

St Patrick's GAC



1. Positive Behaviour
2. Code of Behaviour
3. Prevention of Bullying Policy
4. Sanctions /Discipline Policy

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Approved by Committee May 2018



Safeguarding Team

If you are worried or upset
come and talk to us



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St Patrick's GAC Safeguarding Policy & Code of Behaviour:

www.stpatsgac.com/club-policies

Visit our Well Being Hub:

www.stpatsgac.com/wellbeing-hub



Section 1

Positive Behaviour Policy

Rationale

Parents play the most important role in teaching and modelling good behaviour. It is expected that parents will have taught their children to respect the feelings and property of others.

In St.Patricks GAC, Lisburn we reinforce the attitudes and discipline which begins at home but acknowledge that everyone within our club has a role to play in order to create a positive environment and promote good manners and discipline, good relationships between managers , coaches and club members and children, setting high expectations and having agreed strategies for encouraging good behaviour, all have a bearing on the way children behave. An organised, well managed and welcoming team environment gives clear messages to the children about the extent to which they and their efforts are valued.

Aims of the Positive Behaviour Policy

1. We are aware that we share responsibility with parents and guardians for the children in our care, and make every effort to provide the care and support that any responsible parent would be expected to give.
2. We wish to create a climate where we have the endorsement and active support of parents and guardians to deliver the aims of CLG.
3. We will ensure that positive behaviour is rewarded and all children feel valued and respected.
4. We will deal with young players and adults who make inappropriate choices of behaviour in a consistently firm and fair manner.
5. All members will be aware of this policy and engage in relevant training when available.

Establishing positive behaviour

1. The maintenance of positive behaviour within the club is the responsibility of all the members, parents and visitors.
2. Team Managers, Coaches and club officials endeavour to model desirable behaviour and attitudes and avoid negative cycles of behaviour.
3. Every opportunity is taken to support self-discipline, whereby children are personally involved and accept responsibility for their own actions and behaviours.
4. Coaching methods and other linked activities encourage active participation and support the aims to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding which will enable the children to work and play in co-operation with others.
5. Players have age appropriate responsibilities assigned to them with peers and adults to create a collaborative ethos and promote well-being and shared stewardship.
6. Praise is used to encourage good behaviour as well as good work and constructive criticism should be a private matter between adult and child where possible.
7. All Adults and children are familiar with our aims and our Code of Behaviour.

YOUNG PLAYERS

Young Players can benefit greatly from sports in terms of personal development and enjoyment. Our players are encouraged to realise that as a result of their participation in our Gaelic Games that they also have a responsibility to treat other players and officials with fairness and respect. With rights there will always be responsibilities.

The term young players also refers to children i.e. any person who is under 18 years of age, regardless of what team or age group they play with.

Young Players, and those who work with them in our Associations are required to 'sign up' and abide by this Code of Behaviour and to any other policies or codes in our Clubs or Associations.

YOUNG PLAYERS SHOULD BE ENTITLED TO:

- Be safe and feel safe.
- Have fun and experience a sense of enjoyment and fulfilment.
- Be treated with respect, dignity and sensitivity.
- Comment and make suggestions in a constructive manner.
- Be afforded appropriate confidentiality.
- Participate in games and competitions at levels with which they feel comfortable.
- Be afforded adequate and meaningful playing time to assist in the development of their playing skills, within their own age group and in accordance with Rule.
- Make their concerns known and have them dealt with in an appropriate manner.
- Be protected from abuse.
- Be listened to.

YOUNG PLAYERS SHOULD ALWAYS:

- Play fairly, do their best and enjoy themselves.
- Respect fellow team members regardless of ability, cultural or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation or religion beliefs.
- Support fellow team members regardless of whether they do well or not.
- Represent their team, their Club and their family with pride and dignity.
- Respect all Coaches, Officials and their opponents.
- Be gracious in defeat and modest in victory.
- Shake hands before and after a game as part of the Give Respect Get Respect initiative, irrespective of the result.
- Inform their Coach/Mentor/Manager in advance if they are unavailable for training and games.
- Take due care of Club equipment.
- Know that it is acceptable to talk to the Club Children's Officer with any concerns or questions they may have.
- Adhere to acceptable standards of behaviour and their Club's Code of Discipline.
- Tell somebody else if they or others have been harmed in any way.

YOUNG PLAYERS SHOULD ENGAGE IN GOOD PRACTICE:

- Never cheat – always play by the rules.
- Never shout at or argue with a game's official, with their Coach, their team mates or opponents and should never use violence.
- Accept the decisions of referees and other officials.
- Never use unfair or Bullying tactics to gain advantage or isolate other players.
- Never spread rumours.
- Never tell lies about adults or other young people.
- Never play or train if they feel unwell or are injured.
- Never use unacceptable language or racial and/or sectarian references to an opponent, a fellow player or official by words, deeds or gesture.
- Never consume non-prescribed drugs or performance enhancing supplements.
- Never use social media to discuss team mates, opponents, coaches, match officials or other individuals.

COACHES, MENTORS AND TRAINERS

All Coaches, Mentors and Trainers (referred to hereafter as Coaches) should ensure that young people and children benefit significantly from our games by promoting a positive, healthy and participatory approach in our work with underage players. In developing the skills levels of every player, Coaches should always encourage enjoyment and fun while ensuring meaningful participation in our games and activities. Coaches should always remember that they are role models for the players in their care.

RECRUITMENT OF COACHES

All Coaches working with young people and children are required to be suitable for their chosen role(s), and should be appropriately trained, qualified and supported to fulfil such roles. All persons working or volunteering for such roles are required to:

- Undertake agreed vetting and background Police checks within the jurisdiction(s) in which they operate
- Attend relevant Gaelic Games child safeguarding training
- Possess a coaching qualification relevant to their role as recognised by their Association

Coaches of adult teams, which includes any player under 18 years of age, must also undertake the vetting, child safeguarding training and coaching requirements as outlined above.

COACHES SHOULD MAINTAIN A CHILD CENTRED APPROACH

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person.
- Treat each person equally regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
- Be positive during coaching sessions, games and other activities so that underage players always leave with a sense of achievement and an increased level of self-esteem.
- Recognise the development needs and capacity of all underage players, regardless of their ability, by emphasising participation for all while avoiding excessive training and competition. Skills development and personal satisfaction should have priority over competition when working with underage players.
- Ensure all those eligible to participate in any team within the club are provided with an opportunity to do so with preference given to their own age group.
- Develop an understanding of relevant coaching methods and ensure that they have the appropriate level of coaching accreditation.
- Do not equate losing with failure and do not develop a preoccupation with medals and trophies. The level of improvement made by underage players is the best indicator of effective coaching.

COACHES SHOULD LEAD BY EXAMPLE

- Never use foul language or provocative language/gestures to a player, opponent or match official.
- Only enter the field of play with the Referee's permission.
- Do not question a Referee's decisions or integrity.
- Encourage players to respect and accept the judgement of match officials.
- Promote Fair Play and encourage all players and fellow officials to always play by the rules of the game.
- Do not encourage or threaten a player by deed or gesture to act in any unacceptable manner towards an opponent, fellow player or official.
- Promote the RESPECT campaign amongst your players, fellow coaches, parents and supporters.
- Do not smoke while working with underage players.
- Do not consume alcohol or non-prescribed drugs immediately prior to or while underage players are in your care.
- Encourage parents to become involved in your team and Club activities wherever possible.

CONDUCT OF COACHES WHEN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

- Develop an appropriate working relationship with children based on mutual trust and respect.
- Challenge Bullying in any form whether physical or emotional. Bullying is not acceptable behaviour be it from a young person, coach, parent/guardian, spectator or match official.
- Don't shout at or lecture players or reprimand/ridicule them when they make a mistake. Children learn best through trial and error. Children and young people should not be afraid to risk error so as to learn.
- The use of any form of physical punishment is prohibited as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of restraint.

- Avoid incidents of horse play or role play or telling jokes etc. that could be misinterpreted.
- Never undertake any form of therapy or hypnosis, in the training of children.
- Never encourage players to consume non-prescribed drugs or take performance enhancing supplements.
- Do not make energy enhancing products available to children.

AVOID COMPROMISING YOUR ROLE AS A COACH

Some activities may require coaches to come into physical contact with underage players in the course of their duties. However, coaches should;

- Avoid taking coaching sessions on your own.
- Only deliver one to one coaching, if deemed necessary, within a group setting.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with an underage player and never engage in inappropriate touching of a player.
- Be aware that any necessary contact should be determined by the age and development of the player and should only take place with the permission and understanding of the player and in an open environment in the context of developing a player's skills and abilities.
- Where a team consist of both boys and girls, and for the avoidance of doubt, the coaching team must also consist of both male and female personnel while male only teams must include at least one male coach and female only teams must include at least one female coach.

BEST PRACTICE

- Ensure that all of your players are suitably and safely attired to play their chosen sport. e.g. helmets (Hurling and Camogie), goggles (Handball), shin guards, gum shields (Football).
- As a coach always be punctual and properly attired.
- Be accompanied by at least one other adult at coaching sessions, games and in underage team dressing rooms.
- Abide by supervision ratios that recommend a ratio of one adult for 8 children under 12 years of age teams and a ratio of 1:10 for children over 12 years of age. While abiding by such ratios a coach must always be accompanied by at least one other suitably qualified adult at all times.
- Set realistic – stretching but achievable – performance goals for your players and teams.
- Keep a record of attendance at training and at games by both players and coaches.
- Rotate the team captaincy and the method used for selecting teams so that the same children are not always selected to the exclusion of others.
- Afford meaningful playing time to young players so as to assist in the development of their playing skills, within their own age groups.
- Keep a record of any injuries and actions subsequently taken. Ensure that another official referee/team mentor is present when a player is being attended to and can corroborate the relevant details.
- Make adequate provision for First Aid services.
- Do not encourage or permit players to play while injured.
- Always inform parents/guardians if their child has been injured or becomes unwell at games or training.
- Be aware of any special medical or dietary requirements of players as indicated on the medical consent/registration forms or as informed by parents/guardians.
- Be willing to keep the necessary and emergency medication of players in a safe and accessible place in accordance with the wishes and permission of the parents/guardians.
- Do not administer medication or medical aid unless you are willing to do so and have received the necessary training to administer such aid.
- Use mobile phones, if deemed appropriate, only via a group text or email system for communicating with the parents/guardians of players. Any exception to this form of group texting can only be proceeded with following permission from parents/guardians.
- Do not communicate individually by text, email or via social network sites and or apps with underage players.
- Do not engage in communications with underage players via social network sites.
- Encourage parents/guardians to play an active role in organising and assisting various activities for your teams and your Club.
- If it is necessary to transport a child/young person in your car, ensure that they are seated in a rear seat with seat belts securely fastened and that all drivers are adequately insured.
- With the exception of their own child a coach should not transport a child alone, except in emergency or

exceptional circumstances.

- Ensure that all dressing rooms and the general areas that are occupied by your players and other Club personnel, prior to, during or immediately following the completion of any match are kept clean and are not damaged in any way.
- Should you be aware of or have concerns regarding the possible abuse of a child you should report this to the relevant statutory authority or may seek the assistance of your Designated Liaison Person (DLP) so that they may assist you in forwarding the concern to the relevant statutory authority. All such reports must also be forwarded to your Association's Mandated Person, without delay.

Section 3

Anti –Bullying statement

Definition of Bullying

On updating this policy, we have adopted the NIABF ‘Definition of Bullying’.
(NI Anti-Bullying Forum)

‘...the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to hurt, harm or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others’

To avoid labelling individuals, we will strive to report situations as ‘alleged bullying incidents’ and perpetrators as ‘displaying bullying behaviour’.

The term ‘bullying behaviour’ refers to a range of harmful behaviour, physical or psychological and usually has the following features

- **It is repetitive and persistent.**
- It is intentionally harmful.
- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone helpless to prevent it or stop it.
- It causes distress.

Prevention

Bullying is a complex and emotive issue and can never be eliminated and no club, however hard it tries, can guarantee that a child in its care will not be subjected to it. Active promotion of the CLG aims, Code of Behaviour and promotion of a positive and secure ethos can reduce incidents and build resilience in players. This club actively promotes well-being and anti-bullying strategies throughout its provision.

This club will take **ALL** reasonable steps to minimise incidents of bullying in a proactive manner.

Intervention Strategies

The aim of any intervention applied is to RESPOND to the alleged incidents, RESOLVE the concern and RESTORE the well-being of all involved. Low level bullying must never be ignored, early intervention can diminish problems and reduce potential risk.

Identification

The NIABF document promotes identifying bullying across four levels **Low, Intermediate, Complex and High Risk** – these compliment the ‘Levels of Unacceptable Behaviour’.

Assessing the level of risk an individual player faces will help determine the level of severity as will be taking account of the nature, frequency and duration of the bullying behaviour and the perceptions of the child being bullied. A player may not wish to disclose incidents so all adults involved should be vigilant in observing symptoms such as,

- Deterioration of skills etc

- Spurious (fake) illness and /or erratic attendance
- Isolation/desire to remain with adults
- Problems reported from home
- Childhood depression/anxiety
- Unexplained damage or loss of property
- Unwillingness to talk about friendships
- Unexplained bruises or marks

Response

- When an alleged incident of bullying is witnessed by managers, coaches, club officials reported by a parent, visitor, players or a written or verbal complaint is given by a parent the incident(s) will be fully and sensitively investigated to clarify the facts and check if it constitutes bullying as defined in this policy.
- The confidentiality and sensitivities of the child who has been bullied or engages in bullying behaviour will be considered.
- The **Childrens' Officer or Designated officer must be informed** of incidents of reported bullying either orally or in writing using the appropriate **concerns form**
- Adults should be calm, positive, assertive in seeking resolution and restitution and confident in believing that early intervention will impact future player behaviour.

Resolution

- If proven, action will be taken to protect the 'child who has been bullied' and deal with the 'child who is displaying bullying behaviour' in line with the Sanctions Policy and involving all relevant adults on a need to know basis.
- If parents/guardians are involved (depending on level of severity) they will be given oral feedback or by phone call / formal letter from the Adult involved (or Children's Officer / Designated Officer or the chair of the discipline committee)
- If the parent was the initial complainant a report back will be made (by phone call/interview) in line with this policy. Parents will be informed that they can contact the relevant adult again at any time if concerns are still evident.
- Procedures for monitoring and recording incidents are ongoing and further notable incidents recorded by the adults dealing with the incident, will be retained in a record folder.
- Contact will be made with the parents /guardians of the child exhibiting bullying behaviour (if proven and within reason) but not simply because another parent so wishes. The adult involved will only contact a parent if the alleged incident(s) conform to the above definition of bullying.

Examples of 'Scripting'

(Agreed questioning strategy to promote consistent approach to challenging players about their behaviour in a non-threatening manner.)

The number of questions, vocabulary used etc. will vary with a player's age and ability to process self-reflection.

In order.....

1 Tell me what happened?

2 What were you thinking that led you to behave in that way?

3 Who/what has been affected by what you have done?

(If behaviour is directed towards peers/adults ask)

4 Can you tell me how ----- has been affected by your behaviour?

5 Which rule/part of our Code have you broken?

6 What do you think you need to do to make things right?

ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT/POLICY

Each Club should adopt an Anti-Bullying Statement that could include the following:

“We aim to create a supportive environment where any form of Bullying is unacceptable.

We adopt ‘a whole organisational approach’ to addressing Bullying and are committed to implementing structures and relevant training to deal with allegations of Bullying. Incidents of Bullying are regarded as serious breaches of our Code of Behaviour and Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport.

We are committed to achieving an ethos of respect so as to maximise the potential of all our members when playing or participating in our Gaelic Games”.

The GAA Anti Bullying Statement

GAA ANTI-BULLYING POLICY STATEMENT

The GAA aims to create a supportive environment where any form of bullying is unacceptable. We adopt a whole organisational approach to addressing bullying and are committed to implementing structures and relevant training to deal with allegations of bullying. Incidents of bullying are regarded as serious breaches of our Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport – Our Games Our Code. We are committed to achieving an ethos of respect so as to maximise the potential of all our members when playing or participating in our Gaelic Games.

DEFINITION

Bullying is defined as repeated aggression, be it verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others.

THE GAA SEEKS TO ENSURE THAT:

- Incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed appropriately
- All persons in membership of the Association or attending our games or activities are aware that bullying behaviour is unacceptable in the GAA.

DEALING WITH BULLYING

The Code of Behaviour when working with underage players provides good practice guidance in relation to the prevention of bullying.

If you are aware of or have a concern that bullying behaviour is happening within your Club you should report the matter to your Club Children’s Officer.

We recognise that incidents of bullying are a breach of the Code of Behaviour and of our Give Respect – Get Respect initiative and all such incidents will be dealt with accordingly.

Club Children’s Officer

Date

Name of Club

CODE DECLARATION/SIGNATORY

Please cut out this panel and return it to your Club Children's Officer or other nominated official in your Club.

This Code of Behaviour addresses the minimum levels of behaviour, practice and conduct required from our Young Players, Coaches, Officials, Managers, Supporters, Parents/Guardians and Clubs.

DECLARATION

I _____ (print name) acknowledge that I have received a copy of the **Code of Behaviour (Underage)**, which I have read and understood in full. I agree to be bound by the principles set out in the Code when participating, playing or attending our Gaelic Games.

Signed: _____ (Player)

Date: _____

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian)

Date: _____

Section 4

Levels of Unacceptable Behaviour and Relevant Sanctions

It is important that all coaches /managers keep a record of incidents, particularly at Levels 2 and 3. Notable incidents should be filed in the incident record folder.

All referrals at Level 3/4 should be held in the Sanctions File

<p>Level One Behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infringement of rules/Code of Conduct. • Disregarding instructions. • Minor bad language- spontaneous swearing, sectarian, racial, insulting or rude remarks • Unsafe movement around the grounds • Entering out of bounds areas, without permission • Use of property/resources without asking • Unsafe use of property/resources causing damage. • Insensitivity to others • Not taking instructions • Telling lies/getting others into trouble • Rough play 	<p>Level One - Behaviour Strategies/sanctions</p> <p>Verbal warning to individual or team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private discussion with child • Reminder of Code of Conduct • Self-reflection • Oral apology • Repositioning • Withdrawal of from situation (temporarily) • Use of quiet corner/calm box/thinking area (age dependant)
<p>Level Two More serious behaviour that is not so easily managed within team environment. Parents may be notified in writing or by phone call.</p> <p>Persistence of Level One behaviours e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate use of bad language to hurt others (includes sectarian/racial/ abuse written or verbal) Deliberate destruction of another child's property Persistent infringement of rules. Persistently not taking instructions. Persistently telling lies/getting others into trouble/name calling • Bullying behaviours • Answering back/ shouting/ • Refusal to cooperate • Stealing/intent to steal 	<p>Level Two- Behaviour Strategies/sanctions</p> <p>Inform parent through phone call-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with parent/s if necessary. • Coach discusses sanctions with pupil if age appropriate. • Player sent to a supervised area • Loss of privileges • Written apology or self-reflection using questioning e.g. oral or written • "Time out"

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolated acts of violence – kicking, hitting, thumping, biting etc. • Threatening behaviour Playing in an unsafe manner • Outburst of anger but player regains composure 	
<p>Level Three</p> <p>Very serious misbehaviour or persistent Level Two behaviours. Formal involvement by the Club’s Discipline Committee</p> <p>Persistence of Level Two e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent bad language (includes racial/verbal abuse) /defiance/ Persistent stealing/intent to steal/ • Vandalism of property/ Dangerous refusal to obey instruction. • Violent play incident • Repeated and deliberate incidents of bullying • Leaving grounds or premises without consent • Violent hitting/kicking/fighting – aggressive violent behaviour, causing deliberate injury • Aggressively threatening behaviour towards coaches, peers parents/ visitors, members 	<p>Level 3 - Behaviour Strategies/sanctions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent informed immediately if crisis occurs player removed from situation and supervised in designated area e.g. by appropriate adult • Risk assessment of location/situation • Crisis/ anger -management and de-escalation intervention • Parents contacted to meet Coaches along with Children’s officer /Deputy /Designated officer
<p>Level 4</p> <p>Where there is persistence of Level Three behaviours and the above interventions are not supporting the player adequately, further involvement may be deemed necessary.</p>	<p>Level 4 - Behaviour Strategies/sanctions</p> <p>Parent and player formally invited to Club Discipline Committee meeting to discuss behaviour. Sanctions imposed include suspension of playing and training Expulsion of membership.</p>

This policy will be reviewed again in May 2021