



Rugby Operating Plan 2019-2020

Providing Pathways into Rugby

Linlithgow Rugby Club aims to provide access into rugby at all ages for males and females of all abilities.

The earliest experience offered is at Age 2, with the **Tiny Reds** offering exercise and fun for youngsters, male and female, aged from 2 to 5 years. Small soft pink rugby balls are used and the aim is to have fun and to encourage youngsters to play and exercise under the guidance of a qualified coach. The **Tiny Reds** runs for a 6 week block in the late autumn / early winter indoors on the 3G surface.

For males and females of primary school age, the Club runs a **Wee Reds Micros** section (Primary 1 to Primary 3) with a non-contact introduction to rugby focusing on fun and simple handling skills. The group occasionally takes part in fun games with other clubs, but the main focus for the **Wee Reds Micros** is home-based sessions each Sunday morning from September through till end May. Over the winter months, all sessions are indoors on the 3G pitch.

The next progression is to Mini Rugby and the **Wee Reds Minis** operate four squads, one for each of the primary age groups from Primary 4 to Primary 7. All age groups are open to males and females, however we are planning to introduce a **girls only** team at P6/P7 level as part of our strategy of encouraging more females to play rugby. The **Wee Reds Minis** hold joint training sessions and play matches against other clubs most Sundays from September through to the end of May, with home-based training when no away sessions are scheduled. Training sessions also take place on Wednesday early evenings. Training is indoor during winter months (November through February) and there is a winter close-down of fixtures, but not training, from late December to early February.

The Club runs a **School of Rugby** in conjunction with partners Linlithgow Academy, West Lothian Council and Scottish Rugby. This involves specific curricular and extra-curricular rugby activities in Linlithgow Academy and the cluster primary schools, in addition to outreach activities to other secondary schools in the north of West Lothian. The curricular activities are integral to the wider Health and Wellbeing agenda within schools.

The Club operates the **Young Reds** with male teams at five age groups - S1, S2, S3/U15, U16 and U18. The U18 squad is open to male youngsters who have left school but are still under the age of 18.

The Club seeks to encourage **girls rugby** at secondary school age, both through the School of Rugby and through collaboration with other nearby rugby clubs (Livingston, Falkirk and Grangemouth) and has links to others (RHC and Lismore) to provide opportunities for **girls** to train for and play school age rugby.

Beyond the age of 18 years, the Club runs adult male rugby known as **The Reds**. At present, the Club has two regular teams playing league rugby (**Reds 1st XV** and **Reds 2nd XV**) with a third occasional team playing one-off social matches (the **Red Kites**).

The Club also participates in the **Tartan Touch** programme of Scottish Rugby and over the summer months runs weekly sessions open to all ages and genders, whether participants are Club members or not. This extends our offer for rugby as widely as possible across the community.

As part of the Sporting Memories' initiative, the Club runs a **Rugby Memories' Club** with a monthly social gathering and a separate monthly **Reds Walking Rugby** session. This is aimed at the older members of the Club and is open to anyone who wishes to come along and participate. In addition, the Club has the only **Rugby Club Male Voice Choir** in Scotland. It practises weekly throughout the year and participates in various concerts both locally and nationally.

Managing Transitions to Keep People Involved in Rugby

Experience has shown that several key transitions in playing rugby need to be managed effectively to support individuals to remain in rugby. The first major transition for young males is **between primary and secondary school**. Where the individual is staying within the state sector in West Lothian, then this transition is now effectively managed through the Linlithgow Academy School of Rugby, with its links to other secondary schools in the north of West Lothian. However, not all of the **Wee Reds Minis** move on to West Lothian secondary schools - some attend schools in the Falkirk Council area and this transition can be managed by the Club Development Officer, whilst others move on to independent schools and the link is then passed on to that school.

The second major transition for young males is on **leaving secondary school**. If the individual is under 18 years, then they can still remain within the **Young Reds** U18s. Once over that age (having left school) they move into adult rugby with **The Reds**. To aid this transition, U18 training is linked to adult rugby training for non-contact work and once individuals reach 18 years old, they may be integrated more fully into adult rugby. The Club also runs a scheme to encourage students in central Scotland to remain with the Club, by refunding travel costs to attend training and matches (at cost price and on receipt of travel invoices).

For **girls**, the transition from **primary to secondary school** is particularly major, as they move from being able to play in mixed rugby (primary age) to fully segregated rugby (secondary school age). To help prepare for this, the Club will run a **Wee Reds Girls** U12 squad in parallel with Mini Rugby. Players may elect to play within the **Wee Reds Minis** mixed squads at P6 and P7 levels, or play exclusively for the **Wee Reds Girls** U12, or mix the two with coaches consent and knowledge.

In addition to these two major transitions, the Club uses **Tartan Touch** as a means of attracting males and females of all ages to get involved with rugby.

Club Coaching Structure

The Club has a large number of volunteer coaches across all the teams and squads. The **coaching structure** seeks to ensure both a consistency of approach and a good communications / support group for coaches' development and application of skills. Within the structure key coaches are identified for each major playing section and these key coaches form a network to ensure consistent application of standards and practice.

Lead Coaches

P1/P2/P3	Rob Wakefield
P4/P5/P6/P7	Terence Vorster
S1/S2/S3	Euan Mochrie
U16/U18	Ian McLean
Senior	Dougie Thomson
Overall	David Mitchell

Coaches Training

The Club holds **three major coaches' meetings each season** to which all Club coaches are invited. We encourage coaches to develop themselves through participation in courses and training sessions run by **Scottish Rugby** and the Club provides funding on such courses for our volunteer coaches. In addition, the Club's Rugby Development Team works with coaches and carries out "**Coaching MOTs**" through the season. We identify for each coach their training plan and encourage them to develop to their fullest.

Coaching Topics for Start of Season Meeting

- Ensuring that minimum standards for all coaches (PVG, RugbyRight, First Aid) are met
- Confirmation of coaching list for season - allocation of appropriately qualified coaches
- Identification of training needs - UKCC Coaching Courses, Referee Courses, etc
- Any Law changes or variations and any Age Grade law changes or variations
- Refresher on game coaching principles

Coaching Topics for Winter Meeting

- Review of first few months of season
- Discussion of any changes needed to coaching structure
- Review of Child Protection issues - mini practical training session
- Analysis of any ongoing training needs

Coaching Topics for Spring Meeting

- Review of season
- Lessons learned
- Identification of coaches and duties for next season