



## 1. Playing Out of Age Grade: Key Points

- **Assessment Requirements:**
  - Before allowing a player to play up or down an age grade, an assessment must be completed by an experienced or qualified Level 2 coach, in line with **RFU Regulation 15** and the accompanying guidance.
  - Access **RFU Regulation 15 Guidance** [here](#).
- **Prioritise Safety:**
  - The ultimate consideration is the welfare and safety of the player and others involved. Refer to **Regulation 15** which emphasises this.
- **Obtain Necessary Consents:**
  - Always obtain consents from parents, schools, clubs, and the Constituent Body (CB) where needed.

## 2. Playing Up an Age Grade

- **U6 to U8:**
  - No specific consents are needed for non-contact rugby in internal club training matches (not against other clubs) within **Regulation 15.3.1 to 15.5**.
  - Activity must be recommended by the club/school.
- **U12 to U15:**
  - Players are allowed to train/play up one age grade if recommended by the player's club/school.
  - Consents Required: Parent and Club for clubs, or Head Teacher for schools.
  - An assessment is required using the **Playing Out of Age Grade form**.
- **U16 to U17:**
  - Players may train/play up one or two age grades, with specific restrictions (not in the front row if an U16 playing 15-a-side).
  - Consents Required: Parent and Club for clubs, or Head Teacher for schools.
  - Refer to **Regulation 15.3.2** for details.



### 3. Playing Down an Age Grade

- **Assessment & Consent:**
  - This is valid for one season only, and the player must remain in the lower age grade for that season.
  - **Regulation 15.4.1 and 15.4.2** apply for U9s to U19s who need to play down one age grade due to smaller stature or developmental/behavioural concerns.
  - **Consents:**
    - For U13 and below: Approval needed from the Constituent Body (CB) and Club for clubs, or the Head Teacher for schools.
    - For U14 and above: Parent and Club approval for clubs, or Head Teacher for schools.
  - Find the **Hampshire RFU Playing Out of Age Grade Form** [here](#).

### 4. Process and Documentation

- Use the **Hampshire Permission Form** for playing out of age grade (access [here](#)), which includes a space to add the name of the player's mentor.
- Ensure that the proposing coach is the one who conducts the player's assessment, as specified in Regulation 15.
- The Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO) must sign off on this process and keep records on the Club's Safeguarding Audit required by the RFU.

### 5. Monitoring and Mentorship

- Assign a mentor for players playing out of age grade. Ensure they understand their responsibilities and are fully briefed.
- The CSO should be involved from the beginning, tracking assessments, and documenting players who are playing out of age grade.
- The CSO must communicate with opposition coaches about any player playing out of age grade at least 48 hours before a match.

### Important References:

- **RFU Regulation 15 Guidance:** Full Document



## Hampshire RFU Guidance Sept 2024

- **Hampshire RFU Guidance Document:** The full guidance document can be downloaded [here](#).

By following this expanded guide, the Club Safeguarding Officer can ensure compliance with regulations and prioritize player safety in line with Hampshire RFU and RFU standards.