

Code of Practice and Behaviour

Sports Coaches/Leaders

Coaches must create a positive, safe environment for participants



- Actively encourage fair play
- Help participants to deal with victory and defeat in a sporting manner; and encourage them to treat opponents with due respect at all times.
- Respect referees and officials and ensure that participants recognise that they must do the same
- Provide positive feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner
- Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching
- Ensure that activity sessions are pre planned, show progression and meet the outcomes required/agreed
- Ensure the activity, and level of activity, carried out is suitable for the age, maturity and ability of the individual participant and the size of the group
- Ensure that you are aware of, and act in accordance with relevant policies and procedures including; Health and Safety (including risk assessment and emergency procedures), Safeguarding, Equity, Data Protection, Financial Processes and Registration/ Collection.

- Inform the Designated Officer immediately if you are at all concerned about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult
- Maintain appropriate records of your activity and participants

To maximise benefits and minimise the risks to participants, coaches must attain a high level of competence through qualifications and a commitment to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice:

- Practise in an open and transparent fashion that encourages other coaches to contribute to or learn from your knowledge and expertise
- Be aware of and work within any programme/project specific minimum operating standards
- Do not take responsibility for any role for which you are not qualified



One of 49 County Sports Partnerships, Northamptonshire Sport is a partnership of local and national organisations working together to provide opportunities for people to participate in sport, physical activity and recreation in Northamptonshire. The Northamptonshire Sport Core Team is hosted by Northamptonshire County Council and its activities are funded through Sport England Lottery grant and by local and national partners

Northamptonshire Sport is committed to ensuring that sport, physical activity and recreation across Northamptonshire is both safe and inclusive

This information can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.



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Sport helps children grow and develop, and can provide opportunities for enjoyment and achievement. Through sport, children can develop valuable qualities such as leadership, confidence and self-esteem.

Every child has the right to have fun, be safe and be free from harm.

It is essential that sports coaches and leaders adopt good practice and ensure that the safety of children is paramount. This will ensure that they can enjoy sport within a safe and secure environment where they feel protected and empowered to make the most suitable choices. Providing children with positive sporting experiences means that they will be more likely to achieve their true potential.

This Code of Practice and Behaviour outlines the expectations of sports coaches and leaders and the standards which MUST be adopted at all times. Whilst this leaflet is primarily aimed at coaches who coach children and young people it should be noted that the principles outlined should also be adopted when coaching vulnerable adults.

The following values **MUST** be reflected in the behaviour and coaching practices of sports coaches/leaders at all times:

- The welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount
- All children and vulnerable adults (whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity) have the right to participate in sport, physical activity or recreation in an environment which is free from violence, fear, abuse, bullying and discrimination
- All children and vulnerable adults have the right to be protected from harm and exploitation

Coaches must respect and champion the rights of every individual to participate in sport.

- Project a positive image of sport and physical activity
- Treat all individuals in sport with respect at all times
- Do not condone or allow to go unchallenged any form of discrimination
- Do not publicly criticise or engage in demeaning descriptions of others
- Communicate with and provide feedback to participants in a manner which reflects respect and care

Coaches must develop a relationship with athletes (and others) based on openness, honesty, trust and respect.

- Ensure that physical contact is appropriate and necessary and is carried out within recommended guidelines with the athlete's full consent and approval
- Do not engage in any form of sexually related contact with an underage athlete. This is strictly forbidden as is sexual innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures and terms
- Respect an athlete's opinions when making decisions about their participation in their sport

Coaches must demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times:

- Operate within the rules of your sport
- Be a positive role model
- Maintain a professional appearance, and behave professionally
- Display high standards in use of language, manner, punctuality, preparation, presentation and encourage athletes to display the same standards
- Do not smoke, drink alcohol or use recreational drugs before or while coaching
- Display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved in your sport

