



Waterford Sports Partnership Code of Conduct

**(Source: Waterford Sports Partnership (WSP) Child Safeguarding Policy
approved by the WSP Board 31/3/23)**

Codes of conduct are an integral part of WSP. They set a standard of behaviour that help build WSP culture and make it easier to deal with conduct and behaviour issues as they arise. These can be many and varied, from poor sportsmanship to unfair treatment, inappropriate social media posts, activity incidents, side-line abuse and mismanagement, and more. Codes of conduct set expectations for everyone involved – from the Sports Leaders to children/young people, parents and carers. The WSP code of conduct is informed by the organisation’s risk assessment and is used as a tool in the management of specific risks.

WSP has a code of conduct in place for Sports Leaders, young people and parents/guardians/ carers which outlines the agreed standard of behaviour for everyone.

The WSP Code of Conduct is available on our website.

Sports Leaders are expected to conform to ethical standards in a number of areas. It is required that all staff, tutors, students and volunteers will sign an agreement to abide by the WSP code of conduct.

Code for Sport Leaders

Sport Leaders play a vital role in children’s sport. WSP ensures that the work of Sport Leaders, is guided by this safeguarding guidance and best practice whilst also recognising that they are entitled to obtain a healthy sense of achievement and satisfaction through their involvement in children’s sport.

In order to act as a role model and to promote their safety and the safety of young people Sport Leaders should:

Create a safe and enjoyable environment for children by:

- Planning and preparing appropriately and be positive during sessions.

- Making sure all levels of participation are enjoyable and fun.
- Prioritising skill development and personal satisfaction over highly structured competition.
- Setting age appropriate and realistic goals.
- Avoiding favouritism – each child will need attention according to their sporting needs.
- Praising and encouraging effort as well as results.
- Showing respect for all involved, children and adults.

Recognise and ensure the welfare of children by:

- Monitoring attendance for activities.
- Not exposing a child to criticism, hostility or sarcasm.
- Never swearing at, ridiculing, shouting unnecessarily or arguing with a child.
- Being aware of a child's developmental needs and how a child may be psychologically or physically affected (if relevant for your role).
- Working in an open environment.
- Ensuring there is adequate supervision.
- Involving and updating the appropriate person and/or parents/guardians when a problem has arisen.
- Respecting a child's sensitivity.
- Never using physical punishment or force.
- Not using verbal or physical punishments or exclusion for mistakes.

Additional Information:

- Do not allow or engage in bullying behaviour, rough physical games, sexually provocative games, never allow or engage in inappropriate physical contact of any kind or make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child.
- In the management of a child's participation, where there are recommendations around the management of a child's medical needs, WSP will aim to facilitate, where possible, a child's participation in WSP activities through prior discussion between parents and sports leaders.
- Avoid carrying out any medical testing or giving advice of a personal or medical nature if not qualified to do so or undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children. Any such activity, if qualified, must only be with parent/guardian consent and the understanding of the child.
- Keep any information in relation to a child/young person of a personal or medical nature strictly confidential unless the welfare of the child requires the passing on of this information on a need-to-know basis.
- Never exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Acknowledge the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco is incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity and must be discouraged. The use of alcohol is not permitted at any time whilst responsible for young people e.g. training sessions, events and on trips with young people.

Code for Young People

Children have a great deal to gain from sport in terms of their personal development and enjoyment. The promotion of good practice in sport will depend on the co-operation of all involved, including young people involved in WSP activities. Children must be encouraged to realise that they also have responsibilities to treat other children and Sport Leaders with fairness and respect. The following are WSP's expectations for and of children in the participation of our activities.

In WSP activities children should:

- Be happy, have fun and enjoy taking part and being involved in sport.
- Be treated fairly by everyone, Sports Leaders and other participants.
- Feel safe and secure when taking part in sport.
- Be listened to and allowed to reply.
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect.
- Have a voice in the decisions that affect them within WSP activities.
- Say no to something which makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Participate at a level that is suitable for their age, development and ability.
- Know that any personal details about them will be treated with confidentiality but if they are at risk of harm or WSP are worried about their safety it may be necessary for WSP to pass this information on to the relevant authorities.
- Know who to go to if they feel unsafe.

Children's responsibilities are to:

- Treat all Sports Leaders with respect.
- Be fair at all times, do their best to achieve their goals; be gracious if they do not achieve their goals.
- Respect other participants and opponents.
- Be part of the team and respect and support other team members both when they do well and when things go wrong.
- Never bully or use bullying actions against another person; never hurt other team members, participants or opponents, this includes never taking/damaging their property, never spreading rumours or telling lies about other young people or adults.
- Keep to rules and guidelines set by the Sports Leader.
- Take part in-sport without cheating; participants are responsible for not cheating and must not allow others to force them to cheat.
- Listen to and respect decisions made by other participants/ Sports Leaders- If participants feel unjustly treated they can talk to their parents or the WSP staff member;
- Behave in a manner that is respectful towards the organisation facilitating the activity.
- Never use violence or bad language; never shout or argue with leaders or other participants – talk to someone if upset or angry or if someone has caused upset or anger.

- Talk with the Sports Leader, parent or WSP if they have any difficulties or do not understand something; children should never keep secrets about any person who may have caused them harm or has made them feel upset.
- Do not, or allow others to make them, try or take banned substances to improve their performance.

Code for Parents/Guardians/Carers

Parents/guardians/carers play a key role in the promotion of an ethical approach to sport and young people's enjoyment in sport. Parents/guardians/ carers therefore need to be aware, informed and involved in promoting the safest possible environment for children to enjoy their participation in sport. Sports Leaders need the support of parents/guardians/ carers in conveying the Safe, Fun and Fair Play message.

Parents/ guardians/ carers should help and support the implementation of best practice policies in their child's/ children's participation in WSP activities by following the guidance below.

- Understand and ensure their child/children abide by the Code for Young People.
- Have an awareness of and respect for Sports Leaders and other adults and their roles within the activity.
- If one wishes to raise an issue with a Sports Leader this should be addressed with the Sports Leader in an appropriate manner and not in front of children and young people.
- Respect and abide by the decisions made by the Sports Leaders, these should be made in the best interests of the children.
- Be aware of the complaints process (see www.waterfordsportspartnership.ie) and follow the proper procedure if felt unjustly treated, with the knowledge that any complaint will be dealt with effectively and confidentially.
- Know the activity schedule, and accept it is the responsibility of parents/ guardians/ carers for delivering and collecting their child/children and should ensure they do not leave their child/children waiting unsupervised at any time.
- Ensure the environment is safe and enjoyable for their child/children.
- Promote fair play and the positive aspects of sport.
- Be a role model for their children and young people by maintaining the highest standards of personal conduct and respectful behaviour in any activity related to the activity.
- Allow their child to focus their efforts and success in terms of their goals rather than winning being the main objective.
- Promote participation for children that is fun, safe and in the spirit of fair play.
- Ensure appropriate Sports Leaders are informed regarding any absenteeism, medical conditions or other relevant matters concerning their child.
- Arrange an appropriate time and place for discussing any matter with Sports Leaders; communication should not take place whilst Sports Leaders are in a position of supervision or responsible for other young people.

- Provide the activity organiser with appropriate information in relation to their child to ensure their safe inclusion in the activity and with emergency contact information and to be reasonably available in case of emergency.
- Be aware of and abide by WSP child safeguarding procedures and policies especially with regard to the use of smart phones, any type of camera and videoing equipment.