



Child Protection Policy

Guidelines for Sports Leaders, Coaches, Officials, Convenors etc. including Code of Conduct

Shankill Tennis Club recognises the key role leaders (professionals, coaches, convenors, captains, selectors and team managers, etc.) play in the lives of children in the club. Club coaches, sports leaders and officials will strive to create a positive environment for the children in their care. They have an overall responsibility to take the necessary steps to ensure that positive and healthy experiences are provided. All Leaders will have as their first priority the children's safety and enjoyment of tennis and will adhere to the guidelines and regulations set out in *The Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport* and the club's Child Protection Policy.

Leaders will respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child and will treat everyone equally, regardless of gender, age, disability, social class, race, religion, ability etc.

Leaders appointed by the club to work with children will have the appropriate experience and/or hold the necessary qualifications. Leaders will be expected to go through appropriate recruitment and selection procedures, whether paid or unpaid. Vetting procedures must be followed to comply with legislation. For those in the Republic of Ireland Garda Vetting should be successfully completed for all those with on-going contact with young people and in Northern Ireland all those working unsupervised in 'regulated activity, 'frequently' or 'intensively' must complete an Access NI enhanced check.

There will be a 'sign-up' procedure, whereby the appointed/reappointed leaders agree to abide by *The Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport* and sign up to the Code of Conduct for Sports Leaders. Coaches and Sports Leaders should know and understand the club's Child Protection Policies and Procedures and undertake to abide by them.

Once appointed the Leader should act as a role model and promote the positive aspects of tennis and maintain the highest standards of personal conduct. Leaders should develop an appropriate relationship with young people, based on mutual trust and respect. Their behaviour to players, other officials and opponents will have an effect on the players in their care. They should report any concerns they have to the Designated Liaison Person in the club.

Being a role model

- You will be required to display high standards of language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation
- Ensure that players in your care respect the rules of the game. Insist on fair play and ensure players are aware you will not tolerate cheating or bullying behaviour

- Encourage the development of respect for opponents, officials, selectors and other leaders and avoid criticism of fellow professionals and coaches. Do not criticise other leaders
- The use of illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco must be actively discouraged as they are incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity. Leaders should avoid the use of alcohol and illegal substances before coaching, during events, while supervising trips with young players and providing a duty to care.

Protection for leaders

- Leaders are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with players. It is advisable for leaders not to involve young players in their personal life i.e. visits to leaders' homes or overnight stays.
- Avoid working alone and ensure there is adequate supervision for all activities
- Where possible work in an open environment and ensure that physical contact is appropriate and has the permission or understanding of the child.
- Care must be taken not to expose a child intentionally or unintentionally to embarrassment or disparagement by use of sarcastic or flippant remarks.
- Physical punishment or physical force must never be used. Never punish a mistake by physical means or exclusion

A positive environment

- Be generous with praise and never ridicule or shout at players for making mistakes or for losing a match. All young players are entitled to respect.
- Be careful to avoid the "star system". Each child deserves equal time and attention.
- Remember that young players play for fun and enjoyment and that skill development and personal satisfaction have priority over highly structured competition. Never make winning the only objective.
- Set realistic goals for the participants and do not push young players. Create a safe and enjoyable environment.
- When approached to take on a new player, ensure that any previous coach-participant relationship has been ended in a professional manner.
- It is advisable to get agreement from a parent/guardian when young players are invited into adult groups/squads. Boundaries of behaviour in adult groups are normally different from the boundaries that apply to junior groups/squads.
- Leaders who become aware of a conflict between their obligation to their players and their obligation to the club must make explicit to all parties concerned the nature of the conflict and the loyalties and responsibilities involved.
- Leaders should communicate and co-operate with medical and ancillary practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their players' medical or related problems. Avoid giving advice of a personal or medical nature if you are not qualified to do so. Any information of a personal or medical nature must be kept strictly confidential unless the welfare of the child requires the passing on of this information
- The nature of the relationship between a leader and a participant can often mean that a leader will learn confidential information about a player or player's family.

This information must be regarded as confidential and, except where abuse is suspected, must not be divulged to a third party without the express permission of the player/family.

The following is the Code of Conduct to be signed by all club Coaches, Sports Leaders and Officials. In addition all club Coaches, Sports Leaders and Officials will be required to formally sign the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport Undertaking below.



CODE OF CONDUCT

for Coaches/Sports Leaders/Officials

I, *(Print Name)* _____ agree to:

- Ensure the safety of all children by careful supervision, proper pre- planning of coaching/ playing sessions, using safe methods at all times.
- Actively encourage all children not to discriminate on the grounds of religious beliefs, race, gender, social classes or lack of ability.
- Emphasise fun and participation.
- Not allow any rough or dangerous play, bullying, or the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour.
- Always be positive and to promote the objectives of the club at all times.
- Not let any allegations of abuse of any kind to go unchallenged or unrecorded if appropriate. Incidents and accidents to be recorded in the club incident/accident book. Parents will be informed.
- Report accidents or incidents of alleged abuse to the designated person.
- Administer minor first aid in the presence of others and where required refer more serious incidents to the club "first aider".
- Have access to telephone for immediate contact to emergency services if required.
- Foster team work to ensure the safety of youth members in their care.
- Ensure the rights and responsibilities of youth members are enforced.
- Report suspected abuse to the appropriate designated officer.
- Not abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually.
- Maintain confidentiality about sensitive information.
- Be a role model (disciplined / committed / time keeping), remember children learn by example.
- Refrain from smoking and consumption of alcohol during club activities or coaching sessions.
- Hold current coaches insurance.
- Never ask anyone to keep secrets of any kind.
- Ensure that car insurance is appropriate for transporting young people to and from events.
- Ensure that all those working with young people do so under the guidance of the coach.
- As a coach keep my knowledge updated through the Tennis Ireland Continuous Professional Development.
- Protect myself from false accusation by

- Not spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
 - Avoid taking children alone in a car on journeys, however short.
 - Never taking children to your home.
- Not administering First Aid involving the removing of children's clothing unless in the presence of others.

I accept that any misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be dealt with immediately and reported verbally to the Club's Designated Person. Persistent breach of the code of conduct will result in dismissal from the club.

I have read the Shankill Tennis Club Child Protection Policy and agree to abide by the guidelines as set out in the policy.

Signature of Coach/Sports Leader:

Date _____

Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport Undertaking

I agree to abide by and support the **Shankill Tennis Club Child Protection Policy*** and agree to abide by the guidelines as set out in the Policy and in particular to abide by the **Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport***.

I understand and agree to abide by the Rules of Shankill Tennis Club.

Signature of Coach/Sports Leader:

Date _____

* The Club's Child Protection Policy and Code of Ethics document are available on the club website (Junior Tennis/Child Protection section) or in hard copy format at the clubhouse.