



Kinvara Utd F.C.

Code of Conduct v0.2 Draft

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Code of Conduct (DRAFT)

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.**
- **The Football Association of Ireland Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children’s Soccer can be located on the F.A.I. website at www.fai.ie**

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General Code of Conduct

Football for Fun

Soccer at Kinvara United FC is meant to be fun. We will try to challenge your child to reach out of his “comfort zone” and improve himself as a Player and a person. We will attempt to do this in environments that are fun, yet challenging. Soccer is a fun game and meant to be enjoyed by all participants young and old. In promoting “Football for Fun” everyone involved in the Kinvara United FC should:

- ⌚ Encourage participation and fun.
- ⌚ Promote the development of skills as opposed to winning at all costs.
- ⌚ Emphasize and praise effort.
- ⌚ 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.

Football and Young People

Soccer acknowledges the extent of its influence over young people and pledges to set a positive example. The Football Association of Ireland and Kinvara United FC are indebted to the countless number of volunteers who give of their time in providing football opportunities for children and young people. Like all sports, football, provides an excellent pathway for children and young people to learn new skills, become more confident and maximize their own potential. Through their participation, they can learn and develop life skills, have fun and enjoyment, make friends and experience life in a way that can enhance their personal growth throughout their lives. People become involved in football for young people for a variety of different reasons.

Community

Soccer, at all levels, is a vital part of the community. Soccer will take into account community feeling when making decisions.

Other Sports

Whenever practically possible, children will not be asked to choose between sports, and active communication should take place between the GAA, Camogie to facilitate separate training slots.

Fair Play



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Fair play is the guiding principle of the Irish Sport's Council's Code of Ethics as well as the FAI's Code of Ethics and Good Practice which is designed to provide guidance for those working with young people in football

Players Code of Conduct

Children in Kinvara United FC are entitled to:

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

Children in Kinvara United FC undertake to:

1. Treat other children, officials, coaches, volunteers, spectators and parents with fairness and respect
 2. play fairly, do their best and have fun
 3. be on their best behaviour at all times
 4. abide by all club rules
 5. make high standards of Fair Play the standard others want to follow
 6. respect opponents, they are not the enemy, they are partners in a sporting event
 7. shake hands before and after the match, whoever wins
 8. give opponents a hand if they are injured, put the ball out of play so they can get attention
 9. accept apologies from opponents when they are offered
 10. respect fellow team members and support them both when they do well and when things go wrong
 11. treat players from minority groups with the same respect you show other people
 12. be modest in victory and be gracious in defeat- *"Be A Sport"*
 13. approach the club Children's Officer with any questions or concerns they might have.
- Coaches and parents should encourage children to speak out and support them in doing so



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Children in Kinvara United FC should not:

1. cheat
2. use abusive language, or argue with, the referee, officials, team mates or opponents
3. use violence, use physical contact only when it is allowed within the rules
4. bully
5. tell lies about adults or other children
6. spread rumours
7. take banned substances to improve performance
8. keep secrets about any person who may have caused them harm
9. behave in any manner that may bring the name of Kinvara United FC into disrepute



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Coaches Code of Conduct

Player Centered Approach

Coaches need to be aware of why children want to play soccer. They want to learn new skills, make new friends, be part of a group, to win and be successful, experience challenges, excitement and action. While winning is important, it must be remembered that winning at all costs does not meet the needs of players. Results are not necessarily a good indicator of coaching effectiveness or ability, the improvement level of players and their level of enjoyment is. Coaches should aim to provide a safe and enjoyable environment where children and young people are placed at the centre of all activities.

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

In acting as good role models coaches should:

- ⌚ Encourage and be positive during sessions so that players leave with a sense of achievement.
- ⌚ Set challenging, realistic but achievable goals.
- ⌚ Plan and prepare each session appropriately and ensure proper levels of supervision.
- ⌚ Ensure that all activities are inclusive and allow all players to participate in an enjoyable way.
- ⌚ Put the welfare and enjoyment of players first and strike a balance between this and winning or achieving results.
- ⌚ Enforce the principles of fair play treating each player equally, with dignity and respect and ensure that all players play within the rules.
- ⌚ Be aware of the developmental stages and needs of players.
- ⌚ Avoid over training and over emphasis on competition.
- ⌚ Involve parents/guardians and other club members in what we do.
- ⌚ Be qualified and up to date with the latest coaching knowledge and skills.

In promoting “Sport for Fun” coaches should:

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



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- 🕒 Be aware of children's feelings.
- 🕒 Teach players to respect different cultures.

Best Practice-Coaches

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

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

Risk

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

To ensure a safe environment, coaches, by undertake the following:

1. Regular safety checks should be carried out in relation to premises, training facilities and equipment. Any problems should be brought to the attention of the Committee
2. Appropriate safety rules should be adopted and implemented and protective equipment should be used in any contact training session.
3. Parents/guardians should be informed of the starting and finishing times of training sessions and matches.
4. A first aid kit should be available at all training sessions /matches and injuries should be recorded, with a note of action taken in relation to each one.
5. Parents/Guardians should be notified of injuries/illness which their children incur while participating in any football activity
6. Never play injured players.
7. Ensure that the FAI Goalpost safety policy is strictly adhered to at all times

Coaches in Kinvara United FC undertake to:

1. The coach will be concerned primarily with the well being, safety, health and the future of the individual player.



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2. The coach will encourage players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance in training, competition and social life.
3. The relationship between coach and player relies heavily on mutual trust and respect.
4. Coaches should encourage players not to violate the laws of the game and should also encourage players to obey the spirit of such laws.
5. Coaches must not compromise their players to gain an unfair advantage.
6. Coaches must always discourage the use of drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances.
7. Coaches must treat opponents and officials with due respect both in victory and defeat and should encourage players to act in a similar manner.
8. Coaches must accept responsibility for the conduct of their players insofar as they will undertake to discourage inappropriate behaviour.
9. Coaches have an obligation to project an image of health, cleanliness and functional efficiency.
10. Coaches when responsible for players must not consume alcohol or drugs.
11. Coaches must not smoke when in the presence of young players.
12. Coaches in the presence of players should realise that it is inappropriate to behave in any fashion inconsistent with their position of responsibility.
13. Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every human being and their ultimate right to self determination. Everyone must be treated equally within the context of their activity, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or political persuasion.
14. Managers must notify Club Chairman / Secretary of participation in any friendlies or training sessions outside Kinvara United FC's designated locations.
15. Managers must not participate in any tournaments or competition without informing a Club Officer.
16. Coaches have the responsibility to notify a parent/guardian if their child incurs an injury or illness while participating in sport.
17. Coaches must inform parents/guardians of starting and finishing times of training sessions and matches.
18. Coaches should not treat injuries out of sight of others. Use a 'Two Deep' supervision system. Only personnel who are qualified in administering First Aid or treating sports injuries should attempt to treat an injury.
19. Physical contact between players or coaches and players should not involve touching the genital area, buttocks, breasts or mouth and should only occur when others are present.
20. Coaches should not play injured players.
21. Coaches should be careful not to expose children, especially younger participants to extreme weather conditions. Decisions in this regard should be made from the child's perspective.
22. Coaches should set realistic goals for both the team and individual players and should not push players into inappropriate or overly competitive competitions.
23. Coaches should ensure that all players are aware that 'Bullying' whether verbal or physical will NOT be tolerated.



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24. Coaches should advise players and parents on who and whom to go to if they wish to make a complaint.
25. The coach must not attempt to exert undue influence over any player's performance in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.
26. Coaches must realise that certain situations or friendly actions may be misinterpreted, not only by the player, but by outsiders motivated by jealousy, dislike or mistrust and could lead to allegations of sexual misconduct or impropriety. Therefore, coaches should be aware of, and avoid any such situation.
27. The coach will on occasion be required to travel and reside with players in the course of coaching and competitive matches. On such occasions, ensure separate sleeping accommodation for officials/volunteers and players.
28. When a team is comprised of both genders, there should be both a male and female official present.
29. The coach should never be in a room or similar alone with a player.
30. Physical relationships between coaches and under-age players are illegal.

Coaches must not:

1. Spend any time with children away from others.
2. Take sessions alone (Always employ "Two Deep" supervision).
3. Take children on journeys alone in their vehicle.
4. In the event that a child needs to go to the hospital, the coach must inform the parent and wait for the parent to collect the child. The coach must not take the child to the hospital themselves.
5. Use any form of corporal punishment or physical force on a child.
6. Exert undue influence over a participant in order to gain personal benefit or reward.
7. Engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow inappropriate touching of any kind.
8. Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child.
9. Undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children.
10. Ridicule or shout at a child for making a mistake or losing a game.
11. Put undue pressure on a child to please or perform well.
12. Use foul language directed at any player, any coach, any parent or any spectator.



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Parents/Guardians Code of Conduct

Parents / guardians play an important role in promoting children's happiness and success in football and sport in general. Parental expectations and behaviour have significant bearing on children's attitude and behaviour while participating in football. Parents / guardians need to be aware of why children want to play football. Children want to learn new skills, make new friends, be part of a group, to win and be successful, experience challenges, excitement and action. While winning is important, it must be remembered that winning at all costs does not meet the needs of players. Results are not necessarily a good indicator of coaching effectiveness or ability, the improvement level of players and their level of enjoyment is. Support and encouragement from parents / guardians will contribute to children having: Parents have a great influence on children's enjoyment and success in football. All children play football because they first and foremost love the game - its fun.

It is important to remember that however good a child may become at football within Kinvara United FC it is important that we reinforce the message to parents that positive encouragement will contribute to:

- ⌚ Children enjoying soccer.
- ⌚ A sense of personal achievement.
- ⌚ Improving the child's skills and techniques.
- ⌚ Improved physical fitness.
- ⌚ Higher self-esteem.
- ⌚ Improved social skills.

It is important for parents / guardians to find out what their children want from football, and help them to set realistic targets to achieve this. This may involve controlling their own aspirations and avoiding the desire to force their own dreams or unfulfilled ambitions on them. It is important to:

- ⌚ Encourage but not force children to be active.
- ⌚ Know when he / she are ready to play.
- ⌚ Encourage healthy lifestyle habits.
- ⌚ Attend training and games where possible.
- ⌚ Promote and teach FAIR PLAY.
- ⌚ Teach your child to treat referees, other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, colour, sex or ability.
- ⌚ Help children to set realistic targets.
- ⌚ Help children with decision making.

Parents / Guardians should never:

- ⌚ Insult players or club personnel.
- ⌚ Argue with, or shout abuse at officials and they should actively discourage children or young players from doing likewise.



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- ⌚ Suggest or encourage cheating, aggressive or "dirty" play.
- ⌚ Placing undue or inappropriate criticism on a player, causing the player unnecessary or unhealthy levels of stress.
- ⌚ Behave with physical or verbal aggression towards another person (actually use force or threaten the use of force).
- ⌚ Engage in any "harassment" type of behaviour.
- ⌚ Ignore or dismiss complaints or concerns expressed by a child which relate to his/her involvement in soccer.
- ⌚ Ridicule or shout at a child for losing a game or making a mistake.
- ⌚ Treat any club as a child minding service.
- ⌚ Take safety for granted.
- ⌚ Put undue pressure on any child to please or perform well.

Most importantly parents / guardians should: **“LEAD BY EXAMPLE”**

A parent’s expectations and attitudes have a significant bearing on a child's attitude towards:

- ⌚ Other players.
- ⌚ Officials.
- ⌚ Managers and Coaches.
- ⌚ Spectators.

Parent / Coach Co-Operation

It is important that parents / guardians establish contact with the individual responsible for coaching their child. In addition, parents / guardians should:

- ⌚ Give the coach help when asked and show appreciation for a job well done.
- ⌚ Support the coach’s and referee decisions. These individuals are only doing the best they can and they need support not anger.
- ⌚ Refrain from contacting the coach unless it is necessary, respect they have a private life.
- ⌚ Inform the coach about any illness, injury, holidays, etc.
- ⌚ Make an effort to attend training and games.
- ⌚ Communicate any concerns you may have to the coach.
- ⌚ Make sure the child has appropriate equipment/clothing/refreshments.
- ⌚ Encourage FAIR PLAY at home and do not instil a “win at all costs” attitude in children.
- ⌚ Be positive or be quiet, negative comments are counter productive.
- ⌚ Conduct themselves in such a way which promotes the definition of FAIR PLAY.
- ⌚ Be prepared to be asked to leave by officials or club personnel if behaviour is contrary to the definition of FAIR PLAY.



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At **Kinvara United FC** we want to ensure that the parents of our children are always positive and encouraging towards all children and not just their own. We therefore encourage you to:

- ⌚ Applaud all children as well as your own.
- ⌚ Avoid coaching your child during training or games.
- ⌚ Not to shout and scream.
- ⌚ Respect the coach and other officials.
- ⌚ Give attention to each of the children involved in our organization, not just the most talented.
- ⌚ Give encouragement to every child who participates in activities organized by Kinvara United FC.
- ⌚ Not to criticize your child on any part of the Player's game, leave this to the coaches since it may cause confusion and erode the Player's confidence.
- ⌚ Be your child's best fan and support him unconditionally. Don't withdraw your love when he performs below his standard.
- ⌚ On transporting your son home, please be supporting and always focus on the positive aspects of his game.
- ⌚ Develop a responsibility in your son to pack his own kit, clean boots and bring along his water bottle full of water only.
- ⌚ Respect the facilities at Kinvara United FC and our opponents' grounds.
- ⌚ Do not allow any of your young children to roam around the facilities, please also do not allow them to play on any goal posts, this could be dangerous.
- ⌚ Do not criticize your child's coach to your child or other parents, if you are not happy with the coach you should raise the issue with the coach and follow the procedure laid out in the "Complaints/Grievance Procedure"
- ⌚ Encourage your child to speak with the coach. If your child is having difficulties in training or games, or can't attend training etc. encourage him to speak directly to the coaches. This "responsibility taking" is a big part of becoming a mature person. By handling off the field tasks, your child is claiming ownership of all aspects of the game.
- ⌚ Monitor your child's stress level at home. Keep an eye on the Player to make sure that they are handling stress effectively from the various activities of life.
- ⌚ Monitor eating and sleeping habits. Be sure that your child is eating the correct foods. Players should be in bed at 9.30 pm on the night before a game and early enough on other nights to ensure that adequate rest is being taken.
- ⌚ Help your child keep his priorities correct. He needs to maintain a focus on schoolwork, relationships, and other things in life besides football. However you and he have made a commitment to the Club so help him to honor that commitment.
- ⌚ Help the young Player to focus on the performance and not the result. Winning is not as important as the performance.



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- ⌚ Support all the Players in your son's squad. Do not criticize any other Players in the squad.
- ⌚ Do not criticize the opponents, their parents, coaches or the referee.
- ⌚ View the game from the designated areas for spectators.



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Spectators Code of Conduct

- Remember that although children play organised soccer they are not miniature professionals. Don't place excessive pressure on children to perform to unrealistically high expectations. Children play soccer to develop their skills, to have fun and enjoy the game.
- Be on your best behaviour and lead by example. The behaviour of a teams supporters will often be remembered long after the result of the game. Be remembered for the right reasons.
- Applaud good play, sportsmanship and best effort by the visiting team as well as your own.
- Welcome and respect all your teams opponents. Without them there would be no match.
- Condemn the use of violence in all forms at every opportunity.
- Verbal abuse of players, match officials or opposing supporters cannot be accepted in any shape or form. Players or match officials should never be regarded as fair targets for ignorant or abusive behaviour.



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Club Policy on Participation

In Kinvara United FC we want children in Kinvara United FC 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.

Kinvara United FC 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 Kinvara United FC will insist on:

- ⌚ Encouraging participation and fun
- ⌚ Promoting the development of skills as opposed to winning at all costs
- ⌚ Emphasising and praising effort
- ⌚ Acting as a good role models
- ⌚ Insisting on Fair Play (we will 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

Policy of Participation for non- Galway&District Teams (normally Age 11 & younger)

1. Any person who wishes to play soccer for Kinvara United FC must be a fully paid up member of the club. The Club practices a ‘NO PAY NO PLAY’ policy.
2. Kinvara United FC will seek to enter teams in available competitions and tournaments.
3. For non-G&DL players, Kinvara United FC seeks to maximise the participation of each and every player.
4. When choosing teams for competitions and tournaments, managers will select all eligible players.
5. When choosing teams for matches, managers will select all available players.
6. Each player will play for at least half of the match under normal circumstances. If constraints are imposed by the organisers, managers will refer to the Executive Committee.



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7. Under normal circumstances, only players of that age group, and training with that age group, may play for any team. Younger players may be included in a team only if they are normally in that group for training sessions.
8. No player may play for a team more than one year above their age group.
9. When choosing teams for matches, priority should be given to players with the best training attendance, attitude, etc., NOT to players with the best skills.
10. Players should be substituted for any disciplinary issues on the pitch. E.g. consistent fouling, arguing with the Referee, Manager, Coaches, etc.
11. Players should be substituted for any injury. Any injured player will not be allowed to continue playing even if no substitutes are available. Player's health and safety are paramount.
12. When numbers allow, multiple teams will be entered in competitions and tournaments.
13. If multiple teams are entered in competitions or tournaments, managers will ensure that the skills level of each team is similar. No First teams.
14. If multiple teams are entered in competitions or tournaments, managers will ensure that the team names are non discriminating. E.g. Kinvara United Rovers or Kinvara United Lions and Kinvara United Tigers. No A or B teams.

Policy of Participation for Galway & District 11-a-side Teams (normally Age 12)

1. Any person who wishes to play soccer for Kinvara United FC must be a fully paid up member of the club. The Club practices a 'NO PAY NO PLAY' policy.
2. Kinvara United FC will normally enter a First Team at the highest possible level of each competition entered.
3. If the Club or Manager feels that the first team are not capable of competing at the highest level, this will be brought to the attention of the committee and the matter discussed to decide if the team should be entered at a lower level.
4. When numbers allow, a 'B Team' will be entered into a lower level of competition for **weaker players**. A 'C Team' may also be entered if numbers allow and so on.
5. A Manager may select any player eligible to play for the first team, including players from a lower age group, even if there are "B" and/or "C" Teams.
6. A player must play games and attend training at their own age level before he/she may play/train at a higher level.
7. Match time ? TBC
8. A player may only participate at one level above their age level regardless of size, strength or level of skill.
9. The B Team (if no 'C Team' is entered) may use players from the younger age group to participate in competition. However these 'younger players' may only be used if all players eligible according to their age are already participating.
10. If a 'C Team' is entered into competition, players on the 'B Team' may only be selected from their relevant age level. The 'C Team' may then use players from a lower age level and so on.



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11. If younger players are playing for an older team, the Manager from their relevant age group must be consulted first. This is important in case there are any issues or concerns relating to the player playing above their age.

12. Any concerns a manager may have in relation to a player competing above their age level should be raised at committee level.

Disciplinary Policy

It is the policy of Kinvara United FC that all Members, Parents and Spectators act in an appropriate manner as outlined in the Club Constitution and the Club Code of Conduct.

Player Policy

Minor Breach of Standards

1. Disruption
2. Rough behaviour
3. Chewing gum
4. Inappropriate clothing, e.g., missing shin-pads
5. Lateness

Sanctions

1. Verbal reprimand

Major Breach of Standards

1. Continuous disruption
2. Bullying
3. Leaving grounds
4. Defacing property
5. Smoking
6. Substance abuse

Sanctions

1. Verbal reprimand
2. Timeout / denial of match/game time
3. Phone call home, parent/guardian to come & collect
4. Parent/guardian required to meet with coach
5. Parent/guardian required to meet with discipline committee
6. Suspension
7. Referral to discipline committee

Serious Breach of Standards

1. Bullying
2. Abuse of other players, coaches, including serious verbal abuse
3. Gross indecency



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4. Recurrence of major breaches
5. Possession / supply or use of illegal substances

Sanctions

1. Parent/guardian required to meet with discipline committee
2. Player called to formal discipline meeting accompanied by parent/guardian

Suspension

Any coach may suspend a player from the club for a period no longer than 4 weeks.

Expulsion

Only the discipline committee may expel a player from the club.

Expulsion is the last resort and is considered when the players continued attendance is, in the view of the coach and upheld by the club discipline committee, to be harmful to the learning & enjoyment health or safety of other players of any coach or assistant, and/or the student has, through continued misconduct, displayed their unwillingness to accept the standards set out in the clubs code of behaviour.

Coach Policy

To be agreed.

Parent/Guardian Policy

To be agreed.

Spectator Policy

To be agreed.

Disciplinary committee

The Disciplinary committee will be formed by the Executive Committee of Kinvara United FC and will consist of no fewer than 4 members.

1. When the Disciplinary Committee are required to meet to discuss breaches of the Club Constitution or the Club Code of Conduct, the individual involved will be contacted by the Club Secretary to attend a meeting to discuss the issue.
2. For breaches of the Club Constitution or the Club Code of Conduct, the following sanctions may apply
 - No further action required.
 - Suspension pending further investigation.
 - Suspension from Kinvara United FC for a specified time.
 - Expulsion from Kinvara United FC.
 - Contact with relevant Police Authority to investigate.

The individual will then be required to attend the meeting to discuss the allegations with the committee, where a decision will be made in relation to a sanction if any is to be imposed.



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The individual will be entitled to request the presence of their Parent/Guardian/Representative at the meeting.

If the individual is under 18 years of age, the committee will request a parent/guardian to attend the meeting. No sanction may be imposed on any individual under 18 years of age without a parent/guardian being present.

Any Player/Member of Kinvara United FC sanctioned by the Club, Galway and District League or the FAI will be solely responsible for the sanction imposed. Kinvara United FC will not pay any fine imposed on any Player/Member of the club by any of the Governing Authorities.

If any Player receives a red card during a match, the Manager will review the incident with the view to applying the Club's Internal Disciplinary Procedure.

Complaints Procedure

All players (or player's Guardian) who have complaints, should first raise the issue with the player's Manager. The manager and player/guardian should attempt to resolve the issue in a calm and non-confrontational manner if at all possible, but also depending on the severity of the issue the player/guardian or manager may seek to have the issue referred to a higher authority.

If the player is under 18 years of age, and if unsatisfied with the response of the Manager, the player (or player's Guardian) may raise the issue with the Club Children's Officer who will record the details of the issue in the Club Complaints Book.

If unsatisfied with the response of the Manager or Club Children's Officer, the player (or player's Guardian) should send a letter to the Club Secretary, outlining the issue and responses to date. The Club Secretary will record details of the issue in the Club Complaints Book if not already recorded.

The Secretary will raise the issue at the Executive Committee and following discussion a decision will be made. Complaints will normally be dealt with at the next Executive Committee meeting, but may be delayed until the third next meeting. This decision will be (a) uphold the complaint and outline corrective action, (b) deny the complaint with reasons, or (c) postpone a decision pending further investigation. The complainant will be notified of the decision by letter from the Club Secretary. The decision of the Executive Committee is final.



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Bullying

The risk of bullying and harassment by adults and by children should be anticipated by taking active steps to prevent it occurring. A prompt and decisive response should be made to any indications that it is taking place.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical, which is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour, which is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools, sports clubs and other organisations working with children. While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reportable to Health Board or Gardai, dealing with bullying behaviour is normally the responsibility of the club where it is taking place.

It includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting or extortion by one or more children against a victim. It is the responsibility of coaches to deal with bullying that may take place in their team of Kinvara United FC. Incidents of bullying should be dealt with immediately and not tolerated under any circumstances. Many children are reluctant to tell adults that they are being bullied. Older children are even more reluctant. This underlines the need for constant vigilance and encouragement to report bullying.

Combating Bullying

Kinvara United FC will create an anti-bullying policy, which will include the following measures:

- raising awareness of bullying as an unacceptable form of behaviour
- creating a club ethos which encourages children, Sports Leaders and parents/guardians to report bullying and to use the procedures of the complaints mechanism of the organisation to address this problem
- providing comprehensive supervision of children at all sporting activities
- providing a supportive environment for victims of bullying
- obtaining the co-operation of parents/guardians to counter bullying



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It is important to recognise the impact that bullying and discrimination can have in the lives of young people. Some people may not regard bullying and discrimination as child abuse because of the settings in which this often takes place and also because it is often other young people who are responsible for the behaviour.

The Football Association of Ireland recognises that bullying is an increasing problem. It is imperative that clubs should have in place a policy to deal with bullying, and that volunteers/coaches are aware of this policy and of procedural guidelines to deal with bullying.

In situations where the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, clubs should consult the relevant Health Board with a view to drawing up an appropriate response such as a management plan. (Children First 1999)

All coaches/managers/volunteers/players/parents have a part to play in ensuring that nobody in soccer is the victim of any type of “bullying behaviour”. Everyone should be aware that bullying of any kind will not be tolerated and they have a duty to report any such behaviour to our managers/coaches/volunteers who will in turn report to the Committee.

Peer Abuse

In some cases of child abuse, the alleged perpetrator will be a child. In these situations, the child protection procedures should be adhered to for both the victim and alleged abuser, that is, it should be considered a child protection issue for both children.

Work must be done to ensure that perpetrators of abuse, even when they are children themselves, take responsibility for their behaviour and acknowledge that the behaviour is unacceptable.

It is important that clarity exists in respect of which behaviours constitute peer abuse, particularly child sexual abuse. Consultation with the health board should help to clarify the nature of any sexual behaviour by children which gives rise to concern.

Bullying is often defined in terms of three components.

- ⌚ It must occur over time, rather than being a single aggressive act.
- ⌚ It involves an imbalance of power, the powerful attack the powerless.
- ⌚ It can be psychological, verbal, or physical in nature.



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Types of Bullying

Child to child – includes physical aggression, verbal bullying, intimidation, damage to property, stealing property and isolation

Adult to child- this includes the use of repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidatory nature, or any comment intended to degrade a child

Child to adult- this includes the use of repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidatory nature by an individual or group of children

A UK study found that the most common experiences of bullying and discrimination reported by young people were at the hands of other young people.

This included:

- ⌚ Being called names, insulted or verbally abused;
- ⌚ Being deliberately embarrassed and humiliated by other children;
- ⌚ Being made to feel different or like an outsider;
- ⌚ Being lied about;
- ⌚ Being physically assaulted or threatened with violence;
- ⌚ Being ignored.

In the study, boys were most likely to experience physical bullying or threats have property stolen or damaged. Girls on the other hand, were more likely to be ignored or not spoken to.

Bullying by adults was a less common experience however one in ten reported this. Of this type of bullying the most common reported experiences were:

- ⌚ Being deliberately embarrassed or humiliated;
- ⌚ Being unfairly treated or verbally abused;
- ⌚ Being ignored or not spoken to.

Response to Bullying

Vigilance is the most potent deterrent against bullying so that children and young people who bully will know that it will be dealt with, and the victims of bullying will have confidence in this.

There needs to be open discussion about bullying and a clear statement of its unacceptability. Managers/coaches/children/parents should be advised at the start of every season that “bullying” in any shape or form is not acceptable or permitted in (insert club name here).



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In confronting the bully or bullies in relation to specific incidents it is important to:

- ⌚ Be absolutely certain about the known facts
- ⌚ Confront the “bully/bullies” with the allegations
- ⌚ Make it clear that the behaviour is unacceptable
- ⌚ See each “bully” separately if appropriate
- ⌚ Be specific about sanctions if the bullying does not stop
- ⌚ Follow up to check that the behaviour has ceased
- ⌚ Record all instances of bullying and action taken.

Who should deal with bullying?

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reported to the health board or An Garda Síochana, dealing with bullying behaviour is normally the responsibility of all coaches/managers/volunteers in this club / organisation.

How can it be prevented?

- ⌚ Ensure that all members follow the code of conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member.
- ⌚ Ensure adequate supervision at all times
- ⌚ Deal with any incidents as they arise.
- ⌚ Use a whole group policy or ‘no-blame approach’, i.e., not ‘bullying the bully’ but working with bullies and the group of young people, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a ‘shared concern’ of the group, (see below)
- ⌚ Reinforce that there is ‘a permission to tell’ culture rather than a ‘might is right’
- ⌚ Encourage young people to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly new or different children
- ⌚ Offer the victim immediate support and put the ‘no blame approach’ into operation
- ⌚ Never tell a young person to ignore bullying, they can’t ignore it, it hurts too much
- ⌚ Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game
- ⌚ Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault
- ⌚ All incidents of “bullying” should be reported to the Committee of Kinvara United

Alternatively you may try the “No blame” Approach

What is the ‘No Blame’ Approach?

Step 1 – Interview with the victim

- ⌚ If you find that there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim. At this stage find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling. Try asking the following questions:



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- ⌚ Was it verbal or physical intimidation?
- ⌚ How hurt is the victim
- ⌚ Was it within his/her own peer group?
- ⌚ Ensure the victim that his/her name will not come out in the investigation
- ⌚ Actively listen

Step 2 – Meet with all involved

- ⌚ Arrange to meet with all those involved; this should include some bystanders, those who may have colluded, those who joined in and those who initiated the bullying.
- ⌚ Have a maximum of six to eight in the group – keep the number controllable
- ⌚ Make a point of calling a ‘special’ meeting
- ⌚ Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by all
- ⌚ Speak only of the hurt caused in general terms with no reference to the victim
- ⌚ Play on the conscience of all – ask questions like: How would you feel? Would you like it done to you?

Step 3 – Explain the problem

- ⌚ The distress being suffered as a result of the bullying incident is explained. At this stage the details of the incident or the allocation of the blame is not discussed.
- ⌚ Explain the feelings of loneliness, feeling left out, rejected, laughed at. Try asking questions:
 - ⌚ Would they like it if it happened to them
 - ⌚ “Someone here in this group was bullied by someone within the group, what could we do to see it does not happen again?”
- ⌚ Listen, watch out for reactions, and pick up on any without isolating anyone

Step 4 – Share the responsibility

- ⌚ Explain what steps / controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how everyone will loose out as a result

Step 5 – Ask the group for their ideas

- ⌚ At this stage the group is encouraged to suggest ways that would make the victim feel happier. All positive responses are noted. Use phrases “if it were you” to encourage a response. Listen to all suggestions and note them

Step 6 – Leave it to them

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



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Step 7 – Meet them again

⌚ Each member of the group, including the bully, discuss how things are going, who is doing what and have there been other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and also keeps all involved in the process.

⌚ Again enforce the idea of the ‘team’ looking after each other at regular intervals to ensure it is know that bullying or intimidating behaviour will not be tolerated.

Club personnel are advised that they are not expected to deal with all situations on their own as sometimes “bullying” can be very difficult to deal with. They can be assured that the Committee of Kinvara United are available to provide support and advice and if necessary professional expertise.

See also www.bullying.co.uk/schools/sport

Our Duty to Care Dept of Health & Children