

Coaches, Officials and Volunteers Code of Conduct

Sport should be safe, fun and conducted in a spirit of fair play

In order to act as a role model and to promote their safety and the safety of the young people, all Sports Leaders in athletics should

1. Create a safe and enjoyable environment

- Consider the wellbeing and safety of participants before the development of performance.
- Make sure all activities are appropriate to the age, ability and the experience of those taking part.
- Set age appropriate and realistic goals
- Prioritise skill development and personal satisfaction over highly structured competition
- Make sure all levels of participation are enjoyable and fun
- Encourage participants to value their performances and not just results.
- Praise and encourage effort as well as results
- Promote fair play
- Promote a friendly respectful culture between children
- Avoid favouritism – each child will need attention according to their sporting needs
- Show respect for all involved – adults and children
- Never condone rule violations, rough play or the use of prohibited substances.

2. Recognise and ensure the welfare of children

- Follow all guidelines laid down by the National Governing Body
- Ensure your garda vetting and safeguarding training are up to date (each should be renewed every 4 years)
- Be aware of the code of conduct for young people and for parents (available on the club website)
- Ensure your actions do not put a parent or athlete in a position where they may breach their code of conduct.
- Hold qualifications / complete training appropriate to the age and level of the athletes you coach.
- Have Athletics Ireland insurance cover
- Ensure there is adequate supervision
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with participants, based on mutual trust and respect.
- Promote a culture where children are encouraged to give opinions and children's voices are considered in decisions involving their sport and training.
- Involve and update parents especially if a problem has arisen. Where possible resolve any problems with the parents and child. If the problem cannot be resolved, seek the support of the club committee and/or children's officer.
- Work in an open environment
- Respect a child's sensitivity
- Never use punishments or exclusion for mistakes
- Never swear at, ridicule, shout unnecessarily or argue with a child
- Never expose a child to criticism, hostility or sarcasm
- Display consistently high standards of behaviour.
- Sports leaders or officials must never abuse their position of authority by engaging in any form of sexual relations with children or vulnerable adults.
- Never exert undue influence over participants to gain personal benefit or reward

3. The following should apply when communicating with juvenile athletes:

- Do use a club group text or email system for communicating with parents/guardians of athletes.
- Always use official club group text or social media sites to communicate with juvenile athletes.
- Do not communicate individually by text or email with juvenile athletes.
- Do not engage in communications with underage athletes via personal social network sites.