

# **Rock Celtic Football Club**

## **Code of Practice and Child Protection Policy**

**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.

Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children,  
Dept. of Health & Children 1999

Our Duty to Care, Dept. of Health & Children 2002

Football Association of Ireland Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy

Rock Celtic FC through confirming this policy document has demonstrated its commitment to ensuring that children and young people can participate in all soccer activities with their safety and welfare being of paramount importance.

It is essential that this document represents a process of continual improvement in the area of child protection and welfare in Rock Celtic FC. It is the responsibility of all adults involved in Rock Celtic FC to actively promote safe and best practice standards whilst being ever vigilant and aware of their responsibilities to children and young people in their care.

## **Rock Celtic FC Mission Statement**

The work of **Rock Celtic FC** is based on the following principles that will guide the development of sport for young people in this club. Children and young peoples experience of soccer should be guided by what is best for the child or young person. The stages of development and the ability of the child should guide the types of activity provided within the club. Adults will need to have a basic understanding of the needs of young people, including physical, emotional and personal.

### **Integrity in relationships:**

Adults interacting with young people in soccer should do so with integrity and respect for the child. All adult actions in soccer should be guided by what is best for the child and in the context of quality, open working relationships. Verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any kind is unacceptable within soccer.

### **Quality atmosphere and ethos:**

Soccer for young people should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. A child-centred ethos will help to ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place. Too often unhealthy competitive demands are placed on children too early and results in excessive levels of pressure on them and as a consequence, high levels of dropout from sport.

### **Equality:**

All children should be treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children with disability should be involved in sports activities in an integrated way, thus allowing them to participate to their potential alongside other children.

### **Fair Play:**

Fair play is the guiding principle of the Irish Sports Councils Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport.

It states that "all children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play". Ireland has contributed and is committed to the European Code of Sports Ethics, which defines fair play as: "much more than playing within the rules".

It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing with the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of opportunities, excessive commercialisation and corruption. (European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe, 1993).

### **Competition:**

A balanced approach to competition can make a significant contribution to the development of young people, while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and satisfaction. Coaches/ volunteers should aim to put the welfare of the child first and competitive standards second. A child-centred approach will help to ensure that

competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place. Rock Celtic FC through confirming this policy document has demonstrated its commitment to ensuring that children and young people can participate in all soccer activities with their safety and welfare being of paramount importance.

### **Rock Celtic FC Child Protection & Welfare Policy Overview:**

It is essential that this document represents a process of continual improvement in the area of child protection and welfare in Rock Celtic FC.

It is the responsibility of all adults involved in Rock Celtic FC to actively promote safe and best practice standards whilst being ever vigilant and aware of their responsibilities to children and young people in their care.

### **Child Protection & Welfare Policy:**

Rock Celtic FC is committed to ensuring that all necessary steps will be taken to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people who participate in soccer. This Policy document clearly demonstrates the importance placed by Rock Celtic FC on the protection and safety of children and young people who participate in soccer.

All children and young people who participate in soccer should be able to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment. While doing so they should be protected from any form of abuse be it physical, emotional, sexual, neglect or bullying. The responsibility for protecting children lies with all adults involved in this club and in soccer in general.

Rock Celtic FC recognises and accepts its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, emotional or sexual harm and from neglect or bullying.

These clear policies, practices and procedures in addition to relevant training programmes will ensure that everybody in Rock Celtic FC knows exactly what is expected of them in relation to protecting children and young people within soccer.

It is vital that children and young people who participate in Rock Celtic FC activities are able to do so in a safe, enjoyable and quality environment.

### **Rock Celtic FC Goal**

- Advise all members of Rock Celtic FC (coaches, players, volunteers, parents and spectators) of their responsibilities in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people who participate in soccer.
- Operate within the recommended Football Association of Ireland codes of conduct and best practice guidelines as set out in The Children's First Act 2015 and Tusla's Child Safeguarding : A guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.
- Appoint a Designated Liason Person.
- Appoint a Child Welfare Officer.
- Ensure all coaches and volunteers have up to date Garda Vetting approval and that they

take part in Child Safeguarding courses regularly and that their Child Safeguarding certification is up to date.

## **CHILD WELFARE AND SAFEGUARDING ROLES**

Rock Celtic FC are required to have two key roles in place in order to fulfil the Child welfare and safeguarding roles and responsibilities within the club. These two roles are Club Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person.

### **Rock Celtic FC Children's Officer**

- The appointment of a Club's Child Protection Officer is an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere in any club.
- They act as a resource to members with regard to Children's issues and also ensure that children have a voice in the running of the club and can freely talk about their experiences.
- The Children's Officer should be a member of or have access to, the Club Committee.
- To undertake the role of Children's Officer, the individual must have completed the Safeguarding 1 and Safeguarding 2 courses.

### **Designated Liaison Person**

- Rock Celtic FC Designated Liaison Person shall be the Chairperson of the club who will be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of Children.
- The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of Child abuse Tusla and / or An Garda Siochana.
- Support and advice is available from the Football Association of Ireland's Child Welfare and Safeguarding Manager, who is also the Mandated Person.
- Designated Liaison Person must complete the Safeguarding 1 and 3 Course.
- Rock Celtic FC will make the name and contact details of the Designated Liaison Person available to coaches and volunteers.

### **Rock Celtic FC Child Protection Policy aims are:**

- Being pro-active in protecting all children and young people who participate in Rock Celtic activities in a safe and enjoyable environment.
- To provide appropriate guidance and advice to all club members (players, coaches, volunteers, spectators and parents) in all matters concerning child welfare and protection.
- To promote best practice in the area of child welfare and protection.
- To promote ethics and best practice standards throughout Rock Celtic FC.

## Rock Celtic FC Child Protection key principles:

- The welfare of the child is the first and paramount consideration.
- All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse of any kind regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual identity.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse/poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Rock Celtic FC will work in conjunction with all statutory authorities in accordance with the procedures as outlined in The Children's First Act 2015.

## ROCK CELTIC FC COACH – VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Rock Celtic FC was founded in 1969 and it's existence over the years has depended on the help and support of coaches / volunteers because without these volunteers the club would not be able to offer football activities to all children in the community. It is important that the club provides a healthy environment for all coaches / volunteers and recruits people in roles suitable to their ability. This recruitment policy will help protect young people while they are involved in all club activities.

1. **APPLICATION FORM** - An application form will be provided to coaches / volunteers where all areas must be completed so Rock Celtic FC can decide on a suitable role within the club.
2. **MEETING** – The club will hold a meeting with the applicant before agreeing a role within Rock Celtic FC.
3. **GARDA VETTING** – If a suitable role is agreed the applicant must complete a Garda Vetting application in line with The Children's First Act 2015 and Rock Celtic FC / FAI Welfare policies. The applicant must provide proof of Garda Vetting from the FAI before commencing their role.
4. **CHILD SAFEGUARDING** – If a suitable role is agreed the applicant must take part in a Child Safeguarding Course in line with The Children's First Act 2015 and Rock Celtic FC / FAI Welfare policies. The applicant must provide proof of completing the Safeguarding Course with an approved provider through The Irish Sports Council, before commencing their role
5. **STARTING ROLE** - Before commencing a role in Rock Celtic FC the club will ensure the new coach / volunteer will ensure they are familiar and comfortable with their surroundings.
6. **TRAINING** - The club will provide training and courses to upskill coaches /volunteers.
7. **RULES and GUIDELINES** – All coaches and volunteers must abide by Rock Celtic FC / FAI rules, guidelines and Code OF Conduct.

## **FAI Guidelines**

### **RULE 71. THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN**

(a) In line with legislation and Government Guidelines (The Child Care Act 1991 and the Protection for Persons Reporting Abuse Act 1998) in relation to child protection and welfare, it is mandatory that all participants, clubs, leagues, divisional associations and other football bodies shall be bound by the FAI recommended codes of conduct and best practice guidelines

(b) Any act, statement, conduct or other matter which harms a child or children, or poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children, shall constitute behaviour which is improper and brings the game into disrepute.

(c) Breaches shall become a disciplinary offence. Any member issued with a ban from football activity shall have their name notified to all League Secretaries for onward dissemination to all Club Secretaries. The notification shall state the name of the individual and the fact a ban has been issued.

(d) Any participant who is the subject of a Statutory Inquiry in relation to any child welfare concern must stand down from all football activities pending the outcome of that inquiry and any subsequent internal disciplinary proceedings.

(e) Any member convicted of an offence by the Irish Courts or Courts of any other jurisdiction involving the welfare of children shall be automatically banned from membership of the Association. For the avoidance of doubt no disciplinary or other hearing shall be necessary in order to implement this automatic ban.

### **RULE 95. PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN**

1. All participants, clubs, leagues, divisional associations and other football bodies shall be bound by the FAI rules, codes of conduct and guidelines governing the protection and welfare of children, and breaches of such rules, codes and guidelines shall be subject to disciplinary sanction.

2. The disciplinary body may impose any sanction it deems appropriate.

3. Any act, statement, conduct or other matter which harms a child or children, or poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children, shall constitute behaviour which is improper and brings the game into disrepute.

4. Any participant who is the subject of a statutory inquiry in relation to any child welfare concern must stand down from all football activities pending the outcome of that inquiry and any subsequent internal disciplinary proceedings.

#### **Procedure for dealing with Child Abuse Concerns or Allegations**

It is important to note that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the Statutory Authorities (Tusla and or An Garda Siochana) and should not be undertaken

by the clubs Child Protection officer, Designated Liason Person or any other club personnel. All allegations of child abuse must be referred to the Statutory Authorities.

When an allegation is received it should be assessed promptly and carefully. It will be necessary to decide whether a formal report should be made to Tusla or in the event of an emergency the Garda Siochana and this decision should be based on reasonable grounds for concern.

You should always inform Tusla if you have reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. You can report your concern in person, by telephone or in writing - including by email – to the local work duty service in the area where the child lives. Child First - Contact details ( [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie))

**The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:**

- (i) a specific indication from a child that (s)he was abused;
- (ii) a statement from a person who witnessed abuse;
- (iii) an illness, injury or behaviour consistent with abuse;
- (iv) a symptom which may not in itself be totally consistent with abuse, but which is support by corroborative evidence of deliberate harm or negligence;
- (v) consistent signs of neglect over a period of time.

**Ref. Children First**

### **Step One**

Any allegation of abuse must in the first instance be brought to the attention of the Designated Child Protection Officer of the club who may consult with the Designated Liason Officer (Chairperson) of the Club. Should the Chairperson be unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist s/he can informally consult with the local HSE duty social worker. S/he will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report.

Coaches/volunteers may be subjected to erroneous or malicious allegations. Therefore, any allegation of abuse should be dealt with sensitively and appropriate support should be provided for coaches / volunteers including counselling where necessary.

### **Step Two**

Should Rock Celtic FC become aware of an allegation of abuse of a child or children by a coach/volunteer during the execution of that coaches/volunteer's duties, the Chairman will privately inform the coach/volunteer of the following: the fact that allegations have been made against him / her and the nature of the allegation.

They must Step Down from all activities in the club until the investigation is fully completed.

### **Step Three**

The coach/volunteer should be afforded an opportunity to respond. The Child Welfare Officer and the Designated Liason (Chairperson) will note the response and pass on this information when making the formal report to the statutory Authorities.

The report to Tusla should contain observations, dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant

information.

In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Chairperson is unable to contact a duty social worker, the Gardai shall be contacted.

Under no circumstances will a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities.

#### **Step Four**

Rock Celtic's Child Protection Officer and or Designated Liason Officer (Chairperson), if reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities will first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine any statutory investigation.

#### **Step Five**

All subsequent actions following an allegation of abuse against a coach/volunteer will be taken in consultation with the Statutory Authorities and An Garda Síochána. An immediate meeting will be sought with these two agencies for this purpose. The Football Association of Ireland National Children's Officer is also available to provide support and advice.

#### **Step Six**

Under Football Association of Ireland rules, any coach/volunteer/manager who is the subject of a statutory investigation into alleged child abuse, is required to stand down from all soccer activities until the investigation is completed. Where a stand down order has been issued by Rock Celtic FC it must immediately inform the FAI Designated Child Welfare Officer.

When a person is asked to stand down it should be made clear that it is only a precautionary measure in keeping with standard procedures/guidelines and will not prejudice any later disciplinary proceedings.

The coach/volunteer concerned should be advised that the procedures being undertaken are in accordance with statutory requirements. He or she should be treated with respect and fairness, and also be assured that all information will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner.

#### **Step Seven**

The Club will carefully consider the outcome of the statutory investigation and will then assess if there are any outstanding disciplinary issues in relation to their internal rules or infringements of the Football Association of Ireland best practice guidelines. It must be remembered that the fact that the alleged abuser has not been prosecuted or been found guilty does not mean that they are appropriate to work with young people in the future.

**Internal Club disciplinary proceedings can only be initiated after the Statutory Authorities have completed theirs.**

### **CHILD ABUSE**

Reasonable grounds for concerns Individuals should always inform Tusla when they have reasonable grounds for concern that a Child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. It is not necessary for the individual to prove that abuse has occurred

to report a concern to Tusla. All that is required is that the individual have reasonable grounds for concerns. It is Tusla's role to assess concerns that are reported to it. Reasonable grounds for a Child protection or welfare concern include:

- Evidence, for example of an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way.
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse.
- Consistent signs that a Child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- A Child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused.
- Admission or indication by an adult or a Child of an alleged abuse they committed.
- An account from a person who saw the Child being abused.

## **What is Child Abuse**

Child Abuse can be categorised into four main types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. Other forms of abuse include bullying. A Child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the Child or a stranger, and can be an adult or another Child. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another Child, you should consider it a Child welfare and protection issue for both Children and you should follow Child protection procedures for both the victim and the alleged abuser. The important factor in deciding whether the behaviour constitutes abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the Child rather than the intention of the parent/carer/alleged abuser. The definitions of neglect and abuse presented in this section are not legal definitions nor are they exhaustive. They are intended to describe ways in which a child might experience abuse and how this abuse may be recognised.

## **Neglect**

(a) Neglect is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a Child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety.

(b) The following are features of Child Neglect:

- Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision.
- Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding.
- Inadequate living conditions – unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture.
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the Child's age.
- Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation.
- Failure to provide adequate care for the Child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation.

(c) A reasonable concern for the Child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the Child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where you see the Child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the Child once.

### **Emotional Abuse**

(a) Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a Child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a Child. Abuse occurs when a Child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver.

(b) Emotional abuse may be seen in some of the following ways:

- Rejection.
- Lack of comfort and love.
- Lack of attachment.
- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play)
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned)
- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the Child.
- Bullying.
- Conditional parenting in which care or affection of a Child depends on his or her behaviours or actions.
- Extreme overprotectiveness.
- Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. locking Child in bedroom)
- Seriously inappropriate expectations of a Child relative to his/her age and stage of development.

(c) There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A Child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour.

(d) A reasonable concern for the Child's welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the Child and the parent or carer.

### **Physical Abuse**

(a) Physical Abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a Child physically, or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents

(b) Physical abuse can include the following:

- Beating, slapping, hitting or kicking.
- Pushing, shaking or throwing.
- Pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling.

- Use of excessive force in handling.
- Suffocation.
- Physical punishment.
- Fabricated/induced illness.
- Female genital mutilation.
- Deliberate poisoning.

(c) The Children First Act 2015 includes a provision that abolishes the common law defence of reasonable chastisement in court proceedings. This defence could previously be invoked by a parent or other person in authority who physically disciplined a Child. The change in the legislation now means that in prosecutions relating to assault or physical cruelty, a person who administers such punishment to a Child cannot rely on the defence of reasonable chastisement in the legal proceedings. The result of this is that the protections in law relating to assault now apply to a Child in the same way as they do to an adult. A reasonable concern exists where the Child's health and/or development is, may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

### **Sexual Abuse**

(a) Sexual abuse occurs when a Child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others. It includes the Child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the Child to sexual activity directly or through pornography.

(b) Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and in some instances, occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members.

(c) It should be remembered that sexual activity involving a Young Person may be sexual abuse even if the Young Person concerned does not themselves recognise it as abusive.

(d) Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a Child.
- An invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of a Child's body whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification.
- Masturbation in the presence of a Child or the involvement of a Child in an act of masturbation.
- Sexual intercourse with a Child, whether oral, vaginal or anal.

### **Sexual exploitation of a Child, which includes:**

1. Inviting, inducing or coercing a Child to engage in prostitution or the production of Child pornography [for example, exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means]
2. Inviting, coercing or inducing a Child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent or obscene act.

3. Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse - Exposing a Child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology - Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person.

(e) An Garda Síochána will deal with any criminal aspects of a sexual abuse case under the relevant criminal justice legislation. The prosecution of a sexual offence against a Child will be considered within the wider objective of Child welfare and protection. The safety of the Child is paramount and at no stage should a Child's safety be compromised because of concern for the integrity of a criminal investigation.

(f) In relation to Child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in criminal law the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal. However, it may not necessarily be regarded as Child sexual abuse. Details on exemptions for mandated reporting of certain cases of underage consensual sexual activity can be found in appendix 5 under reporting for Mandated Persons.

## **Substance Abuse Policy**

In Rock Celtic FC the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco shall be actively discouraged as being incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity.

Coaches and volunteers shall not smoke when taking a session or drink alcohol before taking a session.

In relation to our under-age teams Rock Celtic FC shall endeavour to organise receptions and celebrations in a nonalcoholic environment and in a manner that is suitable for the age group concerned.

Where this is not possible, the Club will comply with the **Football Association of Ireland directive that under no circumstances whatsoever can any person under the age of 18 years consume alcohol and any and all appropriate steps should be taken to ensure that this policy is strictly adhered to.**

Our coaches, volunteers and committee shall act as role models for appropriate behaviour and refrain from drinking alcohol at such functions.

## **Bullying Policy & Guidance**

### **What is Bullying?**

Bullying can be defined as repeated verbal, psychological or physical aggression conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour which is intentionally aggravating and intimidating, and occurs mainly in social environments such as schools, clubs and other organisations working with children.

It includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting or extortion behaviour by one or more children against a victim. 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 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/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 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.

### **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

### **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 / volunteers in Rock Celtic FC.

### **How can it be prevented?**

- Children and parents should be advised at the start of every season that “bullying” in any shape or form is not accepted or permitted in Rock Celtic FC.
- Ensure 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 Rock Celtic FC.

### **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:
- 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 can 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

#### **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.
- Coaches / volunteers 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 Rock Celtic FC are available to provide support and advice and if necessary professional expertise.

### **STAND DOWN ORDERS**

The Stand Down Order may be issued to an individual directly by the FAI itself or by Rock Celtic FC. A Stand Down Order is an order made for the immediate protection and safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Persons and is not a determination of wrongdoing by any individual. Stand Down Orders may be issued in a number of circumstances including but not limited to the following:

- (a) Any person who is the subject of a complaint or inquiry by a Statutory Authority in relation to any Child welfare or Vulnerable Person concern shall be issued with a Stand Down Order from all football activities. This order shall be issued by the Designated Liason Person in Rock Celtic FC or by the The Child Welfare and Safeguarding Manager of the FAI pending the outcome of any enquiry and any

subsequent internal discipline proceedings. The terms of the Stand Down Order must be complied with.

- (b) Rock Celtic FC shall immediately notify the FAI of any Stand Down Order issued.
- (c) The FAI may also issue a Stand Down Order in circumstances where concerns are raised with the FAI outside of a Statutory Authority investigation. An Affiliated Member may also issue a Stand Down Order in these circumstances, however the issuance of such order must be notified to the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Manager immediately as per clause 7.3.
- (d) Stand Down Orders shall be issued, managed and lifted in accordance with FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy.
- (e) Any person wishing to continue to engage within football who is the subject of a vetting disclosure, which in the opinion of the Child Welfare and Safeguarding Committee or the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Manager deems them unsuitable to work with Children or Vulnerable Persons, shall be issued with an immediate Stand Down Order
- (f) Where it is determined that urgent action is required for any reason an immediate Stand Down Order shall be issued by Rock Celtic FC or by the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Manager. A written explanation as to why such order was issued must be included when notifying the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Manager.
- (g) In the case of a Stand Down Order issued, the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Manager shall inform the individual of the issuance of a Stand Down Order. The FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Manager shall also inform all persons/bodies who are engaging/employing the individual within the game including but not limited to the person's Club, the League to which the Club belongs and any other party deemed necessary to protect Children or Vulnerable Persons. Failure of any person or body to comply with the terms of such an order once notified shall be a disciplinary matter and subject to further sanction.
- (h) Where a Stand Down Order has been issued directly by an Affiliated Member, that member must immediately inform the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Manager to determine if such a stand down should be applied to all FAI football related activity. The notification must include a written explanation as to why the Stand Down Order was issued.
- (i) The Child Welfare and Safeguarding Committee shall monitor all Stand Down Orders issued and may be requested to review a Stand Down Order on request from the individual concerned. This is a review process not an Appeal, and the Child Welfare and Safeguarding Committee shall make all such final determinations as it deems necessary for the protection and welfare of Children and Vulnerable Persons.
- (j) If the Child Welfare and Safeguarding Committee considers that any breaches of FAI Rules or the Policy are deemed to have occurred it shall refer such matters to the Disciplinary Regulations Officer (DRO) for disciplinary action where necessary.

## **Disciplinary, Complaints and Appeals Procedures**

While many concerns can be dealt with in an informal manner to the satisfaction of all concerned, it is advisable that detailed records are maintained in respect of all complaints and that all parties are advised of the formal complaints and appeals procedure. All reasonable efforts to resolve matters should be exhausted at local level before accessing the appeals procedure.

### **Step One**

Any person who has a complaint or concern should bring it to the attention of the Club Secretary. The complaint or concern should be in writing and should outline all relevant details and other parties involved in line with Rock Celtic's rules and regulations. The secretary should acknowledge receipt of the complaint.

### **Step Two**

The complaint or concern should then be brought to the attention of the Club Chairperson in line with club rules who will convene the disciplinary committee/panel (best practice would advise that this committee/panel would consist of three members) unless the complaint or concern relates **to** a child abuse matter or criminal offence that meets criteria for formal reporting to the statutory authorities.

**Where there are potential contentious issues, due consideration should be given to ensure the independence of the disciplinary committee/panel and therefore, it is advisable that members of the disciplinary committee/panel should not be Officers of the club concerned as lack of independence is often cited as a ground for appeal.**

**(The Chairperson of the Club should not sit on the Disciplinary Committee)**

### **Step Three**

The disciplinary committee/panel should furnish any participant with details of the complaint being made against them and afford them the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing. In the event of a complaint against a child, the parents/guardians should be informed and advised of the process.

### **Step Four**

The disciplinary committee/panel should then hear the case of all parties involved and decide if a rule or regulation has been infringed.

### **Step Five**

The disciplinary committee/panel should then inform in writing those involved of their decision and any sanctions if any that are to be imposed. This notification should be in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction. (Written notification should be forwarded to parents if the proceedings involve a participant under eighteen years of age)

### **Step Six**

Any party unhappy with the findings of the disciplinary committee/panel can appeal the decision in writing to the Club Chairperson.

### **Step Seven**

The appeal body should then rehear the case and all evidence, should be considered. The appeals body should have the power to uphold or reject the appeal or to vary, alter or set aside any sanction imposed by the disciplinary committee/panel.

Written confidential records in relation to disciplinary proceedings should be safely and confidentially kept on file (procedures should clearly define the possession of such records in the event of election of new officers)

### **Anonymous Complaints**

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with, however they cannot be ignored. All complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour/poor practice should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson of the Club. In all cases the safety and welfare of the child/children is paramount.

All complaints should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner. It is important to record all such complaints and actions taken. Specific advice on dealing with anonymous complaints can be got from a local HSE worker or the Child Welfare Officer of the FAI.

### **Rumours**

Rumours should not be allowed hang in the air. Any rumour/s relating to inappropriate behaviour/s circulating in the club should be brought to the attention to the Chairperson and checked out promptly. All ensuing information should be handled confidentially and with sensitivity.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is about managing information in a respectful, professional and purposeful manner. It is important that the rights of both the child and the person about whom the complaint has been made are protected. Therefore, appropriate confidentiality will be maintained in respect of all issues and people involved in concerns about the welfare of a child or bad practice within the club.

The following points will be borne in mind:

- A guarantee of confidentiality or undertakings regarding secrecy cannot be given, as the welfare of the child will supersede all other considerations.
- All information should be treated in a careful and sensitive manner.

Information will be conveyed to the parents/guardians of a child about whom there are concerns in a sensitive way. Giving information to others on a “need to know” basis for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality.

## **Rock Celtic FC Coach / Volunteer Education & Support Policy**

The Committee of Rock Celtic FC are indebted to our coaches and volunteers who give freely of their valuable time in providing a stimulating, challenging, supportive and fun soccer experience to children and young adults in the Club.

The Committee will endeavour to support these coaches and volunteers in their work by providing an environment where all activities are carried out in a safe, fun manner at all times conducted in the spirit of "Fair Play".

Rock Celtic FC will make all efforts to assist all new volunteers and coaches in whatever way they can.

Rock Celtic FC will familiarise coaches and volunteers with Club rules, policies and procedures and expected codes of behaviour for children, coaches and parents/spectators.

The Committee of Rock Celtic FC recognise the value of having appropriately qualified personnel in the club, and therefore will endeavour to support all of our coaches in the coach education process.

At no time will any coach, volunteer be expected to work or deal with any problem alone and they will be assured of Committee assistance and support at all times. Also, coaches and volunteers are encouraged to share ideas, expertise and support other club personnel in Rock Celtic FC.

## **Rock Celtic FC Safety Policy**

All coaches, volunteers and committee in Rock Celtic FC have a responsibility to ensure the safety of the players with whom they work as far as possible within the limits of their control. Therefore coaches, volunteers and committee should seek to create a safe and enjoyable environment in which to play and train.

### **Rules and Regulations**

- Adequate supervision must be maintained at all times. Best practice advice would advocate 2 coaches / volunteers to every 16 children (1:8) but no coach or volunteer works alone.
- Regular safety checks should be carried out in relation to premises, training facilities and equipment.
- Ensure that Goalpost Safety Policy in Rock Celtic FC is strictly adhered to at all times.
- Rock Celtic FC safety rules should be adhered to at all times.
- Parents/guardians should be informed of the starting and finishing times of training sessions and matches.
- A first aid kit should be available at all training sessions and matches and injuries should be recorded, with a note of action taken in relation to each one. Never play injured players.
- Parents/Guardians should be notified of injuries/illness which their children incur while

participating in any Rock Celtic FC soccer activity.

- Records of attendance at training sessions and matches should be maintained.
- Ensure the use of any recommended safety equipment.

## **Social Media**

- When making use of any Social Media platform, you must read and comply with its terms of use.
- Do not upload, post or forward any content belonging to a third party unless you have that third party's consent. For example, don't discuss colleagues, competitors, coaches and / or players without their prior approval.
- Avoid publishing your contact details where they can be accessed and used widely by people you did not intend to see them, and never publish anyone else's contact details.
- Do not engage with irate players, parents or coaches on a public forum. Organise a meeting to allow all parties to discuss possible outcomes.
- **If you are a manager, coach, club official, referee or medic you should not:**
  1. accept any player or referee who is under 18 as a friend on your personal Social Media page.
  2. communicate with any person under 18 through Social Media, text message, phone or email.
- All communications concerning under 18's should be made through parents / guardians. It is important to ensure all communications relate to specific club matters e.g. fixtures, training etc.
- Do not use personal details to set up your organisations Social Media page. You should for example use the organisations email address. All account log in details should be kept safe and secure to avoid possible hacking.
- When setting up an email address and / or Social Media page for your organisation (for example, a club web-site), it should be accessed by at least three administrators. These administrators should be responsible for up-loading content and monitoring posts on the site. If any of these administrators or any other person are behaving inappropriately their access should be removed immediately.
- It is important to ensure everyone within your organisation is aware of who is administering your Social Media page(s)
- Each administrator should be familiar with the privacy and safety settings on their Social Media page to ensure it is for use by your organisation only.
- Do not accept anyone under the age of 13 on your Social Media page. Report underage users to the Child's parents or the Social Media outlet.
- Any user under the age of 18 looking to join your Social Media page should have provided written parental/ guardian consent in advance.
- No images or personal information of under 18's should be posted online without prior written consent from each parent / guardian. It is critical that no user is asked to post any personal details of under 18's as certain information could be used to identify or locate

them.

- To avoid any inappropriate material appearing on your Social Media page you should enable the appropriate privacy settings. This will allow you to manage the content on your Social Media page to avoid any distress or reputational damage.
- The content on your page should be accurate and up to date and any material that is no longer required should be removed.
- Any inappropriate use, such as bullying, is strictly prohibited and should be reported to the Children's Officer within your organisation.
- Misuse of Social Media, in certain circumstances, constitute a criminal offence and suspicious behaviour towards under 18's should be reported to the Statutory Authorities.
- If you are unsure about something you are about to post, then you should not do it. Always consider who will be able to view it and if in doubt, always discuss it with the Children's Officer within your organisation.

### **Cyber, text and social media bullying**

Cyber bullying can involve unwanted text messages, phone calls, video chats/ recordings or web posts being used to threaten abuse or harm someone. It is similar to physical or verbal bullying, but it uses technology instead. Cyber bullying, like all bullying, is difficult for the victim. It can be hard to prove and difficult to get the courage to report it. Text bullying or harassment can be texts that frighten, insult, threaten or make the recipient feel uncomfortable. Email, social networks like Facebook/Twitter and phone calls can be used to harass in the same way

- . • The FAI Social Media Policy 2018 provides guidance on the appropriate use of social media. A copy of The FAI Social Media Policy can be found within Appendix 11.

## Guidance on the Use of Photographic and Filming Equipment

Many people use cameras and video equipment at soccer activities and the vast majority, do so for perfectly legitimate reasons. However there is evidence that people have used sporting events to take inappropriate photographs and video footage of children and young people in vulnerable positions.

Rock Celtic FC has adopted a policy in relation to the use of images of players on their websites and in other publications.

Where possible we will try to use models or illustrations when promoting an activity and avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside the sport.

### **Rules to guide use of photography:**

- If the player is named, avoid using their photograph.
- If a photograph is used, avoid naming the player.
- Ask for the player's parent / guardian permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport.  
**NOTE: The club have requested permission in the members registration form.**
- Only use images of players in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. The content of the photograph should focus on the activity not on a particular child.

Create recognised procedures for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to players. Follow the child protection procedures, ensuring either the designated person or, if necessary, the health boards and/or gardai are informed.

Amateur photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice session should seek permission/accreditation with the children's officer, team coach. This club will display the following information prior to the start of an event to inform spectators of the policy:

*"In line with Rock Celtic FC Code of Conduct, the club request that any person wishing to engage in any video, zoom or close range photography should register their details with the Club Secretary, Team Coach or Clubs Child Protection officer. Children and young people should only be photographed or filmed with Rock Celtic FC permission and/or the permission of their parents/guardian".*

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity or event we will aim to ensure they are clear about our expectations of them in relation to child protection.

Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice session should seek accreditation with the Club Secretary, Team Coach or Child Protection Officer by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded.

## **Rules For Granting Permission**

- Give written permission and provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- Keep a record of accreditations.
- Inform players and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- Not allow unsupervised access to players or one to one photo sessions at events.
- Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the events or at a player's home.

**Videoing as a coaching aid:** Video equipment can be used as a legitimate coaching aid. However, permission should first be obtained from the Club Secretary, Team Coach, Child protection Officer and the player's parent/guardian.

Clubs should also be aware of the dangers of permitting camera phones in dressing rooms and should apply appropriate safety rules.

*Anyone concerned about any photography taking place at events/matches or training sessions should bring their concerns to the attention of the Club Secretary / team coach or club's Child Protection Officer.*

## **Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones are often given to children for security, enabling parents to keep in touch and make sure they are safe. Young people value their phones highly as it offers them a sense of independence. In addition mobile phones allow quick and easy contact, which can make a safe and efficient way to carry out club business. However such technology has also allowed an increase in direct personal contact with young people, in some cases used to cross personal boundaries and cause harm to young people. Therefore, we need to encourage responsible and secure use of mobile phones by adults and young people.

### **Club personnel should advise children:**

- If you receive an offensive photo, email or message, do not reply, save it, make a note of times and dates and tell a parent or children's officer/designated person within the club.
- Be careful about who you give your phone number to and don't respond to unfamiliar numbers.
- Change your phone number in cases of bullying or harassment.
- Don't use the phone in certain locations; inappropriate use of your camera phone may cause upset or offence to another person, e.g. changing rooms.
- Treat your phone as you would any other valuable item so that you guard against theft.

## **Rock Celtic FC Coaches / Volunteers**

Should never message or phone players under 18.

Contact must be made directly to parents / guardians.

Don't use the phone in certain locations; inappropriate use of your camera phone may cause upset or offence to another person, e.g. changing rooms

### **Travelling Guidelines**

- Children being transported should have the strict permission of parents / guardians.
- Only the permitted number of passengers should be allowed in specific transport.
- Clear itineraries for transport arrangements including collection and drop off details and contact details for the appropriate adults in charge should be provided.
- Ensure that there is adequate insurance cover and seat belts are worn.
- In the event that a parent / guardian is late collecting the child an immediate contact should be made with the adult concerned.
- It is a matter for parents / guardians to arrange transport to events for Children unless specific arrangements can be made.
- Coaches / volunteers should not allow themselves be alone.
- The use of private cars maybe necessary from time to time but where possible this should be avoided.

### **Changing Facilities**

- Where possible Children should have sole use of changing facilities and all efforts should be made to try and secure separate facilities for Children. As many Children are self-conscious about changing in front of others it may become more suitable to ask Children to change at home before and after activities. A common-sense approach should be adopted as to what the parents/guardians may prefer.
- Where facilities are being used by Children proper supervision is required and careful consideration should be given to who should be supervising.
- Those persons should be suitable for such supervision, being vetted and recruited in line with the safe procedures outlined in this Policy.
- Adults in such supervisory roles should balance the need of supervision with respect of the privacy of Children at all times.
- It is recommended that more than one adult supervise at any time and supervisors are of the same gender as the Children involved.
- Contact between other adults and Children should be avoided by careful timing of the changing facilities and adequate notices being put in place. Where mixed changing

facilities with adults and Children are unavoidable proper adult supervision is even more important.

- Parents may be of valuable assistance but should also be suitable for undertaking this responsibility.
- Where mixed gender teams are involved arrangements should be made to allow for separate changing facilities. This can be accomplished through timing arrangements, changing at home only, allocating rooms or areas which are screened off.

### **Touching Guidelines**

**All managers/volunteers of Rock Celtic FC are advised that:**

- Any necessary physical contact should be in response to the needs of the child and not the adult.
- It should be in an open environment with the permission and full understanding of the player.
- It should be determined by the age and developmental stage of the player. You should not do anything that a child can do for him/herself.
- Coaches should not treat injuries out of sight of others. Use a "Two-Deep" (two personnel, or two players) supervision system. Only personnel who are qualified in administering First Aid or treating sports injuries should attempt to treat an injury.
- The comfort level and dignity of the player should always be the priority. Example: Only uncover the injured area, or cover private areas of the player's body.
- Any doubts of a medical nature should be passed on to a suitably qualified medical person.
- Coaches should not play injured players.

### **Guidelines For Comforting /Congratulating Players**

- Limit touching to "safe" areas, such as hand-to-shoulder. It should not involve touching genital area, buttocks, breasts, or mouths.
- Make your intention to congratulate or comfort clear to the player.
- Get permission from the player before embracing them - remember that personnel are in the position of power.
- Respect a player's discomfort or rejection of physical contact.
- Be sure that touching occurs only when others are present
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact and never engage in inappropriate touching

## **Guidance on the use of Sanctions**

### **Discipline in Soccer**

Discipline in soccer should always be positive in focus, providing the structures and rules that allow players to set their own goals and strive for them. It should encourage players to become more responsible for themselves and their actions and therefore more independent.

Discipline should be a positive reinforcement for effort. It should encourage the development of emotional and social skills as well as skills in soccer. Players have to be helped to become responsible for the decisions and choices they make within soccer, particularly when it is likely to make a difference between playing fairly or unfairly.

There is no place in soccer for fighting, bullying, over aggressive or dangerous behaviour.

At all times, players should treat others in a respectful manner. They should never bully, interfere with or take unfair advantage of others.

The use of sanctions is an important element in the maintenance of discipline. However coaches/ volunteers and administrators should have a clear understanding of where and when particular sanctions are appropriate.

It should be remembered that effectively controlled organisations and successful coaches /volunteers are characterised by the sparing use of sanctions. The age and developmental stage of the child should be taken into account when using sanctions.

Sanctions should always be fair, consistent and applied evenly, and in the case of a persistent offence, should be progressively applied.

The following steps are suggested:

- Rules should be clearly stated and agreed.
- A warning should be given if a rule is broken.
- A sanction (use of time out for example) should be applied if a rule is broken for a second time.
- If a rule is broken three or more times, the child should be spoken to and parents/guardians involved if necessary.
- Sanctions should only be used in a corrective way that is intended to help children improve both now and in the future. They should never be used in retaliation or to make coach/volunteer feel better or more powerful.
- When violations of the team rules or other misbehaviours occur, sanctions should always be applied in an impartial and fair manner.

Sanctions should never be used as threats. If a rule is broken, the appropriate sanction/s should be implemented consistently, fairly and firmly.

- Sanctions should not be applied if the coach/manager/volunteer is not comfortable with them. If an appropriate action cannot be devised immediately, the child should be told that the matter will be dealt with later, at a specified time and as soon as is possible.
- Once a sanction/s has been imposed, it is important to make the child feel s/he is a valued member of the team again
- A child should be helped, to understand if necessary why sanction/s are imposed.
- A child should not be sanctioned for making errors whilst playing soccer.
- Physical activity (e.g. running laps or doing push ups) should not be used as a sanction as to do so may cause a child to resent physical activity which is something that s/he should learn to enjoy throughout his/her life. Remember Soccer has to be Fun if participants are to continue playing

Sanctions should be used sparingly. Constant criticism and sanctioning can cause participant to turn away from Soccer.

**Adapted from the Irish Sports Councils Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport (2005)**

### **Rock Celtic FC Code of Conduct for Spectators**

- 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 team's 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 team's 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, coaches 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.

### **Children in Rock Celtic FC are entitled to:**

- Be safe
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect
- Participate in soccer on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability and stage of development.
- Rock Celtic FC have a policy in place that all players are entitled to a minimum playing time as per the Club's published minimum playing time guidelines.
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy soccer.
- Make a complaint in an appropriate way and have it dealt with through a proper and effective complaints procedure
- Be afforded appropriate confidentiality
- Be listened to and to be believed.
- Have a voice in the running of the club.
- Children should also be encouraged to realise that they also have responsibilities to treat other children, fellow players, coaches and volunteers with the same degree of fairness and respect.

### **Children in Rock Celtic FC should undertake to:**

- Play fairly, do their best and have fun
- Be on their best behaviour at all times
- Abide by all club rules
- Make high standards of Fair Play the standard others want to follow
- Respect opponents, they are not the enemy, they are partners in a sporting event
- Shake hands before and after the match, whoever wins
- Give opponents a hand if they are injured, put the ball out of play so they can get attention
- Accept apologies from opponents when they are offered
- Respect fellow team members and support them both when they do well and when things go wrong

- Treat players from minority groups with the same respect you show other people
- Be modest in victory and be gracious in defeat- **“Be A Sport”**
- 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.

**Children in Rock Celtic FC should not:**

- Cheat
- Use abusive language, or argue with, the referee, officials, team mates or opponents
- Use violence, use physical contact only when it is allowed within the rules
- Bully
- Tell lies about adults or other children
- Spread rumours
- Take banned substances to improve performance
- Keep secrets about any person who may have caused them harm
- Behave in any manner that may bring Rock Celtic FC into disrepute

Rock Celtic FC want children 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.

Rock Celtic 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 Rock Celtic FC will insist on:

- Encouraging participation and fun.

- Promoting the development of skills as opposed to winning at all costs.
- Ensure a minimum playing time as per FAI Rules.
- Emphasising and praising effort.
- Acting as a good role model.
- Insisting on **Fair Play** (we withdraw 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.

### **Best Practice For Coaches In Rock Celtic FC**

In keeping children and young people at the forefront of planning and practice, our coaches can be confident that participants will enjoy their football experiences and that their actions are regarded as safe and in keeping with the principle that the safety and welfare of children is of paramount consideration.

Our Coaches are given a position of trust by parents/guardians and players, and are expected to operate to the highest standards of behaviour whilst in the company of underage players (under 18years). Our coaches are also expected not to engage in any activity that could reasonably be viewed as bringing the club or soccer in general into disrepute.

It is important too 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.

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 allegation of sexual misconduct or impropriety. Therefore coaches should be aware of, and avoid all situations conducive to risk.

## **Rock Celtic FC Coaches Should Not**

1. Spend excessive amounts of time with children away from others.
2. Take sessions alone. Always have two deep supervision at training and games.
3. Take children to their homes.
4. Take children on journeys alone in their car.
5. Exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.
6. Share a room with a young person alone on away trips.
7. Engage in rough physical, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and/or make sexually suggestive comments about a child.
8. Use any form of corporal punishment or physical force on a young person.
9. Take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adult and permission from the Committee
10. Undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of young people.
11. Contact directly children under 18 by phone or message.

## **Code Of Conduct For Coaches**

1. Act as a good Role Model for players.
2. Encourage and be positive during training and games so players leave with a sense of achievement.
3. Set challenging, realistic but achievable goals.
4. Plan and prepare each session appropriately and ensure proper levels of supervision.
5. Put the welfare and enjoyment of players first and strike a balance between this and winning or achieving results.
6. Enforce the principle of FAIR PLAY treating each player equally, with respect and dignity.
7. Ensure all players play within the rules of the game.
8. Be aware of the development stages and needs of players.
9. Avoid over training and over emphasis on competition.
10. Involve parents/guardians and other club members in what we do
11. Be qualified and up to date with the latest coaching knowledge and skills.

12. Never ridicule or yell at players for making a mistake or not winning.
13. Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age, maturity and ability of all players.
14. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
15. Display control, respect and professionalism to all involved with soccer. This includes, opponents, coaches, officials, administrators, the media, parents and spectators. I will encourage my players to do the same.
16. Show concern and caution toward sick and injured players. Follow advice of a Doctor when determining whether an injured player is ready to practice or play.
17. Ensure that all your players know that bullying whether verbal or physical will not be tolerated.
18. Always have two deep supervision at training and games.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS**

- Always show respect to all players, managers/coaches and officials.
- Never bully, harass or verbally abuse players, managers/coaches, officials on side lines and respect their decisions.
- Be on your best behaviour at all times and lead by example.
- Condemn the use of violence in all forms at every opportunity.
- Accept disappointment, praise good work and refrain from criticising.
- Applaud good play, sportsmanship and best effort by the visiting team as well as your own because without them there would be no game.
- Have realistic expectations for your child and don't put them under undue pressure.
- Emphasise skill development and practise over winning and how they benefit your child.
- If your child is unable to attend training or matches please let the coaches know.
- If a child requires medical treatment the parent must attend.
- Approach the coach/manager or club Child Welfare Officer with any concern.
- Do not encroach on pitch and stay in spectator area.