



# Clonakilty AFC

## Club Handbook & Code of Practice 2023/24

The guidelines in this document are based on the national guidelines as outlined in the following documents.

Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport, Irish Sports Council, 2000 (reviewed 2006).

Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Dept. of Health & Children 2015

Our Duty to Care, Dept. of Health & Children 2002

Football Association of Ireland Code of Ethics & Best Practice



# Clonakilty AFC

## Contact List

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# Clonakilty AFC

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## Clonakilty AFC Mission Statement

The work of Clonakilty AFC is based on the following principles that will guide the development of sport for young people in this club. Children and young people's experience of soccer should be guided by what is best for the child or young person. The stages of development and the ability of the child should guide the types of activity provided within the club. Adults will need to have a basic understanding of the needs of young people, including physical, emotional and personal.

### **Integrity in relationships:**

Adults interacting with young people in soccer should do so with integrity and respect for the child. All adult actions in soccer should be guided by what is best for the child and in the context of quality, open working relationships. Verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of any kind is unacceptable within soccer.

### **Quality atmosphere and ethos**

Soccer for young people should be conducted in a safe, positive, and encouraging atmosphere. A child-centred ethos will help to ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place. Too often unhealthy competitive demands are placed on children too early and results in excessive levels of pressure on them and as a consequence, high levels of dropout from sport.

### **Equality**

All children should be treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children with disability should be involved in sports activities in an integrated way, thus allowing them to participate to their potential alongside other children.

### **Fair Play:**

Fair play is the guiding principle of the Irish Sports Councils Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport.

It states that "all children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play". Ireland has contributed and is committed to the European Code of Sports Ethics, which defines fair play as: "much more than playing within the rules".

It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing with the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of opportunities, excessive commercialisation and corruption. (European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe, 1992, revised 2001).

### **Competition**

A balanced approach to competition can make a significant contribution to the development of young people, while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and satisfaction. Coaches/managers should aim to put the welfare of the child first and competitive standards second. A child-centred approach will help to ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place.

# Clonakilty AFC

## Child Protection & Welfare Policy Statement

### Introduction

Clonakilty AFC is committed to ensuring that all necessary steps will be taken to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people who participate in soccer. This Policy document clearly demonstrates the importance placed by Clonakilty AFC on the protection and safety of children and young people who participate in soccer.

All children and young people<sup>1</sup> who participate in soccer should be able to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment. While doing so they should be protected from any form of abuse be it physical, emotional, sexual, neglect or bullying. The responsibility for protecting children lies with all adults involved in this club and in soccer in general.

Clonakilty AFC recognises and accepts its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, emotional or sexual harm and from neglect or bullying.

These clear policies, practices and procedures in addition to relevant training programmes will ensure that everybody in Clonakilty AFC knows exactly what is expected of them in relation to protecting children and young people within soccer.

It is vital that children and young people who participate in Clonakilty AFC activities are able to do so in a safe, enjoyable and quality environment.

In pursuit of this goal Clonakilty AFC will:

- Advise all members of Clonakilty AFC (coaches, players, parents and spectators) of their responsibilities in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people who participate in soccer.
- Operate within the recommended Football Association of Ireland codes of conduct and best practice guidelines.
- Appoint a Club Children's Officer in line with Football Association of Ireland requirements.
- Provide a child protection and welfare module in staff induction and development programmes

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<sup>1</sup>Children are defined in Irish Law as being any person under 18 years of age.

### **The aims of Clonakilty AFC'S Child Protection Policy are:**

- To develop a positive and pro-active position in order to best protect all children and young people who participate in soccer, in order for them to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment.
- To provide appropriate guidance and advice to all club members (players, coaches, volunteers, spectators and parents) in all matters concerning child welfare and protection.
- To demonstrate best practice in the area of child welfare and protection.
- To promote ethics and best practice standards throughout soccer.

### **The key principles underpinning this Policy are that:**

- The welfare of the child is the first and paramount consideration.
- All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse of any kind regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual identity.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse/poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. It is essential that we work in partnership with children and young people and their parents/carers. The **Tusla** - Child and Family Agency has a statutory responsibility to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and Clonakilty AFC is committed to cooperating fully with them in accordance with procedures as outlined in "Children First" National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.
- Clonakilty AFC will cooperate fully with the Football Association of Ireland National Children's Officer, Gardaí and Tusla in any investigation of child abuse in soccer.

The Football Association of Ireland's regulations in regard to child welfare and protection are defined in the rulebook as:

### **RULE 36. THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN (PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 18) AND VULNERABLE PERSONS.**

#### General

- a) The protection and welfare of children and vulnerable persons as defined in the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy is of paramount importance to the FAI. Any act, statement, conduct or other matter which harms a child/children or vulnerable persons, or poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child/children or vulnerable persons, shall constitute behaviour which is improper and brings the game into disrepute. The FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy sets out how all matters pertaining to the protection and welfare of children and vulnerable persons are governed.

- b) It is mandatory that all Members and Participants shall comply with all FAI rules, regulations, codes, policies and guidelines in respect of child protection, the protection of vulnerable persons and the welfare of both.
- c) It is mandatory that all Members and Participants shall comply with all legislation and guidelines issued by any Statutory Authority in respect of child protection, the protection of vulnerable persons and the welfare of both.
- d) All Members and Participants are responsible for ensuring that their members are made aware of and understand their legal and football obligations in respect of child protection, the protection of vulnerable persons and the welfare of both.

### **RULE 37. THE FAI CHILD WELFARE AND SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE**

1. The Board shall establish a Child Welfare and Safeguarding Committee responsible for considering and determining all matters referred to it in accordance with the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy including but not limited to the approval of FAI codes and policies, the review of stand down orders and vetting decisions and any other matter pertaining to child welfare and vulnerable persons welfare.
2. The Board shall ensure the Child Welfare and Safeguarding Committee is composed of representatives from the football family and such other suitably qualified persons as may be deemed appropriate.
3. The Board shall approve the remit and terms of reference for the Child Welfare and Safeguarding Committee.
4. The Child Welfare and Safeguarding Committee shall prepare reports for the Board and for the Legal and Corporate Affairs Committee on their activities.
5. The Child Welfare Committee shall work closely with the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Manager.

Clonakilty AFC through confirming this policy document has demonstrated its commitment to ensuring that children and young people can participate in all soccer activities with their safety and welfare being of paramount importance.

It is essential that this document represents a process of continual improvement in the area of child protection and welfare in soccer.

It is the responsibility of all adults involved in soccer to actively promote safe and best practice standards whilst being ever vigilant and aware of their responsibilities to children and young people in their care.

## Clonakilty AFC

### **Procedure for dealing with Child Abuse Concerns or allegations**

It is important to note that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the Statutory Authorities (Gardaí, Tusla) and should not be undertaken by Children's Officers or any other Club/League member. All allegations of child abuse **must** be referred to the Statutory Authorities.

When an allegation is received it should be assessed promptly and carefully. It will be necessary to decide whether a formal report should be made to Tusla and this decision should be based on reasonable grounds for concern. In accordance with requirements of Children First all concerns with relation to suspected child abuse will be passed on to the relevant statutory authorities.

#### **The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:**

- A specific indication from a child that (s)he was abused;
- A statement from a person who witnessed abuse;
- An illness, injury or behaviour consistent with abuse;
- A symptom which may not in itself be totally consistent with abuse, but which is supported by corroborative evidence of deliberate harm or negligence;
- Consistent signs of neglect over a period of time.

Ref. Children First 2015

#### **Therefore in practice, concerns will be passed on by the Clubs designated person to the statutory authorities if we receive:**

- A specific indication from a child that (s)he was abused;
  - A statement from a person who witnessed abuse;
- or have evidence in relation to:**
- An illness, injury or behaviour consistent with abuse;
  - A symptom which may not in itself be totally consistent with abuse, but which is support by corroborative evidence of deliberate harm or negligence;
  - Consistent signs of neglect over a period of time.



## Step One

Any allegation of abuse must in the first instance be brought to the attention of the Chairperson of the Club. Should the Chairperson be unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist s/he can informally consult with the local Tusla duty social worker. S/he will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report.

Coaches/volunteers may be subjected to erroneous or malicious allegations. Therefore, any allegation of abuse should be dealt with sensitively and appropriate support should be provided for staff/volunteers including counselling where necessary.

## Step Two

Should Clonakilty AFC become aware of an allegation of abuse of a child or children by a coach/volunteer during the execution of that coaches/volunteers duties, the Chairman will privately inform the coach/volunteer of the following:

- The fact that the allegation has been made against him/her;
- The nature of the allegation.

## Step Three

The coach/volunteer should be afforded an opportunity to respond. The Chairman will note the response and pass on this information when making the formal report to Tusla.

The report to Tusla should contain observations, dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information.

In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Chairperson is unable to contact a duty social worker, the Gardaí shall be contacted.

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

## Step Four

The Clonakilty AFC Chairperson, if reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities will first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine any statutory investigation.

**It should be noted that should a formal notification be made, we are not accusing anyone of child abuse, rather we are passing on concerns for investigation by the appropriate statutory authorities in keeping with the principle that “the welfare of the child is the first and paramount consideration”.**

## Step Five

All subsequent actions following an allegation of abuse against a coach/volunteer will be taken in consultation with Tusla and An Garda Síochána. An immediate meeting will be sought with these two agencies for this purpose. The Football Association of Ireland National Children’s Officer is also available to provide support and advice.



## **Step Six**

Under Football Association of Ireland rules, any coach/volunteer/manager who is the subject of a statutory investigation into alleged child abuse, is required to stand down from all soccer activities until the investigation is completed. Therefore the FAI National Children's Officer must be informed immediately of any formal notification to the Statutory Authorities.

When a person is asked to stand down it should be made clear that it is only a precautionary measure in keeping with standard procedures/guidelines and will not prejudice any later disciplinary proceedings.

The coach/volunteer concerned should be advised that the procedures being undertaken are in accordance with statutory requirements. He or she should be treated with respect and fairness, and also be assured that all information will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner.

## **Step Seven**

The Club will carefully consider the outcome of the statutory investigation and will then assess if there are any outstanding disciplinary issues in relation to their internal rules or infringements of the Football Association of Ireland best practice guidelines. It must be remembered that the fact that the alleged abuser has not been prosecuted or been found guilty does not mean that they are appropriate to work with young people in the future.

**Internal Club disciplinary proceedings can only be initiated after the Statutory Authorities have completed theirs.**

## Clonakilty AFC

### **Club Disciplinary, Complaints and Appeals Procedure (Covers all matters other than suspected child abuse which has to be referred to the Statutory Authorities)**

While many concerns can be dealt with in an informal manner to the satisfaction of all concerned, it is advisable that detailed records are maintained in respect of all complaints and that all parties are advised of the formal complaints and appeals procedure. All reasonable efforts to resolve matters should be exhausted at local level before accessing the appeals procedure.

#### **Step One**

Any person who has a complaint or concern should bring it to the attention of the secretary under the relevant rules of the body concerned.

The complaint or concern should be in writing and should outline all relevant details and other parties involved in line with procedure.

#### **Step Two**

The complaint or concern should then be brought to the attention of the appropriate person in line with club rules who will convene the disciplinary committee/panel (best practice would advise that this committee/panel would consist of three members) **unless the complaint or concern relates to a child abuse matter or criminal offence that meets criteria for formal reporting to the statutory authorities.**

**Where there are potential contentious issues, due consideration should be given to ensure the independence of the disciplinary committee/panel and therefore, it is advisable that members of the disciplinary committee/panel should not be Offices/Directors of the body concerned as lack of independence is often cited as a ground for appeal.**

**(The Chairperson of the Club should not sit on the Disciplinary Committee)**

#### **Step Three**

The disciplinary committee/panel should furnish any participant with details of the complaint being made against them and afford them the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing. In the event of a complaint against a child, the parents/guardians should be informed and advised of the process.

#### **Step Four**

The disciplinary committee/panel should then hear the case of all parties involved and decide if a rule or regulation has been infringed.

#### **Step Five**

The disciplinary committee/panel should then inform in writing those involved of their decision and any sanctions if any that are to be imposed. This notification should be in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction. (Written notification should be forwarded to parents if the proceedings involve a participant under eighteen years of age)

## **Step Six**

Any party unhappy with the findings of the disciplinary committee/panel can appeal the decision in writing to their respective superior body as per rules. Clubs, leagues, divisional associations and other football bodies should review their rules to ensure they contain a provision that facilitates an appeals procedure in this respect.

## **Step Seven**

The appeal body should then rehear the case and all evidence, should be considered. The appeals body should have the power to uphold or reject the appeal or to vary, alter or set aside any sanction imposed by the disciplinary committee/panel.

Written confidential records in relation to disciplinary proceedings should be safely and confidentially kept on file (procedures should clearly define the possession of such records in the event of election of new officers)

## **Anonymous Complaints**

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with, however they cannot be ignored. All complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour/poor practice should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson of the Club. In all cases the safety and welfare of the child/children is paramount.

All complaints should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner. It is important to record all such complaints and actions taken. Specific advice on dealing with anonymous complaints can be got from your local Tusla duty social worker or alternatively the Football Association of Ireland National Children's Officer.

## **Rumours**

Rumours should not be allowed hang in the air. Any rumour/s relating to inappropriate behaviour/s circulating in the club should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson and checked out promptly. All ensuing information should be handled confidentially and with sensitivity.

## **Confidentiality**

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

The following points will be borne in mind:

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

## Clonakilty AFC

### Recruitment Policy Ref Our Duty of Care

#### Safe practice starts with safe recruitment procedures and involves:

- Always applying thorough selection procedures, no matter who the applicant happens to be
- Judging the suitability of applicants in relation to a broad range of matters
- Taking all reasonable steps to eliminate people who are not suitable for working with children
- Providing training. Most people who apply to work with community and voluntary organisations on either a voluntary or paid basis are interested, well-motivated and suitable for the various tasks involved. However, it is very important that organisations take all reasonable steps to ensure that only suitable people are recruited. Unfortunately, people with a tendency to abuse children can be attracted to the type of work that gives them the opportunity to be with children, and this always has to be borne in mind when recruiting new workers.

#### Recruiting Coaches/Volunteers

Clonakilty AFC's approach to safe recruitment and selection practices.

(i) **Clear definition of the role of employees or volunteers:** This means clarifying and agreeing expectations regarding the role of a new worker, and involves identifying the minimum level of personal qualities and skills required to fill the post.

(ii) **Application Form:** An application form, with a clear job description and information about the organisation should be supplied. The form should be designed, as far as possible, to collect all relevant information about the applicant, including past experience of working with children.

(iii) **Declaration:** All applicants should be required to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be unsuitable to work with young people, and declaring any past criminal convictions or cases pending against them. The organisation must have a clear policy regarding the type of factors that would exclude applicants.

(iv) **Interview:** All applicants should be interviewed by a panel comprising of at least two representatives of the organisation. Interviewers should explore the information stated on the application form and assess the applicant's suitability for the post. The information supplied by the applicant and any other information supplied on their behalf should only be seen by persons directly involved in the recruitment procedure.

(v) **References:** An applicant should be expected to supply the names of two referees (not family members) who will testify as to their character, their suitability to the role of employee/volunteer, or any other issues which may affect their ability to perform the tasks required of them. At least one referee should have first-hand knowledge of the applicant's previous work or contact with children. An acceptable reference will indicate that the person is known to the referee and is considered suitable by them to work with young people.



All references should be received in writing and later confirmed by telephone, letter or personal visit. Any additional information should be attached to the application form. If the applicant has had a previous involvement in sport, one of these names must be that of an administrator/leader of your last club/place of involvement.

(vi) **Identification:** The organisation should ensure that the identity of the applicant is confirmed against some documentation (ID card, driving licence or passport) which gives his or her full name, address together with a signature or photograph. This should be compared with the written application.

Clonakilty AFC will take all reasonable steps to ensure that coaches, managers and volunteers are suitable to work with children and young people.

All coaches, managers and volunteers are required to complete an application/self declaration form, giving the names of two referees who will then be contacted. Written references will then be verified and kept on file. Applicants are also required to produce valid photo ID.

All coaches/volunteers subject to Garda vetting – Mandatory

All applicants to be interviewed by Club Recruitment Committee

Following interview all appointments are subject to approval and ratification by the committee of Clonakilty AFC

All coaches, managers and volunteers will be subject to a sign up procedure in which they undertake to abide by Clonakilty AFC's rules and FAI codes of conduct and good practice. (Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained in regard to all application and reference forms)

Once recruited, Clonakilty AFC will make all efforts to support and manage coaches, managers and volunteers ensuring that no person is expected to work alone.

**Induction:** If, following the application and interview process the applicant is accepted, they are required to undertake Clonakilty AFC's Induction Course. Induction will be a planned programme that covers:

- Familiarisation with the Clubs policies procedures and protocols, procedures for dealing with discipline, grievances and allegations, and the organisation's child protection policy.
- Coaches to get to know the organisation, their colleagues, their role
- Expectations of the Club, Coaches/Children's Code of Conduct
- Rules of the Club, coaching philosophy, Team Selection Criteria, Record Keeping Guidelines,
- Safety procedures, safe use of equipment and facilities

# Clonakilty AFC

## Reference Form

### Private and Confidential

Re.

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

The above has applied for a post within Clonakilty AFC and has supplied your name as a referee. As an organisation committed to the safety/protection and happiness of children, we are anxious to know if you are satisfied that this person is suitable to work with children in a sporting capacity.

How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_

In what capacity?

Are you satisfied that the above named person is suitable to work with children in a sporting capacity?

Yes	
No	

*(If you have answered no, we will contact you in confidence)*

Please rate this person on the following (please tick)

	Poor	Average	Good	V Good	Excellent
<b>Maturity</b>					
<b>Self-Motivation</b>					
<b>Motivation of others</b>					
<b>Energy</b>					
<b>Trustworthiness</b>					
<b>Reliability</b>					

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

Any further Comments

Please return completed Form to: Clonakilty AFC, c/o Neal Doran, 3 Cois Na hAbhainn, Western Road, Clonakilty, County Cork, P86 XE16

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Reviewed 05 August-2023

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# Clonakilty AFC

## Coach Details Form

### Contact Details

Name			
Address			
Contact Number			
Email address			
Emergency Contact Name		Emergency Contact Number	

Age group/groups coached	
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### Garda Vetting

Date completed	
Renewal date	
Garda Reference No.	
FAI Reference No.	

### Safeguarding training

Safeguarding 1 course complete (Mandatory)		Renewal Date	
Safeguarding 2 course complete (if applicable)		Renewal Date	
Safeguarding 3 course complete (if applicable)		Renewal Date	

### Coaching Qualifications (continue on back if required)

Award Held	Date of Award

Signed:

Date:





## **Clonakilty AFC**

### **Coach, Manager, Volunteer Education & Support Policy**

The Committee of Clonakilty AFC are indebted to our coaches, managers and volunteers who give freely of their valuable time in providing a stimulating, challenging, supportive and fun soccer experience to children and young people in the Club.

The Committee will endeavour to support these coaches, managers and volunteers in their work by providing an environment where all activities are carried out in a safe, fun manner at all times conducted in the spirit of "Fair Play".

Clonakilty AFC will make all efforts to assist all new volunteers, managers, coaches in whatever way they can.

Clonakilty AFC will provide an induction pack to all new volunteers/coaches which will familiarise them with Club rules, policies and procedures and expected codes of behaviour for children, coaches and parents/spectators.

Specifically in relation to those with no soccer background, the Committee have introduced a "Buddy" system whereby new members will accompany one of our existing coaches for a period of time during which they can familiarise themselves with the Club and its members, adult and children and introduce them to some basic training routines and practice models.

The Committee of Clonakilty AFC recognise the value of having appropriately qualified personnel in the club, and therefore will endeavour to support any of our coaches in the coach education process.

At no time will any coach, manager, volunteer be expected to work or deal with any problem alone and they will be assured of Committee assistance and support at all times. Also, coaches, managers and volunteers are encouraged to share ideas, expertise and support other club personnel in any way they can.

## Clonakilty AFC

### Safety Policy

All coaches/managers in Clonakilty AFC 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:

- Adequate supervision must be maintained at all times. Best practice advice would advocate adult:child ratios of 2 Leaders to every 16 children (1:8), but no coach, manager or volunteer works alone
- Regular safety checks should be carried out in relation to premises, training facilities and equipment. Ensure that the FAI Goalpost safety policy is strictly adhered to at all times
- Clonakilty AFC's safety rules should be adhered to at all times
- 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 and 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 Clonakilty AFC soccer activity.
- Records of attendance should be maintained
- Ensure the use of any recommended safety equipment

## **Clonakilty AFC** **Substance Abuse Policy**

At Clonakilty AFC the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco shall be actively discouraged as being incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity.

Coaches/managers shall not smoke when taking a session or drink alcohol before taking a session.

In relation to our under-age teams Clonakilty AFC shall endeavour to organise receptions and celebrations in a non-alcoholic environment and in a manner that is suitable for the age group concerned.

Where this is not possible, the Club will comply with the **Football Association of Ireland directive that under no circumstances whatsoever can any person under the age of 18 years consume alcohol and any and all appropriate steps should be taken to ensure that this policy is strictly adhered to.**

Our coaches/managers/committee shall act as role models for appropriate behaviour and refrain from drinking alcohol at such functions

**Clonakilty AFC**  
**Club Child Welfare Officer/s/Liaison Officer**

The appointment of a Club Child Welfare Officer is an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere in any club. They act as a resource to members with regard to children's issues and also ensure that children have a voice in the running of the club and can freely talk of their experiences.

Government guidelines advise that a Child Welfare officer should be appointed by all clubs and this should be done in accordance with recommended selection and recruitment procedures.

Clonakilty AFC's Child Welfare Officer, requirements.

- Have good knowledge and be familiar with their Child Welfare and Protection Codes and Guidelines Children First 2015
- Have an understanding of relevant child welfare/protection legislation
- Have undertaken a Garda Vetting application
- Have attended the relevant awareness training on child welfare and protection

**Clonakilty AFC's Child Welfare Officer does not have the responsibility of investigating or validating child protection concerns within the club and have no counselling or therapeutic role. This responsibility lies with Tusla and Gardaí.**

The Child Welfare Officer and the Designated Liaison Officer for the purpose of Children First 2015 are

Child Welfare Officer

**Sam Doherty**      Tel: 087 1344416      Email: samjdoherty74@gmail.com

Designated Liaison Person

**Neal Doran**      Tel: 087 7515022      Email: nealjdoran@gmail.com

**Role of the Designated Liaison Person:** Responsible for making sure that the reporting procedure within Clonakilty AFC is followed so that suspected cases of child abuse or neglect are referred promptly to Tusla or, in an emergency and the unavailability of Tusla, to An Garda Síochána.

## **Clonakilty AFC**

### **Guidance on the Use of Photographic and Filming Equipment**

Clonakilty AFC has adopted a policy in relation to the use of images of players on their website/social media and in other publications.

Where possible we will try to use models or illustrations when promoting an activity and avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside the sport.

Rules to guide use of photography:

- If the player is named, avoid using their photograph.
- If a photograph is used, avoid naming the player.
- Ask for the player's permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport. A player's permission form is one way of achieving this.
- Ask for parental permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport. A parental permission form is one way of achieving this.
- Only use images of players in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. The content of the photograph should focus on the activity not on a particular child

Amateur photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice session should seek permission/accreditation with the club's child welfare officer, team manager/coach and/or event organiser of session. The club will display the following information prior to the start of an event to inform spectators of the policy:

*"In line with the recommendation in Clonakilty AFC's Code of Conduct, the promoters of this event request that any person wishing to engage in any video, zoom or close-range photography should register their details with the organisers. Children and young people should only be photographed or filmed with their permission and/or the permission of their parents/guardian".*

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity or event we will aim to ensure they are clear about our expectations of them in relation to child protection.

Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice session should seek accreditation with the child welfare officer/event organiser/team manager by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded.

We will then:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
- Keep a record of accreditations
- Inform players and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs



- Not allow unsupervised access to players or one to one photo sessions at events
- Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the events or at an player's home

**Videoing as a coaching aid:** Video equipment can be used as a legitimate coaching aid. However, permission should first be obtained from the player and the player's parent/Guardian.

*Anyone concerned about any photography taking place at events/matches or training sessions should bring their concerns to the attention of the committee/team manager/coach child welfare officer.*

## **Mobile Phones**

Clonakilty AFC encourage responsible and secure use of mobile phones by adults and young people.

### **Club personnel should advise children:**

- If you receive an offensive photo, email, or message, do not reply, save it, make a note of times and dates and tell a parent or the club child welfare officer/designated person within the club.
- Be careful about who you give your phone number to and don't respond to unfamiliar numbers
- Change your phone number in cases of bullying or harassment
- 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
- Treat your phone as you would any other valuable item so that you guard against theft

### **Coaches/managers:**

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

## **Clonakilty AFC Social Media Policy**

The Club respects the rights of a person to use social media for personal use. However, it is important to be mindful of the impact of its usage can influence people's perception of Clonakilty AFC and its members. Therefore:

- Do not upload, post or forward any content belonging to another Club member/volunteer unless you have that person's consent.
- Don't discuss coaches/players/officials/competitors/club volunteers etc. without their prior approval.
- Do not engage with children/young people/parents or coaches on a public forum

As a manager, coach, club official or club volunteer you **should not**

- Accept any young person who is under 18 as a friend on your personal Social Media page.
- Communicate with any person under 18 through social media, text message, phone or email. All communications concerning under 18's should be made through parents / guardians.
- When communications relate to Club matters, members should follow Club values, use sound judgement and common sense. When in doubt, do not post. Do not disclose confidential information.
- When disagreeing with the opinions of others online, keep it appropriate and polite. It is also important not to respond in the heat of the moment, in a way you may regret later. In particular do not engage with irate players, parents or coaches on a public forum.
- Do not upload, post, forward or post a link to any abusive, obscene, discriminatory, harassing, derogatory or defamatory content.
- No images or personal information of children should be posted online without prior written consent from each parent/guardian. Children's names or additional detailed information about them should not accompany any image or video.

### **Clonakilty AFC**

#### **Travelling Guidelines**

When travelling with young people coaches/volunteers of Clonakilty AFC should:

- Ensure that there is adequate insurance cover
- Not carry more than the permitted number of passengers
- Ensure the use of safety belts
- Keep to the rules of the road
- Avoid being alone with one player; if with one player you could: put the passenger in the back seat, drop off at central locations, get parental permission for transporting children on a regular basis, and clearly state times of pick off and drop off.

## **Clonakilty AFC** **Touching Guidelines**

All managers/volunteers of Clonakilty AFC are advised that:

- Any necessary physical contact should be in response to the needs of the child and not the adult. It should be in an open environment with the permission and full understanding of the player.
- It should be determined by the age and developmental stage of the player. You should not do anything that a child can do for him/herself
- Coaches should not treat injuries out of sight of others. Use a "Two-Deep" (two personnel, or two players) supervision system. Only personnel who are qualified in administering First Aid or treating sports injuries should attempt to treat an injury.
- The comfort level and dignity of the player should always be the priority. Example: Only uncover the injured area or cover private areas of the player's body.
- Any doubts of a medical nature should be passed on to a suitably qualified medical person.
- Coaches should not play injured players.

**Comforting/congratulating players is an important part of the relationship between coaches and players. Guidelines for this type of touch are:**

- Limit touching to "safe" areas, such as hand-to-shoulder. It should not involve touching genital area, buttocks, breasts, or mouths.
- Make your intention to congratulate or comfort clear to the player.
- Get permission from the player before embracing them - remember that personnel are in the position of power.
- Respect a player's discomfort or rejection of physical contact. Be sure that touching occurs only when others are present.

**Avoid unnecessary physical contact and never engage in inappropriate touching**



## **Clonakilty AFC**

### **Guidance on the use of Sanctions**

#### **Discipline in Soccer – Sanctions**

There is no place in soccer for fighting, bullying, over aggressive or dangerous behaviour. At all times, players should treat others in a respectful manner. They should never bully, interfere with or take unfair advantage of others.

Sanctions should always be fair, consistent and applied evenly, and in the case of a persistent offence, should be progressively applied.

The following steps are suggested:

- Rules should be clearly stated and agreed
- A warning should be given if a rule is broken
- A sanction (use of time out for example) should be applied if a rule is broken for a second time.
- If a rule is broken three or more times, the child should be spoken to and parents/guardians involved if necessary.
- Sanctions should only be used in a corrective way that is intended to help children improve both now and in the future. They should never be used in retaliation or to make coach/manager/volunteer feel better or more powerful
- When violations of the team rules or other misbehaviours occur, sanctions should always be applied in an impartial and fair manner.
- Sanctions should never be used as threats. If a rule is broken, the appropriate sanction/s should implemented consistently, fairly and firmly.
- Sanctions should not be applied if the coach/manager/volunteer is not comfortable with them. If an appropriate action cannot be devised immediately, the child should be told that the matter will be dealt with later, at a specified time and as soon as is possible.
- Once a sanction/s has been imposed, it is important to make the child feel s/he is a valued member of the team again.
- A child should be helped, to understand if necessary why sanction/s are imposed.
- A child should not be sanctioned for making errors whilst playing soccer. Physical activity (e.g. running laps or doing push ups) should not be used as a sanction as to do so may cause a child to resent physical activity which is something that s/he should learn to enjoy throughout his/her life. Remember Soccer has to be Fun if participants are to continue playing.
- Sanctions should be used sparingly. Constant criticism and sanctioning can cause participants to turn away from Soccer.

## **Clonakilty AFC**

### **Code of Conduct and good practice for Parents/Guardians**

We all have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour in the game, Clonakilty AFC's aim is to ensure that football can be enjoyed by all age groups in a safe and positive environment.

Children play football not only because they love the game but to learn new skills, make new friends and be part of a group. While winning is important, it must be remembered that winning at all costs does not meet the needs of players.

Clonakilty AFC want football to be safe and fun and we endeavour to ensure it takes place in the spirit of '**FAIR PLAY**'.

It is with this in mind we ask Parents/Guardians to observe the following:

- Remember that children play for **FUN**
- Applaud effort, good play and sportsmanship as well as success.
- Always respect the match officials' decisions.
- Remain outside the field of play and within the 'Designated Spectators' Area (where provided).
- Let the coach do their job and not confuse the players by telling them what to do.
- Encourage the players to respect their team mates, the opposition, Referee and Match Officials
- Avoid criticising a player for making a mistake – mistakes are part of learning and everyone needs to make them. Don't put undue pressure on any child to please or perform well.
- Never engage in, or tolerate, offensive, insulting, or abusive language or behaviour.
- Never ignore or dismiss complaints or concerns expressed by a child which relate to his/her involvement in soccer.

More information for Parents/Guardians can be found on the FAI's website - see below link  
[https://www.fai.ie/sites/default/files/atoms/files/Parents\\_code\\_of\\_conduct.pdf](https://www.fai.ie/sites/default/files/atoms/files/Parents_code_of_conduct.pdf)

## **Clonakilty AFC** **Players Code of Conduct**

### **Children in Clonakilty AFC are entitled to:**

- Be safe
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect
- Participate in soccer on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability and stage of development.
- Clonakilty AFC have decided that all players are entitled to an equal amount of playing time.
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy soccer
- 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, coaches and volunteers with the same degree of fairness and respect.

### **In this regard children in Clonakilty AFC should undertake to:**

- play fairly, do their best and have fun
- be on their best behaviour at all times
- abide by all club rules
- 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
- 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 Child Welfare Officer with any questions or concerns they might have. Coaches and parents should encourage children to speak out and support them in doing so.

### **Children in Clonakilty AFC should not:**

- Cheat
- Use abusive language, or argue with, the referee, officials, team mates 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
- Behave in any manner that may bring the name of Clonakilty AFC into disrepute

At Clonakilty AFC we want children to have fun and develop skills in a safe and **Fair Play** environment where standards of behaviour are just as important as winning.

We recognise that competition and winning is an important goal, but winning at all costs does not meet the needs of young players.

Clonakilty AFC are aware that recent research would suggest that increasing numbers of children leave sport between the ages of eight and thirteen. A number of the most common reasons given were; that sport was no longer fun, they did not get to play and overemphasis on winning.

Therefore we have to make every effort to ensure that we keep a balanced approach to competition, make sure all players get a chance to play and strive to keep the fun in soccer.

### **Making sport fun.**

In promoting “Sport for Fun” we in Clonakilty AFC will insist on:

- Encouraging participation and fun
- Promoting the development of skills as opposed to winning at all costs
- Ensure a minimum playing time per match per player
- Emphasising and praising effort
- Acting as a good role models
- Insisting on Fair Play (take off offending players)
- Being realistic with our expectations
- Being aware of children’s feelings
- Teaching players to respect different cultures
- Teaching players that standards of behaviour are just as important as winning

### **Codes of behaviour between Coaches/Volunteers and children**

- Coaches/Volunteers should be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in contact sports or other activities.
- While physical contact is a valid way of comforting, reassuring and showing concern for children, it should only take place when it is acceptable to all persons concerned.
- Coaches/Volunteers should never physically punish or be in any way verbally abusive to a child, nor should they even tell jokes of a sexual nature in the presence of children.
- Coaches/Volunteers should be sensitive to the possibility of developing favouritism, or becoming over involved or spending a great deal of time with any one child.
- Children should be encouraged to report cases of bullying to either a designated person, or a Coach/Volunteer of their choice. Complaints must be brought to the attention of the Committee.
- Everyone involved in the Club/League should respect the personal space, safety and privacy of individuals.
- It is not recommended that members of the club give lifts in their cars to individual young people, especially for long journeys.



## Clonakilty AFC

### Code of Conduct for Coaches, Volunteers and officials

Clonakilty AFC recognises the key role coaches, volunteers and club official's play in the lives and development of young players and for that reason it is vitally important that mentors lead by example displaying appropriate behaviour while representing the club be it at training or matches.

In promoting 'Fair Play' everyone involved in the organisation should:

- Encourage participation and fun.
- Promote the development of skills as opposed to winning at all costs.
- Act as a good role model.
- Insist on Fair Play.
- Be realistic with expectations.
- Be aware of children's feelings.
- Teach players to respect different cultures.

**Team coaches, managers, volunteers and club officials** can ensure that our sport has a beneficial impact when they adhere to the following principles:

- Clonakilty AFC Mentors & Officials should maintain a child centred approach.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and encourage the players you are mentoring to do likewise.
- Treat each person equally regardless of age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
- Place an emphasis on learning and practicing the skills of football over competition.
- Encourage the development of respect for opponents, match officials, and other coaches.
- Be positive during coaching sessions so that participants leave with a sense of well-being and achievement.
- Be generous with praise and never ridicule or shout at players for making mistakes or for losing a game.
- Do not equate losing with failure and do not develop a preoccupation with medals and trophies. The level of improvement made by young players and their continued participation within the club is the best indicator of effective coaching.
- Zero tolerance on bullying.



## Clonakilty AFC Coaches, Volunteers & Officials should lead by example:

- Never use foul language or provocative language/gestures to their own players.
- Never engage in verbal or physical confrontations with opposing mentors & players.
- Only enter the field of play with the referee's permission.
- Do not question a referee's decisions or integrity.
- Encourage their players to respect and accept the judgement of match officials.
- Promote Fair Play.
- Promote the SPORT for ALL initiative.
- **Ensure that the FAI Goalpost safety policy is strictly adhered to at all times**

More information for can be found on the FAI's website - see below link

[https://www.fai.ie/sites/default/files/atoms/files/FAI\\_code\\_of\\_conduct\\_for\\_coaches.pdf](https://www.fai.ie/sites/default/files/atoms/files/FAI_code_of_conduct_for_coaches.pdf)





# Clonakilty AFC

## Disability Inclusion Policy

The mission of Clonakilty AFC is to value the ability and individuality of people with disabilities by providing everyone with the opportunities they need to reach their full potential as participants within an inclusive ethos/culture.

At Clonakilty AFC we will achieve disability inclusion by continually reviewing an approach that is implemented by members, coaches, and the committee by working in partnership with disability services and in consultation with people with disabilities and their families. This will ensure that our club is inclusive for everyone.

Our club welcomes all members of the community, regardless of their abilities. We will include people with disabilities in our club in both playing and non-playing roles to the greatest extent that we can.

We will endeavour to make our club as inclusive and accessible as possible, based on our commitment to comply with the Equal Status acts 2000-2012, the Disability Act 2005 and article 30.5 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We are also committed to fulfilling the requirements of the Sports Ireland Policy on Participation in Sport by People with disabilities and to signing and engaging with the Sport Inclusion Disability Charter.

We are committed to ensuring that as far as reasonably practicable our club, training and physical facilities are accessible to people with disabilities. We are ready to consider all reasonable adjustments that would, over time, help us to achieve this aim more fully and effectively.

In our efforts to deliver on this we will:

- Improve on the facilities we use
- Update our training to reflect disability awareness/inclusion
- Organise disability awareness/inclusion training for coaches and committee members
- Ensure that all resources are in accessible formats
- Review all areas in line with Health and Safety requirements

