

PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES

The RFU positively encourages parents and spectators to take photographs of participants involved in rugby union to celebrate the ethos and spirit of the sport.

However, once a photograph has been taken it is important to maintain control of it to avoid it being misused. Any photograph (digital or printed) which is produced and released into the public domain may be misused by anyone as once this has been done, control has been lost. In this day and age when it is so easy to upload or email a photograph within seconds of it being taken, it is worth taking a moment to consider the issue of control.

Club Photographic Policy

Common sense should be used when clubs write their photographic policy as it is not the intention of the RFU to prevent photographs being taken for legitimate purposes. Care should be taken when placing photographic images on club websites and promotional material.

The key points are:

- Personal information which can lead to a child or vulnerable adult being identified should never be used. If it is necessary to name a child ensure you have written parental consent and have informed the parents as to how the image will be used. This is particularly important when issuing press releases and match reports
- Photographs should be of the activity or team, not on one individual
- Clubs should ensure they obtain parental consent for photographs to be taken whilst a child or vulnerable adult is either at the club or away fixtures. This can be done easily at the beginning of the season when obtaining contact information and membership details
- Children and vulnerable adults must be appropriately dressed when being photographed. It is never acceptable to capture any images in changing rooms, showers or at any time when players are dressing. Images should be neither sexual, of an exploitative nature nor open to misinterpretation or misuse
- Parents should be made aware if a film is being taken to be used as a coaching aid. Clubs and CBs should ensure that any footage will be carefully monitored and stored securely
- It is not an offence to take photographs in a public place. On privately owned or leased land it is the owner

who may regulate whether or not photographs may be taken. Clubs must have their own photographic policy appropriate for their own specific needs and circumstances

- When clubs meet for fixtures/festivals it is recommended that confirmation is obtained from each club that parental permission has been given for all the children or vulnerable adults participating. If there is a child who is the subject of a court order who should therefore not have their photograph taken, this should be addressed before the event
- Parents should be aware that they may be asked to register their intention to take photographs

Commissioning Professional Photographers & the Local Media

If the club commissions professional photographers or invites the press to cover an activity, ensure everyone is clear about each other's expectations. The key is to plan ahead and communicate early on. Clubs and CBs should:

- Ensure that the photographer has been appropriately vetted prior to the event
- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
- Inform them of the club's commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Establish who will hold the recorded images and what they intend to do with them
- Issue the professional photographer with identification, which must be worn at all times