

Balbriggan F.C.

Code of Conduct for Player and Parents



Balbriggan F.C (the “club”, “us”, “we”, or “our”) set out below the code of conduct which all players and parents must abide by at all times.

Club Ethos

Balbriggan F.C is a community football club. Our players experience of soccer is core to our ethos and the work of the club is guided by what is best for the player, his/her family and the local community.

Adults interacting with young people in the club should do so with integrity and respect for the child. All adult actions in soccer 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 within Balbriggan FC.

All children should be treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of age, ability, gender, religion, social and ethnic background. Children with disability should be involved in sports activities in an integrated way allowing them to participate to their potential alongside their peers.

Fair play is the guiding principle of how Balbriggan F.C operates. A balanced approach to competition can make a significant contribution to the development of young people, while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and satisfaction. Coaches should aim to put the welfare of the child first and competitive standards second.

Supporting Balbriggan F.C and the Community

Balbriggan F.C is a non-profit sporting organisation which receives no funding to run our activities. Each volunteer receives no payment for their contribution to the club whether that be coaching or administrative duties.

All players must register using the club’s official registration system. Each registration will incur a fee as set out by our executive committee and advertised on our website. The registration fee covers all league related fees and other items such as insurance.

In addition to the registration fees, each manager may prescribe an amount of money to be paid each week known as “subs”. These cover smaller items such as paying for referees’ fees and replacing and maintaining equipment.

Operating one of the largest football clubs in Dublin is an expensive task. As such, we ask that all players and parents support our club fundraisers to the best of their ability and encourage their team’s players and parents to do likewise.

Balbriggan F.C is lucky to have the use of purpose built and high quality facilities. Not only to these facilities serve our club but are also an amenity to other local organisations and the wider community. We ask all volunteers to respect the club’s facilities and help keep them in good order.

Supporting your Team and Coaches

Parents should always remember that all of our coaches are volunteers and give freely of their time to coach the times. We ask all parents to be supportive of our coaches and your team by:

- Never criticising a coach's training session, team selection, tactics or other football issues.
- Offering to help a coach organise a session or carry out administrative tasks such as collecting subs.
- Refraining from criticising or coaching players from the sideline. Instead, offer praise and support.
- Informing the coach in advance of any unavailability to attend trainings or matches.
- Attending all sessions and assisting with travel to away matches.

Spectator Conduct

While attending matches and training sessions, spectators should remember that they are representing both Balbriggan F.C and the wider Balbriggan community. As such, we ask all spectators to:

- Remember that although children play organised soccer they are not miniature professionals. Don't place excessive pressure on children to perform to unrealistically high expectations. Children play soccer to develop their skills, to have fun and enjoy the game.
- Be on your best behaviour and lead by example. The behaviour of a teams supporters will often be remembered long after the result of the game. Be remembered for the right reasons.
- Applaud good play, sportsmanship and best effort by the visiting team as well as your own.
- Welcome and respect all your teams opponents. Without them there would be no match.
- Condemn the use of violence in all forms at every opportunity.
- Verbal abuse of players, match officials or opposing supporters cannot be accepted in any shape or form. Players or match officials should never be regarded as fair targets for ignorant or abusive behaviour.

Substance Abuse Policy

At Balbriggan F.C the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco shall be actively discouraged as being incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity. Spectators shall not smoke in the vicinity a session or drink alcohol before taking a session.

Player Conduct

Children in Balbriggan F.C are entitled to:

- Be safe, be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect.
- Participate on an equal basis, appropriate to their ability and level of development.
- Receive a fair amount of playing time.
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy football.
- Be listened to and to be believed in.
- Play in a safe environment coached by adequately qualified and vetted coaches.

Children should also be encouraged to realise that they also have responsibilities to treat fellow players, coaches and volunteers with the same degree of fairness and respect afforded to them.

While playing with Balbriggan F.C, players should undertake to:

- Play fairly, do their best and have fun.
- Abide by all club rules and maintain the club's high standards of behaviour.
- Make high standards of fair play the standard others want to follow.
- Respect all opponents and shake hands before and after the match, regardless of circumstances.
- Respect their coaches, peers, parents and club volunteers at all times.
- Assist with fundraising for the club.
- Respect and maintain all club facilities and equipment to the highest standard.

Disciplinary Procedures

Discipline in football should always be positive in focus, providing the structures and rules that allow players to set their own goals and strive for them. It should encourage players to become more responsible for themselves and their actions and therefore more independent. The use of sanctions is an important element in the maintenance of discipline. However, coaches should have a clear understanding of where and when particular sanctions are appropriate. Sanctions should always be fair, consistent and applied evenly, and in the case of a persistent offence, should be progressively applied.

The following steps are suggested:

- Rules should be clearly stated and agreed by all players and parents in advance of the start of the season.
- A warning should first be given if a rule is broken. A sanction (use of time out for example) 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 parents/guardians involved if necessary
- Sanctions should never be used as threats. If a rule is broken, the appropriate sanction/s should be implemented consistently, fairly and firmly
- Once a sanction/s has been imposed, it is important to make the child feel they are a valued member of the team again
- A child should not be sanctioned for making errors whilst playing football.
- Physical activity (e.g. running laps or doing push ups) should not be used as a sanction as to do so may cause a child to resent physical activity which is something that they should learn to enjoy. Remember Soccer has to be Fun if participants are to continue playing

While many concerns can be dealt with in an informal manner to the satisfaction of all concerned, complaints may be escalated by any member of the club to the club's disciplinary committee. The disciplinary committee will consist of at least three members of the appointed executive committee including the secretary and chairperson of the club.

The club's disciplinary procedure is set out as follows:

1. Any person who has a complaint or concern should bring it to the attention of the secretary and/or chairperson. The complaint or concern should be in writing and should outline all relevant details and other parties involved in line with procedure.
2. The disciplinary committee will furnish any participant with details of the complaint being made against them and afford them the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing. In the event of a complaint against a child, the parents/guardians should be informed and advised of the process.
3. The disciplinary committee will then hear the case of all parties involved and decide if a rule or regulation has been infringed.
4. The disciplinary committee will then inform in writing those involved of their decision and any sanctions that are to be imposed. This notification will be in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction (Written notification will be forwarded to parents if the proceedings involve a participant under eighteen years of age).
5. Any party unhappy with the findings of the disciplinary committee/panel can appeal the decision in writing to their respective superior body.

The above procedures covers all disciplinary matters other than suspected child abuse which must be referred to the statutory authorities.

Breach of Policy

Breach of any policy may be dealt with using the disciplinary procedures set by our nominated executive committee and, in serious cases, may be treated as gross misconduct leading to a suspension, ban from membership of the club and / or dismissal of duties.

Changes to our Policy

Changes to our policy may be made with the majority agreement of our nominated executive committee. Changes will take effect 28 days after the date of the vote. All changes will be reflected on this document and posted to the main page of our website.

This policy was last modified on 1st March 2018.