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1.0 Purpose

The intent of this policy is to outline clear, consistent and fair team structures and outline mentor responsibilities that will foster the participation and development of all players regardless of ability in all of our games.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all under 18 teams in the following codes

- Boys Juvenile
- Hurling
- Ladies football
- Camogie

3.0 Policy

3.1 Policy Statement


Donaghmore Ashbourne GAA will maintain structures that are designed to ensure maximum participation by all players regardless of skills or abilities and to retain players into adult competition whilst offering them to the opportunity to play dual codes equally and helping them to achieve their full playing potential in accordance with the club's player pathway development programme.

Under 8- 14 Underage Teams

Table 1	Age Criteria (Player Birth year)
Under 14:	Born in 2001
Under 13:	Born in 2002
Under 12:	Born in 2003
Under 11:	Born in 2004
Under 10:	Born in 2005
Under 9:	Born in 2006.
Under 8:	Born in 2007

The Club will maintain Juvenile teams up to Under 14 as set out in table 1 as of the 1st January 2015.

All players must play and train for the team of their birth date as outlined in Table 1 only.

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Under 15- 18 Underage Teams

The Club will maintain under 15- 18 Underage Teams as set out in table 1 as of the 1st January 2015.

Two teams with best team as A in higher division and B team in lower division. Teams selected at the beginning of each year based on player performance during prior year.

Table 2	Age Criteria (Player Birth year)
Minor (U18) A Team:	Born in 1997 or 1998
Under 18: B Team	Born in 1997 or 1998
Under 16: A Team:	Born in 1999 or 2000
Under 16: B Team:	Born in 1999 or 2000


3.2 Playing up policy

At times it may be necessary to supplement a team with a player from a younger team ('playing up'); e.g. an under-13 player plays with an under-14 team for games. While it may be necessary, such 'playing up' can demotivate weaker players to the point where they will eventually give up playing if, for example a player who is 'on the age' is continuously displaced by players from a younger team. Similarly a younger team can be weakened by the loss of players to an older team. This policy is intended to be clear, consistent and fair and designed to foster both weak and strong players.

The club policy discourages 'playing up', but allows it where players are needed to make up a team for games only. 'Playing up' should not deprive players who are 'on the age' of a game.

The club policy on 'playing up' is outlined below only the Chairperson of the Code may sanction exceptions to this policy -

- Players must be selected from the team directly below.
- If there is no players from team below then players can be requested from teams up to two years below.
- In team selection, preference should be given to players who are 'on the age' - i.e. those who will be 'over-age' next year. If substitutes are available, then players who are 'on the age' should play at least half the game.

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Selectors may deviate from this policy if there is good reason not to select a player, other than the player's ability (e.g. indiscipline or poor attendance at training). In such cases, the player should be informed why he is not being selected.

- If a player is selected to play up he must continue to train and play with his own age-group.
- When a team needs a player to play up, the coach must seek permission of the coach of the younger team to provide a player. The coach of the younger team decides which of the team is offered the chance to play up and is responsible for communicating the offer to the parents of the player involved.

It is recommended that the selection of players to 'play up' must follow the following guidelines

- The coach must consult with the coaches of other code if selecting a dual player.
- It is preferable to rotate the chance to 'play up' among players from the younger team. Players selected to play up should be capable of competing at the higher age group.

3.3 Team Selection Policy


It is club policy that all players should be provided with an equal opportunity to play games regardless of ability.

- Players should not be discriminated against.
- Mentors children should not be unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged; team selectors preferably should make impartial decisions.

3.4 Dual Games Policy


It is Club policy to develop all codes to their full potential in the Club and that dual players should be encouraged in every way possible.

- The managers of the respective teams must put the interests of the players first and cooperate with each other to ensure that the players are not put in the unfair position of having to choose between training sessions/matches

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or in any way feeling under pressure.

- It is the manager's responsibility to ensure through ongoing respectful communication and dialogue that an agreed arrangement for training/matches is arrived and communicated in a clear manner to the respective players.
- The Games committee is the forum for the four games sections to discuss and resolve disputes.

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3.5 Games Policy Complainants


Perceived breach of Games Policy should be reported to Code Chairperson who should follow the following process. This procedure relates only to breach of Games Policy, not to breaches of Code of Ethics and Good Practice.

Stage 1

- The Code Chairperson will notify the Mentor/Player/Parent/Guardian against whom the complaint has been made and meet with them. Every effort will be made to resolve the problem at this level.

Stage 2

- Failing a satisfactory outcome from stage 1, the perceived breach will be reported to Chairperson of Games Committee, and the Games Committee Disciplinary Board. This Board will comprise of 2 members of Games Committee, nominated by the Chairperson.
- The Games Committee Disciplinary Board, having received a written report from Code Chairperson, will meet with the person against whom a complaint has been made and attempt to resolve problem.
- The Games Committee Disciplinary Board will determine whether there has been any breach in the club games policy and determine a path forward and whether any sanctions should apply. Any sanction must be ratified by the club's Executive Committee.
- The Games Committee Disciplinary Board will record minutes of all meetings with the person against whom a complaint has been made and furnish a written report of procedures followed, conclusions, and recommendations or any actions to be taken.
- The written report will be signed by all members of the Disciplinary Committee.
- All parties to the complaint will receive a copy of the Disciplinary Committee's conclusions and a copy should be provided to the Executive Committee.

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4.0 Responsibilities

Mentors

- Mentors must put player's interests first. Mentors must adhere to the Donaghmore Ashbourne Code of Ethics and good practise for Young players.
- It is club policy that each team should have mentors with the qualifications as listed in Table 2.

Table 2	Qualification
U16-U18:	Award 1 Youth /Adult
U12-U15	Award 1/Level 1 Child Minimum of 1 mentor per team
U8-U11	Foundation/Fundamentals: Minimum of 1 mentor per team

- It is the responsibility of the Mentors to:
- To plan, organise, and prepare their teams for the various competitions. This includes training and coaching the players in the skills of the games, hurling, camogie and football.
- Mentors should ensure that at least 12 games in each age group are organised in each code per year
- To coordinate training and matches between mentors in each code and facilitate players who wish to participate in all codes. Regular communication with the other code is essential.
- Follow the guidance contained in any Coaching manuals issued by the club.
- One mentor from each group must ensure that **ALL** players are registered.
- Mentors are required to engage in meaningful dialog with other mentors to resolve any issues that may occur.
- Mentors must ensure that under any circumstances should an illegal or overage player be played in competitions or games.
- To ensure that players are wearing the correct Donaghmore/Ashbourne gear while representing the club in games and activities on the field of play.
- Abide by determinations made by the Games Committee Disciplinary Board

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Relevant Code Committee

- It is the responsibility of the Code committee to:
- Ensure that Mentors selected follow the policies of the club.
- Ensure all coaches are made aware of the **GAA Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport**, as well as club policies and guidelines and adhere to these.
- Ensure Implementation of this Policy within the respective code.
- Resolve any games related issues associated with team mentoring
- Ensure communication between mentors.
- Abide and support determinations made by the Games Committee Disciplinary Board

Games Committee

- It is the responsibility of the Games committee to:
- Monitor the implementation of this Policy and propose amendments if required
- To implement coaching initiatives aimed at improving participation, player retention and improving games within the club.
- To ensure that all players and mentors are adequately catered for.

5.0 References

- Donaghmore Ashbourne Development plan
- Donaghmore Ashbourne Code of ethics and Good Practice for Young Players
- Meath Player retention and participation games review 2015.
- GAA Player Pathway Development Program