



handball club

## ASTRA HANDBALL CLUB CODE OF CONDUCT

### EXTRACT FROM ASTRA HC CONSTITUTION

12. Guidelines and policies

12.1 Astra Handball Club guidelines are:

- to be a child centric club.
- the development of Olympic Handball in schools and in all age groups for boys and girls with a desire to be able to sustain the senior teams and enable them to compete at the European level.
- to promote a healthy lifestyle and to provide a safe and enjoyable environment where the younger age group can participate in sport and socialize.
- to promote friendship and respect for all.
- to train and constantly improve the physical, technical and tactical development of the players.
- to encourage and constantly improve the technical and tactical development of the coaches.
- Astra HC has signed up to the ISC child protection and good practice in sport and require all the coaches to attend the relevant workshops.
- Astra HC condemns any form of discrimination (such as of race, colour, creed, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, veteran or disability statuses).

Astra signed up to the Irish Sport Council Child protection guidelines and Code of ethics:

[http://www.irishsportscouncil.ie/Participation/Code\\_of\\_Ethics/](http://www.irishsportscouncil.ie/Participation/Code_of_Ethics/)

Astra HC is fully committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of all our members. Whilst, child safety and protection is of utmost importance, the remit of the Welfare committee extends to all members including adult players, mentors, volunteers and all our club community. Our club recognises that we have not only a legislative but also a moral responsibility to care for all those associated with our Club.

Every individual involved in our Club activities is expected to show respect at all times and to act in a manner that will maintain a safe and enjoyable environment for all. We require all those who come into contact with children in the Club to comply with the highest possible standards of behaviour.

We expect all our officials, mentors, volunteers, adult and child members, parents/guardians and spectators to respect each other and to extend that respect to referees, match officials, opposing teams and all those we come in contact with.

All club activities should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play and respect.

Ireland has adopted 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 within the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialism and corruption.”- (European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe, 1993)

Our club is committed to the promotion of this ethos and asks all members to acknowledge their own role in doing so, and to adhere to our ethos in order to ensure maximum enjoyment and safety for all members of our club

## **Child Protection and Welfare Statement**

Our Club is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all young people who participate in handball activities. We shall take all practicable steps to protect them from discernable forms of abuse, from harm, discrimination or degrading treatment and shall respect their rights, wishes and feelings.

### **WE DO THIS BY;**

- Recognising that all children have the right to be protected from harm.
- Ensuring that all our coaches and volunteers are carefully recruited and selected in accordance with our own guidelines and relevant legislative requirements and that they accept responsibility for ensuring the wellbeing of children in their care.
- Responding swiftly and appropriately to any allegations or concerns so as to protect the welfare of children who participate in our games and related activities.
- Appointing a Designated Officer who will liaise with the statutory authorities as appropriate.
- Providing parents and children with the opportunity to voice their concerns.
- Ensuring that all allegations of abuse of young people are confidentially dealt with in accordance the Association Guidelines and relevant legislation.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of our Child Protection and Welfare procedures and related policies on an on-going basis.
- Ensuring that members, coaches, team mentors, administrators, parents/guardians and spectators sign up to and adhere to our Code of Behaviour.
- Promoting the Give Respect - Get Respect initiative at all levels within our Associations.

### **Code of Behaviour**

#### **When working with underage players**

This Code of Behaviour addresses the minimum appropriate levels of behaviour, practice and conduct required from our Young Players, Coaches, Supporters, Parents/Guardians, Referees and Clubs.

Everyone involved in our sports and activities should accept the roles and responsibilities that they undertake as we commit ourselves to maintaining an enjoyable and safe environment for all. The safeguarding of our members will always be a key priority as we recognise that that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance in our work.

This Code should be used in tandem with the overall Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport, Our Games – Our Code, where roles and responsibilities are outlined in greater detail.

## Young Players

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 due to their participation in sport they also have a responsibility to treat others with fairness and respect. With rights there will always be responsibilities.

There will be a 'sign-up' procedure, whereby Young Players agree to abide by this Code of Behaviour and to any other policies or codes in your Club or National Governing Body.

### **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 levels with which they feel comfortable.
- Make their concerns known and have them dealt with in an appropriate manner.
- Be protected from abuse.
- Be listened to.

### **YOUNG PLAYERS SHOULD ALWAYS**

- Play fairly, do their best and enjoy themselves.
- Respect fellow team members regardless of ability, cultural or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation or religion beliefs.
- Support fellow team members regardless of whether they do well or not.
- Represent their team, their Club and their family with pride and dignity.
- Respect all coaches, officials and their opponents.
- Be gracious in defeat and modest in victory.
- Shake hands before and after a game as part of the Give Respect Get Respect initiative, irrespective of the result.
- Inform their Coach/Mentor/Manager in advance if they are unavailable for training and games.
- Take due care of Club equipment.
- Know that it is acceptable to 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.

### **YOUNG PLAYERS SHOULD NEVER:**

- Cheat – always play by the rules.
- Shout at or argue with a game's official, with their Coach, their team mates or opponents and should never 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 and/or sectarian references.

## **Coaches, Mentors and Trainers**

All 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 in our work with underage players. In developing the skills levels of every player, Coaches should always encourage enjoyment and fun while ensuring meaningful participation in our games and activities. 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 are required to undertake agreed vetting and background Police checks and to attend coaching and training courses relevant to their roles.

### **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 underage players always leave with a sense of achievement and an increased level of self-esteem.
- Recognise the development needs and capacity of all underage 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 when working with underage players.
- 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 underage players is the best indicator of effective coaching.

### **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 campaign.
- Do not smoke while working with underage players.
- Do not consume alcohol or non prescribed drugs immediately prior to or while underage players are in your care.
- Encourage parents to become involved in your team and Club activities wherever possible.

### **CONDUCT OF COACHES WHEN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

- 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.

- Don't shout at or lecture players or reprimand/ridicule them when they make a mistake. Children learn best through trial and error. Children and young people should not be afraid to risk error so as to learn.
- The use of any form of physical punishment is prohibited as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of restraint.
- Avoid incidents of horse play or role play or telling jokes etc. that could be misinterpreted.
- Never undertake any form of therapy or hypnosis, in the training of children.

### **AVOID COMPROMISING YOUR ROLE AS A COACH**

Some activities may require coaches to come into physical contact with underage players in the course of their duties. However, coaches should;

- Avoid taking coaching sessions on your own.
- Only deliver one to one coaching, if deemed necessary, in a group setting.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with an underage player and never engage in inappropriate touching of a player
- Be aware that any necessary contact should be determined by the age and development of the player and should only take place with the permission and understanding of the player and in an open environment in the context of developing a player's skills and abilities.

### **BEST PRACTICE**

- As a coach always be punctual and properly attired.
- Ensure that all of your players are suitably and safely attired to play their chosen sport. e.g. helmets, goggles (Handball), shin guards, mouthguards.
- Keep a record of attendance at training and at games by both players and coaches.
- Ensure that all dressing rooms and the general areas that are occupied by your players and other Club personnel, prior to, during or immediately following the completion of any match are kept clean and are not damaged in any way.
- Be accompanied by at least one other adult in underage team dressing rooms.
- Set realistic – stretching but achievable – performance goals for your players and team.
- Rotate the team captaincy and the method used for selecting teams so that the same children are not always selected to the exclusion of others.
- Keep a record of any injuries and action subsequently taken. Ensure that another official referee/team mentor is present when a player is being attended to and can corroborate the relevant details.
- Make adequate provision for First Aid services.
- Do not encourage or permit players to play while injured.
- Be aware of any special medical or dietary requirements of players as indicated on the medical consent/registration forms or as informed by parents/guardians.
- With the expressed permission of parents/guardians be willing to keep necessary and emergency medication of players in a safe and accessible place for administration in accordance with the wishes of the parents/guardians.
- Do not administer medication or medical aid unless you are willing to do so and have received the necessary training to administer such aid.
- Use mobile phones, if deemed appropriate, only via a group text or email system for communicating with the parents/guardians of players. Any exception to this form of group texting can only be proceeded with following permission from parents/guardians.

- Do not communicate individually by text/email with underage players.
- Do not engage in communications with underage players via social network sites.
- Encourage parents/guardians to play an active role in organising and assisting various activities for your teams and your Club.
- If it is necessary to transport a child/young person in your car, ensure that they are seated in a rear seat with seat belts securely fastened.
- With the exception of their own child a coach should not transport a child alone, except in emergency or exceptional circumstances

## **Parents/Guardians**

Parents/Guardians have an influential role to play in assisting and encouraging their children to fully participate in Sport, whether by playing our games or attending training or coaching sessions. In common with coaches and Club personnel the parents/guardians of underage players should act as role models for their.

### **PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD ENCOURAGE THEIR CHILD TO:**

- Always 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. Advice may be sought if necessary from Club officials on this issue.

### **PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD LEAD BY EXAMPLE:**

- Adopt a positive attitude to their children's participation in our games.
- 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.
- 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.'
- Never embarrass a child or use sarcastic remarks towards a player.
- Applaud good play from all teams.
- Do not 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 unless specifically invited to do so by an official in charge.

### **PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD:**

- Complete and return the registration/permission and medical consent forms for their child's participation in the Club.
- Inform the coaches, and any other relevant Club personnel, of any changes 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 adequate clothing and equipment as may be required for the playing of our games including for example helmets, shin guards, mouthguards etc.
- Ensure that the nutrition/hydration and hygiene needs of their child are met.

- Listen to what their child may 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.

**PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD ASSIST THEIR CLUB BY:**

- Showing appreciation to volunteers, coaches and Club officials.
- Attending training and games on a regular basis.
- Assisting in the organising of Club activities and events as requested.
- Respecting the rights, dignity and worth of every person and by treating each one equally regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
- Not entering team dressing rooms unless deemed necessary by the team coach (es) so as to protect the privacy of other underage players.

**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.

## **Supporters**

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

Fellow supporters have a responsibility to ensure that all spectators conduct themselves in an acceptable and well behaved manner at all times, when attending our games and competitions.

Supporters should realise and consider that Young Players are encouraged to participate in Gaelic Games so that they may enjoy themselves while also improving their skills levels.

**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 behaviour by not using foul language or harassing players, coaches 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 AN ALLEGED BREACH OF THE CODE**

Alleged breaches of the Code should be dealt with in a fair and impartial manner with the presumption of innocence maintained until otherwise proven. If at any stage the person against whom the breach is alleged is under 18 years of age, no formal meetings should take place with that person without the presence or permission of a Parent or Guardian.

Any action(s) taken should at all times be seen to be proportionate to the alleged breach that may have taken place.

If a breach of the Code of Behaviour is reported or observed, it is recommended that the Club Behaviour Advisors initially oversees any enquiry into such an allegation.

The following should be adhered to:

### **STEP 1 ALLEGED BREACH OF THE CODE IS REPORTED OR OBSERVED**

Matter should be reported to the Club's Behaviours Advisor Board.

### **STEP 2 CONFIDENTIALITY**

At all times the Behaviour Advisors must maintain the highest degree of confidentiality in their work on behalf of the Club and should only discuss the details of any alleged breach of the Code on a need to know basis with those that are required to be informed or consulted. The Behaviours Advisor Board shall record and retain a record of all discussions and actions taken.

### **STEP 4 COLLATE THE INFORMATION**

The Club's Behaviours Advisor Board should:

- Carefully take account of what has been reported or alleged and retain a record of all actions taken on behalf of the Club. Such records may be required as part of any subsequent investigation or in the event of an appeal at a later stage.
- Check what has been reported for accuracy.
- Corroborate the facts if necessary with others who may have witnessed the alleged incident.

### **STEP 5 INFORM THE PERSON ACCUSED OF THE ALLEGED BREACH OF THE CODE**

The Club's Behaviours Advisor Board should:

- Inform the person against whom the alleged breach has been made as to the nature of the breach and how it may have contravened the Code.
- Seek a response from the person against whom the allegation has been made within a stated time limit.
- Inform the person if any further action is deemed necessary or shall be recommended.

### **STEP 6 IF A BREACH OF THE CODE IS ACKNOWLEDGED**

- If a breach of the Code is acknowledged and is not deemed to be of an extreme nature (e.g. poor practice as opposed to a deliberate breach), the Club's Behaviours Advisor Board should inform the person against whom the breach has been alleged how they may have breached the Code and that they must in future adhere to all aspects of the Code.
- If the breach is deemed to be of a more serious or a re-occurring nature it may then be subject to reporting within the Club. Such matters, depending on the nature of each case shall be dealt with in accordance with the principles of natural justice and by the Club Code of Behaviour Advisory Committee or in extreme circumstances may be categorized as a breach of Rule or as a form of abuse and would be dealt with accordingly.



The decision to remove a person from their role(s) due to a breach of the Code of Behaviour may only be taken by the relevant Club Board or as recommended to them by the Code of Behaviour Advisory Committee

- Should any action be taken against a person deemed to have breached the Code, the action taken will undoubtedly be proportionate to the level of breach that occurred. However, such actions could include a verbal warning, a removal from their role for a specific period of time, a permanent removal from their role, a directive that they undertake a specified training programme, a request that the matter be dealt with as a disciplinary issue or a referral of the alleged breach to the Designated Person dealing with allegations of abuse
- All such action shall be taken by the relevant Club Committee having considered any recommendations that may be made to them.

#### STEP 7 APPEAL AGAINST DECISION

- If the person against whom an allegation has been made is unhappy with the outcome or decision(s) made, a right of appeal should be afforded to them in accordance with Club and Governing Body structures. Should the person against whom the decision has been made wishes to appeal that decision the Club must afford them the opportunity to do so, at Club level.

#### STEP 9 INFORMING THE AGGRIEVED PARTY AS TO ANY DECISION REACHED FOLLOWING A BREACH OF THE CODE

- Any person, who due to the actions of another, may have experienced or have been the recipient of actions deemed to be in breach of the Code, is entitled to know what outcomes and decisions have been reached following investigations into such matters. Such persons should be informed in a confidential manner as to what has been agreed, but may not be part of the decision making process when determining an outcome.

#### STEP 10 REVIEW USE OF THE CODE IN THE CLUB

- On an on-going basis the Club's Behaviour Advisory Committee should review the implementation of the Code of Behaviour within the Club and where necessary appraise the Club's Executive Committee on how the Code may be promoted at all times.