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Introduction

Cricket Ireland’s coach development manager asks: Why does coaching matter?

Thinking about this question, I decided to play a game. I wanted to see if I could remember every coach I’ve ever had. It’s fair to say this covers a few decades, and the six sports I’ve had a serious go at (so far).

Not surprisingly, I couldn’t remember the names or faces of all the coaches. But most I do, and some I remember for a very specific reason – they were tough (or gruff), or they knew a lot about the sport, or they were inspirational. A couple I remember because they made a specific comment to me that made me feel better about myself – one (rugby) when I was about 8 years old, the other (football) when I was 19 (thanks Mike!).

Coaching matters because it can make a positive difference to people’s lives. Of course, coaching also matters because it strengthens playing standards.

For players, coaches are the ‘face of the sport’. As such, they strongly influence how a participant experiences sport. This is especially so for junior and youth players.

However, there is a value in sport far beyond the scoreboard and the ground, and coaches who coach with the player’s lifelong interests at heart can help ensure that value is fully realised no matter what the player’s goals.

Consequently, Cricket Ireland’s coach education and development programme aims to develop coaches who not only have age- and stage-appropriate cricket knowledge and coaching skills, but who can also contribute positively to people’s lives outside sport, and at the same time, foster a life-long love of the game.

If a coach can do that Cricket Ireland believes they will help inspire the next generation of umpires, scorers, administrators, sponsors, fans, and, of course, coaches.

We also believe coaches are role models who demonstrate leadership through their behaviour on and off the field. It is important, therefore, coaches are aware of their responsibility to behave in an ethical and positive manner at all times.

I hope this plan allows everyone to start a coaching and coach development conversation. So, I encourage you to read the plan in full and then discuss it with someone in your team, at your club, or in your community.

Thanks for listening.

Brett Reid
Coach Development Manager
Cricket Ireland
2018-2020 – Why two years?

This plan covers 2018-2020 for two key reasons.

First, this aligns the coach education and development strategic plan with the current Cricket Ireland Strategic Plan, which runs through to 2020.

Secondly, cricket in Ireland is currently enjoying significant positive change. The coach development system needs to keep pace with that change and be nimble enough to respond quickly to the needs of coaches and the sport.

We believe, therefore, it will be appropriate to review progress on the coach education and development plan by the end of 2020.

Coach development vision

“To have a coach education and development system which supports coaches to continue learning throughout their coaching journey, and inspires them to meet the needs and support the ambitions of cricket players at all levels in Ireland.”

Coaching principles

Cricket Ireland recognises coaches will bring their own practical knowledge and evolving philosophies to the way they coach.

However, we believe it’s helpful to identify a few key principles coaches can build into their coaching practice. These principles can help drive a clear and shared approach to cricket coaching in Ireland.

We believe coaches who ‘bring to life’ the four principles below will provide quality experiences for all participants:

- **Player-centred coaching**
  - Coaches understand that the player’s needs are at the heart of the coach-player relationship, and so behave in ways which best meet those needs

- **Coaches are good people**
  - Coaches behave at all times in ways which respect and affirm others, and which portray cricket as a fun, safe, and ethical sport

- **Collaboration**
  - Coaches are committed to collaborating with each other in order to share experiences to the benefit of their own development and that of their players

- **Lifelong learning**
  - Coaches take responsibility for leading their own development, and understand that learning can occur right across their coaching lifespan
One way to think about coach development is to categorise the contexts coaches learn in.

The 70-20-10 model was originally designed to show the three contexts managers or employees commonly learn in: (1) on-the-job training (70%), (2) learning with others (20%), and (3) formalised educational courses (10%).

Adapting the model to coach education and development, the three broad contexts might look like this:
1. Coaching (on-the-job training)
2. Continuing development – so-called ‘informal’ and ‘non-formal’ learning activities (e.g. a workshop; shadowing another coach)
3. Coach education courses where ‘formal’ learning is driven by the requirements needed to attain a qualification.

Of course, some behaviour, such as one coach talking to another coach, is not exclusive to one context. Also, the percentages (70-20-10) are only indicative. How and what people learn in different contexts will vary greatly.

Despite its limitations, the 70-20-10 model helps highlight the potential contribution each context might make to a coach’s learning over their coaching lifetime.

**70% - Coaching (on-the-job training)**
- The best way to learn how to coach, is to coach
- Coaching is something coaches do week to week, month to month, and year to year, and so it generates a great number of context-specific learning opportunities
- Deliberate self-reflection is essential in helping a coach make the most of those learning opportunities
- Learning can also be accelerated when the coach is supported by a mentor or ‘critical friend’
20% - Learning activities (other than coaching) not explicitly linked to a qualification (often called ‘informal’ and ‘non-formal’ activities)

- Coaches report a range of activities (behaviours) have helped them learn
- Some of these are led by others and often involve other coaches
- Other activities are driven by the coach and don’t require the direct involvement of others
- Some examples of ‘20% activities’ include:
  - Attending coaching workshops
  - Being mentored
  - Being observed coaching and getting feedback
  - Shadowing another coach
  - Talking and listening to other coaches
  - Reading; watching coaching videos
  - Self-reflection
- Over the course of a year, there are likely to be a number of learning activities led by others that a coach can engage with
- And of course, a coach is able to read, watch coaching videos, or reflect on their own coaching practice at any time

10% - coaching courses where an explicit outcome is a coaching qualification

- Coaching courses are usually sport-led, though tertiary institutions also offer coaching-related qualifications
- In most sports, the number of coaching courses available is generally low (e.g. 2-4). Over the course of a coaching lifetime, a coach will spend a relatively small percentage of available learning time on a course or programme
- For new and emerging coaches, courses can provide a valuable foundation in the sport and coaching, as well as providing opportunities for ‘similar coaches’ to connect with each other
- Increasingly, courses are being facilitated by skilful, coach-centred coach tutors/developers who are led by the knowledge, experience, and needs of the coaches ‘in the room’

In summary, coaches who want to keep learning will:
- Get out there and coach – this is where so much learning can occur, especially when the coach consistently reflects on what they are doing, and when they have the support of someone else
- Drive their own development (be an independent learner)
- Acquire coaching qualifications as appropriate.

Framework or pathway?

When people talk about coach development they often use the terms ‘framework’ and ‘pathway’ interchangeably. Quite rightly, sports will choose to use the term(s) they see fit.

When Cricket Ireland talks about coach education and development it will use the term framework rather than pathway.

Cricket Ireland believes ‘pathway’ suggests a prescriptive, linear approach to development and
learning that unintentionally pushes coaches to ‘chase’ higher and higher coaching qualifications.

In most cases, these ‘higher’ qualifications are designed to help coaches support performance and high performance players. In reality, a relatively small percentage of coaches are supporting these groups of players.

Of course, Cricket Ireland wants and needs coaches who aspire to be performance and high performance coaches. Cricket Ireland will encourage and support these coaches as appropriate, including directing them toward coaching qualifications that meet their development needs.

However, what Irish cricket really needs are coaches who are self-driven continuous learners who have the coaching skills and knowledge that allow them to safely meet the needs of the players they coach.

This means ensuring the coach education and development system provides on-going learning opportunities relevant to all coaches. Cricket Ireland and the provincial unions will continue to deliver and/or facilitate development opportunities suitable for club-based coaches, teachers, performance coaches, and high performance coaches.

In addition, the unions will support clubs to explore ways they can create environments that support coaches and coaching.
# Coach education & development framework

## COURSES (Education)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coaching Kids 5-11 years (Cricket Ireland)</th>
<th>Coaching Cricket (Cricket Ireland)</th>
<th>Level 2 (ECB* Certificates in Coaching Children/Young People and Adults)</th>
<th>Levels 3 &amp; 4 (ECB Advanced Coach &amp; Specialist Coach modular programmes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the game of cricket and games-based learning</td>
<td>Introduction to key coaching concepts underpinning safe, enjoyable, and player-centred coaching environments</td>
<td>In-depth consideration and application of coaching tools, skill development, player learning, integrated practices and planning, and cricket game-based learning</td>
<td>Designed to meet the needs of coaches working with players in the performance pathway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For people aged 14 years and over*</th>
<th>For people aged 18 years and over*</th>
<th>By application to the Provincial Unions</th>
<th>By application to Cricket Ireland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aimed at parents, teachers, and young adults supporting children aged 5-11 years</td>
<td>Aimed at emerging coaches who want to coach club players</td>
<td>Aimed at coaches wanting to extend their understanding and application of how to create safe, enjoyable, and player-centred coaching environments</td>
<td>Aimed at equipping coaches with the knowledge, skills and thinking to work effectively in performance and high performance environments, respectively</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* (1) 14 & 15-year-olds can only be assistant coaches, (2) the Safeguarding requirement for this course does not apply to participants aged < 18 years  
* Coaching Kids 5-11 years is NOT a prerequisite for entry onto Level 1  
* England and Wales Cricket Board

## CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coach-led (e.g. learning driven by the coach)</th>
<th>Activities led by others (e.g. Provincial Unions, Cricket Ireland)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## COACHING (on-the-job training)
Who is a Cricket Ireland coach?

A Cricket Ireland coach is someone who has:
- Completed a Cricket Ireland or ECB coaching qualification (or equivalent), AND
- Is current with their Safeguarding (completed a course in the last 3 years), AND
- Is current with their Access NI/Garda Vetting, AND
- Is in ‘good standing’ with Cricket Ireland, their provincial union, and their club.

A coach who meets the above criteria is permitted to coach any team in a club or a union as decided by that club or union.

Cricket Ireland accepts the reliance on volunteer coaches in grassroots sport will sometimes mean a coach ends up coaching across more than one age/stage of the player pathway. It also recognises that a coaching qualification is only one factor an organisation considers when appointing coaches.

However, it is Cricket Ireland’s recommendation that all coaches pursue qualifications and on-going development opportunities matched to the needs of the players they are coaching.

Safety

Safeguarding

One of Cricket Ireland’s roles is to ensure everyone enjoys the game. To do this, we need to provide safe and friendly environments for coaches, parents, umpires, scorers, administrators, and players, especially young players.

Cricket Ireland takes its Safeguarding responsibilities seriously, and is committed to creating a sport where children and adults can participate to the best of their ability in a fun and safe way.

Cricket Ireland recognises it has a duty of care to protect all young people and vulnerable adults involved in cricket in Ireland, and to safeguard their welfare irrespective of age, disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief, and sexual identity.

Consequently, there is an expectation that all coaches and volunteers conduct themselves in a way consistent with the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport. The Code should be read by anyone intending to work with children in sport.

Cricket Ireland’s Child Safeguarding Policy has been formulated in line with: (1) the Republic of Ireland’s Children First Act (2015) and the document underpinning the act, Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011); and (2) the policies and guidance of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI).

Cricket Ireland’s Child Safeguarding Policy sets out procedures to assist those working with children and young people in cricket. It is the responsibility of all adults involved in cricket to actively promote best practice around safeguarding whilst being ever vigilant and aware of their responsibilities.
It is Cricket Ireland's intent to build a Safeguarding requirement into its coaching courses.

To read more about Safeguarding, go to: http://www.cricketireland.ie/about/child-safeguarding

**Code of Ethics and Good Practice**

Being a Cricket Ireland qualified coach means agreeing to act at all times in accordance with Cricket Ireland's Code of Ethics and Good Practice.

The Code outlines the behavioural expectations for coaches in a number of areas, including:
- Creating positive environments for children
- Safety
- Respecting the rights, dignity, and worth of everyone
- Being a positive role model

Cricket Ireland’s Code of Ethics and Good Practice also highlights a number of principles and core values to guide the activities provided to young people in cricket, including the activity of coaching.

### Cricket Ireland’s Code of Ethics and Good Practice

#### Principles and core values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance of childhood</th>
<th>The importance of childhood should be understood and valued by everyone involved in sport.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Needs of the child</td>
<td>All children’s experiences should be guided by what is best for children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity in relationships</td>
<td>Adults interacting with children in sport are in a position of trust and influence. They should always ensure that children are treated with integrity and respect, and that the self-esteem of young people is enhanced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair play</td>
<td>All children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality atmosphere and ethos</td>
<td>Standards of behaviour for leaders and children in cricket are as important as standards set for sports performance. Standards of excellence extend to personal conduct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>Competition is an essential element of sport and should be encouraged in an age-appropriate manner. A child-centred ethos will help ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate places.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>All children should be treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, gender, religion, social or ethnic background, or political persuasion. Children, irrespective of ability or disability, should be involved in cricketing activities in an integrated and inclusive way, wherever possible.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special Section: Coaching young people

Coaching young people is a privilege ... and a responsibility.

For Cricket Ireland, the first focus for coaches of young people is to make it safe. However, if we want kids to stick with cricket, we first need to understand why kids play sport.

Researchers have been asking kids why they play sport for many years. The most common reasons kids give are:

- It’s fun
- They enjoy being active
- They enjoy being fit and healthy
- They like learning new skills
- They like making friends
- They like being appropriately challenged (‘stretched but not broken’)

It may be obvious, but the retention of young players in the game is essential for the future of cricket. The players of today are likely to be the scorers, umpires, coaches, administrators, volunteers, fans, and, of course, adult players of the future.

Coaches who make cricket fun will not only have happy players, they will also have happy parents and caregivers. For very young children, parents/caregivers are key decision-makers and influencers. Parents/caregivers will often decide what sport a child plays, and many will take an active interest in ensuring the experience is a positive one for their child.

Cricket Ireland acknowledges the key role parents play in youth sport, and it encourages clubs and coaches to explore ways to involve parents so they can be active and positive contributors to their child’s cricketing experience.

Future focus areas

Cricket Ireland’s Strategic Plan 2016-2020 recognises that women and young adults are underrepresented in the coaching community.

Cricket is a game for everyone. Cricket Ireland is committed to creating opportunities for everyone in Ireland to connect with cricket, including through coaching.

As part of a wider strategy addressing diversity and inclusion, Cricket Ireland will continue to explore how best to attract and retain coaches who represent all population groups and communities in Ireland.
## What will success look like?

<table>
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<th>Strategic Theme</th>
<th>Strategic Outcome</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Milestone Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership</strong></td>
<td>There is a clear and agreed approach to coach education and development</td>
<td>A Coach Education &amp; Development Strategic Plan and Framework is published</td>
<td>September 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developing leadership capability in Irish coaches is a priority</td>
<td>The number of Irish coaches in key roles</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>Qualifications matching the needs of all coaches, and aligned to the player pathway, are available and facilitated by a learner-centred coach developer workforce</td>
<td>A Coaching Kids 5-11 years course is delivered by the Provincial Unions</td>
<td>April 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A Coaching Cricket course is delivered by the Provincial Unions</td>
<td>January 2019</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>An ECB Coaching Children/Young People &amp; Adults course is delivered by Cricket Ireland in a format which is coach-centred and sustainable</td>
<td>October 2018</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The coach developer workforce are provided with on-going support and development opportunities</td>
<td>May 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuing Development</strong></td>
<td>Relevant on-going development opportunities are accessible to all coaches</td>
<td>The Provincial Unions and Cricket Ireland consistently deliver continuing development opportunities relevant to all coaches</td>
<td>November 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coaching Culture</strong></td>
<td>The value of coaching is recognised throughout the sport</td>
<td>Clubs are actively supporting coaches and coaching</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intelligence</strong></td>
<td>We know who our coaches are and where coaches are needed</td>
<td>There is a database of all active and qualified Cricket Ireland coaches</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Acknowledgements

Cricket Ireland’s Coach Education and Development Strategic Plan 2018-2020 draws on the knowledge and experience of many people inside Irish cricket. Cricket Ireland wishes to thank everyone who contributed to this plan. It is Cricket Ireland’s wish that many of these people will continue to contribute to coach development beyond 2020.