NEWCASTLE RUGBY FOUNDATION × NORTHUMBERLAND RUGBY X NEWCASTLE RED BULLS

Northumberland Rugby **Development Programme**

- The North Star programme aims to drive regional rugby growth through outstanding coach development, a shared curriculum, development-focused competition, and impactful club development.

The Development Team

GB — **Gavin Beasley** — NRF
NRF Development Manager (Rugby)

KR — **Keith Robinson** — NRBA
Foundation Phase Manager

NRF DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS

Dan Simpson
Northumberland – City
Wallsend, Gosforth, Northern

Drew Hayton
Northumberland – Coast
N. Shields, Percy Park, WBR, Blyth

Brooke Henderson
Tyne Valley
Tynedale, Ponteland, Novos

Amy Smith
North Northumberland
Morpeth, Ashington, Alnwick

Developing clubs
Seghill
Medicals
Newcastle Ravens
Prudhoe and Stocksfield
Berwick
West Tynedale

These clubs will be supported by Gavin Beasley, the NRF will work with the clubs to plan a suitable development plan

NRBA FOUNDATION PHASE

WP — **William Ponton**
Foundation Phase Lead – North

U16 Lead Coach	**Adam Hay**
U15 Lead Coach	**Shaun Murphy**
Assistant Coach	**Matt Currie**
Assistant Coach	**Andrew Neal**
Assistant Coach	**Will Travers**
Volunteer	**Pete Jones**
Volunteer	**Paul Stewart**

Roles and Responsibilities

NRBA

FOUNDATION PHASE ACADEMY

- Deliver and manage their Foundation Phase area
- Manage Foundation Phase coaches (U15/U16s)
- Lead talent ID in their areas – more eyes, more times
- Build relationships with teachers and coaches – link in with NRF staff termly
- Mentor club coaches so they are more aligned and develop through the “Tribes”
- Deliver coach and club CPD along with NRF staff to clubs and schools
- Begin a depth chart of players, linking in with NRF’s delivery

NRF

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Predominantly deliver to Year 4 to Year 9, but not excluding Year 10
- Support and deliver schools festivals / fixtures within their areas
- Deliver teacher training sessions
- Bridge the gap between schools and clubs, helping clubs to recruit players
- Identify and recruit club coaches on to the coach development programme
- Inform people on the future pathway for players and record in depth chart (how does this look? Gasp + position)

NRU Steering Group

GOVERNANCE & OVERSIGHT

- Ensure the programme remains aligned to its stated aims and development strategy
- Review progress against agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Act as advocates for the programme within their respective organisations
- Monitor participation, recruitment, retention, club-school links and coaching development outcomes
- Ensure resources are focused on areas with the greatest potential impact

Flight Path

- Prepare players for 1st team rugby
- Assist universities and local clubs within the region for game to which will increase the standard of rugby

- Best prepare players for senior academy and adult rugby
- Enhance life skills for the future
- Help young talent player maximize potential
- Continue to play at highest standard within the region and strengthen the regional game

- Identify and support talented players
- Develop coaches and teachers
- Strengthen partnerships
- Increase awareness and understanding of the NRB Player Pathway and Academy philosophy

- Engage more people playing rugby
- Support people transitioning to clubs
- Support schools and clubs taking part in meaningful competition
- Increase the number of teacher and coaches trained up to delivery engaging sessions

Programme focus (4 Cs)

1 Curriculum

Implement a consistent, high-quality, development-focused approach to rugby delivery across the entire region, ensuring every young person has access to the same standard of experience, learning and opportunity.

2 Competition

Create a consistent, accessible, development-focused and sustainable competition environment that increases participation, improves player development, strengthens the pathway and enhances long-term retention.

3 Coach Development

Better-quality rugby experiences, stronger player development and a more sustainable participation pathway across the region.

4 Club Development

More children playing rugby at schools, more schools playing rugby, more players playing at clubs and an increased talent pool.

26/27 Delivery Aims

NORTHUMBERLAND

AIMS

- Establish long-term adoption of a focused and targeted approach to development
- Support the recruitment and retention of schools playing rugby in Northumberland
- Support the recruitment and retention of young people in rugby clubs in Northumberland
- Embed rugby in a targeted number of schools around Northumberland clubs to affect a longer-term culture of rugby
- Work with clubs and schools to make long-term links between the organisations
- Improve the standard of rugby across the 4 Cs (Curriculum, Coach Development, Competition and Coaching)
- Strengthen the relationship between NRF, NRU and NRB Academy
- **All clubs will be given the opportunity to be included in the project at an appropriate level for their clubs**

REPORTING DASHBOARD	26/27 NLAND
Coaching / curriculum – schools	
Players in schools engaged (male)	**4,825**
Players in schools engaged (female)	**4,825**
Players with a disability	**965**
Players from an ethnic minority	**1,440**
Hours coaching in schools	**1,800**
Coaching / curriculum – clubs	
Hours coaching in clubs	**117**
Transition – players choosing to play (male)	**135**
Transition – players choosing to play (female)	**135**
Increase in numbers in community clubs	**8%**
Competition – schools and clubs	
Festivals (male)	**26**
Festival participants (male)	**2,600**
Festivals (female)	**15**
Festival participants (female)	**1,000**
Coach development / club development	
School teachers trained	**78**
Club coaches trained	**50**
CPD events	**20**
Coaches	**4**
Total participants delivered to (schools / teachers / coaches)	**13,648**

Northumberland Rugby 5 Year Development Plan

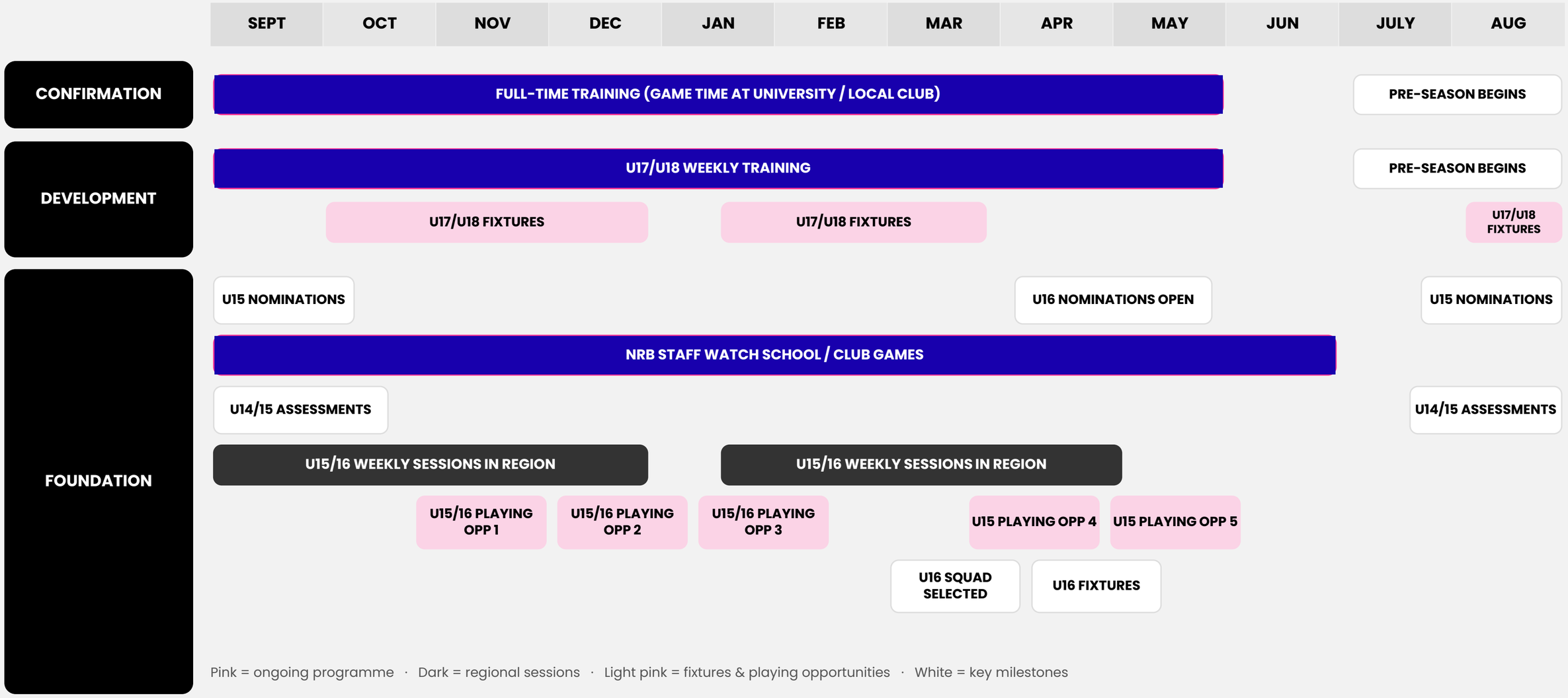
	CURRICULUM	COMPETITION	COACH DEVELOPMENT	CLUB DEVELOPMENT
1 **Year 1** FOUNDATION	Introduce and embed the NRB Flight Plan and Foundation Phase Academy Curriculum in targeted schools linked to clubs. Establish baseline engagement and delivery standards.	Increase participation opportunities and improve player experiences through structured festivals, fixtures and competitions. Establish clear participation pathways.	Deliver coach and teacher support aligned to the Flight Plan. Introduce joint CPD and shared learning opportunities across clubs, schools and pathway partners.	Deploy Development Officers to strengthen club capacity and establish effective school-club partnerships. Improve transition from schools into club rugby. Build relationships between clubs, schools, Foundation, RFU and Academy.
2 **Years 2–3** GROWTH	Increase consistent use of the curriculum across more schools and clubs. Develop teacher confidence and move schools through the Launch → Turbo → Full Throttle pathway.	Expand competition opportunities to support school progression from Launch to Turbo and Full Throttle. Use competitions to support retention and talent identification.	Increase coach and teacher capability, ensuring more consistent delivery standards and player experiences across clubs and schools.	Focus resources on the strongest school-club links while maintaining county-wide support. Improve recruitment and transition into clubs using Year 1 data and evidence.
3 **Years 4–5** SUSTAINABILITY	Rugby becomes embedded within school curriculum delivery. A consistent regional rugby language and delivery model is established while allowing flexibility for local needs.	Deliver repeatable, sustainable competition structures that support participation, retention and progression into club and academy pathways.	Create a skilled and self-sustaining coaching workforce with consistent delivery quality across the region and a shared development philosophy.	Develop sustainable clubs with strong community links, embedded partnerships and clear succession planning. Establish long-term workforce, partnership and funding models.

Delivery Road Map

COMMUNITY (NRF) AND ACADEMY (NRB)

	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG
SCHOOLS COACHING	NORTH STAR SCHOOLS COACHING (NRU)											
FESTIVALS	PLAYING OPS	U14/U15 BOYS U16 GIRLS	PLAYING OPS			U14/U15 BOYS U16 GIRLS	PLAYING OPS	U14/U15 BOYS U16 GIRLS FINALS	PLAYING OPS	7s / BEACH		
COACH DEV	CPD	CPD	CPD	CPD	CPD	CPD	CPD	CPD	CPD	CPD	CPD	CPD
CAMPS		OCT	XMAS			FEB		EASTER	MAY			SUMMER
CLUB VISITS	NORTH STAR CLUB DEVELOPMENT / TRANSITION											
ACADEMY PROGRAMMES	BIOBANDING SEASON PILOT (JAN–DEC, subject to RFU permissions)											
	SCHOOLS FESTIVAL										REGIONAL TALENT ID CAMP ×3	
			NRF × NRB COMBINE			NRF × NRB COMBINE			NRF × NRB COMBINE			

Newcastle Red Bulls Academy Timeline



Pink = ongoing programme · Dark = regional sessions · Light pink = fixtures & playing opportunities · White = key milestones

Meeting Group

KA **Keith Atkinson**
Northumberland Rugby
Club Development director
NRU

GB **Gavin Beasley**
Newcastle Rugby Foundation
Development Manager
NRF

KR **Keith Robinson**
Newcastle Red Bulls
Foundation Phase Manager
NRBA

RS **Rob Snow**
NSRU Chair
NSRU

LN **Liam Nicholls**
RFU
RFU

Next Steps

Let’s get started.

1

WEDS 2 SEPT
1st Steering Group meeting

2

MON 14 SEPT
Schools delivery begins

3

TUES 15 SEPT
NRF × NRU clubs kick-off

4

OCTOBER (TBC)
Regional launch

5

MON 19 OCT
Steering Group meeting 2