



---

**CODE OF ETHICS  
TANEY PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOL SPORTS COMMITTEE**

Taney Parish Primary School is indebted to all the volunteers, coaches, teachers and parents who give of their time in providing sporting opportunities for our children. Sport provides an excellent pathway for children and young people to learn new skills, become more confident and maximise their own potential. Through their participation, they can learn and develop life skills, have fun and enjoyment, make friends and experience life in a way that can enhance their personal growth throughout their lives. Coaches, parents and administrators all have an important role to play in promoting good practice in children's sport.

Taney Parish Primary School and its Sports Committee want all our sporting activities to be safe and to be fun and to that end we would ask that all those involved have, as their first priority, children's safety and enjoyment of the sport. We would draw your attention to our Code of Ethics which has been adapted from The Irish Sports Council's *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland*. It outlines the type of issues that need to be highlighted and addressed in order to provide the safest and most enjoyable environmental not only for players but also the coaches and volunteers involved.

Elizabeth Carpenter, Príomhoide

---

# CODE OF ETHICS

## TANEY PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOL SPORTS COMMITTEE:

### HOCKEY + SOCCER

---

#### NEEDS OF THE CHILD

All children's sport experiences should be guided by what is best for children. This means that adults involved (referred to as Sports Leaders in this Code) should have a basic understanding of the emotional, physical and personal needs of young people. The stages of development and ability of children should guide the types of activity provided within sport. Coaches must ensure that the activities they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual. Especially in the area of young players, training sessions should be fun and challenging for all the players.

#### QUALITY ATMOSPHERE AND ETHOS

Children's sport should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. Standards of behaviour for leaders and children in sports organisations should be as important as the standards these organisations set for sports performance. Standards of excellence should extend to personal conduct.

#### COMPETITION

A child centred ethos will help to ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place. A balanced approach to competition can make a significant contribution to children's development while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and satisfaction. Through such competition children learn respect for opponents, officials and rules of the sport.

Too often competitive demands are placed on children too early, which results in excessive levels of pressure on them. This is one of a number of factors, which contribute to high levels of dropout from sport. It should always be kept in mind that the welfare of children comes first and competitive standards come second.

#### EQUALITY

All children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children, irrespective of ability or disability should be involved in sports activities in an integrated and inclusive way, whenever possible, thus allowing them to participate to their potential alongside other children.

#### FAIR PLAY

All children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. Ireland and the UK have adopted and are 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 within the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialisation and corruption.*

*(European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics. Council of Europe, 1993)*

This model of fair play should be born in mind at all times. The principles of fair play should always be emphasised, and Sports Leaders should give clear guidelines regarding acceptable standards of behaviour. The importance of participation for each child, best effort and enjoyment rather than winning should be stressed.

Children should be encouraged to win in an open and fair way. Behaviour, which constitutes cheating in any form, for example, falling over in football to gain free kicks or penalties, should be discouraged.

#### INTEGRITY IN RELATIONSHIPS

Adults interacting with children in sport are in a position of trust and influence. They should always ensure that they treat children with integrity and respect and that the self-esteem of children is enhanced. All adult actions in sport should be guided by what is best for the child and carried out in the context of respectful and open relationships. Verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any kind or threat of such abuse is totally unacceptable within sport, as in society in general.

#### Adult-child relationships in sport should be:

- open, positive and encouraging
- entered into by choice
- defined by a mutually agreed set of goals and commitments
- respectful of the creativity and autonomy of children
- carried out in a context where children are protected and where their rights are promoted
- free from verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse or any threat of such harm
- respectful of the needs and developmental stage of the child
- aimed at the promotion of enjoyment and individual progress
- governed by a code of ethics and good practice in sport that is agreed and adhered to by all members of the sports club/organisation
- respectful, but not unquestioning of authority
- mindful of the fact that children with disabilities may be more vulnerable

#### SAFETY

The following practices should apply in order to promote safety:

- activities being undertaken should be suitable for the ability, age, and experience of the participants
- equipment and facilities should meet the highest possible standards and be appropriate to the maturity of the participants and regular safety checks should be carried out
- where protective equipment is deemed necessary it should be used - in particular shinguards are compulsory for soccer as are gumshields and shin guards for hockey
- First Aid should be available for all training sessions and events and there should be a proper First Aid Kit
- injuries should be recorded, with a note of the action taken in relation to each one and it is recommended that each club maintain an accident/incident book for completion by Sports Leaders
- parents/guardians should be notified, by the Sports Leader, of injuries/illness which their children incur while participating in a sporting activity
- umpires and referees should ensure that the conduct of the games conform to the standards set by the Governing Body of Sport
- children should be taught the rules of the game at club level and be encouraged to abide by them, keeping in mind that many rules are there for safety
- it is important that before children participate in a sporting activity, they have learned and agreed personal safety rules
- parents/guardians should know the starting and finishing times of sessions and events, should be in attendance or have their child in the care of another parent and should be contactable in case of emergency.

---

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** Much of this document has been adapted from the Irish Sports Council's Code of Ethics & Good Practice. This document and related material is available on their website [www.irishsportsCouncil.ie](http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie).