PHYSICAL INTERVENTION IN RUGBY
TIVERTON RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Document owner	Club Safeguarding Officer
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Applies to	Mini, youth, Colts/U18, adult teams involving 17-year-olds, coaches, managers, parents/guardians, volunteers and visitors

Discipline on the field of play is the responsibility of the players and the referee.

Coaches, team managers, parents, spectators, and all other individuals present on match day, are not permitted to enter the field of play without the authority of the referee. All adults present at rugby matches must always promote good discipline among the players, both on and off the field, in line with the RFU's Core Values (TREDS)– Teamwork, Discipline, Respect, Enjoyment and Sportsmanship.

Any person entering the field without the permission of the referee could be subject to disciplinary action that may result in that individual being prevented from attending any rugby match. This includes any parent, carer, guardian, as well as all spectators, club members or associates, or any other individual who is present.

The RFU are seeing an increase of safeguarding and discipline cases involving coaches, parents, players and spectators entering the field of play to intervene, which often results in physical altercations and the endangerment of children. This behaviour is in direct contravention of the RFU TREDS values and the RFU has a very clear stance on this matter, being that we do not condone this behaviour under any circumstances. It is the intention of this guidance to educate individuals on what is and is not acceptable.

Physical Intervention
Physical intervention is only permissible when it is absolutely necessary to prevent children being hurt. In these situations, you must:

- Stay in control of your actions
- Consider your own safety. Always protect yourself where appropriate
- Use your voice first. Always try to diffuse a situation with words before physical intervention. If you must physically intervene, ensure you give a warning first

- Attend to your own player first. Physical intervention should be a last resort. If you feel that your player is at risk of harm, remove your player from the situation, rather than physically intervening with an opposition player
- Only use the minimal physical force to resolve the incident when necessary. This should be the minimum amount of force required, lasting for the shortest practical time. The purpose of this should be to restrain and reduce risk
- Avoid contact with buttocks, genitals and breasts. When intervening physically, make sure you avoid intimate areas of the body as well as the head and neck. This will significantly reduce the risk of an allegation of assault being made
- Never strike blows with an individual. When physically intervening to separate or restrain children, there is never a need for blows. Throwing blows during a physical altercation would significantly increase the risk of being accused of assault or aggression.

Any form of physical intervention should be to achieve an outcome that is in the best interests of the child, or children, whose behaviour is of immediate concern. Physical intervention must never be used as a form of punishment, by anyone involved in the game. By keeping to these principles, you may mitigate the risk of allegations being made against you.

Following Physical Intervention

The Club Safeguarding Officer and the Constituent Body Safeguarding Manager should be notified at the earliest opportunity of an incident of physical intervention which involves any possible dispute, as a complaint might be lodged with the RFU or the police by a parent whose child has been physically restrained. The incident should be recorded on the RFU Reporting Concerns form. This form should be sent to the RFU Safeguarding Team within 24 hours.