

## **The process of following the Code of Conduct of St Brigids GAC Belfast and how to present grievances or handle breaches in discipline to the Discipline and Grievance Committee (DGC)**

We, the Management Committee of St Brigids GAC Belfast, hereby agree to adhere to the following process of accepting grievances and breaches in discipline.

As a Committee responsible for the day to day running of the Club, we accept the principles of our Code of Conduct and will endeavour to ensure that the Safety, Health, Well- Being and Fair Treatment of our Members is paramount. We will continually stress all points made in our Code of Conduct Booklet and ensure that respect is given to all Members regardless of age, sex, playing ability or position.

We agree with the Principles of Equal Opportunities and endeavour to embrace them.

We accept that abuse in any form, be it physical or verbal, including bad language, from Coaches, Supporters, Children, Players and Officials will not be tolerated.

That a Policy will be adopted whereby if something positive can not be said then nothing at all should be said.

If a complaint is made to the Club, it has a responsibility to investigate it and decide whether action in whatever form is warranted. It's decision and the reasons should be carefully minuted and the parties advised as to the decision.

It is acknowledged that the process for handling grievances and breaches and discipline may be somewhat different however it is hoped that both processes will be handled by the Club with the same matter of urgency and having regard for the dignity and respect of all individuals involved.

That if there is any breach in our Code of Conduct that the following process will be followed:

- Where a person (this covers members and non-members) wishes to register a complaint or grievance (hereafter referred to simply as a grievance) with St Brigids GAC Belfast, then the person should contact either of the following persons:

The Child Protection Officer (CPO)  
Club Chairman (CC)  
Club Secretary (CS)

- That if he/she feels that they do not wish to report to the above people, that they report to another Committee Member, on the understanding that that Member will immediately follow the process mentioned above.

The timeline for dealing with the case is as follows:

On receipt of either Verbal or Written Report, a Disciplinary Grievance Committee (DGC) is set up within 3 days

## **The process of following the Code of Conduct of St Brigids GAC Belfast and how to present grievances or handle breaches in discipline to the Discipline and Grievance Committee (DGC)**

This Committee will be made up of 3 people from a panel of 6, one of whom could be the Child Protection Officer. The Panel will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the Members of the Panel are willing to stand on a year-by-year basis. It is recommended that one panellist be a member of the main committee.



Where the issue has not been put in writing it must be done within 7 days of establishment of the DGC.



On receipt of the written complaint all interested parties are to be contacted and written statements obtained from each party to be lodged with the DGC within a further 7 days.



Any party can obtain witnesses including the DGC and all witnesses are required to provide a statement to be forwarded to the DGC.



It is hoped that the DGC should decide the matter on foot of the statements obtained but where any party including the DGC considers that an oral hearing would be preferable, then such hearing is to take place within 7 days from original complaint referred to at one above.



Parties are to have access to correspondence/statements from the other parties. This information is to be held by the Chairperson of the DGC.

### **POINTS TO NOTE:**

- The individual has the right to outside representation.
- That the parties have access to correspondence from the other parties involved and that this information will be held by the appointed Chairperson of the Grievance Committee
- Where appropriate, that the Panel attempt to resolve the matter by bringing both parties together if they feel a positive way forward can be achieved.

## **The process of following the Code of Conduct of St Brigids GAC Belfast and how to present grievances or handle breaches in discipline to the Discipline and Grievance Committee (DGC)**

- That the DGC has the right to offer sanctions, and that the decision should be put in writing to the persons involved. The DGC has the power to impose sanctions. The following sanctions are available:

Warning reference future conduct etc

Some thought would have to be given to these sanctions.

- The other parties involved are only to be informed that action has been taken to the satisfaction of the Panel. If under 18 the correspondence is to be addressed to the parents/guardians.
- All decisions are to be put in writing and forwarded to all persons involved in the grievance procedure.
- Any person who is sanctioned can appeal the decision in writing. Such appeal must be lodged with the Club Secretary or Club Chairman within 3 days of receipt of the sanction by post.
- All matters are to be handled confidentially.
- St Brigids GAC Belfast endeavour to handle any grievance in a fair, expedient manner recognising the best interests of all concerned in the grievance procedure.
- Where any party is dissatisfied with the finding of the DGC, then any party can follow the Enforcement of Rules criteria set out on pages 83 – 114 in the Official Guide of the Gaelic Athletic Association.
- If a Committee member was a member of the DGC they would be asked not to sit on the Appeals Committee.
- That if dissatisfied with the conclusion that either party can follow the Enforcement of Rules criteria set out on pages 83 – 114 in the Official Guide 2007 of the Gaelic Athletic Association. This is a reminder that in the first instance that the rules of the GAA should be followed at all times.
- That the matter will be handled confidentially and that no other Member is to be copied in on the correspondence. Written confidential records of all complaints should be safely and confidentially kept.
- That in doing all of this, it is paramount that the affair is handled fairly, with expedience and in the best interests of all involved.
- That, St Brigids GAC Belfast, as a Club, maintain integrity at all times in dealing with the issues, which confront us on a day-to-day basis.

**The process of following the Code of Conduct of St Brigids GAC Belfast and how to present grievances or handle breaches in discipline to the Discipline and Grievance Committee (DGC)**

Signed by the St Brigids GAC Belfast Main Committee 2008:

|                     |                  |       |
|---------------------|------------------|-------|
| Chairman            | Oliver Lennon    | _____ |
| Vice Chairman       | Dermot Dowling   | _____ |
| Secretary           | Paul Campbell    | _____ |
| Assistant Secretary | Patricia McCarry | _____ |
| Treasurer           | Greg Morris      | _____ |
| Assistant Treasurer | Barry Gormley    | _____ |
| Committee Members   | Frank Cassidy    | _____ |
|                     | Tom Walsh        | _____ |
|                     | Paul McAnallen   | _____ |
|                     | Noel McGuckian   | _____ |
|                     | Marcel Koch      | _____ |
|                     | Eunan Conway     | _____ |