**SCHOOLS RUGBY LEAGUE – CHAMPION SCHOOL**

**TOURNAMENT RULES 2017/18**

1. **THE TOURNAMENT**

1.1 The schools tournament shall be conducted under the rules of the Rugby Football League (RFL) and shall be organised by the RFL through English Schools Rugby League (ESRL) Board.

1.2 Any team participating in the tournament shall agree to be bound by the RFL rules and regulations, Schools Rugby League tournament rules, the RFL Community Game disciplinary policy and any other as such adopted from time to time by ESRL Board.

**2. INSURANCE**

It is the responsibility of each participating school to ensure they have appropriate insurance cover in place for players in the event of injuries sustained in the tournament. The school upon request by the RFL must provide evidence of insurance.

**3. TOURNAMENT ENTRY**

3.1 Entry into the tournament shall be reviewed annually and applications must be submitted before the deadline provided by the designated organising officer.

3.2 The tournament will be open to any secondary school across England and Wales.

1. Secondary school boys’ teams from year 7 through to year 11
2. Secondary school girls’ teams from year 7 through to year 11

**4. START AND END DATE OF THE TOURNAMENT**

4.1.1 The ESRL Board shall determine the commencement dates of the Regional through to national stages of the tournament.

4.1.2 The RFL organising committee under the guidance of the ESRL board will determine the precise structure of the tournaments as soon as the number of participating teams have been finalised.

4.1.3 The regional and national structure will be published to all schools participating in the tournament.

4.1.4 Local structures will be published to all schools participating in the tournaments at the start of each academic year.

4.1.5 Schools must take part in their local competition structures as determined by the ESRL Board. In the event that there is no local competition the ESRL Board, at their discretion may grant permission for a school to play in another area.

**5. TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE**

5.1 In all games the first named team in the draw is the home team and the second named team is the away team including central venue games.

5.1.2 In the event of games being postponed or cancelled, in order to meet the regional and national stage entry deadline, the tournament organiser in conjunction with the RFL will have the power to rank their teams.

5.1.3 All games will be played under international rules with reference to the following exceptions:

5.1.3.1 40/20 will not be allowed.

5.1.3.2 Sin bin length will be 5 minutes per player, per offence.

5.1.3.3 In the girls’ fixtures, kicking in general play is allowed (no field goals or penalty goals). Goal kicks following a try to be taken from in front of the posts. (Please see appendix 1).

**BOYS**

5.2.1 The local stages will be played in the following formats depending on local provision, knockout, round robin, festival or league format.

5.2.2 The regional and national stages will be a league format. the number of teams and leagues may differ regionally.

5.2.3 The national stages will be a seeded draw determined by the ESRL board annually, the draw will be altered at different year groups to allow areas the opportunity to get home games, if the draw was the same at each year group some areas would not get the opportunity to have home games.

5.2.4 National round one will be a home and away fixture with the first names team being the home team, there will be no central venue games arranged by the RFL for National Round 1

5.2.5 The semi-finals will be played following the announced competition structure, at a venue organised by the RFL.

5.2.6 The national finals will be organised by the RFL at a central venue.

**GIRLS**

5.3.1 The local and regional rounds will be played in the following formats depending on local provision, round robin, festival or league format.

5.3.2 The national stages and venue will be organised by the RFL.

5.3.3 The national finals will be organised by the RFL at a central venue.

**6. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

6.1.1 To be eligible to participate in the Tournament a player must be on the roll and in attendance at the participating school from the start of the academic year.

6.1.2 To be eligible for the team, players must be the following age on 1st September.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Age on 1 September** | **School Team** |
| 11 | Year 7 |
| 12 | Year 8 |
| 13 | Year 9 |
| 14 | Year 10 |
| 15 | Year 11 |

6.1.3 A player is allowed to play up one age group however players are not allowed to play down an age group, unless there are exceptional circumstances agreed by the ESRL board.

6.1.4 Players who are on the national player performance pathways such as playing on a scholarship or for England Youth, should not play at two age groups. The School should decide which year group they play at before the competition begins.

Teachers should read the playing policy for signed players for further clarification.

6.1.5 No player may play for more than one team on any given day.

6.1.6 The selection and fielding of ineligible players should be reported to the designated organising officer within 24 hours of the game being played, this will then be referred to the ESRL board and the appropriate action taken.Any team found breaching regulations risks disqualification from the tournament.

6.2 **Number of Players**

6.2.1 The number of players per boys’ team shall be 13-a-side. At national rounds, teams will be allowed up to 4 substitutes, maximum squad size is 20. There is no limit on the number of interchanges allowed. At local and regional stages maximum squad size will be determined by the local coordinator.

6.2.2 At key stage 3, the number of players per girls’ team shall be 9-a-side. Teams will be allowed up to 6 substitutes and the maximum squad size is 15. There is no limit on the number of interchanges allowed.

6.2.3 At key stage 4, the number of players per girls’ team shall be 11-a-side. Teams will be allowed up to 4 substitutes, maximum squad size is 15. There is no limit on the number of interchanges allowed.

**7. FIXTURES**

7.1 At regional league level if there is are games conceded or games cannot be played for any reason the RFL will determine which team can be awarded the victory. The result will be recorded as a 24-0 victory.

7.2 In the regional leagues if there are two teams tied on points for a qualifying position the final position will be determined in the following order

1. Head to head result between the two teams

2. Overall points difference

3. Tries scored

4. Coin Toss

7.3 The school should contact the opponent immediately after receiving the draw to arrange the fixture, and where possible play the games in the first week of the timeslot. Where there is a disagreement please contact the RFL.

7.4 Where the home team is unable to provide a suitable venue for the match, the fixture can be reversed and played at the away team venue to ensure the match is completed by the due date. If neither team has an available venue the matter must be referred to the RFL, who with the guidance of the ESRL board will have power to extend the date by which the game must be played, or decide which team shall go forward to the next round.

7.5 If the fixture is reversed the original home team will remain the home team and the original away team will have the advantage if the game is drawn following golden point score periods.

7.6 If a team fails to fulfil a fixture, they will be deemed to have conceded the fixture and will result in a walkover.

7.7 The ESRL board reserves the right, in the case of a team conceding a match for no due reason to suspend the team from the following year’s tournament.

7.8 To maintain the continuity of the playing programme the RFL shall be empowered, if necessary, to amend a fixture date under the guidance of the ESRL board.

**8. MATCH DAY OPERATIONS**

8.1.1 Where a home tie is given, it is the responsibility of the home team to provide a suitable venue for the fixture and appoint a qualified match official from a local Referees Society.

8.1.2 Exceptions include the regional and national semi-finals, regional and national finals and girls’ festivals where the venue and match officials will be appointed by the RFL.

8.1.3 Where the home team is unable to provide a suitable venue, the fixture can be reversed, to ensure the match is completed by the date. If neither team can provide a suitable venue, the matter must be referred to the RFL.

8.1.4 If the fixture is reversed the original home team will remain the home team and the original away team will have the advantage if the game is drawn following golden point score periods.

8.1.5 In the case of the referee society being unable to appoint a referee, the home team may provide an impartial Teacher, Rugby League Foundation member of staff of otherwise suitably qualified impartial individual to act as referee or a neutral experienced referee from the school. but only if the away team is notified at least 48 hours before the fixture is due to take place.

8.1.6 If the home side cannot provide a referee the away team must be given the opportunity to provide suitable referee for the game. Both schools playing in the tournament must be in full agreement with these arrangements prior to the game being played.

8.2 **Transport**

The RFL will endeavour to contribute towards the transport costs when reaching the national stages. This will be clarified at the beginning of the tournament.

8.3 **Accommodation**

It is the responsibility of the school to arrange and pay for all accommodation for teams travelling to games if appropriate.

8.4 **Match Balls**

In compliance with the laws of the game the following size match balls must be used for each age group:

Boys Y7, Y8: Size 4 ball

Boys Y9, Y10 Y11: Size 5 ball

Girls Y7, Y8 Size 4 ball

Girls Y9, Y10, Y11 Size 5 ball

8.5 **Match Duration**

**Boys**

8.5.1.2 The duration of each match shall be measured by the match official and shall be:

Y7, 20 minutes each way with 5 minute half time interval

Y 8, Y9 25 minutes each way with 5 minute half time interval

Y10, Y11 30 minutes each way with 5 minute half time interval

8.5.1.2 National Rounds in the event that the scores are level at full time then the winners will be decided by virtue of a “Golden Point Score” i.e. a sudden death first score, will determine the winner. Teams are to toss a coin at the start of the period to determine who will kick off. Teams are to change ends after the first period of play. There will be a maximum of two periods played.

8.5.1.3 The duration of each “Golden Point Score” period shall be measured by the match official and shall be:

Y7, 5 minutes

Y 8, Y9, Y10, Y11 7 ½ minutes

After two “Golden Point Score” periods, should the score still be level;

* The team scoring the most tries goes through,
* If both teams are level, the away team goes through\*

\*At Semi-final stage (due to being played at a neutral venue), the policy following a draw after golden point extra time will be confirmed.

\*At the national finals, the trophy will be shared in the event of a draw after golden point extra time. With the exception of Y7 where the trophy will be shared in the event that there is a draw at full time.

**Girls**

8.5.2.1 For festival formats overall playing time should not exceed 60 minutes.

8.5.2.2 The duration of each single match at Key Stage 3, e.g. the national final, shall be measured by the Match official and shall be 20 minutes each way with a 5 minute half time interval.

8.5.2.3 The duration of each single match at Key Stage 4, e.g. the national final, shall be measured by the Match official and shall be 25 minutes each way with a 5 minute half time interval.

8.5.3 In the event that the scores are level at full time in the semi-finals then the winners will be decided by virtue of a “Golden Point Score” i.e. a sudden death first score, will determine the winner. Teams are to toss a coin at the start of the period to determine who will kick off. Teams are to change ends after the first period of play. There will be a maximum of two periods played.

* 5 minutes each way golden point will be played
* Should the scores still be level, the competition organiser will confirm the next stages.

8.6 **Late Start**  
Each team shall ensure that its team is ready to take the field before the designated kick off time as and when directed by the match officials. Any team failing to adhere to the agreed start time may result in a fixture forfeit.

8.7 **Team Sheet**

8.7.1 The official team sheets must be completed in full prior to kick off and should include the school name along with forename and surname (no initials) and date of birth, of all participants and must be handed in to the tournament organiser who will send it to the RFL after the games conclusion.

8.7.2 Each school must ensure that information provided on a team sheet is accurate and correct.

8.7.3 Failure to submit a team sheet, late submission, or false and misleading information on players and replacements will result in a School liable to sanctions by the ESRL board.

8.8 **Reporting Results**

8.8.1 For local and regional rounds it is the responsibility of the winning team to submit the match result to their local tournament organiser within 24 hours of the completion of the game. It is the responsibility of the local Tournament organiser to inform the RFL within 24 hours. Each school contact should set up a passport account on LeagueNet, as directed by the RFL. Scores should be uploaded directly to LeagueNet within 24 hours of completion of the match by the hosting team.

8.8.2 The following information should be submitted:

* Name of winning school
* Result
* Age Group

8.8.3 For national stages, it is the responsibility of the winning team to submit the match result to the competition administrator at the RFL within 24 hours of the completion of the game. Information required is the same as point 8.8.2.

8.9 **Fielding of ineligible players**

The selection and fielding of ineligible players should be reported to the designated organising officer within 24 hours of the game being played. Any team found breaching regulations risks disqualification from the tournament. The ESRL board reserves the right, in the case of a team having been found guilty of fielding an ineligible player for that team to seek re-election, face suspension or expulsion from the tournament.

8.10 **Abandonment of Games**

If a game is abandoned with more than three-quarters of the playing time elapsed, the result shall stand unless otherwise determined by the RFL. If less than three-quarters of the playing time has elapsed the ESRL Board, at its sole discretion, may order a game to be re-played.

8.11 **Postponements**

8.11.1 In the event of the home team suspecting that its ground will not be fit for play, owing to adverse weather conditions or other cause, the home team must immediately inform their opposition, appointed match official and the RFL. The game will be replayed unless the RFL specifies otherwise.

8.11.2 If on arrival the match official deems the ground is not fit for play, and in their opinion there is no chance of it being so before the scheduled kick off, then that decision must be communicated immediately to the visiting team and the RFL. The game shall be replayed on a date agreed by the RFL.

**9. DISCIPLINE, SUSPENSIONS AND FINES**

9.1 Any disciplinary action relating to general misconduct in the stages prior to the regional rounds of the competition the ESRL board would expect schools to deal with internally following the community game on field disciplinary guidelines (provided with this document).

9.2 Any breech of the tackle it policy, RFL safeguarding policy or assault on a match official prior to the regional stages will be dealt with by a disciplinary panel appointed by the ESRL board. Incidences must be reported to the RFL Education Officer, by the match official and or participating schools within 48 hours of the game.

9.3 All matters of discipline from the regional stages of the competition onwards must be reported by the match official within 24 hours of the game and will be dealt with by a disciplinary panel appointed by the ESRL board.