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|  | **FOXROCK-CABINTEELY GAA CLUB**  **Handbook**  **Club Codes, Policies & Procedures**  **March 2015** |



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***Introduction***

This document outlines the codes, policies and procedures of Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club that have been adopted to provide best-practice guidelines for all stake-holders, juveniles, adults, mentors, volunteers, parents and supporters, and for use in running the club and carrying out its day-to-day business. The main objective of this document is to provide a realistic and common-sense approach to the various practices and procedures, and to standardise their implementation throughout the club. The content of this document is based on up-to-date information and is in line with current best-practice and the requirements of the GAA and the Irish Sports Council, both tasked with the protection and welfare of members. While the detail in this document has been carefully correlated, it is accepted that errors and omissions may inadvertently occur. Despite this, it is hoped the spirit of the document will be adopted by club members in the laudable aspiration of achieving best-practice for our club.

**Note:** This Club document should to be read in conjunction with *Our Games – Our Code:* *Best Practice in Youth Sport when working with underage players (2014)* which is the overarching reference document and will take precedent over this Club handbook. *Children First* remains the statutory guideline for all codes.

***SECTION 1***

***Policy Statement and Club Principles***

**The Ethos of the Gaelic Association of Ireland**

*The Gaelic Association of Ireland is a National Organisation which has as its basic aim the strengthening of the National Identity in a 32 County Ireland through the preservation and promotion of Gaelic Games and pastimes. It shall foster an awareness and love of the national ideals in the people of Ireland, and assist in promoting a community spirit through its clubs (GAA, Official Guide*, Part 1, p. 5).

**Club Policy**

***NÍ NEART GO CUR LE CHÉILE:* THERE IS NO STRENGTH WITHOUT UNITY**

The philosophy of Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club is one of participation and having fun, combined with healthy exercise and skills development in a setting of respect for all and within a safe and happy environment. Realising this philosophy requires a full awareness and clear understanding of the codes, policies and procedures that have been adopted by the Club, by all stakeholders, juveniles, adults, mentors, parents, volunteers and supporters. Everyone involved in the club has a vital role to play in setting and maintaining standards of behaviour of which our Club can be proud.

Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of each of its stakeholders. Every individual in the Club should, at all times, show respect and understanding for members’ rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the codes, policies and procedures of this handbook and the *Our Code-Our Games, Code of Practice* (2014)

In Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club, one of our first priorities is the welfare of players and the Club is committed to providing an environment, which will allow players to perform to the best of their ability, free from bullying and intimidation. As part of the Club’s commitment to achieving this, it has adopted these codes, policies and procedures to guide our players, members and volunteers, and anyone else involved with our teams. The Club will take all practicable steps to protect our young players from any form of abuse, harm, discrimination or degrading treatment. To ensure that the best practice is followed, Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA will continue to work closely with our governing body in Croke Park.

In order to promote best practice the Club will:

* Adopt and implement relevant sections of the Irish Sports Council *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s* Sport and the *Our Game-Our Code: Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport* as an integral part of the Club’s policies and procedures.
* Have the constitution approved and adopted by Club members at an AGM or EGM.
* Clearly define the roles of committee members, Mentors and parents/guardians and any other individuals involved with our teams.
* Endeavour to ensure that all Mentors and volunteers are carefully recruited and selected, are Garda vetted and accept responsibility for ensuring the well-being of young members in their care.
* Appoint a least one Children’s Officer and a Designated Person to deal with any issues in relation to youth welfare.
* Ensure best-practice is delivered by distributing the Club’s codes, policies and procedures, to all its members.
* Have an anti-bullying policy in place.
* Have procedures in place for dealing with a concern or complaint made against any Mentor, player or other members of the Club.
* Respond swiftly and appropriately to protect the welfare of young members who participate in any activity in the Club.
* Review the effectiveness of the Club codes, policies and procedures ideally on an annual basis and if not annually will on a two-year basis.

**Club Principles**

Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club operates on the principles outlined below, which facilitates and encourages best-practice in youth sport within the Club. It is important that all young players are valued and treated with the highest level of respect throughout these important years of their personal, physical and social development.

The Club will provide our young players with a period in their life that enables them to have fun and to make friends *while participating in a national sport in a club of which they may be proud.*

**Importance of Childhood/Young Players:** The importance of childhood/young players should be understood and valued by everyone in the Club. The right to happiness of the child/youth should be recognised. The Club’s provision of sporting experiences should be guided by what is best for the child or youth. The following principles will apply:

* The welfare of the young person is paramount.
* All young members, whatever their age, have the right to protection from harm.
* All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously, will be responded to swiftly and in an appropriate manner.

**Integrity in relationships and Needs of Young Players:** Mentors interacting with players in Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club are in a position of trust and influence. Mentors should have a basic understanding of the emotional, physical and personal needs of the young person. The stages of development and ability of youths will guide the types of activity provided by the Club. All Mentors actions will be guided by what is best for the player and carried out in the context of respectful and open relationships. Neglect, verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any kind (or threats of such abuse) is totally unacceptable behaviour within Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club (see appendix 3 for examples). All Mentors also have the right to be treated in a reasonable and fair manner and to be shown respect by all other stake-holders, including players, other mentors, club members, parents and spectators. They also have the right to conduct their business, free from the threat of verbal or physical abuse.

**Quality Atmosphere and Ethos:** Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club seeks to promote a positive and encouraging atmosphere that involves all players and members. The Club is committed to providing an environment which will allow players to perform to the best of their ability. A player-centred ethos will help ensure that competition of the highest level is attained. Standards of behaviour for Mentors and players should be as important as the standards set for sport performance.

**Equality:** Players participating in the Club will be treated in a fair and reasonable manner, regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social, political and ethnic background. Players, irrespective of ability or disability, should be involved in an integrated and inclusive way, whenever possible thus allowing them to participate along with other team mates. All members, including Mentors, will also be treated in a fair and reasonable manner, regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social, political and ethnic background.

**Fair Play:** All activities in the Club will be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. The principles of fair play should always be emphasised. The importance of participation, best effort and enjoyment should be stressed rather than winning. Players should be encouraged to win in an open and fair way. Behaviour which constitutes cheating in any form must be discouraged. ‘*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, exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialisation and corruption’ (*European Sports Charter* and *Code of Ethics of Europe* 1993).

**Competition:** In Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA we will attempt to strike a balance between a young player’s desire to win and a young player’s right to participate, irrespective of ability. Success is not the same as winning and failure is not the same as losing. A balanced approach to competition will make a significant contribution to the development of the player, while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and a sense of satisfaction and achievement. If unreasonable competitive demands are placed on a child/young player too early in their career it can result in undue pressure which, in turn, often contributes to player dropout. It should be kept in mind that the welfare of the player always comes first and competitive standards second.

***SECTION 2***

***Code of Behaviour***

Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club will strive to ensure that all those who work with young people are at all times competent, and understand their roles and responsibilities. The Club will endeavour to provide them with the necessary supports to ensure the best interests of the players are maintained at all times. Any volunteer working on the Club’s behalf will be selected using a thorough recruitment procedure and will receive training and/or coaching courses, as deemed appropriate. The Club will:

* Promote Quality Participation by: Adopting this Code of Behaviour as a basic level of agreement between the Club and players, Mentors, parents/guardians and supporters. The Club will have a user-friendly and youth-centred approach to its work and it will provide an equal opportunity to all who wish to participate in GAA games and activities, regardless of ability. The Club has developed effective procedures for responding to and recording all attendances, incidents, accident and injuries. It will implement an anti-bullying policy, which is available to all members in the Club.
* Encourage the Participation of Club Members by: Communicating regularly with our Mentors and clearly agree and define their roles, as defined in the ‘Appointment of the team officer document’. The Club will also endeavour to ensure that relevant training, as deemed appropriate, is undertaken by all persons working with our young players.
* Encourage the Participation of Young Players by: Ensuring that all types of programmes, rules and training schedules are structured to facilitate participation by all young players. It will also ensure that training is suitable for the various age-categories, ability and maturity level of young players involved. The rights and dignity of all young players will be respected. Our young players will be encouraged to participate in other aspects of the Club such as coaching in the Academy (instead of nursery), fund-raising programmes, attending refereeing courses, and any other courses deemed appropriate at this level.
* Encourage the Participation of Parents/Guardians by: encouraging them to become members of the Club and participate and help in the running of juvenile games and training, after a suitable registration and screening programme. They are welcome to partake in all aspects of our Club’s activities and events, and information relating to such events will be made known to them *via* the Club web-site and Club teamer-texts. Information in relation to the Children’s Officers will also be published on the Club web site for easy access and these should be contacted to assist with any concerns or enquiries that parents/guardians may have regarding the welfare and safety of children and young people in the Club.
* Develop Best-Practice in Club Structures and Administration by: ensuring the Club is structured in accordance with best-practice guidelines, both in club structures and administration. The Club will ensure that all Club members are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people. The Children’s Officers will monitor the child centred ethos in the Club and ensure that the Club complies with the statutory *Children First* (Depart of Children and Youth Affairs: 2011), the Irish Sports Council ***Code of Ethics and Good Practice***and the **GAA’s *Our Games-Our Code*: *Code of Best Practice in Youth in Sport 2014.***  The Club will also have a Designated Person who will liaise with the Statutory Authorities in relation to child protection issues and the Club will ensure that appropriate insurance and injury schemes are made available to all players, provided the annual subscription is paid.

**Young Players:** Foxrock-CabinteelyGAA Club has a registration procedure whereby your parents agree that you can become a Club member of Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club. By becoming a Club member, you agree to abide by the Code of Behaviour and to other policies, codes and procedures of the Club, outlined in this handbook. It is your responsibility to behave in an appropriate manner, both on and off the field of play, when representing the Club. Breaches of Club codes will be dealt with at a disciplinary meeting with the Chairperson or nominated Club Executive members(s) (*Our Game - Our Code, pp. 20-26)*.

Breaches of our Code will unfortunately occur from time to time. This may happen as a result of carelessness, poor practice, lack of understanding or there may in some instances be deliberate or indeed calculated breaches of the Code. When a minor breach of the Code is witnessed, it may be opportune and appropriate to deal with such breaches as they occur. It may, depending on the incident(s), be appropriate for a Coach, Mentor or other official to deal with such instances as they happen. However, repeated or non-trivial breaches of the Code would require different levels of intervention. All such breaches of the Code of Behaviour must be reported to the Club Children’s Officer.

As a young player you are entitled to be safe and feel safe, to have fun and to experience a sense of enjoyment and fulfilment by participating in our Club. You will be treated with respect, dignity and sensitivity and will be entitled to comment and make suggestions about your training in a constructive manner. You will participate in games and competitions at a level with which you feel comfortable and you can make your concerns known and have them dealt with in a confidential and appropriate manner.

**As a young player of Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club you must:**

* Respect all Lead Mentors/ Mangers, team coaches, Mentors, Club officials and opponents.
* Demonstrate fair play.
* Play fairly, to the best of your ability and enjoy yourself.
* Abide by the rules, codes, policies and procedures of the Club both on and off the playing field.
* Respect your team members regardless of their ability, ethnic/cultural background or religion.
* Support fellow team members whether they do well or not.
* Represent your team, the Club and your family with pride and dignity.
* Shake hands before and after the game irrespective of the outcome.
* Respect your opponent; be gracious in defeat and modest in victory.
* Inform a parent/guardian who must then inform a Lead Mentor/Manager or Mentor when you are unavailable for training or games.
* Take due care of Club equipment.
* Adhere to acceptable standards of behaviour and the Club’s code of Behaviour.
* Behave in a manner that avoids bringing the Club into disrepute.
* Talk to the FLO/Children’s Officer with any concerns or questions you may have. Tell somebody else if you or others have been harmed in any way.
* Challenge bullying in any form whether physical or emotional. Bullying is not acceptable behaviour in Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club.
* Play within your age group.

**As a young player of Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club you must never:**

* Cheat: you must always play by the rules.
* Use violence or physical contact that is not permitted within the rules of GAA.
* Shout at or argue with an official, team mates or opponents.
* Harm team members, opponents or their property in any way.
* Play or train if you feel unwell or are injured.
* Use unacceptable language or racial and/or sectarian references.
* Use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage or isolate other players.
* Take banned substances.
* Keep secrets, especially if they cause harm others.
* Tell lies or spread rumours about Mentors/other Players.

**Juvenile Team Mentors:** Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club will support Juvenile Team Mentors in providing a child-centred approach to coaching and training. The Club will use agreed procedures for recruitment and selection of Juvenile Team Mentors and provide them with the necessary training and education to perform their roles, where deemed appropriate (*Our Game - Our Code, p.9)*. The Club has developed procedures to assist Juvenile Team Mentors in dealing with various situations that may arise, such as misconduct, complaints, discipline, etc. (see below Handbook, Section 3: *Our Game - Our Code, p.7)* The Club expects parents and other club members to support the work of volunteer Juvenile Team Mentors. To maintain a child-centred approach a Juvenile Team Mentor must:

* Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat each one equally regardless of age, gender, ethnic/cultural background, religion or ability.
* Endeavour to ensure that nobody involved with the team acts towards or speaks to another person in a manner that threatens, disparages, vilifies or insults another person.
* Never shout at or lecture players or reprimand/ridicule them when they make a mistake (young people learn best through trial and error, they should not be afraid to make mistakes in order to learn).
* Be positive during coaching sessions, games and other activities so that the players leave with a sense of achievement and an increased level of self-esteem.
* Develop a good understanding of the GAA coaching manuals and ensure that you have the appropriate level of coaching accreditation.
* Don’t equate losing with failure and do not develop a preoccupation with medals and trophies (the level of improvement made by young players is the best indicator of coaching effectiveness).

**Coaching and Matches - lead by example**

* Be punctual and properly attired in Club gear.
* Avoid at all times smoking while working with young players.
* Do not consume alcohol or non-prescribed drugs immediately prior to or while players are in your care.
* Never use foul language or provocative language/gestures to a player, opponent or match official.
* A Mentor should only enter the field with the referee’s permission and should not question their decisions or integrity.
* No negative comments or criticism should be directed at the Club’s officials, match officials, opposition, players, parents or guardians.
* Any abuse of pitches should to be communicated to the Club officials.
* Plan and prepare appropriately for each training session and match and ensure proper levels of supervision.
* Clearly communicate to parents, with sufficient notice, the details of training and match fixtures.
* Ensure that mouth-guards are used.
* Follow the ‘female present policy’ at training.
* Communicate results to the County Board and ideally send a short match report to our Club PRO.
* Ensure that players are made aware that matches take priority over other Club activities such as program selling and that this rule is applied by the Club.
* Ensure games, activities and playing equipment is customized to suit the needs of those involved in terms of age, ability, experience and maturity.
* Skills development and personal satisfaction should have priority over competition.
* Set realistic, stretching but achievable, performance goals.
* Be positive during coaching sessions so that participants always leave with a sense of achievement and an increased level of self-esteem.
* Praise and reinforce effort and commitment and always provide positive feedback.
* Recognise the development needs of young players and ensure that they are matched on an individual or team basis.
* Ensure that all members of a squad get adequate game time and that the same players do not start as substitutes in every game. In particular, in younger teams (Under 11 and below) each player should play at least half of a match. The Club follows the philosophies of “Go Games” and the “Player Pathway” i.e., 6 to 10 years of age FUNdementals, 10 to 14 years of age train to train, 14 to 18 years of age train to compete, 18+ years of age train to win.
* Never use any form of corporal punishment or physically force goals.
* Each squad should aim to enter the maximum number of teams to County Board competitions that it can reasonably field to avoid having excessive amounts of substitutes.
* Challenge bullying in any form whether physical or emotional. Bullying is not acceptable behaviour from anyone including a young person, Mentor, parent or guardian.
* If it is necessary to transport a child/young person in your car, ensure you have permission of the parents, that the mentor is not alone and that they are seated in a rear seat with seat belts securely fastened.
* Ensure that if First Aid is required off the pitch the Mentor follows the ‘female present policy’.

**Interaction with Young Players/Members - avoid comprising your role as Mentor**

* Ensure that all physical contact is appropriate and has the permission or understanding of the player.
* Follow the ‘female present policy’ (i.e. a designated parent) at training and matches.
* Develop an appropriate working relationship with young people based on mutual trust and respect.
* Be aware of the Clubs policy in relation to texting young players/members. Only use group texts and do not contact young players directly unless you have the express permission in writing from the parents or guardian.
* All messages/circulars, etc. should directed to the young person’s parents or guardians.
* Be aware of the Club policy in relation to away trips and overnight stays. When the team travels away, separate sleeping facilities must be provided for all adults. If both genders are in the group, male and female Mentors must be present.
* Juvenile Mentors are encouraged to celebrate success in a manner that is suitable for the age group concerned. Adults should act as role models for appropriate behaviour.
* It is important to recognise that certain situations e.g. staying over at the Mentor’s residence or friendly actions, like: e.g., horse play, role play, telling jokes, etc., could be misinterpreted and lead to allegations of serious misconduct or impropriety.
* Avoid a situation where you are alone in a car with a young player.
* Never enter a dressing room alone and always make sure you have another Mentor or parent with you.
* Do not take coaching sessions on your own.
* Avoid any inappropriate touching when assisting players to perform a technique or when First Aid is being administered.
* Avoid taking young players to your home.
* Never undertake any form of therapy – hypnosis etc., in the training of children.

**Young Player Welfare**

* Do not play an un-registered player as they are not insured.
* Make adequate provision for First Aid and do not encourage or allow players to play while injured.
* Keep an adequate record of each injury and ensure that another official, referee or team Mentor is present when a player is being attended to.
* Check that the referee has recorded the injury in his/her match report.
* Ensure players are safely attired in Club gear for all games and training, i.e. mouth-guards are mandatory at all training sessions/matches
* Avoid excessive training or over coaching or making demands on a young person that can lead to burnout e.g. insisting upon set (stereotyped) playing patterns where individual decision-making and creativity are stifled or where young people are confined to playing in set positions on a continuous basis.
* Do not pressurise a young person to perform at a level that is beyond his/her capacity based on age or maturation level.
* Inform the County Secretary of any unscheduled matches or trips away.
* Ensure that all dressing rooms and areas occupied by the Team, prior to, during or immediately following any match are kept clean and are not damaged in any way.
* Encourage parents/guardians to play an active role in organising and assisting activities and to be aware of the Club’s Code of Behaviour for everyone involved, including children.

**Parents and Guardians:** In Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club, Parents/Guardians play a key role in the promotion of sport and in their children’s enjoyment and development of Gaelic football. Parents play an influential role in assisting and encouraging children and young people to adopt a positive attitude and in encouraging their child to maintain their involvement in the sport. Parents/Guardians should always act as good role models for their children and, to achieve this, need to be aware, informed and involved in promoting the safest possible environment. To assist in the promotion of good practice in our Club Parents/Guardians should:

**Encourage their child to:**

* Play by the rules.
* Improve their skill levels.
* Appreciate everybody on your team, regardless of ability.
* Maintain a balanced and healthy lifestyle with regard to exercise, food, rest and play.
* Focus on efforts rather than performance.
* Attend training sessions.

**Lead by example:**

* Respect Officials decisions and encourage your child to do likewise.
* Do not exert undue pressure on your children or young players.
* Never criticise your own child or any other child for their standard of play.
* Be realistic in your expectations.
* Show approval for effort, not just results.
* Never embarrass a child or use sarcastic remarks towards a Player.
* Applaud good play from all teams.
* Don’t criticise playing performances. Identify how improvement can be made.
* Do not seek to unfairly affect a game or Player.
* Do not enter the field of play or play area or dressing rooms, unless invited to do so by the Mentor in charge.
* Behave responsibly on the side-line.

**Parents/Guardians should:**

* Complete on-line registration, permission and medical consent forms on time for your child’s participation in Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club.
* Be aware of the Lead Mentors/managers and Mentors and their role within the Club.
* Support the Lead mentors/Mentors in conveying the ‘fair play’ message in Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA.
* Inform Lead mentors/Mentors of any change in your child’s medical or dietary requirements prior to training sessions/games or other activities.
* Inform Lead mentors/Mentors if your child is not available to attend training or a match.
* Bring and collect their children and young adults to and from matches and training in a safe manner.
* Ensure that your child punctually attends training sessions/games/other activities.
* Ensure that you know of training/match finish times and collect your child on time.
* Provide your child with proper Club clothing and equipment and note that mouth-guards are mandatory. Warm clothes/and wet gear is also advisable in the winter months.
* Ensure that the nutrition/hydration needs of your child are met.
* Avoid asking your child ‘did you score today/what did you win by/what did you lose by?’ Ask them ‘did you enjoy yourself?’
* Listen to what young people have to say.
* Show approval whether the team wins, loses or draws a match.
* Never attempt to meet your own needs and aspirations for success and achievement through your children’s participation in games.
* Be familiar with the Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Anti-Bullying policy (see below).
* Be aware of the Club Children’s Officer(*Our Games- Our Code, p.4)*
* Be aware of the Club Designated Officer (*Our Games- Our Code, p.65)*

**Parents/Guardians should promote the procedures of good practice by**:

* Showing parental responsibility with regard to the safety of their own children and others.
* Showing appreciation to the players, volunteers, Mentors and Club Officers by attending training and games, on a regular basis.
* Become members of Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club and take an active interest in the running of the Club.
* Assist in organizing of Club activities and events, as requested.
* Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat each one equally regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.

**Parents/Guardians have the right to:**

* Know that there are procedures in place to keep their child is safe and to make a complaint if you believe that your child’s safety is in any way compromised (*Our Game-Our Code, pp 63-84.)*
* Be informed of problems/concerns relating to your child.
* Be informed if your child gets injured.
* Complain if you have concerns about the standard of coaching
* Have a say in relation to decisions being made within the Club (however, note that only paid members can vote at AGM or EGM’s)

**Parents/Guardians should not:**

* Ignore or dismiss complaints or concerns by your child, which relate to his/her involvement in Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club.
* Take safety for granted.
* Treat the Club as a child-minding service.

**Adult Players:** Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA has a registration procedure whereby when you become a member you agree to abide by the Club codes, procedures and policies. Players who have not paid their subscription will not be registered and therefore not insured. These players must not part take in any games.

**Respect**

* Co-operate with and show respect to Lead Mentors/Managers, Mentors, Players, Club officers, Supporters, Match officials, Referees and Opposition.
* All players should arrive at the appointed meeting time for games and observe ‘start times’ for training sessions (including injured, suspended and resting players).
* Preparation for games/training must be consistent with the aims and objectives of your team and the Club.
* All players must arrive in a ‘fit’ state to represent your team. Players are expected to rest in the days before games i.e. no alcohol, sufficient sleep, hydration and nutrition.
* Bookings and sending-off as a result of abusive or violent behaviour will require the Player and Lead Mentor/Manager to appear at a disciplinary hearing with the Investigation Committee (see below Section 3).
* Players are expected to adhere to the Club policy regarding clashes of training and games
* Players are expected to give 100% commitment on and off the field of play. Regular attendance at training is required. Specific standards will be set by each squad to meet their aims and objectives e.g. minimum 80% attendance is required, (except by special arrangement which would include injuries, suspension or resting players).
* 100% attendance record required for games, except by special arrangement (which would include injuries, suspension or resting players).
* Players who fail to attend a fixture for their primary team without giving sufficient notice to their Mentors will not be available for selection at another grade on that weekend or that day in the case of a mid-week game.
* Holidays should be planned around the official summer break; bank holidays, off-season times (December, January and February) and other periods identified when there are no matches. Where exceptional situations occur it is the Player’s responsibility to notify and discuss the problem with team management.

**Responsibility**

* Phone or advise in person, the Lead Mentor/Mentors if you cannot attend a game or training session as early as is possible. When unsure about meeting time arrangements etc., it is your responsibility to clarify in advance.
* Every player must pay their annual Club subscription on time: 30th April each year. If the annual subscriptions are not paid, you are not registered & thus insured. A rigid ‘not registered /no play policy’ will be enforced.
* Ensure that you are properly attired and wear the correct Club gear for all games.
* It is your responsibility to know and understand the rules of the GAA and those of the Club (see website: [www.Foxcab**gaa**.ie](http://www.Foxcabgaa.ie)).
* It is your responsibility to behave in an appropriate manner, both on and off the field when representing the Club. Breaches of Club code may be dealt with at disciplinary meeting with Executive Committee.

**As a player and member of Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club you should undertake to:**

* Treat all Mentors (Selector, Club officials, etc.) with respect.
* Demonstrate fair play and do your best.
* Abide by the rules and policies of the Club, both on and off the playing field.
* Respect 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.
* Accept apologies graciously from opponents when they are offered.
* Give opponents a hand if they are injured or have problems with equipment.
* Respect officials and accept their decisions with grace, not a grudge.
* Uphold the Club Code of Behaviour when travelling to away events (*Our Games – Our Code*, pp. 35-6, see below, p. 37).
* Behave in a manner that avoids bringing the Club into disrepute.
* Talk to Club officers if you have any problems.
* Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
* Exercise self-control and tolerance for others, even if others do not.
* Show appropriate loyalty to your Club and all its participants.
* Create high standards of fair play as an example for others to follow.
* Take due care of Club equipment.

**As a player of Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club you should not:**

* Cheat.
* Use violence or physical contact that is not allowed within the rules.
* Shout or argue with the referee, officials, team mates or opponents.
* Harm team members, opponents or their property.
* Bully or use bullying tactics to isolate another Player.
* Use unacceptable language or racial and/or sectarian references.
* Use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage.
* Take banned substances to improve performance.
* Tell lies about Mentors/other Players.
* Spread rumours.
* Keep secrets about any person who may have caused them harm.
* Play or train if you feel unwell or are injured. Inform your Mentor.

**Adult Team Mentors:** Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club recognises the key role Mentors play in the lives of all players in football and the sense of achievement a Mentor receives through their rewarding works with adults. All Mentors must strive to create a positive environment for their players, thereby ensuring all concerned have positive and healthy experiences at Foxrock-Cabinteely Club. Mentors must understand their role and be fully familiar with the rules of the GAA and those of the Club. Mentors also need to develop an understanding of relevant coaching methods and ensure that they have the appropriate level of coaching accreditation. All persons involved in adult team management will be selected using the Club recruitment and selection procedures (see below p. 35: *Our Games- Our Code,* pp 49-1.)

**Lead by Example**

* Mentors must act as a role model and promote the positive aspects of the Club by maintaining the highest standards of personal behaviour.
* Mentors must understand that their behaviour to players, supporters, game officials, and opponents will have an effect on the players in their charge.
* Mentors should respect the rights, dignity and worth of every player and treat each player equally, regardless of ethnic origin, religion or ability.
* Mentors should encourage the development of respect for opponents, officials, selectors and other coaches and avoid criticism of other Mentors and officials.
* Mentors should encourage fair play and treat participants equally.
* Mentors must avoid working alone at all times and must ensure that there is adequate assistance and supervision for all activities. A Mentor must be aware that it is important to recognise that certain situations or friendly actions could put their reputations at risk, if they were misinterpreted by other participants or other individuals.
* The use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco must be actively discouraged by Mentors as being incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity. Mentors should avoid the use of alcohol or smoking, before coaching, during events and on trips with players.
* Mentors must be cognisance of the fact that when travelling or overnight stays are involved in Club activities, the Mentors and players are ambassadors for the Club.

**Dealing with Players**

* Be generous with praise and never ridicule or shout abuse at players for making mistakes or for losing a game.
* Set realistic goals and targets for the team and individual players.
* Remember that each player deserves equal time and attention.
* Care must be taken not to expose a player, intentionally or unintentionally, to embarrassment or disparagement by the use of sarcastic or flippant remarks about the player or their family.
* Physical punishment or physical force must never be used. Never punish a mistake by either verbal means or physical means, or by exclusion.
* Mentors must insist that players in their charge respect the rules of the game and practice fair play. Mentors should make it clear they will not tolerate cheating or bullying behaviour.
* All Mentors should keep an attendance record of all training sessions and matches.
* All Mentors should ensure that players are aware of training start and finishing times.
* All Mentors should keep a brief record of injury(s) and action taken both during a training session and during a game. For convenience it is recommended that an injury report form is kept in the first aid bag at all times.

**Challenge Games / rearranged Games**

Challenge Games/Rearranged Games: The following rules will apply:

* All Challenge games and games rearranged by Mentors must be notified to the Club Secretary for approval prior to confirmation of fixture.
* No challenge game should be organised for the same day as an official Dublin County Board fixture without the approval of our Head of Football or Secretary and the agreement of other Mentors.
* Challenge Games should not be organised 3 days prior to League Games or 5 days prior to a Championship fixture in the other code unless approval has been sought from the Head of Football.
* Postponed or back matches which are scheduled by Dublin County Board as part of their normal fixture scheduling will take priority in the order as detailed above.

**Minor players**: If Minor players are required to play up for the adult teams then the following rules will apply:

* No Minor player shall be asked or expected to play in a ‘Challenge Game’ at Adult level in the week prior to a knock-out Championship, Round Robin Championship, Championship or League play-off game at Minor level.
* No Minor player shall be asked or expected to play in a ‘Challenge Game’ 3 days prior to a League Game at Minor level.
* Where a clash of fixtures arises Minors shall play with the Minor Team. Exceptions can be made where the Adult fixture is of a higher priority as outlined above, subject to the agreement of the Head of Football and the Mentors concerned.
* Minors shall be available to train with other Adult Games Teams only if they have participated in training at their own age level in that week (subject to injury and availability).
* Subject to the agreement of the Minor Mentors and Head of Football, players may join an Adult Squad for training and games when the progress of the Minor Team in their competitions has ended.
* Requests for Minor players to play with Adult Teams or issues that arise with regard to their attendance etc. should be directed through the Minor Mentors.

The Club philosophy is to encourage participation of all players to the highest level they are capable of and it is expected that all Mentors and Players would fully support this philosophy. However, it must be recognised that Players may have different expectations and commitment levels. In response to this, the Club will endeavour to provide a level of activity that meets the needs of all its members, irrespective of what level they play at.

Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA is aware of the possibility of player ‘burn-out’ and the need to protect players from themselves in some instances. The above code for minors attempts to put in place the necessary guidelines that will ensure players are given the best opportunity to represent the Club at their highest level.

Breaches of any of the above rules will result in Players or Mentors being brought before the Club’s Investigation Committee (see below, Section 3). Sanctions will be imposed on any player or Mentor who is found to have breached the rules (see below pp 26-8: *Our Game - Our Code*, pp. 20-22).

**Supporters:** Supporters have a responsibility to ensure that they conduct themselves in a manner that is acceptable to the club and that they are well behaved at all times when attending underage or adult games and competitions. Supporters should realise that young players participate in organised Club games for fun.

**Supporters should:**

* Applaud good performance and efforts from the players and from the opponents regardless of the result.
* Condemn the use of violence in any form, be it by fellow supporters, spectators, Mentors, officials or players.
* Encourage players to participate according to the rules and to abide by the referee’s decisions.
* Demonstrate appropriate social behaviour by not using foul language or harassing participants, Mentors, other spectators or officials.
* Respect the decisions of all officials.
* Never ridicule or scold a player for making a mistake during games or competitions.
* Show respect to opponents.
* Uphold the principles of ‘Fair Play and Respect’ for all.

***SECTION 3***

***Player Welfare and Protection Policy and Procedure***

**Club Children’s Officer:** Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club will have in place a Children’s Officer who will be child centred in focus and whose primary aim is to maintain a child-centred ethos in the Club. The Children’s Officer is a member of the Executive Committee and will be introduced to the young players in an appropriate forum. The key role of the Club Children’s Officer is to ensure the implementation and promotion of the relevant Child Welfare and Protection Codes and Guidelines for good practice in their Club including the *Give Respect - Get Respect* programme to ensure that young people can participate, enjoy and benefit from football in our club (*Our Game-Our Code*, p. 16). This person represents the link between the young players and the adults in the Club. The Children’s officer(s) do not have the responsibility to investigate or validate child protection allegations or concerns within our Club. A Designated Person will be appointed by the Club to deal with concerns such as allegations of abuse.

**The Club Designated Person:** The Designated Person will be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children in the Club. This person will be a senior member of the Executive or Club. The Designated Officer does not have a counselling or therapeutic role or a responsibility for investigating or validating child protection concerns within the Club. The responsibility for validating/investigating child protection issues lies with the Statutory Authorities, as outlined in *Children’s First* and *Our Duty to Care* publications. It is however possible that child protection concerns will be brought to the attention of the Children’s Officer(s). In this event it is essential that the correct procedure is followed. Note: It is important to note that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the Statutory Authorities and should not be undertaken by the Club’s Children’s Officers/Designated Persons or other Club Official or Executive member. The standard reporting procedures outlined in the GAA and Statutory Authorities Guidelines will be followed by the Club and adhered to by all members (*Our Game – Our Code*, pp. 63-75).

**Investigation Committee:**

The Executive will appoint a 3-person Investigation Committee annually, consisting of Chairperson, a Secretary and the Children’s Officer, which will investigate at Club level (*Our Game - Our Code*, pp.21-2). If any member of the investigating committee has a vested interest in the complaint, they must step aside from the investigation

**Anti–Bullying Policy:**

Bullying behaviour can be defined as repeated aggression and is treated as a very serious issue by the GAA. The following should be read in conjunction with the definitions and guide-lines laid down in *Our Game - Our-Code* (pp. 76-78). Bulling behaviour can be verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others and includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting or extortion by one or more children against a victim.

*“Children have the right to protection from all forms of violence (physical and mental). They must be kept safe from harm and they must be given proper care by those looking after them”* (The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 19)

Bullying can be identified by seven key features:

1. An intention to be hurtful.
2. The intention is then carried out.
3. The behaviour harms the target.
4. The bully overwhelms the target with his or her power.
5. There is often no justification for the action.
6. The behaviour repeats itself again and again.
7. The bully derives a sense of satisfaction from hurting the target.

Many young people are reluctant to tell adults that they are being bullied and older youths or children are even more reluctant. A constant need for vigilance in this regard is promoted by the Club.

**Forms of Bullying:**

* Direct bullying - Where the behaviour is obvious and bystanders are aware of it e.g. physical or verbal.
* Indirect bullying - Where the behaviour is more difficult to recognize e.g. intimidation or isolation.
* Verbal bullying - Including slandering, ridiculing, slagging, abusive telephone calls, name calling etc.
* Physical bullying - Including pushing, shoving, assaults, damage to person’s property.
* Gesture bullying - Includes non-verbal gestures/glances which convey threatening or frightening messages/intent.
* E-bullying/cyber bullying - Using web pages, emails, texts to abuse, intimidate and attack others. Either directly or indirectly.
* Relational bullying - Behaviour which sets out to deliberately damage another person’s friendship or feelings of inclusion in a friendship group e.g. exclusion, isolation etc.
* Extortion - The deliberate extortion of money or other items of property accompanied by threats.
* Homophobic bullying – This is bullying that is typically aimed at young people who are gay or who are perceived to be gay. It will include name-calling, isolation and violence.
* Racial bullying – This can be expressed physically, socially, or psychologically when one is labelled negatively as being different from others according to one’s race.
* Mobbing - This means that the target is being bullied by a group of perpetrators and not just one individual.

All types and forms of bullying are unacceptable in Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club. It is also important to be aware that bullying of a child can also be carried out by other children (young and old) either individually or as part of a group or by an adult/adults. Bullying is a matter for the whole Club. This means that everyone in the Club have a part to play in countering bullying. It is the responsibility of the Club, whether through the Children’s Officer(s), Mentors or other Club Officers, to deal with any instances of bullying.

**Responsibility within the Anti-Bullying Policy:** It is the responsibility of all members of Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club to help develop a caring and supportive atmosphere where any form of bullying is unacceptable. Everybody has to work together to stop bullying, and this includes the child, the parent, the Mentor and the officials of the Club. It is important to distinguish between ‘bullying’ and what can be classified as ‘bossiness and boisterous play’. A bossy child will boss whoever is around them rather than a single target and this behaviour is often is due to lack of self-control or skills of negotiation or compromise. Boisterous play can be dangerous but it does not involve young people wilfully setting out to hurt or victimise a particular individual or individuals. In both these instances, the young people involved often grow out of this kind of behaviour as they grow older. What distinguishes bullying from bossiness or boisterousness is that the bully always picks on someone less powerful and more vulnerable and this targeted behaviour, be it physical or verbal, can be persistent and repeated. It should be noted persistent ‘slagging’ can have the same devastating effects as bullying and should never be ignored. All bullies operate by using threatening behaviour and fear, along with the isolation of their victims. Bullying therefore can only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so.

The following indicators are warning signs that a young player might be a victim of bullying.

* Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities.
* Physical signs (unexplained bruises, scratches, or damage to belongings, physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, etc.).
* Stress-caused illness – headaches and stomach aches which seem unexplained.
* Frequent loss of, or shortage of, money with vague explanations.
* Fearful behaviour (fear of walking to a meeting, going different routes, asking to be driven).
* Having few friends.
* Changes in behaviour (withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed).
* Not eating.
* Attempting suicide or hinting at suicide.
* Anxiety.

Bullying behaviour can be prevented by:

* Ensure that all Club members follow the Anti-Bullying policy of the Club, which promotes the rights and dignity of each individual member.
* Deal with any incidents as they arise.
* Use ‘no blame approach’ when working with bullies and others helping them to understand the hurt they are causing thereby making the bullying a ‘shared concern’ of the group.
* Reinforce that there is a ‘permission to tell concept in the Club and that is it okay to tell someone what is happening.
* Encourage our young players to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly different or new children to the group.
* Offer victim immediate support and put the ‘no blame’ approach into operation.
* Never tell a young player to ignore bullying; they can’t ignore it - it hurts too much.
* Never encourage a young player to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game.
* Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it’s not their fault.

**Dealing with Bullying:** When dealing with a case of bullying the following steps should be followed by the Lead Mentor/Mentor/Children’s Officer.

Step 1 - Interview the victim: If you find that there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim and then find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling.

Try asking the following questions:

* Was it verbal or physical intimidation? (e.g., jokes, name calling, teasing, sarcasm, offensive language, offensive songs, or physical contact, hitting, spitting, shoving).
* How did it hurt the victim?
* Was it within his/her own peer group?
* Reassure them that their name not come out in the initial investigation.
* Actively listen and be reassuring.

Step 2 - Meet all involved: Arrange to meet all those involved. This should include bystanders, those who may have colluded, those who joined in and those who initiated the bullying.

* Have a maximum of six to eight in the group – keep the number controllable.
* Make a point of calling ‘a special meeting’.
* Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by all.
* Speak of the hurt caused in general terms with no reference to the actual victim.

Step 3 - Explain the problem: The distress being suffered as a result of the bullying incident has to be explained. At this stage the details of the incident or the allocation of blame should not be discussed. Explain the feelings of loneliness, being feeling left out, rejected or laughed at. Try asking questions:

* Would they like it if it happened to them?
* If someone here in the group was bullied by someone else within the group, what could we do to ensure it does not happen again?”
* Listen and watch out for positive or negative reactions, without focuses on any particular individuals.

Step 4 - Share the Responsibility: Explain what steps/controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how it will affect everyone.

Step 5 - Ask the group for their ideas: At this stage the group should be encouraged to suggest ways that might make a potential victim happier. All positive responses should be noted. Use phrases ‘if it were you’ to encourage a response. Listen to all suggestions and note them.

Step 6 - Leave it to them: Now the problem has been identified, solutions suggested, the problem is now handed over to the group to solve. Arrange to meet again in a week’s time. Pass the responsibility over to the group and give a time-frame within which something must be done.

Step 7 - Meet with them again: Each member of the group, including the bully, discuss how things are going, who is doing what and have there been other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and also keeps all involved in the process. Again enforce the idea of the ‘team’ looking after each other at regular intervals to ensure it is known that bullying and intimidating behaviour will not be tolerated.

**Breaches of the Codes and the Complaints procedure**

This procedure is based on the Irish Sports Council *Code of Ethics and Best Practice for Youth Sport* and the GAA’s *Our games* *Our Code: Code of Best Practice in Youth in Sport (Our Game-our Codes*, p. 21*).*

***Our Game-Our Code* contains a detailed section covering Breaches of the GAA code, which will be followed should the need arise (*Our Game - Our Code* pp. 19-26).**

This procedure is designed to provide summary guidance to Mentors, Players and their representatives on the general principles of the complaints procedures in Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA. While these guidelines are not legally binding, an appointed body can take into consideration the provisions of the procedure when issuing decisions.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, which suggests a failure to perform a certain function or provide services or protection in line with stated policies and practices. While every effort is made to avoid complaints it does give the Club the opportunity to address any issues to strengthen codes and policies or restore a service to the required standard. Complaints will ensure that bad practice and mistakes are acknowledged by the Club and are dealt with, and that remedies and solutions are sought going forward.

Confidentiality must be maintained in respect of all complaints but this is especially relevant in cases of suspected abuse, welfare or bad practice with young members. All information gathered has to be treated in a careful and sensitive manner and can only be discussed only with those directly involved in the process. Within this process supplying information to relevant others on ‘a need to know’ is not considered a breach of confidentiality. All persons involved in a process (the player, the parents/guardians, the alleged offender, his/her family, Mentors) will be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure. All information in relation to complaints will be stored in a secure place, with limited access only by designated people, as per Data Protection legislation (1998/2003). Anonymous complaints or rumours can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored. In all cases the safety and welfare of the Club members (particularly young members) is paramount and the information should be brought to the attention of the Children’s Officer. The information should be investigated and handled in a confidential manner.

**Stages in the Complaints Procedure:** The vast majority of complaints are best resolved informally at the point nearest to the delivery of the service. However, if the complaint cannot be resolved locally then the following steps should be followed:

* Appointment of an Investigation Committee (or Code in Best Practice hearing committee)
* The initiation of the Complaint Procedure
* Sanctions
* Appeal Procedure

**Receiving a Complaint**:

* All complaints should be submitted in writing to the Club Chairman, Club Secretary or the Children’s Officer.
* The complaint should be acknowledged within 5 working days of its receipt.
* The Mentor/Player/Parent/Guardian against whom the complaint has been made should be notified of the nature of the complaint by telephone and in writing.
* If a complaint made against the Mentor is of a serious nature, the Mentor should be asked to temporarily step aside during the investigation and a caretaker Mentor should be put in place.
* If a complaint is of a suspected abuse (sexual or physical) the Statutory Authorities should be contacted to receive professional guidance.
* All letters of complaint should be kept safely and confidentially.
* Letters of complaint remains the property of the Club. They will remain confidential and will not be read at meetings or circulated to any persons.

**Appointment of Investigation Committee:**

* An investigation committee (or Code in Best Practice hearing committee) of 3 people consisting of a Chairperson, a Secretary and the Children’s Officer will be established to deal with the issue at Club level (*Our Game - Our Code*, pp.21-2). If any member of the investigating committee has a vested interest in the complaint, they must step aside from the investigation.
* It is recommended that this committee is put in place at the beginning of the year.
* The Investigating Committee will deal all incidents of suspected misconduct including breaches of the code and bullying. However, any complaint concerning child abuse will be referred to the appropriate Statutory Authorities.

**Dealing with the Complaint:**

* On receiving a complaint the Investigation Committee hearing committee will inform the individuals involved with details of the complaint being made.
* Each party to the complaint will be afforded the opportunity of providing a response verbally at a meeting with the Investigation Committee. If either party does not attend the meeting, they will be offered the opportunity of providing a response in writing.
* If either party fails to co-operate with the Investigating Committee, the investigation will continue.
* An underage player must be accompanied by a parent/guardian.
* If a parent/guardian is party to the complaint, an underage player should be accompanied by an independent adult of their choice.
* In certain circumstances the Investigation Committee will enlist the assistance of professional help.
* In delivering its findings, the Investigating Committee will furnish a written report giving details of the procedures followed, investigation conclusions and recommendations or any actions to be taken.
* The written report will be signed by all members of the Investigating Committee.
* All parties to the complaint will receive a copy of the Investigating Committee.

**Sanctions:**

* Where it is established that an incident of misconduct has taken place, the Investigation Committee will notify the member (verbally and in writing) of any sanctions or corrective actions being imposed and the reason why.
* If the member is under 18 years of age, correspondence should be addressed to his/her parents/guardian.

**Appeals:**

* If either party to a complaint is unhappy with the outcome of the investigation committee they have the right to appeal the decision to the Club Executive, by notification to the Club Secretary or to an Appeals Committee (independent of the Investigation Committee, which will be set up). At least one member of the Executive will be a member of the Appeals Committee).
* All appeals should be made in writing within 7 days of the issuing of the findings of Investigation Committees findings.
* The appeals committee will have the power to confirm, set aside or change any corrective action imposed by the Investigation Committee.
* Having exhausted all procedures to resolve a complaint, if any party is still not satisfied with the outcome, the matter will be referred to the Dublin County Board Children’s Officer.
* The National Management Committee’s decision on any appeal will be final.

**Filing of Complaints:**

* All correspondence, reports, minutes and findings will be treated with confidence, securely filed and will remain the property of the Club.
* The provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and 2003 will be adhered to i.e., information will be obtained fairly, it will be kept for one or more specific, explicit and lawful purposes, it will be used only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was given, it will be kept safe and secure, it will be kept accurate and up to date, the data collected will be adequate, relevant and not excessive and finally it will not be retained longer than is necessary.

**Standards of Behaviour/Discipline Procedure for Juveniles**

The Club demands the highest standards of behaviour from all young players/members. It is the Club’s policy to encourage, acknowledge, and reward high standards of behaviour, wherever possible. However, it is also the Club’s policy not to tolerate unacceptable behaviour from any player towards fellow players, Mentors, referees, opponents, parents or any other Club members.

This procedure will apply to any situation in which a member is representing the Club, i.e., travelling to and from training, fun days, parties, games, etc. In the event that a player’s behaviour is deemed unacceptable by a Mentor or adult helper, the following disciplinary procedure should be applied.

**Discipline/Sanctions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Behavioural List** | **Sanctions for Offensive Behaviour**  The sanctions below will be applied according to the severity of the offensive behaviour. |
| **Minor Don’ts:**   * Persistent talking & disruption while Mentors are coaching. * Cheek or disrespect towards Mentor(s) or helpers. * Horseplay which has not caused injury. Continuous non- compliance with instructions of Mentor or adult helper. | * Verbal warning. * Taken aside and a 2nd verbal warning. * Sin bin for 5 minutes. * Sin bin for 15 minutes or longer as deemed appropriate. |
| **Serious Don’ts:**   * Offensive language or gestures towards another player or Mentor or others. * Horseplay which has caused injury, accidental or otherwise. * Persistent non-compliance of instructions from a Mentor or adult helper. * Cheating. * Telling lies about adults or other players. * Spreading rumours. | * A formal warning with another Mentor present. Sin bin for 15 minutes or longer, as deemed appropriate. * A formal warning with parent/guardian present and suspension from the next training session or match. |
| **Critical Don’ts:**   * Bullying – in any form (verbal, physical, sexual, etc.). Wilful damage to an individual or Club property. * Theft off individuals or Club property. Shouting and arguing with an official. | * A written warning * Parents advised and suspension for next two weeks * Total suspension from Club activities and membership. |

**Note to Mentors:**

There must be two Mentors and/or Children’s Officer at all times when speaking to a young person about serious or critical breaches of the Code of Behaviour. This conversation must take place away from the main team. This may require the Mentor to get a Parent/Guardian to stand in for them while they speak to the offending player.

The young person should be spoken to in a calm, normal voice explaining the breach of code of behaviour in a non-threatening manner. The Mentor must strive to ensure young person understands the breach and how the situation may be resolved or improved. The Mentor should explain that a repeat breach will lead to further disciplinary action and what the disciplinary action may be. If a young person becomes visibly upset or emotional when spoken to, the Mentors need to inform the parents/guardian at the end of the training session.

It is vital that the Mentor remains calm at all times, even in the face of severe provocation. The aim of this procedure is to improve behaviour with a minimum of conflict. On some occasions, to avoid conflict, a second Mentor may intervene to support the action of a colleague.

The use of a sin bin needs to be clearly visible to Mentors and set away from any other activity. The sin bin should consist of two coned or marked areas preventing two offending players from being in contact during their sin bin stay. If possible, an attending Parent should be asked to supervise the sin bin area and should be encouraged to support the Mentor’s action.

Sanction Redemption. A young player may redeem themselves by undertaking to do additional chores (picking up cones, tidying away gear) over a specified period of time. A report must be kept on the breach/disciplinary action to be completed for all serious and critical breaches.

**Note**: the disciplinary procedure does not cover any sanctions issued by match referees.

**Grievance Procedures for Adult Members:**

The grievance procedures are an agreed set of rules by which players can raise grievances and/or complaints with their Mentors. All grievances should be considered as potential disputes and should be dealt with as near in time as possible to the incident that gave rise to the grievance. Mentors should follow this procedure and be seen to be acting fairly and consistently. Some common causes of grievance include:

* Interpretation of rules of the game,
* Lack of fairness in training and team place allocation,
* Alleged discrimination and/or harassment,
* Health and safety issues.

If grievances are not dealt with promptly, they are likely to fester and result in bad player relations. Poor grievance handling will also affect team morale while an effective process will release pressures/tension that can build up within the team.

In all cases attempts should be made to resolve grievances locally and informally. If this is not possible, then the grievance should be dealt with officially within the Club management in the order listed below:

* Mentor
* Lead Mentor/Manager
* Club Executive

In dealing with any grievance ensure that due regard is given to Club policy and the custom and practice within the Club and in sport. The grievance can be accepted verbally or in writing to the Mentor or Lead Mentor, who should then convene a formal meeting where the key grievances will be aired.

Lead Mentor/Manager: Prior to the meeting:

* Ensure that there has been an opportunity for an informal meeting.
* Decide if you can deal with the grievance immediately or if you need time to investigate and consider what action is necessary.
* Ensure the complainant knows that they can be accompanied at the meeting.
* Be clear about your authority in relation to possible solutions, particularly with regard to possible precedents and Club policy.
* Allow adequate time for the interview and get the physical setting right.
* Plan the interview with a view to identifying the true nature of the grievance and consider ways to draw out further information.

During the meeting:

* Outline the purpose and structure of interview, informing the claimant that there will be notes taken.
* Ask the complainant to state the background of the grievance and to outline what action he/she would like to see taken to resolve the problem.
* Listen and try to understand why the complainant has raised the grievance.
* Explore the facts further, if necessary, through appropriate open questioning (why, what, how).
* State what you understand the grievance to be and ask the player to confirm that your understanding is correct.
* Identify any relevant rules, policies or procedures, which may have not been followed.
* Discuss options and a range of solutions.
* If the grievance is justified, suggest a solution to the problem.
* If the grievance is unfounded, carefully explain the reasons for rejecting it.
* Inform the complainant of the right of appeal and the timescale involved.

After the meeting:

* Record the minutes of the meeting.
* If necessary, ensure that the next stage of the procedure is activated.

Implications/Findings:

* Before deciding on the resolution of a major grievance, the Lead Mentor must be aware of the implications of his/her decision for future potential grievances. Also, an evaluation of the likely outcome of a referral to an independent third party should be made at this stage, in consultation with the Club Executive.

***SECTION 4 - Medical/Injury Policy***

The reimbursement of Medical expenses to members:

* The GAA Medical Insurance policy or LGFA Injury Fund can be used to cover serious injuries and members should familiarize themselves the scheme and, in particular, the time-limits for submitting claims. Claims should be made promptly and contain all relevant invoices and receipts. Payments will exclude policy excess.
* Claimant must be a fully paid up member at Juvenile or Adult level when the injury occurs.
* Only injuries arising from participation in or related to ongoing ability to partake in Club activities (e.g., training/games) will be covered under this policy.
* Players and Mentors should take all reasonable precautions to ensure injuries are minimised (e.g., mandatory wearing of gum shields, appropriate footwear, etc.).
* All injuries incurred during matches should be reported to the referee at time of injury.
* All injuries incurred during training should be reported to the Lead Mentor / Manager at time of injury.
* All claims must be signed by the claimant/parent, Mentor, the Club Secretary, before submission for reimbursement to the County Board Insurance Scheme. All receipts and invoices must accompany the claim form.
* Given it is possible to claim tax relief on all Medical Expenses, Claimants should seek reimbursement of any expenses not reimbursed by the County Board Insurance Scheme from the Revenue Commissioners in their annual tax return.
* Members should endeavour to reduce claims by using Personal Medical Insurance and Social Services where practicable and possible.

The Ladies GAA Injury Fund covers those in the fund for injuries sustained in the following: a) an official competitive or challenge game or b) an official and supervised training session. It also applies to Club Officers, Team Mentors and Match Officials (Referees, Umpires and Linespersons) if registered to the injury fund. All players must be registered to the fund. See page 39 for GAA Claim Form and Procedures.

**The Main Guidelines for Players is as follows:**

* Report any suspected injury
* When completing the Application Form, print your name, address and club clearly under Section 1
* Ensure permission is sought for private treatment. Private treatment is considered to be anything other than public A&E visits and X Rays, GP visits and Physiotherapy. Doctor treatment in swift care clinics is deemed to be private treatment.
* Permission for private treatment, Scan’s or consultants visits must be approved by the injury fund co coordinator in advance and the request must be in the form of a GP referral letter and a letter from the injured party or parent.
* A copy of all forms, receipts, letters, etc. sent should be kept and any correspondence received should also be kept
* Where a preliminary claim has been submitted, a report and update on the claim must be submitted within one year from the date of the preliminary notice to validate the claim
* All claims for which preliminary notices have been received must be lodged and validated within two years of the original preliminary notice except in exceptional circumstances
* Injury claims will be monitored on a claim by claim basis and a player who plays while receiving treatment may have her claim disallowed

**What are the Key Guidelines for Officials?**

* Ensure all details on form are completed and in order prior to forwarding claim
* Ensure forms are forwarded on time
* Establish a register of claims for your own records
* Who do you Contact in Relation to the Injury Fund Scheme?
* Rosemarie Coyle, Croke Park,
* Click on the Link below to download a (1) Prem. form (2) Full Injury Claim Form
* <http://ladiesgaelic.ie/club/injury-fund/>

**Concussion**

**Concussion must be taken extremely seriously?**

* Ignoring the signs and symptoms of concussion may result in death, a more serious brain injury or a prolonged recovery period.
* The potential for serious and prolonged injury emphasises the need for comprehensive medical assessment and follow-up until the concussion has fully resolved.
* Returning to play before complete resolution of the concussion exposes the player to recurrent concussions that might take place with ever decreasing forces.
* Repeat concussions could shorten a player’s career and may have some potential to result in permanent neurological (brain) impairment.
* There is no such thing as a minor concussion or ‘knock to the head’.

**If a player has ANY ONE of the visible clues they MUST be immediately removed from activity and MUST NOT return until they have completed the graduated return to play protocol.**

How to recognise Concussion

* Lying motionless on ground
* Slow to get up
* Unsteady on feet
* Balance problems or falling over
* Grabbing/Clutching head
* Dazed, blank or vacant look
* Confused/Not aware of plays or events
* Suspected or confirmed loss of consciousness
* Loss of responsiveness

**RECOGNISE AND REMOVE**

**What happens if a player has a suspected concussion at training or when playing?**

* The player MUST be immediately removed from activity and MUST NOT return.
* The player MUST NOT be left alone.
* The player MUST NOT drive a vehicle.
* The player MUST always be in the care of a responsible adult, who is informed of the player’s suspected concussion.
* The player should be medically assessed as soon as possible.

**For detailed guideline on Concussion we recommend you to review the Rugby IRFU site at:**

<http://www.irishrugby.ie/downloads/IRFU-Guide-to-Concussion%282%29.pdf>

***SECTION 5***

***Texting/ Web Usage/Photography Policy***

**Texting of Young Players by the Club:**

* It is Club’s policy that group texts are used to pass on information regarding games, training or other activities to under-age members *via* their parents. Mentors and/or Club officials should obtain these relevant contact numbers when an under-age player is being registered.
* Mentors should not use any social networks (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to communicate with any young player. These forms of communication should not be used to conduct any Club business.
* If, for whatever reason, a parent/guardian insists or requests that the information is sent directly by the Mentor to their child and gives this request in writing, the Club may, if they so wish, accede to this request. However, if the Club accedes to the request the information can only be sent as part of a group text and cannot be communicated individually to the under-age member.
* The Club would regard the individual texting of an under-age members by their Mentor as being inappropriate and unnecessary. The Club recommends that Mentors do not keep the mobile numbers of young members on their personal phones, and should maintain all player contact *via* the parent / guardian unless expressly agreed in writing by the parent / guardian and then only part of a group text.
* If a young player is a member of a development squad, the group text mechanism is the preferred method of communication with the young players.
* If a young player plays up for adult teams, the same recommendation applies and parental/guardian permission must be sought if you wish to directly communicate with the young person as part of a group text scheme.

**Web Site Usage/Photographic/Recorded Images:**

* Taking photographs of players, using the Club website to publicise GAA activities, video recording of events, games and training sessions are normal activities associated with football. However, care must be taken in the dissemination, storage and use of such material.
* The GAA *Our Games –Our Codes Code* (pp. 58-60) does not seek in any way to eliminate or curtail these activities but proposes safeguards to ensure that the Club minimise the risk or threats that inappropriate use of photographs or the recording of images may pose, particularly for young people.
* Young players, parents and adult players will be asked to give permission for the recording of photographic and recorded images as part of the player’s registration/subscription process.
* Photography and the recording of images in a public place do not generally require explicit or prior consent. However, if at an event such as a game or training session is taking place a Mentor, parent or player is entitled to request a person to refrain from taking photos if they feel that it may be inappropriate.
* All young people featured in recordings must be appropriately dressed.
* A photograph or recording of a young player should focus on the activity rather than the young person.
* Parents and spectators taking photos and recordings should seek permission in advance from the Club and should also be prepared to identify themselves, if requested, and state the purpose for photos/videos.
* Group and team photos may be taken but it is not necessary to match the player’s name with the position they are standing or seated in the photo i.e., the photo may appear with the player’s name recorded but need not be in the order in which they appear in the photo.
* On certain occasions individual players may receive recognition and may be presented with an award. In the case of an underage player certain levels of sensitivity and common sense are required and a balance should be drawn between the publication of a photograph of a young player, who may or may not be named and the safety aspects of the publication.
* Any instances of inappropriate images should be reported to the Children’s Officer who will ensure that appropriate action is taken.

***SECTION 6***

***Volunteer Recruitment and Selection***

The following procedures will be used when recruiting Mentors and other personnel used to manage teams:

* Role Clarification: The role of the volunteer will be clearly defined e.g. Lead Mentor, Mentor, Committee Member, etc.
* Role Assistance: The various supports available in the Club will be explained to any new volunteers, for example relevant training courses. For new Mentors in the Academy, induction meetings will be held in the Club. A copy of this handbook (Club *Codes, Policies and Procedures*)will be made available to every new volunteer.
* Application/Subscription Form: Volunteers should complete an application form prior to formally commencing their role in the Club. This is particularly important for new Mentors as they must be registered in order to be covered by insurance. Signing an application form requires the volunteer to agree to abide by the Clubs *Codes, Policies and Procedures*.
* Data Retention: All member details collected on application or subscription forms will be securely stored on the Club data base. This information will be treated confidentially and only be used for GAA purposes.
* References: As part of the recruitment process each new volunteer member must be recommended by an existing Club member. These recommendations will be verified by a member of the Club Executive. For volunteers involved in Mentoring or in assisting in juvenile or adult teams, it is mandatory to complete a Garda Vetting process prior to commencement of their role(s).
* Meeting the Applicant: An official representative of the Club will meet each new volunteer to ensure that they are aware of their role(s) and to use the occasion to clarify any issues that may arise and identify any coaching and up-skilling needs as appropriate.
* Volunteer Support: Continuous supports will be made available to all Mentors and volunteers to enable them to full fill their roles successfully. The Club Executive, Head of Football, other Mentors and the Children’s Officers will be available to support all roles in the Club.
* Mentor Ratification: All Mentors (new and existing) will be reviewed and ratified by the Club Executive on an annual basis.
* Each appointed team official will confirmed that they understand their responsibilities and agree to abide by the Clubs Codes, Policies and Procedures / GAA’s *Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport (Our Game-Our Code)*.
* Each appointed team official will confirm that they agree to the required National & Garda Vetting Procedures.

**Garda Vetting:**

All adults involved in a team training sessions and or matches are required to be Garda vetted. They will be required to complete a Garda Vetting form and return it to our Club Secretary. If not already Garda Vetted, a copy of the form is available on our Club Web Site at

[www.Foxcab**gaa**.ie](http://www.Foxcabgaa.ie)

<http://ladiesgaelic.ie/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Garda-Vetting-Application-Ladies-Football4.pdf>



NOTE: All Team Officials & Club Officers must be Garda vetted.

***SECTION 7***

***Away trips and Overnight stays***

**Away Trips**

The Club has the following policy in place for travelling with young players. Parental or guardian consent must be obtained in writing before any young player/member can participate in any organised trip.

* Young players and their parents/guardians should sign a form agreeing to partake in away trips or overnight stays.
* Young players must be adequately supervised (approximately 1 Mentor to 8 players).
* There must be adult Mentors of each gender with under-age groups.
* Mentors travelling are required to be familiar with the agreed rules on smoking and on the consumption of alcohol. As a basic minimum, Mentors are required to avoid smoking while working with young players and must not consume alcohol or non-prescribed drugs while young players are in their care.

**Overnight stays:**

* A specific ratio of Mentors to young people should be agreed in advance (approximately 1 Mentor to 8 players) and this must include female Mentors/helpers. This ratio can vary depending on the age category of the young players and the type of activity they participate in.
* Ensure that the standard of accommodation is suitable for groups.
* Adults should never share a room with a young player. If exceptional or emergency circumstances so dictate there should be more than one young person in the room with the adult.
* Where young people are sharing a room it should be arranged that the same gender and age grouping are kept together.

**Hosting a Visiting Club:** Hosting another Club means that prior planning is key to success. The following points should be considered:

* The age group of the visiting Club.
* The number of payers and Mentors in the visiting Club.
* Timetable or schedule of events.
* Referees and officials.
* Catering arrangements.
* First Aid.
* Emergency contact numbers.
* An alternative programme of events should the weather be bad.

**Hosting a Visiting Club Overnight:**

* It is the responsibility of the Club to seek or provide suitable accommodation for the visiting Club.
* Host families must provide a safe and caring environment for young people.
* All houses must be checked for suitability by the Club.
* The Club should provide an itinerary of events to the host family.
* More than one young player should be placed in a host home.
* The host family should be made aware of any special needs/requirements of guest players.
* Guest players should not be asked to share a room with an adult or a member of the opposite sex.

**Transport:**

Transport is a central element of any trip. If teams avail of bus or coach transport, it is essential that all aspects of the transport arrangements are checked out and agreed in advance. Safety should be considered a priority at all times, regardless of the cost. The following should be considered:

* All vehicles used for transport should be well maintained, roadworthy, have the proper safety equipment and should be properly taxed and insured.
* Hired transport should be fully accessible for people with disabilities.
* When travelling on buses, coaches or cars, passengers must remain seated at all times and belted in.
* Alternative access to transport should be available in case of emergency.
* Vehicles should be equipped with a First Aid Kit and a fire extinguisher and Mentors of the group should be familiar with how to use them.
* When hiring a bus or coach, information should be sought regarding the company’s safety standards, reputation and reliability.

***SECTION 8 - Club Facilities***

**Use of Pitch**

The following rules will apply to the use of the pitches:

* No drills of any kind that will cause damage to the surface are to be carried out on the playing surface of the pitch.
* Conditioned games should be played across the pitch where possible. This will protect the goal-mouths, which are the most susceptible areas to damage.
* The Head of Football will have the final say in relation to any disputes about the use of the playing surfaces.
* Abuse or misuse of the playing surface will result in long periods of downtime of the pitches.
* All bottles/gear/rubbish to be removed from side-lines of both home team and opposition and the area surrounding pitches following matches to ensure area is kept neat and tidy.
* No use of the pitches by members outside official training times or matches is permitted. Breaches of this rule will result in sanctions.

**Use of Dressing Room / Club House**:

The following rules will apply to the use of the dressing room / club house:

* Dressing rooms should be locked while players on the pitch.
* The Opposition should share same set of dressing rooms as the team they are playing. It is the Lead Mentor’s responsibility to make sure opposition are accommodated correctly and are shown how to lock up etc. and to carry out their warm-up, off the pitch.
* Dressing rooms/showers to be cleaned out after use (both training and matches).
* Nets / Flags to be tidied away and accounted for in their correct allocated location.
* No bicycles allowed in dressing rooms.
* Players are to be informed that bicycles should be locked to railings outside dressing rooms.
* Toilets should be left clean & tidy

**Rules for Pitch and Player Priority of Adult Games / Competition:**

Booking of the Pitches at all times is essential. The Head of Football will have final say if there is competition for a pitch. The following priority shall be applied in deciding the priority of player and pitches:

* Championship
* League
* *Féile na nGael*
* Cup
* Challenge
* Training

St Frances Gaels GAA (Men’s Club) share our pitch. Their requirement and use are also factored into our pitch allocation. The Head of Football has responsibility to co-ordinate this.

The Club has the use of 4 pitches and co-operation of all Mentors & teams is required to ensure best-practice in the allocation & running of these pitches:

* Main Pitch in Kilbogget
* Main Pitch in Cornelscourt
* Juvenile Pitch in Kilbogget
* Juvenile Pitch (Training Area) in Cornelscourt

Where a shortage of pitches arises and games of equal priority are scheduled for the same day/time the highest ranked Team will be given priority for pitch allocation. Consideration may also be given to the playability of the Club’s pitches and the impact preceding day’s games may have on the ability to fully fill subsequent fixtures. The following order shall apply:

* Ladies Senior Football
* Ladies Junior Football
* Minor (in order of team ranking)
* Juvenile

Access to pitches, if available, will be prioritised in descending age order.

**Use of the pitch**

Pitch Bookings: Allocated slots maybe assigned to teams. These may change from time to time with agreement of the Mentors. Booking slots that have not been allocated can be arranged by contacting the Head of Football.

NOTE: Our Club Pitch Diary is available on our Club Web site.

* Priority will be given to teams who are competing in league, shield and championship matches.
* Mentors should check the fixtures for cancelled matches.
* Where a conflict potentially exists Mentors should agree between them who takes the slot. Under 8 to Under 13 will train and play on the juvenile pitch where numbers allow, while Under 14 to Senior will train and play on the main pitch.

**Neighbours:**

* All of our neighbours should be treated with the utmost of courtesy and their rights should be respected at all times.
* Good relationships with our neighbours on all sides of the synthetic pitch are essential for the future use and development of our facilities.

**Equipment Store - Containers:**

* The Container should be kept tidy at all times.
* All training equipment should be returned to the store after training is complete.
* The store is not to be used to house bicycles, lost property, etc.
* The store is to be kept locked at all times.
* If additional equipment is required or equipment is damaged, it should be reported to one of the Juvenile Officers.

**Food/Drinks:**

* Food wrappers and drinks cans / bottles to be taken off the pitch and out of Club House after each team use. Bins are provided for their disposal.

***SECTION 9***

***Forms Section***

***Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA - Away Trips Permission Slip***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Team will be attending a field trip to:** | |
| **Departing Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Clubhouse : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ pm** | |
| **Cost** | **€\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |
| **Transportation** |  |

**Please return this permission slip by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

I give permission for my child, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, to attend the trip to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and to partake in the activities indicated in the itinerary.

I have read the Code of Behaviour for Young Players attached and agree that my child will abide when in the care of the Club and I understand that any serious or continued breach of this Code may result in my child being sent home early at my expense.

Enclosed is € \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to cover the cost of the trip.

In case of an emergency, I give permission for my child to receive medical treatment. In case of such an emergency, please contact:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Phone No** |
|  |  |

Does your child have any special dietary requirements/allergies? Yes/No

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Is your child on any medication? Yes/No Please specify \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Special medical instructions \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA***

***Medical Expenses Claim Procedure & Forms***

Click on the Link below to download a (1) Preliminary Claim form and (2) Full Injury Claim Form

<http://ladiesgaelic.ie/club/injury-fund/>

**Claims Procedure:**

1. The Injury Fund Co-ordinator shall be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Fund on behalf of the Central Council.
2. All submissions of claims must be made within two months of the date of injury to the Injury Fund Co-ordinator.
3. Where a claim cannot be made within the two-month period, a preliminary Notification Form should be completed and forwarded to the Injury Fund Co-ordinator.
4. All forms are available from Clubs, County Boards or the Ladies Football Office and can be downloaded from the official Ladies Football website at [www.ladiesgaelic.ie](http://www.ladiesgaelic.ie)
5. Claim Forms must be completed and signed by the injured player, team trainer and counter-signed by the Club Secretary, as a declaration of authenticity. This must then be forwarded to the County Secretary and duly signed as a declaration that he/she has been officially notified beforehand of the injury. The claim documentation must incorporate and confirm:
   1. Loss of wages claims and Employers’ Certification stating the amount of loss of basic earnings together with the last four payslips.
   2. A copy of the Referee’s Report if the injury was sustained in an official match.
   3. The official in charge of a team must sign the claim if the injury occurred in an official training session or challenge match.
   4. A letter from the appropriate Secretary as to whether permission had been granted for a challenge match if the injury occurred in a challenge match.
   5. All original receipts must be included: photocopies will not be accepted.
   6. If the applicant has suffered from a previous injury and received payment from the Injury Fund, the reference number from the claim should be included under Section 9 of the Application Form.
6. Where treatment is likely to exceed €200, a preliminary claim form must be submitted within 8 weeks of the date of injury to the Injury Fund Co-ordinator
7. Any request for private treatment must be supported by documentation from a Medical Practitioner, and a request letter from the injured party or parent, to demonstrate why private treatment is necessary. Physiotherapy sessions shall be limited to six sessions. If further sessions are required a full report should be submitted by a registered chartered Physiotherapist or registered Physical Therapist. Further payment will only be considered on receipt of this report.
8. If a submitted claim is not fully documented, the necessary documents will be requested by the Injury Fund Co-ordinator, or declared void.
9. All payments will be made directly to the applicant. Under no circumstances will payments be made to Clubs, County Boards or any institution involved in treating the injury.
10. When claims are received late by the Central Council and if the delay is due to the Club or County Secretary, the Club or County Board may then be held responsible for the payment of the claim.



**Acceptance of the Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Clubs Code, Policy & Procedures**

This handbook contains the Club’s Codes, Policies and Procedures designed to support your understanding of key points essential for your role in working with a Club Team. It is based on the GAA’s *Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport (Our Game Our Codes),* which is the overarching reference document.

Note: The *Our game-Our Code* takes precedence over this acceptance document and the full text is available on our Club Web Site.

I confirmed that I understand my responsibilities and agree to abide by the Clubs Codes, Policies and Procedures as contained in this handbook. I also agree to abide by the Clubs Codes, Policies and Procedures of the GAA’s *Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport (Our Games Our Code)*.

I also agree to the National & Garda Vetting Procedures.

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

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (See below)

This form must be retained by the Foxrock-Cabinteely GAA Club Secretary.

**Team Officer Positions**

1. Lead mentor / manager,
2. Team coach
3. A mentor who is part of the lead mentor’s / managers management team
4. Team female officer

\*\* See Section 6 pages 41 to 60 of “Our Games Our Code – Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport” for an outline of the Garda Vetting process in LGFA.

***Appendix 1***

***References***

***Our Game-Our Code (2014)*** *Code of Practice in Youth Sport when working with underage players. GAA*

***Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport*** (Irish Sports Council and Sport Northern Ireland, Irish Sports Council, West End Office Park, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15)

***Code of Behaviour for all persons working with young people*** (Cumann Lúthchleas Gael (GAA). Published in association with Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael, Cumann Peil Gael na mBan, Comhairle Liathróid Láimhe na hÉireann and Comhairle Cluiche Corr na hÉireann, Páirc an Chrócaigh, Dublin 3)

***Guidelines for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse*** (Cumann Lúthchleas Gael (GAA) Fourth Edition 2009, Páirc an Chrócaigh, Dublin 3)

***Children First*** (National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Department of Health and Children, Hawkins House, Hawkins Street, Dublin 2)

***Our Duty to Care (NI)*** (Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People, Volunteer Development Agency, 129 Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 1SH)

***Our Duty to Care (ROI)*** (Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People Department of Health and Children, Hawkins House, Hawkins Street, Dublin 2)

***Let’s Beat Bullying*** (An anti-bullying resource for those working with young people in Youth Work Settings. National Youth Council of Ireland, 3 Montague Street, Dublin 2)

***Guidelines for taking and using images of children and young people in the arts sector*** (The Arts Council, 70 Merrion Square, Dublin 2)

***Code of Good Practice for the Youth Work Sector*** (Department of Education and Science, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1)

***Webwise*** (For information on the safe use of the Internet check [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie))

***The GAA Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport, the Code of Behaviour for all Persons Working with Young People and Guidelines for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse*** (Fourth Edition 2009) are downloadable at http://www.gaa.ie

**Gaelic Athletic Association** (Established 1884) Official Guide - Part 1 Containing the Constitution and Rules of the G.A.A., revised and corrected up to date, and published by authority of the Central Council. This publication replaces all previous versions published. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED © Published by the Central Council of the Association Croke Park, Dublin 3, June 2011

***Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms***

**Youth/Young Players/Children/Young People:** For the purpose of these codes, policies and procedures youths, juveniles, young players, children, and young people are recognised as persons under 18 years of age. Legislation in certain jurisdictions stipulates that a child is a person under 18 years who is not or has not been married.

**Lead Mentor / Manager:** A Lead Mentor / Manager is a person appointed by the Club to oversee the effective management of a team. A Lead Mentor / Manager undertakes this role with the help of Mentors. All Mentors have a role to play in ensuring that procedures as described in this document are agreed, followed and reviewed on a regular basis.

**Team coach:** A Team Coach is a person appointed by the club to help the Lead Mentor / Manager in the effective management and coaching of a team. All Team Coaches have a role to play in ensuring that procedures as described in this document are agreed, followed and reviewed on a regular basis. A team Coach is expected to have the necessary skills and qualifications to coach and train the team.

**Mentor:** Mentor is a person appointed by the Club to help the Lead Mentor / Manager in the effective management of a team. All Mentors have a role to play in ensuring that procedures as described in this document are agreed, followed and reviewed on a regular basis.

**Team female officer:** A Team female officer is a female who is part of the Lead Mentors / Mangers team structure. They are appointed by the Club as part of the Child Protection Policy of the Club. This officer or officers must be present at all training sessions or matches or anywhere the teams are assembled (social events, trips away, courses etc.).

**Parents/Guardians:** The terms Parents/Guardians are used in this Code to indicate the legal parents and/ or guardians of our underage players.

**Official:** An Official is an individual charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the rules of an activity are adhered to in a formal way. This category includes referees, umpires, lines men, etc.

**Club Children’s Officer:** A person/persons appointed to ensure that there is recognition and development of a child/youth centred ethos within the Club. They will act as the link between the young members and adults.

**Club Designated Person:** A person/persons whose prime responsibility is reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the Statutory Authorities. This person will also be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of young members and will report to the relevant committee within the GAA.

**Statutory Authorities:** The government bodies who are responsible the welfare and protection of children and young people and who have a legal authority for the investigation and/or validation of suspected child abuse, i.e. *An Garda Siochana* and the Health Service Executive.

**Club Officer:** Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Head of Football, PRO and Committee members who are appointed to oversee Club activities and developments

**Investigation Committee:** A three-member committee set up annually to investigation breaches of the Code, discipline issues and general complaints. In *Our Game- Our Code* this is referenced as a Code in Best Practice Hearing Committee *(Our Game-Our Code* p. 21).

***Appendix 3: Useful information***

**Categories/Definitions of Child Abuse.** Abuse can take place in various different ways; neglect, emotional, physical, sexual or bullying. This section defines the different categories of abuse and provides some practical examples of how they may arise in the GAA context.

**Neglect** is normally defined in terms of an omission, where a young person 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 is the persistent failure to meet a youth’s basic physical/psychological needs that can lead to significant harm. Some examples of neglect would include; consistent lack of team supervision, exposing players to undue heat (and the lack of necessary re-hydration fluids), cold, injury and exposure to risk or injury during games (lack of protective gear).

**Emotional** abuse is persistent emotional ill treatment, normally found in the relationship between a caregiver and a youth rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a youth’s need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. It is rarely manifested in terms of physical symptoms. Examples would include; persistent criticism and negative comments by Mentors or parents of young players, seeking unrealistic expectations of a young player beyond their capabilities or age level, promoting a win only ethic in the coaching and playing, downplaying a player’s attempts at skill improvement and the use of un-realistic or harsh disciplinary measures.

**Physical** abuse is the deliberate injury to a youth or any form of non-accidental injury that causes significant harm to a youth. Possible examples of physical abuse would include; over playing/training, excessive training regimes which disregard a player’s physical capacity/development, imposing performance enhancing substances or dietary programmes, shaking or physically hitting a player.

**Sexual** abuse occurs when a youth is used by another person for their own gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others. Examples of sexual abuse would include; intentional touching a player at training sessions or games in an inappropriate manner, exploitation of a young player for sexual gratification, creating/forwarding or exchanging sexually explicit images/messages in any e-communication format or sexual relationships with a young person or a child.

**Bullying** has been covered in Section 3 under the Anti-Bullying procedure. Some common scenarios that occur would include; bullying carried out by young players or by adults against other young players or against adults, Mentors pursuing a “win at all costs” ethos with players, a player being intimidated by another player/players, bullying that may have commenced outside of the Club but continue on the playing fields or in dressing rooms, teasing/taunting or physical bullying.

**Appendix 4 Go – Games**

**National Go Games**

Our club Go Games ethos, rules & guidelines follow the recommendations of the GAA Games Development Committee, approved by GAA Central Council. The GAA adopts a national policy approach here and a copy of their guidelines can be found on [www.gaa.ie](http://www.gaa.ie) at:

<http://www.gaa.ie/content/documents/Rule%206_26%20Web%20Version%201%2009-01-14.pdf>

Go Games are small-sided versions of Hurling and Gaelic Football which have been devised for children up to and including 11 years of age. The following are the key underpinning principles of Go Games:

* All participants play in the full game.
* Participant needs are catered for, where possible, on the basis of two year age cohorts i.e. U.7, U.9 & U.11 in a manner consistent with the ethos of Go Games.
* All training sessions & games are structured in a manner which optimises the level of fun, friendship, fair play and achievement derived by participants.
* Participants train and play in a safe, supportive and stimulating environment where they are encouraged to risk error, to learn and to derive maximum enjoyment from their involvement.
* Players master the basic skills of Hurling and Gaelic Football and experience the sense of accomplishment, which derives from acquiring playing proficiency on the left and right hand side of the body.
* Everybody involved in Go Games, whether as players, parents/guardians, spectators, mentors, teachers, officials etc., should adhere to the key underpinning principles and give expression to the GAA ‘Give Respect, Get Respect’ initiative.
* Go Games may be organised on a blitz basis. Go Games may be organised by a Club, Primary School or at an Approved GAA Centre.
* Games in the U.11 and younger age groups shall be organised on the basis of the ‘Go Games’ model. Games in the U.12 and older age groups shall be organised on a league basis.

*Go Games Regulations*

* Go Games are subject to the general rules of the GAA.
* Teams shall be a maximum of:
  + 7-a-side at U.6 & 7 age levels
  + 9-a-side at U.8 & 9 age levels
  + 11-a-side at U.10 & 11 age levels
* Participants may play up to certain levels:
  + U.7 may play at U.9 group
  + U.9 may play at U.11 group
  + U.11 may play at U.12 & U.13 age levels.
* No provision is made to publish scores, to play on a knock-out basis nor to include semi-finals, finals etc.
* No provision is made to present trophies, cups etc. Where certificates/medals are presented in lieu of participation, the same certificate/medal must be presented to every participant.

**Dublin Go Games**

Dublin Ladies Gaelic have amended the National Go Games rules so they extend to the U12 age group. As a club we will subscribe to these rules.

***Appendix 5: Mission, Vision, Values of the GAA Association***

**Appendix 4 Mission, Vision, Values of the GAA Association**

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| --- | --- |
| **Mission**  ‘The GAA is a community based volunteer organisation promoting Gaelic games, culture and lifelong participation.’ The GAA is a volunteer organisation. We develop and promote Gaelic games at the core of Irish identity and culture. We are dedicated to ensuring that our family of games, and the values we live, enrich the lives of our members, families and the communities we serve. We are committed to active lifelong participation for all and to providing the best facilities. We reach out to and include all members of our society. We promote individual development and well-being and strive to enable all our members achieve their full potential in their chosen roles. | **Vision**  Our vision is that everybody has the opportunity to be welcomed to take part in our games and culture, to participate fully, to grow and develop and to be inspired to keep a lifelong engagement with our Association. |
| **Values – Our Club & the GAA** | |
| **Community Identity**   * Community is at the heart of our Club. Everything we do helps to enrich the communities we serve. * We foster a clear sense of identity and place. | |
| **Amateur Status**   * We are a volunteer led organization. * All our members play and engage in our games as amateurs. * We provide a games programme at all levels to meet the needs of all our players. | |
| **Inclusiveness**   * We welcome everybody in our Club. * We are anti-sectarian. * We are anti-racist. | |
| **Respect**   * We respect each other on and off the playing fields. * We operate with integrity at all levels. * We listen and respect the views of all. | |
| **Player Welfare**   * We provide the best playing experience for all our players. * We structure our games to allow players of all abilities reach their potential. | |
| **Teamwork**  Effective teamwork on and off the field is the cornerstone of our  *Ní neart go cur le chéile*: There is no strength without Unity | |

**Appendix 6 Clarifications**

When this document was distributed to the management team, some questions arose. This section is being added to document the clarification that was given.

* **Playing Up** – Common sense should always prevail, and subbing up is allowed only in exceptional circumstances, e.g. 1st communions, blitzes etc. where normal panel members are not available. Contact with the age group below, through the relevant manager is permitted to ensure the fixture goes ahead. This should be closely monitored, and no player “on the age” should ever stand on a side-line while a player from a younger age group plays instead. The Director of Football, should be made aware, of occurrences requiring “subbing up” in advance of a fixture proceeding, however this may not be practical on some occasions and notification should be forwarded with the relevant player details as soon as is practical after the fixture.
* **Bullying** – This Handbook comprehensively addressed bullying and this equally applies to mentors, parents and players.
* **“Sudden catastrophic issue”** – Regarding the hypothetical scenario of a “sudden catastrophic” issue with a player on the pitch, this would be for the injury fund co-ordinator of the LDGF to determine.

***Appendix 7 - Code of Behaviour Summary - All mentors & adult members are expected to abide by our code set out below***

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| **1. For all Club members, players, Mentors, parents/guardians and supporters.**   * Promote the highest standard of personal conduct and fair play. * Respect the right, dignity & worth of every person and treat each one equally regardless of age, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion. * Applaud good performance and efforts from players and from opponents regardless of the result. * Do not use abusive language or harassing behaviour towards any player, Mentor or official or opponents. * Never criticise, ridicule or scold a player for making a mistake during a game/training. * Respect the decision of all officials in particular the referee. * Encourage players to abide by the rules and uphold or promote the concept of fair play. * Condemn the use of violence in any form. * Be aware of the Clubs anti-bullying policy. | **2. For the Mentors – Role Models**   * Ensure that you have an understanding of relevant coaching methods. * Respect the dignity, self-esteem and rights of all young players. * Be punctual, properly attired and organised for training and games. * Ensure all young players are involved in training and games. * Always be positive, give praise and encouragement. Young people learn best through trial and error. * Ensure that all physical contact is appropriate and has the permission or understanding of the young player. * Clearly communicate matches/training times to players/parents. * Ensure that all players are suitable and safely attired to play. * Be aware of the Club codes, policies and procedures. * Make sure you have first aid available. * Avoid smoking while working with young players. * Challenge unacceptable behaviour from players, Mentors, parent/guardian or supporter. |
| **3. For the Players**   * Arrive on time, properly attired (gum shield, helmets, etc.). * Respect all Mentors, team mates, Club and match officials and your opponents. * Co-operate with Mentors; when asked to do something oblige by doing it. * Play fairly, do your best and enjoy yourself. * Do not shout or argue with an official, team mates or opponents or use violence. * Do not use unacceptable language or racial references. * Do not cheat – always play by the rules. * Be gracious in defeat and modest in victory. * Support fellow team members whether they do well or not so well. * Help with preparation for training/games and with the tidy-up afterwards especially around pitch and in dressing rooms. * Take due care of Club equipment. * Inform your Mentor if you are unavailable for training and matches. * Represent the Club and your family with pride and dignity: | |