**Tag Rugby Rules**

**The Teams**

 Squad of 12 players from year 4, 5 and/or 6

 Team of 8, squads of 12 with a minimum of 2 girls/boys on the pitch at any one time.

 There is an expectation, but no requirement, that all the squad members should receive equal playing time

**Supervision**

 Each School is responsible for the supervision and welfare of the players including minor cases of first aid.

 The competition organisers reserve the right to legislate against any activity that is deemed contrary to the spirit of the competition – this includes all players, coaches, parents and spectators – both on and off the field of play.

**Equipment and kit**

 Each player must wear 2 tags of the same colour

 Tags must be clearly visible and not obstructed by clothing, etc. i.e. the tag belts to be worn OUTSIDE of clothing

 All players should wear the same colour tops

 Bibs will be provided in case of a clash of colours

**Playing rules**

 Matches will last 7 minutes; there is no half time or change of ends.

 The choice of ends will be determined by the toss of a coin between the 2 captains. The winners start with the ball from the middle of the pitch.

 Replacements are unlimited and are on a roll on, roll off basis during any breakdown of play (as long as there are only 8 players on at any time); the team coach must identify a player changing to the referee.

 In multi-pitch venues all matches will be centrally timed, although the pitch referee may add on time if there is an injury/ long stoppage.

 A match is started (and restarted after a try has been scored) with a ‘free pass’ at the centre of the pitch.

 A ‘free’ pass is used to restart play after a knock-on, if the ball or player is in touch, when there is a forward pass, when a tagged player doesn’t pass within 3 steps / 3 seconds or when the opposition is offside. For an infringement close to the try line, please note that the free pass has to be taken back 7 metres.

 A player taking a free pass cannot run with the ball and must pass to the closest person (no miss passes directly from a free pass). Cavalry charges are not permitted and the passer and receiver must be still on free passes. The passer must at all times be facing the opposition.

**Players must not spin to avoid being tagged and should remain on their feet at all times, including when scoring a try – they should not dive or fall over the line.**

Opposition players must be 7 metres back when a free pass is taken and cannot move until the ball has been passed

**The Tag**

 Only the ball carrier may be ‘tagged’.

 A tag is complete when it is removed, held above the head and ‘TAG’ is shouted clearly.

 A tagged player has 3 steps or 3 seconds to pass the ball.

 If a player does not have two tags on their belt, one on each hip and they become a ball carrier or if they tag an opponent, a free pass will be awarded to the non-offending side at the place of infringement.

 Teams are limited to 6 tags per possession; the ball is then turned over to the opposition. The referee is the sole judge of calling the number of tags.

 The ball is the offside line when a tag has occurred. Players must make an effort to get onside without interfering with play

 The tag must be given back to the tagged player by the tackler; failure to do this will result in a penalty.

**Scoring a try**

· The only method of scoring is a ‘try’. A try is worth 1 point.

· To score a try the ball must be placed down under control over the try line.

· Players are only allowed one step to score a try after being tagged.

· If the ball carrier is tagged whilst standing inside the goal area they must ground the ball immediately in order to score.

· If a player ‘dives’ to score a try, the try will be disallowed and a free pass will be given to the defending team 7m out from the try line.

· A player may not be prevented from grounding the ball to score a try by any physical contact (including placing a hand between ball and ground - This would result in a penalty try).

Whilst not a requirement, it is expected that players will carry the ball in both hands at all times.

**Other rules**

· The ball may not be kicked at any time

· Players must be on their feet at all times when playing. Even if one knee touches to ground, a player is considered ‘off their feet’.

· Players must not hand off the opposition or swipe an attacker’s arm out of the way, this will result in a free pass to the opposing team.

· The ball cannot be stolen/knocked from a player’s hands.

· If the ball goes to ground, players can pick it up but they must not dive to the floor to recover the ball.

· Players may not ‘spin’ in order to avoid a tackler.

· Full time cannot be blown on a penalty (deliberate knock on, dangerous play, blocking tags, physical contact, off side). If there is an infringement at the end of the game the final phase should be played out.

· Where schools have multiple teams , individual players should remain in their original team throughout the tournament. If schools do swap players to their own advantage schools will be required to forfeit the match/s where this has taken place.

The referee will encourage open play and play advantage where possible!