



ST Maurs GAA Club Code of Best Practice (Coaches and Mentors Charter)

We at **St Maurs GAA Club** aim to promote the participation of children in our club by creating a culture of safety and fun. This charter provides guidelines for all mentors and coaches of St. Maurs engaged in coaching young teams

COACHES

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 to our work with underage players.

Conduct of Coaches when working with under age players

- Develop an appropriate working relationship with children based on mutual trust and respect.
- Don't shout at, lecture, reprimand or ridicule players when they make mistakes. Young players learn best through trial and should not be afraid to risk error so as to learn.
- Never use any form of corporal punishment or physical force.
- Avoid incidents of horse play or role play or telling jokes etc that could be misinterpreted.
- Provide opportunities for all players to participate in games to the best of their ability
- Ensure all players are registered with the club. Mentors should ask Juvenile committee for a list of registered players and communicate back details of any players not registered so that the committee can follow up. Any player not registered is not insured and cannot be played.
- Challenge bullying in any form whether physical or emotional.
- Ensure pitches are prepared in accordance with the rules. The proper dimensions and goalposts should be used and all portable posts should be anchored properly.
- Referees should be respected during games and mentors should remember that players copy the example set by their coaches and parents
- St Maurs referees at CCC1 are our juvenile players . Club mentors should ensure they are treated with respect by our supporters and opposition so avoid shouting instructions to them, criticizing openly from touchline etc.

Training Sessions - Each session should be attended by a minimum of two mentors. A third designated adult should be available for issues such as First Aid, Toilet Escort, Signing In of children etc

Contact Lists – All mentors should have a contact list available at all sessions to ensure swift communication with parents guardians during any session/match.

First Aid - A First Aid Kit must be available for use at all sessions. It should include an agreed list of contents.

Indoor Sessions – Safety is a particular concern during indoor sessions. All furniture should be removed from the floor area of the hall prior to a session, a waiting area created and no access by other people to the hall during a session.

Match Days – A check list should be used to ensure all necessary equipment is available and in working order – jerseys, balls, hurls, first aid kit, water bottles, flags etc. Parents should be identified to erect and safely secure goal posts. Goals should never be left unsecured.

Parent Meeting – Each squad should hold a meeting for parents as early as possible in the new season. While the following is not an exhaustive list the agenda should specifically include

- Information regarding timetables for training and matches
- An outline of the club code of conduct for mentors, parents and children – the abbreviated copy could be presented to all parents and all children over twelve years of age for their information
- Systems for communication between parents and mentors
- The appropriate involvement of parents/guardians in the teams activities eg First Aid, Signing in Book, Setting up of pitches prior to matches, rota for cleaning gear etc

PLAYER PARTICIPATION

- All players are entitled to be included in squads appropriate to their age. Players should not play with teams above their own age group except in exceptional circumstances. Players should only play up with the agreement of both sets of mentors and with the permission of parents.
- At no time should juvenile players play up more than two years above their grade for boys or 3 years for girls eg no U11 boy should be requested to play with the U14s or U12 girl with the u16's. This is a club rule !
- Where players from another squad are used then
 - a. Mentors should give the players from their own squad first preference in playing time.
 - b. Players from younger squads should be used only to make up the numbers OR as substitutes in case of injury to your own squad players
 - c. Players from younger squads can be used to make up a Feile panel to 24 but should not be played to the disadvantage of the squads own players
- Where a clash in fixtures takes place between two grades a player should always play with his correct designated team.

Guidelines for Junior teams (Nursery to U12)

- All games (boys and girls) in Age groups U8 to U12 are non-competitive and should be treated as such
- Mentors should encourage all players with reasonable/equitable game time
- Mentors should abide by the streaming guidelines set down by the co boards which are designed to encourage all players to play at their own standard of competition and therefore get sufficient time on the ball as a result
- All players playing Go Games have the opportunity to be rotated and experience playing in different positions. Strong players should not be allowed to dominate games to the disadvantage of other players i.e. taking all frees, always playing in the central positions, never substituted etc.
- Go Games matches should NEVER be played with more than the allowed number of players. It's better to play less or setup a 2nd or 3rd pitch

U8 is 7 a side, U9/10 is 9 a side, u11 is 9 to 11 a side, U12 is 11 to 13 a side

1. E.g. if you have 14 u9'splay 2 x 7 a side games on shorter pitches...Do NOT PLAY 11/ 12/13 or 14 a side
2. It's better to play 9 a side and have 3 or 4 subs interchanging all the time than pack the pitch with 12 or 13 players. Nobody benefits as the play is congested. Weaker players will suffer as they will not get the ball.

Guidelines for Teenage Teams (U13 to U18)

- Children playing on teams from U13 to U18 have the opportunity to play in competitive league and championship games. Such competition gives the children the opportunity to experience winning and losing in a competitive setting. The objective of the club is to develop the potential of each player to their maximum.
- Mentors should seek to include as many players as are eligible during matches. In general at these grades a maximum of twenty players can be given game time during a game.
- Where there are more than twenty players on a panel mentors should consider factors such as participation at training/varying starting line ups/ inclusion during previous matches when choosing teams.

Matches and training are supposed to be fun for children to participate in. Children give up sports when they feel undervalued and don't get enough participation Gaelic Games are about the children playing not about the mentors and as a club we can only improve if we develop more children to a higher level of skill. This will not happen if we don't abide by the guidelines of the club While the club needs on field success to stimulate and encourage our players, we can't adopt a win at all costs approach at a risk of sacrificing the atmosphere of the club itself St Maurs GAA have a code of best practice which is a wide ranging document that covers behaviour expectations of players, parents, coaches, supporters, referees and the club itself. It's available on the club website with a clear link on the homepage. Please take some time to read through this document

