

*Pearse Celtic FC Club Manual*

**Pearse Celtic F.C.**



**Pearse Celtic Club Manual**

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## **Club Constitution**

### 1. NAME OF THE CLUB

The Club shall be called Pearse Celtic Football Club (hereinafter referred to as “the Club”) and it shall be affiliated to, and be bound by, the rules and regulations of this constitution (including such changes properly made from time to time) and by the rules of the Football Association of Ireland (“FAI”) and the associated League(s) in which the Club’s teams participate.

### 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CLUB

- i. To foster, promote and develop, at all levels, the game of Association Football.
- ii. To constantly seek to improve, progress and maintain standards within the club and within the game.
- iii. The Club is community based with an emphasis on participation for all encompassing fair play and participation within the resources of the Club at any point in time.
- iv. To arrange football matches and training for each of the playing members of the Club and to undertake such activities as are necessary or desirable in support of that object.
- v. The Club is committed to encouraging the highest ethical standards. All individuals involved in the Club should conduct themselves with integrity, transparency, accountability and in a fair and equitable manner
- vi. The Club will be non-denominational, non-sectarian and non political. To create a positive, encouraging environment for all.

3. MANAGEMENT OF THE CLUB:

- i. The business affairs of the club shall be managed and controlled by a Management Committee (herein the committee) consisting of: The Officers of the Club namely the Chairman, The Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer and:
- ii. Up to 10 other members.
- iii. Each of such officers shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting (“AGM”) or within a given year co-opted by the Committee provided said members stand for re-election at the following AGM. All Committee members must be members of the Club.
- iv. Committee members shall hold office from the date of appointment until the next AGM unless removed by resolution passed at a Special General Meeting. One person may hold no more than one positions of Club officer at any time.
- v. The Committee shall be responsible for the management of all day to day affairs of the Club.
- vi. The Venue, date and time of each Committee meeting to be decided at the previous meeting.
- vii. The Secretary shall draw up Agenda items. Committee members will be entitled to raise any matters of concern by way of advance notice to the Secretary or under the agenda item “any other business”.
- viii. Order of Procedure: The procedure at Committee meetings will be:
  1. Minutes of the last meeting will be read, proposed, seconded and passed, signed by the Chairperson, all matters arising from the minutes to be settled
  2. Chairperson: To report on all happenings concerning the Club and to be the spokesperson on matters relating to the Club’s best interest.
  3. Secretary: To read all correspondence, and to inform the meetings of all relevant matters.
  4. Treasurer: To make a statement on the state of the accounts of the Club and all relevant matters and if requested to make available a statement of the accounts. To pay all bills accrued and as approved by the Committee
  5. Sub-Committees (if appointed): A Spokesperson to report to the Committee, when requested and necessary.
  6. Any Other Business (A.O.B.): This will be the last item on the agenda.
- ix. Mode of Voting: A show of hands shall determine all ballots, except when members wish a secret vote.

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- x. Mode of Speaking: Each member should address him/herself to the Chairperson and not to any other member. During the time any other member is speaking, the Chairperson shall not allow interference until the speaker finishes, or a point of order has to be made. Members should indicate they wish to speak on any discussion by getting the attention of the Chairperson, who will allow them to speak in order, and reply to any questions thereafter. The aim of all discussions should be to reach conclusions.
- xi. Points of Order: Any member may bring to the notice of the meeting, through the Chairperson, points of order relating to the constitution and rules of the club.
- xii. Rescinding resolutions: When a motion has been voted on and passed, a decision to rescind the original motion shall not be allowed unless a majority of the meeting present and voting agrees.
- xiii. Subject to paragraph (xv) below, decisions of the Committee shall be made by a simple majority of those attending the meeting. The Chairperson of the meeting shall have a casting vote in the event of a tie.
- xiv. Meetings of the Committee shall be chaired by the Chairperson or, in his absence, The Vice-chairperson or failing that elected by those Committee members present.
- xv. The quorum for a Committee Meeting shall be five.
- xvi. Decisions of the Committee meetings shall be entered into the minute book of the Club to be maintained by the Club Secretary.
- xvii. An outgoing member of the Committee may be re-elected. Any vacancy on the Committee which arises between AGMs shall be filled by a member proposed by one and seconded by another of the remaining Committee members and approved by a simple majority of the remaining Committee members.
- xviii. The Committee may appoint sub-committees for such Club activities as it shall deem appropriate.
- xix. The Committee shall have the power to decide all questions and disputes arising in respect of any issue concerning the Club (rules such decisions to be binding on the members), including but not limited to dealing with complaints received by and about members of the Club and in accordance with the Club complaints policy.
- xx. The Committee shall appoint the Club's Child Welfare Officer after the Annual General Meeting.
- xxi. All Committee Meetings are strictly confidential.

4. GENERAL MEETINGS:

- i. An Annual General Meeting (A.G.M.) of the Club shall be held each year +/- one month of June.
- ii. All members are to be notified at least seven days in advance of the A.G.M.
- iii. A minimum of twelve persons is required for a quorum at the A.G.M.
- iv. A majority of members present at the A.G.M. shall be sufficient to alter, delete or add to any rules of the Club, providing such alteration, deletion or addition have been specifically included on the agenda of the A.G.M.
- v. Each Officer of the Club shall present a report to the A.G.M.
- vi. Items for inclusion on the agenda must be forwarded to and received by the Secretary 7 days prior to the A.G.M.
- vii. The agenda of the Annual General Meeting shall be prepared by the Secretary and agreed at a committee meeting prior to the A.G.M.
- viii. Election of Officers:  
Nominations for election (or as the case may be re-election) of members as Club Officers shall be made in writing by the proposer and seconder, both of whom must be existing members of the Club, to the Club Secretary not less than 7 days before the AGM.  
The Chairman of the Club shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. The outgoing Chairman will be entitled to submit for re-election. Officers of the Club, who will act as Secretary and as Treasurer shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting; they must be willing to accept and adhere to all the rules of the Club Constitution, if they wish to take office. Outgoing Officers will be entitled to submit for re-election.  
The club will consist of:
  - (a) Chairperson
  - (b) Vice Chairperson
  - (b) Officers of the Club who will act as Secretary and Treasurer
  - (c) Committee Members
  - (d) Managers/Coaches
  - (e) Ordinary MembersOrdinary membership of the Club consists of persons who have paid an annual subscription, either as a player, or as a family member, and are registered as such in the Club's Records
- ix. Any member may propose a resolution at an AGM and notice of such resolution shall be given in writing to the Club Secretary not less than 7 days before the meeting.
- x. A Special General Meeting ("SGM") may be called at any time by a majority of the Committee. 25% of the Club members may also call such a meeting. An SGM must take place within 14 days of the Secretary

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receiving notice of the request. Business at an SGM may be any business that may be transacted at an AGM or proposed by the parties calling the SGM.

- xi. The Secretary shall send to each member, at his or her last known postal or email address, notice of the date of an AGM or SGM, together with details of any the resolutions to be proposed or matters to be approved, at least 7 days before the meeting.
- xii. The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 12 members.
- xiii. The Chairperson or, in his absence, The Vice Chairperson or failing that a member selected by the Committee, shall take the chair. All attending members shall have one vote,
- xiv. The Club Secretary or, in his absence, a member selected by the Committee, shall enter minutes of General Meetings into the minute book of the Club.
- xv. Voting shall be by a show of hands followed by ballot if deemed necessary by the Chairperson of the meeting

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5. ROLE OF THE CHAIRMAN:

- i. The Chairman is the principal officer of the Club. As well as chairing Club Committee and other Club meetings, the Chairman has prime responsibility for ensuring:
- ii. that the Club is a well organized, well managed and an active unit.
- iii. To Provide leadership and management in the Club.
- iv. To Hold effective Club meetings.
- v. To Uphold the Club constitution
- vi. To Plan ahead for the Club.
- vii. To Delegate tasks to Club members

6. ROLE OF THE HON SECRETARY:

- i. The Secretary shall deal with all correspondence.
- ii. The Secretary shall take the minutes of the Committee meetings and any other meetings of the Club, including the A.G.M.
- iii. The Secretary shall keep records of the membership of the Club.
- iv. Other members of the Committee may be delegated to assist the Secretary in the performance of any of the above or other duties as required.
- v. The Secretary will be entitled to act as Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson.

7. ROLE OF THE TREASURER:

- i. The Treasurer shall keep up to date accounts of the finances of the Club.
- ii. The financial year shall run from 1<sup>st</sup> June to 31<sup>st</sup> May each year.
- iii. The Treasurer shall report on a regular basis to the Club Committee on the Club's finances.
- iv. The Treasurer shall collect and enter into the accounts of the Club all money and proceeds entrusted to him/her.
- v. The Treasurer will be entitled to act as Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson.



8. ACCOUNTS OF THE CLUB:

- i. The Treasurer will operate bank accounts on behalf of the Club.
- ii. All cheques of the Club must be signed by any two officers of the Club.
- iii. The Accounts of the Club must be audited and signed off by the Committee before the A.G.M. and be available at the following A.G.M.
- iv. The Committee of the Club shall be indemnified against any expenses incurred by them in the course of carrying out the duties of the Club, the said expenses to be approved by the Committee of the Club.

9. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION :

- i. Pearse Celtic Football Club is committed to setting standards and values to apply throughout the Club. Football belongs to and should be enjoyed by everyone, equally. Our commitment is to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of sex, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or disability. Equality of opportunity at Pearse Celtic FC means that in all our activities we will not discriminate or in any way treat anyone less favourably, on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or disability.
- ii. This includes:
  - The selection of candidates for volunteers
  - Courses
  - External coaching and education activities and awards
  - Football development activities
  - Selection for teams
  - Appointments to honorary positions
- iii. Pearse Celtic FC will not tolerate sexual or racially based harassment or other discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal and will work to ensure that such behaviour is met with appropriate action in whatever context it occurs.
- iv. Pearse Celtic FC supports awareness raising events and activities in order to promote the eradication of all forms of discrimination within football.

10. DISCLAIMER:

All players play at their own risk. While the Club will provide appropriate insurance cover, there is no requirement on the Club to meet any costs arising for any player who may be injured while playing or training. Players should read the Clubs Policy and Procedures for the Treatment of Injuries.

11. SUBSCRIPTIONS:

The cost of subscriptions, match fees, training fees and any other fees will be decided by the Club Committee.

12. REGISTRATION:

All Players must be registered with the Club and appropriate league before they are allowed to play competitive matches.

13. APPOINTMENTS:

Coach/Managers are to be appointed each season to run the various teams.

14. GENERAL:

- i. Teams within the Club shall play home games at grounds designated by the Club Committee.
- ii. Players must only wear kit provided by the Club or team sponsors at matches and it must not be worn at any other time unless with the permission of the Team Coach/Manager.
- iii. All members of the Club shall operate and behave in accordance with the Club's Code of Practice/Code of Conduct.
- iv. All adults involved directly with children will be aware of the guidelines regarding behaviour towards children. It is the duty of each Coach/Manager to ensure that all children are safe and every effort will be taken to protect them.
- v. Training schedules should be drafted in consultation with the Team Coaches/Managers.

## **Codes of Practice:**

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.

Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Dept. of Health & Children 1999

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

Football Association of Ireland Code of Ethics & Best Practice

Pearse Celtic FC recognises and accepts that in all matters concerning child protection, the welfare and protection of our underage players is the priority.

Members of the Club shall at all times observe FAI rules and the laws of the game of Association Football, the Pearse Celtic FC Codes of Practice and Conduct and the Club rules.

Should any act of misconduct or deliberate act in breach of rules by a Club member result in the Club being fined, then that member may be asked to reimburse the Club the amount of the fine.

Misconduct by any member(s) may be reviewed by the Club Committee.

The Club Committee shall have the power to expel a member when, in their opinion, it would not be in the interest of the Club for them to remain a member.

## **Code of Conduct for Managers/Coaches:**

It is the aim of the managers and coaches of the club to promote the highest standards to their players in training and match days.

All team managers/coaches should have the appropriate interest and competence. It is intended that all managers would have a coaching badge before being given the responsibility of managing a team.

Team managers and coaches must plan and prepare their coaching sessions in advance, which should include:

- Facilities available
- Availability of equipment in working order (balls inflated etc.)
- Players available
- The coaching structure for the training session

Team managers must give advice, encouragement and support to their players in coaching sessions and on match days, promoting sportsmanship and fair play at all times, also ensuring that players shake hands with their opponents and the referee.

Team managers are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is honourable and in keeping with the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship. They should not indulge themselves in tactics, either by words or action that are likely to bring the game, this Club, or the League in which they play, into disrepute.

## **Code of Conduct for Players:**

It should be the aim of all players to attend training sessions and match days on time with all their boots/trainers and training kit clean and be ready 15 minutes before training starts and 30 minutes before the game starts.

All players must conduct themselves in training and match days, ensuring that their level of behaviour is of the highest standards at all times and show respect to their Manager/Coach, other players in their team, opponents and the equipment/building they are using.

All players representing the Club who fall below the expected standards and levels of behaviour will be subject to disciplinary action. Examples of unacceptable action include:

- Disrupting training
- Abusive behaviour/language towards team mates/ opponents
- Threatening behaviour
- Violent conduct
- Bad sportsmanship
- Persistently being cautioned or sent off

Any player displaying unsporting behaviour will be liable to immediate substitution or suspension by the Club for a period as determined by the Team Coach/Manager in the first instance, and/or by the Club Committee.

All players should seek to shake hands with their opponents and also the referee at the end of the game.

Any player found to be in breach of the code of conduct will be subject to sanction, which will, in the first instance, be a matter for the Team Manager/Coach and could include a fine and/or suspension and/or face the Committee of the Club to explain their behaviour. This could result in their membership being suspended or in certain cases, being expelled from the Club.

**ALL PLAYERS SHOULD:**

- Play for enjoyment, not just to please parents and coaches.
- Play by the rules of the game.
- Always accept the referee's decision.
- Play with control and not to lose your temper.
- Play for yourself and your team – your team's performance will benefit and so will your own.
- Respect your opponent. Treat all players as you would like to be treated. Do not "bully" or take advantage of any player.
- Co-operate with Team Manager/ Coach, team mates and opponents.
- Remember that the goals of the game are to have fun, improve your skills and feel good.

**Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians, Spectators:**

It is the aim of this Club to promote the highest standards of sportsmanship and fair-play and to ensure the spirit of the game is not abused.

Any adult taking part in any activity organized by the Club, or attending such an activity with the Club as a guest or another, shall conduct himself or herself in an exemplary manner.

Adult behaviour must be of the highest standard to set the correct example to the players.

Players should expect advice, encouragement and support and not be embarrassed or humiliated by the adults watching them.

Adults should not shout, swear, argue, become violent or use sarcasm. Wherever possible players who require help should be assisted and encouraged to overcome any difficulties.

**ADULTS SHOULD:**

- Always look for aspects to praise rather than rebuke
- Praise good behaviour to show that adults value it
- Praise effort and performance, rather than just achievement, most often in the case of a victory
- Emphasise the importance of involvement first, winning second
- Display patience
- Ensure players have a clear understanding of the standards of behaviour expected
- Help players understand the rules; talk to them, not at them.
- Matters of team selection, including the playing of substitutes, remain the sole responsibility of the Team Manager/Coach and his/her decision will remain final.

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At all times, during the course of the game, the decisions made by the referee, qualified or unqualified, appointed to officiate, will remain final. In many cases newly qualified referees are appointed to youth matches in order to gain experience and these officials, male or female, should be given support and encouragement and support.

Any parent/guardian or spectator (associated with a playing member) whose behaviour is considered to fall below the required standard, may result in the membership of that player being suspended or cancelled.

Any complaint regarding the opposition, referee, spectators, or any other aspect of the game must be dealt with by the Team Manager. If the matter is considered serious enough, the Club Secretary will inform the appropriate authority. It will not be acceptable for individuals to take the law into their own hands.

All parents, guardians and spectators shall abide by the rules of the Football Association of Ireland and its Leagues.

### **SPECTATORS SHOULD:**

- Be of your best behaviour and lead by example
- Remember that although young people play organised Football, they are not miniature internationals
- Applaud good play by the visiting team as well as your own
- Show respect for your team's opponents. Without them there would not be a match
- Condemn the use of violence in all forms at every opportunity
- Verbal abuse of players or referees cannot be accepted in any shape or form. Players and referees are not fair targets for ignorant behaviour
- Encourage young players to play by the laws of the game.

## **Child Protection & Welfare Policy Statement**

### **Introduction**

Pearse Celtic Football Club 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 Football. This Policy document clearly demonstrates the importance placed by Pearse Celtic Football Club on the protection and safety of children and young people who participate in Football. All children and young people[1] who participate in Football 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 Football in general.

Pearse Celtic Football Club 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 Pearse Celtic Football Club knows exactly what is expected of them in relation to protecting children and young people within Football.

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

In pursuit of this goal Pearse Celtic Football Club will:

- Advise all members of Pearse Celtic Football Club (coaches, players, parents and spectators) of their responsibilities in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people who participate in Football.
- 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.

The aims of Pearse Celtic Football Club 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 Football, 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.



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- To demonstrate best practice in the area of child welfare and protection.
- To promote ethics and best practice standards throughout Football.

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 HSE has a statutory responsibility to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and Pearse Celtic Football Club is committed to cooperating fully with them in accordance with procedures as outlined in “Children First” National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children.
- Pearse Celtic Football Club will cooperate fully with the Football Association of Ireland National Children’s Officer, Gardai and Health Boards in any investigation of child abuse in Football.

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

Rule 95. The Protection and Welfare of Children In line with recent legislation and Government Guidelines (The Child Care Act 1991 and The Protection for Persons Reporting Abuse Act 1998) in relation to child protection and welfare, it is mandatory that all National Associations, Divisional Associations and Affiliated Leagues should operate to Football Association of Ireland recommended codes of conduct and best practice guidelines.

1. Any act, statement, conduct or other matter, which harms a child or children, or poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children, shall constitute behaviour which is improper and brings the game into disrepute.
2. Breaches will become a disciplinary offence.
3. Any Member or Participant who is the subject of a Statutory Inquiry in relation to any child welfare concern must stand down from all Football activities pending the outcome of that inquiry and any subsequent internal disciplinary proceedings.

Pearse Celtic Football Club through confirming this policy document has demonstrated its commitment to ensuring that children and young people can participate in all Football 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 Football.

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It is the responsibility of all adults involved in Football 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.

### 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 (Gardai, HSE) and should not be undertaken by Children's Officers or any other Club/League. 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 the HSE and this decision should be based on reasonable grounds for concern.

The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

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

Ref. Children First

### 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 HSE 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

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Should Pearse Celtic Football Club 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 the HSE.

The report to the HSE 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 Gardai shall be contacted.

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

### Step Four

Our 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.

### Step Five

All subsequent actions following an allegation of abuse against a coach/volunteer will be taken in consultation with the HSE 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 Football 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.

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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.

## **Club Disciplinary, Complaints and Appeals Procedure**

(Covers all matters other than suspected child abuse which has to be referred to the Statutory Authorities - See above)

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 HSE 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 to 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

## **Recruitment Policy**

Pearse Celtic Football Club 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.

All coaches/volunteers subject to Garda clearance

All appointments are subject to approval and ratification by the committee of Pearse Celtic Football Club

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

Once recruited, Pearse Celtic Football Club will make all efforts to support and manage coaches, managers and volunteers ensuring that no person is expected to work alone.



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

The Committee of Pearse Celtic Football Club are indebted to our coaches, managers and volunteers who give freely of their valuable time in providing a stimulating, challenging, supportive and fun Football 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”.

Pearse Celtic Football Club will make all efforts to assist all new volunteers, managers, coaches in whatever way they can.

Pearse Celtic Football Club 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 Football background, the Committee have introduced a “Buddy” system whereby new members will accompany one of our existing coaches for a (decide on a time frame) period 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 Pearse Celtic Football Club 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.

## **Club Safety Policy**

All coaches/managers in Pearse Celtic Football Club 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
- Ensure that the FAI Goalpost safety policy is strictly adhered to at all times
- Pearse Celtic Football Club safety rules should be adhered to at all times
- Parents/guardians will 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 Pearse Celtic Football Club Football activity.
- Records of attendance should be maintained
- Ensure the use of any recommended safety equipment

## **Substance Abuse Policy**

In Pearse Celtic Football Club 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 Pearse Celtic Football Club shall endeavour to organise receptions and celebrations in a nonalcoholic 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

## **Children's Officer/s**

The appointment of Club Children's Officers 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 children's officer should be appointed by all clubs and this should be done in accordance with recommended selection and recruitment procedures. The appointment of this person should be carried out in consultation with juvenile members and their parent/guardians.

The League/Club Children's Officer should have the following functions:

- To promote the Code of Ethics & Good Practice
- To influence policy and practice and to prioritise children's needs
- To ensure that children know how and whom they can report their concerns to within the club. Information disclosed by a child should be dealt with in accordance with the Department of Health and Children's Guidelines "Children First"
- To encourage the participation of parents/guardians in club activities
- To co-operate with parents to ensure that each child enjoys his/her participation in Football
- To act as a resource with regard to best practice in children's Football
- To report regularly to the Club Management Committee
- To monitor changes in membership and follow up any unusual dropout, absenteeism or club transfers by children or coach/volunteers

Club/League Children's Officers do 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 the HSE and Gardai.

Pearse Celtic Football Club have appointed **Terry Barrett** as our Children's Officer and can be contacted on **087 659 1780**

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

Many people use cameras and video equipment at Football activities and the vast majority, do so for perfectly legitimate reasons. However there is evidence that people have used sporting events to take inappropriate photographs and video footage of children and young people in vulnerable positions.

Pearse Celtic has adopted a policy in relation to the use of images of players on their websites 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 parental permission to use their image.
- 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.

Create recognised procedures for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to players. Follow the child protection procedures, ensuring either the designated person or, if necessary, the health boards and/or Gardai are informed.

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

“In line with the recommendation in the Pearse Celtic 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”.

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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 children's 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
- Issue the photographer with identification which must be worn at all times
- 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 athletes or one to one photo sessions at events
- Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the events or at an athlete's home

Videoring 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/carer.

Clubs should also be aware of the dangers of permitting camera phones in dressing rooms and should apply appropriate safety rules.

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 children's officer.

## **Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones are often given to children for security, enabling parents to keep in touch and make sure they are safe. Young people value their phones highly as it offers them a sense of independence. In addition mobile phones allow quick and easy contact, which can make a safe and efficient way to carry out club business. 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 to young people. Therefore, we need to encourage responsible and secure use of mobile phones by adults and young people.

Therefore 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 children's 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

As a coach/manager remember:

- 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
- 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

## **Travelling Guidelines**

When travelling with young people coaches/volunteers of Pearse Celtic Football Club 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.

## **Touching Guidelines**

All managers/volunteers of Pearse Celtic Football Club 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 athlete's body.

Any doubts of a medical nature should be passed on to a suitably qualified medical person.



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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 players 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

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

### Discipline in Football

Discipline in Football should always be positive in focus, providing the structures and rules that allow players to set their own goals and strive for them. It should encourage players to become more responsible for themselves and their actions and therefore more independent.

Discipline should be a positive reinforcement for effort. It should encourage the development of emotional and social skills as well as skills in Football. Players have to be helped to become responsible for the decisions and choices they make within Football, particularly when it is likely to make a difference between playing fairly or unfairly.

There is no place in Football 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.

The use of sanctions is an important element in the maintenance of discipline. However Coaches/Managers/Volunteers and Administrators should have a clear understanding of where and when particular sanctions are appropriate.

It should be remembered that effectively controlled organisations and successful coaches/managers/volunteers are characterised by the sparing use of sanctions. The age and developmental stage of the child should be taken into account when using sanctions.

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

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- 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 be 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 Football
- 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 Football 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 Football

*Adapted from the Irish Sports Councils Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport (2005)*

## **Social Media Guidelines**

Pearse Celtic Football Club recognizes and supports its members' rights to freedom of speech and expression including the use of social networks. In this context, however, each member must remember that playing and competing for Pearse Celtic FC is a privilege, not a right. As coach, Player or volunteer you represent Pearse Celtic FC and you are expected to portray yourself, your team, and the Club in a positive manner at all times. Any online postings must therefore be consistent with Club guidelines.

### **Guidelines:**

If you participate on a social networking site, you must keep the following guidance in mind:

- Everything you post is public information – consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to misinterpret your information (including photos, videos, comments and postings).
- Similar to comments made in person, Pearse Celtic FC will not tolerate disrespectful/offensive comments and behaviour online towards Pearse Celtic FC teams, coaches, & players and opposition teams, coaches, & players.
- Only the Pearse Celtic FC Committee has the authority, to Post, Comment, and Converse officially on behalf of Pearse Celtic FC.
- Our official Social media sites are - Pearse Celtic FC (Facebook + Web site) are the only official avenues the Club uses.

### **Monitoring and Consequences:**

Any violation of these guidelines is subject to investigation and sanction by Pearse Celtic FC. Pearse Celtic FC reserves the right to determine appropriate sanctions for any violation of these guidelines (such sanctions may vary from removal of the objectionable material, suspension or dismissal).

## **Club Policies and Procedures for the Treatment of Injuries.**

To: All Members and Players.

Please be advised that all players play for the Club and engage in training and related practice at **their own risk**. The Club cannot and will not accept responsibility for injuries sustained by players in the course of these activities.

Players are reminded of this and urged to ensure that they have the **appropriate personal medical insurance** in place to cover any injuries sustained in the course of such activities.

The club insurances are designed to cover serious injuries only and have strict limits.

All injuries no matter how small must be reported to the club immediately.

Where Physio treatment is required, The Club will consult with the Physio following the assessment, The Physio and the Club will recommend the next stage of treatment.

The Club will make a contribution toward the first physio treatment session but the full fees for all subsequent sessions will be borne personally by the player.

Where an injured player cannot wait for the assessment, then he/she can arrange an appointment themselves players, of course, are free to choose their own medical practitioners but are reminded that, where they do so, no subsidy will apply and all fees incurred must be settled by them personally.

Clearly, the above arrangements only apply to injuries sustained while playing/training with Pearse Celtic FC and **do not apply** to other sports or engagements with other teams e.g. Cork AUL or development squads etc. Players are advised to clarify the position with regard to these situations directly with those responsible.