

THE RUGBY FIVES ASSOCIATION

Equity Statement

Principle

The RFA recognises the need to be vigilant in combating inequality in Rugby Fives (fives), particularly in relation to gender, race and disability.

Gender

The RFA supports all initiatives to introduce fives to more women and girls (women). Efforts will be made to ensure that:

- Coaching reaches as many women as possible
- Women are encouraged to play for fives clubs in friendly games and matches
- Competitions willingly accept women and women-only competitions are encouraged.

Drugs

The RFA will not tolerate the use of performance enhancing drugs by a player under any circumstances. Any abuse will lead to severe disciplinary action against the individual concerned.

Race

The RFA believes that fives has always been a multi-racial sport, and the Association will be vigilant in seeing that this spirit continues.

Disability

The RFA is conscious of the need to promote fives to those with disabilities.

More detailed statements are attached relating to:

- Child protection
- Disability
- Equal opportunities
- Risk assessment – Control Measures
- Racial equality

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Child Protection Safeguards

The Children Act 1989 defines children as those under the age of 18 and it is concerned with the protection of children from any form of abuse. Abuse is illegal.

Policy Statement

The RFA seeks to safeguard all children involved in RFA activities from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. The RFA will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in RFA activities through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by the RFA.

The Different Types of Abuse

- Over-zealous coach
- Physical abuse through over-training
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse through bullying and pressure to succeed.

Good Practice Guidelines

Anyone working with children within the game of Rugby Fives should

- Be professional and maintain the highest standards of personal behaviour
- Always work in an open environment (eg avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication)
- Treat all young people equally, and with respect and dignity
- Always put the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance from players
- Be an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of young people, avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- Be aware of physical contact with a player when helping to develop a game skill. This might be interpreted wrongly by the player or an observer
- Not respond to any form of sexual innuendo
- Ensure, as far as possible, that they are not alone when working with young players.

What to do if a Problem does occur

Report any concerns within the area of Child Protection to the General Secretary.

Do not discuss an allegation or suspicion with another person, other than the police, before the General Secretary has been contacted.

Make a record of any relevant details and information, including the nature of the allegation, background information, the period of time involved and the degree to which the information is known to be fact rather than opinion or hearsay. These records should be retained indefinitely.

Make no comment to the media.

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Disability Statement

Many people with minor disabilities could play fives and, if they wished to do so, they would be welcomed into the fives-playing community. (Over the years, a number of disabled people have reached a very commendable standard despite what some people might consider to be more than minor disabilities, eg having the use of only one arm in a game for the successful playing of which, one of the basic requirements is a good degree of ambidexterity).

The RFA's risk assessment document indicates the hazards associated with the game and should be carefully studied by disabled players before going on court, so that they are fully aware of the potential hazards.

No special forms of the game have been developed to enable severely disabled persons to play and it is difficult to see how the game could be adapted for such persons. However, the RFA would be willing to investigate the possibility of adapting the game to make allowance for their disabilities.

For enquiries, contact:

Andy Pringle – General Secretary
66 Brayburne Avenue
Clapham
London
SW4 6AA

or visit our website at: www.rfa.org.uk

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Equal Opportunities Statement

The RFA is wholly opposed to any form of discrimination against players or would-be players on grounds of their age, sex, sexual orientation or ethnicity. Disabled persons whose disabilities do not put them at risk of injury should be encouraged to play but it should be noted that there are no specially modified forms of the game to enable more seriously disabled players to participate. It should also be noted that fives courts are neither numerous nor evenly distributed throughout the country and that the majority of them, being in schools and universities, are not automatically accessible to the general public.

For more information about the RFA, contact:

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Racial Equality Statement

The Rugby Fives Association is committed to achieving equal opportunities and making fives accessible to all.

The Association pledges to:

- Challenge and remove racial discrimination in Rugby Fives
- Encourage people from all communities to become involved in the sport
- Welcome players and spectators from all communities, and protect players and spectators from racial abuse and harassment
- Develop the best possible racial equity policies and practices that are subject to regular review and update
- Celebrate cultural diversity in Rugby Fives

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