OUR ETHOS

**APPENDIX 2**

***“Making a difference to Children’s lives through Rugby Union”***

***Coaching Philosophy and Advice – Gordano RFC***

Given that we are responsible for providing rugby coaching for your children, we believe that it is important that you understand our coaching philosophy and how we can work together to ensure that the maximum benefit for all concerned is obtained.

As coaches to your children, we are grateful that you entrust us with the wellbeing and development of your child on a weekly basis. We don’t see the time we spend coaching your child as a sacrifice but as gift. First and foremost, our aim is to develop the children socially. Sport is next and rugby is last.

The only coaching reality that a young person experiences in sport is the one that we create for them. So we create it for them not us.

The 5 key objectives for us are:

1. Enjoy the social experience
2. Have fun
3. Learn
4. Make friends
5. Smile at all times

We want to build a team of children who will not only play together on a Sunday but become great friends who will learn and grow together. We recognise that they will all develop at different speeds but as a team they will develop together. We also recognise that the game of rugby changes over time – the numbers in the team increase, we introduce tackling, rucking, mauling, scrummaging, we have forwards and backs – there is a position for everyone and their individual strengths will over time be utilised to their fullest. We want this group of players to still be playing together in 10 years’ time.

However, in order to achieve this we need the children to keep turning up on a Sunday morning, and that is why we so strongly believe that the focus has to be on them enjoying themselves and having **FUN**. We fully recognise that if they stop enjoying themselves they’ll find something else to do on a Sunday morning and will stop attending.

**We recognise that children are not mini adults**

Therefore, it is our coaching philosophy that everything we do must be child focussed and centred on it being fun for the children. To us this means trying to provide every player, regardless of ability and attendance, with an equal opportunity to participate in rugby - be it at training and or in matches. Therefore, in real terms our philosophy/aims mean that we will try to make the sessions and games fun and enjoyable for all of the children by way of the following:

* We will not differentiate the teams based upon perceived ability.
* We will not stream or select the children based upon perceived ability.
* We will not select teams based upon their previous attendance.
* We will not focus upon winning the games but in improving their social and rugby skills through the playing of games.
* We want to build their confidence and their ability to be creative.
* We will work on the skills required to play the various forms of rugby individually and in groups - whichever is most suitable.
* Whilst we want the children to be competitive when playing we are not concerned about the score-line but in the manner in which the game is played.
* We want the children to treat the winning and losing of games in the same way - with a smile on their face and having enjoyed the shared experience of playing a match with their friends.
* We want to focus on the positives, whether it be great sportsmanship, great teamwork, a great pass, a great tackle or a great try.
* We will be fair, balanced and consistent in our dealings with the children.
* On match days we would like them to be in the clubhouse after the game, eating their free hot dogs and feeling great about their individual involvement and their being part of a team.

Rugby is a difficult game and we accept that the children will make plenty of mistakes. They will drop catches, miss tackles/tags, run the wrong way etc etc. They will learn from these mistakes. They need to have the freedom to be creative in their play, to try things that might be difficult to them, and to know that they will not be criticised by anyone – coaches, parents and teammates - for making such wrong decisions or mistakes.  Consequently, as coaches we don’t highlight the negative and will simply look to improve all of their skills through our coaching.

As a club and coaching team, we recognise the need to engage with parents. We need you as Parents and Guardians to help us in this regard. We want you to encourage from the sideline and praise the positives after the session – be it at training or a game. Please don’t coach them or shout instructions when they’re playing as this can confuse them. We want them to make their own decisions and learn from those decisions.

In return, all we ask of the children is that on a Sunday morning they behave themselves, listen to us as coaches and try their best (feel free to remind them of all this). When playing against other teams they are representing not only us as their parents/guardians but Gordano Rugby Club and are therefore respectful of the opposition, the referee and the opposition coaches. Consequently, bad or disrespectful behaviour is the only thing that could cost them playing time.

If anyone has any issues with any of the foregoing, and specifically our approach to the coaching of your children, then please raise this with us at the earliest opportunity.