

ABC Sports Coaching

Coaches Code of Practice

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

Coaches should:

- Assist in the creation of an environment where every individual has the opportunity to participate in a sport or activity of their choice.
- Create and maintain an environment free of fear and harassment.
- Recognise the rights of all participants to be treated as individuals.
- Recognise the rights of participants to confer with other coaches and experts.
- Promote the concept of a balanced lifestyle, supporting the well-being of the participant both in and out of the sport.
- Never ridicule, embarrass or abuse a child or reduce them to tears as a coaching method.
- Accept that everyone has the right to be protected from abuse. Bullying of participants will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- Treat all individuals in sport with respect at all times.
- Do not discriminate on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, colour, disability, sexual identity, age, occupation, religious beliefs or political opinion.
- Do not condone or allow any form of discrimination to go unchallenged.
- Do not publicly criticise or engage in demeaning descriptions of others.
- Be discreet in any conversations about participants, coaches or any other individuals.
- Communicate with and provide feedback to participants in a manner that reflects respect and care.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of anyone they meet within our sport.

Relationships – Coaches must develop a relationship with participants (and others) based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect. Coaches:

- Inform participants or their parents/guardians of the requirements of the sport.
- Inform participants or their parents/guardians of any potential costs involved in accessing the coaching services on offer.
- Be aware of and communicate on any conflict of interest as soon as it becomes apparent.

- Do not work with any other coach's participant without first discussing or agreeing it with both the coach and the participant involved.
- Identify and agree with participants which other experts or organisations could offer appropriate services.
- Give clear instructions as to what you expect from the players at all times.
- Coaches must not encourage participants to violate the rules of table tennis and should actively seek to discourage such action. Furthermore, coaches should encourage participants to obey the spirit of such rules.
- Coaches must accept responsibility for the conduct of their participants insofar as they will undertake to discourage inappropriate behaviour.
- Must not engage in behaviour that constitutes any form of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, bullying).
- Should promote the welfare and best interests of their participants.
- Must not enter into sexual intimacy with participants either while coaching them or in the period of time immediately following the end of the coaching relationship.
- Must take action if they have a concern about the behaviour of an individual towards another individual.
- Should empower participants to be responsible for their own decisions.
- Should clarify the nature of the coaching services being offered to participants.
- Should communicate and cooperate with other organisations and individuals in the best interests of participants.
- Always be publicly open when working with children.
- Ensure a professional working relationship with fellow coaches and colleagues; guarding against any form of abuse.
- Be aware of the dangers of social media and ensure that the use of such media is not abused or puts the coach at any risk.
- Be aware of the physical needs of participants, especially the developmental stage and needs of children and young people, and ensure that training loads and intensities are appropriate.
- Ensure that physical contact is appropriate and necessary, and is carried out within recommended guidelines (provided by governing bodies of sport) with the participant's full consent and approval.
- Do not engage in any form of sexually related contact with any participant for whom they have responsibility. This is strictly forbidden as is sexual innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures and terms. Coaches are in a position of power and trust in relation to participants. By entering into an

intimate/sexual relationship with a participant, a coach may be deemed guilty of abusing this position and, in relation to children and young people, this may also be unlawful.

- Inform parents or guardians immediately if you are at all concerned about the welfare of a child, unless there are concerns that this would not be in the interests of the child.
- Know and understand the relevant governing body of sport or employer child protection/safeguarding policies and procedures in this regard and adhere to them.
- Follow the reporting procedures laid down by your governing body of sport or employer if you have a concern – non-action is unacceptable.
- Arrange to transfer a participant to another coach if it is clear that an inappropriate or intimate relationship is developing.
- Discuss with parents and other interested parties the potential impact of the programme on the participant.
- Respect participants' opinions when making decisions about their participation in their sport.
- Encourage participants to take responsibility for their own development and actions.
- Allow participants to discuss and participate in the decision-making process.
- Discuss and agree with participants what information is confidential.

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

- Must be fair, honest and considerate to participants and others in their sport
- Should project an image of health, cleanliness and functional efficiency
- Must be positive role models for participants at all times. Always avoid inappropriate use of alcohol and tobacco, and never condone the use of any type of enhancing drugs in the company of children.
- In the situation where more than one coach/responsible adult is travelling with a group, at least one must always be in a fit state to react at all times e.g. in case they are required to transport the children.
- Operate within the rules and the spirit of your sport.
- Educate participants on issues relating to the use of drugs in sport and cooperate fully with UK Sport and governing bodies of sport policies.
- Maintain the same level of interest and support when a participant is sick or injured.
- Display high standards in use of language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation.

- Do not drink alcohol or use recreational drugs before or while coaching, or when travelling with participants. In addition be aware of smoking only in appropriate locations and circumstances. This reflects a negative image and could compromise the safety of your participants.
- Display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved in your sport.
- Be aware of all foreign laws and cultures at all times, minimising any potential risks.

Principle Statement Issues Actions

- Ensure the environment is as safe as possible, taking into account and minimising possible risks
- Avoid situations working with a child unobserved.
- If any form of physical contact is absolutely necessary it should be used openly. Always explain to the child what you are doing and why the physical contact is necessary, and ask permission of the child. If possible avoid all physical contact.
- When supervising groups of children in changing rooms, where possible, work in pairs, and never supervise children of the opposite gender to yourself.
- Never invite individual players to your room when travelling away.
- Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Avoid taking children alone on car journeys where possible and ensure that seat belts are worn at all times.
- Make sure that you have the player information and medical forms with you at all times. Do not take children to your home.
- Be aware of the uses of social media, minimising risk where possible; ensure that comments do not contain abuse towards another individual, the National Governing Body or any of its programmes.
- Promote the execution of safe and correct practice
- Be professional and accept responsibility for their actions
- Make a commitment to providing a quality service to their participants
- Coaches should clarify in advance with participants and/or employers the number of sessions, fees (if any) and method of payment. They should also explore with participants and/or employers the expectation of the outcome of coaching.
- Coaches have a responsibility to declare to their participants and/or employers any other current coaching commitments.
- Follow the guidelines of your governing body of sport or employer.
- Plan all sessions so they meet the needs of the participants and are progressive and appropriate.

- Maintain appropriate records of your participants.
- Seek to achieve the highest level of qualification available.
- Demonstrate commitment to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) by undertaking/attending learning opportunities to maintain up-to-date knowledge of technical developments in your sport.
- Be aware of the social issues and how your sport can contribute to local, regional or national initiatives.
- Actively participate in recruitment and education opportunities in your sport.
- Actively contribute to local, regional and national initiatives to improve the standards and quality of coaching both in your sport and sport in general.
- Actively promote the positive benefits to society of participation in sport, including the positive contribution sport can make to achieving improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Contribute to the development of coaching as a profession by exchanging knowledge and ideas with others, and by working in partnership with other agencies and professionals
- Gain governing bodies of sport coaching qualifications appropriate to the level at which they coach.
- Recognise the developmental capacity of the child and do not push them against their will or train them excessively.
- Practise in an open and transparent fashion that encourages other coaches to contribute to or learn from your knowledge and experience.
- Engage in self-analysis and reflection to identify your professional needs.
- Seek CPD opportunities to develop your coaching skills and competencies, and update your knowledge.
- Manage your lifestyle and coaching commitments to avoid burnout that might impair your performance.
- Do not assume responsibility for any role for which you are not qualified or prepared.
- Do not misrepresent your level of qualification.
- Promote good coaching practice in others and challenge any poor practice that you become aware of.
- If any injuries occur keep a detailed written record of the incident along with any treatment given.
- Coaches must communicate and co-operate, in consultation with the players parents, with registered medical and ancillary practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their

participant's medical and psychological problems. Coaches should not administer any medicines or drugs to their participants; unless consent has been given formally by the child's parent or guardian.

- Coaches should refrain from public criticism of fellow coaches. Differences of opinion should be dealt with on a personal basis and more serious disputes should be referred to the National Governing Body.
- Coaches must treat opponents and officials with due respect both in victory and defeat and should encourage their participants to act in a similar manner.

Implementation

It is recognised and identified by the National Governing Bodies (NGB) and National Source Group for table tennis that this code of practice has minimal value unless incorporated fully into their practices at a formal level. In order for this code to fully impact on coaching practice and behaviour, each NGB has incorporated it into their coach licence scheme* and the rules of the sport. Coaches should therefore take note of the following:

- Failure to adhere to the terms of the Code of Practice can result in disciplinary action.
- This Code of Practice is a constituent part of a policy and procedure for dealing with allegations and complaints
- This Code of Practice is the definitive guide and benchmark measure of coaching practice in determining any need for sanctions against a coach.

Coaches are required under the Code of Practice to keep up to date with all aspects of coaching and meet minimum standards for qualification, licensing and deployment. To aid in this process a series of Continual Professional Development (CPD) qualifications are increasingly available through the National Governing Body and external training providers.

This Code of Practice has been developed under the guidelines of sports coach UK and provides a guide for good and safe coaching practice.