

ONLINE COACHING OF CHILDREN – GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

The temporary postponement of our games, training and coaching sessions during the Covid pandemic has undoubtedly impacted on many of us and in particular on our underage teams and the children and young people* in our Clubs, i.e. those under 18 yrs. of age, including their families.

It is however always gratifying to hear that despite the restrictions that may be placed upon us we have developed a number of new resources and services to offset some of this impact that includes the use of communication platforms enabling us to deliver live or recorded training programmes, Officer Training, Safeguarding Training, numerous webinars, and the live online coaching sessions** for players of all age groups. Live online coaching sessions for children are particularly welcomed and will assist children to maintain their links with the Club and participate in much valued physical activity. We should however always be cognisant of the fact that some children, for a variety of reasons, may not be able to participate in these online activities or may find them unsuitable to their needs.

With the correct guidance and good practices in place, we wish to support all such initiatives, so that coaches and units may deliver live online coaching sessions in a safe and enjoyable environment, through the use of secure online communications.

This online coaching guidance for children and young people under 18 yrs. has been developed following consultation with statutory authorities, the Gaelic Games Associations, Games and coaching personnel, volunteer coaches and parents. In addition to the online coaching sessions we encourage the use of pre-recorded online resources, accessible at <https://learning.gaa.ie/coachingresources>.

This Guidance forms part of our Code of Behaviour (Underage).

Good practice and safety requirements

- Online coaching sessions should be conducted via the Microsoft Teams platform which is our preferred platform option for such purposes – other equivalent tools do exist but are not covered by GAA/LGFA/Camogie governance mechanisms
- Signed consent from a parent is required prior to the child participating in any Club or County online coaching sessions (see Appendix 1 – Online Coaching Parent/Guardian Consent Form)
- It is not permitted to take screen shots of individual children or groups of children who are participating in live online coaching sessions
- Coaches who deliver a coaching session as part of an in-school activity may be required by the school to use the school's preferred platform. In some instances this may not be our preferred Microsoft Teams app but as this is a school based or school approved activity this will be permissible
- Approved Association skills challenges/competitions/charity events should be facilitated in line with the Skills Challenges Protocol available
<https://www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/gujvmtqymbj1a6pzovws.pdf>

Microsoft Teams

- Microsoft Teams is a virtual communication platform hosted on Microsoft Office 365. It enables a range of services such as video conferencing, messaging, and file storage
- Teams is free to use platform and can be accessed by anyone with an email address.
- An online coaching session must be created by the use of an official @gaa, @lgfa, or @camogie account as this will enable more control and provide greater security when

delivering a session e.g. use an existing person's or officers @gaa, @lgfa or @camogie account

- There is no charge to a Club when they use the official @gaa, @lgfa, or @camogie account
- Features available to the meeting host include the following:
 - The host does not have the ability to turn off an individual's camera but may turn off all cameras as required
 - The chat functionality cannot be turned off during a Teams coaching session
 - Parents must submit the email address to the host coach, on behalf of their child, to enable the issuing of an invitation to them
 - It is this email address that shall invite parents to avail of the coaching session for their child
 - The email address of a person under 18 yrs. shall not be accepted for such purposes
 - Attendees can be muted/ unmuted
 - Attendees can be removed from the meeting
- Children should be instructed not to use the chat function unless directly engaging with the coach

For more information on Microsoft Teams please see the Teams users guide

<https://www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/lg8bomcg2tray2dtu56s.pdf>

Setting up and delivering a coaching session

- An official @gaa.ie, @lgfa, @camogie address must be used to set up the online session on behalf of the coach. Please contact the Club Secretary or Children's Officer to facilitate this
- Each event must have an individual and newly created invitation
- The coach(es) should have their camera and microphone on at all times, except during breaks or in exceptional circumstances
- Children should join the session with their microphone mute and their camera off and should only turn these on at the request or under the direction of the coach in charge

Coaches

- Coaches must receive permission and use an official existing email address from their Club or County, as relevant, to deliver online coaching sessions
- At a minimum 2 coaches (or 1 coach and 1 nominated responsible adult) are required to deliver a coaching session in accordance with agreed supervisory ratios
- One person, delivering the online coaching must be nominated as the lead coach
- It is the lead coach who must act as the point of contact for each coaching session and shall also be the responsible person should it be necessary to make administrative or disciplinary decisions in relation to the delivery of the coaching
- If the young people participating include both male and females the coaches/nominated responsible adults must also include a male/female presence
- At a minimum, coaches must have achieved a Foundation/ /FUNDamentals level coaching qualification, must be satisfactorily vetted and have attended relevant Child Safeguarding Training
- The responsible adult, if not a qualified coach, shall be deemed a Supervisor of Children. and must be satisfactorily vetted and must have attended relevant Child Safeguarding Training recognised by our Associations
- Coaches must keep a record of each participant at online coaching sessions
- Coaches and any nominated responsible adults must be in membership of their Gaelic Games Association

- Misbehaviour or conduct of an inappropriate nature may result in the offending person being removed from the session by the lead coach
- Coaches delivering an in-school coaching activity may be required to avail of the platform and existing procedures adopted by the school

Delivering the coaching session - good practice

- During underage online coaching for children and young people the coach should have their camera and microphone on at all times, except during breaks or in exceptional circumstances
- Children should join the session with their microphone mute and their camera off and should only turn these on at the request and with the permission or under the direction of the coach or if deemed necessary when asking a question
- While a camera 'off and mute' rule applies to children participating in the session it is recommended that the coach would occasionally request the children, as a group, to turn on their cameras for a short period of time, as this will enable the coach to be aware who is in attendance. Any such instruction will be under the guidance of the lead coach in charge

Children attending the coaching session

- Children participating in online coaching sessions must be in membership of the Club or unit
- Participants must be appropriately dressed when participating in the session
- Children who are unwell or injured, should not participate in an online coaching session
- Misbehaviour or conduct of an inappropriate nature may result in the offending person being removed from the session by the lead coach
- Children may not seek to turn on their camera or microphone unless requested to do so by the lead coach
- A 'chat' function is available as part of the Microsoft Teams function that may be utilised by the participants or their parents, with the permission of the lead coach
- Children should be instructed not to use the chat function unless directly engaging with the coach

Parents/Guardians***

- Parents and guardians have a central role to play in supporting the participation of their child(ren) in our online coaching sessions
- The child's parent must complete a consent form on behalf of their child and submit same to their Club so as to enable their child participate in an online coaching session (link)
- Parents shall receive an email inviting their child to participate in the coaching session. This invite may not be shared with any other person(s)
- Parents must undertake to be present or in close proximity to their child while they are participating in the coaching session
- Parents may avail of the 'chat' function on behalf of their child, if deemed necessary

Clubs/County Boards

- Register and access the FMS/ABC Have a Ball Resources on GAA Learning site <https://learning.gaa.ie/coachingresources> where additional coaching and skills resources are available to download
- Register and access the FMS/ABC Have a Ball Resources on GAA Learning site <https://learning.gaa.ie/coachingresources> and the GAA Activity Planner <https://learning.gaa.ie/planner/> where additional coaching and skills resources are available to download
- Review the delivery of coaching sessions by their nominated coach

- Note that the parental consent form submitted to enable a child participate in online coaching has a 12 month recognition period
- Ensure that the content and delivery of all coaching sessions and uploaded recordings are age appropriate for the participants. To achieve this, each session should be targeted at a specific age group
- Agree a realistic number of attendees at each session

Injury fund/insurance

- Please note that the provisions of the GAA player injury fund and the LGFA Injury Fund do not extend to cover participants in online coaching. Camogie Clubs are advised to liaise with their broker on any specific cover that applies to them
- Participation in any physical activity has inherent risk and it is the responsibility of the parent /guardians to ensure they have cover in place should their child sustain an accidental injury whilst participating in online coaching

* Children and young people refers to any person under 18 yrs. of age. Referred to as child hereafter

** Online coaching denotes training and coaching sessions online for children

*** Parent denotes parent or guardian. Referred to as parent(s) hereafter

Appendix 1 Template Online Coaching Parent/Guardian Consent Form

A club must receive parental permission for each child to participate in the online coaching session. A club can create a Parental Consent Form by using Microsoft Forms. Please see template below.

ONLINE COACHING PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

1.Players Name

2.Players DOB

3. Team/Age Grade

4.Parent/Guardian Name

5.Parent's email address for purpose of invite to online coaching

6.Parent's contact telephone number

7.By ticking the box below, I/we agree to allow the above named child to participate in our Club Online Coaching

Online Coaching Guidance

Data Protection Notification: Please note, your personal data as provided on this form will be used solely for the purpose of conducting virtual online training sessions, ensuring that you have provided the appropriate consent for your child to participate and contacting you with the appropriate links for your child to join. The Data Controller is your GAA Club and you can contact your Club Secretary if you have any questions or queries in relation to your personal data. Your personal data will be deleted once it is no longer required to fulfil the aforementioned purpose. Information on your rights and complaint mechanisms are available on the Data Protection Commission's website at:

www.dataprotection.ie