



2026

SCHOOLBOY TROPHY

COMPETITION HANDBOOK

Western Australia

playrugbyleague.com



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1. WELCOME

Welcome

Welcome to the 2026 School Rugby League Season.

Rugby league thrives on camaraderie, character and team spirit. Our great game brings students together, fostering values of respect, discipline, and teamwork, impacting many lives at such a pivotal age.

As we kick off the 2026 season, we are excited to see a new wave of talent and discover the future stars of our game. School rugby league holds a significant place in our sport, offering students the opportunity to actively participate at regional, state, or national levels. As the season progresses, young players will embark on their journeys towards the NRL and NRLW Premiership, following in the well-trodden footsteps of many elite players who participated in school competitions just like this.

At the NRL, we recognise the vital role teachers and sport play in shaping the lives of school students. We are closely aligned with schools in valuing education and believe academic growth is essential in developing young players into well-rounded individuals. By encouraging our elite players to pursue tertiary education alongside their sporting careers, we ensure they have diverse career opportunities beyond rugby league.

I would like to thank all the schools participating in our sport this season with special recognition to the state, district, and regional convenors for their tireless efforts, as well as the principals, teachers and parents who make the 2026 competitions possible.

Best wishes to everyone competing this season. I look forward to seeing the spirit and sportsmanship in every game as our young players embark on a rugby league journey filled with opportunities to safely play, connect, and thrive.



Andrew Abdo
Chief Executive Officer
National Rugby League

2. ATTENDANCE

- 2.1 A student must maintain 85% attendance to be eligible to play in any NRL Schoolboy Trophy match.
- 2.2 When submitting a team list, schools acknowledge and agree that each named player has met the 85% attendance rate.
- 2.3 If there are any extenuating circumstances that have affected a student's ability to attend school, the school, on behalf of the student, must apply for an exemption to NRL School Competition Management and provide evidence to support the exemption request.

3. CANCELLATION, POSTPONEMENT, ABANDONEMENT, FORFEIT

- 3.1 All NRL Schoolboy Trophy matches may only be cancelled, delayed, postponed, or abandoned with the prior approval of the NRL School Competition Management.
- 3.2 During the **regular rounds** of the competition, cancellation, postponement, abandonment and forfeit rules will be at the discretion of the NRL School Competition Management.
- 3.3 In the **final's series**, if a match is cancelled or abandoned, the decision of a replay will rest with the NRL School Competition Management.
- 3.4 In the **final's series, if half or more** of the match has been completed, the score at the time of suspension of play in the match will be the result.
- 3.5 In the NRL Schoolboy Trophy, forfeits, at any time, are not acceptable. Consecutive forfeits over time may affect your school's participation in NRL School Competitions.
- 3.6 If any team is unable to play a scheduled match, a school may apply to NRL School Competition Management for special consideration. Only extenuating circumstances will be considered.
- 3.7 In the event of an emergency, the NRL School Competition Management (or their nominee), in conjunction with the referee and both schools will make the decision on the cancellation, postponement or abandonment of the match.



4. CODE OF CONDUCT & BEHAVIOUR

NRL NATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT

- 4.1 All NRL Schoolboy Trophy matches are played in accordance with the NRL National Code of Conduct. <https://www.playrugbyleague.com/policies/>
- 4.2 Players, coaches, team staff and spectators are all responsible with always upholding the NRL National Code of Conduct.
- 4.3 Game Day Operations staff and Match Officials have the right to report any breaches of the NRL National Code of Conduct to NRL School Competition Management.
- 4.4 Individuals who have been reported to have breached the NRL National Code of Conduct will be handled by the relevant disciplinary procedures and may be required to attend a hearing and face suspension from participation or attendance from future Rugby League events (school, club & representative).

BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

- 4.5 It is emphasised that the strictest standard of behaviour should be observed and always followed by players, coaches, officials, and spectators at all NRL Schoolboy Trophy matches.
- 4.6 School spectator groups must always be under strict teacher/school supervision. Failure of school/s to properly supervise and control supporter groups may lead to the suspension or abandonment of a match.
- 4.7 Strong disciplinary action will be taken against any offender or offending school, including suspension and possibly ineligibility from future Rugby League events.
- 4.8 Any incidents of unacceptable behaviour should be immediately reported to the Ground Manager.
- 4.9 During finals matches, schools may be required to nominate a Student Supporter Liaison who will be the point of contact for any matter relating to supporter groups.



5. COMPETITION STRUCTURE

COMPETITION ENTRY

- 5.1 Participation in the NRL Schoolboy Trophy is on a school basis.
- 5.2 Entry into the NRL Schoolboy Trophy is via the online nomination form.
- 5.3 All schools entering the NRL Schoolboy Trophy must adhere to the rules and conditions outlined in this document, and any reasonable request from NRL School Competition Management.

COMPETITION FORMAT

- 5.4 NRL WA Schoolboy Trophy divisions include:
- Year 7/8
 - Year 9
 - Year 10
- 5.5 Each division will have a rounds phase with the top four teams of each division progressing to the finals.
- 5.6 The finals series for each division will be a two-week finals series, including Semi Finals and a Grand Final.



6. DISMISSALS & SUSPENSIONS

TEMPORARY SUSPENSION

- 6.1 A player receiving a period of temporary suspension by the referee shall leave the field of play and enter the allocated sin bin area, or an area instructed by the Ground Manager, until the end of the temporary suspension period.
- 6.2 The time of temporary suspension (sin bin) shall be **ten (10) minutes** of playing time only and shall commence after the referee signals time on or when play recommences.
- 6.3 The temporary suspension shall be suspended if the referee signals time off and the time is stopped and shall recommence when time is restarted.
- 6.4 Suspended time does not include the half time break and shall cease at the end of the first period and recommence at the beginning of the second period.
- 6.5 If more than one (1) player receives a temporary suspension from the one (1) incident, the players' temporary suspension shall be equal and they shall be entitled to return to the field of play together, after the completion of the temporary suspension.
- 6.6 Players re-entering the field of play must do so from an onside position.

PERMANENT SUSPENSION

- 6.7 Any player permanently dismissed from the field (i.e. sent off) must immediately retire to their teams' dressing room until the player has changed out of their playing uniform.
- 6.8 Under no circumstance can a dismissed player return to the players' bench. The player, once out of team uniform, is permitted to be outside the playing area bounded by the fence.

SUSPENDED PARTICIPANTS

- 6.9 Any player or team official who is suspended or disqualified from Rugby League by NRL School Competition Management or any other relevant judiciary or disciplinary bodies, including local, state, and national leagues, shall not participate in any NRL School Competition match until that suspension or disqualification period has expired.
- 6.10 It is the responsibility of the competing school to ensure that participants are not subject to any suspension from Rugby League, including local, state, and national leagues, at the time of participating in a NRL School Competition match.
- 6.11 Any player or team official who is suspended or disqualified from Rugby League by NRL School Competition Management or any other relevant judiciary or disciplinary bodies, including local, state, and national, must not enter the playing field or area inside the fence prior to, during, or after a match.



7. DRAWN MATCHES

DRAWN MATCHES & EXTRA TIME

- 7.1 In the **regular rounds** of the competition, the procedure for drawn matches will be both teams will receive two points.
- 7.2 In the **finals' series**, if scores are equal at the conclusion of normal time, a further two (2), five (5) minutes of Golden Point extra time will be played.
- 7.3 In golden point extra time, the first scorer of any point/s will immediately be declared the winner.
- 7.4 In the event of no points being scored after the first five (5) minutes of golden point extra time, teams will swap ends and immediately commence the second five (5) minute period.
- 7.5 In the event of no points being scored in golden point extra time, full-time will be signalled by the referee and the following criteria will be used to determine the winner;
- Most tries scored, if equal;
 - First try scored, if zero;
 - First points, if zero;
 - Most penalties received (including extra time), if equal;
 - First penalty received, if zero;
 - Toss of a coin.

8. EQUIPMENT

- 8.1 Playing jerseys must meet all sponsorship guidelines and not conflict with any major sponsor of the NRL.
- 8.2 A player must not wear any item that may prove dangerous to other players. The Match Officials will have the final say on the allowance of potentially dangerous items.
- 8.3 All jewellery must be removed prior to the start of the match.
- 8.4 Kicking tees may be used provided it is a licensed product.



9. FACILITIES & VENUES

- 9.1 In the **regular rounds** of the competition, match venues will be nominated by the host school or NRL School Competition Management.
- 9.2 In the **final's series**, match venues will be nominated by NRL School Competition Management.
- 9.3 All match venues shall be required to provide as a minimum standard the following items;
- Suitable and up-to standard playing surface with appropriate line markings consistent with the game of Rugby League.
 - Separate home and away dressing rooms, with toilet facilities
 - Match officials dressing room.
 - Suitable and designated area for home and away benches
 - Public amenities
 - Suitable area for spectators that is fenced or roped off at least three (3) metres from the field of play.
 - Ambulance access

10. GAME DAY OPERATIONS

- 10.1 In the **regular rounds** of the competition, game day operations will be the responsibility of the NRL staff.
- 10.2 In the **final's series**, game day operations will be the responsibility of the NRL.
- 10.3 Schools and team officials must adhere to any reasonable request from the locally appointed ground managers and NRL staff.
- 10.4 Locally appointed ground managers and NRL staff can report any breach of the NRL On Field Policy or NRL National Code of Conduct to NRL School Competition Management.

11. INJURY REPORTING

- 11.1 All schools are required to report all serious injuries on MySideline, **within 24 hours** of the incident. Serious injuries can be defined as, but not limited to, concussion, head injuries, fractures, ligament injuries etc.



12. INSURANCE

- 12.1 It is the responsibility of each school that participates in any program to ensure that it has in place all insurances required to cover its student in the case of accident, injury, loss and/or damage arising out of a student's participation in the programs. The NRL accepts no responsibility for a failure by a school to have in place any such insurance policy which would otherwise cover an accident, injury, loss and/or damage that arises out of a student's participation in a program. Additionally, we recommend schools inform parents that they obtain private health insurance for their child (for things such as general medical expenses and dental) to the extent necessary to meet any gap and to cover any accident, injury, loss and/or damage to their child which would not be covered by the mandatory insurances held by the school. Participants who are registered players in competitions affiliated with State or Territory leagues may be covered by their relevant participant insurance policies while participating in NRL school competitions.

13. INTERCHANGE & REPLACEMENTS

- 13.1 Interchange is unlimited for all NRL Schoolboy Trophy matches.
- 13.2 Locally appointed ground managers and NRL staff, in conjunction with the independent medical officer, have the right to request an interchange for the purpose of a medical assessment.

14. LAWS OF THE GAME

- 14.1 Subject to the modifications in this handbook, all NRL Schoolboy Trophy matches are played in accordance with the International Laws of the Game (13+).
<https://www.playrugbyleague.com/laws-of-the-game-community/>

SAFEPLAY CODE

- 14.2 All Year 7/8 and 9 competitions must be played in accordance with the NRL SafePlay Code. <https://www.playrugbyleague.com/safety/safeplay/>
- 14.3 The standalone Year 10 competitions will not play in accordance with the NRL SafePlay Code.



15. MATCH TIME

- 15.1 In the **regular rounds** of the competition, match duration is flexible and be customised by the NRL School Competition Management.
- 15.2 In the **final's series**, each match shall be played in the below times.
- Year 7/8s – two (2) equal periods of twenty (20) minutes, with a five (5) minute half time
 - Year 9s & 10s – two (2) equal periods of twenty-five (25) minutes, with a ten (10) minute half time
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16. MATCH OFFICIALS

- 16.1 In the **regular rounds** of the competition, match officials will be organised by NRL School Competition Management.
- 16.2 In the **finals' series**, all match officials will be organised by the NRL School Competition Management.
- 16.3 It is the responsibility of all schools to ensure that their staff, coaches, trainers, players, and supporters do not approach, question, or harass Match Officials in any way.

17. MATCH REVIEW & DISCIPLINARY

- 17.1 In the **regular rounds** of the competition, all match review and disciplinary action will be handled by the NRL School Competition Management.
- 17.2 In the **finals' series**, all match review and disciplinary action will be handled by NRL School Competition Management.
- 17.3 All match review and disciplinary matters will be dealt with via the current Judicial Protocols, in conjunction with the governing school body and/or the relevant state league.
- 17.4 School and Club suspensions relating to on field incidents will be separate. Being suspended in club rugby league will not rule you out of school rugby league and vice-versa, unless it is a code of conduct related charge, or deemed serious enough to warrant dual suspension by either the Judiciary or the NRL School Competition Management.



18. MEDICAL

- 18.1 The NRL reserves the right to appoint independent medical personnel to oversee NRL Schoolboy Trophy matches. These personnel will work in addition to the standard team staff who will remain responsible for the monitoring and treatment of injuries.
- 18.2 In the event of a serious injury or suspected serious injury, the NRL appointed medical will have the final decision.

CONCUSSION

- 18.3 All NRL Schoolboy Trophy matches are played in accordance with the **Community Rugby League Policy and Guidelines for the Management of Concussion – 2025**.
<https://www.playrugbyleague.com/policies/>
- 18.4 Any player who is diagnosed with a concussion cannot return within the timeframe outlined below;
- **Children and Adolescents (18 years and younger):** Nineteen (19) days. The earliest a player can be made available for team selection is on the 19th day after sustaining a concussion and only after all symptoms have resolved and the player has been cleared to play by a medical professional.

19. MYSIDELINE

- 19.1 All NRL Schoolboy Trophy participants (players, coaches, trainers, volunteers) must be registered to their school via the National Registration Database (MySideline).
- 19.2 MySideline training will be made available to all NRL Schoolboy Trophy schools.
- 19.3 Any participants marked as unavailable on MySideline will be unable to participate in a NRL Schoolboy Trophy match. Cases of exceptional circumstances only will be heard by NRL School Competition Management.



20. ON-FIELD POLICY & QUALIFICATIONS

- 20.1 All NRL Schoolboy Trophy matches operate under the **Community** level of the NRL On-Field Policy. <https://www.playrugbyleague.com/policies/>
- 20.2 All team trainers must have the required accreditation for the role in which they are performing. No match shall commence until the required on-field personnel are available.
- 20.3 Under no circumstances are trainers permitted to approach, become involved, or enter the field of play during an altercation or melee involving players from either team. This includes not attempting to separate or restrain players.
- 20.4 If any on-field personnel abuse their roles or behave in a manner contrary to the NRL On-Field Policy or NRL Code of Conduct or bring the game of Rugby League/their school into disrepute, they may be subject to sanctions and/or disciplinary action, up to and including deregistration from the game.

COACHING QUALIFICATIONS

- 20.5 At a minimum, all coaches must have a current NRL Community Coach Accreditation, age relevant to the age they are coaching.
- 20.6 All coaches must not be subject to a suspension or disqualification from the game, including local, state, and national leagues.

21. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- 21.1 Age eligibility:

AGE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	
Year 7/8	Born 1 st July 2012 – 30 th June 2014
Year 9	Born 1 st July 2011 – 30 th June 2012
Year 10	Born 1 st July 2010 – 30 th June 2011

- 21.2 A player can play two-year groups above their current year.
- 21.3 A player may only represent one (1) school in each year of the NRL Schoolboy Trophy.
- 21.4 Players must be categorized as a full-time student.
- 21.5 Players must always comply with the 85% attendance condition outlined in **2. Attendance.**



- 21.6 A player will be deemed ineligible if they are marked unavailable on MySideline.
- 21.7 In the regular rounds of the competition, a player may not participate in more than one (1) division. During the final's series, all eligible players may participate.
- 21.8 It is the responsibility of competing schools to ensure that all players meet the above eligibility criteria.

22. PROTESTS, CHALLENGES, EXEMPTIONS

- 22.1 Any protests or challenges must be lodged in writing, via email, to NRL School Competition Management **within 24 hours of the completion of the relevant match.** Protests must be on a school letterhead and signed by the school principal.
- 22.2 Any exemption requests relating to the rules in this document must be lodged in writing, via email, to NRL School Competition Management. Requests must be on a school letterhead and signed by the school principal.

23. SPONSORSHIP

- 23.1 Schools seeking to engage sponsorship must adhere to the following guidelines.
- Sponsorship arrangements must not conflict with the competition or that of the National Rugby League.
 - Sponsorship arrangements must be of an appropriate nature for School Rugby League. An alcohol manufacturer or seller is an example of an inappropriate sponsor.
 - The final decision on sponsorships will rest with the NRL.

24. TEAM LIST SUBMISSIONS

- 24.1 Schools must submit a team list via MySideline for each match, with the following.
- Maximum of twenty players with correct jersey numbers
 - All team staff (head coach, assistant coaches, trainers, manager)



25. VIDEOGRAPHY & MEDIA

- 25.1 The NRL has the right to arrange the production and live streaming/broadcast of NRL Schoolboy Trophy matches.
- 25.2 Match footage will be made available to schools and match officials. The provision of match footage is for **coaching purposes only**. Under no circumstance can match footage be shared without the prior permission from the NRL.
- 25.3 The NRL shall maintain exclusive rights to the intellectual property captured by the nominated provider and shall be entitled to use such property in a manner that it deems appropriate for the promotion and enhancement of the competition.





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