



2011

Parnell's GAA Club Code of Conduct & Volunteer Charter Plan for Working with Young People



Mission Statement

Parnell's GAA is committed to implementing an integrated Games Development Strategy with a view to maximising participation, optimising playing standards and ensuring that Players' needs are catered for in a balanced way.

Our Philosophy

The greater the sense of achievement, fun and fair play experienced by young players, the more they enjoy their involvement the greater the effort they will make to excel.

Respect 4 All

Respect is an integral part of the Parnell's GAA Coaching & Games Development Programme. It is an essential element in terms of recruiting and retaining young players in our club with specific regard to the Young Player's right to participation and fair play etc. Young Players also have responsibilities, both to their Coaches, Rules and to Referees and to Match Officials.

We believe that **Respect = Rights, Recruitment, Retainment, Rules, Referees and Responsibilities**. The **6 R's of Club Habit** underpins our philosophy about playing our Games with our underage players.



Parnell's GAA Club – The 6 R's of Club Habit

Rights

Every Child has the right to an environment that supports and promotes learning and enjoyment. An environment that is conducive to the recruitment and retention of players will by implication be inclusive, safe and supportive.

Recruitment

The Parnell's GAA is committed to providing an inclusive environment within which all young players may participate and enjoy Gaelic Games.

As an Association that seeks to fulfil our obligations relating to the welfare of all of our members we are committed to recruiting volunteer coaches, administrators and referees that respect the rights of all Young Players.

Retain

Through specific and targeted training and support services Parnell's GAA will assist our coaches, administrators and referees as they promote the playing of our Games and the co-ordinating of skills development, particularly among young players. This in turn will support the retention of all players.

Rules

The Rules are there to explain how the games of hurling, Camogie and Gaelic Football and Ladies Football are played and to perpetuate the following underlying principles of fair play.

- Rules should ensure that the games are played in a spirit of true sportsmanship and with total respect for match officials.
- Rules enhance the prevailing level of skill and reward players who make the ball the focal point of their attention.
- Rules make provision for physical contact while minimising the potential for injury and cynicism.
- Rules ensure that all players take responsibility for their own behaviour and that sanctions are imposed on a proportionate and transparent basis.

Referees

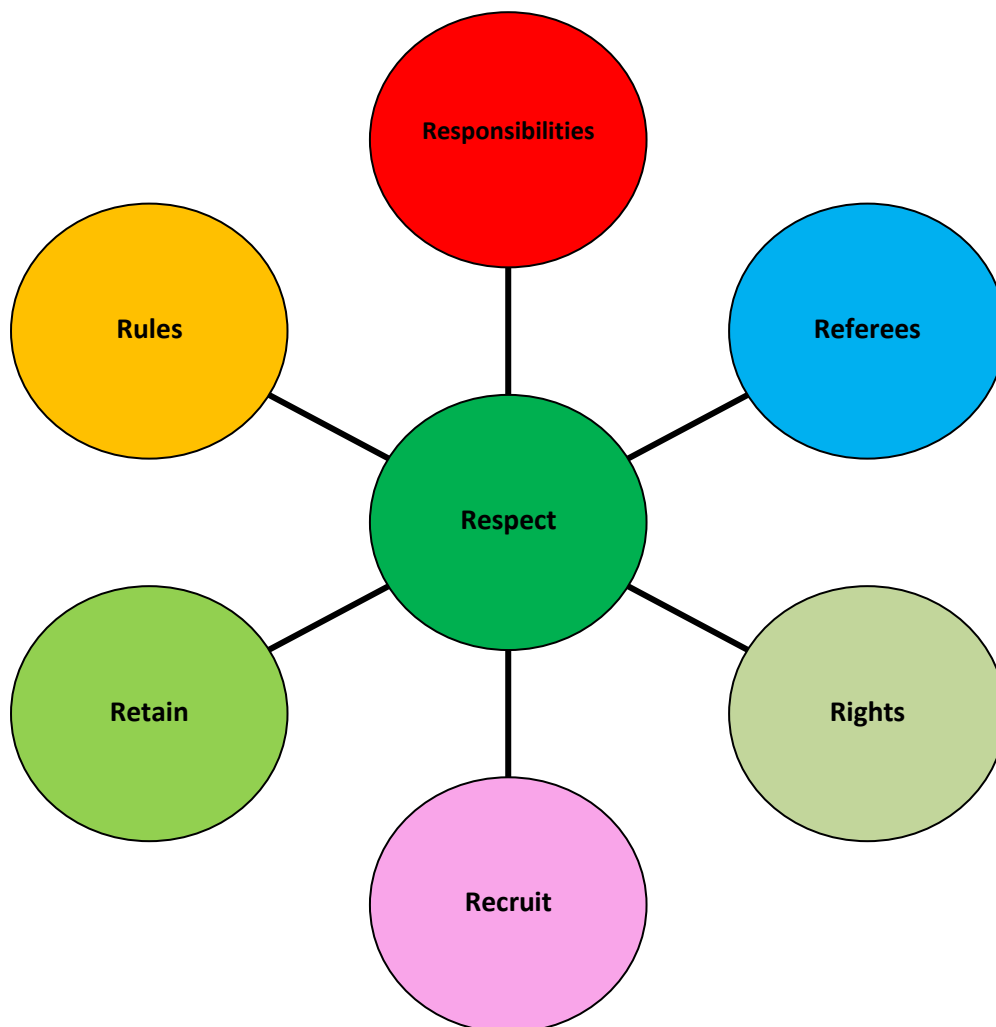
The standard of our games depends on the quality of our referees. The essential roles, responsibilities and privileges of a Referee are:

- To apply the rules impartially and consistently in order to create the conditions for our Games to be played well. Proper application of the rules enables our Referees to:
- Fulfil their responsibilities and in doing so to protect, preserve and promote our Games.
- Creates the conditions for hurlers and footballers to play with confidence.
- Be constructive, positive and caring.
- Oversee the conditions whereby our Games can be played with skill, courage, commitment, genius, flair, strength and legitimate aggression.

Responsibilities

With rights there come responsibilities. Respect requires the acceptance and fulfilment of all of our responsibilities as Players, Coaches, Administrators, Referees, Supporters and Parents.

The Model - Parnell's Club Code of Conduct: Respect = 6 R's of Club Habits



Parnell's GAA Young Players

All of Parnell's GAA 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 they also have responsibilities to treat others with fairness and respect. With rights there will always be responsibilities. There will be a 'sign-up' procedure, whereby young people agree to abide by the **Code of Behaviour** and to any other relevant policies and codes within the GAA.

Parnell's GAA Young Players should be entitled to:

- Be safe and feel safe.
- Have fun and experience a sense of enjoyment and fulfilment.
- 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 a level at which they feel comfortable.
- Be listened to.
- Make their concerns known and have them dealt with in an appropriate manner.
- Be protected from abuse.



Parnell's Young Players should always:

- Play fairly, do their best and enjoy themselves.
- Respect fellow team members regardless of ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
 - Support fellow team members whether they do well or not so well.
 - Represent their team, their club and their family with pride and dignity.
- Respect all coaches, mentors, officials and their opponents.
- Be gracious in defeat and modest in victory.
- Shake hands before and after the game irrespective of the result.
- Inform their coach/mentor/manager when they are unavailable for training and games.
- Talk to the Club Children's Officer with any concerns or questions they may have.
- Adhere to acceptable standards of behaviour and their Club's



Code of Discipline.

- Tell somebody else if they or others have been harmed in any way.
- Take due care of club equipment.
- *Wear Parnell's GAA club gear with pride as part of club identity.

Parnell's GAA Young Players should not:

- Cheat – always play by the rules.
- Shout at or argue with an official, team mates or opponents or use violence.
- Use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage or isolate other players.
- Spread rumours.
- Tell lies about adults or other young people.
- Play or train if they feel unwell or are injured.
- Use unacceptable language or racial abuse.

Parnell's GAA Club Coaches, Mentors and Trainers

All Parnell's GAA Coaches, Mentors and Trainers (referred to hereafter as Coaches) should ensure that young people and children benefit significantly from our games by promoting a positive, healthy and participatory approach to our work with under age players. In developing the skills levels of every player Coaches should always encourage enjoyment and fun while ensuring meaningful participation in our games and activates. Coaches should always remember that they are role models for the players in their care.

Recruitment of Coaches

All Coaches working with young people and children are required to be suitable for their chosen role(s), and should be appropriately trained, qualified and supported to fulfil such roles. All persons working or volunteering for such roles will participate in agreed recruitment and selection procedures and shall attend coaching and training courses relevant to their roles.

Parnell's GAA Coaches should maintain a child centred approach:

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person.
- Treat each person equally regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
- Be positive during coaching sessions, games and other activities so that young players always leave with a sense of achievement and an increased level of self-esteem.
- Recognise the development needs and capacity of all young players, regardless of their ability, by emphasising participation for all while avoiding excessive training and competition. Skills development and personal satisfaction should have priority over competition.
- Develop an understanding of relevant coaching methods and ensure that they have the appropriate level of coaching accreditation.
- Do not equate losing with failure and do not develop a preoccupation with medals and trophies. The level of improvement made by young players is the best indicator of effective coaching.



Parnell's GAA 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 decisions or integrity.
- Encourage players to respect and accept the judgement of match officials.
- Promote **Fair Play**.
- Promote the **RESPECT** initiative.
- Avoid smoking while working with young players.
- Do not consume alcohol or non prescribed drugs immediately prior to or while young players are in your care.
- Encourage parents to become involved in your team and club activities wherever possible.

Conduct of Parnell's GAA Coaches V Working with Children

- Don't shout at or lecture players or reprimand/ridicule them when they make a mistake. Young players learn best through trial and should not be afraid to risk error so as to learn.
- Never use any form of corporal punishment or physical force.
- Avoid incidents of horse play or role play or telling jokes etc that could be misinterpreted.
- Ensure that all physical contact is appropriate and has the permission and understanding of the young person.
- Never undertake any form of therapy or hypnosis, in the training of children.

- Develop an appropriate working relationship with children based on mutual trust and respect.
- Challenge bullying in any form whether physical or emotional. Bullying is not acceptable behaviour be it from a young person, coach, parent/guardian, spectator or match official.

Avoid compromising your role as a Parnell's GAA Coach

- Avoid a situation where you are alone in a car or dressing room with a player.
- Avoid taking coaching sessions on your own.
- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with a player or away from others.
- Avoid taking young players to your home.

Parnell's GAA Club - Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians have an influential role to play in assisting and encouraging their children to adopt a positive attitude and in encouraging them to maintain an involvement in sport. They should always be a good role model for their children.

Parnell's Parents/Guardians should encourage their child to:

- Play by the rules.
- Improve their skills levels.
- Appreciate everybody on their team, regardless of ability.
- Maintain a balanced and healthy lifestyle with regard to exercise, food, rest and play. Seek advice if necessary from club officials on this issue.

Parnell's Parents/Guardians should lead by example:

- Respect officials' 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.
- Never embarrass a child or use sarcastic remarks towards a player.
- Applaud good play from all teams.
- Don't criticise 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 or play area unless invited to do so by an official in charge.

Parnell's Parents/Guardians should:

- Complete and return the registration/permission and medical consent forms for their child's participation in the club.
- Inform the mentors of any change 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 or other activities.
- Provide their child with proper clothing and equipment.
- Ensure that the nutrition/hydration and hygiene needs of their child are met.
- Avoid asking a child or 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'.
- Listen to what young people 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.



Parnell's Parents/Guardians should assist their club by:

- Showing appreciation to volunteers, mentors and club officials.
- Attending training and games on a regular basis.
- Assisting in the organising of club activities and events as requested.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat each one equally regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.

Parnell's Parents/Guardians have the right to:

- Know their child is safe and to make a complaint if they believe that their child's safety is in any way compromised.
- 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

Parnell's GAA Supporters (Home & Away)

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. Active, loyal and well behaved supporters are always welcome to attend and support our games but should be aware that their conduct will always reflect upon the team, players and clubs that they support.



Fellow supporters have a responsibility to ensure that all spectators conduct themselves in an acceptable and well behaved manner at all times when attending under age games and competitions. Supporters should always realise that young players participate in organised sport for fun.

Parnell's GAA 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 by fellow spectators, coaches, officials or players.
- Encouraging players to participate according to the rules and the referees' decisions.
- Demonstrating appropriate social behaviour by not using foul language or harassing participants, mentors or officials.
- Respecting the decisions of all officials.
- Never ridiculing or 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.

Dealing with complaints

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, which suggests a failure to perform a function or provide a service in line with stated practices and policies.

Purpose of Complaint:

A complaint gives an organisation the opportunity to:

- Put something right which has gone wrong
- Restore the service to the required standard

- Ensure that faults/mistakes are acknowledged
- Provide a remedy

Key elements for consideration

Those who make complaints should have easy access to an effective procedure to allow a quick resolution of their complaint.

Who is the first point of contact for a complaint?

This should be made known to all and the contact details of the person receiving such complaints on behalf of the Club or County also made known in advance.

Stages in a complaints procedure

There are normally two or three stages in a complaints procedure:

Stage 1 (informal)

The Association acknowledges the complaint and attempts to resolve the issue at local level. Experience has shown that the vast majority of complaints are best resolved informally and at the point nearest delivery of the service.

Stage 2 (Formal)

If the complaint cannot be resolved at the first stage, it is necessary to outline how it will be dealt with subsequently. This stage may involve formalising the complaint by completing a complaints form or writing a letter. A realistic time frame for acknowledgement of the complaint and subsequent investigation should be identified. This time frame for resolving a complaint should be short and not drawn out for any purpose unless it is beyond your control. Those with responsibility for investigating complaints should be clearly identified. All parties need to be informed of the outcome in writing. An appropriate final decision making point should be identified and options for appeals should be outlined

Additional considerations:

Everyone involved – the complainant and the subject (s) – should be given the right of representation. They may for example be accompanied or represented by a friend or colleague. Any process should be clearly and accurately recorded at every stage. Good practice would indicate that it is preferable to confirm arrangements in writing. All information from the process – written or verbal – should be kept confidential.

When dealing with a complaint it is important to be clear about:

- The particular incident of concern
- Any previous incidents taken into account
- Any remedial action to be taken, e.g. an apology
- Any new behaviour expected
- What will happen if the arrangements agreed are not adhered to?

In the event of a particularly serious incident where a criminal offence is suspected, the Gardaí should conduct the investigation. Complaints that may infer any forms of Abuse should be dealt with under the GAA Guidelines for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse.

Confidentiality in the processing of allegations

Confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all issues and people involved in cases of abuse, welfare or bad practice. It is important that the rights of both the child and the person about whom the complaint has been made are protected.

Charter for Volunteers of *An Cumann Parnell*

Volunteers' Rights

- To know if, and how, they are being selected for voluntary work
- To be given meaningful work to do and to know what is expected of them, and to be offered appropriate training
- To be appreciated and have their voluntary contribution recognised
- To receive supervision/support and to know who to go to if there is a problem
- To get something out of the work themselves, and to make mistakes and learn from them
- To be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses while on official An Cumann Parnell activities
- To be made aware of any disciplinary and grievance procedures
- To be treated fairly and not experience discrimination, to have safe working conditions, including insurance cover
- To be informed about, and given the opportunity to play an active part in An Cumann Parnell as a whole
- To be able to say "no" and leave without feeling guilty

Volunteers' Responsibilities

- To respect the values and aims of An Cumann Parnell and To respect the confidential nature of An Cumann Parnell
- To be committed and punctual, to be reliable and give sufficient notice if unable to turn up
- To attend essential training and support
- To undertake to work to a high standard and admit if there are problems
- To leave when no longer enjoying the An Cumann Parnell experience
- To give 6 months continuous service within the previous year

An Cumann Parnell Rights

- To look for certain qualities and skills in volunteers
- To select only volunteers who are suitable for the work
- To draw up a volunteer agreement or "contract"
- To ask for tasks to be done in a particular way
- To ask for commitment, reliability and punctuality
- To deal with disciplinary and grievance matters
- To ask volunteers to leave if their involvement hinders An Cumann Parnell achieving its goals

An Cumann Parnell Responsibilities

- To ensure the volunteers' experience is a rewarding one
- To ensure equal access and not to discriminate, to define clear policies, procedures and meaningful roles for volunteers
- To provide all necessary information to volunteers and to provide training where necessary
- To supervise, provide support, appreciate and value volunteers
- To provide a safe working environment, to provide insurance cover and inform volunteers of any legal liabilities
- To re-imburse out-of-pocket expenses

Volunteer Incentive Package

Parnell's GAA Club appreciate the huge commitment, attitude and the time given to working with teams, events, etc by our network of Volunteers.

We in Parnell's GAA club are committed to acknowledging this fact and are committed to adhering to our Volunteer Charter and to ensure that we continue to provide Support, Education and Training in order to help everyone to do their jobs as best as possible for the greater good of our Club, Players, Coaches, Parents and Supporters.

The following is Parnell's GAA Volunteer incentive package as agreed by club executive.

- ✓ Free piece of branded club gear to the value of **€50**
- ✓ 4 x '**Buy one get one free**' drinks vouchers per month for 12 months.
- ✓ Free **Gym membership** for new club.
- ✓ Priority tickets for all club functions.
- ✓ Free volunteers **social night** at Christmas time.
- ✓ Free internal **Coach Education & Training programmes**

Acknowledgements

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Reference: GAA Code of Conduct; Irish Sports Council 'Code of Best Practice of Working with Children in Sport. Volunteering Ireland for their advice and information