

Code of Conduct for Coaches

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Principles of the Code of Ethics and Conduct

Redland Ladies Hockey Club (RLHC) expects all coaches to conform to ethical standards in a number of areas. These areas are clearly laid out in this document and it is imperative that all coaches have read and understood this code before working with any group.

RLHC has a duty to its members to provide guidelines within which hockey coaches work, thus ensuring that all those involved within the game are acting in the best interests of the players at all time. It is important that the expected standards of ethical behaviour in coaching practice are widely publicised and maintained. It is also essential that people within the sport and members of the public who are using the services of RLHC coaches are informed of the code of ethics and are protected through its application.

Introduction

Hockey is one of the most popular sports amongst young people. It is important that all those taking part in the game are exposed to positive experiences and protected from negative ones. The role of the coach within the sport is a very important one. The coach is any person who is responsible for the development of an individual or group of individuals within a specific sport. As well as the sporting development the coach is tasked with the all round development of the individual, or group of individuals, within the sporting context.

The coach is the mentor, the confidante and the teacher: to name but a few of their roles, and, therefore, must demonstrate exemplary behaviour at all times. The coach has to maintain this level of behaviour when dealing with parents, assistant coaches, managers and other personnel involved in the sport.

These guidelines are specific to hockey and should be used in conjunction with other sporting publications such as SportCoach UK's 'Code of Ethic and Conduct for Sport Coaches', Working with Children, 'The Coach in Action' and 'Protecting Children'.

Coaches are strongly advised to read and apply the England Hockey's 'Child Welfare Pack'. Coaches who accept and work to the guidelines within this document are accepting their responsibility to the players they coach and their families, to other colleagues within the sport, to their employer as a coach and to RLHC.

Procedures are in place to deal with any situation which could arise, where a coach's application of the 'Code of Ethics and Conduct' may be called into question. Should such a situation occur the matter would be dealt with in an objective and confidential manner.

The following sections set out the overriding principles that coaches are expected to adhere to, to ensure that taking part in the sport of hockey is a positive and worthwhile experience for all.

Personal Standards

- Personal appearance is of great importance when coaching and, although individual taste will affect differences in appearance, the coach has the responsibility to look clean and project an image of functional efficiency at all times.
- Coaches should never smoke while coaching.
- Coaches should try and avoid chewing gum whilst coaching.
- Coaches should never coach under the influence of alcohol under any circumstances.
- Coaches should avoid using profanities during coaching sessions.

It is recommended that coaches should:

- Consistently project a favourable image of the sport and of coaching to the players they are working with, their parents / families / guardians, officials, spectators and the general public.
- Try and encourage performers to work within discipline guidelines contained in the clubs constitution.
- Make sure that the level of activity carried out by the performers is suitable for their age, strength, maturity and the ability of each individual performer.
- Encourage appropriate behaviour by the performers during both training and competition.
- Encourage the performers to abide by the rules of the sport. All performers should be encouraged to uphold the spirit of the sport.
- Make a positive effort to educate the performers as to the improper use of substances that are on the sports banned drug and substance list.
- Help performers to deal with victory and defeat in a sportsmanlike manner, and encourage them at all times to treat opponents with due respect.

Relationships

- Coaches have a responsibility to set and uphold the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship between themselves and the performers. This is especially important when the performer is a young person.
- It is recommended that coaches should be concerned at all times with the safety and well being of the performers. There should be a sensible balance between performance and the emotional, physical, social and development needs of the performers.
- If any part of the coaching process requires physical contact between coach and performers, it is recommended that coaches ensure that no action on their part could be seen as inappropriate. It is essential that all coaches are aware and adhere to the association's guidelines with regard to such situations.
- As the relationship between coach and performer is based heavily on trust it is important that all coaches can offer proof of experience and valid qualifications.
- Coaches will undoubtedly build up strong relationships with performers, and in some cases will travel and reside with them during the course of competition. At no time is a coach to use this privilege to place undue pressure or exert influence over performers to gain personal benefit for herself, himself or the Club.
- Coaches will, in the course of a working relationship, gather much information about performers. It is important that an appropriate degree of confidentiality is maintained and that personal information is not divulged without the permission of the performer. At times coaches will be asked to provide relevant information concerning a player's performance and development and an agreement must be made between the coach and the performer with regard to the passing on of such information.

Safety

- Coaches have a responsibility to make sure that performers have a safe environment to work and play within.
- If an accident occurs it is recommended that coaches follow the steps laid out in the Club Emergency Procedures.
- Coaches have a responsibility to protect children from any form of abuse during training sessions, competitions and whilst in their care.
- It is strongly recommended that coaches arrange adequate insurance to cover their coaching practice.
- It is recommended that any activities carried out by coaches should be suitable for the age, maturity, strength and ability of the performer.
- It is strongly recommended that coaches do not attempt to coach techniques or skills that have not been covered in their specific level of coaching award qualification. An attempt to do so will invalidate their insurance cover.

Expectations

- Coaches should clarify the level of commitment expected from performers at the outset of any agreement. Details should include number and length of sessions, attendance at matches or competitions, fees and payment methods. In the same respect, the performers/employees should state the expectation of the outcome of the coaching.
- It is strongly recommended that some form of written agreement acceptable to all parties is drawn up at the beginning of any coaching period.
- It is recommended that coaches declare any other coaching commitments they already have before working with new partners.
- Coaches who start to experience conflict between obligation to their performers and to other parties must make all parties aware of the conflict in an attempt to solve the issues.
- It is recommended that where coaches receive payment for their work/time that the fee they command is in line with the suggested scale set out by England Hockey.
- It is up to each individual to ensure that any monies earned coaching should be declared to the Inland Revenue in line with the current taxation laws.

Equity

- It is recommended that coaches respect the rights of every human being they work with, and treat all as equals within the context of their activity and ability. This must be regardless of age, ethnic origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, cultural background or political affiliation.
- Coaches should try and ensure that any activity under their supervision is free from any form of non-equitable behaviour.

Competency and EH Coach Licence

- Competency to coach should be verified through the proof of qualification and should not be inferred from evidence of prior experience.
- It is recommended that coaches confine themselves to carrying out sessions in accordance with the experience gained whilst obtaining their highest qualification.
- It is recommended that coaches are able to recognise when to pass performers on to other clubs or agencies. It is important that coaches have their performers' best interests at heart at all times. It is also the responsibility of coaches to verify, as far as possible, the integrity of any club or agency, to which they are referring the performers to.
- It is important that coaches take responsibility for their own continuous professional development, making the most of opportunities offered to them through the association of other educational agencies.
- It is important for coaches to be objective about their coaching ability. If at any time they feel concerned about their ability to coach at a certain level, or about their effectiveness in a certain situation it is up to them to find help or withdraw if necessary.
- On the introduction of the proposed 'EH Coach Licence Scheme' all coaches will be required to undergo continuous professional development to maintain their licence to coach. All necessary support will be offered to them to do so.

Complaints Procedure

- Anyone wishing to make a complaint about any person acting in the capacity of a hockey coach within the context of these guidelines must follow the set procedure.
- If the complaint involves a junior member report the matter **in confidence** without delay to the Child Welfare Officer or his/her nominated deputy.
- Report all other complaints to a member of the Committee or the employer of the coach.
- On receipt of a complaint procedural guidelines will be issued to all parties.