



Ellesmere
Co-ed 7-18 Day and Boarding

Ellesmere College: Rugby Safe

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LIFE:READY
Academic | Sports | Arts | Leadership | Global

The Benefits of Rugby

- In recent years rugby has come under scrutiny for issues relating to safety and in particular concussion. Despite some of these concerns, Rugby Union still continues to be one of the UK's most popular sports.
- Rugby Union attracts people due to the number of benefits that it provides those that play the game. Some of these include:

PHYSICAL BENEFITS

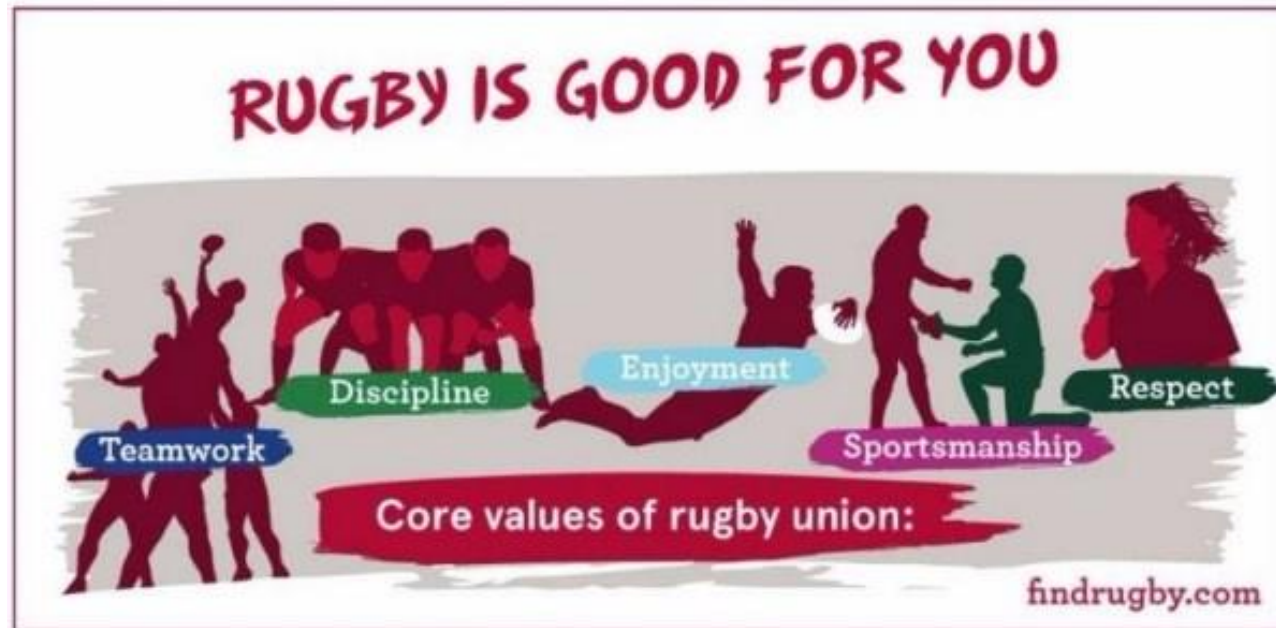
- Improved cardiovascular fitness
- Improved strength
- Improved Flexibility
- Increased Bone density

MENTAL/SOCIAL BENEFITS

- Improved mental health & wellbeing
- Improved social & interaction skills
- Improved resilience and perseverance
- Builds self esteem and self confidence
- Promotes team work and values

Rugby's Values

- In addition to physical and mental benefits, rugby is unique in the values that it promotes.
- Ellesmere College works with the RFU to promote the sport's core values which are:



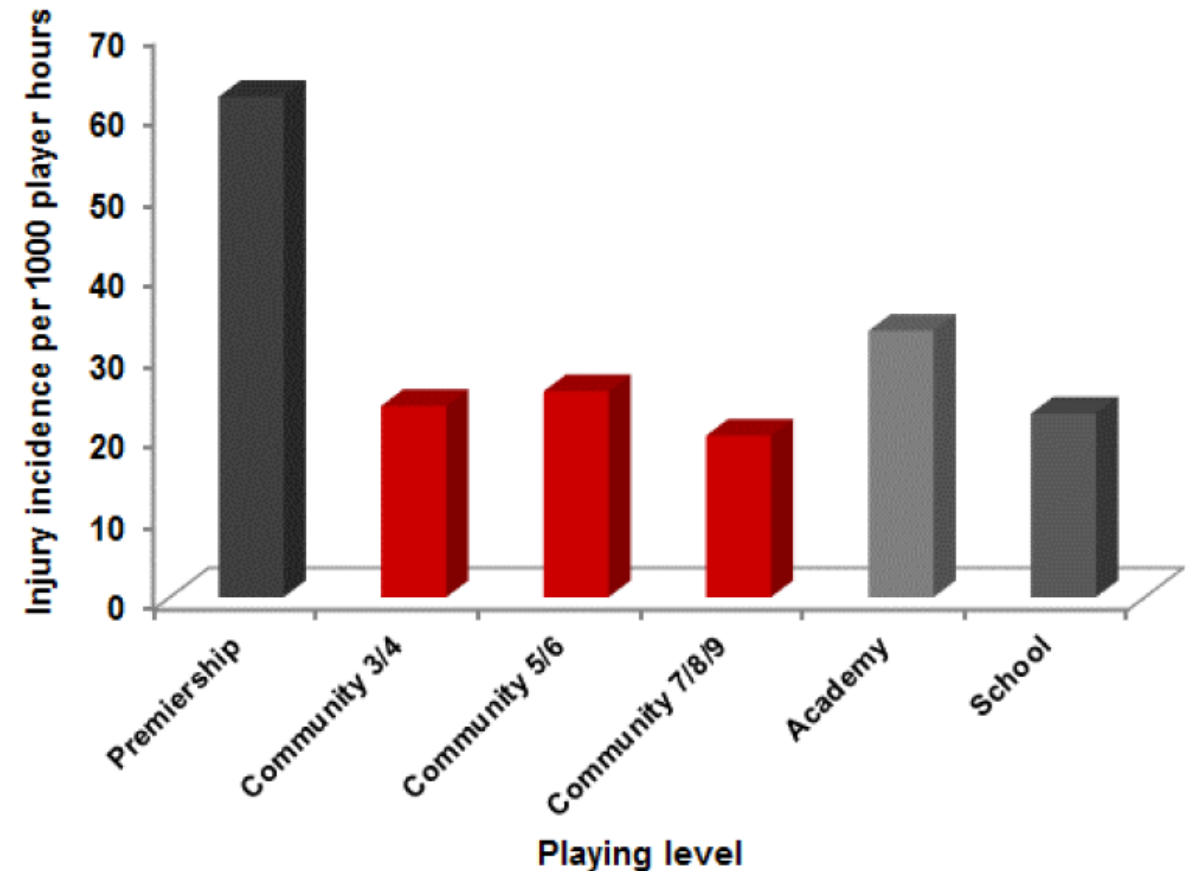
Getting the facts straight

- In recent years the number of injuries sustained in rugby has featured in a number of press articles.
- These headlines tend to be driven by the professional game which has evolved over the last ten years through different approaches in physical conditioning, coaching and strategy.
- However, the school rugby environment is a significantly different to the professional environment.
- A number of recent surveys on rugby injuries undertaken by the RFU and Bath University highlight the huge difference between the two.

Rugby's Values

The graph displays a comparison of injury rates for different levels of community rugby, professional rugby and schools rugby.

It is clear to see that there is a much lower number of injuries sustained in school level rugby in comparison to the professional game.



Data source: University of Bath/ RFU 2011

Differences: Professional vs. School

There are a number of reasons why there is such a large difference in the number of injuries between the game that we see on television and the game that is played in schools. Some of these factors include:

- There are fewer contact points in the schoolboy game and the game length is shorter.
- Fixtures are made with an intention of a fair and appropriate game not with the intention to just win against the opposition.

Differences: Professional vs. School

- Professional rugby is attritional but schoolboy rugby is based on evasion and developing skill.
- Areas of scrum and ruck are less combative. The introduction of the new scrum laws at schoolboy level have had a tremendous effect on the safety of this area of the game.
- The emphasis of Ellesmere Rugby is on fun!

Keeping School Rugby Safe: Risk Mitigation

- All sport has a degree of risk and we have always worked to provide appropriate levels of engagement across all our sports.
- Ellesmere College is committed to ensuring that player safety is the main priority.
- There are a number of ways in which our rugby programme caters for player's safety:

Risk Mitigation Strategies

Game variations

- We offer several non-contact versions of rugby such as Touch, Tag, Rugby X, Rugby Ready.
- These versions still promote game understanding while also being great fun.

Coaching priorities

We Teach safe technique with attention to three key areas, tackle, ruck and scrummage. We revise these techniques each season and safe tackle is built up gradually.

Contact minimisation policy

- We reduce the amount of contact during the week to reduce fatigue and therefore the chance of sustaining injury.
- The focus is on skill, tactics and personal development

Contact planning

- When training does need to include an aspect of contact it is carefully planned to incorporate player size, maturation and level of development.
- Sessions are managed and controlled in a developmental fashion.
- Coach player ratios – Contact sessions usually always include a minimum of two coaches per group.

Going the extra mile...



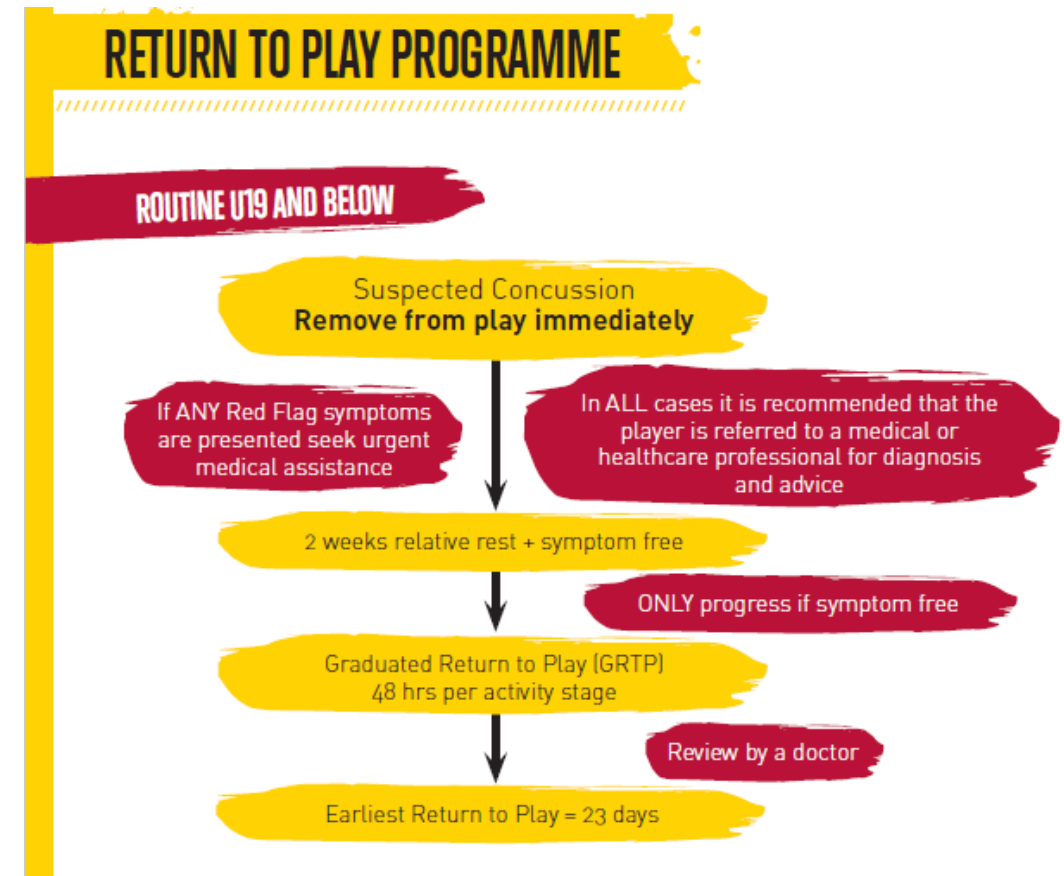
Working with the RFU

- Ellesmere College is an “RFU Affiliated school” and has been certified as rugby safe as it meets the strict criteria.
- Age Grade Rugby ensures that every player is able to enjoy rugby in a safe environment where they can develop their personal and social skills as well as a wide array of transferable multi-sports skills. This results in their holistic development as well as their life long involvement in rugby and other sports.
- Age Grade Rugby is the game for all players aged 6 – 18 in clubs, schools, colleges and within the representative pathway and it incorporates the rules of play, regulation, competition formats and the structure of the season.
- It is based on the principles of player centred, development driven and competition supported with the wants and needs of young people at its heart.



Concussion Management

- Rugby Union has been leading the way on concussion awareness and management.
- All of our Ellesmere College staff are qualified in the RFU “Headcase Concussion Awareness Course”.
- This qualification trains staff in spotting the signs of concussion and then ensuring that they follow the strict protocol for returning to play.
- Our Medical Staff ensure that any players who experience a concussion follow the player ‘Return to Play’ protocol pathway.



GRADUATED RETURN TO PLAY - ROUTINE U19 AND BELOW

STAGE	STAGE 1	STAGE 2A	STAGE 2B	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5	STAGE 6
Aim	Initial Rest (Physical and Cognitive)	Relative Rest Symptom-limited activities	Light aerobic exercise	Sport specific exercise	Non-contact training drills	Full contact practice	Return to sport
Activity	No exercise or driving. Minimise screen time. Consider time off or adaptation of work or study	Initially daily activities that do not provoke symptoms. Consider time off or adaptation of work or study	Brisk walking or stationary cycling at slow to medium pace. No resistance training	Running drills. No head impact activities	Harder training drills, eg, passing drills. May start progressive resistance training	Following medical review, participate in normal training activities	Normal game play
Goal	Recovery	Return to normal activities (as symptoms permit)	Increase heart rate	Add movement	Exercise, coordination, and cognitive load	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff	Exercise, coordination, and cognitive load
Time	24-48 hours	Minimum 2 weeks (incl. stage 1)	Minimum 48 hours	Minimum 48 hours	Minimum 48 hours	Minimum 48 hours	

If any symptoms occur while progressing through the GRTP programme, the player should rest a minimum 48 hours until symptom free and then may return to the previous stage.

REVIEW BY A DOCTOR

