



Managers/Coaches Code of Conduct & Guidelines

Rationale

This Code of Conduct and the guidelines contained herein are designed to protect both our players and our Managers/Coaches and to help everyone uphold the laws and ethics of the game.

Coaches/Managers are key to the establishment of good ethics in football and their concept of ethics and their attitudes directly affects the behaviour and attitude of players under their supervision.

Coaches/Managers are expected to pay close attention to the moral aspects of their general conduct and to ensure it is consistent with the Club Ethos and in line with FAI Guidelines.

Priorities

Most children and their respective Managers/Coaches would naturally prefer to be winning matches. That said, the best interests of children (especially at an early age) are served by providing a football environment that concentrates on improving and developing their football skills, allowing them to make friends and, above all, ensuring they have fun.

At Schoolboy/girl level, Managers/Coaches at the Club must disassociate themselves from the “winning at all costs” mentality. This mentality inhibits player development and can lead to young players having a sense of frustration and failure. The Clubs' approach in this regard is consistent with FAI Guidelines for the development of young players, which the Club fully supports.

The health, safety, welfare, moral education and skill development are Club priorities and **MUST** be put before the achievement or reputation of any Manager and/or Coach.

Managers/Coaches should appreciate that children's reasons for playing football and their expectations and values are quite different from those of adults.

We would ask all Managers/Coaches to familiarise themselves with the following Club policies so they can understand and appreciate the expectations of the Club, the Football Committee, the Parents/Guardians and the Children:

- Players Code of Conduct
- Parents/Guardians & Spectators Code of Conduct
- Child Safeguarding Policy
- Reporting Procedures for Child Abuse Allegations & Concerns
- Bullying Policy & Guidelines



Garda Vetting & Volunteer Recruitment

It is a legal requirement that anybody working in a voluntary capacity with children must first be Garda Vetted through the FAI. Garda Vetting application forms are available on the website of the FAI.

Coach Education & Development

Managers and Coaches are encouraged to develop their coaching skills by attending Coach Education Programmes such as FAI Kick Start 1, Kick Start 2, etc.

Such courses are advertised periodically, especially if they are being held at the Club grounds. Please consult with the Football Committee if you are interested in further developing your coaching skills.

The Club will endeavour to facilitate approved child welfare training for all Managers/Coaches e.g. FAI Safeguarding 1.

Ensuring Player Participation

There will be Roll on/Roll Off substitutes at all age levels.

The Club strongly discourages the use of permanent substitutes and advocates that all players should get minimum playing time, at least consistent with FAI player development guidelines.

In the interests of fair play, the strongest team should not necessarily start every game. It is up to the Managers/Coaches to use their skills to field a combination of players at different stages of the game to achieve the best result making sure throughout that all players are treated fairly.

General Points

Managers/Coaches must be prepared to allow their players to move to other teams if it is felt by the Club to be in their best interests of the player's future development.

Avoid dictating to players on the on the sideline as this only undermines their confidence and hinders their development. Appropriate advice and guidance can be given at half-time.



Club Officials may seek assistance from Managers in collecting outstanding registration fees from time to time.

Resist the temptation to engage in verbal squabbles, inappropriate language or gestures with match officials, opposition teams or parents as it reflects badly on the Club. Ignore any that may arrive in your direction from the opposition.

Never have underage player contact details or phone numbers stored on your phone or any other place. Managers/Coaches should have Parent/Guardian contact details only.

Managers/Coaches should avoid situations where they are asked to give a child a lift in their car unless accompanied by others for the full duration of the trip. Encourage parents/guardians to take full responsibility for travel arrangements for their child.

Respect the rights, dignity and worth of each and every player on their team, and treat each player equally.

Ensure that the activities you advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience & ability of your players.

Ensure you carry a First Aid Kit with you to all matches and training sessions. It is recommended that coaches familiarise themselves with the Kit by attending a first aid course.

Breaches of codes of conduct or club policies will be dealt with through the clubs Complaints & Disciplinary Process and could result in offenders being suspended or expelled from the Club.

Some Key Principles in Managing/Coaching

1. Motivate your players positively – it builds their self-confidence and self-motivation.
2. Praise and encourage your players and give them the freedom to express themselves.
3. Let the players make their own decisions on the pitch. You have already coached and guided them before the game, at training sessions and also played training matches. Avoid constantly instructing them on what to do during a match. Coaches should accept that mistakes are part of the game and part of player learning and development.



4. Focus on the quality of play (when attacking, defending and in transition) rather than on winning games.
5. Set development goals on what you want to achieve with your team/players. For example, today we are focusing on attacking play, defending, closing down, maintaining possession, passing, keeping your heads up etc.
6. Engage with your players by asking questions, getting their views and opinions. Talk and discussion will create awareness of their role.
7. Use language that is simple and age appropriate.
8. Demonstrate and participate in the training routines what you want them to do so they fully understand.

Match Day Protocol

Match results should be communicated on the MTFC Forum on WhatsApp as soon as possible on the same day.

Follow League rules on the notice period that you need to give for game cancellations. Always communicate this through the Club Secretary and not directly with the League.

Any incidents or accidents during games or training must be reported to the Club Secretary immediately. (e.g. managers/parents being sent from grounds by match officials, Red Cards, serious injuries to players or any other incident which the Executive Committee need to know about).

It is the Managers responsibility to ensure nets/corner flags are put up for games and taken down after games where appropriate and also to ensure goal posts are safe in accordance with FAI goal post regulations. When playing away, please check goal posts are securely staked down.

Dealing with Injuries

1. Managers/Coaches should not treat injuries out of sight of others. Therefore, use a "Two-Deep" (two personnel, or two players) supervision system.
2. Only personnel who are qualified in administering First Aid or treating sports injuries should attempt to treat an injury.
3. The comfort level and dignity of the player should always take priority. Example: Only uncover the injured area, or cover private areas of the player's body.
4. Any doubts of a medical nature should be passed on to a suitably qualified medical person.
5. Coaches must not play injured players.
6. First Aid Kits should be taken to all games. These should be adequately stocked.



7. Parents/Guardians should be notified of illness or injury which their children incur while participating in any Club activity.
8. All incidents should be recorded on an "Incident Report Form"
9. Any serious injuries suffered by players must be reported immediately to the Club Secretary.
10. Managers/Coaches are asked to be familiar with the Club's Concussion Policy & Guidelines below.

Coach, Manager & Volunteer Support Policy

Maynooth Town FC is indebted to our Managers/Coaches and all other volunteers who give freely of their valuable time in providing a stimulating, challenging, supportive and enjoyable soccer experience for children in the Club. The Club will endeavour to support these volunteers in their work. The Club will make all efforts to assist new volunteers in whatever way they can. An induction pack will be provided to all new volunteers which will help them familiarise themselves with Club rules, policies and procedures and expected behaviour of children, parents/guardians & spectators, and Managers/Coaches. Managers/Coaches are not expected to deal with any problems alone and are assured of Committee assistance and support.

Child Protection

1. No person representing Maynooth Town FC is permitted to instruct players in a manner that a child may feel intimidated or threatened during a match and/or training sessions or whilst attending any other Club event.
2. Persons representing Maynooth Town FC should be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in contact sports or other activities.
3. While gentle physical contact may be considered a valid way of comforting, reassuring, and showing concern for children, it should only take place in public view and when it is acceptable to all persons concerned.
4. No person representing the Club should ever physically punish or be in any way verbally abusive to a child, nor should they tell inappropriate jokes in the presence of children.
5. Club representatives should be sensitive to the possibility of developing favouritism or becoming over involved or spending a great deal of time with any one child.
6. Children should be encouraged to report cases of bullying to either a Child Protection Officer, or a Club Representative of their choice. All concerns or complaints must be brought to the attention of the Football Committee immediately.
7. Everyone involved in the Club should respect the personal space, safety and privacy of individuals.



Player Contact

All managers/Coaches/volunteers of Maynooth Town FC are advised that:

1. Any necessary physical contact should be in response to the immediate needs of the child (such as First aid).
2. It should be in an open environment with the permission and full understanding of the player
3. 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.

Comforting/congratulating players - Guidelines:

1. Limit touching to "safe" areas, such as hand-to-shoulder, hand to hand.
2. Make your intention to congratulate or comfort clear to the player.
3. Avoid embracing players unless the player initiates it.
4. Respect a player's discomfort or rejection of physical contact.
5. Be sure that touching occurs only when others are present.

Guidance on Discipline and the use of Sanctions Discipline in Soccer

Discipline in soccer should always be positive in focus, and it should therefore encourage players to become more responsible for themselves and their actions.

The use of sanctions is an important element in the maintenance of discipline.

However, Coaches/Managers should have a clear understanding of where and when sanctions are appropriate. It should be remembered that successful coaches/managers/volunteers are sparing in the use of sanctions. The age and developmental stage of the child should be considered 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 guidelines are suggested:

1. Rules should be clearly stated and agreed.
2. A warning should be given if a rule is broken.
3. A sanction (e.g. use of time out) should be applied if a rule is broken for a second time.
4. If a rule is broken regularly 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.

Remember:

- Sanctions should never be used in retaliation.



- 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 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.
- Soccer is meant to be enjoyable and constant criticism and sanctioning can cause participants to turn away from Soccer and sport in general.

This code of conduct and guidelines contained herein are designed to protect players and Managers/Coaches alike. All Managers & Coaches must follow these guidelines in the interest of player safety & welfare, and the enjoyment of all who participate in Soccer at Maynooth Town FC.