



Ballyvary Hurling Club Information Booklet for Members, Coaches, Players, and Parents/Guardians

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Introduction

Ballyvary Hurling Club was formed in 2005 with the aim of making the game of hurling readily accessible and enjoyable to the youth of the central Mayo area. In 2010 the club formed a Camogie club and today has in excess of 100 active members from the ages of 6 years to 18 years of age.

One of the clubs main objectives is to safeguard the well being of its members and players. Every individual in the club should, at all times, show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the club and the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland.

Sport provides an excellent opportunity for children to learn new skills, become more confident and maximise their own unique potential. These benefits will increase through a positive and progressive approach to the involvement of children in sport that places the needs of the child first and winning and competition second. Winning and losing are an important part of sport but they must be kept in a healthy perspective.

Mission Statement

Ballyvary Hurling Club aims to teach all members the traditional values and culture of the game of hurling. This will be achieved through the creation of a safe environment where all players experience a sense of Fun, Fair Play and Achievement as they learn to develop their talents to their full potential.

Core Values

Integrity in Relationships

The trust implicit in adult-child relationships in sport places a duty of care on all adults, voluntary or professional, to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the child while engaged in their sporting activity. All adult actions in sport should be guided by what is best for the child and in the context of quality, open working relationships. Verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any kind is unacceptable in sport.

Quality Atmosphere

Sport for young people should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. Adults must contribute to the creation of a positive sporting environment for young people. A child-centred ethos will help to ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place. Too often competitive demands are placed on children too early and results in excessive levels of pressure on them and as a consequence, high levels of dropout from sport.

Fair Play

The principles of fair play should always be emphasised, and organisers and coaches 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 should be discouraged.

Equality

All children should be treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion.

Rights within the Club

Rights of Children

Children have the right to

- Safety
- Be listened to
- Respect
- Privacy
- Enjoyment of sport in a safe environment
- Referral to professional help if necessary
- Protection from abuse
- Equality and fair involvement
- Experience competition and a healthy desire to win
- Be believed

Rights of Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians have the right to

- Know the child is safe
- Be informed of problems or concerns relating to the child
- Be informed if the child is injured
- Have consent sought for issues such as trips

Club Safety

The club will adopt the following practices in order to promote safety while participating in club activities:

- 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
- Protective equipment (e.g. helmets) must be used
- First Aid should be available for all training sessions and events. There should be a proper First Aid Kit.
- Parents/Guardians should be notified by the relevant coach 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
- Children should be taught the rules of the game and be encouraged to abide by them, keeping in mind that many rules are there for safety

Parents/Guardians should know the starting and finishing times of sessions and events and be on time to collect their children

Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct - Players

As a player I will

- Always do my best, play fairly and have fun
- Respect my coaches and obey their instructions
- Turn up on time for training and always wear my helmet
- Practice new skills to help make me a better player
- Show consideration for referees, team mates and opponents
- Always shake hands before and after a match
- Know that bullying is totally unacceptable
- Avoid using foul or abusive language
- Never cheat
- Report inappropriate behaviour
- Respect my club and its property
- Behave in a way that makes my club, my team mates and my parents/guardians proud of what I do and say
- Ask for help

Code of Conduct - Mentors / Coaches

Mentors / Coaches must

- Try to ensure that training is an enjoyable experience for the players
- Coach by example and encourage sportsmanship and fair play on the field of play among juvenile players
- Ensure that sufficient time and attention is given to all players
- Keep a record of attendance at training
- Avoid physical or verbal abuse
- Avoid spending amounts of time with children away from others
- Avoid taking children to their home or taking children on journeys alone in your car
- Never overemphasise the importance of results
- Avoid verbal exchanges with referees or opposing mentors / players
- Avoid taking sessions alone
- Never rebuke a child for making a mistake, always encourage
- Inform parents/guardians of any injuries sustained in training or matches

Code of Conduct - Parents

Parents must

- Always encourage and support your child in their sport
- Be familiar with those mentors who are coaching your child
- Behave responsibly on the sideline
- Bring children to and from training on time
- Encourage your child to play by the rules
- Detail any health concerns pertaining to the child on the Registration Form. Any health concerns should be noted to the coach before training or a match.
- Ensure your child has the proper training/playing gear and water
- Support the coaches and help out wherever necessary
- Ensure that your child is registered and paid-up
- Respect the coaches' decisions and encourage your children to do the same
- Show your support for your child/team by attending matches on a regular basis and assisting in the organisation of club activities
- Behave responsibly
- Be realistic in terms of children's abilities and skill levels

Discipline, Complaints and Appeals

Discipline in sport should always be positive in focus, providing the structure and rules that allow participants to learn to set their own goals and strive for them. It should encourage young people to become more responsible for themselves and therefore more independent.

The main form of discipline should be positive reinforcement for effort. It should encourage the development of emotional and social skills as well as skills in sport. Children should be helped to become responsible about the decisions and choices they make within sport, particularly when they are likely to make a difference between playing fairly and unfairly. There should be no place for fighting, over-aggressive or dangerous behaviour in sport. Participants should treat others in a respectful manner. They should not interfere with, bully or take unfair advantage of others

Discipline Levels

The use of sanctions is an important element in the maintenance of discipline. Coaches have the authority to apply sanctions where they are deemed necessary, however, coaches should have a clear understanding of where and when particular sanctions are appropriate. The age and developmental stage of the child should be taken into consideration when using sanctions. The following steps are suggested:

Minor Offences

- a warning should be given if a rule is broken, eg poor conduct.
- a sanction (for example, use of time out) should be applied if a rule is broken for a second time.
- if a rule is broken three or more times, the child should be spoken to, and if necessary, the parents/guardians should be informed.
- If the offences continue the coach can request that the player be suspended from training & matches for a defined period

Serious Offences

Serious offences can be defined as:

- Continuous breaches of discipline
- Refusal to carry out the instructions of the coach
- Wilful damage to club property or that of visiting teams, or
- Bringing the club into disrepute through the player's actions during a training session, match or any event organised by the club.

In the event of such incidents occurring, the coach can ask the parent/guardian to collect their child from the training/match and suspend the player from playing or training for a defined period. The coach may also report the incident to the executive committee of Ballyvary GAA Club if s/he deems it necessary. On receipt of any such complaint the executive committee or a sub-committee thereof will investigate the incident and recommend any further punishment deemed proportionate to the offence involved.

Supervision of Away Trips

Attention should be paid to the following factors if away trips are being contemplated:

- Written permission of parents / guardians should be obtained for all overnight away trips
- The roles and responsibilities of adults participating in away trips should be clearly defined
- Where there are mixed teams there should be at least one female mentor
- As a rule adults should not share a room with a child. Where the presence of an adult is required there should be more than one child in the room with the adult. If children are sharing a room it should be with those of the same age and sex
- Adequate adult : child ratios should be observed
- Special care should be taken by both host and visiting clubs in the selection of homes for overnight stays, and where practicable more than one child should be placed with each host family
- If a child suffers a serious injury or accident the parents/guardians should be informed as soon as possible