



## Kit and Protective Equipment Policy (Youth Players)

**Boots:** In the dry, trainers or “Astro’s” are sufficient, especially for the Minis.  
In the wet, players will need proper boots with good condition aluminium rugby studs with a BSI kite mark.

**Important:** Check the condition of studs, as damaged or worn studs may result in injuries. Blades:

**The Club bans the wearing of Blades. All Mini, junior & Colts must wear good condition rugby studs.**

Top level coaches in Rugby /Football are concerned about the safety of blade style boots. Reports include lacerations to opponents + injuries to ankle, knee, hip joints of the wearers. Similarly, injuries can be caused by players using football rather than aluminium rugby studs.

Please see below an article about the damage that can be done by blades:  
[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/sport/rugby\\_union/article754534.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/sport/rugby_union/article754534.ece)

All Coaches and Managers are asked to:

- Carry out a boot inspection at the beginning of each training session.
- Inform opposition teams of our Club policy in advance of fixtures & ask them to respect our decision.
- Ensure the referee carries out boot inspection before beginning each game.

**Gum shields:** Gum Shields are Mandatory for those in U9’s & Above but the club strongly recommends they are worn by all ages.

The dangers of not wearing gum shields are not only to the player not wearing the mouth guard who will be exposed to the danger of damage to their teeth and gums as well as increased risk of concussion, but they also protect opposition players from cuts to their scalps, faces, arms etc.

**Clothing:** The wearing of other types of protective equipment by any player i.e. shoulder pads, forearm protector, mitts, hats etc is a personal preference, subject to the RFU requirements, set out below.

It is important that children have adequate clothing to keep warm and dry at both training sessions and matches. A tracksuit or sweatshirt, hat, fingerless gloves and a waterproof jacket are recommended.

All protective equipment MUST be:

- IRB approved (see the label for proof)
- be in good condition
- be the correct size and fit for the player wearing it.
- Zips & Hoods are not permitted whilst training or playing matches.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Kent RFU Statement on Clothing on the next page.

You can find more info on Club kit and the Club Shop at: <https://www.ocrfc.co.uk/shop/>

## Kent RFU Statement on Clothing:

“Statement to all Kent RFU Mini/Midi Rugby Sections regarding protective clothing for young players:

Kent RFU Mini/Midi Committee is issuing this statement following a number of recent concerns regarding injuries which have been caused by the wearing of non-regulation equipment. This statement is designed to give practical advice to parents, coaches and managers of young players aged 6 to 12 and is not intended to be a substitute for the details of RFU regulation 15.7.4, iRB Law 4 and Regulation 12.

### WHAT PLAYERS CAN WEAR:

- 1) The basic equipment for rugby players is socks, shorts and match top, Underclothing may include heat retaining lycra style vests, shorts and / or leggings.
- 2) Players should wear boots with approved metal studs or plastic moulded studs but these must not be sharp or abrasive.
- 3) Coaches are requested to adopt the practice of encouraging players to change their footwear on leaving the ground as inevitably concrete car parks etc. will cause studs to become abrasive.
- 4) Protective headgear may be worn but it should be iRB approved.
- 5) Protective shoulder padding may be worn but it should be iRB approved.
- 6) Protective shin guards may be worn but these must be of non-rigid material and not of the plastic moulded type that is often worn for school football.
- 7) Mitts (fingerless gloves) may be worn but these should **not** cover the finger tips
- 8) A mouthguard or dental protector is highly recommended.

### WHAT PLAYERS MUST NOT WEAR

- 1) any item that is contaminated by blood.
- 2) any item that is sharp or abrasive.
- 3) any items containing hoods, buckles, clips, rings, hinges, zippers, screws, bolts or rigid material or projection
- 4) jewellery such as watches, rings or earrings.
- 5) Complete hand gloves.
- 6) shorts with padding sewn into them.
- 7) a single stud at the toe of the boot.

The match referee has discretion to request the removal of any items he considers unsafe.

For the purpose of clarification, tracksuits which have zips at the neck/ down the body and/or at the ankles must not be worn. Training tops and bottoms of flexible and/or weatherproof material with elasticated neckline, cuffs and ankles may be worn for training and particularly when the weather is cold or inclement. Training suits should not be worn during a match.

To avoid doubt and in the interest of child welfare, if the weather is so inclement as to make it difficult for the majority of children to stay warm, whilst actively engaged in rugby activities, without additional protective clothing the practice or fixture should be called off.