



## **Developing Player Programme (DPP)**

2017

## **Introduction**

The DPP is the development thread that is woven between CB, School and Club rugby and is not instead of, but alongside of and should support players in all appropriate programmes and their normal place of participation.

The England Rugby Player Pathway is the name given to a single system that helps identify where a player sits in relation to the different opportunities that exist. It includes associated development programmes, England Academy Player (EAP), Academy Player Development Group (PDG) and Developing Player Programme (DPP), playing opportunities in the community game at Under 16 and 18 and International playing opportunities at 18, 20, Saxons and England.

The DPP engages players aged 13 – 16 years old and is a development programme that should interact with and complement the school, club and county playing programmes, providing further development opportunity without the conflict of competition. It supports the identification of players entering the professional game through Regional Academies. It is a national programme managed by the RFU and delivered locally through a partnership between the RFU, Regional Academy and Constituent Bodies. Each programme is established within the fourteen Regional Academy boundaries.

Clubs and schools will be invited to nominate players for inclusion in the programme, The principle objective of DPP is to provide a consistent and high quality experience which is tailored to the needs of individual players to encourage their lifelong participation in rugby. It will identify those with talent and help them find the right direction to follow, whether that is into professional rugby or long term participation at a level appropriate to them.

An important element of the programme will be to enable ‘talent transfer’, encouraging potential rugby union players up to the age of 16 to join the game from playing other sports.

The program will also enhance the development and quality of players who whom will contribute to their school/club programme and will go on to be the lifeblood of community rugby clubs within the North West.

## **Core Purpose**

*“To provide a first opportunity to identify those players with greatest potential to enter the pathway towards the professional game and England”*

## **Principles of the Programme**

- Provide a holistic and player centered experience for all players in the programme.
- Assist to retain more players within the game post-16.
- Increase the number of players moving upwards in the player pathway.
- Develop coaches both within the player pathway and community game.
- Strengthen clubs and schools by improving the standard of the players with them.
- Simplify the player pathway by consolidating Constituency Bodies and Regional Academy activities.

## **Governance**

The Community Game Board (CGB) of the Rugby Football Union will govern the policies and strategies for the DPP. Rugby Development and the Professional Rugby department will develop a framework for delivery to ensure national consistency that will allow for Regional Academy variation. These will be approved annually by CGB Player Development Sub Committee and Professional Game Board Player Pathway Group.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The programme is a partnership between Rugby Football Union (RFU), Regional Academy (RA) & Constituent Body (CB). The governance of the programme is through the Regional Player Pathway Group (RPPG) including a membership of various stakeholders. The RPPG will be responsible for the compliance with age grade regulations, Player Pathway Calendar and implementation of the policies, strategies and delivery framework of the DPP.

## **Safeguarding**

The RFU is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children in rugby. We have worked closely with the Child Protection In Sport Unit (CPSU) within NSPCC to develop robust policy and procedures to safeguard children, achieving the CPSU's National Advanced Standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport.

As a partnership, the Regional Academy, CB and RFU should be operating best practice for this programme, it is essential that all deployed individuals have Enhanced DBS checks processed through and **approved** by the RFU and as such, existing certificates from other employers, e.g. schools are not accepted. Each CB, assisted by RFU staff and Regional Academies, will be responsible for the registration of all coaches.

This will enable better quality assurance for DBS status, and support the registration of all appropriate coach development courses attended. Additionally, it will be a requirement of the programme that any coach working within the DPP will need to have attended a relevant sports safeguarding course.

Further information regarding safeguarding can be found here:

<http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/safeguarding/>

## Sale Sharks Academy Regional DPP Boundaries (North West Region)

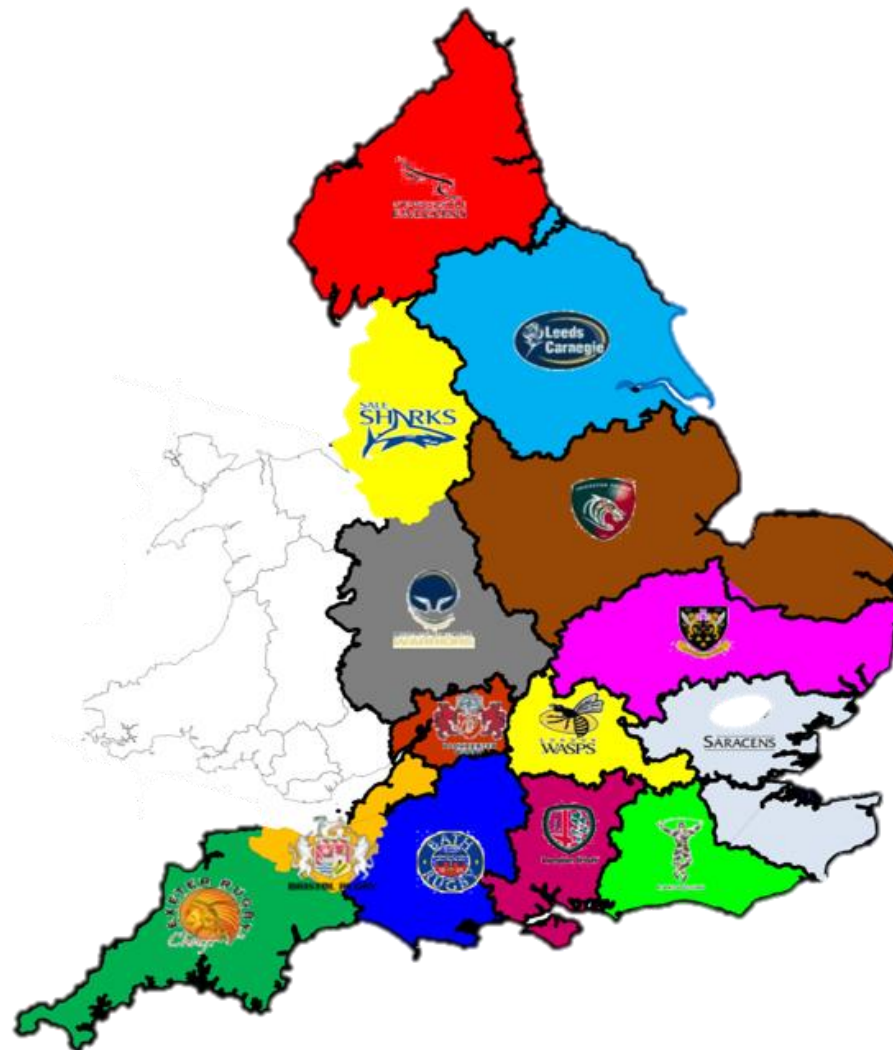
The DPP will run from 6 sites across the region.

The guiding principle is to reduce player travel time.

Sites:

- Manchester
- Merseyside
- North Lancashire
- Central Cheshire
- West Cheshire
- East Cheshire

A seventh site runs out the Isle of Man following an adapted programme within the standardized DPP framework.



## **Delivery Model**

The principles of player centred, development driven and competition supported are key aspects to the delivery model where the wants and needs of young people will be at its heart. It should put player enjoyment and rugby's core values above all else to keep more young people enjoying the game for longer and into their adult years. Supporting the key "*Talent Symposium*" principles of early engagement, broad numbers and longitudinal opportunity to develop and nurture potential, the programme will engage players at Under 13 through to Under 16. The demands on players in these age groups is ever increasing, in order to implement a player centred approach that supports the community game, delivery windows aligned to the Playing Calendar which avoid key pressure points will be adopted with an emphasis on the following;

### **Contact Time**

#### Under 13

- Maximum of 12 hours
- Starting February half term and finishing at the end of April
- There will be no associated playing opportunity

#### Under 14

- Contact time will be within a bandwidth of 20 – 30 hours
- Starting October and finishing at the end of April avoiding pressure points (school, club, county)
- There will be a festival to support coaching programme

#### Under 15

- Contact time will be within a bandwidth of 20 – 30 hours
- Starting October and finishing at the end of April avoiding pressure points (school, club, county)
- There can be a festival to support coaching programme

#### Under 16

- Maximum of 12 hours contact time

- Starting in October and finishing in December
- There will be no associated playing opportunity

In order to ensure that DPP and CB rep rugby is a nationally defined **single system** rather than a series of different and competing programmes to ensure that player welfare and development are at the centre and the ultimate outcome of life-long participation in the game is achieved, the DPP programme at u15 and u16 age grades operates in closer collaboration with Cheshire and Lancashire Constituent Bodies.

It is aspiration that the DPP will engage with 10% of the playing population registered in clubs at U13-15 and 5% at U16, with a coach to player ratio of 1:12.

### **Programme Content**

At this stage of a player's development, the attainment of skills, game understanding (principles of play) and athleticism should be the emphasis. This integrated approach built upon a positive learning environment is essential in the development of young rugby players. England Rugby's performance pathway vision is on producing players that are the most adaptable in the world. Two priority areas of focus identified to achieve this aim are The Skills and Components of Performance.

The five key skills that the Pathway coaches think are the most important for boys aged 13 – 18 are:

1. Creativity
2. Awareness
3. Resilience
4. Decision Making
5. Self-Organising

The five key components of performance are

1. Game Preparation (availability to train and play)
2. Behaviour (observable behaviours required on and off the field to play the game)
3. Game Fitness (physical and physiological components needed to meet the game demands)
4. Actions (needed to perform the skills to play the game)
5. Tactical (decisions needed to play the game)



The DPP will focus on providing a learning environment, where CARDS and the Components of Performance are key drivers, which will better support players and coaches to develop.

### **Coaching Style**

The major focus throughout the programme is in the delivery of adaptive games or games for understanding in sessions & assessment.

**Physical Literacy:** Focus on developing Agility, Balance & Coordination, strength and range of movement through comprehensive warm-up protocols including SAQ but not exclusively, full body callisthenic circuits and cool down strategies. Movements and exercise used will be selected to develop a rounded athlete capable of producing a range of tasks not specific sport skills.

**Education:** Follow aspects of the Sharks Development Group (SDG) curriculum relevant to player development. Core modules would be fundamental nutrition in-line with the RFU 10 pillars of nutrition, Psychology and lifestyle which aims to implement practical applications of Psychological Characteristics of Developing Excellence.

### **Festivals**

In line with the key principles of player centred, development driven and competition supported it is worthwhile remembering the DPP is not a competitive playing programme and therefore the appropriate competitive opportunity is within the County playing programmes at Under 15 and 16.

Festivals at Under 14 and 15 are encouraged to help assessment, both peer to peer and against stated criteria or learning points. The festivals are not competitive fixtures, 15 a side games or selection based. There will be no festivals for Under 13 or Under 16 age groups.

In line with the changes to Age Grade Rugby the following is a definition of a Festival and should help design the playing opportunity:

*“A Festival is a competitive round-robin playing opportunity where equal team and player participation is the emphasis. Scores may be recorded but winning does not affect your ongoing participation as every team plays the same appropriate number of matches”.*



A DPP festival should be:

- Inclusive of all within the DPP age-group (not exclusive)
- Inter DPP or Intra DPP
- Usually abbreviated forms of the game (e.g. 12s or 10s)
- Scheduled in line with the playing calendar

## **Nomination/Eligibility**

In order to be eligible for selection into each DPP the player must either:

- (i) Have their permanent home address or school address located in the Region; and/or
- (ii) Be registered as a player at a rugby club located in the Region.

Where the Regional Academy has a *bona fide* associated amateur club which operates a Mini and Junior Section, a player registered with that Mini and Junior Section can only be recruited to join that DPP if:

- They satisfy the terms of eligibility as outlined in (i) or (ii) above; or
- That player has been registered with the applicable Mini and Junior Section before the player's Under 13s year.

Where a player is registered at a rugby club which is affiliated to a CB within a Region other than the Region in which that rugby club is geographically situated, that player can only be recruited to join that DPP if:

- They satisfy the terms of eligibility as outlined in (i) or (ii) above; or
- That player has been registered with the club's Mini and Junior Section before the player's Under 13s year.

To be clear, players cannot participate in more than one DPP.

Clubs and Schools are invited to nominate up to 5 U13 players who are considered to have the appropriate potential for the DPP. Players who were in the U13 DPP for the previous season are automatically invited to be re-assessed for the new season's U14 DPP. Clubs and Schools can also nominate a limited number of other U14 players who were not in the previous season's U13 squad. It is then the same nomination process for the U15 and U16 DPP.

Players from clubs and school should be provided with an opportunity to be involved in the DPP. At all times, it should be understood and recognized that the individual development needs of each player may be being met at an alternative establishment.

## **Medical Cover**

Prior to any player attending training, the following recommendations to be carried out;

- All players submit screening form prior to training (no form no train)
- Screen all submitted forms and identify any areas that require further investigation
- Where appropriate a GP referral is to be made prior to taking part in training

The following are minimum medical standards of the programme; Academies may wish to provide a higher level of cover;

### **In Training (Non-Contact)**

- Each session to have at least one first aid trained person in attendance per 15 players. The training should be an RFU 'Emergency First Aid' (EFA) course or equivalent course covering contact sport.
- Appropriate risk assessments are carried out prior to programme launch

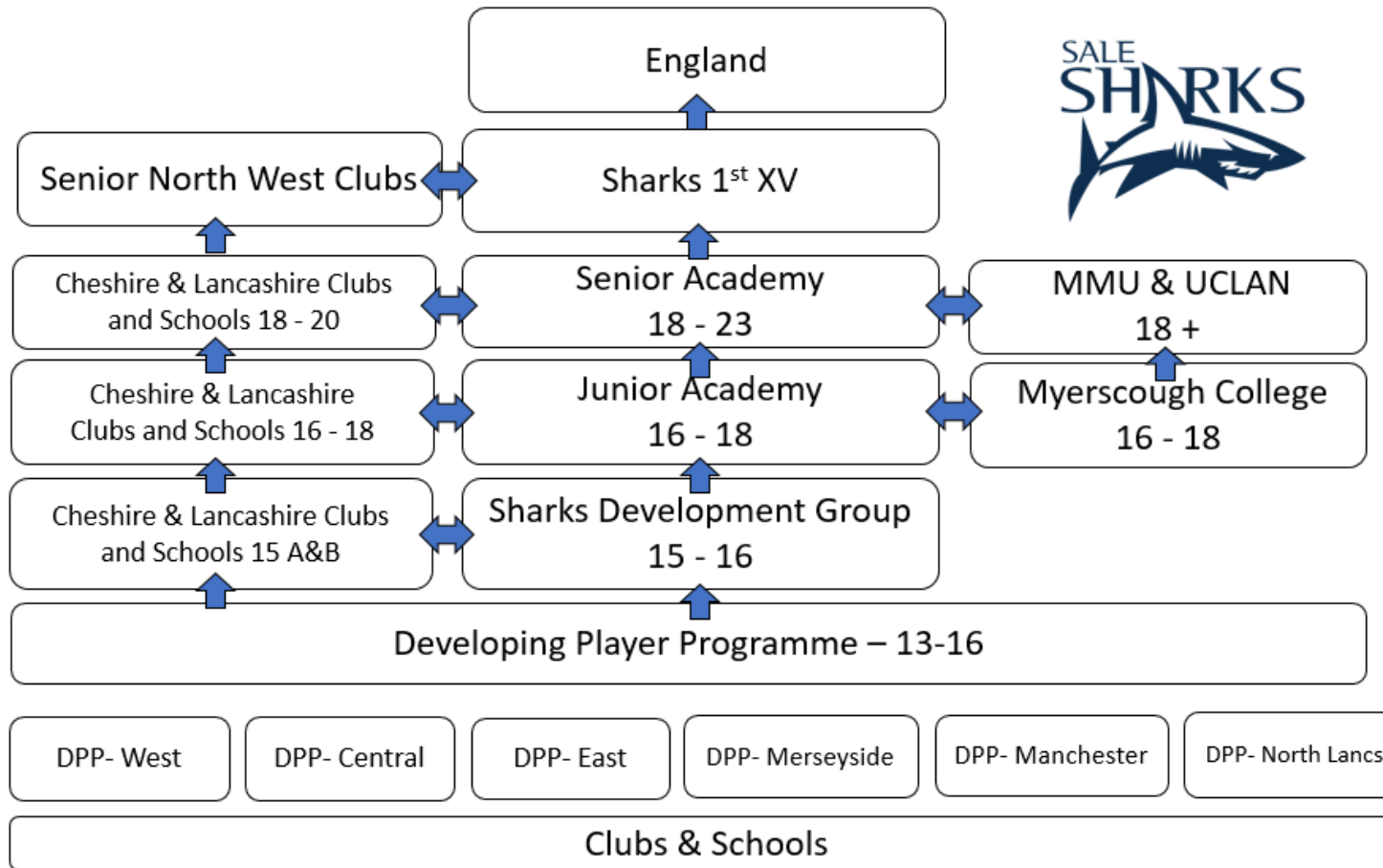
### **In Training (Contact)**

- As above with the addition of an Immediate Care Practitioner qualified to RFU ICIS Level 2 in attendance

### **Festivals (Contact)**

- As above with the addition of:
- Immediate Care Practitioner qualified to RFU ICIS Level 2 per team
- A central control point for medical emergencies
- Where appropriate a Doctor to be onsite

**Sale Sharks Academy Pathway:**



## Finance & Funding

Finance for the programme will be provided to each Regional Academy and spend approved through the RPPG. RFU investment into the DPP should be matched by the Regional Academy (in cash or value in kind), while CB investment from own reserves is optional.

Medical and Safeguarding courses will be funded centrally by the Rugby Football Union.

Annual funding will be confirmed in the March of the preceding year to support planning.

Funding will be released in three tranches:

DPP Plan	40%	September	Core
Budget Plan			Core
Coach Development	20%	December	Conditional
Delivery			Core
QA	40%	May	Core
Stakeholder Survey			Conditional
Delivery			Core

Funding release will be conditional on planning and implementation of this framework and signed off by RFU staff.

Each Regional Player Pathway Group will be responsible for submission of proposed budget and actual spend in the annual plan and review.