



Naomh Mearnog

Process for Dealing with Concerns Raised In Relation to Juvenile Teams

This process has been approved by the Club's Executive Committee on 13th May 2021 and is designed to bring clarity to practical issues in dealing with concerns raised in relation to juvenile teams, ensuring that such concerns are raised or recognised early and to assist with ensuring good relations between all members of the Club.

It is not intended to supersede the official GAA process and where there is a conflict the GAA process will take precedence. The process is subject to change and may require change in the event of any adjusted guidance from the GAA. This document should therefore be read in conjunction with the GAA Code of Behaviour (Underage).

An information night for all juvenile coaches will be held at the start of every year where the following will be introduced for new coaches and reinforced for existing coaches.

- Club Coaching and Games Development Policy;
- GAA Code of Behaviour;
- Contact Details for the Children's Officer(s) and the Designated Liaison Person (DLP); and
- Details of this process.

All coaches should have an opportunity to attend and those that cannot, should be contacted in writing to require them to read all the documents.

The Club website will have a section where all policies and contact details are available to parents. All parents will be sent a link at the start of the year.

Preventative Measures:

In addition to the GAA Codes and the Club Policies the following measures are designed to reduce the risk of matters developing.

- **Club Children's Officer (CCO)**

Where there is a concern regarding child welfare you should contact the CCO.

- **Games Development Committee:**

Where conflict or disagreement arises between a parent and a coaching team or between members of a coaching team around coaching and not child welfare matters the concern should first be raised with the Chairperson or Secretary of the Games Development Committee.

The role of the Committee will be to discuss the matter with all parties and seek either a change in coaching methods or a greater shared understanding.

- **Surveys**

The Club will on a rolling basis through the year conduct a survey of parents on each team to get feedback in a neutral way on how their children are finding being part of their team, what is being done well, what could be better etc. Where clear patterns emerge in relation to a team the Games Development Committee or the CCO as appropriate will be involved in taking appropriate measures.

- **Parent Liaison:**

The Club would like a situation where each team up to Under 12 level would have a rota of volunteer parents who would be available on match days to support the coaches. Their responsibilities would be to provide general support with the activities required on match days.

Process upon Receipt of a Concern Regarding a Breach of the GAA Code of Behaviour

The process for dealing with such matters is clearly laid out in the GAA Guidelines. There is the option for (a) and informal process; or (b) a formal process. Alongside this guidance the Club will introduce the following:

As soon as a matter is raised all parties will be bound by confidentiality as this is in the best interest of all concerned. It is our experience that breaches of confidentiality could be very damaging to all parties and can cause long term issues even if a resolution to the original matter is found.

Therefore, all parties will be informed of the confidentiality requirement in writing and that a breach of this will be a serious disciplinary matter under the Club Constitution as potentially amounting to conduct considered to have discredited or harmed the Club or the GAA.

Any complaints must comply with the guidelines regarding written submissions and details **must** be sent to the CCO.

- **Informal Resolution:**

A decision to proceed to attempt an informal resolution will be made by the CCO.

The parties to the matter will receive in writing the process that will be followed covering the following:

- The person or persons that will attempt to reach an informal resolution;
- The process that they will follow which is likely to be unique to each situation; and
- The expected timeline.

- **Formal Procedure:**

The parties to the matter will receive in writing the process that will be followed covering the following:

- The names of the Members of the Investigation Committee;
- The process that will be followed and the expected timeline. It is accepted that an investigation may, because of early findings, have to adjust one or other of the above
- Before the process begins the Chair of the Committee should make contact with the appropriate County Children's Officer to discuss how they should fulfil their role and should any party seek to appeal or contest the outcome the Chair will again make contact to receive further advice

Post Complaint

It is accepted that where a parent, coach or player raises a concern there can, regardless of the outcome, be very serious damage to relationships.

Where concerns have been raised and addressed the Games Development Committee will play an active role in seeking to build an improved relationship between the involved parties.

The Club will also survey the parents again within 3 months of the conclusion and will monitor compliance with any measures put in place by the Club Executive.

Where there is evidence of any prejudicial actions taken against a party who has raised a valid concern this will be treated in the same way as a breach of confidentiality.