

September 2021

Princethorpe
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Dear Parents

I hope you have had a safe and pleasant summer and your children are looking forward to their return to school. This term's focus during Games lessons for the boys in Years 7 and 8 will be Rugby, with an element of choice offered from Year 9 onwards. Boys will be assigned to a group based upon their ability and experience. In these sessions, a variety of versions of the game will be played. These will include non-contact versions such as touch rugby or a "controlled contact" version up to full live contact rugby with all pupils being taught all the techniques needed to participate full and safely at their level.

Please note that for some C, D and E matches that are scheduled on Games afternoons, these may be either non-contact or limited contact versions of the game. This will be communicated to the players involved beforehand. Players will be selected for the different versions of the game depending on their assessed ability and confidence in contact. All fixtures can be found at www.princethorpesport.co.uk with the team sheets available in the week prior to the fixture.

The training program will run as follows during the Michaelmas term:

Year Group	Games Afternoon	Training Evenings (16:00 to 17:30)	Teacher in charge
Year 7 (U12)	Friday	Wednesday	Mr Holtom
Year 8 (U13)	Thursday	Tuesday and Friday	Mr Bower
Year 9 (U14)	Tuesday	Monday and Wednesday	Mr Clarke
Year 10 (U15)	Monday	Tuesday and Thursday	Mr McCollin
Year 11 (U16)	Wednesday	Tuesday and Thursday	Mr Friswell
VI Form (U18)	Wednesday	Tuesday and Thursday	Mr Bucknall

There will be two after school training sessions a week for boys in Year 8 and above, which are essential for those aiming to represent the school in A and B team fixtures. This is to give the boys more time on the field, learning the core skills and developing their understanding of the game. I would like to assure parents that the contact element of those training sessions will be managed closely to ensure that the boys are not undertaking too much contact during the week; total training time that is full contact will not exceed 60 minutes. In weeks where there are two fixtures scheduled, this will be reduced.

Senior School (11-18 years) at Princethorpe College

Junior School (4-11 years) at Crescent School

Junior School and Little Crackers Nursery (2-11 years) at Crackley Hall

Princethorpe rugby has made some great strides forward in recent years and the College is proud of its rugby performance. It is important to make sure this continues into the future by investing the time in effective preparation.

Concussion

It is important to acknowledge that all sports, especially contact sports, involve an element of risk that may lead to injury, including the potential of injury to the head. There are a number of measures undertaken by World Rugby and the College to ensure that the risks are reduced:

- World Rugby have implemented a trial to reduce the height of the tackle from the line of the neck to the 'imagined line of the armpits'. This means that tackles deemed over this height are subject to sanction, which includes yellow and red cards. Players at Princethorpe will be coached to tackle at a lower height to reduce the risk of high tackles and to use the appropriate technique to reduce the chance of injury.
- The College follows a concussion management protocol which is supported by a wide range of national governing bodies for sport (e.g. the RFU, the FA and England Hockey). Please see below for further information.
- Contact training will be monitored carefully throughout the week. Session practice and design will prioritise the need for safety above all other factors, whilst recognising that players need to be confident in contact in order to execute techniques safely.

The RFU Headcase protocol

The key points are:

- If a concussion is suspected the player **will be removed immediately** from the field of play.
- The player will need an assessment by a healthcare professional. If any symptoms of concussion are evident, the College will assume that the player is concussed and implement the protocol as follows:
- The player must have at least 14 days' complete rest from all exercise. PE and Games staff will be informed of this because pupils will be unable to partake in exercise.
- The player must then make an appointment with a doctor to confirm they are symptom free before returning to training (via the Graduated Return to Play Protocol).
- The G RTP takes a further 8 days. This makes the earliest Return to Play 23 days after the initial injury.

Parents are encouraged to visit the link below where the RFU has a wealth of information available. On this page is the 20 minute concussion awareness course- parents and players are strongly encouraged to complete the "open access" version.

<https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/playing/headcase>

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Peter Bucknall

**Head of Rugby
Princethorpe College**