



# NLD RFU

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, LINCOLNSHIRE & DERBYSHIRE  
RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

HONORARY PRESIDENT 2014 - 2015 : PHILIP CASS

## **FAO Coaches / Managers U16-19 / Club Honorary Secretaries / Chairman**

The time and effort you give to coaching boys in the 16-19 age groups is much appreciated, your work is essential for the Adult game to survive. Moving boys from the junior section into the senior section is a challenge for all and there are different views as to how rugby for 16-19's is managed.

Regardless of the age from U16-19 we must still abide by the rules set out by the RFU in Regulation 15. It has come to the attention of NLD RFU that there are some member clubs not abiding by Regulation 15 and as a consequence they are exposing themselves to potential problems. Please take the time to read the information below which is aimed specifically at U16+.

### **General Information**

It is the Constituent Body and its member clubs' responsibility to ensure the U19 Law Variations, Regulation 15, together with the Safeguarding Regulation (Regulation 21) is adhered to. These have been devised to assist in developing young rugby players safely by the RFU whose aim is for rugby to be seen as an attractive, fun and enjoyable sport for all to enjoy.

Clubs not adhering to the regulations may find their Insurance invalid in the case of serious injury as well as facing possible disciplinary action. Club Coaches are responsible for ensuring a safe playing environment and may expose themselves to litigation in the case of serious injury particularly where they have not followed RFU Regulations. We are all in this for the same reason and the last thing we want is to see any hard working volunteers put themselves or their clubs in a vulnerable position.

This guidance sets out to provide positive recommendations and best practice. Clubs and schools must ensure their Lead Coaches and Team Managers are aware of their responsibilities under the relevant regulations. The welfare of the young players must be the paramount criteria for any decisions and should be based on the personal development and enjoyment of the players.

Every effort should be made to ensure that players get the best possible experience from being in an age grade rugby squad.

### **Playing out of Age Grade**

Playing a young person out of their age grade, either 'up' or 'down', requires careful assessment by a suitably experienced person. Any decision should take into account the following points and should be governed by what is in the best needs of the individual:

- The social and personal development of the young player
- The physical development of the individual in relation to the rest of the team
- The skill level of the individual
- The position that they are playing with in a team
- The level that they are playing is appropriate
- The impact this will have on others in the team and opponents



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A player can play for an age group one year above, if they are eligible for that season. i.e. U16 can play 'up' to U17 or u17 to u18's. A copy of the NLD Playing Out of Age Grade form (see web site) should be completed and requires a parental consent signature. In NLD sanctioned competitions the forms need to be carried to all matches.

When assessing an U16 or an U17 for playing up two age grades additional care is needed to be satisfied that the player is capable of doing so in the context of the planned playing & training programme. That assessment must be done by a suitably qualified person (level 2 coach). The Out of Age Grade form should be completed and signed by the coach and parents. However, this does not apply to boys playing the front row. Please note that U16's playing up to U18's are not allowed in the front row of the scrum. The age dates for youth rugby are 31st August / 1st September – which is different from adult rugby – which is player's birthday.

In any U19 NLD sanctioned match an U17 with prior written permission of their parents and written notification to the chairperson of the U13-U19 Clubs Competitions committee may be allowed to play up two years in to the U19 competition, U16 Players are not allowed to play in U19's Matches.

**PLAYING DOWN – this is not allowed under any circumstances unless dispensation has been granted by the NLD Safeguarding Team.**

Requests will be considered following the guidance set out on the NLD website: [Playing Out of Age Grade Guidance Notes](#) and [Playing Out Of Age Grade Form](#).

Please be aware that it is likely that formal requests may only be approved in exceptional circumstances where there are physical or development reasons which mean that it would be more appropriate to play a year down.

It is good practice for Managers or Coaches to contact oppositions each at least 48 hours' prior to a game whenever a selected a player is "playing down". Clear communication is key with any decisions made based around the best interest of all players.

My apologies for the length of this communication but hopefully it will remind you and your club of your responsibilities to adhere to Regulation 15. It is meant to draw your attention to the potential exposure a serious injury occurring on the field of play could lead to. Regardless of whether you agree with Regulation 15 it is implemented by the RFU and we must follow it all times.

We are keen to ensure that as many youngsters as possible can play the game in a safe and enjoyable environment and again thank you for your continued support of the game that we all love!

Kind regards

**Tracy Edmundson**  
**Honorary Secretary**  
**NLD RFU Ltd**  
**6<sup>th</sup> November 2014**