



BISHOPS

Dear Parents

We are delighted to welcome you to the 2026 rugby season at Bishops.

We are pleased to announce that we have appointed a Director of Rugby, Mr Rob Fleck (former Springbok and Stormers player and current UCT Varsity Cup coach). He will be working closely with our Prep coaches across all age groups.

Bishops Rugby – Our Approach

At Bishops, we play a distinctive brand of rugby that emphasises:

- A high-tempo, attacking style with lots of passing
- Strong, organised defence
- Continuous interaction and support play between all players

Skills are developed at practice, with a strong emphasis on ball-handling and safe contact techniques. These take time to master; we ask for your patience and encourage you to look for progress and enjoyment, rather than only results.

Pre-season: From Monday 9 March

- Pre-season starts on **Monday 9 March**.
- **U9** will practise on **Avenue Field**.
- **U10–U13** will practise at **Lutgensvale**.
- Boys will be walked to the fields by staff and can be collected directly from the practice venues.
- Pre-season will focus on skills, fitness, strength and position-specific work.

Boots are not essential for pre-season; boys may train in takkies. U9s play barefoot.

Inspires Individuals

PREPARATORY SCHOOL: Fir Road • Rondebosch • 7700 • Cape Town • South Africa Headmaster (acting): Christopher Groom

TEL: +27 21 659 7222

FAX: +27 21 659 7227

EMAIL: prep@bishops.org.za

WEBSITE: www.bishops.org.za/prep



Term 2 & 3 Practice Schedule

U9 – TIC: cgroom@bishops.org.za

- Tuesday & Thursday: 14:15–16:00
- Venue: Avenue Field (next to Woodlands Astro)

U10 & U11 – TIC: [wlouw@bishops.org.za](mailto:wlouv@bishops.org.za) (u10) and bfogarty@bishops.org.za (u11)

- Monday & Wednesday: 14:30–16:15
- Venue: Lutgensvale

U12 & U13 – TIC: gdesousa@bishops.org.za (u12) and gjordan@bishops.org.za (u13)

- Tuesday & Thursday: 14:30–16:15
- Venue: Lutgensvale

All boys will be walked to the fields. They may be collected from the practice venue at the end of practice. Boys not collected within 10 minutes will be walked back to aftercare.

Early Morning Training

These sessions are **voluntary** and are open to both hockey and rugby players.

Focus:

- Core and upper-body strength
- Grappling, wrestling and rugby-specific strength work

Details:

- Time: **06:30**
- Venue: **Jagger Hall**
- Dress: **PE kit (boys will need to change into khakis for the start of school)**

Schedule:

- Monday: U10
- Tuesday: U12
- Wednesday: U11
- Thursday: U13

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Kit Requirements

Practices

Players must wear:

- A **mouthguard** (compulsory)
- Bishops striped or plain dark blue rugby jersey
- Blue rugby shorts
- Bishops rugby socks (not required for U9, who play barefoot)
- Predominantly black rugby boots (iron studs may be used; no boots for U9)
- Shoulder pads and a headguard are optional

Matches

Players must wear:

- A **mouthguard** (compulsory)
- Bishops rugby jersey
- Blue rugby shorts
- Bishops rugby socks (not required for U9)
- Predominantly black rugby boots (iron studs may be used; no boots for U9)
- Shoulder pads and a headguard are optional
- Full tracksuit for arrival and departure

Selection

Selection is one of the most challenging aspects of coaching. Teams are chosen based on:

- Fitness and strength
- “Soft” skills – passing, catching, kicking and use of space
- “Hard” skills – tackling, rucking, mauling and physicality
- Position-specific skills
- Attitude
- Coachability

Coaches will always aim to select the strongest possible teams. Please allow them the time and space to do this. Boys will receive regular feedback.

Teams and positions may – and should – change throughout the season, as this is normal in age-group rugby and reflects the different rates at which boys grow and develop.

Teams for Saturday matches will be finalised after the last practice of the week and will be available on MyBishopsLife on **Thursday evening**. Age group heads will also send out teams on an Excel spreadsheet, indicating reserves for teams on the Friday in case of absenteeism.

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Practice Structure

- The **first** practice of the week is a **squad practice**, allowing coaches to see a wider group of players and assess ongoing development.
- The **second** practice is a **team session**, focused on preparation for Saturday's fixture.

Each practice should be seen as a trial opportunity, where coaches continually assess improvement and attitude.

Coaches

All our coaches:

- Are **BokSmart accredited**
- Have completed **World Rugby Level 1 (Coaching)**
- Have completed the **World Rugby Level 1 Referees Course**

Bishops teaching staff are allocated to A and C teams, and at U13 we are fortunate to have staff at all three levels.

External coaches are sourced from UCT, False Bay and Villagers. Some are ODs; others come from similar schools. While coaching ability is essential, we place equal emphasis on attitude and the ability to connect meaningfully with the boys. We also have specialist skills coaches who attend once a week to focus on specific areas.

Communication with coaches

- Please do not approach coaches directly after a match.
- If you have concerns, please message the head of the age group on a **Monday**.
- Rather than requesting teams or positions, we ask that you enquire about **specific skills** your son can work on.
- Major queries, especially those around selection, must be directed to bfogarty@bishops.org.za.

Coaches at primary school wear many hats: coach, motivator, disciplinarian, educator and, at times, psychologist. They are working with young boys, so we ask for your patience and support as the boys grow and develop.

Medical Support

- We have **qualified medics** at every practice, equipped for basic on-field care.
- The school sister (SAN) is also available.
- All coaches have the **SPINELINE** number saved for spinal emergencies.

On match days, medical support is provided by **MELOMED**:

- 6 medics on duty
- 2 ambulances
- Medics are ESA to BLS level

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- There is often a doctor on the sidelines who may assist when needed

Injuries to children are taken very seriously. We ask that parents stay off the field until the coach or medic invites you to come over. Please respect the medical team and their decisions. We may appear overly cautious at times, but the safety of the players is of utmost importance.

All boys complete the **IMPACT** online concussion baseline test at the start of the season. If concussion is suspected:

- The boy is booked off rugby
- The IMPACT test is repeated once symptoms have resolved
- Only when function has returned to normal will he be cleared to play

Concussion is treated with the greatest seriousness.

Fixtures

- Most matches are played on **Saturdays**, with some midweek fixtures during the season.
- The 2026 rugby fixtures are attached and may be subject to minor changes, depending on WPRU decisions.

General

Rugby is an integral part of a Bishops education. Historically, the game in South Africa has deep Bishops roots, and the original Springbok jersey was based on the OD jersey. Our style of rugby is known internationally, and our former pupils can be found playing at professional, club and social levels worldwide, often in leadership roles. This reflects both their character and the leadership skills nurtured at school.

Rugby is a **long-term development game** – most players reach their peak only around the age of 28. Please be patient, watch the progress, and most importantly, encourage a love for the game.

One of the best things a parent can say to a child after a match is:
“I love watching you play.”

Rugby teaches discipline, teamwork, selflessness and a deep respect for teammates and opponents. We hope you will enjoy the journey, build new friendships and share in the many positive experiences the sport offers.

Thank you for allowing your son to play this great game.

Kind regards

Brendan Fogarty
Head of Rugby Prep

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