



SECTION
01

INTRODUCTION INDEX & APPENDICES

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF THE
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)



CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)

The publication by the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Ladies Gaelic Football Association, the Camogie Association, GAA Handball Ireland and the Rounders Council of Ireland of this joint Code of Behaviour (Underage) provides our membership, and particularly those who work with young people and children, with specific direction and guidance when fulfilling their roles at local and national level.

Such is the importance of the child safeguarding and protection agenda in our work that each of the Gaelic Games Associations have brought together the collective best practices based on many years of experience as we seek to provide a safe environment in which we can promote our games and enable young people and children to develop in a caring and respectful environment.

This Code applies to all persons under 18 yrs. of age who participate in our games or other activities and to those who work with them and assist them in any capacity on our behalf.

The value of providing a joint Code for our members enables us to jointly promote organisational and statutory guidance and legislation that governs our work with young people and children. This will assist and direct our members and units in our work and provide a platform and support for those working with young people and children at all levels in our Associations.

Our Associations, in common with others who work with young people and children, will continue to abide by and integrate child welfare legislation and statutory guidance into our work, regardless of the jurisdiction in which we operate. In upholding this principle, the welfare of the child shall always be our paramount consideration, whether it is on the playing fields, in the training of our underage players, the recruitment of our coaches, the active involvement of parents in our work or the many other developmental and social opportunities that we offer our underage players on a daily and weekly basis.

Young people will spend some of the most enjoyable days of their lives playing our games and socialising with their friends in our local Clubs. Whether attending or playing GAA matches, playing Ladies Football or Camogie, or participating in Rounders or Handball activities, they will do so during some of the most important developmental years of their lives.

We hope to see as many of these players as possible progressing to coaching, mentoring and refereeing roles in the years ahead. The enjoyment they experience, the friendships they make, the winning and the losing will all be part of the development of these young people as will the bond they build within each of our Gaelic Games Associations.

Our role and our responsibility is to ensure that they benefit from and participate in our Gaelic Games in a safe, enjoyable and developmental environment where our Games are conducted in a spirit of fair play with everyone who works on our behalf emphasising respect, equality, safety and non-discrimination in all aspects of our work with children and young people. Each member of our Associations has a responsibility to accept and implement this Code as it directs us in such work.

ALLEGED BREACHES OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)

The Code outlines in Section 4 of this Code ‘Dealing with Alleged Breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage)’ how alleged breaches may be dealt with informally through the services of the relevant Children’s Officer or if deemed more appropriate may be dealt with formally through a Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings.

Breaches of the Code, whether by an adult or a child, should always be addressed in a proportionate manner and should a sanction ever be required, following a breach of the Code, it should be applied in accordance with the provisions of the Code, as outlined for that purpose.

The Child Safeguarding Committee shall also have the authority to order that a team, unit or member, deemed to be safeguarding non-compliant, may not participate in any competitions, games or activities during their period of non-compliance. This is a temporary measure and is separate to the process involving a Code of Behaviour Hearings Committee and shall be subject to the same appeals procedure as would any sanction imposed under the Code.

In the interest of clarity and accuracy, any amendments to the Code of Behaviour (Underage) shall be in accordance with the Code that is available on each of our Associations’ websites.

Mol an Óige agus tiocfaidh sí.

Adopted by the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Ladies Gaelic Football Association, the Camogie Association, GAA Handball Ireland and GAA Rounders.

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