

Southend United Football Club



# SOUTHEND UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB



# INTRODUCTION

Southend Utd FC decided to form a committee and adopt, implement & carry out all practices relating to the The Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland, in order to bring the club to a new & forward thinking ethos. We began by accepting volunteers to the committee, all of whom have completed a certified training course with the Irish Sports Council, and since October 2006 the committee has been meeting with all members of the club, its coaches/managers and parents. The input from everyone was recorded and has been used to create the codes of conduct for our club, this makes this publication unique to Southend Utd. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved and we hope to continue our work, with the input from all members, as we all have a responsibility to create fair play, equality, safety and above all, fun for all.

The Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland is a publication for all sports clubs/organizations. It is for the benefit of everyone involved in children's sport - children, parents/guardians and Sports Leaders, etc. By following the principles, policy and practice guidelines contained in the Code, adult sport leaders are playing their part in providing an enjoyable and safe environment in which children can learn and thrive.

As citizens, adults have a responsibility to protect children from harm and to abide by government guidelines in responding to and reporting child protection concerns. This responsibility exists wherever such concerns might arise, whether inside or outside sport. Guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland took account of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and are in accordance with government guidelines in the documents Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (IRL). The guidelines contained in the Code are complimentary to, and do not substitute, the government guidelines, which are available within sports clubs/organisations.

The Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport is built upon a number of core principles relating to the importance of childhood, the needs of the child, integrity and fair play, and relationships and safety in children's sport. It addresses issues relating to the roles and responsibilities of all involved in children's sport, and underpins the importance of policies and procedures in providing quality leadership for children in sport. It outlines principles of good practice and child protection policy and procedures.

The full application of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport by everyone in sport will help to ensure the promotion of happy, healthy and successful experiences for children and their Sports Leaders.

A group of young children in soccer uniforms are huddled together on a field, looking down. The image is faded and serves as a background for the text.

## **POLICY STATEMENT FOR SOUTHEND UTD FC**

This sports club is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of its members. Every individual in the club should, at all times, show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the club and the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland.

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR A CLUB**

"To ensure that the best practice is followed by this club we shall work closely with our Governing Body. In order to promote the best practice in children's sport, we shall comply with the guidelines of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport; as set out in Section 2.7 which are:" (each club should insert the sixteen bullet points which are set out in Section 2.7 of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport).

# **SOUTHEND UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB**

## **GENERAL RULES OF THE CLUB**

**LATEST REVISION : 1st May ,2007**

**These rules form the Constitution of the Club.**

### **THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

1. A general meeting for all the members will be held annually not later than 1st June
2. All nominations for a position on committee must be received in writing by the Hon. Secretary not later than fourteen days prior to AGM. New committee shall be elected at the AGM. Election of Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and committee members shall take place at the first meeting of the incoming committee.
3. Any member proposing an amendment or a new rule shall give written notice of same to the Hon Secretary 21 days before the date of the meeting. The Hon Sec. should send due notice of same to all members 14 days prior to meeting. A two thirds majority of all members present is required for said change to be passed. All members should receive 14 days written notice of the place, date, agenda and time of the AGM.
4. Committee members, managers and all registered players over the age of 17 years are eligible to vote at the AGM. except those in arrears with subscriptions.
5. Fifteen Members shall constitute a quorum for the meeting.
6. All motions at any General Meeting (other than amendments to the Rules or new rules as provided by Rule 3) shall be decided on a majority vote.
7. The meeting shall be presided over by the Chairman or by a person nominated on his behalf.
8. These rules can only be amended or added to at the AGM
9. It is the responsibility of the Hon Secretary to convene the AGM
10. An EGM shall be convened by the Hon Sec if directed by the committee or if requested for same in writing signed by ten members of the club, stating the reason for their request. Any such meeting should be held within fourteen days of the receipt of such notice and should this not be done, the petitioning Members may themselves proceed with the meeting.
11. The quorum necessary for such a meeting is 15 Members.

## **SOUTHEND UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB**

### **RULES FOR JUNIOR, SCHOOLBOY AND YOUTH MEMBERS**

1. Players must attend the ground at least 30 minutes before kick-off for all games for which they are selected.
2. Players are to supply gear and boots in good condition.
3. Any player not available for a game must notify a member of the team management within 24 hours of the game. Failure to do so without valid reason will result in a one game suspension, a second such offence will result in a 2 game suspension and a third or subsequent offence may lead to further suspension or expulsion from the club.
4. Membership and registration fees for the season are as follows :

Schoolboys	€2 per match	
Under 17 and Under 18	€40 per season.	(€5membership - €35 registration)
Juniors	€80 per season	(€10 membership - €70 registration)

Membership fee must be paid before a player takes part in any club activity in the season.

5. Any player who is three weeks in arrears with subscriptions may not be eligible for team selection.
6. Training for junior and youth players is compulsory. Players must train at least once weekly during the season under supervision of club coaching staff. Failure to do so may make a player ineligible for selection.
7. For all FAI and Munster Junior Cup games, the first team manager will have first call on all players within the club.
8. All requests for release from the club must be made in writing to the Hon. Secretary. Such release requests shall only be dealt with by the committee.
9. No injury claim shall be entertained by the committee. The club will partake in the Insurance scheme as administered by the Waterford District & Junior League. Cost for inclusion in same is covered by registration fees.
14. Each season a copy of the rules shall be issued to every player over 17 years of age.
15. It is club policy to report any player who is in arrears with his subscriptions at the end of the season to the Junior League Management Committee
16. The committee's decision on all matters is final

17. All members shall be bound by the foregoing rules.
18. Issues not covered in these rules shall be adjudicated on by the committee.
19. (a) All decisions made based on these rules are subject to appeal. All appeals must be received in writing by the Hon Secretary within seven days of notification of a decision.  
(b) Appeals committee shall consist of club chairman, member of committee and one players representative.

## **THE COMMITTEE AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

1. The committee shall consist of Seven members ,who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting.
2. The President is elected for life or until he resigns, by a two thirds majority vote of the committee.
3. Each candidate for election to the committee must be proposed and seconded by two members of the club . Nominations for committee can be received in advance of the AGM or during the meeting.
4. The committee should meet at least once a week during the football season.
5. Four Committee Members shall constitute a quorum.
6. A record of attendance at committee meetings shall be kept by the Hon Secretary. Members not attending meetings on a regular basis, without reasonable explanation will have being deemed to have resigned from the committee.
7. The committee shall have the power to co-opt new Members as they see fit.
8. The Chairman shall remain in Office until the first committee meeting of the succeeding year.If he resigns then he will be succeeded by the vice - chairman or by any person deemed fit by the committee
9. The chairman shall preside at the meetings and sign the minutes.In his absence, the Vice -Chairman or a person deemed fit by the committee shall deputise.
10. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chairman shall have the casting vote.
11. The Secretary shall keep proper minutes of all the resolutions and proceedings of the committee. The minutes shall be signed and dated by the Chairman of the Meeting and shall be sufficient evidence of the facts therein stated.

12. The Secretary shall keep a record of Members ,their addresses and telephone numbers,if any.
13. The Treasurer shall keep proper Books and Accounts showing the receipt and disbursements of Club funds and shall permit the Committee whenever they wish to inspect his Books & Accounts and to furnish information in connection with same as may be required.
14. The Treasurer shall at the AGM, furnish an accurate account of the financial state of the Club and shall produce proofs of receipts and expenditures and shall submit same to the Accountant of the Club if the Committee so decide.
15. The Treasurer shall furnish, if required, a report of the Clubs finances at the meetings of the committee.
16. All books and documents should be kept in a safe place and remain the property of the club.
17. The Committee may appoint sub -committees from amongst the members. The extent of their duties and powers may be pre- determined.
18. The Committee has the authority to determine the number of teams in the playing season.
19. The Committee shall have the power to fine, suspend, expel or otherwise deal with any member who, in their opinion, acts in a manner detrimental to the good name of the Club.
20. The Committee shall ensure that no discrimination is allowed within the club based on creed, colour or social disposition. Anyone found guilty within the club of such behaviour is liable for immediate expulsion
21. The Committee shall have the power to deal if it thinks fit with any matter not otherwise dealt with in the rules.The Committee shall have the sole right to interpret thses rules and shall have the final say in any matter raised.
22. All decisions made based on these rules are subject to appeal. All appeals must be received in writing by the Hon Secretary within seven days of notification of a decision.  
(b) Appeals committee shall consist of club chairman, member of committee and one players representative.

## ASSETS AND TRUSTEES

(a).The club shall have the power to acquire and hold and to sell, lease, mortgage or charge real and personal property.Real property shall not be transferred, sold, leased, conveyed, mortgaged or otherwise charged or dealt with without the consent of the Committee as set out in the declaration of trust.

(b) The real property of the club shall be vested in three or more trustees who shall work in accordance with the Charter Constitution and Rules thereof and subject to the covenants and conditions contained in the approved declaration of Trust and who shall sell, lease, mortgage or charge said property when directed to do so.

( c ) The personal property of the club shall vest in the Chairman,Treasurer, and Secretary for the time being of the club and shall hold same in trust for the club.The said Trustees shall invest the funds of the club in accordance with the directions of the Committee of which an entry in the minute book shall be conclusive evidence.

(d)The Committee shall open a bank account on behalf of the club and all cheques drawn on the said account shall be signed by the Treasurer and by the Chairman or Secretary

(e) Correct accounts and books shall be kept showing the financial affairs and receipts and disbursements of the club.

(f) The said Trustees of the real property and of the personal for the time being shall be as set out in the Schedules to these club rules.

(g) The club shall indemnify and save harmless a Trustee in respect of any loss or out of pocket expenses bona fida incurred by him in or about the execution of his duties on behalf of the club.



## **PRINCIPLES**

Children have a lot to gain from sport. Their natural sense of fun and spontaneity can blossom in positive sporting environments. Sport provides an excellent opportunity for children to learn new skills, become more confident and maximise their own unique potential. These benefits will increase through a positive and progressive approach to the involvement of children in sport that places the needs of the child first and winning and competition second. Winning and losing are an important part of sport but they must be kept in a healthy perspective. A child centred approach to children's sport will return many benefits in terms of the health and well being of our future adult population.

The organisation of sport for children should be guided by a set of core values that provide the foundation for all practice.

## **IMPORTANCE OF CHILDHOOD**

The importance of childhood should be understood and valued by everyone involved in sport. The right to happiness within childhood should be recognised and enhanced at all levels of sport.

## **NEEDS OF THE CHILD**

All children's sport experiences should be guided by what is best for children. This means that adults should have a basic understanding of the emotional, physical and personal needs of young people. The stages of development and ability of children should guide the types of activity provided within sport.

## **INTEGRITY IN RELATIONSHIPS**

Adults interacting with children in sport are in a position of trust and influence. They should always ensure that they treat children with integrity and respect and that the self-esteem of children is enhanced. All adult actions in sport should be guided by what is best for the child and carried out in the context of respectful and open relationships. Verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any kind or threat of such abuse is totally unacceptable within sport, as in society in general.

## **FAIR PLAY**

All children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. Ireland and the UK have adopted and are committed to the European Code of Sports Ethics which defines fair play as: much more than playing within the rules. It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing within the right

spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialisation and corruption. (European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics. Council of Europe, 1993)

This model of fair play should be incorporated into all sport organisations that have juvenile and child members as participants.

The principles of fair play should always be emphasised, and organisers should give clear guidelines regarding acceptable standards of behaviour. The importance of participation for each child, best effort and enjoyment rather than winning should be stressed.

Children should be encouraged to win in an open and fair way. Behaviour, which constitutes cheating in any form, for example, falling over in football to gain free kicks or penalties, should be discouraged.

## **QUALITY ATMOSPHERE AND ETHOS**

Children's sport should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. Standards of behaviour for leaders and children in sports organisations should be as important as the standards these organisations set for sports performance. Standards of excellence should extend to personal conduct.

## **COMPETITION**

Competition is an essential element of sport and should be encouraged in an age appropriate manner. A child centred ethos will help to ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place. A balanced approach to competition can make a significant contribution to children's development while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and satisfaction. Through such competition children learn respect for opponents, officials and rules of the sport. Too often competitive demands are placed on children too early which results in excessive levels of pressure on them. This is one of a number of factors, which contribute to high levels of dropout from sport. It should always be kept in mind that the welfare of children comes first and competitive standards come second. While under eight is a very different age group to under eighteen the same general principle should apply.

As adults we need to strike a balance between a young person's desire to win and a young person's right to participate, irrespective of ability. Remember that success is not the same as winning and failure is not the same as losing.

## **EQUALITY**

All children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children, irrespective of ability or disability should be involved in sports activities in an integrated and inclusive way, whenever possible, thus allowing them to participate to their potential alongside other children. Sports Leaders should be aware of and seek to gain competence in addressing the needs of young people with disabilities or any other additional needs.

## **LEGISLATIVE BASIS**

While the Code of Ethics is not a legal document it is based on the Child Care Act (IRL) 1991 and the Children (NI) Order 1995, as well as subsequent related legislation, such as Children's Act 2001 (IRL), Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003 and the Protection for Persons Reporting Act (IRL) 1998. Furthermore Ireland is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which acknowledges the right of the child to protection from all harm. Article 31 of the UN Convention on Rights of the Child recognises the "right of the child to engage in play and to have the chance to join in a wide range of activities". In order to promote this charter and in response to consultation with young people the National Children's Office (IRL) includes in its strategy the objective that "children will have access to play, sport and recreation and cultural activities to enrich their experience of childhood". The Office of the Minister for Children appointed an Ombudsman for Children in 2004, while Northern Ireland appointed the Commissioner for Children and Young People in 2003.

This Code is intended to provide guidelines for those working with young people in sport. It is not a definite legal interpretation of the legislation. While it is not a legal document, failure to comply may have legal implications or consequences.

## **ADULTS INVOLVED IN SPORT**

The roles of every adult involved in children's sport should be clearly defined. Many leadership roles contribute to the successful development and organisation of children's sport. These may overlap on occasions, but it is very important that

each Sports Leader has a clear idea of his/her role and responsibilities. Each person involved in children's sport should ensure that the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland is agreed, adopted and implemented in the organisation to which they are affiliated. The principal leadership roles in sport are outlined in the Glossary.

## **ADULT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS IN SPORT**

The trust implicit in adult-child relationships in sport places a duty of care on all adults, voluntary or professional, to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the child while engaged in their sporting activity. Adults have a crucial leadership role to play in sport. Whether they are parents/guardians or Sports Leaders or teachers, they can contribute to the creation of a positive sporting environment for young people.

The unique nature of sport allows Sports Leaders to develop positive and special relationships with children. Such relationships have tremendous potential to help children to develop and express themselves in an open and secure way. Positive adult-child relationships will result in growth, development and fulfilment for all those involved in children's sport.

Most adults who become involved in children's sport do so in their own free time. There may, therefore, be a reluctance to make impositions upon them with regard to either conditions of training, or reproaches for any misdemeanours. However, given the important and responsible roles which adults play at many different levels in sport, it is essential that their competence and ability to deal with children in a fair, empathic and ethical way is supported, guided and maintained. A consistent method of recruiting and selecting Sports Leaders should be in place, including seeking references, confirming identity and checking adequacy of qualifications. Effective management of Sports Leaders is also equally central to the promotion of good practice in the club/organisation. This should include support, supervision, access to training and effective communication between members of the club/organisation.

Adult-child relationships in sport should be:

- open, positive and encouraging
- entered into by choice
- defined by a mutually agreed set of goals and commitments respectful of the creativity and autonomy of children
- Be respectful of the creativity and autonomy of children

- carried out in a context where children are protected and where their rights are promoted
- free from verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse or any threat of such harm
- respectful of the needs and developmental stage of the child
- aimed at the promotion of enjoyment and individual progress
- governed by a code of ethics and good practice in sport that is agreed and adhered to by all members of the sports club/organisation
- respectful, but not unquestioning of authority
- mindful of the fact that children with disabilities may be more vulnerable

## **CHILD TO CHILD RELATIONSHIPS**

Interaction between children should be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and fair play. Adults including parents/guardians, who create an environment in which quality, open relationships are valued and where the integrity of each individual is respected, can promote such interaction

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS /GUARDIANS**

Parents/guardians play a key role in the promotion of an ethical approach to sport and their children's enjoyment in sport. Parents/guardians therefore need to be aware, informed and involved in promoting the safest possible environment for children to enjoy their participation in sport. Sports Leaders need the support of parents/guardians in conveying the fair play message.

## **THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF SPORTS LEADERS**

Sports Leaders play a vital role in children's sport. Sports clubs/organisations should ensure that the work of Sports Leaders which occurs mainly on a voluntary basis, is guided by this Code of Ethics and Good Practice whilst also recognising that they are entitled to obtain a healthy sense of achievement and satisfaction through their involvement in children's sport.

A Governing Body of Sport is the organisation recognised by the respective international federation as being responsible for the administration of a particular sport on a countrywide basis or the national body responsible for national games. The Governing Body is responsible for overseeing the adoption and implementation of this Code by all its affiliated members.

To maximise compliance with the Code, each Governing Body of Sport should:

- ensure that the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland is adopted, agreed to, implemented and signed up to by all members
- amend, as necessary, its Constitution to reflect a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting, selecting and managing
- appoint a National Children's Officer/Designated Person (See 2.8/9). S/he should be a member of the Executive Committee
- ensure that effective disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures are in place
- have in place procedures for dealing with a concern or complaint made to the Statutory

Authorities against a committee member or a Sports Leader. Regulations should stipulate that a Sports Leader who is the subject of an allegation, which has been reported to the Statutory Authorities, should stand aside while the matter is being examined. S/he should be invited to resume full duties immediately if s/he is vindicated

- ensure that all sports clubs with child members are fully affiliated and signed up to the Governing Body's constitution
- be represented by appropriate personnel at all education/training workshops dealing with the Code
- where children are involved in representative teams, designate an appropriate senior officer in the Governing Body as the person with responsibility for following the guidelines of the Code
- review its child protection procedures regularly through open discussion with its members, Sports Councils and Statutory Authorities
- promote contact with representatives of the Statutory Authorities. The building of these relationships will contribute to the creation of an environment in which education and knowledge of child protection issues and procedures are widely known.
- examine and take appropriate action in response to any reports of unusual incidents (high rate of transfers, dropouts) received from clubs

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Everyone taking part in sport, irrespective of his or her role, should be able to do so in a safe environment. The purpose of creating and adhering to policies and procedures is to facilitate and encourage best practice.

## GUIDELINES FOR SPORTS LEADERS

Sports Leaders have an important role to play in promoting good practice in children's sport. They should have as their first priority the children's safety and enjoyment of the sport. The Sports Leaders' success should not be evaluated by performance or results of competition. They should enjoy a sense of achievement and pleasure through their work with young people. After undertaking appropriate education and training within the club, Sports Leaders will be well prepared to operate in a safe sporting environment with a knowledge and understanding of their role and responsibilities. They should be supported in their work by the sports club and parents/guardians.

Sports Leaders are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with young participants. Sports Leaders should operate to the club's agreed code of conduct, which emphasises enjoyment, equality, fair play and the general well being of young people. This model of good practice should help children to demonstrate an awareness of equality, fair play and respect for Sports Leaders, other members of their group and the rules of the sport. The club and parents/guardians should afford Sports Leaders the respect they deserve and make them aware of any special needs of the child.

Club procedures should support the Sports Leaders' model of good practice, thus ensuring protection for both the Leader and the participant. In so doing, Sports Leaders should feel able to make a complaint in an appropriate manner and have it dealt with through an effective complaints procedure. They should be able to appeal any decision through an effective appeals procedure.

In order to act as a role model and to promote their safety and the safety of young people, Sports Leaders should:

- Be positive, praise and encourage effort as well as results
  - Put the welfare of young people first, strike a balance between this and winning
  - Encourage fair play and treat participants equally
  - Have the relevant knowledge and experience to work with young people
  - Understand the developmental needs of young people
- Where possible, and for their own safety, Sports Leaders should avoid:
- Spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others

- Taking sessions alone
- Taking children on journeys alone in their car
- The use of alcohol before coaching, during events and on trips with young people

**Sports Leaders should not:**

- Use any form of corporal punishment or physical force on a child
- Take children to their home
- Exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward
- Engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and/or make sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a child
- Take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adult
- Undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children





## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COACHES/MANAGERS AS COMPOSED BY SOUTHEND UTD CLUB MEMBERS**

- Coaches/Managers should always ensure the correct ratio of coaches to players.
- Coaches/managers must ensure that there is a first-aider on each training session/match.
- All coaches/managers should be aware that notice has been given for & upcoming games
- Each player to be given a game, when and where it is possible, and encouragement to be given to all players whether they play or not.
- Coaches/managers should always monitor the cleanliness of dressing rooms, and approach players to ensure the areas are kept free of items etc.
- All coaches/managers within Southend Utd should always show respect for all parents, players, coaches & members of staff, this creates a good atmosphere so that everyone has a forum to speak and to listen.
- Coaches/managers should ensure that sports equipment is cared for & accounted for, each time it is being used by them.
- Training times to be adhered to, if a coach cannot make it, then another member/s should be notified as soon as possible.
- Where possible, it is in the interest of everyone to vary training methods, as it makes for more fun.
- Southend Utd are committed to providing education on training & dealing with players, all coaches should talk to the committee should any issues arise out of this.
- Coaches/managers should at all times adopt a 'No blame policy', which Southend Utd have set out.(see page 23)
- Coaches/managers need to be aware of the policy & procedures of use of photographic materials etc. (see page 24)

**Coaches/managers should never:**

**Use foul language, Bully or use violent behaviour, and never use inappropriate physical contact during practise sessions, games and on trips.**

# GUIDELINES FOR YOUNG PERSONS

Children have a great deal to gain from sport in terms of their personal development and enjoyment. The promotion of good practice in sport will depend on the co-operation of all involved, including child members of the sports club. Children must be encouraged to realise that they also have responsibilities to treat other children and Sports Leaders with fairness and respect.

## **Young persons in sport are entitled to:**

- be listened to
- be believed
- be safe and feel safe
- participate in sporting activities on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability and stage of development
- be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect
- be happy, have fun and enjoy sport
- experience competition at a level at which they feel comfortable and the desire to win as a positive and healthy outcome for striving for best performance
- comment and make suggestions in a constructive manner
- make a complaint in an appropriate way and have it dealt with through an effective complaints procedure
- be afforded appropriate confidentiality
- be represented at decision making bodies/meetings within their sports club.
- have a voice in the running of their club
- approach the Children's Officer/Designated Person with any questions or concerns they may have

## **Young persons should undertake to:**

- play fairly, do their best and have fun
- shake hands before and after the event, whoever wins -and mean it
- respect officials and accept their decisions with grace not a grudge
- respect fellow team members; give them full support both when they do well and when things go wrong
- respect opponents, they are not enemies, they are partners in a sporting event
- give opponents a hand if they are injured or have problems with equipment

- accept apologies from opponents when they are offered
- exercise self-control and tolerance for others, even if others do not
- be modest in victory and be gracious in defeat
- show appropriate loyalty to their sport and all its participants
- make high standards of fair play the example others want to follow
- approach the Children's Officer with any questions or concerns they may have

**Young persons should not:**

- **cheat**
- **use violence, use physical contact only when it is allowed within the rules**
- **shout at, or argue with, the referee, officials, team mates or opponents**
- **take banned substances to improve performance**
- **bully or use bullying tactics to gain advantage**
- **tell lies about adults or other children**
- **keep secrets about any person who may have caused them harm**



## **CODE OF PRACTICE –SCHOOLBOYS AS COMPOSED BY SOUTHEND UTD CLUB MEMBERS**

**All players should never use foul language, Bully or use violent behaviour, during training sessions, games and/or on away trips.**

- All players should at all times show respect for parents, players, coaches & members of staff
- Players should always ensure they adhere to the cleanliness of dressing rooms, to ensure the areas are kept free of items etc.
- All players are asked to read and adapt the 'No blame policy'
- Training times must be adhered to, and if a player cannot make it, the manager should be contacted.
- Players should always follow the procedure that's in place for dealing with issues, using the code of practise as is set down by Southend Utd FC
- All players are responsible for the return & completion of health slips, registration slips, permission slips etc
- Players should always show respect for opposing teams – shaking hands after games etc.

Ensure you have the correct clothing for weather conditions for training & games

## **CODE OF PRACTICE –JUNIORS AS COMPOSED BY SOUTHEND UTD CLUB MEMBERS**

**All players should never use foul language, Bully or use violent behaviour, during training sessions, games and/or on away trips.**

- All players should at all times show respect for parents, players, coaches & members of staff
- Players should always ensure they adhere to the cleanliness of dressing rooms, to ensure the areas are kept free of items etc.
- All players are asked to read and adapt the 'No blame policy'
- Training times must be adhered to, and if a player cannot make it, the manager should be contacted.
- Players should always follow the procedure that's in place for dealing with issues, using the code of practise as is set down by Southend Utd FC
- All players are responsible for the return & completion of health slips, registration slips, permission slips etc
- Players should always show respect for opposing teams – shaking hands after games etc.

Ensure you have the correct clothing for weather conditions for training & games

## GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for the care and welfare of their children within sport.

Parents/guardians should encourage their children to participate in sport for fun and enjoyment and should ensure that their child's experience of sport is a positive one. Lessons learned in children's sport will shape values and attitudes in adult life. They should always remember that children play sport for their own enjoyment not that of the parents/guardians. Parents/guardians have a duty to ensure that the context in which their child is participating is appropriate.

Parents/guardians and Sports Leaders will ideally work in partnership to promote good practice in children's sport and to support all efforts to protect against verbal, physical or sexual abuse in sporting activities. To do so, parents/guardians should ensure that sports clubs treat their children with fairness, respect and understanding, and that the club is fulfilling its responsibility to safeguard children. They should encourage their children to tell them about anyone causing them harm. They should become aware of club procedures and policies, in particular where changes are made that effect them or their children, and be informed of all matters relating to ethics and good practice. They should check that the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland has been adopted in the club.

Parents/guardians should remember that children learn best by example. To assist in the promotion of good practice with the club or organisation they should:

- be aware of the relevant Sports Leaders and their role within the club
- show appreciation of and respect for Sports Leaders and their decisions
- encourage their child to play by the rules
- behave responsibly on the sideline
- focus on their child's efforts rather than performance
- focus on the fun and participation of the child in the activity
- liaise with the Sports Leaders in relation to the times/locations of training sessions, medical conditions of their children and any requirement for their child's safety

To promote the procedures of good practice parents/guardians should be:

- encouraged to become members of the club, where feasible, and take an active interest in the running of the club or any sporting activities in which their children take part
- informed of the training and/or competitive programmes and be satisfied with the general environment that is created for their children
- informed if their child sustained an injury during sporting activities
- informed of problems or concerns relating to their children.
- informed in advance and have their consent sought in relation to matters regarding away trips, camps or specially organised activities (at registration)

**Parents/guardians should not:**

- **ignore or dismiss complaints or concerns expressed by a child which relate to his/her involvement in sport**
- **ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or losing a game**
- **put undue pressure on their child to please or perform well**
- **take safety for granted**
- **treat the club as a child-minding service**

## CODE OF CONDUCT – PARENTS/GUARDIANS AS COMPOSED BY SOUTHEND UTD CLUB MEMBERS

- Parents/Guardians should ensure that their children have the correct clothing for weather conditions for training & games.
- Parents/Guardians should always show respect for players, coaches & members of staff, this creates a good atmosphere so that everyone has a forum to speak and to listen.
- Parents/Guardians should at all times adopt a 'No blame policy', which Southend Utd have set out.(see page 23)
- Parents/Guardians need to be aware of the policy & procedures of use of photographic materials etc. (see page 24)
- Parents/Guardians should adhere to training times, if there is any changes, please make contact with the coach/manager.
- Encourage the child to participate and create a healthy environment where the child feels happy and safe.
- Parents/Guardians should read & be aware of all the policies set down by the club, regarding insurance, away trips, transport, general behaviour, permission and registration slips, and any comments or queries can be discussed with any member of the committee, coach or managers.



## **DISCIPLINARY, COMPLAINTS & APPEALS PROCEDURE**

Southend Utd FC, on receiving a complaint, have in place a child protection committee to resolve problems relating to the conduct of its members. The complaint should be in writing to a member of the committee, or the children's officer and will be responded to in the shortest time possible.

If the complaint involves suspected abuse or a criminal offence the children's officer/designated person will be consulted and the committee disbanded. The statutory authorities will then be informed.

The child protection committee will review any relevant paperwork and hold any necessary meetings with all parties to proceed with complaints into any incident of suspected misconduct that does not relate to child abuse. It will, as soon as possible, inform the club committee of the progress of the disciplinary process.

The child protection committee will inform the individual with the nature of the complaint being made against him/her and allow him/her the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing, which will be usually at a meeting with the disciplinary committee.

Written confidential records of all complaints will be safely and confidentially kept & club procedures, will be defined for the possession of such records in the event of new officers.

Where it is established that an incident of misconduct has taken place, the Child protection committee will notify the member of any sanction being imposed. The notification will be made in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction. If the member is under 16 years of age, correspondence will be addressed to the parents/guardians.

If the member against whom the complaint is made, is unhappy with the decision of the child protection committee, he/she will have the right to appeal the decision to an appeals committee (independent of the disciplinary committee). Any appeal should be in writing within an agreed period after the issue. The appeals committee will have the power to confirm, set aside or change any sanction imposed by the disciplinary committee.

If any party is not satisfied with the outcome, the matter can be referred to a governing body. However, efforts to resolve the issue at local level will be exhausted before the governing body is engaged in attempts to resolve the matter



## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

Southend Utd relies heavily on the time and commitment freely given by volunteers and without this the opportunities for children and young people to participate in sport may not exist. In order to make these opportunities a positive experience it is recommended that all adults taking responsibility for young people in sport should undergo a recruitment process. The following recruitment steps will help to protect young people and assist in placing leaders in the position to which they are suited and supported.

Each applicant will complete an application form.  
This will include a self-declaration section/ form.

The following are the guidelines set down by the Irish Sports Council & Southend Utd FC will endeavour to carry out & adhere to all it sets down. In the Republic of Ireland the ISC recommend that coaches who work with young people should be checked by the Garda vetting service when this becomes available to sports organisations.

- It is not the responsibility of any one person to recruit a leader. References should be verified by the club/organisation Management Committee and will be kept on file.
- All recommendations for appointment will be ratified by the sports club's/organisation's management committee. The decision to appoint a Sports Leader is the responsibility of a sports club/organisation, and not of any one individual.
- Once recruited into the sports club/organisation, all Sports Leaders should be adequately managed and supported and any statutory guidelines should be adhered to
- A probationary period is advisable and should be established, ideally through an informal interview, which can be used to assess the leader's commitment to promoting good practice in relation to young people
- Verify qualifications, experience and gaps in employment history
- Confirm identity of leader by checking formal identification
- When storing information in relation to applicants information should be treated as highly sensitive and confidential. It should be kept in a locked cupboard that is accessible only to a nominated officer and a deputy nominated officer.
- After making a final decision about the applicant, the original information sent to the vetting authorities must be destroyed immediately by shredding or burning. Organisations may, however, include a note on any personnel file stating that a check was carried out and that the person's conditional offer of appointment was confirmed/withdrawn as a result.

# BULLYING

The risk of bullying and harassment by adults and by children should be anticipated by taking active steps to prevent it occurring. A prompt and decisive response should be made to any indications that it is taking place.

## **What is Bullying?**

Bullying is repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical, which is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour, which is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools, sports clubs and other organisations working with children. It includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting or extortion by one or more children against a victim. It is the responsibility of Sports Leaders to deal with bullying that may take place in the organisation. Each club/organisation should have a clear policy on bullying which is known to members and implemented by Sports Leaders. Incidents of bullying should be dealt with immediately and not tolerated under any circumstances.

Many children are reluctant to tell adults that they are being bullied. Older children are even more reluctant. This underlines the need for constant vigilance and encouragement to report bullying.

## **Combating Bullying**

Southend Utd have an anti-bullying policy, which includes the following measures:

- raising awareness of bullying as an unacceptable form of behaviour
- creating a club ethos which encourages children, Sports Leaders and parents/guardians to report bullying and to use the procedures of the complaints mechanism of the organisation to address this problem
- providing comprehensive supervision of children at all sporting activities
- providing a supportive environment for victims of bullying
- obtaining the co-operation of parents/guardians to counter bullying

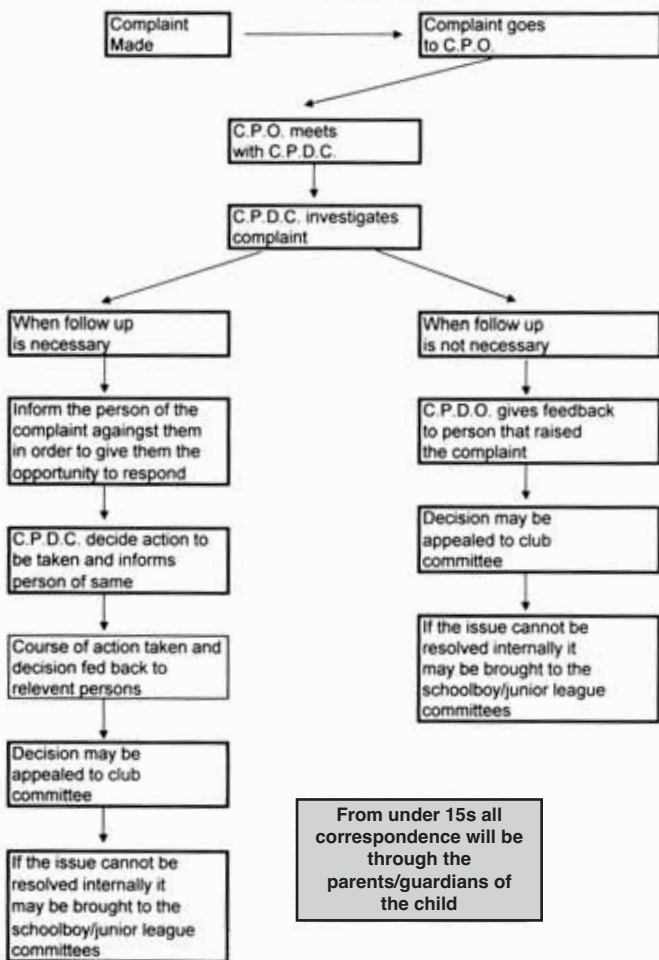
Child Protection Officer  
Child Protection Disciplinary Committee

C.P.O.  
C.P.D.C.

Amy Kearney

Club Members to approach with a concern

John Murray Paul Devereux  
Brian Mooney Seamie Byrnes  
Pat Dunphy Paul Ryan  
Michael Mooney Keith Green  
Michael Kearney Brian Thompson  
Craig Mooney Michael Farrell  
Andy Power  
Lee Hayes  
Michael Robinson  
Matt Willmott



# USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC AND MOBILE EQUIPMENT

## Policy

Southend Utd FC are committed to the safe use of all photographic, filming and mobile phones.

Our aim is to reduce the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people outside the sport. The following are the guidelines which Southend Utd FC will aim to be adhered to at all times.

## Working in partnership to protect young people

All parents & coaches have a duty to work together to prevent any images finding their way onto child pornography sites, as the dangers of children's images being used or adapted for inappropriate use will be reported to the authorities immediately should it come to the attention of the club. With this in mind, all people associated with Southend Utd FC are asked for their co-operation with all guidelines set out in this policy.

- When registering, parents, players & coaches will be asked for permission to use photographs for publication to ensure that each image is only a representation of the sport & it is not for any other purpose.
- Where Southend Utd FC has control over the publication of photographs, only images of people with suitable dress will be permitted.
- Amateur photographers/film/video operators wishing to record a game, or practice session should seek accreditation with the Childrens Officer, Club Chairman, or the Manager, who will request you to fill in a permission form. All footage must be shown to the Club committee for approval, if it is to be publicised at a later date.
- The content of all photos should focus on the activity & not on any particular child.
- It is not the intention of the club that parents/families are prevented from taking pictures etc. We would like to ensure the safety of all members of the club.

## Mobile Phones

Mobile Phones are given to our children as a safety measure and it offers parents a way of keeping in touch with them. However, with this comes an increase in the abuse of how they can be used; Bullying, Offensive photos, and theft are a few of the boundaries crossed when the phones are used inappropriately.

## Young persons

- If you receive an offensive photo, email or message, do not reply to it, save it, tell & show a parent, childrens officer/designated person at the club.
- Do not give out your number to persons unknown to you.
- Do not use your phone for inappropriate use, and in certain locations, eg: Camera phones in changing rooms.
- Guard your phone against theft, as the club cannot be held responsible for items that go missing on trips, training sessions etc.

## Sports leaders

Southend Utd FC may use group texts for communication among members and parents, all persons will be notified by the club (at registration) that this is one method of communication for upcoming games etc. Constant one to one communication by Managers/coaches to young persons is discouraged by the club.

***Southend Utd FC have drawn up these guidelines which will reduce the risk of inappropriate behaviour. Any persons who do not adhere to these and are found to be guilty of abuse using mobile phones, or photographic equipment will be dealt with accordingly through the appropriate channels of the disciplinary committee.***



## SAMPLE PERMISSION FORM

"In line with the recommendation in the Southend Utd FC code of conduct, the promoters of this event request that any persons wishing to engage in any video, zoom or close range photography should register their details with the organisers.

It is not advisable that children are photographed or filmed without their permission and/or the permission of their parent/guardian."

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Signature of person requesting permission

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Block Capitals

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Signature of designated member of club

---

Block Capitals

Dated:

## GENERAL SUPERVISION

Southend Utd FC will always work towards the good practices set down under these guidelines.

- Ensure adequate Adult: Child ratios. Good practice dictates that a leader should try to ensure that more than one adult is present. This will help to ensure the safety of the children as well as protect adults
- Adult:Child ratios will depend on the nature of the activity, the age of the participants and any special needs of the group, a general guide might be 1:8 for under 12 years of age and 1:10 for over 12 years of age
- There should be at least one adult of each gender with mixed parties
- Away trips will need higher rates of supervision and these should be checked out with the governing body or organiser, children and young people should be supervised at all times.
- Avoid adults being left alone with young participants, if a leader needs to talk separately to a participant this should be done in an open environment, in view of others
- Respect the privacy of young people while changing, leaders may only need to enter changing rooms where the participants are very young or require special assistance. When necessary, leaders will supervise in pairs or seek assistance, it is the safety and welfare of the participants that is of paramount importance
- Leaders should not be left alone with young people at the end of a training session. Clearly state times for start and finish of training and/or competitions. If late collections occur leaders should remain in pairs until participants have left. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make arrangements for collection of young people, it should be made clear that the club is responsible for only club activities
- If a child suffers an injury or accident the parents/guardians will be informed.

# TRANSPORT

There is an extra responsibility on adults and leaders when they transport young people to events. Adults should

- Ensure there is adequate insurance on their car and that they follow the rules of the road, including the legal use of seat belts
- Ensure they do not carry more than the permitted number of passengers
- Avoid being alone with one passenger, put passengers in the back seat, have central drop off locations or seek parental permission when transporting on a regular basis. Parents should check with young people about the plans, listen to what the young people are saying, be sure they are happy with the transport arrangements

## Overnight & Away Trips

- Written permission of parents/guardians should be obtained for all overnight away trips, this should include permission to travel, behaviour agreement and any medical/special needs of the group, (including permission to treat the participant)
- The agreement should be signed by both parents and participants
- A meeting with parents and participants is useful to communicate travel times, competition details, other activities, gear requirements, special needs (medical or dietary), and any other necessary details, contact details, codes of conduct, etc.
- The governing body should share any appropriate information with leaders of the group
- All adults who travel on away trips should be carefully chosen, using the recruitment and selection procedure
- The roles and responsibilities of adults participating in away trips should be clearly defined
- The Governing Body of Sport/Sports Club should appoint a Team Manager/Head of Delegation for away trips. S/he should have overall responsibility for the children's well-being, behaviour and sleeping arrangements. S/he should be appointed as an official of the club for the duration of the trip
- The Team Manager should submit a written report to the organisers as soon as possible after the end of the trip



- On away trips, coaches should be accountable to the Team Manager in all non-performance related matters
- Where there are mixed teams there should be leaders of both genders (at least one female and/or male in the management/coaching structure)
- Adults should not share a room with a child. Where the presence of an adult is needed there should be more than one child in the room with the adult. If children are sharing a room, it should be with those of the same groupings, age and gender
- Managers should check out the venue beforehand, so that separate and appropriate sleeping arrangements can be made in advance
- Alcoholic drink, smoking and other illegal substances / activities are forbidden to participants. Leaders should act as role models in this respect.

## **CHILD PROTECTION IN SPORT**

The prevention and detection of child abuse depends on the collaborative effort of everyone concerned. The following factors are central to effective child protection in sport:

- acceptance by all involved with children that abuse, whether physical, psychological or sexual is wrong, severely damages children and must be confronted
- awareness of the behavioural and physical indicators of various forms of abuse
- knowledge of the appropriate response and action to be taken where abuse is revealed or suspected
- vigilance, and avoidance of all situations conducive to risk
- open, trusting and co-operative relationships within the club/organisation, and with parents/guardians and others concerned with children's progress or welfare
- willingness to co-operate with the Statutory Authorities (police authorities, health boards or social services), in relation to sharing information about child protection concerns at any time

## **CATEGORIES OF ABUSE**

All Sports Leaders should be familiar with signs and behaviours that may be indicative of child abuse. Though a child may be subjected to more than one type of harm, abuse is normally categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. For detailed definitions of abuse, refer to Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Department of Health & Children) The categories of abuse may be briefly summarised as follows:

### **CHILD NEGLECT**

Neglect is normally defined in terms of an omission, where a child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, or medical care. It may also include neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. For instance, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries is not having his or her needs for supervision and safety met. The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well being and/or development is severely affected.

## **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between an adult and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. It is rarely manifested in terms of physical symptoms. For children with disabilities it may include over-protection or conversely failure to acknowledge or understand a child's disability.

Examples of emotional abuse include:

1. Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
2. Where the level of care is conditional on his or her behaviour;
3. Unresponsiveness, inconsistent or unrealistic expectations of a child;
4. Premature imposition of responsibility on the child;
5. Over or under protection of the child;
6. Failure to provide opportunities for the child's education and development;
7. Use of unrealistic or over-harsh disciplinary measures;
8. Exposure to domestic violence.

Children show signs of emotional abuse by their behaviour for example, excessive clinginess to or avoidance of the parent/guardian, their emotional state (low self-esteem, unhappiness), or their development (non-organic failure to thrive). The threshold of significant harm is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/guardian.

## **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury that causes significant harm to a child, including:

1. Shaking;
2. Use of excessive force in handling;
3. Deliberate poisoning;
4. Suffocation;
5. Munchausen's syndrome by proxy (where parents/guardians fabricate stories of illness about their child or cause physical signs of illness);
6. Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child;
7. For children with disabilities it may include confinement to a room or cot, or incorrectly given drugs to control behaviour.

## **SEXUAL ABUSE**

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others, For example:

1. Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child;
2. Intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
3. Masturbation in the presence of a child or involvement of the child in the act of masturbation;
4. Sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal;
5. Sexual exploitation of a child;
6. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

## **PROTECTIONS FOR PERSONS REPORTING CHILD ABUSE ACT, 1998(IRL)**

The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to the Health Board (now Health Services Executives) or the Gardai. This means that, even if a reported suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that the reporter had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report. This Act came into operation on 23rd January, 1999. The main provisions of the Act are:

1. the provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse "reasonably and in good faith" to designated officers of Health Boards (now HSE) or any member of An Garda Síochána;
2. the provision of significant protections for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to and including, dismissal;
3. the creation of a new offence of false reporting of child abuse where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities "knowing that statement to be false". This is a new criminal offence designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports.

## **RECOGNISING AND REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

Each club should have clear procedures for responding to reports or concerns relating to the welfare and safety of children. All Sports Leaders, children and parents/guardians should be aware of how to report and to whom concerns should be reported within the club/organisation. These procedures should be consistent with Statutory Authority guidelines and with the procedures outlined in this Code. Copies of the Statutory Authority guidelines should be available in all sports clubs/organisations. Everyone involved in child protection matters should be aware of their responsibility to work in co-operation with the statutory child protection authorities.

The ability to recognise child abuse depends as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on knowledge and information. It is important to note that child abuse is not always readily visible, and may not be clearly observable. If a Sports Leader or a parent/guardian is uneasy or suspicious about a child's safety or welfare the following response should be made:

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

The following steps should be followed in reporting child abuse to the Statutory Authorities:

1. Observe and note dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information;
2. Report the matter as soon as possible to the designated person. If there are reasonable grounds (See 5.10) for believing that the child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, s/he will make a report to the statutory authorities who have statutory responsibility to investigate, assess and validate suspected or actual child abuse;
3. In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Designated Person is unable to contact a duty social worker the police authorities should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities;
4. If the Designated Person is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist or not, s/he should informally consult with the local duty social worker. S/he will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report;
5. A Designated Person reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities should first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation;

6. A report should be given by the Designated Person to the Statutory Authorities in person or by phone, and in writing; without delay.
7. It is best to report child abuse concerns by making personal contact with the relevant personnel in the Statutory Authorities and follow up in writing
8. In those cases where the sports club/organisation finds that it does not have reasonable grounds for reporting a concern to the Statutory Authorities, the member who raised the concern should be given a clear written statement by the designated person of the reasons why the sports club/organisation is not taking action. The member should be advised that, if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to consult with, or report to, the Statutory Authorities in their area.

## **RESPONSE TO A CHILD REPORTING ANY FORM OF ABUSE**

- The child should understand in an age appropriate way that it is not possible that any information will be kept a secret;
- It is important to deal with any allegation of abuse in a sensitive and competent way through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem, rather than interviewing the child about details of what happened;
- It is important to stay calm and not to show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen compassionately, and take what the child is saying seriously;
- It should be understood that the child has decided to tell about something very important and has taken a risk to do so. The experience of telling should be a positive one so that the child will not mind talking to those involved in the investigation;
- No judgmental statement should be made against the person against whom the allegation is made;
- The child should not be questioned unless the nature of what s/he is saying is unclear. Leading questions should be avoided. Open, non-specific questions can be used if necessary such as "Can you explain to me what you mean by that". Try to let the child tell their story, use their words
- The child should be given some indication of what would happen next, such as informing parents/guardians, health board or social services. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage.

## SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE

Signs of abuse can be physical, behavioural or developmental. A cluster or pattern of signs is the most reliable indicator of abuse. The following indicators should be noted. It is important, however, to realise that all of these indicators can occur in other situations where abuse has not been a factor and that the list is not exhaustive.

Abuse	Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<b>Physical</b>	Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas. Bites, burns and scalds	Becoming withdrawn or aggressive. Reluctance to change clothing
<b>Emotional</b>	Drop in Performance. Crying	Regressive behaviour. Excessive Clinginess
<b>Neglect</b>	Weight loss. Untreated fractures	Changes in attendance. Reluctance to go home
<b>Sexual</b>	Torn or bloodstained clothing. Inappropriate sexual awareness, behaviour or language	Distrustful of adults. Sudden drop in performance

## GROUNDS FOR CONCERN

Consider the possibility of child abuse if there are reasonable grounds for concern. Reasonable grounds for concern exist when there is:

- a specific indication from a child that s/he has been abused
- an account by a person who saw the child being abused
- evidence, such as an injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way
- an injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse. An example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour;
- consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect

## ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST SPORTS LEADERS

Each club/sports organisation should have agreed procedures to be followed in cases of alleged child abuse against Sports Leaders. If such an allegation is made, two steps should be taken:

- The reporting procedure
- The procedure for dealing with the Sports Leader

## **SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The following points should be considered

- the safety of the child making the allegation and any others who are/may be at risk should be ensured and this should take precedence over any other consideration. In this regard, the sports club/organisation should take any necessary steps which may be immediately necessary to protect children
- if a Sports Leader is the subject of the concern s/he should be treated with respect and fairness

## **STEPS TO BE TAKEN WITHIN THE SPORTS ORGANISATION**

Where reasonable grounds for concern exist, the following steps should be taken by the club/organisation:

- advice should be sought from the local duty social worker with regard to any action by the club deemed necessary to protect the child/children who may be at risk
- the matter should be reported to the local statutory authorities following the standard reporting procedure outlined above
- in the event that the concern is connected to the actions of a Sports Leader in the club, the Sports Leader involved in the concern should be asked to stand aside pending the outcome of any investigation by the Statutory Authorities. It is advisable that this task be undertaken by a senior office holder other than the designated person/children's officer who takes the responsibility for reporting

When the Sports Leader is being privately informed by the senior officer of a) the fact that an allegation has been made against him/her and b) the nature of the allegation, s/he should be afforded an opportunity to respond. His/her response should be noted and passed on to the statutory authorities.

All persons involved in a child protection process (the child, his/her parents/guardians, the alleged offender, his/her family, Sports Leaders) should be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure.

Once the criminal process is completed, employers should consider the need to examine whether there are grounds for disciplinary proceedings for misconduct. The fact that the alleged abuser has not been prosecuted or has been found not guilty does not mean that such proceedings are not necessary or feasible.



## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN SPORT**

- the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco will be actively discouraged as being incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity
- a Sports Leader should not smoke when taking a session or drink alcohol before taking a session
- under-age clubs and teams will be encouraged to organise receptions and celebrations in a non-alcoholic environment and in a manner that is suitable for the age group concerned. Adults should act as role models for appropriate behaviour and refrain from drinking alcohol at such functions
- Sports Leaders will promote fair competition through the development of sound training practice and should actively discourage the use of any substance that is perceived to offer short cuts to improved performances or to by-pass the commitment and hard work required to achieve success
- it is the responsibility of all Sports Leaders to educate and inform those in their care as to the short and long-term effects of substances taken to enhance performances. Officials will also ensure that those in their charge are aware of the harmful side effects or the illegality of proscribed drugs or other banned performance-enhancing substances
- Sports Leaders in children's sport will refrain from seeking sponsorship from the alcohol and tobacco industries

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS, BURNOUT AND DROPOUT OF CHILDREN IN SPORT**

Burnout may be defined as a process resulting from an activity that was once a source of fun and personal satisfaction but later becomes associated with progressive physical and psychological distress. There is a range of factors, which may cause this change, some of which are not associated with the child's sporting activities. Burnout itself may result from a combination of the number of hours involved in physical training with high expectations and pressure from Sports Leaders and parents/guardians. It represents a loss of energy and enthusiasm for sport and is characterised by anxiety and stress. The child no longer has fun and becomes overwhelmed by the demands of competition and training. S/he may wish to drop out of sport. Within a sporting context the following practices are harmful to children's health and welfare:

- pressuring a child to perform at a level which is beyond his/her capacity based on age or maturation level
- over-training or the making of demands on a child that lead to burnout
- knowingly permitting an injured child to participate in a sporting activity
- failure to take adequate precautions to protect a child from environmental hazards
- failure to take account of known ailments or relevant weaknesses of a child

## **Psychological stress within the sporting context can be caused by:**

- over-emphasis on winning
- age-inappropriate expectations
- excessive criticism
- inappropriate use of sanctions/discipline
- rejection
- disapproval of skill/performance ability
- failure to provide support and encouragement for effort and achievement
- failure to involve a child/children as fully as possible in the activity
- the use of coarse, inappropriate language

## **Signs of psychological stress and burnout**

- sleep disturbance
- irritability
- tension
- lack of energy
- sadness/depression
- frequent illness
- loss of interest and enthusiasm
- absenteeism, arriving late, leaving early
- no pleasurable anticipation of participation in sporting events

## **Combating psychological stress and burnout**

Children who show an early aptitude for sport are very often asked to participate in a range of team sports or across a range of age groups. This can put them at risk of stress and burnout.

## **Stress and burnout can be prevented and dropout rates reduced by measures such as:**

- listening to and respecting children's views about participation
- parents/guardians and Sports Leaders de-emphasising the importance of winning and encouraging the development of individual skills and effort instead
- attaining an appropriate match between the individual child's ability and the activity in which s/he is participating
- ensuring that the physical or sporting abilities of the child are not viewed by the child as indications of his/her self worth
- ensuring that children have fun and enjoy activities in which they are involved
- encouraging younger children to play a variety of different sports both at

individual and at team level. This promotes variety and encourages a range of different sport skills in participants

- using modified games
- maximising the involvement of children by using substitutions
- ensuring that children are not participating in adverse climatic conditions

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality is about managing information in a respectful, professional and purposeful manner. Confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all issues and people involved in concerns about the welfare of a child or bad practice within a club. It is important that the rights of both the child and the person about whom the complaint has been made are protected.

The following points should be borne in mind:

- a guarantee of confidentiality or undertakings regarding secrecy cannot be given, as the welfare of the child will supersede all other considerations
- all information should be treated in a careful and sensitive manner and should be discussed only with those who need to know
- information should be conveyed to the parents/guardians of the child about whom there are concerns in a sensitive way
- giving information to others on a need to know basis for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality

## **DEALING WITH ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS**

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored. In all cases the safety and welfare of the child/children is paramount. Any such complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour should be brought to the attention of the Designated Person. This information should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner.

Any such complaints relating to child protection concerns should be handled in accordance with procedures outlined in this Code.

## **RUMOURS**

Rumours should not be allowed to hang in the air. Any rumours relating to inappropriate behaviour circulating in sports organisations should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson and checked out without delay. Any ensuing information should be handled confidentially and with sensitivity. If the Chairperson has reasonable grounds for concern that a child has been abused s/he should refer the matter to the Statutory Authorities, using the standard reporting procedure. If there is any doubt about the requirement to report the substance of a rumour, advice should be sought from the duty social worker in the local health

board or social services department.

Children should be encouraged to report problems or concerns directly to their Children's Officer and/or to their parents/guardians, or any trusted adult, regardless of how minor or serious the problem might be. Parents/guardians should also encourage children to inform them of any such problems or concerns. Open trusting relationships between adults and children will help to ensure that all-important issues are dealt with in a constructive manner.

## **DISCLOSING INFORMATION TO OTHERS**

In the absence of the above legislation and police service, the ISC recommend that best practice is to disclose information requested by a third party which is given in order to provide protection to a young person now or in the future.

## **NO BLAME POLICY**

There should be no verbal or physical intimidation when speaking/interviewing the persons involved, if an investigation is being held, name's are not released during the investigation. All persons involved will be met with, and the severity of the topic should be understood by all.

If a problem arises, all parties should be asked ' how would they react if it happened to them and what steps would they take to ensure it not happening again'

This, for young persons, is a constructive and effective method of teaching each other of how not to 'blame' each other for incidents that could also just as easily happen to themselves.

After the problems have been solved, all parties should meet again to gauge how everybody within the group is reacting to each other, again, this shows the way forward for the club and all its members.

## Confidential Reference Form

(this form can be used as a telephone reference or used as a written reference)

The following person: Name:  expressed an interest in working with:  (name club / organisation) as  (list position)

If you are happy to complete this reference, any information will be treated with due confidentiality and in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance. Information will only be shared with the person conducting the assessment of the candidate's suitability for the post, if he/she is offered the position. We appreciate you being extremely candid, open and honest in your evaluation.

1. How long have you known this person?

2. In what capacity?

3. What attributes does this person have that would make them suited to this work?

4. Please rate this person on the following-please tick one box for each statement:

	Poor	Average	Good	V Good	Excellent
Responsibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maturity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-motivation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can motivate others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Energy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trustworthiness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reliability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

This post involves substantial access to young people. As an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of young people, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children and young people

YES  NO

If you have answered YES we will contact you in confidence

Signed:  Date:

Position in organisation:

Name of club / organisation:

**Sample Application Form for new Junior Members**

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name:  Male / Female:

Address:

Telephone - Home:

Telephone - Mobile (in case of emergency):

E-MAIL:

Date of Birth:

**MEDICAL HISTORY INFORMATION (details of any known allergies, conditions, medications)**

In the event of illness, having parental responsibility, I give permission for medical treatment to be administered where considered necessary by a nominated first aider, or by suitably qualified medical practitioners. If I cannot be contacted and my child needs emergency hospital treatment, I authorize a qualified medical practitioner to provide emergency treatment or medication.

**OTHER INFORMATION**

Any other special needs, requirements or directions that would be helpful for leaders to know about:

**PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT**

I am the Parent/Guardian of

**Photographs**

I understand that photographs will be taken during or at sport related events and may be used in the promotion of sport.

**Drug Testing (for elite players only)**

I give permission for my child(ren) to be tested for prohibited substances in accordance with the Sports Council Anti Doping Rules (where applicable)

I hereby consent to the above child(ren) participating in activities of the organisation in line with the Code of Ethics for Young People. I will inform the leaders of my children's activities of any changes to the information above.

I confirm that all details are correct and I am able to give parental consent for my child(ren) to participate in and travel to all activities.

SIGNATURE

SIGNED NAME

### Existing Leaders Information Form

Leaders should familiarise themselves with the Governing Bodies Code, in particular the Code of conduct. Leaders should read below and agree to abide by these terms. Leaders should update the self-declaration questions annually.

**As a leader in \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of sport) I agree that I should**

- Be positive during sessions and competitions, praise and encourage effort as well as results
- Put welfare of young person first, strike a balance between this and winning / results
- Encourage fair play and treat participants equally
- Recognise developmental needs, ensuring activities are appropriate for the individual
- Plan and prepare appropriately
- Have experience relevant to working with young people or hold up-to-date qualifications and be committed to the guidelines in this Code
- Involve parents where possible and inform parents when problems arise
- Keep record of attendance at training and competitions
- Keep a brief record of injury(s) and action taken
- Keep a brief record of problem/action/outcomes, if behavioural problems arise
- Report any concerns in accordance with this Code's reporting procedures

*Where possible I will avoid:*

- Spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others
- Taking sessions alone
- Taking children on journeys alone in the car

*Sports Leaders should not:*

- Use any form of punishment or physical force on a child
- Take children to their home
- Exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward
- Engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and /or make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a child. This includes innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures and terms
- Take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adult
- Undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children

### Self-Declaration

Do you agree to abide by the guidelines contained in the Children in \_\_\_\_\_ (insert sport) Code of Conduct?

Yes  No

Do you agree to abide by the rules of the governing body / club?

Yes  No

Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation?  
(If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence)

Yes  No

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution; a Bound Over Order; or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations?

Yes  No

(If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence)



**DISCLOSURE OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS & PERMISSION  
FOR STATUTORY CHECKS FOR THOSE WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

*(Please read this information carefully)*

**Statement of non-discrimination:**

Name of Sports Organisation is committed to equal opportunity for all applicants including those with criminal convictions. Information about criminal convictions is requested to assist the selection process and will be taken into account only when the conviction is considered relevant to the post. Any disclosure will be seen in the context of the job criteria, the nature of the offence and the responsibility for the care of existing clients/customers and employees.

**For the purposes of your application for the post of:**

\_\_\_\_\_ it is our policy to ask for a check to be carried out by the statutory organisation responsible for this task in the jurisdiction in which you are working/volunteering

**Advice to Applicants:**

Please complete this form as accurately as possible and return it marked "**Confidential**" in the envelope provided. An arrangement will be made with you to discuss any clarification if required.

Thank you for your co-operation.

You **must** tell us now if you have a case pending or if you have ever been convicted of a criminal offence, or cautioned, the police, or bound over. You **must** include all offences, even minor matters such as motoring offences, and 'spent' conviction, that is, things which happened a long time ago. If you leave anything out it may effect your application. The disclosure of a criminal record or other information will not debar you from registration / appointment unless (Name of Sports Governing Body) considers that the conviction renders you unsuitable. In making this decision (Name of Sports Governing Body) will consider the nature of the offence, how long ago it was committed and what age you were at the time and other factors which may be relevant.

**Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution; a Bound Over Order; or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations?**

Yes  No

If so, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s)

Please provide any other information you feel may be of relevance such as:

- the circumstances of the offence
- a comment on the sentence received
- any relevant developments in your situation since then
- whether or not you feel the conviction has relevance to this post.

I declare that all answers are complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and I will inform the designated person of any future convictions or charges. I consent to the check being made via the statutory authorities in which I intend to work/volunteer. I am also aware that Name of Sport as the umbrella organisation carrying out the check, may, following discussion with myself, share the information returned with my club chairperson.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return completed forms to: \_\_\_\_\_



**VOLUNTEER / COACH APPLICATION FORM**  
**FOR THOSE WITH SUBSTANTIAL ACCESS TO CHILDREN**  
All information received in this form will be treated confidentially

Name:  Maiden Name (if applicable):

Current Address:

Previous Address over the last 5 years:

How long have you lived at this address?

List any address outside of NI on additional sheet (Northern Ireland only)

Place of birth(Town/City)

Telephone No:  Mobile  DOB:

PPS Number (R.O.I only):  NI Number (N.I only):

Previous work/voluntary experience & relevant qualifications

Do you agree to abide by Sports Governing Body Code of Conduct (copy included with this form)? Yes  No

Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation in the past? Yes  No   
*(If you have answered yes we will contact you in confidence)*

Any other relevant information?

Please supply the names of two responsible people whom we can contact and who from personal knowledge are willing to endorse your application. If you have had a previous involvement in a sports club one of these names should be that of an administrator / leader in your last club / place of involvement.

Name:  Name:

Address:  Address:

Tel:  Tel:

Position:  Position:

**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY:**

Date application received:  Date of interview:

Interviewed by: 1.

2.

References received and are satisfactory: Yes  No

Comments:

Statutory check completed & returned (if appropriate): Yes  No  N/A

Proof of applicants identification received: Yes  No

Recommendation:  Approved Reasons  Not Approved Reasons:

Signed:  Dated: