



SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

V2.1 – AUG 2025

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ABOUT THESE POLICIES

All members of Esker Celtic Football Club (the '**Club**') are required to comply with the principles set out in these Policies and Guidelines, and any breach of these principles may lead to sanction by the Management Committee, including revocation of membership.

The principles in this Policy and Guidelines are based on applicable national laws, guidelines and best practices, including the following:

- Football Association of Ireland Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy
- Sport Ireland Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People in Sport
- Children First Act, 2015
- National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016,

The club has the status of an affiliated member club of the Football Association of Ireland (the "FAI") and is also a member of the Dublin and District Schoolboys League (the "DDSL")

This Policy and Guidelines were approved by the Management Committee of Esker Celtic F.C on 11th August 2025 and is effective from that date.

These Policies should be read in conjunction with the Clubs Safety Statement focused on the Health and Safety of the physical environment the Club operate in.



MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to give every child in Lucan and the surrounding areas a positive and lasting experience of football — one built around enjoyment, development, and belonging.

We aim to provide a safe, respectful, and supportive environment where players can learn, grow, and be part of something — no matter their background or starting point.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Respect

Everyone involved with Esker Celtic — players, parents, coaches, volunteers — should be treated with respect and integrity. All adult actions should be guided by what is best for the child, in an atmosphere of trust, encouragement, and fairness.

Positive Atmosphere & Child-Centered Ethos

We believe children thrive in positive, structured environments that prioritise their needs, not adult expectations. Our goal is to make football something they love, by keeping pressure low, and enjoyment high.

Equality & Inclusion

All players — regardless of ability, age, gender, religion, or background — are welcome and valued. We strive to ensure that every child has access to opportunity and support appropriate to their stage of development.

Fair Play

Fair play is more than following rules — it's a mindset rooted in respect, teamwork, and humility. We teach players to compete with integrity, and we expect all adults in the club to model the same behaviour.

Development Over Results

Competition is important — but progress, effort, and enjoyment come first. Coaches are encouraged to adopt a long-term view, where the development of the player always outweighs the result of the game.

Coach & Volunteer Support

We recognise that great experiences rely on great volunteers. We commit to supporting coaches and volunteers with training, resources, and clear communication, so they can confidently deliver on our mission.



CHILD PROTECTION & WELFARE POLICY STATEMENT

Esker Celtic Football Club is committed to ensuring that all necessary steps will be taken to protect and safeguard the welfare of children (Under 18s) who participate in football. This Child Protection Policy ('Child Protection Policy') is intended to clearly demonstrate the importance placed by the Club on the protection and safety of children who participate in football.

All players who participate in football should be able to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment. While doing so they should be protected from any form of abuse be it physical, emotional, sexual, neglect or bullying. In particular, the responsibility for protecting children lies with all adults involved in the Club and in football in general.

The Club recognises and accepts its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all players (and in particular children) by protecting them from physical, emotional or sexual harm and from neglect or bullying.

These clear policies, practices and procedures in addition to relevant training programs will ensure that everybody in the Club knows exactly what is expected of them in relation to protecting children within football.

It is vital that children who participate in the Club activities are able to do so in a safe, enjoyable and quality environment.

In pursuit of this goal, the Club will:

- Advise all members of the Club (coaches, players, parents and spectators) of their responsibilities in relation to the welfare and protection of children who participate in football.
- Operate within the recommended FAI codes of conduct and best practice guidelines.
- Appoint a Club Children's Officer in line with FAI requirements
- Appoint a 'Designated Liaison Person'

In accordance with its obligations under the Children First Act, 2015, the Management Committee of Esker Celtic Football Club has performed and approved an assessment of the relevant risks and signed a Child Safeguarding Statement which is publicly displayed and accessible on the Club's website.

It is the responsibility of all adults involved in football to actively promote safe and best practice standards whilst being vigilant and aware of their responsibilities to children in their care.



The aims of the Child Protection Policy:

- To develop a positive and pro-active position in order to best protect all children who participate in football, in order for them to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment.
- To provide appropriate guidance and advice to all club members (coaches, players, parents and spectators) in all matters concerning child welfare and protection.
- To demonstrate best practice in the area of child welfare and protection.
- To promote ethics and best practice standards throughout football.

The key principles underpinning the Child Protection Policy:

- The welfare of the child is the first and paramount consideration.
- All children have a right to be protected from abuse of any kind regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual identity.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse/poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. It is essential that we work in partnership with children and their parents/guardians.
- The Club will cooperate fully with the FAI National Children's Officer, An Garda Síochána and Tusla in any investigation of child abuse in football.



CHILD ABUSE CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS

The investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of An Garda Síochána and TUSLA (the 'Statutory Authorities') and will not be undertaken by the Club. Consequently, when such an allegation is received by the Club it will be assessed promptly and carefully to determine whether a formal report should be made to the Statutory Authorities. In accordance with requirements of the Children First Act, 2015, any allegation which is determined to have reasonable grounds for concern of suspected child abuse will be passed on to the Statutory Authorities.

The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

1. a specific indication from a child that (s)he was abused;
2. a statement from a person who witnessed abuse;
3. an illness, injury or behaviour consistent with abuse
4. a symptom which may not in itself be totally consistent with abuse, but which is supported by corroborative evidence of deliberate harm or negligence; and
5. consistent signs of neglect over a period of time

Cases which give reasonable grounds for concern will be passed on by the Club's Designated Liaison Person to the Statutory Authorities. The Designated Liaison Person for the Club shall be the Chairman.



INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

Step One

Any allegation of abuse must in the first instance be brought to the attention of the Club Children's Officer. Should the Children's Officer be unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exists/he can informally consult with the local TUSLA duty social worker. S/he will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report. Coaches or volunteers may be subjected to erroneous or malicious allegations. Therefore, any allegation of abuse will be dealt with sensitively and appropriate support will be provided.

Step Two

Should The Club become aware of an allegation of abuse of a child or children by a coach or volunteer during the execution of their duties, the Children's Officer will privately inform the relevant coach or volunteer of the following:

- the fact that the allegation has been made against him/her; and
- the nature of the allegation

In accordance with FAI rules, any coach/volunteer/manager who is the subject of a statutory investigation into alleged child abuse is required to stand down from all football activities until the investigation is completed. This is a precautionary measure in keeping with standard procedures/ guidelines and will not prejudice any later disciplinary proceedings.

The coach/volunteer concerned will be treated with respect and fairness, and all information will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner. The relevant coach/volunteer will be afforded an opportunity to respond, and the Children's Officer will make a written note of this response.

Step Three

Where the Children's Officer determines it advisable to do so, the Children's Officer will include all relevant information in a formal report to TUSLA. The report to TUSLA will contain observations, dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information.

In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Children's Officer is unable to contact a duty social worker, the Gardaí will be contacted. Under no circumstances will a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities.

In considering whether such report should be made, the Children's Officer may consult with the FAI's National Children's Officer to provide support and advice.



Step Four

The FAI National Children's Officer will be immediately informed of any formal notification to the Statutory Authorities.

Step Five

If reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities, the Children's Officer will first inform the family of the child of the intention to make such a report, unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine any statutory investigation. It should be noted that a formal notification to the Statutory Authorities does not constitute an accusation of child abuse, rather it is the Club fulfilling its obligation to inform the appropriate statutory authorities in keeping with the principle that "the welfare of the child is the first and paramount consideration".

Step Six

All subsequent actions following an allegation of abuse against a coach/volunteer will be taken in consultation with TUSLA and An Garda Síochána, and a meeting will be sought with these two agencies for this purpose as soon as possible.

Step Seven

The Club will carefully consider the outcome of the statutory investigation and will then assess if there are any outstanding disciplinary issues in relation to their internal rules or infringements of the FAI's best practice guidelines.



ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

All complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour/poor practice should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson.

All complaints will be investigated and handled in a confidential manner. A record will be maintained of all such complaints and actions taken. Specific advice on dealing with anonymous complaints may be taken from the local TUSLA duty social worker or the FAI National Children's Officer.

Rumours

Any rumours relating to inappropriate behaviour circulating in the Club should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson and will be investigated promptly. All ensuing information will be handled confidentially and with sensitivity.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is about managing information in a respectful, professional and purposeful manner. It is important that the rights of both the child and the person about whom the complaint has been made are protected. Therefore, appropriate confidentiality will be maintained in respect of all issues and people involved in concerns about the welfare of a child or bad practice within the club.

The following points will be borne in mind:

- A guarantee of confidentiality or undertakings regarding secrecy cannot be given, as the welfare of the child will supersede all other considerations.
- All information will be treated in a careful and sensitive manner and only be discussed with those who need to know.
- Information will be conveyed to the parents/guardians of a child about whom there are concerns in a sensitive way. Giving information to others on a "need to know" basis for the protection of a child shall not constitute a breach of confidentiality.



CLUB CHILDRENS OFFICER

The appointment of a Children's Officer is an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere in any club. They act as a resource to members with regard to children's issues and also ensure that children have a voice in the running of the club and can freely talk of their experiences.

The Club Children's Officer should:

- Have good communication skills, be approachable and open minded
- Have good knowledge and be familiar with child welfare and protection law, codes and guidelines.
- Have undertaken a Garda Vetting application.
- Have attended the relevant awareness training on child welfare and protection.

The Club Children's Officer will have the following functions:

- To promote the Club Safeguarding Policies, codes of conduct and guidance.
- To influence policy and practice and to prioritise children's needs.
- To ensure that children know how and whom they can report their concerns to within the Club.
- To act as a resource with regard to best practice in children's football.
- To report regularly to the Management Committee.

Volunteer Register

The Club's Children's Officer shall keep and update a list, called the Volunteers Register, which shall include names and contact details of volunteers, employees, contractors who work with children or vulnerable adults. The Volunteer Register shall also confirm the position regarding current Garda Vetting status and Safeguarding course undertaken (including expiry/renewal dates) and age group where the individual volunteers/work. The Volunteer Register shall be confirmed by the Committee annually, prior to each season and as required thereafter, so that an appropriate record can be maintained and a pipeline of actions identified to best ensure current and future compliance with the Child Protection Policy.

The Children's Officer does not have the responsibility of investigating or validating protection concerns within the Club and this responsibility lies with TUSLA and the Gardaí.



SUPERVISION

It is essential to create a safe, enjoyable environment for Children (anyone under 18) to play and train. Coaches must take steps to minimise risks related to facilities, premises, and equipment through proper planning and safety procedures. Effective supervision is key – the likelihood of accidents increases significantly when Children are not properly supervised.

In particular, the following must be adhered to:

- Each team must ensure that at least two coaches are present at every training session and match. Where possible, aim for three adults to allow for late arrivals or unforeseen absences. Children must never be left unsupervised, and coaches should never be alone with a Child.
- Start and finish times must be clearly communicated to parents/guardians. If a Child is collected late, they should remain with the coach in a group setting until collected.
- If only one coach is available for a session:
 - At least one parent/guardian must remain as an observer. Their role is to act as a safeguarding witness, not to coach or supervise.
 - Parents may not assist with the group unless they have completed Garda Vetting and Safeguarding 1 training.
 - If an observer is not available, the session must be cancelled, and parents notified as early as possible.
- For younger age groups, it is strongly recommended that a parent or guardian stays for the session or arranges another responsible adult to be present.
- If a coach needs to speak privately with a player, it must be done in an open, visible area and in sight of others.
- If a coach is giving a Child a lift, they must comply with the Club's Transport Policy. Teenagers assisting with coaching must always be supervised by an adult coach.
- If a Child is injured or involved in an accident, their parents or guardians must be informed promptly, and any required incident or injury reports must be completed.
- All activities must be appropriate to the Child's age, ability, and experience to ensure safe and meaningful participation



DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

1. Purpose

Esker Celtic FC aims to maintain a positive, respectful, and safe environment for everyone involved in the club – players, parents, coaches, and volunteers. All members are expected to follow the club's rules, Code of Conduct, and relevant league or FAI regulations. This is a non-negotiable part of membership.

Where issues arise, the club encourages a practical, respectful, and informal approach first – especially where the concern is not serious and the person feels comfortable addressing it directly. If this doesn't resolve the issue or if the matter is serious (e.g. abuse, violence, repeated misconduct), the club's formal disciplinary procedure applies.

2. What This Procedure Covers

This procedure applies to any alleged breach of:

- Esker Celtic's Constitution, Rules, or Code of Conduct
- League (e.g. DDSL) or FAI rules
- Club policies or instructions issued by the Management Committee

It applies to incidents on or off the pitch, and includes all members: players, coaches, parents, volunteers, and officials.

3. Disciplinary Committee

The Management Committee appoints a three-person Disciplinary Committee to handle the matter. This group will:

- Include at least one Management Committee member
- Be impartial (anyone with a conflict of interest will not take part)
- Handle matters confidentially, unless a criminal issue requires statutory reporting

The committee has the authority to determine whether a breach occurred and what, if any, sanctions are appropriate.



4. The Disciplinary Process

1. Complaint received

- The Club Secretary logs the concern and refers it to the Disciplinary Committee.

2. Parties are notified

- The committee informs the person involved that a disciplinary matter is being considered and invites them to respond.

3. Opportunity to respond

- The person involved may submit a response in writing and/or attend a hearing to explain their side. They may bring someone with them for support.

4. Hearing and decision

- The committee reviews all information and decides whether a breach occurred and what action, if any, is appropriate.

5. Outcome communicated

- The decision, including any sanctions, will be issued in writing once the process is complete.

5. Sanctions

Depending on the nature of the issue, sanctions may include:

- A verbal or written instruction
- A reprimand or warning
- A fine
- Suspension from club activities
- Membership suspension or expulsion

Note 1: The club may impose sanctions in addition to those from the DDSL or FAI.

Note 2: Where a fine is levied, it must be paid before a player can return to Esker Celtic activity.

6. Appeals

Anyone subject to a club sanction may appeal the decision.

- Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Club Secretary
- A €100 appeal fee applies (refunded if the appeal is successful)

The Appeals Committee will consist of:

- One of the following: Chairperson, Secretary, or Treasurer
- Two other Management Committee members not involved in the original decision

The appeal will be reviewed fairly, and the outcome is final and binding.



RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Esker Celtic FC thrives on the dedication of our volunteers, who are essential to our club's success. We aim to ensure every volunteer feels welcomed and supported while at the same time prioritising the safeguarding of children. Having a credible recruitment process is critical in ensuring we are placing the right people in the right roles.

The process applies in recruiting for positions within the club that involve working with Children and Vulnerable Persons

- There will be a clearly defined job description so potential Coaches, Volunteers and Contractors understand the extent and nature of the role.
- All individuals that apply for a potential role (or are nominated for a role by a club member) must meet with two existing volunteers relevant to the role being sought to ensure suitability for the role. This could include for instance for an assistant coach role the team manager and another existing club coach or volunteer. These existing volunteers should confirm if the individual should proceed to Volunteer Registration for the role.

Volunteer Registration

Prior to commencement of any involvement in the potential role with the Club, a number of steps must be completed by the Individual as follows. These can be completed at the same time:

1. Submit the on-line Esker Celtic FC – Volunteer Registration Form. This is available at <https://volunteer.eskerceltic.ie>
2. Complete registration with the FAI via their online platform. Detailed instruction are on our website.
3. Complete the Garda Vetting process. Detailed instructions are on our website. On completion upload the certificate to the Esker Celtic Volunteer Register.
4. Complete Safeguarding 1. Detailed instructions are on our website. On completion upload the certificate to the Esker Celtic Volunteer Register.

All roles are subject to final ratification by two Committee members once the Volunteer Registration Form is submitted.

Volunteer Training

As confirmed in the Volunteer Education & Support Policy – the club will endeavour to support all new volunteers in their roles by providing information, training and support relevant to the specific role. Where appropriate the club will fund training costs to support the upskilling of our volunteers.



VOLUNTEER EDUCATION & SUPPORT

Esker Celtic Football Club is indebted to our coaches and managers who give freely of their time in providing a stimulating, challenging, supportive and fun football experience to children in the Club.

The Management Committee will endeavor to support these coaches and managers in their work by providing an environment where all activities are carried out in a safe, fun manner at all times conducted in the spirit of "Fair Play".

The Club will provide supporting information to all new coaches and managers which will familiarise them with club policies and procedures and expected codes of behaviour for children, coaches and parents/spectators.

The Management Committee recognises the value of having appropriately qualified personnel in the club, and therefore will endeavour to support any of our coaches in the coach education process.

At no time will any coach or manager be expected to work or deal with any problem alone and they will be assured of Management Committee assistance and support at all times. Also, coaches and managers are encouraged to share ideas, expertise and support other club personnel in any way they can.



EQUALITY & INCLUSION

The aim of this policy is to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect and that Esker Celtic FC (the Club) is equally accessible to all.

The Club is responsible for setting standards and values to apply throughout the club at every level. Football belongs to and should be enjoyed by, anyone who wants to participate in it. Our commitment is to encourage equal opportunities, and confront and eliminate discrimination by reason of:

- gender
- sexual orientation
- marital status
- 'race', nationality
- ethnic origin
- colour,
- religion or belief

This policy is fully supported by the club officers who are responsible for the implementation of this policy. The club, in all its activities, will not discriminate, or in any way treat anyone less favourably, on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, 'race', nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief. This means that the club will ensure that it treats people fairly and with respect and that it will endeavour to provide access and opportunity where possible for all members of the community to take part in and enjoy, its activities.

The club is committed to a policy of equal treatment of all members and requires all members to abide by and adhere to the policies and the requirements of the relevant legislation:

- Equal Status Acts, 2000–2008;
- Employment Equality Acts, 1998–2004;
- Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act, 1989
- any amendments to these acts and any new legislation.

The club commits itself to the immediate investigation of any claims, when it is brought to its attention, of discrimination on the above grounds and where such is found to be the case, a requirement that the practice stop and sanctions imposed as appropriate. (Further information on policies and the requirements of the relevant legislation:

- Equal Status Acts, 2000–2008;
- Employment Equality Acts, 1998–2004;
- Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act, 1989
- any amendments to these acts and any new legislation



PRIVACY & DATA PROTECTION / GDPR

Esker Celtic FC is a community club run by volunteers. We are committed to protecting the privacy of our members and handling personal data responsibly, fairly, and securely. The Club has a legitimate interest in collecting, processing, and holding personal data related to the running of football activities. This includes, without limitation; Name, gender, date of birth, home address, email, phone number and emergency contact details. We may also collect – medical information and photographs and videos (with consent).

Use of Personal Data

Personal data is used solely for Club purposes, including:

- Managing membership and registrations
- Organising training sessions, matches, and events
- Communicating with members about club activities
- Player registration with leagues and the FAI
- Garda vetting and safeguarding compliance
- Sharing medical information with team officials when required for health or safety

We will not use personal data for commercial marketing and will never sell your data.

Who We Share Your Data With

We may share relevant information with:

- FAI and league organisations (e.g., for player registration)
- Club coaches, managers, referees
- Emergency contacts or medical professionals
- Sub-contractors for services (under our instruction only)

We do not share data with third parties for commercial purposes.

How We Protect Your Data

Esker Celtic FC uses Clubforce, a secure third-party system for registrations.

Only the nominated Management committee members have full access. Managers receive limited data sufficient to run their teams.

Your Rights

Under GDPR, you have the right to: Access your data, Request correction or deletion, Restrict or object to processing, Request data portability, Withdraw consent at any time (where applicable) and Lodge a complaint with the Data Protection Commission. If you choose not to share your data, we may not be able to register you or deliver certain services

How Long We Keep Your Data

We retain data for as long as you are involved with the club. After you leave, we may keep data for two more seasons or longer if required legally. Player registration data will be held in line with FAI requirements. To remove your data, contact the Club Secretary.



USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC & FILMING EQUIPMENT

Esker Celtic FC recognises the importance of capturing and sharing positive moments within our club community. However, we also acknowledge the potential risks associated with the misuse of photographic and video content involving young people. This policy provides clear guidance to ensure that all photography and filming conducted under the club's remit is safe, respectful, and compliant with safeguarding best practices.

In accordance with the Club's Privacy Policy, Esker Celtic FC relies upon legitimate interest as the legal basis for capturing and using photographs and video content related to club activities. This is always balanced against the privacy rights of the individuals involved.

Image Categories and Guidelines

1. Personal Images

Images taken by parents, guardians, or family members during games or events are considered for personal use only. As these may include other children, public sharing (e.g. on social media) should be avoided unless consent is confirmed by the parents/guardians of all children depicted. Sharing should be limited to private team WhatsApp groups or similar closed platforms.

2. Training Videos

These are recordings taken during training sessions or events specifically to support player development. They must be recorded only by a qualified coach or a person appointed by the coach. These videos may be used internally within the club to support skill progression and learning but must not be shared externally.

3. Media Images

Images taken by club-designated photographers or official representatives for the purpose of promoting club activities (e.g. on the website, social media, or marketing materials). Where possible, individuals should not be identified by full name. Images should only be used in the context of representing the club and its activities.

Photography or filming must never take place in areas of personal privacy, such as changing rooms, showers or toilets.



Authorisation and Permissions

As per the FAI Communication and Social Media Policy, documented parental/guardian consent is required at the start of each season before any photography or filming takes place.

Parents/guardians will be asked to confirm:

- Consent for the child's name to appear on social media in relation to match reports or club activities.
- Consent for the child's image (photograph/video) to be used for official club purposes and/or promotional purposes.

If at any time a parent/guardian or child wishes for an image or detail to be removed from the club's website, social media pages, or promotional material, the Club Children's Officer should be contacted. The requested material will be removed within seven days.

Non-Authorised Photography

If an individual is observed taking photos or video without appropriate permission, this should be reported immediately to a coach, committee member, or the Children's Officer. The individual may be asked to identify themselves and explain their purpose. If they are not authorised or refuse to cooperate, they may be asked to leave. Serious concerns may be referred to the statutory authorities.



CLUB COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Esker Celtic FC uses WhatsApp Community to communicate relevant notices concerning matters relating to Esker Celtic FC with parents of players within the club.

Each Manager sets up a WhatsApp group for parents/guardians of players on the Team to communicate details about matches and training. Members of the Management Committee or the Director of Football may also be added to the group.

Players under the age of 18 will not be added to any WhatsApp group all communication will be through their parent or guardian.

Under no circumstances are WhatsApp Groups to be used:

- To promote third party commercial events.
- for any other purpose other than what they were set up to do.

WhatsApp Etiquette to be followed by all Club Officials and Parents/Guardians:

- Always keep to the purpose of the group, don't share irrelevant messages about other topics.
- Don't be offended if others leave.
- Do politely excuse yourself before you leave a group.
- Try not to have long one-on-one conversations in the group. Switch to private messages.
- Do not post in any group between 22:00 and 07:00 unless absolutely necessary.
- If a message asks for a positive response like an RSVP, don't reply in the negative. Only say if you are able to attend. Don't double RSVP if a second call to action is sent out for the same event.
- If someone asks a question and you don't know the answer don't respond with "I don't know". Just wait for someone who knows the answer to reply.
- Please don't send in a hundred "thank you" messages. If you feel gratitude towards someone – tell them in a private message.
- If someone asks a question of a personal nature (like asking for advice) don't respond if someone else has already answered, or else respond to the person directly in a private message.
- Never EVER use a group to berate someone else or air grievances. If you have an issue address it one on one with the relevant person.
- Don't add random people to a close-knit group.
- Always ask someone if you may add them before you add them.
- When the group has served its purpose delete it.

If you are not sure, ask yourself these three questions before you post:
Is this relevant? Is this necessary? Is this a good time to post?

The Esker Celtic website is also a form of club communication and players, parents and guardians are encouraged to visit the website regularly to ensure that they stay up to date with Club news and events and to access the Club policies and procedures.



MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones are often given to children for security, enabling parents to keep in contact and make sure they are safe. Children value their phones highly as it offers them a sense of independence. In addition, mobile phones allow quick and easy contact, which can make a safe and efficient way to carry out Club business. However, such technology has also allowed an increase in direct personal contact with children, in some cases used to cross personal boundaries and cause harm to children. Therefore, we need to encourage responsible and secure use of mobile phones by adults and children.

The following applies to the use of mobile phones in the course of activities related to the Club:

- If you or your child receives an offensive photo, email or message, do not reply, save it, make a note of times and dates and notify the Club Children's Officer. Children should be advised by their parent to notify them if they receive any such messages.
- Be careful about who you give your phone number to and don't respond to unfamiliar numbers.
- Do not use the phone in certain locations as inappropriate use of your camera phone may cause upset or offence to another person (e.g. changing rooms).
- Treat your phone as you would any other valuable item so that you guard against theft

As a coach/manager remember:

- It is not appropriate to have communication with players who are children. All such communication should be routed through the player's parent/guardian

Don't use the phone in certain locations: inappropriate use of your camera phone may cause upset or offence to another person, e.g., in changing rooms.



TRAVELLING PROCEDURES

It is the sole responsibility of a parent or guardian to make appropriate arrangements for their child to travel to and from training sessions, home matches, or away fixtures. While a coach may, at their discretion, offer a lift, it remains the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure they are fully satisfied that the following conditions are being met:

- The driver holds adequate and appropriate car insurance.
- The number of passengers does not exceed the vehicle's legal capacity.
- Transport arrangements are made directly with the parent/guardian, not with the underage player.
- Seatbelts are worn at all times, and the driver adheres fully to the rules of the road.
- The driver is not alone with one player in the vehicle unless previously approved by the parent/guardian.

Esker Celtic FC coaches and volunteers who choose to provide transport must ensure these requirements are followed at all times.

Please note: Esker Celtic FC is not in a position to monitor or enforce compliance with the above requirements and accepts no liability in respect of transport arrangements made privately between individuals.



SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE FOR AWAY TRIPS

1. Purpose of Away Trips

Away trips provide players with opportunities to play in new environments, experience different cultures, and build lasting memories as part of their football journey.

2. Club Approval Required

All away trips must be approved in advance by the Management Committee. A written proposal should be submitted containing the Venue, Dates, Estimated cost, Number of players, coaches, and parents travelling, Designated Trip Lead and the Designated Children's Officer for the trip.

3. Responsibility for Children

Each player must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Coaches are not responsible for children unless they are the parent/guardian or have written agreement from the child's parent/guardian.

Parents/guardians may take responsibility for another child only with written consent from that child's parent/guardian.

4. Financial Inclusiveness

Children with financial challenges should be considered during the proposal phase. Support can be arranged discreetly, ensuring that no child is excluded due to financial hardship.

5. Insurance

The Designated Trip Lead must ensure adequate insurance is in place for the trip. This should be confirmed with the Treasurer in advance of any travel.

6. Player Eligibility

Only players who are fully registered with Esker Celtic FC and have paid their subscriptions in full for the current season may travel on club-organised trips.

7. Club Kit

All players must wear full club gear during the trip, unless otherwise agreed.

8. Child Protection Lead

Each trip must have a Designated Children's Officer present and identified. They are responsible for child safeguarding throughout the trip and must be named to players and parents in advance.

9. Early Return Due to Misconduct

In cases of serious misbehaviour, the Designated Trip Lead has the authority to send a player home early. The parent/guardian will be responsible for all associated costs, including travel for any accompanying adult if necessary.





CODE OF CONDUCT

V2.1 – AUG 2025

PARENTS & SPECTATORS

CODE OF CONDUCT

- Remember that young people are involved in soccer for their enjoyment and not yours.
- Encourage your child always to play by the laws of the game.
- Teach young children that honest endeavour is as important as winning, so that the result of each game is accepted without disappointment.
- Help young people to work towards skill improvement and good sportsmanship.
- Set a good example by applauding good play on both sides.
- Never ridicule, humiliate or shout at young players for making a mistake or losing a match.
- Do not place emphasis on winning at all costs.
- Do not force an unwilling child to participate in the playing of football. If the child is to play, he or she will do so in good time through your encouragement. There are other aspects of football, other than playing, which are equally fulfilling.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from football.
- As a spectator, do not use profane language or harass referees, coaches or players.
- Do not publicly question the referees judgement or their honesty.
- Recognise the value and importance of volunteer referees and coaches, They give of their time and resources to provide recreational activities for young people.
- Encourage in your child an appreciation of mutual respect for team-mates and opponents.

Parents Match Day Guide

- Stand one meter from the touchline, this gives the players ample space to take quick throw-in's and allows the managers and referees a clear view of the pitch.
- Standing behind the goal or on the goal line is not allowed.
- Do not enter onto the pitch unless summoned by a manager or coach.
- Do not coach players during a match. It only leaves the child confused trying to please you and follow his coaches instruction.
- If you have an idea, a tactic or plan, speak to the coaches, they don't know or see everything.
- Do not criticise the coaches, any questioning should be done out of ear shot of players and other parents.



At Esker Celtic FC, every player has the right to:

- Be safe and protected from harm.
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity, and respect.
- Participate in football on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability and stage of development.
- Receive minimum playing time in line with the FAI Player Development Plan.
- Be happy, have fun, and enjoy football in a supportive environment.
- Make a complaint and have it dealt with through a fair and effective process.
- Be afforded appropriate confidentiality.
- Be listened to and taken seriously.
- Have a voice in the running of the club.

At Esker Celtic FC, every player should:

General Behaviour and Respect

- Show respect to coaches, team-mates, opponents, match officials, and spectators at all times.
- Play fairly, give their best effort, and enjoy the game.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
- Accept apologies and make them when needed.
- Treat players from all backgrounds and identities with inclusion and respect.
- Never bully or exclude another player — in person or online.
- Never use abusive or inappropriate language or gestures.
- Support team-mates, both when they succeed and when they struggle.
- Avoid behaviour that reflects poorly on themselves or the club.

Commitment and Responsibility

- Attend training and matches on time, ready to participate.
- Let the coach know as early as possible if you are sick or injured and cannot attend.
- Pack and carry your own gear and ensure you have the correct boots and equipment.
- Help with setting up and tidying away equipment before and after sessions.
- Listen to advice from coaches and ask questions if unsure.
- Take pride in your own development and performance, and respect the efforts of others.

Match Day Conduct

- Shake hands with opponents and the referee before and after each game.
- Offer help to injured players, regardless of team.
- Play with control — never retaliate or lose your temper.
- Celebrate with respect. Do not mock or provoke opponents.



COACHES & MANAGERS

CODE OF CONDUCT

All managers and coaches at Esker Celtic FC are expected to follow this Code of Conduct. It outlines the standards of behaviour that align with the club's child-first philosophy and long-term player development approach.

General Standards

- Uphold the club's values, safeguarding policies, and FAI guidelines at all times.
- Support a positive, respectful, and inclusive environment for all children.
- Prioritise the safety and welfare of every player.

Coaching Behaviour

- Act in the best interests of the players at all times.
- Encourage participation, effort, and enjoyment.
- Promote the development of skills, not just results.
- Teach fair play, teamwork, and learning through both winning and losing.
- Treat all children equally and respectfully.
- Use clear, age-appropriate, and positive language.
- Avoid foul language, shouting, or negative criticism.
- Be calm, honest, and realistic in communication with children.
- Understand how children think and behave; lead with empathy.
- Never contact children directly – all communication must go through parents or guardians.

Match Day Expectations

- Coaches should facilitate play and learning – not control every move.
- Players must be allowed to make decisions and express themselves.
- Rotate players fairly and give all appropriate game time, per Club/FAI guidance.
- Focus on good play (attacking, defending, teamwork), not just the score.
- Ask questions to develop awareness rather than giving constant instructions.
- Ensure respect is shown to referees, opponents, and all participants.
- After each game, players and coaches line up to shake hands.

Club Procedures

- Concerns or complaints should be raised with the Club Children's Officer.
- Any recruitment of an additional coach, assistant coach or helper must be approved under the Clubs Safeguarding Policy on Recruitment prior to the person taking an active part in training or matches.



