



**WASPS**  
ACADEMY

# Developing Player Programme Handbook 2018-19

Working with:



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### What is the Wasps DPP?

The DPP is the first step on the RFU's recognised Player Development Pathway and is the entry level programme for the Wasps Academy. It provides development opportunities for players in the U13 – U16 age groups in a geographic region that covers Buckinghamshire, Coventry, North Warwickshire and Oxfordshire.

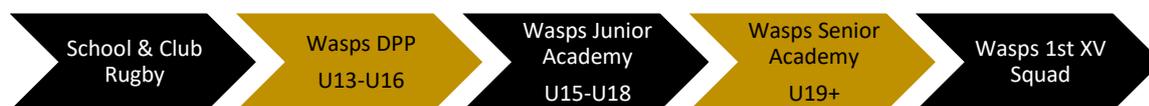
### Why does the DPP operate?

“Providing high quality player development experiences, encouraging lifelong participation in the game and enabling those with potential to be clearly identified and supported.”

The Outcomes; To produce players capable of playing for Wasps at a senior level, and to have a consistent representation at International age grade level.

### Wasps Academy.....The Pathway

The DPP is a very important first step on the Academy pathway, it allows basic principles to be introduced to the players in a development led, competition supported environment. Academy rugby is very competitive, selection for one stage does not guarantee selection for the next.



### Eligibility & Nominations

To be eligible for nomination for the Wasps DPP a player should fulfil one of the following criteria in our geographic region;

i) Go to school ii) Play for a club or iii) Have a home address.

Nominations and trials usually occur at the start of the rugby season (U13's being the exception), however we are always interested to hear about players who may have been over looked or missed the initial trials. Once nominations are open they will be collated via an on-line form – this link will be made available once trial dates are published. At all other times nominations can be sent to [DPP@wasps.co.uk](mailto:DPP@wasps.co.uk). U13 Nominations will take place around January of each year.

### **Talent Identification.....What are we looking for in our players....**

In identifying young players with potential, there will always be huge subjectivity between coaches and those making the decisions. Within the Wasps pathway we aim to make these decisions based on W.A.S.P and a sound understanding of player development realising that players can show potential in different ways.

#### **Warrior**

**Someone who battles for their desired outcomes.**

Are they resilient? Do they seem competitive? Do they want to win - do they stretch the rules of the game or activity? When in contact, do they relish a physical battle? Can you see them adapting to the physical nature of the game as it develops alongside the players?

#### **Application**

**Mastery of elements that require no talent.**

How hard do they work? How frequent are their involvements, whether successful or not? Are they a team player? Do they communicate well? Do they ask questions in a quest to improve?

#### **Skill**

**Demonstrates a high level of ability across core skills.**

Do they stand out with the frequency of their involvements with the ball in games? Do they demand the ball, make the plays, even force the play through being ambitious in their actions? Can they demonstrate a variety of skills? Are they greedy, keeping the ball and trying the miracle play, or do they try to facilitate bringing others in the game? Both demonstrate differing stages of understanding but are underpinned by their ability and confidence to get onto the ball. Don't dismiss someone for being greedy or wanting to be the centre of the game at all times.

#### **Physical Potential**

**Someone who has the potential to excel in terms of height, strength or speed.**

Are they big, in terms of height, frame, depth, density? Try to look past body composition at this stage and concentrate on the frame, and how the player could grow or develop. Have consideration for their birth date and the subsequent potential impact on their physical/mental maturation compared to the peer group - chronological v biological age, commonly referred to as Relative Age Effect. Do they have good 'top end' speed? Are they quick off the mark? Are they agile?

Finally, remember that at best, the majority of these players will not feature at Premiership level for another six to nine years. Consider how the game has moved forward in the past decade, and how the demands have changed for the players involved. That rate of change will continue regardless, so the players we recruit and develop need to be adaptable, self-reliant and eager to continue their learning in our environment.

#### **DPP Trials Process**

The trial session(s) are ran by the team of DPP Coaches. The coaches will organise a series of games and decision-making exercises that will provide opportunity for the players to demonstrate the required attributes. The coaches will then make the selection decisions based on what they have seen. These decisions will be communicated to the parents and players via email. Unfortunately, at this stage individual feedback isn't possible, however some generic observations will be relayed.

### After DPP Selection

Attendance at all DPP sessions is crucial to maximise the personal development whilst on the Wasps player pathway. Each session is an opportunity to improve & impress. The DPP sessions will be held regularly and although the theme of each session will vary, there will be key technical and tactical focuses delivered throughout the whole programme. Each of the sessions follows a structured, high intensity session plan.

### Venues

Region	Host Venue	Session Information
Buckinghamshire	Aylesbury RFC Brook End, Weston Turville, HP22 5RN	Monday evenings 18:30 – 20:00
Coventry & Warwickshire	Old Coventrians RFC Tile Hill Lane, Coventry, CV4 9DE	Monday evenings 18:30 – 20:00
Oxfordshire	Gosford All Blacks RFC Stratfield Brake, Kidlington, OX5 1UP	Monday evenings 18:00 – 19:30

### Staffing

A team of experienced coaches, led by a DPP Head Coach, run each centre and are supported by the full-time Wasps Academy Staff. The Wasps DPP also has a Talent ID Co-ordinator & Coach Development Officer that will work across all 3 DPP venues. Each centre is covered by Rugby, Administrative and Medical staff.

### Feedback

Through the coaching style used within the DPP, feedback is constantly given to the players by the coaches commenting on areas of strength and areas to be improved upon. At any point throughout the season if a player would like more in-depth comments then the onus is on them to ask, please speak with the relevant coaches. At the end of the season there will be an opportunity to meet with the coaches to discuss the season.

### Exit Routes

After a successful trial, players are normally involved in the DPP for one season at a time, depending on training and playing performances. If a player needs to be released they will be given appropriate feedback. The players' parents or guardians will also be notified. Details of any player leaving the DPP will also be passed on to the relevant CB contact so that they can continue to assist with their rugby development.

### The DPP Season

The DPP is usually delivered between October & April, with there being approximately 14 sessions spread throughout the season. The sessions work on a week on, week off cycle. The season is split into two halves with there being an extended rest period over December & January.

### Competitive Elements

In addition to the training sessions there will also be competitive opportunities aimed at supporting the learning and development of the players. These usually take place for the u14 & u15 age groups. The format will involve some mixed training as well as some conditioned games against players from within the Wasps DPP system.

It is important to note that the DPP is not about creating 'winning' teams but is focused on the development of individuals as rugby athletes.

### **DPP into Wasps Junior Academy Training**

The Wasps Junior Academy is the step up from DPP level, although development is still the main priority it is the first point that teams/squads are created. At the end of the u14 season a small group will be selected to attend some combined Junior Academy sessions over the following Summer.

During the u15 season, any players involved in the Junior Academy squad will still attend the DPP sessions. Throughout this season DPP players may be added to the Junior Academy Squad which meets approximately once a month October to March & then more regularly through April. There will be a couple of game/festival opportunities in April / May for the u15 Junior Academy Squad.

During the u16 season, there will be a small Junior Academy Squad that trains separately to the DPP. Players still within the DPP will have the opportunity to be selected for this squad through strong performances in training.

These decisions will be led by the Talent Id Co-ordinator, however this will be in collaboration with the Age Group Lead Coaches & DPP Head Coaches.

### **Players Game Time**

It is highly recommended that members of the DPP should play no more than one match per week and certainly no more than one match within twenty-four hours. It is also advised that they should have 2 complete days of rest in a week.

If clashes or conflicts with School, Club, County or Wasps activity occur then we would suggest the 'best development opportunity' for the player takes precedence. If you are unsure, please liaise via [DPP@wasps.co.uk](mailto:DPP@wasps.co.uk)

### **Concussion Management**

All head injuries with concussive symptoms will be treated in-keeping with the current RFU and IRB guidelines. For further information about head injuries please see the following websites:

<http://www.irbplayerwelfare.com/concussion>

<http://www.rfu.com/headcase>

### **DPP Coach Recruitment**

Specific positions and roles will be advertised on [www.wasps.co.uk](http://www.wasps.co.uk). For speculative enquiries please contact [DPP@wasps.co.uk](mailto:DPP@wasps.co.uk). For all coaching positions we are looking for:

- Forward thinking coaches with a desire to develop best practice.
- Coaches with the desire to work with developing athletes on the RFU recognised player development pathway.
- Coaches who are committed and reliable.

### **Coach Education**

Throughout the season the Wasps Academy will run a number of Coach Education events for the DPP staff some of which will also be open to coaches from the community game. These will be aimed at developing the delivery of the coaches tasked with nurturing the Wasps players of the future.

### **Contact Information**

On a week to week basis general questions can be asked of the DPP centre staff, however all communications and distribution of information will be handled by Wasps Academy staff.

For any queries concerning any of the detail in this document please contact: [DPP@wasps.co.uk](mailto:DPP@wasps.co.uk)

Alternatively visit [www.wasps.co.uk](http://www.wasps.co.uk) or follow @Wasps\_Academy on Twitter.