



**Basketball
Ireland**

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Code for Young People

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

In your sport you should:

- Be happy, have fun and enjoy taking part and being involved in your sport.
- Be treated fairly by everyone, adults and other athletes.
- Feel safe and secure when you are taking part in your sport.
- Be listened to and allowed to reply.
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect.
- Have a voice in the decisions that affect you within the Club and organisation.
- Say no to something which makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Train and compete at a level that is suitable for your age, development and ability.
- Know that any details that are about you are treated with confidentiality but if you are at risk of harm or we are worried about your safety we may need to pass this information on.
- Know who to go to if you feel unsafe.

Your responsibilities are to:

- Treat all sports leaders/coaches with respect.
- Be fair at all times, do your best to achieve your goals; be gracious if you do not achieve your goals.
- Respect other athletes and your opponents.
- Be part of the team and respect and support other team members both when they do well and when things go wrong.
- Never bully or use bullying actions against another person; you should never hurt other team members, athletes or your opponent, this includes never taking/damaging their property, never spreading rumours or telling lies about other young people or adults.
- Keep to rules and guidelines set by your National Governing Body of Sport, the Region and your Club and make sure you understand the rules e.g. if you play a team sport what contact is allowed.
- Take part in your sport without cheating; you are responsible for not cheating and must not allow others to force you to cheat.
- Listen to and respect decisions made by others; if you feel unjustly treated you can talk to your Club Children's Officer or your parents;
- Behave in a manner that is respectful towards your organisation and your club.
- Never use violence or bad language; do not shout or argue with leaders, teammates or opposing participants – talk to someone if you are upset or angry or if someone has caused you to be upset or angry.
- Talk with your Coach or Club Children's Officer if you have any difficulties or do not understand something; you should never keep secrets about any person who may have caused you harm or has made you feel upset.
- Do not, or allow others to make you, try or take banned substances to improve your performance.



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Code for Parents/Carers

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

- You should help and support the implementation of best practice policies in your child's/children's Club by following the guidance below.
- Become members of the Club and contribute your time and effort in the daily running of the Club; no club can operate successfully and safely without the help of volunteers.
- Understand and ensure your child/children abide by the Code.
- Be available for specified duties if and when required; some duties are mandatory and form part of the procedures for safeguarding your children; some will be at the request of the Club.
- Have an awareness of and respect for Leaders and other adults and their roles within the Club.
- If you wish to raise an issue with a Leader, this should be addressed with the Leader in an appropriate manner and not in front of children and young people
- Respect and abide by the decisions made by the Committee and other Leaders, these should be made in the best interests of the children in the Club.
- Understand the complaints process and follow the proper procedure if you feel unjustly treated, with the knowledge that any complaint will be dealt with effectively and confidentially.
- Know your child's training and/or competitive programme, and accept it is your responsibility for delivering and collecting your child/children. Parents/carers should ensure they do not leave their child/children waiting unsupervised at any time.
- Ensure the environment is safe and enjoyable for your child/children.
- Promote fair play and the positive aspects of sport.
- Be a role model for your children and young people by maintaining the highest standards of personal conduct and respectful behaviour in any activity related to the sports club/organisation.
- Allow your child to focus their efforts and success in terms of their goals rather than winning being the main objective.
- Promote participation for children that is fun, safe and in the spirit of fair play
- Ensure appropriate leaders are informed regarding any absenteeism, medical conditions or other relevant matters concerning your child.
- Arrange an appropriate time and place for discussing any matter with leaders and coaches; communication should not take place whilst leaders and coaches are in a position of supervision or responsible for other young people.
- You should have the opportunity to put forward suggestions and comments.
- Provide the Club with appropriate information in relation to your child to ensure their safe inclusion in the club and with emergency contact information and to be reasonably available in case of emergency.
- Abide by the procedures and policies in this document especially with regard to the use of smart phones, any type of camera and videoing equipment.
- Be aware and abide by the safeguarding policy, the rules and constitution of your organisation and the rules and constitution of your own Club.



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Code for Sport Leaders

Sport Leaders play a vital role in children's sport. Sports organisations and sports groups should ensure that the work of Sport Leaders which occurs mainly on a voluntary basis, is guided by this safeguarding guidance and best practice whilst also recognising that they are entitled to obtain a healthy sense of achievement and satisfaction through their involvement in children's sport. In order to act as a role model and to promote their safety and the safety of young people Sport Leaders should:

Create a safe and enjoyable environment for children by:

- Planning and preparing appropriately and be positive during sessions.
- Making sure all levels of participation should be enjoyable and fun.
- Prioritising skill development and personal satisfaction over highly structured competition.
- Setting age appropriate and realistic goals.
- Avoiding favouritism – each child will need attention according to their sporting needs.
- Praising and encouraging effort as well as results.
- Showing respect for all involved, children and adults.

Recognise and ensure the welfare of children by:

- Keeping attendance records.
- Not exposing a child to criticism, hostility or sarcasm.
- Never swearing at, ridiculing, shouting unnecessarily or arguing with a child.
- Being aware of a child's developmental needs and how a child may be psychologically or physically affected (if relevant for your role).
- Working in an open environment.
- Ensuring there is adequate supervision.
- Involving and updating parents, especially if a problem has arisen.
- Respecting a child's sensitivity.
- Never using physical punishment or force.
- Not using verbal or physical punishments or exclusion for mistakes.

Additional Information:

- Do not allow or engage in bullying behaviour, rough physical games, sexually provocative games, never allow or engage in inappropriate physical contact of any kind or make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child.
- Co-operate with the recommendations from medical and ancillary practitioners in the management of a child's medical or related problems. You may request a certificate of medical fitness to ensure safe continued participation.
- Avoid carrying out any medical testing or giving advice of a personal or medical nature if not qualified to do so or undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children. Any such activity, if qualified, must only be with parent/guardian consent and the understanding of the child.
- Keep any information in relation to a child/young person of a personal or medical nature strictly confidential unless the welfare of the child requires the passing on of this information on a need to know basis.
- Never exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Acknowledge the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco is incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity and must be discouraged. Avoid the use of alcohol at all times whilst responsible for young people e.g. training sessions, events and on trips with young people.



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Code for Committees

CLUB:

Committees should follow the points as below:

- Be familiar with the National Governing Bodies/ Organisation and any Club rules.
- Within a Club ensure and approve the appointments of Club Children's Officers and a Designated Liaison Person. Inform all members of who the person is through your communication channel.
- Carry out your required duties for sports club/organisation understanding that the welfare of children is paramount.

Follow the sports club/organisation policies & procedures so that all activities are in accordance with this document:

- Create safe environment for young people.
- Ensure the codes of conduct are in place for all involved.
- Provide adequate supervision for training sessions with attendance record being kept.
- Recruit volunteers/employees including vetting and training is completed.
- Understand and implement the complaints and disciplinary procedures.
- Ensure safe induction and supervision of volunteers/ employees.
- Ensure other activities follow procedures e.g. away trips.
- All required procedures contained in this document are adopted.

Ensure complaints including rumours are not ignored and dealt with appropriately, following the relevant procedures including:

Recording all incidents.

Reporting the incident/accident or injury.

Informing the parent or guardian (if child involved).

Additional Information:

Keep and store securely all documentation with respect to meetings, correspondence and minutes of committee meetings together with General Meetings, including the Treasurers report.

Set up, maintain, revise and implement rules in the best interests of young people and taking into consideration the best interest of the club (organisation/committee/club name). Rules should not contravene any (organisation/committee/club name) rules and must be communicated to the relevant members.

Ensure effective communications with members through recognised means e.g. e-mail, web posting, use of noticeboards, etc.

Inform parents/guardians in advance and obtain consent for children to be involved in events outside the normal activities within the aquatic disciplines e.g. fun day out, fundraising.

Inform parents/guardians where a matter or problem arises relating to their child.

Monitor with the Club Children's Officer any changes in membership and any unusual dropout, absenteeism or Club transfers by children or leaders. Ensure these are followed up to determine the reason for the trend.

Club Children's Officers and Coaches must be invited to at least 50% of committee meetings per annum to report and advise the Committee. Club Children's Officers and Coaches/Teachers may not be appointed/elected members of the committee.



Code for Officials

As an official, you play a crucial role in maintaining the integrity, fairness, and enjoyment of basketball. Your professionalism, knowledge, and conduct set the standard for the game and influence the experience of players, coaches, and spectators.

1. Advocate for Positive Rule Changes

Officials have a unique perspective on how rules impact the game. Use your position to **advocate for rule improvements** that enhance fairness, safety, and enjoyment for all participants. Your insights can help shape the future of the sport in a way that benefits players at all levels.

2. Lead by Example – On and Off the Court

Respect is a two-way street. Just as you expect players to respect your authority, they have the right to expect **honesty, fairness, and integrity** from you. **Your actions set the tone**—if you demonstrate professionalism and sportsmanship, players, coaches, and spectators will follow your lead.

3. Commit to Continuous Learning

Stay up to date with the **latest officiating techniques, rule changes, and best practices**. Attend regular training sessions, study new regulations, and seek feedback to **continually refine your skills**. A well-informed referee enhances the credibility of the game and earns the trust of all participants.

4. Support Player Education and Development

Help players understand the rules by communicating **clearly and constructively**. If a player appears confused by a call, take a moment—when appropriate—to explain the decision. If a team repeatedly misinterprets a rule, liaise with their coach to **clarify expectations and improve understanding**. Your role is not just to enforce the rules but to foster a culture of learning and respect for the game.

5. Maintain a Professional Appearance and Demeanour

Your **appearance and attitude** influence how you are perceived. Always wear the correct officiating uniform, ensuring it is clean and presentable. Conduct yourself with **confidence, neutrality, and composure**, even in high-pressure situations. A professional presence earns respect and reinforces your authority on the court.

6. Respect Facilities and Equipment

Basketball facilities and equipment are valuable resources. Treat them with **care and respect** to ensure they remain safe and functional for all users. Encourage players to avoid unsafe behaviours, such as **hanging from hoops or misusing equipment**, which can cause damage and lead to injuries. As an official, you play a role in promoting safety and responsibility within the game.

By upholding these principles, you contribute to a **positive, safe, and respectful basketball environment**. Your professionalism and dedication ensure that the game remains fair, enjoyable, and welcoming for all involved.



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Code for Coaches

Basketball and Young People

Basketball Ireland (BI) is indebted to the countless number of volunteers who give of their time in providing basketball opportunities for children and young people. Like all sports, basketball, provides an excellent pathway for children and young people to learn new skills, become more confident and maximise their own potential. Through their participation, they can learn and develop life skills, have fun and enjoyment, make friends and experience life in a way that can enhance their personal growth throughout their lives.

People become involved in basketball for young people for a variety of different reasons. They come from a variety of sporting backgrounds and take on various roles within clubs and other basketball organisations. Yet irrespective of their role or responsibility, they all share the common goal of providing basketball opportunities for young people.

Coaches, parents/guardians and administrators all have an important role to play in promoting good practice in children's sport. They should have, as their first priority, children's safety and enjoyment of the sport.

BI wants sport to be safe, to be fun and to ensure that no matter what sport young people are involved in, that it takes place in the spirit of 'FAIR PLAY'.

Fair play is the guiding principle of the Irish Sport's Council's Code of Ethics as well as BI's Code of Ethics and Good Practice which is designed to provide guidance for those working with young people in basketball. It outlines the type of issues that need to be discussed and addressed to provide the safest and most enjoyable environment not only for players but also the coaches and volunteers involved.

Coaches achieve satisfaction from working with children and young people. Focusing on the individual participants' needs and performance encourages young people to achieve and demonstrate enjoyment, equality and fair play. They will come to realise that standards of behaviour are as important as sports performance.

In taking this approach children are encouraged to:

- Do their best – put in their best effort.
- Improve and develop their skills.
- Make friends.
- Play by the rules.
- Appreciate/accept everyone in the group, regardless of ability, race, religion, gender etc.

Player Centred Approach

Coaches need to be aware of why children want to play basketball. They want to learn new skills, make new friends, be part of a group, to win and be successful, experience challenges, excitement and action.

While winning is important, it must be remembered that winning at all costs does not meet the needs of players. Results are not necessarily a good indicator of coaching effectiveness or ability, the improvement level of players and their level of enjoyment is.

Coaches should aim to provide a safe and enjoyable environment where children and young people are placed at the centre of all activities.

In promoting good practice and creating a child/player centred approach coaches should:

- Act as good role models.
- Encourage and be positive during sessions so that players leave with a sense of achievement.
- Set challenging, realistic but achievable goals.
- Plan and prepare each session appropriately and ensure proper levels of supervision.



- Ensure that all activities are inclusive and allow all players to participate in an enjoyable way.
- Put the welfare and enjoyment of players first and strike a balance between this and winning or achieving results.
- Enforce the principles of fair play treating each player equally, with dignity and respect and ensure that all players play within the rules.
- Be aware of the developmental stages and needs of players.
- Avoid over training and over emphasis on competition.
- Involve parents/guardians and other club members in what we do.
- Be qualified and up to date with the latest coaching knowledge and skills.
 - Ref. Irish Sports Council, Code for Leaders

Best Practice

In keeping children and young people at the forefront of planning and practice, coaches can be confident that participants will enjoy their basketball experiences and that their actions are regarded as safe and in keeping with the principle that the welfare of children is of paramount consideration.

Coaches are given a position of trust by parents/guardians and players and should show the highest standards of behaviour whilst in the company of under-age players.

It is important that coaches follow an agreed code of good practice and parents/guardians/club officials are satisfied that coaches are suitable to lead the activities undertaken. BI's Code of Ethics & Best

Practice guidelines are available on our website at www.ireland.basketball and are under review currently.

It is important to note that in adhering to these guidelines we ensure not only a safe environment for children but also a safe environment in which coaches and volunteers can operate.

Coaches/volunteers should never:

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

Most coaches work in an environment where it is recognised that, in a sporting context, certain types of coaching require a 'hands on approach', i.e., it may be necessary to support a participant in order to physically demonstrate a particular technique. This should only occur when necessary and in an open and appropriate way with the knowledge, permission and full understanding of the participant concerned and his/her parents/guardians.

Coaches must realise that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted, not only by the player, but by outsiders motivated by jealousy, dislike or mistrust and could lead to allegations of sexual misconduct or impropriety. Therefore, coaches should be aware of, and avoid all situations conducive to risk.

Where possible, coaches/volunteers should avoid:

- Spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others.
- Taking sessions alone (always employ "Two Deep" supervision).
- Taking children to their homes.
- Taking children on journeys alone in their care.



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Safety

Coaches have a responsibility to ensure the safety of the players with whom they work as far as possible within the limits of their control. Therefore, coaches should seek to create a safe and enjoyable environment in which to play and train.

In this respect:

- Regular safety checks should be carried out in relation to premises, training facilities and equipment.
- Appropriate safety rules should be adopted and implemented.
- Parents/guardians should be informed of the starting and finishing times of training sessions and matches.
- A first aid kit should be available at all training sessions /matches and injuries should be recorded, with a note of action taken in relation to each one. Never play injured players.
- Parents/guardians should be notified of injuries/illness which their children incur while participating in any basketball activity a positive approach to the involvement of children in sport.

BI has amended its rules to include a child protection element in line with Children First (Department of Health & Children), the Irish Sports Council's Code of Ethics & Good Practice and relevant recent child welfare legislation. Specifically, coaches/volunteers are required to operate within these recommended codes of conduct and best practice. The complete code of conduct for coaches is posted at www.ireland.basketball/child-protection

"Sport for young people is about Fun and Participation, Best Effort and Fair Play in a Safe Environment"

In promoting "Sport for Fun" coaches should:

- Encourage participation and fun.
- Promote the development of skills as opposed to winning at all costs.
- Emphasise and praise effort.
- Act as a good role model.
- Actively discourage children/young players from abusing referees, officials, team mates or opponents (take off offending players).
- Insist on FAIR PLAY (take off offending players).
- Be realistic with your expectations.
- Be aware of children's feelings.
- Teach players to respect different cultures.

Children in Basketball are entitled to:

- Be safe.
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect.
- Participate in basketball on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability and stage of development.
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy basketball.
- Make a complaint in an appropriate way and have it dealt with through a proper and effective complaints procedure.
- Be afforded appropriate confidentiality.
- Be listened to and to be believed.
- Have a voice in the running of the club.

Children should also be encouraged to realise that they also have responsibilities to treat other children, fellow players, referees, officials, coaches and volunteers with the same degree of fairness and respect.

In this regard children should undertake to:

- Play fairly, do their best and have fun.
- Make high standards of Fair Play the standard others want to follow.
- Respect opponents, they are not the enemy; they are partners in a sporting event.



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- Shake hands before and after the match, whoever wins.
- Give opponents a hand if they are injured, put the ball out of play so they can get attention.
- Accept apologies from opponents when they are offered.
- Respect fellow team members and support them both when they do well and when things go wrong.
- Treat players from minority groups with the same respect you show other people.
- Be modest in victory and be gracious in defeat “BE A SPORT”.
- Approach the club Children’s Officer with any questions or concerns they might have. Coaches and parents/guardians should encourage children to speak out and support them in doing so.

Children should not:

- Cheat.
- Use abusive language, or argue with, the referee, officials, teammates or opponents.
- Use violence, use physical contact only when it is allowed within the rules.
- Bully.
- Tell lies about adults or other children.
- Spread rumours.
- Take banned substances to improve performance.
- Keep secrets about any person who may have caused them harm.

Responsibility to Report

Any person, who has concerns about a child’s welfare or who suspects that a child is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, has a responsibility to report their concerns to the Health Board or Gardaí.

Persons unsure about whether or not certain behaviours are, abusive and therefore reportable, are advised that they can seek advice from the duty social worker in their local health board area where they will receive appropriate advice.

In cases of emergency where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the duty social worker is not contactable, call the Gardaí.

Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities.

All clubs should have clear procedures for responding to reports or concerns relating to the safety and welfare of children. Coaches / volunteers, children and parents/guardians should be aware of how and to whom they report concerns within the club or organisation.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are often given to children for security, enabling parents/guardians to keep in touch and make sure they are safe.

However, such technology has also allowed an increase in direct personal contact with young people, in some cases used to cross personal boundaries and cause harm. Within clubs there is a need to encourage responsible and secure use of mobile phones.

In this respect Coaches are advised to:

- Use group texts for communication among athletes and teams and inform parents/guardians of this at the start of the season
- It is not appropriate to have constant communication for individual athletes



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- Don't use the phone in certain locations; inappropriate use of your camera phone may cause upset or offence to another person, e.g. changing rooms.

For further information or advice see:

Basketball Ireland Code of Ethics which is available on our website www.ireland.basketball

Or contact: BI National Children's Officer, National Basketball Arena, Tymon Park, Tallaght, Dublin 24. Tel. 01-459 0122 / 086-798 0155 Email: safeguarding@ireland.basketball

Basketball Ireland Coaching Department

Helpside: helpside@ireland.basketball

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Signed: