



Coaching Guidelines

U14-15



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1 Prerequisites

It is necessary that all members of the coaching group have familiarised themselves with the Pasaiste Og Player Pathway [here](#).

2 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide coaches with the necessary tools, resources, contacts and direction for the U14 & U15 age group in Hurling and Football. It will also make coaches aware of the responsibilities required for this age group. This document is based on the Player Development pathway which provides the overall direction for Pasaiste Og for all age groups.

This guidelines document will include direction on the following:

- Management Structure
- Age Specific Objectives
- Communication Protocols
- Required Coaching qualifications, courses etc.
- Where to source equipment
- Contact Numbers
- Recruitment considerations
- How to manage Parents
- Session Planner Template /Examples
- Essential Skills
- Fundamental Movements
- Links to Resources containing
 - Fun Activities
 - Conditioned Games
 - Drills



***Note:** It should be noted that these are guidelines and recommendations for coaches, managers, mentors and parents and may be used with a degree of flexibility.*

This guideline document along with a book called 'Give us a game' will form a coaching pack that will be provided to coaches at this age group.

3 Vision

“To provide players to the senior section of Passage West developed to their full potential“

4 Mission

“To provide excellent coaching that provides all kids the opportunity to be the best player they can be. To further cement the friendships and camaraderie already developing within the team. To be fair and give equal chances to all kids regardless of ability. To ensure that as many kids as possible are retained within the club. To further impart to each kid a sense of honour and integrity and most importantly a strong measure of self-worth.”

5 Goals

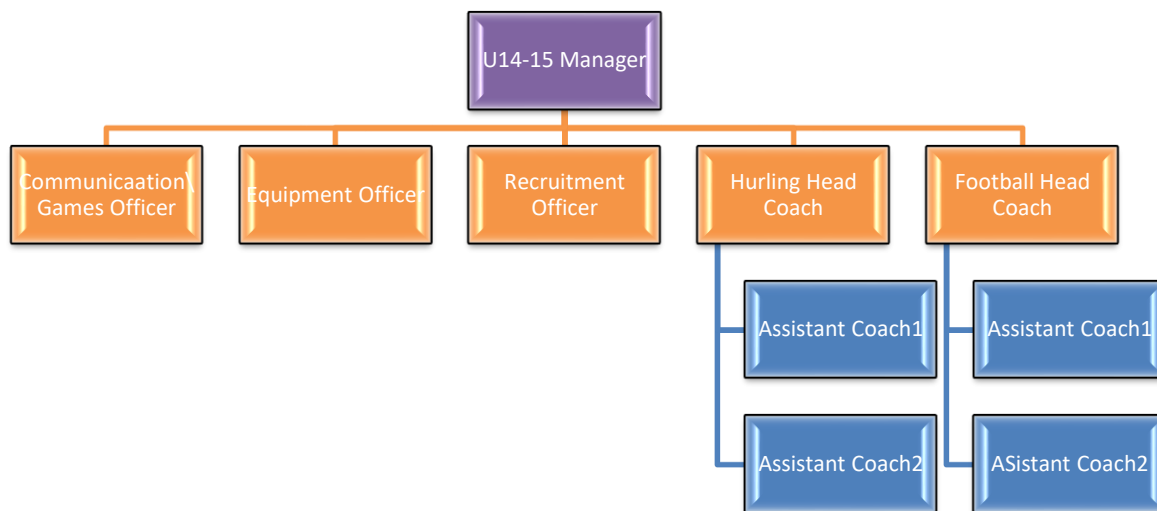
Under 14-15 Core Management and Coaching Objectives

- Compete competitively in championship and Feile
- Develop an attitude of players taking responsibility for their own development
- Have cohesive and cooperative coaching teams
- Maximise Squad development
- Maximise development at an individual player level
- Provide excellent and evolving modern coaching.
- Retain existing players
- Recruit from locality or other clubs.
- Impart a sense of honour and discipline.
- Develop kids self-worth and self confidence
- Have **FUN**

6 Management

6.1 Structure

There should be a designated manager responsible across both codes (Hurling & Football) for assembling and coordinating the coaching team. The manager should recruit as many coaches as possible with the simple objective of enabling more people to do less. Depending on coach numbers the following is the recommended management structure for the U14-15 group. Where coaching numbers are limited the same person may perform multiple roles.



Role	Responsibilities
Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach recruitment • Player Recruitment • Coach Training • Ensuring Coach and Team compliance with club policy and Player Pathway directives • Parental Management • Player Attendance and player retention • Matches
Head Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with Player Pathway Directives • Season objectives • Session planning (FUN) • Session Execution & Coordination (FUN)

Assistant Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session Training • Skills training • Adherence to session plan
Communications/Games Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental Communication (Matches/ Training) • Organises League/Challenge Games • Coordinates with opposing teams
Equipment Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Bag and medical stock • Training Equipment (Poles, Cones etc) • Footballs/Hurleys Stock & Sales
Fundraising Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemble fundraising team • Execution of fundraising activities for u15 group

6.2 Competing Sports

Passage West provides rich opportunity in terms of sporting choice for our children. However, this presents a challenge for the club in that we are very sensitive to player numbers. A guiding principle is that the Passage West GAA manager work with the managers of other sports in the community to avoid and resolve training and match conflicts. Managers need to work to avoid situations where players and parents are forced to make a choice as to what training session to go to. When this happens all sports suffer. Resolve by choosing training days that conflict as little as possible with other sports. If match days collide, try moving times or changing the day.

At U15 level it can be common that some GAA players playing soccer maybe offered contracts with Cobh Ramblers, Cork City etc. In this situation ensure that players and parents understand that the door is always open to return. Bare in mind that these contracts can be terminated opening an opportunity to return.

At this age playing two matches in a day should be avoided.

6.2.1 Training Slots

The primary competitor for player training time is the soccer club. While soccer has separate teams at U14/U15 and can possibly train on different nights, Passage GAA combines these age groups. This presents a challenge when competing for training slots. The manager should meet with the soccer managers to find a solution. The following are two possible approaches:

- Soccer U14 and U15 teams train on the same night. This will free up two nights between Mon and Thursday for GAA.

NOTE: Critical that this is planned with the soccer club well in advance of their season. In GAA terms this means requesting this a year earlier. Once soccer have planned training times for all ages it will very unlikely it will be changed.

a year earlier.

- If soccer cannot train on a single night consider the following for agreement with Soccer management:
 - Fitness/Stamina training for all GAA and Soccer players on a single night. This can be done in either club
 - Dual club players attend 1 soccer training session in the week.

6.3 Recruitment

Once a player plays for a club at U12 they are tied to that club unless they have moved into the parish. The manager is responsible for recruitment:

- Manager & assistant coaches should attend other sporting events (E.g. Soccer matches) for the same age group with a view to approaching parents and assessing levels on interest in their child joining the GAA.
- Ask all current players to reach out to others in their class and encourage to join. Especially anyone who has moved into the community.



***Note:** If a player has played for another club at/over the age of 12 they can still join Passage West but must not have played for 48 weeks. They can continue to train for passage within this time. The Juvenile committee will provide a lot of support here.*

6.4 Parental Management

For new players it's important that parents are encouraged to attend or get involved in the organisation of any events. (E.g. Summer BBQ etc)

- Communicate back to parents after matches telling them how well their child is progressing. Pick out the positives. Specific skills that are improving etc.
- Ask parents occasionally if there is anything they can see in their child that they would like you as a coach to address.

- Players at this age usually reveal more to parents than coaches on what they find difficult or stressful. If parents identify and communicate weaknesses in their own child performances reassure them that you can address this in training.
- Identify players at risk of dropping out and why. Refer to 6.5 below.
- Coach parents on how to manage their child's playing time. Sufficient rest time each week is essential at this age. This becomes very significant for players involved with multiple club and when secondary schools start up their training programs. Critical that players of this age have sufficient rest time.

6.5 Player Retention

Passage West GAA is very exposed to low player numbers. Having recruited players it is essential to retain them. Identify players that are at risk of dropping out. Ask parents occasionally if their kids are enjoying training. Parents will often provide insights that if addressed can avoid a player dropping out.

It is common at this age that players begin to see the difference between where they are and where the seemingly top players are. This can often lead to players wanting to drop out as they feel they will never be as good. The Management team need to be vigilant to this and carefully manage parental expectation as well as player expectation. Take every opportunity to tell these players and their parents how well their child is improving regardless of the facts. Explain to parents that players develop different skills at different speeds and different times. A seemingly weak player at this age could be your best at U12 or U14. Cite examples if you have them. Re-enforce this message constantly to players also.

Competition for playing time from other sports and schools can heat up at this age group. Parents may feel under pressure to cut back their child activity. ***They should.*** This needs to be managed carefully. The following are some mitigating actions:

- Physical training (Fitness, Stamina, Speed) can be conducted once a week and shared between Soccer, Hurling and Football. This allows focus on skills during other sessions during the week.
- Empower and encourage parents to manage their child activity and rest levels. Pulling a child from an evening training session if they were already training that day with the school.

Some players maybe offered Soccer places, with Cobh Ramblers or similar. Players in these setups may not have the time to attend GAA training or matches. However they may also get

dropped from these soccer clubs at any time. Ensure parents are aware that the door is always open when they want to return. Also if they want to attend GAA training or matches while playing for such teams this should be accommodated.

6.6 Communication

Communication to kids regarding matches and training must be conducted through parents only. It is recommended that two WhatsApp groups are created which will cover both hurling and football.

- **Coaches Group**
Used for communications within the coaching group. Availability of coaches, session planning etc.
- **Parent Group**
Used for training and match notifications.

7 Coach Training

All coaches involved with children under the age of 18 need to be Garda vetted and will need to also complete a child safeguarding course.

7.1 Garda Vetting Process

All coaches involved with children under the age of 18 need to be Garda vetted. The passage west child protection officer is on hand to guide coaches through the following process.

Unfortunately at present if a coach has been vetted for another sport this does not count. This can be done online using the following procedure:

1. **Initial Application at club level.**

You must in the first instance complete the [GAA E-Vetting ID Form](#). This form compels you to provide proof of your identity to the Club Children's Officer, who must verify that they have received the ID verification as required. The ID verification may be retained by the Club Children's Officer for the duration of the e-vetting process or it may be attached by you at Step 2 to the On Line Vetting application Form. The primary purpose of this form is for you to provide your name, address, club, role for which you applied, and to present your ID (e.g. copy of your passport plus a utility bill showing your current address) plus a valid email address for future reference. The full list of documents which are accepted for verification can be found here [Click here for the GAA E-Vetting ID Form](#)

2. **Completing the Vetting Application form**

Following completion of the initial process you will then be directed to www.gaa.ie where the GAA on-line E-Vetting Application Form is available to

download. Once you complete the GAA on-line E-Vetting Application Form the information provided is forwarded to the NVB by the GAA and you will receive an on-line NVB Vetting Form to complete. The details entered will be emailed back to you, for your own records. Your Club Secretary will also receive an email informing him/her that you have applied as a member of the club, to be issued with the NVB Vetting Application Form. [Click here for GAA on-line E-Vetting application form](#)

3. **NVB Vetting Application form**

The NVB will issue you with the NVB Vetting Application form. This will be issued to the email address you provided in Step 2. Completing this form is a confidential matter between you and the NVB. All sections of the form including current and previous addresses, email address and contact telephone numbers, information on convictions and prosecutions (if any), plus other information will be required when completing the form. Once all sections of the form have been answered this then completes your application process for E Vetting in the GAA and within a short period of time you shall be contacted by the GAA to informing you as to the outcome of the vetting application.

You and your Club Secretary will be notified when the vetting process has been completed.

7.2 Safeguarding

The safeguarding course is initially a classroom based course. The child protection officer will organise this. Refresher courses (every 3 years) can thereafter be done online through a GAA portal using the following link : <https://learning.gaa.ie/safeguardingrefresher>

7.3 Coaching Skills Training

A foundation course is available for new coaches at this level. It covers both codes on how to teach the basics skills of the game. Contact the Juvenile secretary to get details of when the course is next available.

7.4 First Aid Training

A first aid training course will be organised by the Juvenile committee and provided to all coach. This will enable coaches to be able to treat basic injuries and how to use the Defibrillator which will be located on the wall outside the clubhouse.

8 Session Training

8.1 Principles

- Training sessions should have sufficient intensity.
- Equal focus on the development of both weak and strong sides in both hurling and football during all sessions.
- Art of defense as well as attack should be coached
- Provide Simple Tips
- Reinforce link between practice and improvement
- Set FUN activities.
- All sessions to include at least 10 minutes of warm up, core exercise and fundamental movement skills & stretching.
- Avoid Queues. Every player should have a ball or at the very least ball between two.
- Avoid grouping players by skill level.
- All sessions to include a match at the end.
- Coach movement off the ball
- Commit to assess skills at start and end of season. This allows managers/coaches to show players how much they have progressed throughout the year.
- Commit to minimum 20 sessions in both hurling and football annually.

8.2 Session Management

Coaches need to be aware that players at this age:

- Do not make the connection between physical development and loss of form
- Tend to be self-critical and rely on the coach for positive reinforcement
- Huge difference in physical development between players. Large gaps between biological and chronological age
- Will respond quickly to stamina a speed training. (LTAD Window)
- Should be allowed to make their own decisions and learn from their mistakes.

Coaches need to get to know players individually and set individual challenges to perform away from the field. Players need to be made aware of how activities are used to improve specific skills. Coaches need to allow players make own decisions and coaches and players need to accept that mistakes are large part of learning.

It is recommended if the squad needs to be split up during a session due to high numbers that the groups be split into even sizes but randomly on talent level.

The above logic applies to training matches also. Players develop most when outside their comfort zone so need to be challenged however, when playing training matches using players of mixed ages coaches need to be mindful of the gap between players marking each other. Maybe ok to match a stronger player from the lower age group with a player of higher age group. However a weak player of the lower age group maybe better suited being matched with a player from the same age group. Coaching discretion required.

8.3 Session Planning

Section 13.1 identifies the skills that should be developed at this age group. The Head Coach will need to design session plans that develop these skill. It is important that session difficulty is aimed at just above the average ability of the group. The head coach can draw from the following resources when designing session plans. The following links provide access to a Session Planning template, Skill Cards, Activities etc.

Link	Description
Munster GAA	Session Planning Template, Skills, Activites, Skill cards. Etc.
Learning GAA	Age specific GAA planner facility
Coaching Resource	Covers, how to create a positive environment, how to develop the skills of the game, Communication, Physical fitness , first aid.
Hurling Resource	Age Specific skill for Hurling
Football Resource	Age Specific Skills for Football

8.4 Development Windows

The player pathway identifies development windows at specific age groups. Research has shown that development windows present at particular stages in human development where the development of a specific capacity has an optimal effect. For the U12/13 age group there is a *stamina* and *speed* window. While warmups, stretching, skills should form part of every

session, the training programme for the season should be also focused on stamina and speed development.

9 Grading Selection

U14 and U15 will train together but will compete in separate leagues and championships. (*If sufficient numbers at U14*) Grading selection is a critical step for the management team. Can make or break the season. For players/teams to grow and develop, matches need to be competitive. The selection of a division to enter needs to have this in mind. The Juvenile secretary will contact the manager of each age group when grading selection is required. Usually early January. To inform selection, it is useful to contact managers from teams you have already played to see what they are planning. We must remember that players in later years will not remember what grade they played in. They will remember if they won something.

10 Championship/Feile

At U15 players are introduced for the first time to championship. This will be organised by Rebel Og and will follow the Grading selection chosen at the start of the year,

U15 is also where the Feile competition takes place. This is a major national level competition that takes place only at the age group each year. It is recommended that players are made aware of this at the beginning of the year and something that the team builds towards throughout the year.

11 Matches

Usually hurling and football rotating every second week throughout the summer. Rebel Og League Rules and regulations can be found [here](#) .

Age	Line Ups	Dimensions	Slotar Size	Football Size
U14/15	15 a-side	Full Pitch	Size 4	Size 4

Coaches need to be mindful that, at this age group, players will understand the nature of a win or a loss. Coaches must consider that if we are not competitive in matches, we are likely to lose players (nobody likes being hammered). Similarly, if we only play our strongest team then we are likely to lose the weaker kids (they will feel that they have no path forward and they are not having fun). With this in mind it appears balance is the key.

The following are the recommended guidelines:

- Over the season rotate players to ensure meaningful game time is given to all.
- Generally players on the age should start. However if the U14s do not have their own league and championship competitions and their primary competitions is U15, this rule should not apply.
- Take every opportunity to develop weaker kids by giving them more game time. E.g. Playing a known weaker team or games where winning comfortably.
- Challenge games can be organised to provide more game time for weaker kids.
- Attempts should be made to remain competitive within a game especially for championship and Feile games. If numbers are insufficient, stronger players from the U13 age group may be asked to play up a level if required.
- When playing against a better team, stronger players may need get extra game time to remain competitive, however the weaker u14s and stronger under 15s should be rotated fairly over the season.

12 Team Building and Fun

We must be aware that we are competing with other sports. We need to have at least as good an overall offering to retain the interest of players.

Group needs to have a least 2 fun trips per season. This can be going to a Cork Match and McDonalds afterwards to going on a fun adventure outing to places like Zipit, Kinsale foot golf or Fota Adventure. It can also include bus trip to play a team from a different county.

12.1 Guest Appearances

An area that needs to be considered at this age is the use of influencers. Star athletes who can shape kids thinking in terms of things like

- Diet
- Hard work beats talent
- Learning from failure
- What it takes to succeed
- Alcohol and drug use

It should be an aim at this age group to get a star athlete (that they will have heard of and respect- doesn't need to be a GAA player) to have a chat to them for 30 minutes at least once during this year.

Consider inviting guest coaches to take a session occasionally. Former senior/adult player or an inter county player. A different voice/perspective/approach can add value to player development.

13 Equipment

The Juvenile committee will ensure that coaches at each age group have the equipment they need. You can find a list of contact numbers of committee members on the Passage GAA website [here](#).

Other useful contacts below.

Item	Contact	Email
Sliotars	Dave Maxwell	Dave_Maxwell@trendmicro.com
Medical Bags	Billy Cotter	billy@pharmacare.ie
Young Whistlers	Damien Taff	damiantaaffe@gmail.com

U14 -> 15 DEVELOPMENT PILLARS

Player Characteristics

- Popularity influences self-esteem
- Tend to be self-critical, rely on the coach for positive reinforcement
- Huge difference in physical development between players
- Players do not make connection between physical development and loss of form

Challenges for Coach

- Large gaps between biological and chronological age
- Take advantage of LTAD windows for Stamina and Speed
- Allow Players make own decisions
- Accepts that mistakes are large part of learning
- Set example by showing respect to officials & Opponents at all times
- Use simple language
- Awareness of LTAD Stamina and Speed window

Environment

- Coach to player ratio 1:10
- At least 1 sliotar every 2 players
- Enjoyment and fun still key consideration
- Match results are secondary to development

Hurling Core Skills (LTAD Window)

- Striking – Short/long from Hand on run (40-50M), Under pressure.
- Handling – Hand Pass – Both Hands & Off the Hurley (6-8M Moving) Catching – Low, Chest, High (Pressure of an opponent) Batting/Doubling –High Ball Solo and Strike off Hurley
- Tackle – Blocking/Hooking (Under pressure of an opponent), Flick off the hurley

Football Core Skills (LTAD Window)

- Kicking (Increase emphasis on accuracy, movement distance)
- Free taking (ground & hand)
- Handling (Low/High/body catch under pressure)
- Movement – Dummy Kick/solo, feint and sidestep. Attack ball. Chip lift.
- Tackle (Shadowing player in possession and off the ball. Near hand tackle)

Game

- Players beginning to become accustomed to specific position but must still be challenged to playing a variety of positions.
- All players experience game time in matches
- Aim to provide at least 16 games in a season for your team.
- Size 5 sliotar

Tactical – Decision Making

- Understand the specific responsibilities of the various position through playing experience and minimal direction from coach.
- Small sided games 5v5 7v7 are crucial in players developing decision making

Physical Fitness (LTAD Window)

- Flexibility - through static stretching and dynamic mobility activities
- Speed - multidirectional, between 5M-25M with complete recovery in between. Built into warm up. (LTAD Speed Window)
- Strength - Improve core strength through own body weight exercise – E.g. Planks, Jumps Lunges, Burpees.
- **LTAD Stamina Window - Endurance training. During session and between sessions.**
- **LTAD Speed Window - Speed endurance drills**
- **Recovery Training**

Team Play

- Appreciate the space of a full size GAA pitch i.e. Use of width & depth.
- Attack - Implement principles of attack – possession & support play
- Maintain Possession - Moving the ball as a team.
- Defending - Implement principles of defend – Delay, Deny, Dispossess, Deliver

Psychological Focus

- Strive to make players fully recognise the improvements made through individual practice

