

2.1 Child Protection and Welfare Policy

2.1.2 Child Welfare Information for Parents/Carers/Guardians

We in Ballymun United FC are committed to ensuring that all necessary steps are taken to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people who participate in soccer.

It is the policy of Ballymun United FC to safeguard the welfare of our underage players by protecting them from physical, emotional or sexual harm and from neglect or bullying.

This information is given to you not as a response to massive problems within soccer, rather Ballymun United FC has accepted its moral and legal responsibilities and mainly to ensure that children enjoy soccer in safe, healthy and enjoyable atmosphere.

At all times we are committed to providing the highest possible standards of care in a safe environment.

In this respect children are entitled to:

- Be safe;
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect;
- Experience competition and the desire to win as a positive and healthy outcome of striving for best performance;
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy soccer;
- Comment and make suggestions in an appropriate and constructive manner;
- Be listened to;
- Be believed.

Most importantly they are entitled to express concerns and make complaints in an appropriate way and have these dealt with through an effective complaints procedure.

Ballymun United Children's Officer is Patrick Daly and he can be contacted at phone number 086 895 9705.

On all away trips there is a designated Head of Delegation who has overall responsibility for the player's well being, behaviour and accommodation arrangements.

He/she will also act as the designated child protection officer for the trip and all concerns will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

Parents and players are also advised that they can also raise concerns with the FAI National Children's Officer who can be contacted at 087 969 1422.

Parents and players inhibited for any reason in reporting any incident internally or unhappy with the internal response, can also report concerns to your local Health Board who have statutory responsibility for safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children here in Ireland.

The first priority is that no player will be exposed to unnecessary risk in keeping with the fundamental principle that the welfare of the child is the first and paramount importance.

All allegations of child abuse will be managed in accordance with Government Guidelines as outlined in "Children First", National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

In keeping with best practice standards, a parent/guardian consent form is required for all activities relating to your son/daughters participation whilst in the care of Ballymun United. A medical consent form is also required.

Note the Following:

Gear

Make sure your child has the correct gear i.e. boots, shinguards, nicks, socks and a coat (suitable for the conditions on the day) to wear while on the touchline in the event of being a substitute and finally a drink (preferably water) in a sealable container with his or her name on it.

Drinks

The drink should be a still one - fizzy drinks can cause a noticeable deterioration in performance on the pitch. Isotonic and sports drinks take about half an hour (longer for the older children) to have their full effect.

Timing

Arrive at the correct time as instructed by the Manager or Coach and for away games the team usually meets somewhere in Ballymun and the team travels together. Its important especially as kids get older to offer to help with transport.

Help and Support

On arrival at the pitch (home games) you will be of immense support if you help with nets and flags

You may find that the manager will ask you to help keep control of the footballs as during the game it is impossible to manage a team, watch the match and look after the equipment.

At half time allow the managers and coaches to talk to the kids on their own.

Encouragement

During the match all parents are encouraged to verbally support the team with positive encouragement and plenty of "well done's". However it is vital that you refrain from directing the players with comments such as "push up" or "move back" or "go the whole way yourself"; these comments may be at complete odds to their pre-match directives from the manager and will lead only to confusion. Many managers will point out to the players that where Dad or Mum gives a directive that is different from the manager's instructions, so remember who picks the team next week!

At the end of the match again give the manager just a few minutes with the kids if he wishes and help again with the nets and posts and most importantly collection of the footballs if they require it.

Offering to wash gear is always welcome as some managers will never ask. You will not be expected to do this each week and if parents get together they will only get it every 3 Months.

Team Selection

Team selection is based on current form, attendance at, performance and behaviour during, training. In relation to substitutions and parents feeling aggrieved by the actions of the manager because his/her son/daughter only gets 10 mins, remember winning games should not be a priority above all else however this may change when the club develops "A" teams as part of their academy structure.

Discipline

Our aim is to ensure that your child's involvement with Ballymun United FC will be an enjoyable and memorable one. In order to achieve this, managers need to maintain a certain level of discipline within the team. However, the best form of discipline is self-discipline and ideally that's what we expect from ALL our players.

As a Club we will not tolerate bullying or harassment of team-mates in any shape or form. No one player is bigger than the team. If a manager considers that a player's attitude or actions are disruptive to the well-being of the team, he is permitted to exclude them from training or games, however, **no other** form of discipline is permitted. Thankfully, cases of disciplinary action are rare but, when such action is deemed unavoidably, the manager will inform the parent of the reasons. If the situation does not improve the player may, following a decision by the Club's Executive Committee be suspended or expelled from the Club.

Discipline is very important at training and if there is an occasion where the manager has seen fit to exclude your child from a particular exercise as a form of discipline there must have been a good reason and this should be discussed with the manager in private.

Remember your child is the most important part of the football jigsaw, without him/her the game would not continue, make his day an enjoyable one and help them to achieve their dreams.