Code for Sports Leaders

Sport Leaders play a vital role in children's sport. Irish Surfing will ensure that the work of our Sport Leaders which occurs mainly on a voluntary basis, is guided by safeguarding guidance and best practice whist also recognising that they are entitled to obtain a healthy sense of achievement and satisfaction through their involvement in children's sport. In order to act as a role model and to promote their safety and the safety of young people Sport Leaders should:

Create a safe and enjoyable environment for children by:

• Planning and preparing appropriately and be positive during sessions.

• Making sure all levels of participation should be enjoyable and fun.

• Prioritising skill development and personal satisfaction over highly structured competition.

• Setting age appropriate and realistic goals.

• Avoiding favouritism – each child will need attention according to their sporting needs.

• Praising and encouraging effort as well as results.

• Showing respect for all involved, children and adults.

Recognise and ensure the welfare of children by:

• Keeping attendance records.

• Not exposing a child to criticism, hostility or sarcasm.

• Never swearing at, ridiculing, shouting unnecessarily or arguing with a child.

• Being aware of a child's developmental needs and how a child may be psychologically or physically affected (if relevant for your role).

• Working in an open environment.

• Ensuring there is adequate supervision.

• Involving and updating parents, especially if a problem has arisen.

• Respecting a child's sensitivity.

• Never using physical punishment or force.

• Not using verbal or physical punishments or exclusion for mistakes.

Additional Information:

• Do not allow or engage in bullying behaviour, rough physical games, sexually provocative games, never allow or engage in inappropriate physical contact of any kind or make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child.

• Co-operate with the recommendations from medical and ancillary practitioners in the management of a child's medical or related problems. You may request a certificate of medical fitness to ensure safe continued participation.

• Avoid carrying out any medical testing or giving advice of a personal or medical nature if not qualified to do so or undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children. Any such activity, if qualified, must only be with parent/guardian consent and the understanding of the child.

• Keep any information in relation to a child/young person of a personal or medical nature strictly confidential unless the welfare of the child requires the passing on of this information on a need to know basis.

• Never exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.

• Acknowledge the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco is incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity and must be discouraged. Avoid the use of alcohol at all times whilst responsible for young people e.g. training sessions, events and on trips with young people