



Fulham Irish GAA Club – Behaviour Code for Coaches



1. WHY WE HAVE A BEHAVIOUR CODE:

Fulham Irish and all the clubs that participate in Gaelic Games do so on a voluntary basis, from the players and coaches to the parents, guardians, supporters, administrators and all the other helpers that allow our clubs to exist. We do this because we enjoy the sport but also because we know that lifelong friendships and a permanent community are created when people come together in a team setting to achieve a shared ambition. For it to succeed, though, requires everyone to agree and understand what is expected of them and what they can expect from others when they are a member of Fulham Irish.

This code of behaviour is there to make sure everyone knows what is required of them and that everyone feels safe, respected and valued within the club. We expect all members of the club and people who participate occasionally in Fulham Irish activities to display appropriate behaviour at all times, including behaviour that takes place outside our club.

If you are unsure about what anything in this code means or how it applies to you, speak with the Club Children's Officer, one of the Committee, or one of the coaches who will answer any questions you have.

Our aim is to ensure that young people and children who play our games receive the best possible care, attention and protection while participating in our Gaelic Games.

The safeguarding of our members will always be a key priority as we recognise that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance in our club.

2. THE FULHAM IRISH BEHAVIOUR CODE FOR COACHES:

A. RECRUITMENT OF COACHES

Coaches working with young players are required to be suitable for their chosen role(s), and should be appropriately trained, qualified and supported when fulfilling such roles.

- Coaches are required to initially and periodically (every three years):
 - Undertake agreed vetting and background Police checks within the jurisdiction(s) in which they operate. In England this is the Disputes and Barring Service (DBS) check.
 - Attend relevant Gaelic Games child safeguarding training
 - Possess a coaching qualification relevant to their role

- Coaches who work with children within Fulham Irish must be a member of the GAA or LGFA as appropriate.

The Fulham Irish Youth Secretary, Children's Officer and/or a member of the Committee can advise on which safeguarding or coaching qualification is required for your role depending on the circumstances.

B. COACHES SHOULD MAINTAIN A CHILD CENTERED 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.
- 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.
- Recognise that 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 playing in 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.

C. COACHES SHOULD LEAD BY EXAMPLE

- Never use foul language or provocative language/gestures towards any player, fellow coaches, officials or supporters.
- 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 a fellow player, coach 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.

D. 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.
- Do not 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.
- Never engage in the use of physical interventions as a form of response to misbehaviour, unless it is necessary 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 with children.
- Never encourage players to consume non-prescribed drugs or take performance enhancing supplements.

- Do not make energy enhancing products available to children.
- Never use racial and/or sectarian or homophobic references towards another coach, player, official or supporter by words, deeds or gestures.

E. 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.
- Any delivery of one-to-one coaching must be within an overall 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.

F. BEST PRACTICE

- Ensure that all of your players are suitably and safely attired to play their chosen sport. e.g. gum shields.
- As a coach always be punctual and properly attired.
- Be familiar with the Code of Behaviour for Young Players and the Code of Behaviour for Parents, Guardians and Supporters and remind others of their responsibilities under the codes if necessary.
- Be accompanied by at least one other adult at coaching sessions, games and in underage team dressing rooms, in accordance with our agreed adult to child ratios.
- Abide by a minimum ratio of 2 adults to 10 children, (2:10). This ratio level requires at least one qualified coach and at least one other responsible adult to be present at all times.
- Groups of 10-20 children must have a minimum of 3 adults present at all times.
- In the case of an all-female team, at least one of the two adults must be female and similarly in the case of an all-boys team, at least one of the two adults must be male.
- Where a team or training group consists of both boys and girls, the supervision/coaching personnel, must also comprise of both male and female personnel.
- The number of coaches required will naturally depend on the number of children attending a training session, camp, game or other activity. When assessing how many coaches are required always note that Supervisors and Camps Assistants (at camps) do not have a coaching role.
- 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.
- Inform parents/guardians if their child has been injured or becomes unwell at games and training as soon as is practical.
- Be aware of any special medical or dietary requirements of players as indicated on the medical consent/registration or FOIREANN forms or as informed by parents/guardians.
- Be willing to retain 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 do so.
- Do not engage in unapproved social media apps as part of your role.
- If necessary use mobile phones, only via a group text or email system, for communicating with the parents 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.
- 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 training, match or blitz 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, without delay, report this to the relevant statutory authority and you may seek the assistance of club Children's Office and/or your Designated Liaison Person (DLP) so that they may assist you in processing this matter. All such concerns and subsequent reports must also be forwarded to your Association's National Designated Liaison Person/Mandated Person, without delay.

3. What happens if I do not to follow the code of behaviour?

This code of behaviour is part of our process for making sure everyone who takes part in our activities gets the support they need. Alleged breaches of the code may need to be enquired into. Following any such enquiry, and where deemed necessary, sanctions or disciplinary action may be taken against those who admit or who have been proven to have breached the code.

In some circumstances, the club may be obliged to notify relevant authorities outside of the GAA such as the police and/or social services.

Please refer to our '[Safeguarding Procedures & Reporting of Concerns](#)' page for further information on how to report a complaint and information on organisations outside of the club to whom a complaint can be made if necessary.

If an alleged breach of the code is reported, the relevant Children's Officer (depending on whether the report is made at club, county, provincial level, etc) will consider the allegation and establish the facts and the context of the allegation.

Certain breaches of the code may be dealt with in an informal manner. In such cases the relevant Children's Officer will be responsible for dealing with the alleged breach informally and agreeing the procedure to be followed with the parties. This could involve meeting with the person(s) against whom an allegation has been made and resolving the matter amicably and by agreement. If the matter is resolved informally, the relevant Children's Officer will note the outcome in writing.

In the event that the Children's Officer or any party to the allegation objects to the matter being dealt with informally, the Children's Officer shall refer the allegation to the appropriate authority or committee to be dealt with in accordance with the formal procedure set out in the [GAA's child safeguarding policy and code of behaviour](#).