***CODE OF BEHAVIOUR***

***WHEN WORKING WITH UNDERAGE PLAYERS***

**Everyone involved in our sport and activities should accept the roles and responsibilities that they undertake as we commit ourselves to maintaining an enjoyable and safe environment for all. The safeguarding of our members will always be a priority as we recognise that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance in our work.**

**Loughgiel Shamrocks wish to see this code developed, promoted and implemented as an initiative that encourages fair play, respect, equality, safety and non discrimination in all aspects of our work with children and young people.**

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***YOUNG PLAYERS***

Young players can benefit greatly from sports in terms of personal development and enjoyment. As part of their participation our players must be encouraged to realise that due to their participation in sport they also have a responsibility to treat others with fairness and respect. With rights there will always be responsibilities.

***YOUNG PLAYERS SHOULD BE ENTITLED TO***

* Be safe and feel safe.
* Have fun.
* Be treated with respect, dignity and sensitivity.
* Comment and make suggestions in a constructive manner.
* Be afforded appropriate confidentiality.
* Participate in games and competitions at levels with which they feel comfortable.
* Make their concerns known and have them dealt with in an appropriate manner.
* Be protected from abuse.
* Be listened to.

***YOUNG PLAYERS SHOULD ALWAYS***

* Play fairly.
* Respect fellow team members.
* Support fellow team members regardless of whether they do well or not.
* Represent their team, their club and their family with pride and dignity.
* Respect all coaches, officials and their opponents.
* Be gracious in defeat and modest in victory.
* Shake hands before and after a game as part of the Give Respect Get Respect initiative irrespective of the result.
* Inform their coach in advance if they are unavailable for hurling and games.
* Take due care of club equipment.
* Know that it is acceptable to talk to the Club’s Children’s Officer with any concerns or questions they may have.
* Tell somebody else if they or others have been harmed in any way.

***YOUNG PLAYERS SHOULD NEVER***

* Cheat – always play by the rules.
* Shout at or argue with a game’s official, with their coach, their team mates or opponents and should never use violence.
* Use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage or isolate other players.
* Spread rumours.
* Tell lies.
* Play or train if they feel unwell or are injured.
* Use unacceptable language.

***COACHES***

All coaches should ensure that young people and children benefit significantly from our games by promoting a positive, healthy and participatory approach in our work with underage players. In developing the skills level of every player, encouraging enjoyment and fun. Coaches should always remember that they are role models.

***RECRUITMENT OF COACHES***

All coaches working with young people are required to be suitable for their chosen role and should always be appropriately trained, qualified and supported for such roles. They are also required to have undertaken vetting and to attend coaching and training courses.

***COACHES SHOULD MAINTAIN A CHILD CENTRED APPROACH***

* Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person.
* Treat each person equally.
* Be positive during coaching sessions, games and other activities so that underage players always leave with a sense of achievement and an increased level of self esteem.
* Recognise the development needs and capacity of all underage players.
* Do not equate losing with failure and do not develop a preoccupation with medals and trophies. The level of improvement made by underage players is the best indicator of effective coaching.

***COACHES SHOULD LEAD BY EXAMPLE***

* Never use foul language or provocative language/gestures to a player, opponent or match official.
* Only enter the field of play with the referee’s permission.
* Do not question a Referee’s decision or integrity.
* Encourage players to respect and accept the judgement of match officials.
* Promote fair play.
* Promote the RESPECT campaign.
* Do not smoke; consume alcohol or non prescribed drugs while working with underage players.
* Encourage parents to become involved in your team and Club activities wherever possible.

***CONDUCT OF COACHES WHEN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE***

* Develop an appropriate working relationship with children based on mutual trust and respect.
* Challenge Bullying in any form whether physical or emotional.
* Don’t shout or lecture players or reprimand/ridicule them when they make a mistake. Children learn best through trial and error. Children and young people should not be afraid to risk error so as to learn.
* The use of any form of physical punishment is prohibited.
* Avoid incidents of horse play or role play or telling jokes etc. that could be misinterpreted.

***AVOID COMPROMISING YOUR ROLE AS A COACH***

* Avoid taking coaching sessions on your own.
* Only deliver one to one coaching, if deemed necessary, in a group setting.
* Avoid unnecessary physical contact with an underage player and never engage in inappropriate touching of a player.
* Be aware that any necessary contact should be determined by the age and development of the player and should only take place with the permission and understanding of the player and in an open environment in the context of developing a player’s skills and abilities.

***BEST PRACTICE***

* As a coach always be punctual and properly attired.
* Ensure that all of your players are suitably and safely attired to play their chosen sport, e.g. helmets, shin guards.
* Keep a record of attendance at training and at games.
* Ensure that all dressing rooms and the general areas that are occupied by your players and other Club personnel, prior to, during or immediately following the completion of any match are kept clean and are not damaged in any way.
* Be accompanied by at least one other adult in underage team dressing rooms.
* Set realistic – stretching but achievable – performance goals for your players and team.
* Rotate the team captaincy and the method used for selecting teams so that the same children are not always selected to the exclusion of others.
* Keep a record of any injuries and action taken. Ensure that another official referee/team mentor is present when a player is being attended to and can corroborate the relevant details.
* Make adequate provision for first aid services.
* Do not encourage or permit players to play while injured.
* Be aware of any special medical of dietary requirements of players as indicated on the medical consent/registration forms or as informed by parents/guardians.
* With the expressed permission of parents/guardians be willing to keep necessary and emergency medication of players in a safe and accessible place for administration in accordance with the wishes of the parents/guardians.
* Do not administrator medication or medical aid unless you are willing to do so and have received the necessary training to administer such aid.
* Use mobile phones, if deemed appropriate, only via a group text or email system for communicating with the parents of players. Any exception to this form of group texting can only be proceeded with permission from parents.
* Do not communicate individually by text/email with underage players.
* Do not engage in communications with underage players via social networking sites.
* Encourage parents to play an active role in organising and assisting various activities for your teams and your club.
* If it is necessary to transport a young person in your car, ensure that they are seated in a rear seat with seat belt securely fastened.
* With the exception of their own child a coach should not transport a child alone, except in emergency of exceptional circumstances.

***PARENTS/GUARDIANS***

Parents/Guardians have an influential role to play in assisting and encouraging their children to fully participate, whether by playing, attending training or coaching sessions.

In common with coaches and club personnel the parents/guardians of underage players should act as role models for their children.

***PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD ENCOURAGE THEIR CHILD TO***

* Always play by the rules.
* Improve their skills levels.
* Appreciate everybody on their team, regardless of ability.

***PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD LEAD BY EXAMPLE***

* Adopt a positive attitude to their children’s participation in our games.
* Respect official’s decisions and encourage children to do likewise.
* Do not exert undue pressure on your child.
* Never admonish your own child or any other child for their standard of play.
* Be realistic in their expectations.
* Show approval for effort, not just results.
* Avoid asking a child of young person, ‘How much did you score today’ or ‘What did you win by’ or ‘What did you lose by.’ Ask them ‘Did they enjoy themselves.’
* Never embarrass a child or use sarcastic remarks towards a player.
* Applaud good play from all teams
* Do not critiicise playing performances. Identify how improvements may be made.
* Do not seek to unfairly affect a game or player.
* Do not enter the field of play unless specifically invited to do so by an official in charge.

***PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD***

* Complete and return the registration/permission and medical consent forms for their child’s participation in the Club.
* Inform the coaches, and any other relevant Club personnel, of any changes in their child’s medical or dietary requirements prior to coaching sessions, games or other activities.
* Ensure that their child punctually attends coaching sessions/games of other activities.
* Provide their child with adequate clothing and equipment.
* Ensure that the nutrition/hydration and hygiene needs of their child are met.
* Listen to what their child may have to say
* Show approval whether the team wins, loses or draws a game.
* Never attempt to meet their own needs and aspirations for success and achievement through their children’s participation in games.

***PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD ASSIST THEIR CLUB BY***

* Showing appreciation to volunteers, coaches and Club officials.
* Attending training and games on a regular basis.
* Assisting in the organising of Club activities and events as requested.
* Respecting the rights, dignity and worth of every person.
* Not entering team dressing rooms unless deemed necessary by the team coach (es) so as to protect the privacy of other underage players.

***PARENTS/GUARDIANS HAVE THE RIGHT TO***

* Know their child is safe.
* Be informed of problems/concerns relating to their child.
* Be informed if their child gets injured.
* Complain if they have concerns about the standard of coaching.
* Have a say in relation to decisions being made within the Club.

***SUPPORTERS***

Young Players are eager to enjoy and benefit from the support they receive from parents, guardians, friends and other members of the club who attend our games as spectators and supporters. Active, loyal and well behaved supporters are always welcome to attend and support our games but should be aware that their conduct will reflect upon the team, players and Clubs that they support and represent.

Fellow supporters have a responsibility to ensure that all spectators conduct themselves in an acceptable and well behaved manner at all times, when attending our games and competitions.

***SUPPORTERS ADD TO THE ENJOYMENT OF OUR GAMES BY***

* Applauding good performance and efforts from your Club’s players and from your opponents, regardless of the result.
* Condemning the use of violence in any form, be it fellow spectators, coaches, officials or players.
* Encouraging players to participate according to the rules and the referees’ decisions.
* Demonstrating appropriate behaviour by not using foul language or harassing players, coaches of officials.
* Respecting the decisions of all officials.
* Never ridiculing of scolding a player for making a mistake during games or competitions.
* Showing respect to your Club’s opponents. Without them there would be no games or competitions.
* Upholding the principles of FAIR PLAY and RESPECT for all.

***REFEREES***

Referees are conscious of the fact that they are instrumental in ensuring our games are played fairly and all participants are treated with respect.

The manner in which we accept the role, authority and decisions of a Referee will naturally be scrutinised very closely by our underage players.

***IN THEIR CAPACITY AS REFEREES OF UNDERAGE GAMES WE EXPECT OUR REFEREES TO***

* Apply the playing rules on an impartial and consistent basis.
* Act with integrity and objectivity in all games.
* Communicate decisions to players and team officials in an effective and constructive manner.
* Deal with dissent firmly and fairly.
* Work as a team with other match officials.
* Maintain composure regardless of the circumstances.
* Avail of assessments and supports to improve performance.
* Uphold and implement the Give Respect – Get Respect initiative at all levels.

Players, coaches, supporters, parents/guardians and other Club personnel should recognise the pivotal role that Referees play in our underage games and should support them in their role.

***GIVE RESPECT – GET RESPECT***

Give Respect – Get Respect is an awareness campaign that seeks to ensure that Gaelic Games are promoted and played in a positive, fair and enjoyable manner and where player, coaches, spectators and referees Give Respect - Get Respect from each other.

The **RESPECT** campaign applies at all levels and amongst all players regardless of age, competition or ability.

***THE RESPECT CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS THE FOLLOWING GOOD PRACTICES***

* All players and coaches shake hands with their opponents and the referee before and after each game.
* Mark out a designated spectators’ area around the playing area.
* At relevant underage categories teams should strive to achieve the maximum participation of all players in accordance with agreed playing models.
* The host club should welcome referees and opposing teams to all games.
* A merit award, based on sporting endeavour and fair play, shall be awarded to players and teams who have upheld the RESPECT principles.
* Adopt and implement the Code of Behaviour when working with underage players as the minimum level of agreement between the Club and players, coaches, parents, guardians and supporters at underage level.
* Organise half time exhibition games during Club, inter County League and championship Games that promote the principles of the RESPECT campaign in association with Cumann na mBunscol.

**RESPONSIBLE**

 **ENCOURAGING**

 **SUPPORTIVE**

 **POSITIVE**

 **ENABLING**

**CONSIDERATE**

 **TOLERANT**

***THE CLUB***

Loughgiel Shamrocks recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount. We ensure that those chosen to work on our behalf with underage players have been selected following a thorough recruitment, selection, training and coaching procedure and must also provide these people with the necessary supports so as to enable them to fulfil their roles.

***THE CLUB SHOULD PROMOTE QUALITY PARTICIPATION BY***

* *A*dopting this Code of Behaviour as a basic level of agreement between the Club and their players, coaches, parents/guardians and supporters.
* Leading by example and ensuring that a user friendly and child centred approach is adopted in our work with young people and that equal opportunities are available for all to participate in our games and activities, regardless of an individual’s ability.
* Developing effective procedures for responding to and recording all attendances, incidents, accidents and injuries.
* Accessing relevant information on Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention Programmes and promoting relevant training in this area of health awareness for relevant Club personnel.
* Distributing information on anti-Bullying strategies in our work with young people and by adopting and implementing an Anti-Bullying statement in the Club.

***THE CLUB SHOULD ENCOURAGE THE PARTICPATION OF THEIR MEMBERS BY***

* Agreeing the role of each and every coach working with young people.
* Ensuring that relevant Child Protection Training is undertaken by all persons working in an official capacity with children and young people in the club.
* Adopting and implementing clearly defined recruitment and selection procedures when choosing coaches and other relevant personnel to work with young people.

***ENCOUARGING THE PARTCIPATION OF YOUNG PLAYERS BY***

* Ensuring that training schedules, playing rules, use of equipment and length of games are structured to facilitate greater participation by all Young Players and are suitable to all age categories and to the ability and maturity level of players.
* Not imposing responsibilities or roles on young people that may be inappropriate to their age.
* Respecting the rights, dignity and worth of all players and treating them equally regardless of their age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
* Creating pathways for young people to participate in our games not just as players but by affording them other developmental opportunities including training to become referees, coaches etc.
* Ensuring that when the team may travel away and stay overnight that separate sleeping facilities are provided for all adults and for young people. Similarly, for mixed groups, separate sleeping quarters for males and females shall be required.

***ENCOURAGING THE PARTICIPATION OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS BY***

* Encouraging parents/guardians to become members of the Club and to make themselves aware as to the running of juvenile games and activities and to the rules and codes that direct us in our work.
* Encouraging the participation of parents and guardians in all aspects of the Clubs activities and events and in organising and delivery of our games.
* Welcoming all parents/guardians to attend the games and training sessions that relate to their children. Information relating to such events should be made known to them at all times.
* Informing parents/guardians as to the identity of their Children’s Officer. This person should be available to assist with any concerns or enquiries that parents/guardians may have regarding the welfare and safety of children and young people in the Club.

***DEVELOP BEST PRACTICE IN CLUB STRUCTURES AND ADMINISTRATION BY***

* Ensuring that the Juvenile Section of the Club is structured in accordance with good practice guidelines and that young people are afforded a role in decision making at an appropriate level.
* Ensuring that all Club members are aware of their responsibilities to all children and young people.
* Appointing a Children’s Officer whose role shall include the monitoring of the child centred ethos of the Club and compliance with any policies and guidelines as issued by the Club, by their national Governing Bodies, or by statutory authorities and agencies in their jurisdiction.
* Appointing a Designated Person whose role shall include liaising with Statutory Authorities and the relevant Governing Body in relation to the reporting of allegations, concerns and/or suspicions of child abuse.
* Ensuring that all players are covered by their relevant Injury Scheme and that all premises etc. in use by our Club and players are equally covered for property/liability insurance as deemed necessary.
* Adopting procedures that facilitate the privacy and safety of all young people in the Club and that all such procedures are maintained and regularly reviewed so as to ensure that young people feel safe and are safe in the Club.
* Seeking the agreement of parents/guardians when their sons under 18 years of age are invited into adult squads. Boundaries of behaviour in adult groups are normally different from the boundaries that apply to underage teams and squads.

***This Code of Behaviour addresses the minimum appropriate levels of behaviour, practice and conduct required from our Young Players, Coaches, Officials, Supporters, Parents/Guardians and our Club.***

***DECLARATION***

***I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (print name)***

***Acknowledge that I have read a copy of the Code of Behaviour when working with underage players, and understood in full. I agree to be bound by the principles set out in the Code when participating, playing or attending our games.***

***SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Player) Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_***

***SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian/Coach)***

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