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Shankill FC

**Safety Policy**

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## Shankill FC

## Safety Policy

All coaches/managers in Shankill 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 should seek to create a safe and enjoyable environment in which to play and train. *(Clubs are advised to carry out a risk assessment in relation to premises, training facilities and equipment and implement appropriate safety rules)*

In this respect:

* Adequate supervision must be maintained at all times**.** Best practice advice would advocate adult:child ratios of 2 Leaders to every 16 children (1:8), but no coach, manager or volunteer works alone.
* Regular safety checks should be carried out in relation to premises, training facilities and equipment. Ensure that the FAI Goalpost safety policy is strictly adhered to at all times
* Shankill 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 Shankill FC soccer activity.
* Records of attendance should be maintained

Ensure the use of any recommended safety equipmenta

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**Substance Abuse Policy**

In Shankill FC the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco shall be 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 Shankill 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/managers/committee shall act as role models for appropriate behaviour and refrain from drinking alcohol at such functions

**Shankill FC 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 League/Club Children’s Officer should have the following functions:

* To promote the Code of Ethics & Good Practice
* To influence policy and practice and to prioritise 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/League 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.

Shankill FC have appointed Eimhin Dale as our Children’s Officer and they can be contacted at :

* 086 8505370

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# 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.

Shankill 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 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 should seek permission/accreditation with the children’s officer, team manager/coach and/or event organiser of session. This club / organisation 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 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (name of club / association’s) 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.

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 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

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Travelling Guidelines

When travelling with young people coaches/volunteers of Shankill FC 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.

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Touching Guidelines

All managers/volunteers of Shankill 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 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.

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 players 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**

**Shankill FC**

**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 sparring 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/s should 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

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

**Shankill 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 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.

**Shankill FC**

**Players Code of Conduct**

**Children in Shankill 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.
* Shankill FC decided that all players are entitled to playing time.
* 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 Shankill 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 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 Shankill 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 the name of (insert club name here) into disrepute

In Shankill FC we 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.

Shankill 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 Shankill 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 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

**Best Practice-Coaches**

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

Where possible, our coaches/volunteers should avoid:

* Spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others.
* Taking sessions alone (always employ “Two Deep” supervision).
* Taking children to their homes.
* Taking children on journeys alone in their care.

Our Coaches/volunteers should never:

* Exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.
* Share a room with a young person alone on away trips.
* Engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in
* inappropriate touching of any kind, and/or make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child.
* Use any form of corporal punishment or physical force on a young person.
* Take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adult and permission from the Committee
* Undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of young people.•

**Safety**

Coaches have a responsibility to ensure the safety of all players 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:

* Regular safety checks should be carried out in relation to premises, training facilities and equipment. Any problems should be brought to the attention of the Committee
* Appropriate safety rules should be adopted and implemented and protective equipment should be used in any contact training session.
* 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 /matches and injuries should be recorded, with a note of action taken in relation to each one.
* Parents/Guardians should be notified of injuries/illness which their children incur while participating in any football activity
* Never play injured players.
* **Ensure that the FAI Goalpost safety policy is strictly adhered to at all times**