



## Underage Rugby Policy

## INTRODUCTION

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This document sets out rugby policies of Garryowen FC so that all members of Garryowen, whether they are coaches, parents or players, know what's expected of them and what they can expect from their child's experience from a rugby perspective.

## CHILD CENTRED COACHING

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### OVERVIEW

In terms of child centered coaching, we recognise that all children are different in their own way, have very different objectives for what they want out of sport compared to adults (coaches and parents) and mainly just want to have fun. Everything we do in our Underage structures must be done with the goals and aspirations of children in mind, not coaches and parents. In GFC we aspire to provide a safe and fun environment for all of our players and challenge and develop them appropriately.

### QUOTE....

“Child-centred coaches understand that all players learn in different ways. They appreciate that children are all at varying levels cognitively, physically and emotionally. They understand the process is more important than any score line. Taking this into account they create an environment that provides structure, but — more importantly — provides space for exploration. They focus on the child's effort and praise positive behaviour rather than a specific end result. Ultimately, this way, players are more engaged, more excited and have a blast as they learn. (Obviously, as players get older we can increase the amount of coach direction relative to the situation and level of sport they are playing).”

FROM COACHING IRELAND:

“All too often in the past, programmes offered to children in sport are scaled down versions of adult activity. Coaching was conducted in the main without sufficient regard to the principles of child development. Children's needs in sport are different to the needs of other populations; therefore the coaches of children need to be equipped with specific knowledge, skills and competencies to fulfil the needs of children.

Children want different things from their sport participation and require different approaches given their stage of development both physically and mentally. And by the way, very few children will ever be elite athletes, but if we get it right at this early stage, a higher proportion of them will be equipped with both movement skills and love of activity, to remain active into their adult years and lead a healthy lifestyle. The stakes are high!”

## SCOPE

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The policies outlined in this document refer to rugby related policies for mini and youths rugby in Garryowen FC only. Policies related to other areas and activities such as Child Welfare, touring, fundraising, etc. are documented separately.

## DEFINITIONS/TERMINOLOGY

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- Stage 1 (Mini) Breakdown
  - Mini 1: U6-U7
  - Mini 2: U8-U9
  - Mini 3: U10-U11
  - Mini 4: U12
- Stage 2 (Youths)
  - U13-U15
- Stage 3 (Youths)
  - U16-U18

## IRFU LONG TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

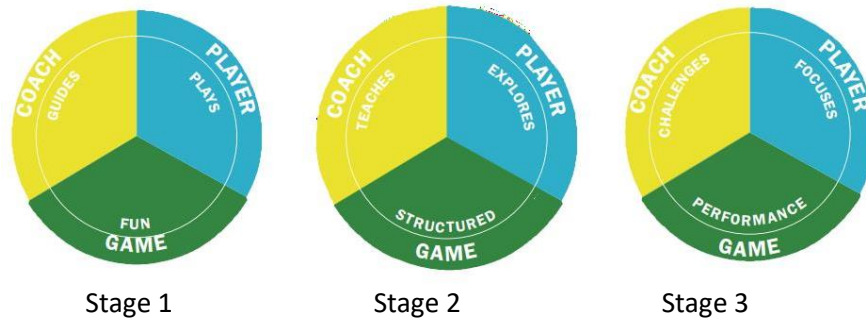
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By and large, the policies in this document are set out in line with the IRFU's Long Term Player Development plan. This plan is representative of similar athlete development models across various sports and governing bodies around the world.

Rugby is regarded as a late specialisation sport – in that respect, it is generally accepted that, due to the broad breadth of skills (technical, physical and mental) employed in rugby, specialisation is managed according to the development age and capacity of the athlete. Each stage of development is in accordance with accepted mental, physical, cognitive and emotional milestones in the development of athletes. As a club, and as coaches, it is important to be cognitive of that but it is equally important to recognise that not all players develop in the same way and at the same rates and the challenge is to

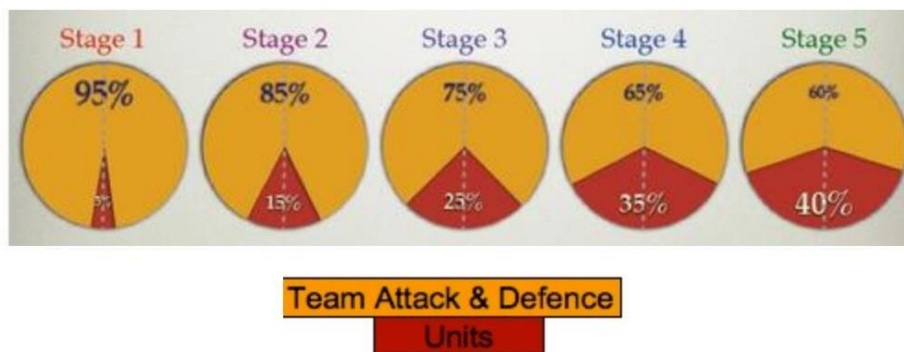
meet the needs and expectations of the players and squad as a whole.

The following diagram gives a breakdown of the general approach and expectations of players and coaches for each stage of development relevant to underage rugby.



This is a general guideline for the nature of the relationship between the player and coach and how games are seen at each level.

In analysing the needs at each level we must recognise the “reality of the game”. It’s an accepted coaching paradigm that we train as we play, and the reality of the game at each level shows a different picture for how the games are played depending on the development level of the children playing. This shows a vastly different profile for how the game is played at Stage 1 versus how it is played at Stage 3, for example. This should be reflected in how children are coached at each level and in the content of the sessions.



“Units” refers to set piece such as scrum, lineout and restarts. “Team Attack & Defence” refers to the open play. The various parameters underlining each stage of development are set out in the following

breakdown. The sections relevant to Garryowen FC underage are “Fundamental”, “Learn To Play And Practice” and “Train To Train”. This should be an overall guide for how players are coached at each level.

# LONG TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

STAGE		FUNdamental			LEARN TO PLAY AND PRACTICE
CHRONOLOGICAL AGE		5-7	7-10	10-12	12 - 14
DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE		Early Childhood - Late Childhood			Late Childhood Early Puberty
SUMMARY		"Fun. Safety, Basic Skills and Understanding"			"Safe and Enjoyable experience of the 15-a-side game"
WINDOWS OF OPTIMAL TRAINABILITY		FUNdamental Movement Skills First Speed Window F ; 6-8; M: 7-9			FUNdamental Sports Skill Major Motor Learning Window
PLAYER CAPACITIES	TECHNICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual Skills</li> <li>Intro. to Unit Skills</li> <li>Intro. to Tackling at Phase 2</li> <li>Intro. to Continuity Skills at Phase 3 Mini</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further development of Individual and Unit Skills</li> <li>Intro. to Position Specific Skills</li> </ul>
	TACTICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pass backwards</li> <li>Offside</li> <li>Go Forward</li> <li>Support</li> <li>Continuity (Phase 2 Mini)</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify with Positional role</li> <li>Basic Attack and Defence principles</li> <li>Basic Tactical preparation – awareness of Opposition</li> </ul>
	PHYSICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ABCs of movement</li> <li>Co-ordination and Manipulation</li> <li>Flexibility</li> <li>Speed and Locomotion</li> <li>Warm-up / Cool Down</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agility</li> <li>Flexibility</li> <li>Co-ordination and Manipulation</li> <li>Balance – static and dynamic</li> </ul>
	MENTAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-confidence</li> <li>Self-esteem</li> <li>Positive attitude to sport</li> <li>Tolerance</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goal setting- short term</li> <li>Patience</li> <li>Control</li> <li>Concentration</li> </ul>
	LIFESTYLE / PERSONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social skills</li> <li>Fairness</li> <li>Self-control</li> <li>Creative thinking</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal responsibility</li> <li>Interpersonal skills</li> <li>Ambition to improve</li> </ul>

TRAIN TO TRAIN	TRAIN TO COMPETE	TRAIN TO WIN	RETIREMENT/ RETENTION
15 – 17 +/- & ADULT to JUNIOR 2	18 – 21 +/- & ADULT JUNIOR 1 AND ABOVE	21 +/- & SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE	Enter at any stage
Early Puberty Late Puberty	Late Puberty Early Adulthood	Early Adulthood Adulthood	
"The performance of Rugby Skills to achieve the Principles of Play in a match"	"The performance of Multi-Functional Roles under match conditions"	"Improvisation and Problem-solving under match conditions"	'To enjoy a healthy lifestyle & retain participants for administrative, coaching, officiating, mentoring or supporting roles'
Build the Engine Endurance with the on-set of PHV Strength with the on-set of menarche for females And 12-18 month after PHV for males Second Speed Window F: 11-13; M: 13-16	Individualise and optimise fitness	Individualise and maximize fitness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unit and Ind. Skills used to achieve Team Play</li> <li>Development of Position Specific Skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of Functional Roles and problem-solving abilities within Individual, Unit and Team skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mastery of Individual and Position Specific skills at a High-Performance level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain appropriate recreational interest</li> <li>Apply knowledge in coaching / mentoring / tutoring capacity.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding "Game Plan"</li> <li>Implement Patterns of Play</li> <li>Selection of Tactical options</li> <li>Pressure – achieving the Principles of Play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement problem-solving strategies</li> <li>Identities of Rugby</li> <li>Develop Mini-unit strategies</li> <li>Game Appreciation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Performance Analysis</li> <li>Ability to Adapt Tactical strategies during a match</li> <li>Prioritise Pressure – Possession / Position / Points</li> <li>Identify Opposition tactical strengths and weaknesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain appropriate recreational interest</li> <li>Apply knowledge in coaching / mentoring / tutoring capacity.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strength</li> <li>Power</li> <li>Speed and Acceleration</li> <li>Pre-habilitation</li> <li>Sports specific multi-activity endurance</li> <li>Individual specific flexibility due to PHV</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-sprint Endurance</li> <li>Strength and Power</li> <li>Speed, Agility &amp; Quickness</li> <li>Position specific conditioning</li> <li>Periodised training</li> <li>Recovery routines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-sprint Endurance</li> <li>Strength and Power</li> <li>Speed, Agility &amp; Quickness</li> <li>Position specific conditioning</li> <li>Periodised training</li> <li>Recovery routines</li> <li>Individualised programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep active through recreational and other sporting activities</li> <li>Flexibility, endurance, strength training</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Motivation</li> <li>Goal setting – medium term</li> <li>Determination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-match preparation</li> <li>Controlled breathing</li> <li>Coping with Arousal and Anxiety</li> <li>Goal setting – long term</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental relaxation</li> <li>Imagery</li> <li>Coping strategies</li> <li>Self-Awareness</li> <li>Profiling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjustment to non-participation environment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent thinking</li> <li>Ambition – career options</li> <li>Self-identity</li> <li>Role model role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principle-centred values</li> <li>Life management</li> <li>Self-reliance</li> <li>Coping with failure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-reliance</li> <li>Patience to achieve long-term goals</li> <li>Positive use of Power / Influence</li> <li>Life management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursue personal &amp; family goals</li> <li>Pursue further self-development</li> <li>Possible engagement in rugby development initiatives</li> <li>Appropriate nutrition</li> </ul>



# MIDWEEK TRAINING

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## MINI (Stage 1)

### Policy

Midweek training policy for Mini Rugby is as follows:

- Mini 1: None
- Mini 2: Club organised FUNdamental movement session from September until April, generally on Wednesday evenings. These sessions will be 1 hour in duration, **maximum**. This may be expanded to include earlier parts of the season. These sessions are **optional**.
- Mini 3 & 4: Club organised FUNdamental movement session, combined with a cut down rugby session, from September until April, generally on Wednesday evenings. The movement part of these sessions will be 45 minutes and content will be provided by Setanta College. The rugby part of these sessions will be 20 minutes, **maximum**, content will be provided by GFC Rugby Development and the session will be provided by GFC Rugby Development, Setanta College or squad coaches for the participating age grades. If the squad coaches involved in the session need help with any of the activities then GFC Rugby Development will be available to go through the content with them. These sessions are **optional**.
- Duration of these sessions must not be exceeded (see section on Session Duration).

### Background and Justification

The major tenet of Stage 1 development in the long term athlete development plans of all major sporting organisations is fun. Unfortunately, there is a tendency towards early specialisation – the race to do too much too early in terms of the quantity or technical level of training - and competitiveness, which is in no way a factor of mini rugby, nor should it be. This policy seeks to ensure that while the

players are at mini level an emphasis is placed on enjoyment of the game while also exposing our children to movement skills which are vital to development as rugby players. The major factor in this policy is that mini players do not need to, and should not, train more than once a week for rugby. This especially applies to the perceived need to “be competitively prepared” for blitzes, which in itself shows a desire to compete.

It must be remembered that kids do multiple activities which take various forms including sports (hurling, football, soccer, etc), music (guitar, piano, etc.) and other school based activities as well as homework. Parents and coaches must appreciate that the breadth of these activities can have an effect on players and parents and, while everybody wants to be seen to be taking a full part in the training schedule, a part of it must be optional and provide variety.

## YOUTHS (Stage 2 & 3)

### Policy

Midweek training policy for youths is as follows:

- Stage 2 - At least 1 pitch session and 1 gym session (not including a match)
- Stage 3 – At least 1 pitch session and 1 gym session (not including a match)
- If there isn't a match on Sunday then there will be a training session instead.

### Background and Justification

At youths level the club feels it is appropriate to challenge players in terms of the technical level and quantity of training. There are plans to offer a midweek gym session to Stage 2 players. These gym sessions will transition the players to resistance training under appropriate guidance of a trained strength and conditioning coach, building on the fundamental movement skills instilled from early levels.

# GAME TIME

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## MINI

### Policy

Mini 1-4: All players will have equal game time in all games.

### Background and Justification

Mini grade players in particular place participation and inclusion as probably their highest aspirations.

Fulfilling these aspirations ensures that the child gets personal fulfilment and builds a love for the game and our club. Since there is no competition at mini level this removes the need for coaches to be concerned about the outcome regardless of the playing ability of the players.

## YOUTHS

### Policy

- Players must have at least 50% game time across the season for any games in which they were available. Availability must include a fair balance of friendly and competitive matches.
- Game time levels must be as close as possible to compliance on at least a monthly basis, not just across a season.
- Management teams must endeavour to facilitate as many friendlies as possible on weekends where there is no competitive fixture is taking place.
- It is acceptable and appropriate for management teams to target players for games against opposition that is appropriate for their level of development. This doesn't imply an acceptance of "stacking" teams for certain opposition and, in particular for teams U13 and U14, a goal of mixed ability selections must be sought.

- Game time for subs at Stage 2 (U13, U14)
  - 8 subs on for at least 25 mins (half match)
- Game time for subs at Stage 3 (U16, U18/U18.5)
  - 4 subs on for at least 20 mins
  - 4 subs on for at least 15 mins
  - Given the LTPD parameters for Stage 3 where performance is an important aspect and goal of player development, sometimes in games this game time policy goal may not be achieved but it mustn't become the norm.
- Management teams must log the following data which shall be used to support selection decisions
  - Training attendance for all players.
  - Game minutes for each player, per game.
  - Did a players start or bench in the game.
  - Player position for each game.
  - Whether a game is competitive or not.
  - Whether players are available for fixtures or not.

#### Background and Justification

Game time is probably the single most controversial issue at youths level. It is highly emotive due to the perception that one child is not treated as fairly as another. The challenge with Youths rugby is to give appropriate game time to players to develop them but also participate in competitions when there is an expectation of trying to win. Parents often complain about game time levels for their children in terms of not getting enough game time, not getting enough starts, not getting enough starts in competitive fixtures or even not getting enough starts in a particular position.

This policy seeks to ensure that players achieve a fair level of game time in the context of their level of

development. While game time is a vital component in the development of a player it is not the most important one, which is training. To that end, each management team must record the data as above and the underage committee hopes to be able to provide an Excel template which just requires basic input of game time, starts and training attendance data to provide the required information as efficiently as possible.

It's important to note that it's most likely not possible to provide equal game time to all players across a squad due to the varying development levels of all players and the different rate and stages at which they improve. This can be especially difficult in our club where we tend to have bigger squads and so the impact can be felt most. This is where it is vital that management teams work hard to get friendlies to get game time for players and against opposition where they can develop their confidence in a structured manner.

# SQUAD STRUCTURE

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## STRUCTURE

- Head Coach
- Assistant Coach(es)
- Manager
- Kit Man
- First aider(s)

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Head Coach
  - Liaise With
    - Team Manager
    - Assistant Coaches
    - Underage Committee
    - Technical Director(s) of Underage/Garryowen Rugby Development
    - Parents

- Role
  - Mini
    - The role of the Head Coach is to ensure sessions are safe and the kids enjoy rugby while also learning the very basics of the game by leading the management team, in line with the IRFU LTPD. They must ensure compliance with club rugby policy including game time, selection and session content.
  - Youths
    - The role of the Head Coach is to realise the team potential with regard to performance and results through leading the management team, in line with the IRFU LTPD. They must ensure compliance with club rugby policy including game time, selection and session content.
- Objectives
  - Develop and implement an operational plan for the squad.
  - Oversee the ongoing development of all players during the year.
  - Identify and select appropriate coaching staff to assist with the preparation of the team.
  - Plan, prepare and manage the team for any blitzes or matches.
  - Maintain all administration requirements in keeping with the position.
  - For Stage 3 and late Stage 2, develop and maintain a team play book to assist players and coaches in preparing for matches



- Assistant Coaches
  - Liaise With
    - Team Manager
    - Head Coach
    - Parents
    - Underage Committee
    - Technical Director(s) of Underage/Garryowen Rugby Development
  - Role
    - The role of the assistant coach is to support the head coach in achievement of objectives.
  - Objectives
    - To participate in season and session planning
    - To assist head coach in implementation of session plan in sessions
    - For Stage 2 and 3 to ensure units perform within agreed game plan.
    - To coach individual and, for Stage 2 and 3, unit skills.
    - To assist and collaborate with Head Coach in developing and implementing team play book.

- Manager
  - Liaise With
    - Team Management
    - Underage Committee
    - Parents
  - Role

- To carry out the administration and planning of all squad activities.
  - Act as liaison between Management and Players.
  - Ensure squad operates within the agreed club structures and rugby policies in conjunction with Head Coach.
  - Track game time data for underage committee and parents.
- Objectives
    - To support the Team Coach regarding requirements for all squad activities.
    - To look after the wellbeing of group from assembling to dispersing for all activities.

# HEAD COACH ROTATION

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## POLICY

Beginning in season ending 2018, the Head Coach position in each squad must rotate such that no one person can assume the position for more than 2 years in a row. The 2 year rotation will de facto begin from start of season 2016/2017.

## BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Traditionally in our club the coaching team structure is set at U6 level and remains the same up until U15 or later. While this is a great way of providing continuity for all involved it doesn't provide an opportunity for other coaches to develop and also means that players mainly listen to the same voice all the time.

This policy seeks to foster the development of all our coaches by encouraging them to assume the role of head coach for 2 seasons. It will challenge them to step up and afford head coaches the opportunity to be an assistant coach which in itself offers its own challenges. There is still an expectation of collaboration between the coaches in planning of sessions and seasons to ensure all are moving in the same direction, in agreement on technical direction and run effective sessions.

# APPROPRIATE AGE GRADE PARTICIPATION

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## MINI

### Policy

All players must play in the age-grade commensurate with their date of birth.

### Background & Justification

This is in compliance with IRFU Child Welfare guidelines. There is never a requirement for players to move up to another squad. Playing numbers are flexible at all mini grades and there is no instance in which a player's development will be pushed such that they will be used in a higher age grade.

## YOUTHS

### Policy

Players must play either in the age grade commensurate with their date of birth or, if deemed in the best interest of their development, because of pressure on another squad to field a competitive team or because a squad is not available at their own age grade, they may play in the age grade 1 year up from their own. Decisions on progressing players to upper age grades will be made by GFC Rugby Development along with the coaches of both squads involved and the parents of the players.

### Background & Justification

This policy is in compliance with IRFU Child Welfare guidelines. It is appropriate to play players at their own age grade but if a player is developed sufficiently (physically, emotionally, mentally and with appropriate skill level) and it is deemed necessary or beneficial for them to play up then that is acceptable. Flexibility is required to ensure we have squads to play matches so movement of players between squads is fine. Communication and good decision making are key.

# COACHING APPOINTMENTS

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## MINI

### Policy

Coaching teams from the previous season are invited to submit for reappointment. Head coach appointment must comply with policy in relation to head coach rotation. Underage Committee and GFC Rugby Development must have final say on all coaching appointments. All members of the coaching and management team must comply with any and all requirements for assuming the position, ranging from coaching qualifications to paid membership and Garda Vetting & IRFU Safeguarding. These criteria may evolve from season and are available from the Underage Committee on request.

## YOUTHS – STAGE 2

### Policy

Coaching teams from the previous season are invited to submit for reappointment. Head coach appointment must comply with policy in relation to head coach rotation. Underage Committee and GFC Rugby Development must have final say on all coaching appointments. All members of the coaching and management team must comply with any and all requirements for assuming the position, ranging from coaching qualifications to paid membership and Garda Vetting & IRFU Safeguarding. These criteria may evolve from season and are available from the Underage Committee on request.

## YOUTHS – STAGE 3

### Policy

Coaching teams will be appointed by the GFC Rugby Development (Director or Rugby, Technical Director Underage) and Underage Committee. This will be done in the best interests of producing talent for Garryowen adult rugby. All members of the coaching and management team must comply with any and all requirements for assuming the position, ranging from coaching qualifications to paid membership and Garda Vetting & IRFU Safeguarding. These criteria may evolve from season and are available from the Underage Committee on request.

## PLANNING & CONTENT

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### SEASON PLANNING

All coaches should be using some degree of season planning. This applies to all age grades. The degree and type of planning will differ depending on the age grade and development levels of the squad.

Season planning should be done in blocks of 6-8 weeks with reviews and tweaks based on feedback from games and blitzes. Feedback from blitzes/games will have varying degrees of impact on the content of sessions and deviations from your plan and this will vary hugely as the players get older. At Mini level, blitzes should be used as a basic indicator of skill levels and shouldn't sway to any great degree the content done on weekly basis. On the other hand, at U16 or U18 the performance of the team in certain areas of the game may prompt an immediate response in terms of what will be done in the next session. The season plan can be very basic and is there to ensure coaches cover the required content over the season with appropriate attention given to the content in the context of any competitions they may be participating in. In general though, GFC prefers if attention is given to coaching with the long term objectives and development of these players in mind rather than match prep for on the immediate horizon. Help is available any time from GFC Rugby Development on request for help in this regard.

### SESSION PLANNING

All coaches should prepare a plan for each session. This is best practice and in accordance with all IRFU coaching guidelines. Session plans will become more detailed the higher the stage in development and there are several different templates that can be used. They should also be circulated to all members of the coaching team prior to the session so that all are familiar with the content that will be covered, who's leading each activity, timings for each activity and the resources

(coaches/cones/balls/pitches/etc.) required for each activity. Sharing can be done using email, TeamApp or WhatsApp. The session plan should also be part of your overall season plan. We are conscious of the demands on coaches time and the voluntary roles they perform so in order for them and the players to get the best return for their time on the pitch we recommend a plan be completed prior to each session.

For lower age grades, 7 or 8 lines in a document/note/email will suffice. For older age grades, a more detailed plan can be done in email or a .doc template format and shared as above. The plan should be clear and should include details of all activities and timings. Copies of standard templates are available on request.

Sample sessions, in various templates, for all age grades are available. If you would like help in putting a session together then help is available. Please just ask. If GFC Rugby Development coaches are participating in a session they will generally provide coaches with a pre prepared plan or send the plan to the coach following the session in a structured format, or they may simply also ask the coach for the plan the coach would like to use.

## SESSION CONTENT

### MINI

The primary role of the coach at Mini age grades is to provide a safe environment, a fun session and develop the movement skills and very basic rugby skills of all players. Please refer to the earlier diagrams from the LTPD on the breakdown of game time for general movement versus set piece and the primary objectives of players and coaches at this level.

Please keep drills and reductions to an absolute minimum in terms of duration (5-10 mins max) – these should be used so that players get a general feel for the technique of the skill you are trying to coach.

We would also recommend that only one drill be used per session and that a whole-part-whole



approach be used in your planning so that you would begin with a game, identify, demonstrate and explain the theme and work-on for the session to the players, use a drill or reduction and then put the technique into a game based situation. There is no obligation to use contact based games in every session nor should that be the case. The primary focus is that it's safe and the players have fun. If any coach requires help at any time, either prior to a session, during a session or at any time during the season, there is help available from GFC Rugby Development.

In general, the current ratio of drills to games would be something like 3-4 drills to 1 game. This should be closer to 1 drill to 3 or 4 games and you should aim to do at least 10-15 minutes of fun, movement games in each session. It is a proven theory that children learn and enjoy more effectively with a “game sense” approach to coaching. In this sense, a game is an activity whereby the techniques experienced in reduced activities such as drills are put into a collective activity where they are experienced under pressure or in game realistic situations, often with modified rules or conditions. In this way players have more fun, relate to game situations better and develop skills from the techniques they have learned. From time to time GFC Rugby Development may assist in the running or planning of a session to ensure that it runs smoothly and that the players get the best experience from their time in Garryowen.

YOUTHS – STAGE 2

WIP

YOUTHS – STAGE 3

WIP

## SESSION DURATION

### MINI & YOUTHS

#### Policy

- Mini 1 – Session duration 60 mins. Rugby content 55 minutes.
- Mini 2 – Session duration 60 mins. Rugby content 55 minutes.
- Mini 3 – Session duration 70 mins. Rugby content 60 minutes.
- Youths Stage 2 – Session duration 75 minutes. Rugby content 65 minutes.
- Youths Stage 3 – Session duration 90 minutes. Rugby content 75 minutes.
- Notes:
  - All values above are **maximum** values. It is not intended that these durations would be used in every session.
  - In the early 9:30am rugby slot, coaches have a 1 hour for their session and must be off the pitch at 10:30am so that the next group can prepare and start.
  - At the 10:40am slot, coaches have 75 mins to prepare, execute and clear up after their session. Therefore, the rugby content itself should be no more than 65 minutes.
  - Effective planning, organisation and management of sessions will ensure that session duration targets can be met to maximise time usage.

## BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

This policy is driven by the needs of young players and the management of pitch space and time in the club. There is an element of respect required between coaching groups and squads to successfully implement policies such as this.

Players from the ages of 5 to 14/15 years of age have a limited span of attention. There is a very good

reason, for example, why classes in secondary school do not need exceed more than 40-45 mins. Session durations listed above also include water breaks. Coaches should try and be prepared before the session starts with a clear plan with clear objectives. It's a very good idea to keep the teaching points low so that the objectives will be retained by the players. All participants should be familiar with the plan and a number of activities can laid out on the training area ahead of the start of the session to keep a flow to the activities. We recognise that this is not always possible. But the session should be finished in time so that you finish at the appointed finish time and allow the following group to fairly get their allotted time.

Please do not start activities in the areas close to or around a session that is ongoing while you are waiting for them to finish as it can be a safety issue to players in your squad and the squad training beside you. This also mustn't be used to increase the duration of your own session. You must consider the needs of the children and not your own goals as a coach or parent.

## COMPLIANCE

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We recognise that coaches want to follow a coaching philosophy and parents have their own goals and aspirations for their children. However, the primary focus of this policy and everything we do in GFC Underage is around what's best for children in line with Child Welfare policies and regulations and the IRFU LTPD plan. This is the best formula for **all** children for retention, enjoyment and participation. This policy document has been developed in line with these principles and all coaches are expected to implement and use these policies at all times.

If coaches do not feel they are able to do so they should discuss with the Underage Committee and GFC Rugby Development. The Underage Committee may ask a coach to step aside if he/she is unwilling or unable to implement these policies, especially in relation to policies.



## Garryowen Underage Guidelines

Rev 1.

Stage	U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12	Junior Girls	U13	U14	U15	U16	U18
<b>Equipment</b>	1 Mini 1 Fun	1 Mini 1 Fun	1 Mini 2 Fun	1 Mini 2 Fun	1 Mini 3 Fun	1 Mini 3 Fun	1 Mini 4 Fun	2 Youths Fun	2 Youths League	2 Youths League	2 Youths League & Cup	3 Youths League & Cup	3 Youths League & Cup
<b>Game time</b>	Equal *3	Equal *3	Equal *3	Equal *3	Equal *3	Equal *3	Equal *3	Equal *4	Min 50% (Measure monthly)	Min 50% (Measure monthly)	Min 50% (Measure monthly)	Min 50% (Measure monthly)	Min 50% (Measure monthly)
<b>Midweek Training</b>	No	No	Schools FUNDO... Schedule	Schools FUNDO... Schedule	Schools FUNDO... Schedule	Schools FUNDO... Schedule	Schools FUNDO... Schedule	No	1	1	1	1-2	1-2
<b>Gym Session per week (Mutual neighbor)</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Away Games</b>	No	No	Per Month Munster Blitz Schedule	Per Month Munster Blitz Schedule	Per Month Munster Blitz Schedule	Per Month Munster Blitz Schedule	Per Month Munster Blitz Schedule	min 2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Thursday Park Half Time</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Participate in away Blitz in conjunction with Senior (All Year *2</b>	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
<b>End of year Medal &amp; Meet Santa &amp; Christmas</b>	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
	Head Coach	Head Coach	Head Coach	Head Coach	Head Coach	Head Coach	Head Coach	Head Coach	Head Coach	Head Coach	Head Coach	Head Coach	Head Coach

Game time

- \*1 All available squad players get equal game time throughout the season. For Thursday Park half time. All names to go in a hat and be selected. Turn back up names to be selected in case of dropout.
- \*2 Preparation to tour need to be presented to the Club Executive including a cost estimation and fundraising proposal. Tour can be domestic or European.
- \*3 Head Coach responsible to ensure that all available player get equal game time throughout the season. Team Manager must record Attendance Availability & game time for each player.
- \*4 Head Coach responsible to ensure that all available player get equal game time throughout the season. Team Manager must record Attendance Availability & game time for each player. Friendlier need to be organized to ensure their balance is maintained.



Rev.	Changes	Date
1b	Added note on Tag Rugby	10-Jan-2018
1c	Amended youths game time	13-02-2022