

## Patrickswell GAA Anti-Bullying Policy Statement



Patrickswell GAA aims to create a supportive environment where any form of bullying is unacceptable. We adopt a whole organisational approach to addressing bullying and are committed to implementing structures and relevant training to deal with allegations of bullying. Incidents of bullying are regarded as serious breaches of our Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport - Our Games Our Code. We are committed to achieving an ethos of respect so as to maximise the potential of all our members when playing or participating in our Gaelic Games.

### **DEFINITION**

**Bullying is defined as repeated aggression, be it verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others.**

### **THE Club SEEKS TO ENSURE THAT:**

- Incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed appropriately
- All persons in membership of the Association or attending our games or activities are aware that bullying behaviour is unacceptable in the GAA.

### **DEALING WITH BULLYING**

The Code of Behaviour when working with underage players provides good practice guidance in relation to the prevention of bullying. If you are aware of or have a concern that bullying behaviour is happening within your Club you should report the matter to your Club Children's Officer.

We recognise that incidents of bullying are a breach of the Code of Behaviour and of our Give Respect -Get Respect initiative and all such incidents will be dealt with accordingly.

P J O Grady

Health & Wellbeing Officer

Patrickswell GAA Club

1<sup>st</sup> May 2021

## Dealing with Bullying in your Club

Underage sports activity has a positive impact on the lives of thousands of young people many days of the week and every week of the year. The range of activities offered by the GAA, & Camogie to young people in particular, caters for more than their sporting needs. The social and friendship aspects of meeting colleagues, the community ethos of our Associations and the general developmental opportunities that these surroundings present for young people, all contribute to the general well being of these young people, more often than not during some of the most developmental phases of their lives.

While sports organisations are recognised for the overall developmental opportunities they give to young people we are not immune to instances of behaviour that would be deemed as unacceptable and may in fact be deemed by us as breaches of our Code of Behaviour. A notable example of unacceptable behaviour that occurs in many walks of life is that of Bullying. Unfortunately, Bullying may occur in schools settings, in communities, in the work place or in sports organisations where a small cohort of people may choose to engage in Bullying behaviour.

### HOW DO WE DEFINE BULLYING?

Bullying behaviour can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. Our duty and our challenge as Club leaders, coaches or parents is to challenge such unacceptable behaviour and to put measures in place to counteract this behaviour. Our aim should be to: Understand Bullying and its possible impact within the context of our local Club.

- Identify a range of approaches in relation to preventing Bullying
- Equip ourselves to deal with incidents of Bullying.
- Introduce and implement an Anti-Bullying Policy to our clubs
- Implement 'a whole club approach' to the issue of Bullying.

### IT IS WIDELY ACCEPTED THAT BULLYING CONTAINS SEVEN KEY FEATURES:

- An intention to be hurtful
- This intention is carried out
- The behaviour harms the target
- The bully overwhelms the target with his/her power
- There is often no justification for the action
- The behaviour repeats itself again and again
- The bully derives a sense of satisfaction from hurting the target



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### Our Games Our Code

#### ANTI BULLYING STATEMENT/POLICY

Each Club should adopt an Anti Bullying statement that could include the following:  
"We aim to create a supportive environment where any form of Bullying is unacceptable. We adopt 'a whole organisational approach' to addressing Bullying and are committed to implementing structures and relevant training to deal with allegations of Bullying. Incidents of Bullying are regarded as serious breaches of our Code of Behaviour and Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport.  
We are committed to achieving an ethos of respect so as to maximise the potential of all our members when playing or participating in our Gaelic Games".

#### CYBERBULLYING

can take place when instant messages, emails, text messages or webpages are used to spread rumours, make threats or harass. It can include written messages, photographs, videos or voice messages. If you are a victim of Cyberbullying or believe you may be targeted by a Cyberbully you should:

- Sign off on your computer.
- Don't respond or retaliate.
- Block the bully.
- Save and print out bullying messages.
- Talk to a friend.
- Tell a trusted adult.

#### HOW TO PREVENT BULLYING IN YOUR CLUB:

- Implement the joint Code of Behaviour when working with underage players which highlights good practice and clarifies that instances of Bullying are deemed to be a breach of the Code.
- Create a supportive environment for all where it is not acceptable to Bully and highlight that the Club has a 'zero tolerance for Bullying'.
- The ethos of the club should be that it is 'ok to tell' the Club Children's Officer or team coach of incidents of Bullying. Underage players should be made aware of the telling policy that 'its ok to tell' and they should be supported if they report any incidents of Bullying.
- Publicise the Club Anti-Bullying policy and display Anti Bullying Posters - available from the GAA.
- Ant Bullying is a 'whole club responsibility' and is part of the Give Respect Get Respect initiative. Its everybody's responsibility.

#### WHAT DOES A WHOLE CLUB APPROACH INVOLVE?

- A recognition that Bullying can be tackled by all in the Club – Players, Coaches, Parents, Referees....
- Promoting policies and procedures which aim to prevent Bullying in the first instance and intervene when appropriate.
- A shift from a problem based focus to a solution based focus.
- Creating a supportive environment where its 'ok to tell'.
- An awareness and implementation of good practice in this area.



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### PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE/ADULTS

Incident should be dealt with as a breach of the Code of Behaviour as follows:

- Report the matter to the Club's Children's Officer.
- Confidentiality must be maintained.
- Initial assessment by the Club Children's Officer.
- Children's Officer collates relevant information.
- Club Children's Officer uses the acid test to determine whether this is an incident of Bullying.
- Club Children's Officer informs the alleged bully and target as to what procedures will follow. Bullying is considered a breach of the Code of Behaviour and is dealt with as per the relevant section of Code of Behaviour.

## Dealing with Alleged Breaches of the Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport

Our Games – Our Code, the joint Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport (including the Code of Behaviour) outlines the minimum levels of behaviour that we require of those that are involved in underage games and activities. The Code applies equally to underage players, coaches, to parents and guardians, to our supporters, referees and officials. While the promotion of the Code may be seen as the responsibility of the Children's Officer ultimately it is everybody's responsibility to ensure that the Code is fully implemented.

Breaches of our Code will unfortunately occur from time to time, some minor and some of major consequences. This may happen as a result of carelessness, poor practice, lack of understanding or there may in some instances be deliberate or indeed calculated breaches of the Code.

Minor instances of poor practice may quite appropriately be dealt with at Club/County level by the Children's Officer in an informal manner and by agreement. This could necessitate meeting with the person who may be responsible for the poor practice or the minor breach of the Code and resolving the issue amicably and by agreement. All such outcomes should be noted by the Club Children's Officer. However, other alleged breaches of the Code may have to be dealt with in a more formal manner.

### PROCESSING AN ALLEGED BREACH OF THE CODE AT CLUB LEVEL

#### Club Executive or Appointed Sub-Committee Receives an Alleged Breach of the Code

- Refer to Children's officer for informal action.
- Refer to Club or County Code of Best Practice Hearings Committee
- Refer to national Committee
- Take no further action.
- Deal with alleged Breach under rule.