

County Durham Sport

Codes of Behaviour Guidance

The “Codes of Behaviour Guidance” recommends good practice for participants, parents, coaches, officials, spectators, administrators, teachers and the media when involved in any sporting activity delivered by the relevant organisation.

The “Codes of Behaviour Guidance” has been produced for organisations/clubs who are encouraged to adapt the relevant information for their use.

The “Codes of Behaviour Guidance” should be used in conjunction with the “Codes of Behaviour - Sanction Guidance” document.

Participants – Code of Behaviour

- Always play by the rules.
- Never argue with an official. If you disagree, have your captain, coach or manager approach the official during a break or after the competition.
- Control your temper. Verbal and physical abuse is not acceptable in life and in sport.
- Work equally hard for yourself and/or your team. Your team’s performance will benefit and so will you.
- Treat all participants in your sport as you would like to be treated. Do not bully or take unfair advantage of another competitor.
- Support your coach, manager, team-mates and opponents. Without them, there would be no competition.
- Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit, not just to please your parents and coaches.
- Respect all of your fellow participants.
- Behave responsibly. Discriminatory, offensive and violent behaviour towards any individual is unacceptable and will be acted upon.
- Do not leave the playing/training venue unless the coach or manager is aware.
- Remember, it is your responsibility to always be on time and prepared for all activities.
- Always take time to thank all those who help you take part in your chosen sport/activity.

Parents / Guardians – Code of Behaviour

- Remember that young people participate in sport for their enjoyment, not yours.
- Encourage young people to participate, never force them.
- Focus on, and praise the effort and performance displayed, rather than the winning or losing.
- Encourage young people to play according to the rules and to settle disagreements without resorting to argumentative behaviour.
- Never ridicule a young person for making a mistake or losing a competition.
- Remember that young people learn best by example. Always show appreciation for good performances displayed by all participants.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from all sporting activities.
- Respect coaches’ and officials’ decisions and teach young people to do likewise.
- Always show appreciation for the coaches, officials and administrators. Without them there would be no activity for your child to participate in.

- Respect the rights and dignity of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
- Behave responsibly. Discriminatory, offensive and violent behaviour towards any individual is unacceptable and will be acted upon.
- Always ensure you are punctual when dropping off and collecting your children, do not put the coach/club in a difficult position by arriving late.

Coaches – Code of Behaviour

- Any physical contact with a young person should be appropriate to the situation.
- Remember that young people participate for many reasons, and winning is only part of the fun of taking part.
- Never ridicule a young player for making a mistake.
- Be reasonable in your demands on players' time, energy and enthusiasm.
- Operate within the rules and spirit of your sport and teach your players to do the same.
- Ensure that the time players spend with you is a positive experience. All young people are deserving of equal attention and opportunities.
- Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of all players.
- Display control, respect and professionalism to all involved with the sport. This includes opponents, coaches, officials, administrators, the media, parents and spectators. Encourage players to do the same.
- Obtain the appropriate qualifications and keep up to date with the latest coaching practices and the principles of growth and development of young people.
- Respect the rights and dignity of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
- Behave responsibly. Discriminatory, offensive and violent behaviour towards any individual is unacceptable and will be acted upon.
- Place the well-being and safety of the performer above all else.
- Follow all guidelines laid down by the sports governing body and hold the appropriate insurance cover.
- Encourage and guide performers to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
- Ensure all activities are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual.
- At the outset, clarify with performers (and where appropriate with their parents/carers) exactly what is expected of them and what performers are entitled to expect from the coach.
- Co-operate fully with other specialists (e.g. other coaches, officials, sports scientists, doctors, and physiotherapists) in the best interests of the performer.
- Always promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances.
- Consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance, set a good example which others can follow
- Arrive in plenty of time to set up the activity

Officials (Referees / Umpires etc) – Code of Behaviour

- Place the safety and welfare of the participants above all else.
- Modify rules and regulations, where appropriate, to match the skill levels and needs of the young people taking part.

- Compliment and encourage all participants.
- Be consistent and objective when making decisions.
- Promote respect amongst participants.
- Always emphasise the spirit of the game.
- Encourage and promote rule changes, where appropriate, that will make participation more enjoyable for the participants.
- Be a role model, actions speak louder than words.
- Keep up to date with the latest developments in officiating and the principles of growth and development of young people.
- Your behaviour and comments should always be positive and supportive unless condemning unsporting behaviour.
- Behave responsibly. Discriminatory, offensive and violent behaviour towards any individual is unacceptable and will be acted upon.
- Respect the rights and dignity of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

Spectators – Code of Behaviour

- Remember that young people participate in sport for their enjoyment and benefit, not yours.
- Acknowledge good performances from all individuals and teams.
- Congratulate all participants on their performance, regardless of the game's outcome.
- Respect the decisions of officials and teach young people to do the same.
- Never ridicule a young player for making a mistake. Positive comments are always motivational.
- Condemn the use of violence in any form, whether it is by other spectators, coaches, officials or players.
- Show respect for your team's opponents. Without them, there would be no game.
- Encourage all players to follow the rules and the officials' decisions.
- Do not use foul language or harass players, coaches or officials.
- Behave responsibly. Discriminatory, offensive and violent behaviour towards any individual is unacceptable and will be acted upon.
- Respect the rights and dignity of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

Administrators (Sports Development Officers etc) – Code of Behaviour

- Make it clear that abusing young people in any way is unacceptable and will result in severe disciplinary action.
- Involve young people in planning, leadership, evaluation and decision-making related to the activity.
- Give all young people equal opportunities to participate.
- Create pathways for young people to participate in sport, not just as a player but as a coach, referee, administrator, etc.
- Ensure that rules, equipment, length of games and training schedules are modified to suit the age, ability and maturity level of young players.
- Provide quality supervision and instruction for junior players.
- Remember that young people participate for their enjoyment and benefit. Do not overemphasise results.
- Help coaches and officials highlight appropriate behaviour and skill development, and help improve the standards of coaching and officiating.

- Ensure that everyone involved in junior sport emphasises fair play, rather than winning at all costs.
- Promote “Codes of Behaviour” to spectators, officials, parents, coaches, players and the media where appropriate, and encourage their use.
- Remember, you set an example. Your behaviour and comments should be positive and supportive.
- Behave responsibly. Discriminatory, offensive and violent behaviour towards any individual is unacceptable and will be acted upon.
- Respect the rights and dignity of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

Teachers – Code of Behaviour

- Encourage young people to develop basic skills in a variety of sports and discourage overspecialisation in one event, sport or playing position at the expense of other sports and activities.
- Create opportunities to teach appropriate sports behaviour as well as basic skills.
- Give priority to free play activities, skill learning and modified sports over highly structured competition for primary school aged children.
- Prepare young people for competition by teaching them basic sport skills.
- Make young people aware of the positive benefits of participation in sporting activities.
- Keep up to date with coaching practices and the principles of physical growth and development. Read and use the latest coaching and teaching resources for junior sport.
- Help young people understand the differences between the junior competition they participate in and professional sport.
- Help young people understand that playing by the rules is their responsibility.
- Give all young people equal opportunities to participate in leadership, administration, coaching and refereeing as well as playing.
- Behave responsibly. Discriminatory, offensive and violent behaviour towards any individual is unacceptable and will be acted upon.
- Respect the rights and dignity of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

Media – Code of Behaviour

- Provide coverage of young people’s competitive and non-competitive sport as well as reporting adult sport.
- Be aware of the differences among adult sport, professional sport and modified sports programs for young people.
- Do not highlight isolated incidents of inappropriate sporting behaviour.
- Focus on a young player’s fair play and honest effort.
- Do not place unfair expectations on young people.
- Describe and report on the problems/barriers to young people participating in organised sport.
- Focus on the abilities and not the disabilities of young people.
- Avoid reinforcing stereotypical views on the involvement of boys and girls in particular sports.
- Give equal time and space to reporting boys and girls sports.
- Behave responsibly. Discriminatory, offensive and violent behaviour towards any individual is unacceptable and will be acted upon.
- Respect the rights and dignity of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.