necessary to do so, or any matter in relation to Age Grade/ Youth Players on which the advice or directions of the Union are required.
- Receive from the Branch Child Welfare Officer advice, information and directions from the IRFU concerning Age Grade/ Youth Players and act accordingly.
- Inform their Clubs of requirements made by the IRFU concerning Age Grade/ Youth Players.
- Ensure that they are in a position to respond accurately and promptly to queries from the IRFU as to the welfare of Age Grade/ Youth Players in their club generally or in relation to any specific incident which may occur.
- Be the contact person in the club for the Statutory Authorities regarding the welfare of Age Grade Players who are members of the club.

6.00 GUIDELINES FOR BEST PRACTICE.

- The guidelines for Best Practice for Clubs are contained in the IRFU Child Welfare Policy Document.

- Included in the Child Welfare Policy Document are detailed guidelines for clubs on the following areas of particular relevance:
 1. Administration & Regulations
 2. Substances & Substance Abuse
 3. Bullying
 4. Hosting a Match or an Event at a Club
 5. Photographic Equipment & Mobile Phones
 6. Supervision & Safety
 7. Travelling with Age Grade / Youth Players
 8. Volunteers and Recruitment
 9. Reporting Abuse.

- As well as the areas outlined above, Killorglin Rugby Club will act within the guidelines laid down by the IRFU in relation to matters such as Advertising, Sponsorship, Alcohol & Drugs particularly as they apply to Age Grade / Youth Rugby.

- Killorglin Rugby Club will act within the guidelines laid down by the IRFU in relation to Garda vetting of all club coaches, assistants and club officers.

- As stated previously Killorglin Rugby Club have drawn up this Code of Ethics with reference to IRFU Strategies to support Age Grade/ Youth Rugby
 1. **Long Term Player Development Pathway** - Ensure a quality experience throughout all levels of participation for players/ coaches and administrators.

 2. **Regulations for Leprechaun, Mini and Youth Rugby** - To monitor how these games are played.

3. **Child Welfare Policy** - To define roles and guide clubs and volunteers on these issues ensuring best practice in all rugby activities.
4. **Codes of Conduct** - To ensure participants understand and adhere to what is expected of them when involved with age grade rugby activities.
5. **Player registration** - To ensure players are registered with their club and branch.
6. **Committees (Mini and Youth)** - To administer, guide and develop rugby at these levels.
7. **Child Welfare Officers** - To ensure the implementation of IRFU Child Welfare Policy at club/ branch and national level and to represent the interest of the player.
8. **Coaching courses (Mini/ Foundation & Level 1)** - To have qualification opportunities for coaches ensuring best practice.
9. **IRB Rugby Ready Programme** - Good practice models for physical conditioning; technique, injury prevention and management