

# *Galway Bohemians AFC*



## **Code of Practice**

The guidelines in this document are based on the national guidelines as outlined in the following documents.

Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Childrens Sport, Irish Sports Council.

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

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

Football Association of Ireland Code of Ethics & Best Practice

## **Galway Bohemians AFC Mission Statement**

The work of **Galway Bohemians AFC** is based on the following principles that will guide the development of sport for young people in this club. Children and young people's 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-centered ethos will help to ensure that competition and specialization 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 consequently, 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 commercialization and corruption.

### **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/managers should aim to put the welfare of the child first and competitive standards second. A child-centered approach will help to ensure that competition and specialization are kept in their appropriate place.

# Galway Bohemians AFC

## *Child Protection & Welfare Policy Statement*

### **Introduction**

Galway Bohemians AFC 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 Galway Bohemians AFC on the protection and safety of children and young people who participate in soccer.

All children and young people<sup>1</sup> 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.

Galway Bohemians AFC recognizes 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 programs will ensure that everybody in Galway Bohemians AFC 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 Galway Bohemians AFC activities are able to do so in a safe, enjoyable and quality environment.

In pursuit of this goal Galway Bohemians AFC will:

- Advise all members of Galway Bohemians AFC (coaches, players, 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.
- Appoint a Club Children's Officer in line with Football Association of Ireland requirements.
- Provide a child protection and welfare module in staff induction and development programs.

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<sup>1</sup> Children are defined in Irish Law as being any person under 18 years of age.

### **The aims of Galway Bohemians AFC Child Protection Policy are:**

- To develop a positive and pro-active position in order to best protect all children and young people who participate in soccer, in order for them to do so 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 demonstrate best practice in the area of child welfare and protection.
- To promote ethics and best practice standards throughout soccer.

### **The key principles underpinning this Policy are that:**

- 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. It is essential that we work in partnership with children and young people and their parents/carers. The HSE has a statutory responsibility to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and Galway Bohemians AFC is committed to cooperating fully with them in accordance with procedures as outlined in “Children First” National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.
- Galway Bohemians AFC will cooperate fully with the Football Association of Ireland National Children’s Officer, Gardai and HSE in any investigation of child abuse in soccer.

The Football Association of Ireland’s regulations in regard to child welfare and protection are defined in their handbook.

Galway Bohemians AFC 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 soccer.

It is the responsibility of all adults involved in soccer 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.

## **Galway Bohemians AFC 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 (Gardai, HSE) and should not be undertaken by Children's Officers or any other Club/League. 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 the HSE and this decision should be based on reasonable grounds for concern. In accordance with requirements of Children First all concerns with relation to suspected child abuse will be passed on to the relevant statutory authorities.

### **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 2011

**Therefore in practice, concerns will be passed on by the Clubs designated person to the statutory authorities if we receive:**

- (i) a specific indication from a child that (s)he was abused;
- (ii) a statement from a person who witnessed abuse;

**or have evidence in relation to:**

- (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.

### **Step One**

Any allegation of abuse must in the first instance be brought to the attention of the 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 staff/volunteers including counselling where necessary.

### **Step Two**

Should Galway Bohemians AFC become aware of an allegation of abuse of a child or children by a coach/volunteer during the execution of that coaches/volunteers duties, the Chairman will privately inform the coach/volunteer of the following:

- ❖ the fact that the allegation has been made against him/her;
- ❖ the nature of the allegation.

### **Step Three**

The coach/volunteer should be afforded an opportunity to respond. The Chairman will note the response and pass on this information when making the formal report to the HSE.

The report to the HSE 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 should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities

### **Step Four**

Our 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.

**It should be noted that should a formal notification be made, we are not accusing anyone of child abuse, rather we are passing on concerns for investigation by the appropriate statutory authorities in keeping with the principle that “the welfare of the child is the first and paramount consideration”.**

### **Step Five**

All subsequent actions following an allegation of abuse against a coach/volunteer will be taken in consultation with the HSE 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. Therefore, the FAI National Children's Officer must be informed immediately of any formal notification to the Statutory Authorities.

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.**

## Galway Bohemians AFC

### **Club Disciplinary, Complaints and Appeals Procedure (Covers all matters other than suspected child abuse which has to be referred to the Statutory Authorities)**

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 secretary under the relevant rules of the body concerned.

The complaint or concern should be in writing and should outline all relevant details and other parties involved in line with procedure.

#### **Step Two**

The complaint or concern should then be brought to the attention of the appropriate person 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 Offices/Directors of the body 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 their respective superior body as per rules. Clubs, leagues, divisional associations and other football bodies should review their rules to ensure they contain a provision that facilitates an appeals procedure in this respect.

## **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 your local HSE duty social worker or alternatively the Football Association of Ireland National Children's Officer.

## **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 and should only be discussed with those who need to know
- 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

## **Galway Bohemians AFC Coach, Manager, Volunteer Education & Support Policy**

The Committee of Galway Bohemians AFC are indebted to our coaches, managers and volunteers who give freely of their valuable time in providing a stimulating, challenging, supportive and fun soccer experience to children and young people in the Club.

The Committee will endeavour to support these coaches, managers 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".

Galway Bohemians AFC will make all efforts to assist all new volunteers, managers, coaches in whatever way they can.

Galway Bohemians AFC will provide an induction pack to all new volunteers/coaches which will familiarize them with Club rules, policies and procedures and expected codes of behaviour for children, coaches and parents/spectators.

Specifically in relation to those with no soccer background, the Committee have introduced a "Buddy" system whereby new members will accompany one of our existing coaches for a certain period during which they can familiarize themselves with the Club and its members adult and children and introduce them to some basic training routines and practice models.

The Committee of Galway Bohemians AFC recognize the value of having appropriately qualified personnel in the club, and therefore will endeavour to support any of our coaches in the coach education process.

At no time will any coach, manager, 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, managers and volunteers are encouraged to share ideas, expertise and support other club personnel in any way they can.

### **Galway Bohemians AFC Safety Policy**

All coaches/managers in Galway Bohemians AFC 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 should seek to create a safe and enjoyable environment in which to play and train.

In this respect:

- Adequate supervision must be maintained at all times. Our Clubs adult:child ratios are 1 Leaders to every 10 children (1:10), but no coach, manager or volunteer works alone. If a squad/group has 21-30 players they require 3 adult leaders etc.
- Regular safety checks will be carried out in relation to premises, training facilities and equipment. Coaches must ensure that the FAI Goalpost safety policy is strictly adhered to at all times.
- Galway Bohemians AFC safety rules must be adhered to at all times.
- Parents/guardians must be informed of the starting and finishing times of training sessions and matches.
- A first aid kit must be available at all training sessions and matches and injuries must be recorded, with a note of action taken in relation to each one. Never play injured players.
- Parents/Guardians must be notified of injuries/illness which their children incur while participating in any Galway Bohemians AFC activity.
- Records of attendance must be maintained

### **Galway Bohemians AFC Substance Abuse Policy**

In Galway Bohemians AFC the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco is actively discouraged as being incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity.

Coaches/managers shall not smoke when taking a session or drink alcohol before taking a session.

In relation to our under-age teams Galway Bohemians AFC shall endeavour to organize receptions and celebrations in a non-alcoholic 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 must be taken to ensure that this policy is strictly adhered to.**

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

### **Galway Bohemians AFC Club Children's Officer/s**

The appointment of Club Children's Officers 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 of their experiences.

Government guidelines advise that a children's officer should be appointed by all clubs and this should be done in accordance with recommended selection and recruitment procedures. The appointment of this person should be carried out in consultation with juvenile members and their parent/guardians.

The Club Children's Officer should

- Have good communication skills, be approachable and open minded
- Have good knowledge and be familiar with their Child Welfare and Protection Codes and Guidelines Children First
- Have an understanding of relevant child welfare/protection legislation,
- Have undertaken a Garda Vetting application (when available)
- Have attended the relevant awareness training on child welfare and protection and availed of Children's Officer training

The Club Children's Officer will have the following functions:

- To promote the Code of Ethics & Good Practice
- To influence policy and practice and to prioritize children's needs
- To ensure that children know how and whom they can report their concerns to within the club. Information disclosed by a child should be dealt with in accordance with the Department of Health and Children's Guidelines "*Children First*"
- To encourage the participation of parents/guardians in club activities
- To co-operate with parents to ensure that each child enjoys his/her participation in soccer
- To act as a resource with regard to best practice in children's soccer
- To report regularly to the Club Management Committee
- To monitor changes in membership and follow up any unusual dropout, absenteeism or club transfers by children or coach/volunteers

**Club Children's Officers do not have the responsibility of investigating or validating child protection concerns within the club and have no counselling or therapeutic role. This responsibility lies with the HSE and Gardai.**

**Galway Bohemians AFC**  
**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.

Galway Bohemians AFC 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 permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport. A player's permission form is one way of achieving this.
- Ask for parental permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport. A parental permission form is one way of achieving this.
- 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 player's. 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 must seek permission/accreditation with the children's officer, team manager/coach and/or event organiser of session. This club will display the following information prior to the start of an event to inform spectators of the policy:

*"In line with the recommendation in the Galway Bohemians AFC Code of Conduct, the promoters of this event request that any person wishing to engage in any video, zoom or close range photography should register their details with the organisers. Children and young people should only be photographed or filmed with their 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 children's officer/event organiser/team manager by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded.

We will then:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
- Issue the photographer with identification which must be worn at all times
- 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 athletes or one to one photo sessions at events
- not approve/allow photo sessions outside the events or at an athlete'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 player and the player's parent/carer.

No camera, phones or other recording equipment is permitted in dressing rooms. Any such equipment may be stored with personal belongings but must not be used.

*Anyone concerned about any photography taking place at events/matches or training sessions should bring their concerns to the attention of the committee/team manager/coach children's 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.

### **Therefore 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

### **As a coach/manager remember:**

- Use only group texts for communication among players and teams and inform parents of this at the start of the season
- It is not appropriate to have constant communication for individual players
- 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

## **Galway Bohemians AFC Travelling Guidelines**

When travelling with young people coaches/volunteers of Galway Bohemians AFC should:

- Ensure that there is adequate insurance cover
- Not carry more than the permitted number of passengers
- Ensure the use of safety belts
- Keep to the rules of the road
- Avoid being alone with one player; if with one player you could: put the passenger in the back seat, drop off at central locations, get parental permission for transporting children on a regular basis, and clearly state times of pick off and drop off.

## **Galway Bohemians AFC Touching Guidelines**

All managers/volunteers of Galway Bohemians AFC 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 athlete's body.
- Any doubts of a medical nature should be passed on to a suitably qualified medical person. Coaches should not play injured players.

**Comforting/congratulating players is an important part of the relationship between coaches and players.**

Guidelines for this type of touch are:

- Limit touching to "safe" areas, such as hand-to-shoulder. It must 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.

## **Galway Bohemians AFC**

### **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/Managers/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/managers/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/manager/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 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 participants to turn away from Soccer

## **Galway Bohemians AFC**

### **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 teams 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 teams 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 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.

*Galway Bohemians AFC*

***Players Code of Conduct***

**Children in Galway Bohemians AFC 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.
- Galway Bohemians AFC have decided that all players are entitled to a minimum playing time of ..... minutes per match. (Consult League rules in this regard) Criteria for team selection should be clearly defined.
- 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.

In this regard children in Galway Bohemians AFC 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 Galway Bohemians AFC 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 the name of Galway Bohemians AFC into disrepute

In Galway Bohemians AFC we want children in Galway Bohemians AFC 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.

Galway Bohemians AFC 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 Galway Bohemians AFC will insist on:

- Encouraging participation and fun
- Promoting the development of skills as opposed to winning at all costs
- Ensure a minimum playing time of 15 minutes per match per player (time may vary according to League Rules)
- Emphasising and praising effort
- Acting as a good role models
- Insisting on **Fair Play** (we will take off 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