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Safeguarding Guidance for Children & Young People in Sport

FOREWORD

The safeguarding of children in sport is of paramount importance. Sport Ireland will continue to develop and invest in our ethics programme to ensure children and young people's experiences of sport are fun, enjoyable and conducted in the spirit of fair play. Everyone, regardless of age or circumstance should participate in sport in a safe environment.

This document has been developed to specifically support National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) and clubs to ensure they can meet their child safeguarding and child protection responsibilities. This new guidance document has been prepared in the context of the challenges that National Governing Bodies and their clubs face on a day to day basis, ensuring that current best practice is followed while also complying with today's relevant legislation. This is paramount to the successful protection of children and young people in sport.

Over the past 19 years the Code & Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Sport has been implemented at grassroots level across all sports. The implementation of the Code has been driven by the National Children Officers, Local Sports Partnerships and National Governing Bodies of Sport at national and club level and this valuable work needs to be supported and built upon. The new guidance document brings this support to a new level.

It is necessary that all involved in sport understand their responsibilities in safeguarding children. A working group comprised of professional staff from Sport Ireland, Sport NI & the National Governing Bodies of Sport convened to conduct a comprehensive review of the Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport. The aim of the group was to provide support to the sector to ensure alignment with current legislation, policies & procedures and best practice in terms of safeguarding and child protection.

I would like to thank Sport Northern Ireland and the representatives from the National Governing Bodies of Sport for their valuable contributions to the review of the Code.



John Treacy
CEO Sport Ireland

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All appendices are available online at: www.sportireland.ie/Participation/Code_of_Ethics/

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GLOSSARY

Child: For the purpose of this guidance a child is any person under 18 years of age unless they are or have been married (Child Care Act 1991).

Club Children's Officers (CCO): Children's Officers are appointed within clubs to act as a resource for children and to represent them at committee level.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP): A person who is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse and welfare issues to the Statutory Authorities. This person will be a resource to anyone in the organisation/club who has a child protection/welfare concern.

Mandated Person: The mandated person is a person named under schedule 2 of Children First Act 2015 (ROI). They have a legal responsibility to report concerns or allegations that reach or exceed the threshold of harm of abuse to the Tusla (refer to NGB/Club for list of mandated persons).

National Children's Officer (NCO): The National Children's Officer should be a member of the executive committee, or have access to the committee and its accompanying documents, to ensure that children's interests are kept on the agenda and influence the decisions of the Governing Body .

Provider of Relevant Service: As defined in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI), this means, in relation to a relevant service, a person-

- (a) who provides a relevant service, and
- (b) who in respect of the provision of such relevant service-
 - (i) employs (whether under contract of employment or otherwise) one or more than one other person to undertake any work or activity that constitutes a relevant Service,
 - (ii) enters into a contract for services with one or more than one other person for the provision by the person of a relevant service, or
 - (iii) permits one or more than one other person (whether or not for commercial or other consideration and whether or not as part of a course of education or training, including an internship scheme) to undertake any work or activity, on behalf of the person, that constitutes a relevant service.

Relevant Service: As defined in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI), this means any work or activity specified in Schedule 1 [of that Act].

Relevant Person: As defined in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI), this means a person who is appointed by a provider of a relevant service to be the first point of contact in respect of the provider's Child Safeguarding Statement.

Statutory Authorities: The authorities who promote the protection and welfare of young people and who have the responsibility for the investigation and/or validation of suspected child abuse, i.e. in the ROI it is Tusla & An Garda Síochána and in NI it is the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Health and Social Care Trusts.

Sports Leaders: For the purpose of this guidance all adults involved in children's sport are referred to as Sports Leaders. All have a role to play in ensuring that procedures as described in this policy are put in place, agreed, followed and reviewed on a regular basis. The principal leadership roles (some of which overlap) include the following:

Administrators: While administrators may not be actively involved in children's sport, they may be involved in organising activities and events.

Assistants: Assistants are those people who provide back-up to any of the roles outlined in this section and often such assistants are involved on an intermittent basis (e.g. provision of lifts to matches or competitions; checking equipment, etc.).

Club/Organisation Officers: President, Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee members are appointed to oversee club activities and the development of the club/organisation.

Coach/Trainer: A coach is a person who assists a young participant to develop his or her skills and abilities in a progressive way.

Instructor/Teacher: Instructors are involved in the systematic development of the core skills and abilities of an activity, sometimes in a non-competitive context.

Manager: A manager is an individual who takes overall responsibility for a team or a group of sports people and who may often have a direct input into the nature and organisation of the activity itself.

Mentor: A mentor is an individual who undertakes an overseeing role with a group of participants under 18 years of age, often in co-operation with other mentors.

Official: An official is an individual charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the rules of an activity are adhered to in a formal way. This category includes referees, judges, umpires, etc.

Selector: A selector is an individual who has responsibility for the selection of participants under 18 years of age for teams and events.

Statutory Authority Guidelines on Child Protection: In the Republic of Ireland - Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Department of Health and Children 2017 (ROI). Northern Ireland - Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People (NI) 2003 (NI).

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Sport Ireland & Sport NI are committed to ensuring that the best interests of children and young people attending our services are of paramount importance.



1.1 Context

Sport Ireland & Sport NI are committed to ensuring that the best interests of children and young people attending our services are of paramount importance. Our guiding principles and this guidance document are underpinned by national policy and legislation in ROI Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, and the requirements under The Children First Act 2015, and in Northern Ireland – the Children (NI) Order and Cooperating to Safeguarding Children and Young People 2017.

This guidance is also informed by Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, The Child Care Act 1991, The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 and the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012-2016. In Northern Ireland guidance is also from Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 and Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

For more information on Legislation and Policy please see [Appendix 1](#)



1.2 What is the Purpose of this Guidance Document?

The aim of this guidance document is to help sporting bodies to create a culture of safety that promotes the welfare of children and young people engaged in sporting activities. This guidance document supports National Governing Bodies to meet their child safeguarding and child protection responsibilities which are cognisant of, and in line with, requirements under policy/legislation and with best practice. It does this through the provision of guidance and information in relation to the carrying out of a risk assessment, the development of a Child Safeguarding Statement and the development and implementation of policies and procedures for safeguarding and protection of children and young people.

1.3 Who is the Target Audience of this Guidance Document?

This guidance is for the benefit for everyone involved in children and young people's sport. It has been developed to support National Governing Bodies for Sport in the ROI, and in NI, to meet their child safeguarding and child protection responsibilities.

1.4 Values & Principles

Participation in sport plays a crucial role in the development of children and young people. The range of skills learned through being involved in sport contribute towards the holistic development of children. We want a safe, positive and nurturing environment where all children can learn important values. These can include honesty, teamwork and fair play. Children can learn to respect themselves and others, adhere to rules, and develop a healthy relationship with competition. We believe that this desired outcome is possible with the support of this guidance document. We acknowledge that the values are relevant throughout sport but identify them as being particularly essential when we talk about children's sport.

1. Fun and Healthy

Sport must be a fun and healthy experience for all.

2. Inclusion

Sport is welcoming and inclusive, offering appropriate opportunities for participation and development for all children.

3. Fair Play

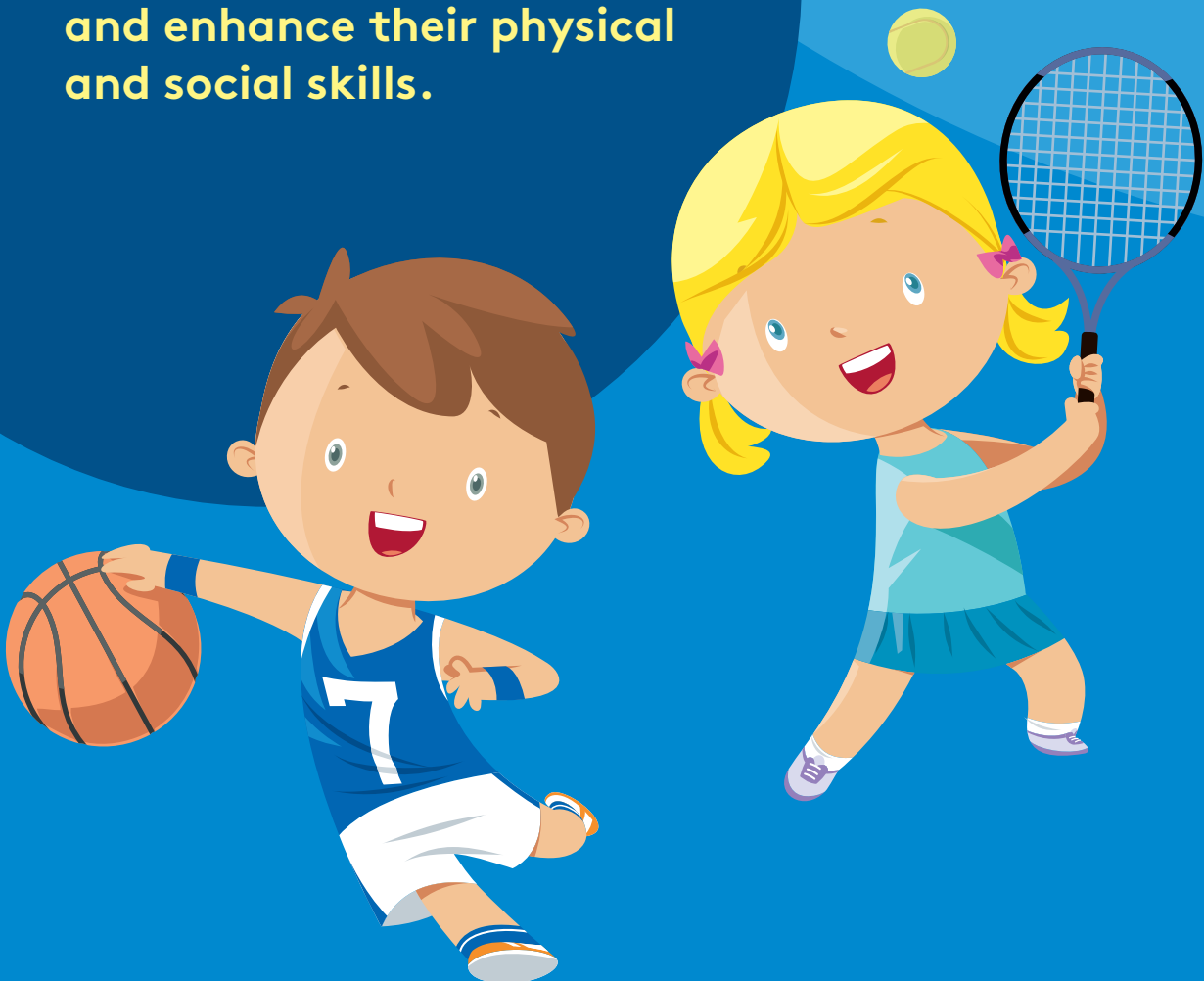
We will promote fair play, respect, ethics, integrity and safety throughout the sports system when it comes to dealing with children's sport.

4. Safe

With the best interests of children in mind, we will foster best practice in safeguarding procedures and policies throughout the sports sector.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPORTING BODIES

A central goal for all involved in children's sport is to provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment where children can develop and enhance their physical and social skills.



2.1 Overview of Responsibilities of Sporting Bodies in Child Safeguarding and Child Protection

A central goal for all involved in children's sport is to provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment where children can develop and enhance their physical and social skills. Promoting a child-centred ethos should go hand in hand with identifying and eliminating practice that impact negatively on safe and enjoyable participation in children's sport.

In order to create a culture of safety which promotes the welfare and protection of children, organisations working with children and young people are required to:



2.2 Risk Assessments & Child Safeguarding Statements

Children First National Guidance 2017 (ROI) states clearly that organisations that provide services to children must ensure that they prevent, as far as practicable, deliberate harm or abuse to the children while availing of their services.

Risk Assessment

The risk assessment considers the potential for harm to come to children whilst they are in the relevant organisation's care. This risk assessment precedes the Child Safeguarding Statement (Section 11 (1b) Children First Act 2015 (ROI)) and informs the development of safeguarding policies and procedures to manage the risk identified. In accordance with Children First the risk is of abuse and not general health and safety.

Under the Children First Act 2015 (ROI), if your organisation is providing a relevant service, you must:

- Keep children safe from harm while they are using your service.
- Carry out a risk assessment to identify whether a child or young person could be harmed while receiving your services.
- Develop a Child Safeguarding Statement that outlines the policies and procedures which are in place to manage the risks that have been identified.
- Appoint a relevant person to be the first point of contact in respect of the organisation's Child Safeguarding Statement.

The above responsibilities rest with the provider of the relevant service. Organisations and clubs should identify who the provider of the relevant service is – e.g. the chairperson of the club/head of the National Governing Body.

A risk assessment is an exercise where your organisation examines all aspects of your service from a safeguarding perspective to establish whether there are any practices or features of your service that have the potential to put children at risk of harm.

The risk assessment process is intended to enable your organisation to:

- Identify potential risk.
- Develop policies and procedures to minimise risk by responding in a timely manner to potential risks.
- Review whether adequate precautions have been taken to eliminate or reduce these risks.

Sport Ireland and Sport NI in consultation with the Children in Sport Group have designed a sport specific risk assessment template which is available to the National Governing Bodies of Sport, Local Sports Partnerships and other sporting organisations. As stated in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) the risk assessment is a legal requirement that must be undertaken by the providers of relevant services who engage in sporting activities with children and young people in Ireland. In Northern Ireland there is an expectation that all regulated activities have robust safeguarding procedures in place and this requirement though not a legal requirement is often linked to public funding.

For more information on Risk Assessments please see [Appendix 2](#)



Child Safeguarding Statement

The Children First Act 2015 (ROI) requires organisations in Ireland that are providers of relevant services to prepare a Child Safeguarding Statement. This is good practice and funding requirement for all sporting organisations throughout Ireland. The Child Safeguarding Statement is a written statement that specifies the service being provided and the principles, that a child availing of the service is safe from harm. Your service should ensure that your Child Safeguarding Statement has due regard to the Children First Guidance or equivalent and any other child protection guidelines issued by the relevant government departments or any guidelines issued by statutory authorities concerning Child Safeguarding Statements.

What the Child Safeguarding Statement should contain

As outlined above, the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) places obligations on organisations that provide relevant services to children. These obligations are:

1. To keep children safe from harm while they are using the service (section 10) and promote the paramountcy principle that the welfare of the child is core
2. To carry out a risk assessment to identify whether a child or young person could be harmed while using the service (section 11.3)
3. To develop a Child Safeguarding Statement (section 11.3) which must include both the written risk assessment and the procedures that are in place to appoint a relevant person to be the first point of contact in respect of the organisation's Child Safeguarding Statement

Manage any risk identified

- Investigate an allegation against any staff/volunteer member about any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child availing of the service.
- Select and recruit staff/volunteer members who are suitable to work with children.
- Provide information and training to staff/volunteer members on child protection and safeguarding issues.
- Enabling staff/volunteer members in ROI, whether mandated persons or otherwise, to make a report to Tusla in accordance with the Act or any guidelines issued by the statutory authorities. In NI reports are made to the Health and Social Care Trust in accordance with their guidance.
- Maintain a list of persons in the organisation who are mandated persons under the Act.
- Appoint a relevant person in the organisation for the purposes of the Act.

Sport Ireland and Sport NI in consultation with the Children in Sport Group have designed a sport specific Child Safeguarding Statement template which is available to the National Governing Bodies of Sport, Local Sports Partnerships and other sporting organisations. As stated in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI), on completion of the risk assessment all relevant organisations should draw up a Child Safeguarding Statement for their clubs.

For more information on Child Safeguarding Statements please see [Appendix 2](#)

2.3 Sport Ireland's Safeguarding Audit Framework

What is Sport Ireland's Safeguarding Audit Framework?

The Sport Ireland Safeguarding Audit framework will support National Governing Bodies to strengthen their adherence to safeguarding policies and procedures thereby ensuring that children and young people are protected in sport. It has been designed to help sporting organisations safeguard children from harm, meet their legal obligations and adopt best practice.

The framework is comprehensive and sets out expectations beyond those referenced in existing statutory guidance.

The framework provides the structure for risk assessments as required by section 11(1) (a) of the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) and as such, will complement the development of effective Child Safeguarding Statements. It also provides a robust reassurance process that benchmarks the quality of safeguarding practice and delivers a mechanism for ensuring ongoing compliance.

The framework is:

- Fundamentally child focused.
- Easy to access and simple to understand.
- Designed to support the whole sporting community.
- Configured to reflect the voices of children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.
- Fully compliant with legislation and statutory guidance.

Who is the Framework for?

The framework has been developed for use by all sports organisations that work with children, from grass-roots to the national level. It is applicable across the island of Ireland and covers individual sport clubs, and the National Governing Bodies of Sport.

Principles

In sport, whilst practice might not make you perfect it will always make you better. This key principle should be applied when using the framework. Regular and consistent implementation of the framework will help us all make children safer.

The framework is underpinned by the requirements set out in relevant legislation, statutory guidance and Sport Ireland's Safeguarding Guidance for Children & Young People in Sport. It has a fundamental focus on the context of children in sport and the creation of safe spaces where they can be seen, heard and helped

For more information on the Safeguarding Audit Framework please see [Appendix 3](#)

2.4 Child Safeguarding and Protection - Policies, Procedures and Practice

By carrying out a risk assessment and producing a Child Safeguarding Statement each Sporting Body/ National Governing Body for Sport is required to have in place detailed policies and procedures outlining how the organisation safeguards children and young people and addresses any potential risks identified.

The policies and procedures include the roles and responsibilities of the people within the organisation, safe recruitment and selection of people, and the procedures to follow in relation to identifying and reporting child welfare or child protection concerns, and responding to allegations against someone within the organisation.

...each Sporting Body/National Governing Body for Sport is required to have in place detailed policies and procedures outlining how the organisation safeguards children and young people and addresses any potential risks identified.



2.4.1

Safe Recruitment Procedures for those working with Children & Young People

Please note: A procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children is a specified procedure under the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) and Keeping Safe - Our Duty to Care resource pack.

The Risks

The vast majority of volunteers will help out through a genuine desire to see children or their particular organisation develop. Unfortunately we must face the reality that a small minority of people will join an organisation or club as an opportunity to gain access to children. They will create an air of acceptability about their role, justifying their close contact with children. One important factor in deciding whether behaviour is a risk of abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the adult.

In order to safeguard young people against such risks it is important that organisations should take all reasonable steps to ensure that only suitable people are recruited to work with children and families by adopting and consistently applying a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting staff and volunteers.

Below are steps to help NGBs. If you are dealing with someone new to the club you will need to be rigorous with respect to recruitment procedures, however you need to be sure of all those working with young people, including those who have been members for quite some time. Any existing member who wishes to work with young people will also need to be assessed for their suitability for a role with children.

Easy Rules to Remember

The implementation of thorough recruitment and selection procedures will help to keep children and young people safe within your organisation. Good practice in management and supervision of workers and volunteers after appointment is a further essential safeguard to help keep children/young people safe.

The procedures outlined below are recommended best practice in your organisation. This reduces the risk of someone targeting a club or organisation to gain access to children and/or of 'seasoned' members moving roles.

Sports clubs/organisations should ensure good recruitment procedures for 'all' members by:

- Insisting that a person applying for any post of responsibility within the club complete the relevant sports application form, verify qualifications, experience and gaps in employment history; person should be provided with a role descriptor.
- Obtaining two references in writing, followed up with personal contact with the reference provider (any request for references should only be sought for preferred applicants);
- Ensuring the individual completes their vetting with either the National Vetting Bureau or Access NI through the relevant Sport's Governing Body prior to commencement of working with children or vulnerable people. Contact your own governing body for more information on this process.
- Setting a probationary period (six months for staff or long-term volunteers) which can be used to assess the leader's commitment to promoting good practice in relation to young people.
- Interviewing or meeting the individual either formally or informally. Appoint two club members to meet the applicant who will be able to:
 - assess the individual's experience of working with children or young people and knowledge of safeguarding issues;
 - assess their commitment to promoting good practice; and
 - assess their ability to communicate with children and young people (i.e. be approachable).
- Ensuring the club management committee ratifies appointments.
- Once recruited into the sports club/organisation, all Sports Leaders should be adequately managed and inducted into policies and procedures.
- When storing information in relation to applicants this should be treated as highly sensitive and confidential. It should be kept in a locked cupboard that is accessible only to a nominated officer and a deputy nominated officer.
- Ensuring they have agreed to and signed up to the relevant Code of Conduct for those working with young people.
- Ensuring they have met with club officials and that they understand the role they are taking on. This is especially important if moving from one role to another among different skill sets, ages, genders, etc. Working with young people will have additional responsibilities attached due to their vulnerability.
- Ensuring they give a commitment to complete the necessary safeguarding training.
- Ensuring they understand that supervision is a vital safeguard for the club so they should avoid working alone.
- Ensuring they know who the Children's Officer/Designated Liaison Person within the club is and understand the youth structures of the club/organisation.

Sport relies heavily on the time and commitment given by volunteers and paid staff. Without this, the opportunities for children and young people to participate and learn new skills would not exist. Below are a number of sample forms to aid your club:

- [Sample Volunteer/Coach Application Form](#)
- [Sample Confidential Reference Form](#)
- [Sample Application Form for new Junior Members](#)
- [Sample Existing Leaders Information Form](#)

For more information contact your own governing body or employer for specific advice or visit [safe recruitment and vetting procedures](#)

For more information on Safe Recruitment please see [Appendix 4](#)



2.4.2

Safeguarding Training

Sport Ireland's remit is to develop and disseminate guidelines and training standards that promote best practice for the protection of children in sport consistent with child welfare and protection guidance and legislation. Sport Ireland's Safeguarding 1, 2 & 3 workshops must be recognised across all sporting organisations.

Who is Safeguarding Training for?

All staff and volunteers should receive safeguarding training appropriate for their role. Basic face to face awareness courses or workshops are appropriate for those working in sport with regular responsibility for children and young people. Training should be updated and reviewed regularly for staff and volunteers, and in line with national guidance and changing legislation.

What this training should include:

- A basic awareness and understanding of safeguarding issues and roles within organisation/club.
- Establishing minimum standards of best practice and codes of conduct.
- Exercises to identify, respond and report concerns.
- Signposting for further information and sources of support.

Training Guidance:

Every sport should have a procedure in place for the provision of information and training that ensures compliance with the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) Section 11(3) and can be used as part of the training plan required as a good practice in Northern Ireland.

Who provides Safeguarding training?

- The Local Sports Partnership network deliver safeguarding training as well as a number of National Governing Bodies of sport.
- Sport Ireland offers three different levels of safeguarding workshops, each are 3 hours long.
- Sport NI offer two different levels of safeguarding workshops, each are 3 hours long.

Basic courses or workshops are appropriate for those working in sport with regular responsibility for children and young people.



Importance of face-to face training

Face-to-face training allows individuals to ask questions in a safe environment facilitated by a safeguarding tutor and can benefit from the experience of other participants. For someone who is attending safeguarding training in sport for the first time it is important that they have an opportunity to discuss specific safeguarding issues that arise during the training an opportunity they would not have if merely doing online training. Face to face training also means you are using a greater range of your senses to learn than sitting in front of a screen alone.

Online training does not challenge negative opinions and there is no discussion/debate, preventing the participant from getting a detailed explanation of questions.

There will also be the need for a sport leader working across several National Governing Bodies to be inducted to each National Governing Bodies' policies, procedures and good practice guidance.

For more information on Safeguarding Training please see [Appendix 5](#)



2.4.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone in sport i.e. children, parents/carers and Sports Leaders should accept the role and responsibilities that they undertake in their commitment to maintaining an enjoyable and safe environment. Sports Leaders play a vital role in children's sport. Sports organisations and sports groups should ensure that the work of Sports Leaders which occurs mainly on a voluntary basis, is guided by this Safeguarding Guidance. Interaction between children and their peers and adults should be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect, equality and non-discriminatory with a spirit of fair play. Adults including parents/carers, who create an environment in which meaningful, open relationships are valued and where the integrity of everyone is respected, can promote such interaction.

National Governing Bodies of Sport

A National Governing Body of Sport is the organisation recognised by the respective international federation as being responsible for the administration of a sport on a countrywide basis or the national body responsible for national games. The National Governing Body is responsible for overseeing the adoption and implementation of this guidance, the legal requirements set out by and Children First (ROI) and the good practice guidelines and standards in NI by all its affiliated members.

Roles within safeguarding (please see links)

- [National Children's Officer](#)
- [Club Children's Officer](#)
- [Relevant Person](#)
- [Designated Liaison Person](#)
- [Mandated Person](#)
- [Role of Sport Ireland & Sport Northern Ireland](#)

Sports Clubs

To ensure that best practice is being followed, all sports clubs should work closely with their Governing Body of Sport.

- [Adult to child relationships in sport](#)
- [Child to child relationships](#)

For more information on Roles, Responsibilities & Relationships in Sport please see [Appendix 6](#)



2.4.4 Reporting & Protection

All those involved in sport have a moral duty of care to report child protection concerns in order to help create a safer environment for children. The procedure in ROI for reporting child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla is a specified procedure under the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) and should be done online following a discussion with Tusla staff. In NI there is a standard UNIOCN form for statutory agencies, however voluntary sports can complete their own proforma. It is recommended best practice that any telephone referral is followed up in writing.

Sport organisations have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of children. Staff and volunteers should be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact may be being abused or at risk of being abused. They should know how to recognise and respond to the possibility of abuse or neglect, so as to ensure that the most effective steps are taken to protect a child and to contribute to the ongoing safety of children.

The guiding principles on reporting child abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:

1. The safety and wellbeing of the child must take priority over concerns about adults against whom an allegation may be made.
2. Reports of concerns should be made without delay to Tusla¹/HSCT².

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in a paid or voluntary capacity, or those working in affiliated organisations, to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. However there is a responsibility to protect children in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person.

- [Responding to child abuse.](#)
- [Recording.](#)
- [Reasonable grounds for concern.](#)
- [Responding to a child/young person who discloses abuse.](#)
- [Confidentially.](#)
- [Reporting concerns about a child.](#)
- [Reporting to Statutory Authorities.](#)
- [Procedure for the management of allegation of abuse against a coach/volunteer.](#)
- [Categories of abuse.](#)
- [Signs of abuse.](#)
- [Statutory Contacts Republic of Ireland.](#)
- [Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts.](#)

1 Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017

2 Children (NI) Order 1995/Criminal Law Act 1967

Under no circumstances should any individual be left with a worry or concern about a child and feel they are unable to discuss it with their club/organisation's Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

Any individual can contact TUSLA to discuss or report a child protection/welfare concern. Please see link to Tusla website below.

If you think the child is in immediate danger and you cannot contact Tusla, you should contact the Gardaí without delay.

In Northern Ireland the NSPCC helpline is available at any time to discuss any worry.



Tusla (ROI):

www.tusla.ie/children-first/contact-a-social-worker3

An Garda Síochána: 999/112

In Northern Ireland it is the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) Gateway Team. Alternatively you can contact the NSPCC helpline to discuss any concern about a child: Telephone: 0808 800 5000

Text: 88858

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Visit gateway contacts:

www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/gateway-service-teams-contact-details

For more information on Reporting and Protection please see [Appendix 7](#)



2.4.5

Disciplinary, Complaints & Appeals of Code of Behaviour Breaches

Each club/organisation should ensure that it has adequate disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures in place. It is important to note that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the Statutory Authorities and should not be undertaken by Children's Officers/Designated Liaison Persons or other club/organisation Sports Leaders. The standard reporting procedure outlined in the Statutory Authorities guidelines should be followed by each sports club/organisation and adhered to by its members.

Only following advice from statutory agencies about suspected child abuse cases should NGB's begin their own internal disciplinary procedures to ensure they do not impact on any statutory investigation.

For more information on Disciplinary, Complaints and Appeals, please see [Appendix 8](#)



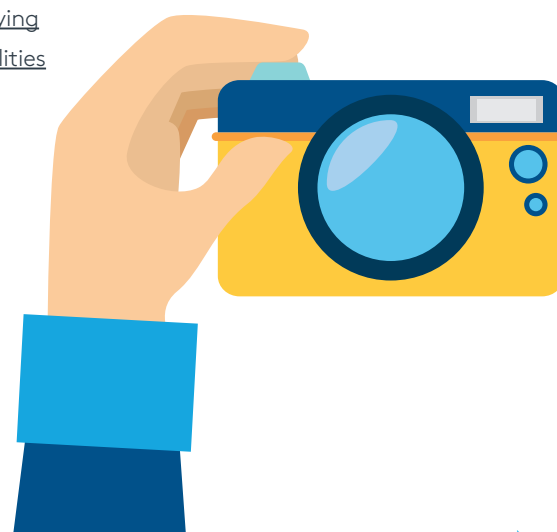
2.5 Safeguarding Guidance

A central goal for all involved in children's sport is to provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment where children can develop and enhance their physical and social skills.

Promoting a child-centred ethos should go hand in hand with identifying and eliminating practice that impacts negatively on safe and enjoyable participation in children's sport.

This section of the guidance document provides sample templates to establish a standard that guides how National Governing Bodies, Clubs and Sporting Organisations provide a safe environment for children and young people. The sample templates are in keeping with the values and goals of Sport Ireland and Sport NI (please see links below).

- [Overnight, Staying Away & Hosting](#)
- [Supervision, Ratios & Environment](#)
- [Registration, Dropouts & Club Transfers](#)
- [Incidents & Accidents Template Reporting Form](#)
- [Transport & Travel](#)
- [Filming & Photography](#)
- [Inappropriate Images](#)
- [Social Media](#)
- [Use of Mobile Phones](#)
- [Physical Contact](#)
- [Bullying](#)
- [Facilities](#)



For more information on Safeguarding Guidance, please see [Appendix 9](#)



2.6 Code of Conduct

Codes of conduct are an integral part of any club/sporting organisation. They set a standard of behaviour that help build a club's culture and make it easier to deal with conduct and behaviour issues as they arise. These can be many and varied, from on-field incidents, side-line abuse and mismanagement, to inappropriate social media posts, unfair treatment, poor sportsmanship and more. Codes of conduct set expectations for everyone involved – from the administrators, coaches and officials, to players, parents and spectators. The code of conduct should be informed by the club/sporting organisation's risk assessment and be a tool in the management of specific risks.

A code of conduct should be in place for administrators, coaches, officials, players and parents. They outline the agreed standard of behaviour for everyone.

Sports Leaders are expected to conform to ethical standards in a number of areas. To be part of the coaching team in an organisation or club it is required that all potential coaches will sign an agreement to abide by a code of conduct and return it to the appropriate organisation/club officials.

The following elements should be included in your organisation/clubs Codes of Conduct.

- [Code for Young People](#)
- [Code for Parents/Guardians](#)
- [Code for Sport Leaders](#)
- [Code for Committees](#)

For more information on Codes of Conduct please see [Appendix 10](#)

2.7 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

It is important to remember that National Governing Bodies of Sport must also have a plan in place in order to ensure that all of its policies, procedures and practices are fully implemented, which requires an implementation plan. This plan sets out the tasks required to fully realise all procedures, and to ensure that these are regularly reviewed and updated in line with ongoing risk assessments, developments in best practice and any changes to policy and legislation.



Summary

Sport Ireland and Sport NI greatly appreciates the army of volunteers who give up their time to strive to provide the highest standards of care for children and vulnerable adults within the Island of Ireland.

Children who have positive early experiences of sport are more likely to continue to some degree of lifelong participation. This contributes to their ongoing physical and emotional wellbeing in adulthood. Sport, therefore, has a lot to offer children – provided it takes place in an environment that is safe, promotes enjoyment, and respects the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of each individual athlete.

This guidance is intended to assist people who are involved today with children & young people's sport, ensuring they are equipped with the necessary tools to positively contribute to a young person's overall experience of sport.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In 2017 a working group comprised of professional staff from Sport Ireland, Sport NI & the National Governing Bodies of Sport convened to conduct a comprehensive review of the Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport. The aim of the group was to ensure that the existing Code was brought into line with current legislation, policies & procedures and best practice in terms of safeguarding and child protection.

Sport Ireland and Sport NI would again like to thank the representatives from the National Governing Bodies of Sport for their valuable contributions to the review of the Code.

2.9 References and Source Material

- Children First Act 2015
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017
- Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Child Care Act 1991
- The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
- Criminal Justice Act 2006
- Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children & Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012
- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017
- National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012-2016

- Child Protection in Northern Ireland Legislation, policy and guidance
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Access NI Code of Practice (NI)
- Children (NI) Order 1995 (NI) Children's Services Co-operation Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 (NI)
- Club Framework for Safeguarding Standards In Sport
- Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People 2017
- Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967 (NI)
- General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR)
- Part V of the Police Act 1997 (NI)
- Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) (Northern Ireland)
- Order 1979 (as amended 2013) (NI)
- Safeguarding Board Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (NI)
- Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008

www.sportireland.ie

www.sportni.net

www.thecpsu.org.uk

www.dataprotection.ie

APPENDICES

Appendix 1	<u>Legislation</u>
Appendix 2	<u>Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement</u>
Appendix 3	<u>Safeguarding Audit Framework</u>
Appendix 4	<u>Safe Recruitment</u>
Appendix 5	<u>Safeguarding Training</u>
Appendix 6	<u>Roles, Responsibilities & Relationships in Sport</u>
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Appendix 8	<u>Disciplinary, Complaints & Appeals of Code of Behaviour Breaches</u>
Appendix 9	<u>Safeguarding Guidance</u>
Appendix 10	<u>Codes of Conduct</u>



APPENDIX 1

Legislation & Policy

Relevant Legislation

There are a number of key pieces of legislation that relate to child welfare and protection. Below is list of the legislation that is applicable in the area of Safeguarding and Child Protection:

Child Care Act 1991

This is the key piece of legislation which regulates child care policy in Ireland. Under this Act, Tusla has a statutory responsibility to promote the welfare of children who are not receiving adequate care and protection. If it is found that a child is not receiving adequate care and protection, Tusla has a duty to take appropriate action to promote the welfare of the child. This may include supporting families in need of assistance in providing care and protection to their children. The Child Care Act also sets out the statutory framework for taking children into care, if necessary.

[Child Care Act 1991](#)

Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

This Act protects you if you make a report of suspected child abuse to designated officers of Tusla, the Health Service Executive (HSE) or to members of the Gardai as long as the report is made in good faith and is not malicious. Designated officers also include persons authorised by the Chief Executive Officer of Tusla to receive and acknowledge reports of mandated concerns about a child from mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.

This legal protection means that even if you report a case of suspected child abuse and it proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that you had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report. If you make a report in good faith and in the child's best interests, you may also be protected under common law by the defence of qualified privilege.

You can find the full list of persons in Tusla and the HSE who are designated officers under the 1998 Act, on the website of each agency (www.tusla.ie and www.hse.ie).

[Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998](#)

Criminal Justice Act 2006

Section 176 of this Act created an offence of reckless endangerment of children. This offence may be committed by a person who has authority or control over a child or abuser who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by:

1. Causing or permitting the child to be placed or left in a situation that creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse; or
2. Failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation.

[Criminal Justice Act 2006](#)

Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children & Vulnerable Persons) ACT 2012

Under this Act, it is a criminal offence to withhold information about a serious offence, including a sexual offence, against a person under 18 years or a vulnerable person. The offence arises where a person knows or believes that a specified offence has been committed against a child or vulnerable person and he or she has information which would help arrest, prosecute or convict another person for that offence, but fails without reasonable excuse to disclose that information, as soon as it is practicable to do so, to a member of An Garda Síochána.

The provisions of the Withholding legislation are **in addition** to any reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015.

[Criminal Justice \(Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Act 2012](#)

National Vetting Bureau (Children & Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012–2016

Under these Acts, it is compulsory for employers to obtain vetting disclosures in relation to anyone who is carrying out relevant work with children or vulnerable adults. The Acts create offences and penalties for persons who fail to comply with their provisions. Statutory obligations on employers in relation to Garda vetting requirements for persons working with children and vulnerable adults are set out in the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012–2016.

[National Vetting Bureau \(Children & Vulnerable Persons\) Act 2012–2016](#)

Children First Act 2015

The Children First Act 2015 is an important addition to the child welfare and protection system as it will help to ensure that child protection concerns are brought to the attention of Tusla without delay.

The Act provides for mandatory reporting of child welfare and protection concerns by key professionals; comprehensive risk assessment and planning for a strong organisational culture of safeguarding in all services provided to children; a provision for a register of non-compliance; and the statutory underpinning of the existing Children First Interdepartmental Implementation Group which promotes and oversees cross-sectoral implementation and compliance with Children First.

[Children First Act 2015](#)

Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017

This Act addresses the sexual exploitation of children and targets those who engage in this criminal activity. It creates offences relating to the obtaining or providing of children for the purposes of sexual exploitation. It also creates offences of the types of activity which may occur during the early stages of the predatory process prior to the actual exploitation of a child, for example, using modern technology to prey on children and making arrangements to meet with a child where the intention is to sexually exploit the child. The Act also recognises the existence of underage, consensual peer relationships where any sexual activity falls within strictly defined age limits and the relationship is not intimidatory or exploitative.

[Criminal Law \(Sexual Offences\) Act 2017](#)

Child protection in Northern Ireland Legislation, policy and guidance

The Northern Ireland Executive government is responsible for child protection in Northern Ireland. They set out policy, legislation and statutory guidance on how the child protection system should work.

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) co-ordinates, and ensures the effectiveness of, work to protect and promote the welfare of children. The board includes representatives from health, social care, the police, the probation board, youth justice, education, district councils and the NSPCC. The SBNI is responsible for developing policies and procedures to improve how different agencies work together.

[Child protection in Northern Ireland Legislation, policy and guidance](#)

and also see

[Access NI Code of Practice \(NI\)](#)

[Children \(NI\) Order 1995 \(NI\)](#)[Children's Services Co-operation Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2015 \(NI\)](#)

[Club Framework for Safeguarding Standards In Sport](#)

[Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People 2017](#)

[Criminal Law Act \(Northern Ireland\) 1967 \(NI\)](#)

[General Data Protection Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679 \(GDPR\)](#)

[Part V of the Police Act 1997 \(NI\)](#)

[Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 \(NI\)](#)

[Rehabilitation of Offenders \(Exceptions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1979 \(as amended 2013\) \(NI\)](#)

[Safeguarding Board Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2011 \(NI\)](#)

[Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups \(NI\) Order 2007 \(NI\)](#)

[Sexual Offences \(NI\) Order 2008](#)

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

As a regulation, does not generally require transposition into Irish law (regulations have 'direct effect'), so organisations involved in data processing of any sort need to be aware the regulation addresses them directly in terms of the obligations it imposes. The GDPR emphasises transparency, security and accountability by data controllers and processors, while at the same time standardising and strengthening the right of European citizens to data privacy.

Raising awareness among organisations and the public of the new law will be a combined effort of the Data Protection Commission (DPC), the Government, practitioners, and industry and professional representative bodies. The DPC has been proactively undertaking a wide range of initiatives to build awareness of the GDPR, in particular providing guidance to help organisations prepare for the new law which is in force as of 25th May 2018.

[General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#)

APPENDIX 2

Risk Assessment & Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS)

Risk Assessment (RS)

This risk assessment considers the potential for harm to come to children whilst they are in (insert Club/Region/NGB)'s care. This risk assessment precedes the Child Safeguarding Statement (Section 11 (1b) Children First Act 2015) which is developed following this risk assessment process. In accordance with the requirements of Section 11 (1) of the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) the risk is of abuse and not general health and safety risk (covered under a separate H&S policy and risk assessment).

Section 11 (1) of the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) states that where a person proposes to operate as a provider of a relevant service, he or she shall, within 3 months from the date on which he or she commences as such a provider –

Undertake an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of the service (in this section referred to as a "risk").

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/Region/National	Further action required ...
CLUB & COACHING PRACTICES				
Lack of coaching qualification	H	- Coach education policy - Recruitment policy		Proof of qualification to be confirmed
Supervision issues		- Supervision policy - Coach education policy		Ongoing review
Unauthorised photography & recording activities		Photography and Use of Images policy		Ongoing review
Behavioural Issues		- Code of Conduct - Safeguarding Level 1 (min) - Complaints & Disciplinary policy		Ongoing review
Lack of gender balance amongst coaches		- Coach education policy - Supervision policy		Ongoing review
No guidance for travelling and away trips		- Travel/Away trip policy - Child Safeguarding Training		Ongoing review
Lack of adherence with misc procedures in Safeguarding policy (i.e. mobile, photography, transport)		- Safeguarding policy - Complaints & disciplinary policy		Ongoing review

COMPLAINTS & DISCIPLINE				
Lack of awareness of a Complaints & Disciplinary policy	H	- Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy - Communications procedure	Club	Immediate action needed Greater communication required
Difficulty in raising an issue by child & or parent Reason: Covered above		- Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy - Communications procedure		Review the communication/ responsibilities of the procedure/ policy as required
Complaints not being dealt with seriously		Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy		Ongoing review

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/Region/National	Further action required ...
REPORTING PROCEDURES				
Lack of knowledge of organisational and statutory reporting procedures	H	- Reporting procedures/ policy - Coach education policy - Code of Conduct/ Behaviour	NGB MP DLP	Make policies and procedures available Include in Safeguarding Training (L1) Include in Coach Education Training
No Mandated Person appointed		Reporting procedures/ policy	NGB	Publicise identity of Mandated Person Train Mandated Person in their role
No DLP Appointed		Reporting procedures/ policy	NGB Club	Train all DLPs Publicise identity of DLPs
Concerns of abuse or harm not reported		- Reporting procedures/ policy - Child Safeguarding Training – Level 1	MP DLP	Include in Safeguarding Training (L1) Publicise names of CCOs, DLPs, MP(s) Publicise internal and external reporting procedures
Not clear who YP should talk to or report to		Post the names of CCOs, DLPs and MP	CCO DLP	Communicate in Club Include in Safeguarding Training (L1)
FACILITIES				
Unauthorised access to designated children's play & practice areas and to changing rooms, showers, toilets etc.	H	- Supervision policy - Coach education	NGB Club	Clarify responsibilities before session starts
Unauthorised exit from children's areas		- Supervision policy - Coach education		Clarify responsibilities before session starts

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/Region/National	Further action required ...
Photography, filming or recording in prohibited areas		Photography policy and use of devices in private zones		Enforce policy in private changing and wet areas
Missing or found child on site		Missing or found child policy		Refer to policy and inform Gardai
Children sharing facilities with adults e.g. dressing room, showers etc.		Safeguarding policy		Plan with facilities management to create a suitable child centred environment in shared facilities

RECRUITMENT

Recruitment of inappropriate people	H	Recruitment policy	NGB Club CCO Appropriate personnel	Ongoing review
Lack of clarity on roles		Recruitment policy	Club	Check job description Put supervision in place
Unqualified or untrained people in role		Recruitment policy	Club	Check qualification Ongoing review

COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Lack of awareness of 'risk of harm' with members and visitors	H	- Child Safeguarding Statement - Training policy	National Club DLP CCO	Communicate Child Safeguarding Statement
No communication of Child Safeguarding Statement or Code of Behaviour to members or visitors		- Child Safeguarding Statement – display - Code of Behaviour - distribute	Club Executive County Committee DLP Children's Officer	Communicate Child Safeguarding Statement Distribute Code or Sections as appropriate
Unauthorised photography & recording of activities		Photography and Use of Images policy		Ongoing review
Inappropriate use of social media and communications by under 18's		- Communications policy - Code of conduct		Ongoing review
Inappropriate use of social media and communications with under 18's		- Communications policy - Code of conduct.		Ongoing review

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/Region/National	Further action required ...
GENERAL RISK OF HARM				
Harm not being recognised		- Safeguarding policy - Child Safeguarding Training		Ongoing review
Harm caused by - child to child - coach to child - volunteer to child - member to child - visitor to child		- Safeguarding policy - Child Safeguarding Training		Ongoing review
General behavioural issues		Code of Conduct		Take disciplinary action where necessary Sign code of conduct

Explanation of terms used:

- **Potential risk of harm to children** – these are identified risks of harm to children whilst accessing activities in the Club/Region/Province/NGB.
- **Likelihood of harm happening** – the likelihood of the risk occurring in the club/region/NGB measured by you as Low/Medium or High.
- **Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document** – indication of the policy required to alleviate the risk.
- **Responsibility** – provider should indicate where the responsibility for alleviating the risk lies.
- **Further action...** - indicates further action that might be necessary to alleviate any risk ongoing.

This Risk Assessment document has been discussed and completed by *(insert Club/Region/NGB as provider)* on __ /__ /2018

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Role: *(insert role on Committee)* _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Role: Club Children's Officer _____

Date: _____

Child Safeguarding Statement Template

Section 1 – NGB / club information

(Insert NGB name) provides various sporting activities and opportunities for young people through participation in clubs, regional/provincial events and through our national teams.

- NGB/Club details:
- Name:
- Sport:
- Location (National/Local level):
- Size (Number of staff/members/clubs):
- Activities

Section 2 – Principles to safeguard children from harm

(Insert name of Club/Region) is committed to safeguarding children and by working under the guidance of our NGB Safeguarding Policies our staff, both volunteers and employed, working with our young people, throughout the organisation, seek to create a safe environment for young people to grow and develop within sport. The following set of principles should be adhered to:

- **Importance of childhood** - The importance of childhood should be understood and valued by everyone involved in sport.
- **Needs of the child** - All children's sport experiences should be guided by what is best for children. This means that adults should have a basic understanding of the emotional, physical and personal needs of young people.
- **Integrity in relationships** - 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 the self-esteem of young people is enhanced.
- **Fair Play** - All children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. The principles of fair play should always be emphasised, and organisers should give clear guidelines regarding acceptable standards of behaviour.
- **Quality atmosphere & ethos** - Children's sport should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere.

- **Competition** - Competition is an essential element of sport and should be encouraged in an age appropriate manner. A child centred ethos will help to ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place.
- **Equality** - All children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, gender, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion.

Section 3 - Risk Assessment

This *(insert name of Club/Region)* written Risk Assessment document indicates the areas of potential risk of harm, the likelihood of the risk occurring, and gives the required policy, guidance or process documents required to alleviate these risks. The list of risks identified and procedures to manage these risks are contained in the following categories:

Risk Identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
Club and Coaching Practices - Lack of coaching qualification. - Supervision issues. - Unauthorised photography & recording activities. - Behavioural Issues. - Lack of gender balance amongst coaches - No guidance for travelling & away trips - Lack of adherence with misc procedures in Safeguarding policy	- Coach education policy/Recruitment policy. - Supervision policy/Coach education policy - Photography & Use of Images policy - Code of Conduct / Safeguarding 1 / Complaints & Disciplinary policy. - Coach education policy/Supervision policy. - Travel/Away trip policy/Child Safeguarding Training. - Safeguarding Policy/Complaints & disciplinary policy
Complaints & Discipline - Lack of awareness of a Complaints & Disciplinary policy. - Difficulty in raising an issue by child & or parent - Complaints not being dealt with seriously	- Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy / Communications procedure. - Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy / Communications procedure. - Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy.
Reporting Procedures - Lack of knowledge of organisational & statutory reporting procedures - No DLP appointed. - Concerns of abuse or harm not reported. - Not clear who YP should talk to or report to.	- Reporting procedures/policy/Coach Education policy/Code of Conduct/Behaviour. - Reporting procedures/policy. - Reporting procedures/policy / Child Safeguarding Training – Level 1 - Post the names of CCO, DLP and Mandated person.
Use of Facilities - Unauthorised access to designated children's play & practice areas & to changing rooms, showers, toilets etc..... - Unauthorised exit from children's areas. - Photography, filming or recording in prohibited areas. - Missing or found child on site. - Children sharing facilities with adults e.g. dressing room, showers etc...	- Supervision policy/Coach Education. - Supervision policy/Coach Education. - Photography policy and use of devices in private zones. - Missing or found child policy. - Safeguarding policy.

Risk Identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
Recruitment • Recruitment of inappropriate people. • Lack of clarity on roles. • Unqualified or untrained people in role.	• Recruitment policy. • Recruitment policy. • Recruitment policy.
Communications • Lack of awareness of 'risk of harm' with members and visitors. • No communication of Child Safeguarding Statement of Code of Behaviour to members of visitors. • Unauthorised photography & recording of activities. • Inappropriate use of social media & communications by under 18's • Inappropriate use of social media & communications with under 18's.	• Child Safeguarding Statement/Training Policy. • Child Safeguarding Statement (display) / Code of Behaviour (distribute). • Photography & Use of Images policy • Communications policy/Code of conduct • Communications policy/Code of conduct
General Risk of Harm • Harm not being recognised. • Harm caused by: - Child to Child. - Coach to Child. - Volunteer to Child. - Member to Child. - Visitor to Child. • General behavioural issues. • Issues of Bullying. • Vetting of staff/volunteers. • Issues of Online Safety	• Safeguarding policy/Child Safeguarding Training. • Safeguarding policy/Child Safeguarding Training. • Code of Conduct. • Anti-Bullying policy. • Recruitment policy/Vetting policy • Social Media/Online Safety policy.

The Risk Assessment was undertaken on (insert date).

Section 4 – Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, (the Children First: National Guidance, and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice (if 32 county insert equivalent in NI)). In addition to our Risk Assessment document described above, there are further procedures that support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our activities.

(Insert name of Club/Region) has the following procedures in place as part of our Safeguarding Policies:

- Procedures for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct by staff or volunteers against a child availing of our activities.
- Procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers to work with children in our activities.
- Procedures for access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
- Procedure for reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Statutory Authorities.
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

Please note that all procedures listed are available on request.

The Mandated/Relevant Person for NGB is *(insert name of MP/RP)*.

Section 5 – Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our NGB/Club is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our activities.

Please note the following:

- That all staff have been furnished with a copy of this statement.
- This statement is available to parents/guardians, the Agency and members of the public on request.
- This statement will be displayed in a prominent place by the NGB/Club.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on *(insert date <24 months)*

Signed: _____

Date: _____

(On behalf of the Club/Region/NGB – this is the Provider)

Name: _____

Phone no:

*For queries on this Child Safeguarding Statement, please contact **(insert the name of the Relevant Person)**.*

Guidance on developing a Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS)

Section 1 – NGB/club information.

In this section you will need to provide details on your NGB / club. These details include the following:

- Name (NGB/club).
- Sport (sport or sports provided by the NGB/club).
- Location (national/local level).
- Size (number of staff/members/clubs).
- Activities

By gathering the above information on your NGB / club it will ensure that key details are captured which will help to complete the CSS i.e. one overarching Child Safeguarding Statement or a number of Child Safeguarding Statement's for different affiliates.

Section 2 - Principles to safeguard children from harm.

In this section the NGB/club should state their commitment to safeguarding children and the principles they operate by. The following is a list of overarching principles that should be taken into account by your NGB/club:

- Importance of childhood.
- Needs of the child.
- Integrity in relationships.
- Fair Play.
- Quality atmosphere & ethos.
- Competition.
- Equality.

Each of the above principles is a key part of safeguarding children and should be closely adhered to by your NGB/club.

Section 3 - Risk Assessment

This section indicates the areas of potential risk of harm, the likelihood of the risk occurring, and gives the required policy, guidance or process documents require to alleviate these risks. The areas of risk listed below are by no means exhaustive but they give an indication of what should be taken into account by your NGB/club:

- Club and Coaching Practices.
- Complaints & Discipline.
- Reporting Procedures.

- Use of Facilities.
- Recruitment.
- Communications.
- General Risk of Harm.

Each risk that has been identified should have a procedure in place to manage that risk. This must be specific to your NGB /club.

Section 4 – Procedures

This section is where the NGB/club states the procedures they have in place to support their intention to safeguard children while they are participating in activities with the NGB/club.

The name and location of the NGB/Club should be provided along with details on each procedure that is in place.

Please note that all procedures that are listed must be made available on request.

The name and contact details of the mandated person/ relevant person for NGB/club (insert name and contact details), should also be stated in this section.

Section 5 – Implementation

This section outlines the implementation phase of the CSS. It should contain details on the how the NGB / club intends to implement the CSS this will include a set of procedures to keep children safe from harm while availing of the NGB/club's activities.

It should be stated in this section that;

- The CSS has been furnished to staff
- Made available to parents/guardians, the Agency and members of the public on request &
- Displayed in a prominent place where services are provided.'

This section should also state the review timeframe for the CSS and should be signed and dated by the relevant person.

In the event of any queries on the CSS, contact details for the relevant person should also be provided.

Further information on developing a Child Safeguarding Statement can be found via the following link: <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/organisations/what-is-a-child-safeguarding-statement/how-do-i-develop-a-child-safeguarding-statement>

- CSS = Child Safeguarding Statement.
- NGB = National Governing Body

APPENDIX 3

Safeguarding Audit Framework

Sport Irelands Safeguarding Audit Framework's main focus will be to assist National Governing Bodies of Sport across Ireland strengthen the way that children and young people are made safer.

The Audit Framework is:

- Focused on safeguarding children.
- Easy to access and simple to understand.
- Designed to support the whole sporting community.
- Configured to reflect the voices of children, young people, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.
- Focused on a more detailed analysis of safeguarding arrangements.
- Compliant with relevant legislation and guidance, including Children First 2015.

Sport Irelands Safeguarding Audit Framework has been developed for use by all sporting organisations that work with children and young people, from grass-roots to the national level. This includes individual sport clubs, National Governing Bodies and Sport Ireland.

Sport Irelands Safeguarding Audit Framework is underpinned by current legislation and the principles set out in this guidance document. It has a fundamental focus on the context of children and young people in sport and the creation of safe spaces where they can be seen, heard and helped.

Sport Ireland will provide leadership, co-ordinate, oversee and ensure the effectiveness of the Safeguarding Audit Framework. Implementing this audit process reflects the priority that Sport Ireland applies to safeguarding children and young people, together with the expectation that National Governing Bodies and their clubs mirror this focus at all levels.

National Governing Bodies are responsible for ensuring that audit process is completed by their member clubs and that any improvement actions arising from this process are implemented. National Governing Bodies will evaluate, quality assure and endorse submissions of their member clubs. On request National Governing Bodies will also provide an analysis of returns from their respective clubs to Sport Ireland.

Individual clubs will be responsible for the timely completion of the safeguarding audit process. Clubs will be responsible for responding to any improvement actions that are identified through the Safeguarding Audit process and co-operating fully with any review that is commissioned in respect of their club.

APPENDIX 4

Safe Recruitment

Safe Recruitment procedures for those working with Children & Young People

Sample Volunteer / Coach Application Form For Those with Access to Children

(All information received in this form will be treated confidentially)

Name: _____

Maiden Name (if applicable): _____

Current Address: _____

Previous Address over the last 5 years: _____

How long have you lived at this address? _____

List any address outside of NI on additional sheet (Northern Ireland)

Place of birth (Town City): _____

Telephone No: _____

Mobile: _____

DOB: _____

PPS Number (ROI only): _____

NI Number (N.I. only): _____

Previous work/voluntary experience & relevant qualifications

Do you agree to abide by the National Governing Body of Sport Code of Conduct (copy included with this form)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation in the past? (if you have answered yes we will contact you in confidence)

Yes ☐ No ☐

Any other relevant information?

Please supply the names of two responsible people whom we can contact and who from personal knowledge are willing to endorse your application. If you have had a previous involvement in a sports club one of these names should be that of an administrator / leader in your last club / place of involvement.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

Position: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

Position: _____

For Official Use Only

Date application received: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Interviewed by:

1. _____

2. _____

References received and are satisfactory:

Yes ☐ No ☐

Comments: _____

Statutory check completed & returned (if appropriate):

Yes ☐ No ☐

Proof of applicants identification received:

Yes ☐ No ☐

Recommendation: _____

Approved Reasons _____

Not Approved Reasons: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Sample Confidential Reference Form

(This form can be used as a telephone reference or used as a written reference)

The following person _____

expressed an interest in working with: (name club/organisation) _____

as (list position) _____

If you are happy to complete this reference, any information will be treated with due confidentiality and in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance. Information will only be shared with the person conducting the assessment of the candidate's suitability for the post, if he/she is offered the position. We appreciate you being extremely candid, open and honest in your evaluation.

1. How long have you known this person? _____

2. In what capacity? _____

3. What attributes does this person have that would make them suited to this work? _____

4. Please rate this person on the following-please tick one box for each statement:

	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Maturity					
Self-motivation					
Can motivate others					
Energy					
Trustworthiness					
Reliability					

This post involves substantial access to young people. As an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of young people, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children and young people.

Yes ☐

No ☐

(If you have answered YES we will contact you in confidence)

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Position in organisation: _____

Name of club/organisation: _____

Sample Application Form for new Junior Members

Contact Information

Name: _____

Gender: _____

Address: _____

Telephone – Home: _____

Telephone – Mobile: _____

E-mail: _____

Date of Birth: _____

**Medical History Information (details of any known
allergies, conditions, medications)** _____

In the event of illness, having parental responsibility, I give permission for medical treatment to be administered where considered necessary by a nominated first aider, or by suitably qualified medical practitioners. If I cannot be contacted and my child needs emergency hospital treatment,

I authorize a qualified medical practitioner to provide emergency treatment or medication.

Other Information:

**Any other additional information requirements or
directions that would be helpful for leaders know about:**

Parental/Guardian Consent

I am the Parent/Guardian of: _____

Photographs

I understand that photographs will be taken during or at sport related events and may be used in the promotion of sport. That they will be stored safely and used for only the agreed purposes. That only authorised persons will take such photographs

Drug Testing (for elite players only)

I give permission for my child(ren) to be tested for prohibited substances in accordance with Sport Irelands Anti Doping Rules (where applicable).

I hereby consent to the above child(ren) participating in activities of the organisation in line with the Sport Ireland's Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People in Sport. I will inform the leaders of my children's activities of any changes to the information above.

I confirm that all details are correct and I am able to give parental consent for my child(ren) to participate in and travel to all activities.

Signature: _____

Signed Name: _____

Sample Existing Leaders Information Form

Leaders should familiarise themselves with the Governing Bodies Code, in particular the Code of conduct. Leaders should read below and agree to abide by these terms. Leaders should update the self-declaration questions annually.

As a leader in (insert name of sport) _____

I agree that I should.

- Be positive during sessions and competitions, praise and encourage effort as well as results.
- Put welfare of young person first, strike a balance between this and winning / results.
- Encourage fair play and treat participants equally.
- Recognise developmental needs, ensuring activities are appropriate for the individual
- Plan and prepare appropriately.
- Have experience relevant to working with young people or hold up-to-date qualifications and be committed to the guidelines in this policy.
- Involve parents where possible and inform parents when problems arise.
- Keep record of attendance at training and competitions.
- Keep a brief record of injury(s) and action taken.
- Keep a brief record of problem/action/outcomes, if behavioural problems arise.
- Report any concerns in accordance with this Code's reporting procedures.

Where possible I will avoid:

- Spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others.
- Taking sessions alone.
- Taking children on journeys alone in the car.

Sports Leaders should not:

- Use any form of punishment or physical force on a child.
- Take children to their home or to a place other than the sport environment where the parent has given consent.
- Exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.

- Engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and/or make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a child. This includes innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures and terms.
- Take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adult.
- Undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children.

Self-Declaration

Do you agree to abide by the guidelines contained in the Children in (insert sport) _____ Code of Conduct?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Do you agree to abide by the rules of the governing body / club?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation?

(If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence)

Yes ☐

No ☐

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution; a Bound Over Order; or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations?

(If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence)

Yes ☐

No ☐

APPENDIX 5

Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding Training Guidance for Sports Organisations

Sport Ireland's remit is to develop and disseminate guidelines and training standards that promote best practice for the protection of children in sport consistent with child welfare and protection guidance and legislation. Sport Ireland's Safeguarding 1, 2 & 3 workshops must be recognised across all sporting organisations.

This guidance can form part of the Safeguarding Statement required by governing bodies under the (ROI) Children First Act 2015 (ROI) Section 11(3) and can be used as part of the training plan required as a good practice in Northern Ireland.

Sample Template

The guidance sets out the accepted workshop for Ireland and Northern Ireland together with any specific requirements for attendance and renewal of certification. A list of roles required by (NGB¹) to attend the workshop appropriate to their role is included at the end of this guidance.

Accepted Workshops – Ireland

Sport Ireland requires all NGB's to ensure all members working with children and young people complete the Sport Ireland Safeguarding workshops.

Basic Safeguarding Workshops

Safeguarding 1 (face to face workshop)

- Validation period: 3 years
- Expected attendees: any person working with or has interaction with or who is involved in the planning/administration of activities or events with young people (according to the requirements of NGB)
- Renewal: Safeguarding 1 certificate may be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding 1 (face to face workshop) or Safeguarding 1 Refresher (e-learning module)

Safeguarding 1 Refresher (e-learning module)

- Prerequisite: Valid Safeguarding 1 (face to face workshop)
- Validation period: NGB recommendation
- Expected attendees: any person having completed Safeguarding 1 (face to face workshop) within the NGB recommendations

- Renewal: Safeguarding 1 Refresher certificate may only be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding 1 (face to face workshop)

Advanced Safeguarding Workshops – Role specific

Safeguarding 2 (Club Children's Officer Workshop)

- Prerequisite: Valid Safeguarding 1
- Validation period: **3 years**
- Expected attendees: any person taking on the role of Club Children's Officer
- Renewal: Safeguarding 2 certificate may only be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding 2 (CCO workshop)

Safeguarding 3 (Designated Liaison Person workshop)

- Prerequisite: Valid Safeguarding 1, Safeguarding 1 Refresher
- Validation period: **3 years**
- Expected attendees: any person taking on the role of Designated Liaison Person
- Renewal: Safeguarding 3 may only be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding 3 (face to face workshop)

Sport Ireland Safeguarding workshops information and booking:

All Sport Ireland Safeguarding workshops are offered through the Local Sports Partnership Network. If you wish to attend a Safeguarding 1, 2 or 3 workshop please contact the Sports Partnership in your area via the following link: www.sportireland.ie/Participation/Local_Sports_Partnerships/LSP_Contact_Finder/

For further information on Sport Ireland's Safeguarding workshops please email: contactus@sportireland.ie or telephone on (01) 860 8800.

Renewing Safeguarding certificates:

- Safeguarding training requires renewal in line with NGB recommendations. Renewal may be achieved by attending any of the above Safeguarding workshops where the prerequisites required are met.
- Roles requiring Safeguarding 2 must be renewed by attending a Safeguarding 2 workshop.
- Roles requiring Safeguarding 3 must be renewed by attending a Safeguarding 3 workshop.

¹ NGB can refer to National Governing Body or other organisation who are providing a service to children and young people.

Accepted Workshops – Northern Ireland

Basic Safeguarding Workshops

Safeguarding Children & Young People in Sport (SCYPS)

Validation period: *NGB recommendation*

Expected attendees: any person working with or has interaction with or who is involved in the planning/administration of activities or events with young people (according to the requirements of the NGB)

Renewal: Safeguarding C&YP certificate may be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding C&YP (face to face workshop) or Safeguarding 1 Refresher (e-learning module) in line with *NGB recommendations*

Safeguarding 1 Refresher (e-learning module)

This is a free on-line course aimed primarily at those who have previously attended a Sport Northern Ireland Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport three hour, face to face workshop or equivalent. Individuals may want to refresh their knowledge or are required to do so by their sport's governing body.

- Validation period: *NGB recommendation*.
- Expected attendees: any person having completed SCYPS workshop within the *NGB recommendations*. *This course can also be beneficial for parents and for all roles with regular responsibility for children this course can be a useful precursor to a face-to-face workshop.*

Advanced Safeguarding Workshops – Role specific Designated Safeguarding Officer Workshop

- Prerequisite: Valid Safeguarding Children & Young People in Sport.
- Validation period: *NGB recommendation*.
- Expected attendees: any person taking on the role of Club Children's Officer.
- Renewal: Designated Safeguarding Children's Officer Workshop may only be renewed by attendance at Designated Safeguarding Children's Officer Workshop.

Typical Roles in (NGB) and required workshops

	Safeguarding 1 or SCYPS ²	Safeguarding 2 or DSCO ³	Safeguarding 3 or DSCO
Coach/Teacher	YES		
Committee	YES		
Sports Leader	YES		
Supervisor	YES		
Staff	YES		
Mentor	YES		
Team manager	YES		
Chaperone	YES		
Mandated Person	YES		YES
DLP	YES		YES
CCO	YES	YES	
Tutor	YES		
Parent	YES		

Sport NI Training

Sport Northern Ireland offer two different levels of safeguarding workshops both of them are 3 hours long:

- Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport
- Designated Safeguarding Children's Officer (DSCO) suitable for those in DLP role.

Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport workshop

During this training, you'll learn:

- to understand the background to safeguarding children in sport.
- to identify best practice procedures to safeguard children in sport.
- to recognise different categories of child abuse.
- to identify the signs of poor practice and/or abuse.
- to respond to poor practice or abuse concerns.
- See below for further information and to [book a Sport NI training course](#).

1 SCYPS = Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport Workshop
2 DSCO = Designated Safeguarding Children Officer Workshop

Designated Safeguarding Children's Officer (DSCO)

The aim of the workshop is to enable participants to become familiar with the role of a Designated Safeguarding Children's Officer and develop their competence and confidence in carrying out this role within sport.

Participants must have attended the Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport workshop prior to attending this training.

During this training, you'll learn to:

- understand your roles and responsibilities.
- reflect on the communication skills needed for your role.
- recognise and respond appropriately to a range of situations that give grounds for concern.

Sport NI workshop information and booking

For further information and to book a place on a Sport Northern Ireland workshop, contact:

Name: Marie-Therese Higgins, Development Assistant

Tel: 028 9038 1222

Email: marietheresehiggins@sportni.net

SAFEGUARDING 3:

To provide training to the Designated Liaison Person who is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to TUSLA Child and Family Agency and/or An Garda Síochána.

- Describe how the child protection system and its associated processes work.
- List the role and responsibilities of the DLP in relation to protecting and safeguarding children.
- Identify the categories and indicators of abuse.
- Communicate with parents and/or agencies as appropriate.
- Carry out reporting procedures.

Sport Ireland Workshops Learning Outcomes

SAFEGUARDING 1:

Sports Leaders will be able to:

- Implement best practice in protecting the welfare of participants.
- Create a child-centred environment within the sports club.
- List categories of abuse and some indicators associated with abuse.
- Make appropriate response to a disclosure.
- Make a report to Designated Liaison Person or appropriate Statutory Authorities.

SAFEGUARDING 2:

- Understanding how to communicating with young people.
- How to deal with safeguarding issues.
- Your reflections on the Club Children's Officer (CCO) role.

APPENDIX 6

Roles, Responsibilities and Relationships in Sport

National Children's Officer (NCO)

Each Governing Body of Sport should appoint a National Children's Officer. The National Children's Officer should be a member of the Executive Committee, or have access to the committee and its accompanying documents, to ensure that children's interests are kept on, and influence the decisions of, the agenda of the Governing Body.

The role of the National Children's Officer involves:

- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Code and relevant child protection legislation (Children First Act 2015 (ROI)/ National Vetting Bureau Act 2012-2016, Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2017).
- Commitment to attendance at appropriate training as required in order to act as a resource to members in relation to children's needs
- Co-ordination of Child Safeguarding training.
- The promotion of the values, attitudes and structures which make sport enjoyable for children
- Circulation of all relevant information and resource materials, on children's sport to clubs and affiliates of the sports organisations
- Communication with Club Children's Officers to ensure the distribution of the Code and the promotion of related education programmes, materials events and governing body related codes
- Liaison with all clubs to examine the rules, regulations and structures to ensure that they are child centred, e.g., equal playing time, appropriate competition structures, modified equipment to allow sense of achievement and success, use of protective gear, bullying policy etc.
- Liaison with clubs, to ensure drop-out rates and transfers are monitored so that unusual developments or trends can be addressed, including transfer of sports leaders
- Assisting in the development of a system of record keeping which maintains confidentiality while allowing for appropriate information to be passed to relevant authorities where necessary
- Ensuring that the Governing Body develops an appropriate sport specific policy, which includes a policy statement, codes of conduct, disciplinary procedures, bullying policy, safety statement, recruitment and selection policy and reporting procedures.

Club Children's Officer (CCO)

The appointment of Club Children's Officers in a sports clubs/ organisations is an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere. They act as a resource with regard to children's issues. In summary Children's Officers should review current policies in relation to young people, check that all activities are safe and fun, and inform adults of how to deal with any concerns that may arise in relation to the protection of children and young people. Club Children's Officers should be child centred in focus and have as the primary aim the establishment of a child centred ethos within the club. S/he is the link between the children and the adults in the club. S/he also takes responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the Club Management Committee on how club policy impacts on young people and Sports Leaders.

The Children's Officer should be a member of or have access to, the Club Management Committee and should be introduced to the young people in an appropriate forum.

The Club Children's Officer should have the following role:

To promote awareness of safeguarding guidelines within the club, among young members and their parents/guardians. This could be achieved by:- the production / distribution of information leaflets, the establishment of children's/age-group specific notice boards, regular information meetings for the young people and their parents/guardians

- To influence policy and practice within the club in order to prioritise children's needs
- Establish contact with the National Children's Officer at governing body level.
- To ensure that children know how to make concerns known to appropriate adults or agencies.
- To encourage the appropriate involvement of parents/guardians in the club activities
- To act as an advisory resource to Sports Leaders on best practice in children's sport
- To report regularly to the Club Management Committee.
- To monitor changes in membership and follow up any unusual dropout, absenteeism or club transfers by children or Sports Leaders
- To ensure that the children have a voice in the running of their club and ensure that there are steps young people can take to express concerns about their sports activities /experiences.
- Establish communication with other branches of the club, e.g. facilitate parent's information sessions at the start of the season
- Keep records on each member on file, including junior members, their contact numbers and any

- special needs of the child that should be known to leaders
- Ensure each member signs an annual membership form that includes signing up to the code of conduct for sports leaders and children and young people.

Ensure that the club rules and regulations include:

- complaints, disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- an anti-bullying policy.
- safety statement.
- rules in relation to traveling with children.
- supervision and recruitment of leaders.

Relevant Person

- For Clubs/organisations that operate in Republic of Ireland they must appoint a Relevant Person. Defined in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) as a person who is appointed by a provider of a relevant service to be the first point of contact in respect of the provider's Child Safeguarding Statement.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Each NGB/Club must appoint a Designated Liaison Person (DLP). This person may or may not also fulfil the role of Children's Officer.

- The DLP is a resource for volunteers/coaches and should ensure that the clubs reporting procedures are followed. The DLP reports any suspected cases of child neglect or abuse to the Duty Social Worker in Child and Family Agency/Túsla or an Garda Síochána/ Gateway team or PSNI.

The DLP should also inform the NCO that a report has been submitted without identifying details

- The DLP should be knowledgeable about child protection and undertake any training considered necessary i.e. Safeguarding 3
- The DLP should familiarise themselves with the statutory and support services within their locality
- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Code and relevant child protection legislation (Children First Act 2015 (ROI)/National Vetting Bureau Act 2012-2016 (ROI) and Cooperating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2017.

Mandated Person

The Mandated person is a person named under schedule 2 of Children First Act 2015 (ROI). They have a legal responsibility

to report concerns or allegations that reach or exceed the threshold of harm of abuse to the Tusla (refer to National Governing Body/Club for list of mandated persons).

Legal Obligations of a Mandated Person:

Mandated persons have two main legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015 (ROI). These are:

- To report the harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla;
- To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

Role of Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland

Sport Ireland and Sport NI will ensure the widest possible dissemination of the safeguarding guidance and ask that this guidance is adopted and implemented by all sports clubs/organisations. This approach is based on the need for All-Island consistency in advice offered to clubs, Sports Leaders, parents/guardians, children, and in particular, National Governing Bodies of Sport who are responsible for the administration of their sports.

Sport Ireland and Sport NI have jointly agreed that a common approach is essential in promoting good practice in children's sport.

This approach is based on the following underpinning principles:

- children's involvement in sport should be an enjoyable experience.
- the safety of children should always be the paramount concern of those adults responsible for providing sporting opportunities at whatever level an individual adult is involved.
- the appropriateness of the experience provided for children should be determined by and based on a child-centred ethos which place the needs and interests of the child as paramount.
- all adults have a responsibility to be aware of child protection as an issue.
- Sports Leaders should be properly recruited and managed and that appropriate training should be made available to them.
- the provision of support by the Councils will be subject to the adoption and implementation of this Safeguarding Code by National Governing Bodies of Sport.

Adult-child relationships involved in sport

The trust implicit in adult-child relationships in sport places a duty of care on all adults, voluntary or professional, to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the child while engaged in their sporting activity. Adults have a crucial leadership role to play in sport. Whether they are parents/carers or Sports Leaders or teachers, they can contribute to the creation of a positive sporting environment for young people. The unique nature of sport allows Sports Leaders to develop positive and special relationships with children. Such relationships have tremendous potential to help children to develop and express themselves in an open and secure way.

Safe recruitment practices and selection of Sports Leaders should be in place, including vetting, seeking references, confirming identity and checking adequacy of qualifications. Effective management of Sports Leaders is also equally central to the promotion of good practice in the club/organisation. This should include support, supervision, and access to training and effective communication between members of the club/organisation.

Adults-child relationships in Sport

Adult-child relationships in Sport should be:

- open, positive and encouraging.
- entered into by choice.
- Meets the need of the child and not the adult.
- defined by a mutually agreed set of goals and commitments.
- respectful of the creativity and autonomy of children.
- carried out in a context where children are protected and where their rights are promoted.
- free from physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect or any threat of such harm.
- respectful of the needs and developmental stage of the child.
- aimed at the promotion of enjoyment and individual progress.
- governed by a code of ethics and good practice in sport that is agreed and adhered to by all members of the sports club/organisation.
- mindful of the fact that some children may be more vulnerable than others.
- mindful of appropriate boundaries.
- mindful of the importance of equality of relationships with children and the potential for favouritism/special treatment.

Child to child relationships

Interaction between children should be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect, equality and non-discrimination and with a spirit of fair play. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, you should consider it a child welfare and protection issue for both children and you should follow safeguarding procedures for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

APPENDIX 7

Reporting and Protection

Responding to Child Abuse:

Regardless of how a concern comes to a coach/volunteer's attention, it must be reported to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP), in consultation with the person who raised the concern, will decide if reasonable grounds for concern exist. If reasonable grounds for concern exist, the Designated Liaison Person will report to a Tusla duty social worker. If as the DLP you decide not to report a concern to Tusla, the following steps should be taken:

- The reasons for not reporting should be recorded.
- Any actions taken as a result of the concern should be recorded.
- The employee or coach/volunteer who raised the concern should be given a clear written explanation of the reasons why the concern is not being reported to Tusla.
- The employee or coach/volunteer should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to make a report to Tusla or An Garda Síochána.

The individual employee or coach/volunteer has protections under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998, should they report independently.

Your organisation/club should have a procedure for recording certain concerns which, following consideration, do not initially meet reasonable grounds for concern. This procedure should identify where such concerns are recorded, who has access to these records and who is responsible for reviewing these records in line with GDPR. Concerns which do not initially meet reasonable grounds for concern may, upon review, show patterns or clusters which may heighten the level of concern.

Recording:

Your organisation/club's child safeguarding procedures should contain guidance on record-keeping.

- Records should be factual and include details of contacts, consultations and any actions taken.
- All agencies dealing with children must cooperate in the sharing of records with the statutory authorities where a child protection or welfare issue arises.
- Ensure that records on child protection concerns, allegations and disclosures are kept securely and safely within the organisation/club.
- Records should only be used for the purpose for which they are intended.
- Records should only be shared on a need to know basis in the best interests of the child/young person.
- Clearly state who within your organisation/club has access to particular types of records.

- State the location where records are stored.
- Indicate how long the organisation will retain these types of records.
- Child protection records should be updated as required and reviewed regularly by the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

Reasonable Grounds for concern:

There are many reasons a coach/volunteer may be concerned about the welfare or protection of a child or young person. Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI) states that "Tusla should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected".

It is important to remember that children/young people are sometimes abused by members of their own family, by peers or by others outside the family environment such as strangers, workers or trusted adults. Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI) lists the following as reasonable grounds for concern:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way.
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse.
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused.
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed.
- An account from a person who saw a child being abused.

Wherever appropriate, any issues should be checked with the parents/carers when considering whether a concern exists, **unless doing so may further endanger the child or the person considering making the report. The DLP should be able to support this process.**

It is important to remember that abuse is not always committed through personal contact with a child or young person, sometimes it is perpetrated through social media or the use of information and communication technology.

Responding to a child/young person who discloses abuse:

A child or young person may disclose to a coach/volunteer that they have been or are being harmed or abused. Children/young people will often have different ways of communicating that they are being abused. If a child or young person hints at or tells a coach/volunteer that he or she is being harmed by someone, be it a parent/carer, another adult or by another child/young person (peer abuse), it should be treated in a sensitive way.

Remember, a child/young person may disclose abuse to you as a trusted adult at any time during your work with them. It is important that you are aware and prepared for this.

- Be as calm and natural as possible.
- Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked.
- Do not panic.
- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for the child/young person.
- Remember, the child or young person may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Listen to what the child/young person has to say. Give them the time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to.
- Do not pressurise the child/young person. Allow him or her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language.
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger or disbelief.
- Accept what the child or young person has to say – false disclosures are very rare.
- It is important to differentiate between the person who carried out the abuse and the act of abuse itself.
- It may be necessary to reassure the child/young person that your feelings towards him or her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what they have disclosed.
- Reassure the child/young person that they have taken the right action in talking to you.

When asking questions:

- Questions should be supportive and for the purpose of clarification only.
- Avoid leading questions, such as asking whether a specific person carried out the abuse.
- You should also avoid asking about intimate details or suggesting that something else may have happened other than what you have been told.

Confidentiality:

It is essential that there is a clear understanding of professional and legal responsibilities with regard to confidentiality and the exchange of information. Your organisation/club child safeguarding procedures should include a statement on confidentiality.

Below are the key points your organisation/club should consider in terms of confidentiality:

- Where child protection and welfare concerns arise, information must be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the best interest of the child/young person with the relevant statutory authorities and with parents/guardians.
- No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. Those working with children/young people and families and in adult services should make this clear to parents/guardians and to the child/young person.
- The proportionate provision of information to the statutory agencies necessary for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.
- Parents/guardians and children/young people have a right to know if personal information is being shared, unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk or may put the reporter at risk.

Reporting concerns about a Child

All organisations/clubs should have procedures in place for reporting any concerns about the welfare or protection of a child that arise. You should make sure the procedures are available and followed by all staff members, volunteers, and individuals undertaking work experience or internships within your organisation.

Procedures for your staff and volunteers on reporting concerns should include:

Seeking advice and guidance: Who to pass the concern to – who the worker/volunteer consults with and reports the concern to internally, i.e. the Designated Liaison Person. (Link needed)

Reasonable grounds for concern: The responsibility of staff and volunteers to report to Tusla using the Report Form (available on the Tusla website: www.tusla.ie) where reasonable grounds for concern exist - <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/individuals-working-with-children-and-young-people/how-do-i-report-a-concern-about-a-child/>

Informal consultation: The process for seeking advice and guidance from the Tusla social work office in the child/young person's area when the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) or coach/volunteer is unsure whether a report should be made.

How to report a concern: Procedures for non-mandated and mandated persons and contact details for the designated liaison person, should be displayed within your organisation/club. It is the DLP's responsibility to complete the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form and to forward it without delay to the Tusla Duty Social Worker by registered post under confidential cover. Reports can also be made on Tusla's secure web portal.

Allegations of abuse by a child: where the person allegedly causing harm to a child is another child (peer abuse), reports should be made to Tusla for both children.

Guidance on dealing with adult disclosures of child abuse: Retrospective Abuse Report form is required when reporting any concerns about retrospective abuse - <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms/>

Immediate risk to a child: The steps to be taken where an immediate risk to a child is believed to exist.

Recording: Guidance on how the details of the concern and the actions taken are to be recorded. [link](#)

Talking to parents/carers: The process for discussing a concern with parents/carers before reporting and the circumstances in which this is not advised, as it may further endanger the child or the person making the report. You do not need to inform the family that a report is being made, if by doing so the child will be placed at further risk or in cases where the family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out an assessment. Also, it is not necessary to inform the family if the person making the report reasonably believes it may place them at risk of harm from the family.

Cases not reported to Tusla: The process for recording both the reasons for the decision and any actions taken.

Information for mandated persons: If your organisation employs mandated persons, your reporting procedure should state clearly that mandated persons must report concerns of harm above a particular threshold under the Children First Act 2015. Refer them to chapter 3 of Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI). It should also specify (a) whether persons are expected to make their mandated report jointly with the designated liaison person and (b) whether mandated persons must provide a copy of their mandated report to their employer.

Responsibilities of a Mandated Person – your organisation/club need to establish whether you have any Mandated persons as prescribed under the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) schedule 2. These Mandated persons should be made aware of their responsibilities to report child protection and welfare concerns that reach or exceed the threshold for 'harm' as defined in the Act.

A Mandated Person has a statutory obligation to report mandated concerns to Tusla, they cannot discharge this duty to the DLP. However they may make a report jointly with another person, whether the other person is a mandated person or not. In effect, this means that a mandated person can make a joint report with a designated liaison person.

All records and copies of child protection and welfare concerns should be held securely by the DLP.

Reporting to Statutory Authorities:

You should always inform Tusla if you have reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. You can find details of who to contact to discuss your concern on the Tusla website.

If your concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but you feel it is a reasonable concern about the welfare or protection of a child, you should report it to Tusla under Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI).

Procedure for the management of allegation of abuse against a coach or volunteer.

Each organisation/club should have agreed procedures to be followed in cases of alleged child abuse against a coach/volunteer. If such an allegation is made, three steps should be taken:

- Responding to allegations of abuse made against a coaches/volunteers.
- Reporting allegations of abuse made against coaches/volunteers to Tusla.
- Internal procedures for dealing with the coach/volunteer should to be clearly outlined.

Responding to allegations of abuse made against coaches/volunteer.

An allegation of abuse may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- Behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child/young person;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence in relation to a child/young person;
- Behaved towards a child/young person or children/young people in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child/young person;
- Behaved in a way that is contrary to the club/sports organisation code of behaviour for coaches & volunteers;
- Behaved in a way that is contrary to professional practice guidelines.

If an allegation is made against a coach/volunteer in your organisation/club you must ensure that everyone involved is dealt with appropriately and in accordance with the organisation/club guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures, the rules of natural justice and any relevant employment law. The organisation/club has a dual responsibility in respect of both the child/young person and the coach/volunteer. There are two separate procedures to be followed:

- The reporting procedure to Tusla in respect of the child/young person and the alleged abuser;
- The internal personnel procedure for dealing with a coach/volunteer.

Each club/sports organisation should have agreed procedures to be followed in cases of alleged child abuse against Sports Leaders. If such an allegation is made, two steps should be taken:

- The reporting procedure.
- The procedure for dealing with the Sports Leader.

Special Considerations

The following points should be considered:

- the safety of the child making the allegation and any others who are/may be at risk should be ensured and this should take precedence over any other consideration. In this regard, the sports club/organisation should take any necessary steps which may be immediately necessary to protect children
- if a Sports Leader is the subject of the concern s/he should be treated with respect and fairness.

Steps to be taken within the Sports Organisation

Where reasonable grounds for concern exist the following steps should be taken by the club/organisation:

- advice should be sought from the local duty social worker with regard to any action by the club deemed necessary to protect the child/children who may be at risk.
- the matter should be reported to the local statutory authorities following the standard reporting procedure outlined above
- in the event that the concern is connected to the actions of a Sports Leader in the club, the Sports Leader involved in the concern should be asked to stand aside pending the outcome of any investigation by the Statutory Authorities.
- It is advisable that this task be undertaken by a senior office holder other than the designated liaison person/club children's officer who takes the responsibility for reporting.

When the Sports Leader is being privately informed by the senior officer of a) the fact that an allegation has been made against him/her and b) the nature of the allegation, s/he should be afforded an opportunity to respond. His/her response should be noted and passed on to the statutory authorities.

All persons involved in a child protection process (the child, his/her parents/carers, the alleged offender, his/her family, Sports Leaders) should be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure.

Once the criminal process is completed, employers should consider the need to examine whether there are grounds for disciplinary proceedings for misconduct. The fact that the alleged abuser has not been prosecuted or has been found not guilty does not mean that such proceedings are not necessary or feasible.

Internal procedures for dealing with a coach/volunteer should be clearly outlined

In the context of an allegation of abuse against a coach/volunteer, the organisation/club disciplinary procedures should ensure that fair procedure is followed and take account of the employment contract/membership guidelines as well as the rules of natural justice. The following points should be incorporated into the procedure:

- In making an immediate decision about the coach/volunteer's presence in the organisation/club, the Chairperson should as a matter of urgency take any measures necessary to protect the child/young person. These should be proportionate to the level of risk to the child/young person; 'protective measures' do not presume guilt.
- The Chairperson should privately inform the coach/volunteer that an allegation has been made against him or her and the nature of the allegation.
- The coach/volunteer should be afforded an opportunity to respond.
- The Chairperson should note the response from the coach/volunteer and pass on this information if making a formal report to Tusla.
- The coach/volunteer should be offered the option to have representation at this stage and should be informed that any response may be shared with Tusla.
- While Tusla will not provide advice on employment matters, advice and consultation with regard to risk to children/young people can be sought from the local Tusla social work office.

- The Chairperson should ensure that actions taken by the organisation/club do not undermine any investigations or assessments undertaken by Tusla or An Garda Síochána. The organisation/club should liaise closely with the investigating bodies to ensure this.

Once the statutory process is completed, the organisation/club should consider the need to examine whether there are grounds for disciplinary proceedings for misconduct. The fact that the alleged abuser has not been prosecuted or has been found not guilty does not mean that such proceedings are not necessary or feasible

Categories of Abuse:

Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI) defines four categories of abuse: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child/young person may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time.

When working with children/young people it is important to be aware of the four categories of abuse these are as follows:

Neglect:

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences.

Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety.

Emotional Abuse:

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver.

Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health and/or development is, may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

Physical abuse can include the following:

- Physical punishment.
- Beating Slapping, hitting or kicking.
- Pushing Shaking or throwing.
- Pinching Biting, choking or hair-pulling.
- Use of excessive force in handling.
- Deliberate poisoning.
- Suffocation.
- Fabricated/induced illness.
- Female genital mutilation.

Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography.

NB: If you require further information on any of the categories of abuse listed above please consult Children First Guidance directly via the following link: https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf

Signs of Abuse:

If you are dealing with children, you need to be alert to the possibility that a welfare or protection concern may arise in relation to children you come in contact with. A child needs to have someone they can trust in order to feel able to disclose abuse they may be experiencing. They need to know that they will be believed and will get the help they need. Without these things, they may be vulnerable to continuing abuse.

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. Also, there may be particular times or circumstances when a child may be more vulnerable to abuse in their lives. In particular, children with disabilities, children with communication difficulties, children in care or living away from home, or children with a parent or parents with problems in their own lives may be more susceptible to harm.

The following list is intended to help your organisation/club identify the range of issues in a child's life that may place them at greater risk of abuse or neglect. It is important for you to remember that the presence of any of these factors does not necessarily mean that a child in those circumstances or settings is being abused.

Parent/Carer Factors:

- Drug and alcohol misuse.
- Addiction, including gambling.
- Mental health issues.
- Parental disability issues, including learning or intellectual disability.
- Conflictual relationships.
- Domestic violence.
- Adolescent parents.

Child Factors:

- Age.
- Gender.
- Sexuality.
- Disability.
- Mental health issues, including self-harm and suicide.
- Communication difficulties.
- Trafficked/Exploited.
- Previous abuse.
- Young carer.

Community Factors:

Cultural, ethnic, religious or faith-based norms in the family or community which may not meet the standards of child welfare or protection required in this jurisdiction.

Culture-specific practices, including:

- Female genital mutilation.
- Forced marriage.
- Honour-based violence.
- Radicalisation.

Environmental factors:

- Housing issues.
- Children who are out of home and not living with their parents, whether temporarily or permanently.
- Poverty/Begging.
- Bullying.
- Internet and social media-related concerns

Poor motivation or willingness of parents/guardians to engage:

- Non-attendance at appointments.
- Lack of insight or understanding of how the child is being affected.
- Lack of understanding about what needs to happen to bring about change.
- Avoidance of contact and reluctance to work with services.
- Inability or unwillingness to comply with agreed plans.

You should consider these factors as part of being alert to the possibility that a child may be at risk of suffering abuse and in bringing reasonable concerns to the attention of Tusla

Statutory Contacts Republic of Ireland & Northern Ireland

TUSLA-Child & Family Agency

If in the Republic of Ireland and you have any concerns about a child you should report it to the Child & Family Agency please see website for contact details <http://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker/>

Any query or concern in relation to children out of hours should be reported immediately to An Garda Síochána

Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts

Each trust will have a Gateway team to deal with reports of abuse and also more local contacts for ongoing professional liaison for advice on concerns.

Regional Emergency Social Work service. Available 5.00 PM – 9.00 AM Monday to Thursday and 5.00 PM on Friday to 9.00 AM on Monday. There is a 24 hour cover over public holidays. Tel: 028 9504 9999

9.00 - 5.00 Gateway Numbers

Northern HSC Trust	Tel: 03001234333
South Eastern HSC Trust	Tel: 03001000300
Southern HSC Trust	Tel: 08007837745
Belfast HSC Trust	Tel: 028 90 507000
Western HSC Trust	Tel: 028 71314090

APPENDIX 8

Disciplinary, Complaints & Appeals of Code of Behaviour Breaches

Each organisation/club should ensure that it has adequate disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures in place. It is important to note that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the Statutory Authorities and should not be undertaken by Club Children's Officers/ Designated Liaison Person's or other organisation/club Sports Leaders. The standard reporting procedure outlined in the Statutory Authorities guidelines should be followed by each sports club/organisation and adhered to by its members.

Recommended Procedures

A quality sports organisation/club will operate on the basis of good practice to include a complaints/appeals procedures similar to the following:

- A code of conduct reflecting a child centred ethos should be drawn-up, widely disseminated and returned from and applied to all Sports Leaders and members.
- Each organisation/club, on receiving a complaint, should appoint a disciplinary committee to resolve problems relating to the conduct of its members. This should include bullying.

The complaint should be in writing to the secretary or Club Children's Officer and should be responded to within 5 working days.

- The committee should consist of a representative from the Management Committee, the Club Children's Officer and ordinary registered members of the club.
- If the complaint involves suspected abuse or a criminal offence the children's officer/designated person should be consulted and the disciplinary committee disbanded. The statutory authorities will then be informed.
- The disciplinary committee should review any relevant paper work and hold any necessary meetings with all parties to proceed with complaints into any incident of suspected misconduct that does not relate to child abuse. It should, as soon as possible, inform the Management Committee of the progress of the disciplinary process. This should be done within 10 working days.
- The disciplinary committee should furnish the individual with the nature of the complaint being made against him/her and afford him/her the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing, but usually at a meeting with the disciplinary committee.
- Written confidential records of all complaints should be safely and confidentially kept and club procedures should be defined for the possession of such records in the event of election of new officers.
- Where it is established that an incident of misconduct has taken place, the disciplinary committee should notify the member of any sanction being imposed. The notification

should be made in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction. If the member is under 18 years of age, correspondence should be addressed to the parents/ carers.

- If the member against whom the complaint was made is unhappy with the decision of the disciplinary committee s/he should have the right to appeal the decision to an appeals committee (independent of a disciplinary committee). Any appeal should be made in writing within an agreed period after issue, usually 10 days of the decision of the disciplinary committee. The chairperson of the appeals committee should be a member of the Management Committee. The appeals committee should consult with the Club Children's Officer in relation to issues of child welfare and codes of conduct.
- The appeals committee should have the power to confirm, set aside or change any sanction imposed by the disciplinary committee.
- If any party is not satisfied with the outcome the matter can be referred to the Governing Body.

However efforts to resolve the issue at local level should be exhausted before the National Governing Body is engaged in attempts to resolve the matter.

Best Practice Guidance

Overnight, Staying Away & Hosting

Being a host family or being hosted is an integral part of many sports and, if handled appropriately, can add to a child's enjoyment and experience at a competition. Hosting can be a challenging role but also very rewarding. Special care should be taken in the selection of homes for overnight stays. A host should be provided with as much information about the child/children staying with them and details of the competition. Where practicable more than one child should be placed with each host family. The family in turn should agree to provide references and be vetted when and if this is available. In addition clubs should follow the recruitment and selection that is also outlined in this code.

When arranging for events/trips abroad, the club or National Governing Body will be dependent on the ability of the host organisation to access vetting services and obtain appropriate references. It is the responsibility of the trip organiser to provide the hosts with the relevant information on the child and details of what is expected.

Host families should:

- Agree to abide by the National Governing Bodies Code of Conduct.
- Consent to appropriate checks and references.
- Attend host family meetings before competitions or events.
- Provide a safe and supportive environment for young people.

National Governing Bodies/Clubs should:

- Provide a travel pack to hosting families.
- Check out references with hosting families.
- Provide an itinerary of the trip.
- Gather information on destination and venue.

Young People:

- Should sign a behaviour agreement.
- Should not be asked to share a bed or a room with an adult.
- Should be happy with the arrangements.
- Should show respect to the host families.

Supervision, Ratios & Environment

Ensure adequate Adult/Child Ratios:

Good practice dictates that a leader should try to ensure that more than one adult is present. This will help to ensure the safety of the children as well as protect adults.

Adult/Child Ratios:

- Will depend on the nature of the activity, the age of the participants and any special needs of the group, a general guide might be 1:8 for under 12 years of age and 1:10 for over 12 years of age.
- There should be at least one adult of each gender with mixed parties.

Environment:

- Away trips will need higher rates of supervision and these should be checked out with the governing body or organiser, children and young people should be supervised at all times.
- Avoid adults being left alone with young participants, if a leader needs to talk separately to a participant this should be done in an open environment, in view of others.
- Respect the privacy of young people while changing, leaders may only need to enter changing rooms where the participants are very young or require special assistance.
- When necessary, leaders should supervise in pairs or seek assistance, it is the safety and welfare of the participants that is of paramount importance.
- Leaders should not be left alone with young people at the end of a training session. Clearly state times for start and finish of training and/or competitions.
- If late collections occur leaders should remain in pairs until participants have left.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make arrangements for collection of young people, it should be made clear that the club is responsible for only club activities.
- If a child suffers an injury or accident the parents/guardians should be informed.

Registration, Dropout & Club Transfers

Loss of club members, including adult transfers, should be monitored. Any unusual or unexpected dropout or club transfer of children or Sports Leaders should be checked out by the Club Children's Officer and/or the governing body. If any concerns regarding a child or children's welfare are raised the matter should be handled in accordance with procedures outlined in this Code.

Accidents & Incidents Template Reporting Form

Name: _____

Name of Organisation / Club: _____

Role: _____

Contact Information (you):

Address: _____

Eircode: _____

Telephone numbers: _____

Email address: _____

Child's Name: _____

Child's DOB: _____

Is there any additional, relevant information to add? _____

If yes please state _____

Child's Gender: _____

Parent's / carer's name(s): _____

Contact Information (parents/carers):

Address: _____

Eircode: _____

Telephone numbers: _____

Email address: _____

Have parent's / carer's been notified of this accident / incident?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If YES please provide details of what was said/action agreed:

Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else:

Responding to my own concerns ☐

Responding to concerns raised by someone else ☐

If responding to concerns raised by someone else:
Please provide further information below

Name: _____

Position within the sport or relationship to the child: _____

Telephone numbers: _____

Email address: _____

Date and times of accident / incident: _____

Details of the accident / incident or concerns: _____

Include other relevant information, such as description of any injuries and whether you are recording this accident / incident as fact, opinion or hearsay.

Child's account of the accident / incident: _____

Please provide any witness accounts of the accident /

incident: _____

Please provide details of any witnesses to the accident / incident:

Name: _____

Position within the club or relationship to the child: _____

Date of birth (if child): _____

Address: _____

Eircode: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Please provide details of any person involved in this accident/incident or alleged to have caused the accident / incident / injury:

Name: _____

Position within the club or relationship to the child: _____

Date of birth (if child): _____

Address: _____

Eircode: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Please provide details of action taken to date:

Has the incident been reported to any external agencies?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If YES please provide further details:

Name of organisation / agency: _____

Contact person: _____

Telephone numbers: _____

Email address: _____

Agreed action or advice given _____

Your Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print name: _____

Contact your organisation's Designated Safeguarding Officer in line with (insert your organisation / club name) reporting procedures.

Transport and Travel

Transporting Young People

Many organisations/clubs could not operate without the goodwill of volunteers and parents ensuring that children are transported to events and returned home in a private car. Sport Ireland and Sport NI do not state that coaches/volunteers can never transport a young person by themselves, however they recommend individuals and organisations recognise the risks and put in place appropriate measures to reduce these risks.

For further information on transport guidelines in relation to safeguarding please contact your sport's governing body or visit (link to <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2013/guidelines-on-transporting-a-child-or-young-person-in-your-car/>)

The risks

The vast majority of coaches and volunteers will help out through a genuine desire to see children or their particular sport develop. Unfortunately we must face the reality that a small minority of people will join a sports club as an opportunity to gain access to children. These adults create an air of acceptability about their role, therefore justifying their close contact with children.

Although those who want to abuse children may find it more difficult to do so in a group setting, such as a leisure centre or sports pitch, they can use this time to gain the trust of not only the young person but also other adults, including parents/carers. This is known as 'grooming' or 'entrapment'. Developing credibility is an essential part of any abusers 'grooming process.' An abuser will "groom" the environment i.e. creating a justifiable reason for getting the child alone.

Easy rules to remember when a club are organising transport

- It is good practice to receive informed consent from parents and young people who will be transporting their child, why and how long the journey will take.
- Attempt to have more than one child in the car.
- Alternate drivers if possible and which child is dropped off last.
- Driver should have a point of contact/mobile phone.
- A person other than the planned driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans.
- The driver must ensure that they have insurance to carry others.

- Drivers representing and volunteering on behalf of a club should be vetted through National Vetting Bureau/Access NI if driving regularly, and therefore meeting the regulated activity criteria.
- Consider the need for booster seats.
- Parents and coaches can also download Sport Irelands SafeSport App @ https://www.sportireland.ie/Participation/Code_of_Ethics/Code-Of-Ethics-App. One of the features of the App is a 'Travel Tracker' function. This allows parents and coaches who are driving someone else's child/children home, for example after a training session, to permit the child's parent or guardian to view and have oversight of their location for a specified period of time while they are travelling on a journey.

Personal arrangements between parents

If parents make personal arrangements between themselves this is not the responsibility of the club unless there are particular concerns about a parent's ability to drive for example due to the consumption of alcohol.

The use of booster seats

From 2006, the law in Europe requires all children in cars, vans and other goods vehicles to be carried using an appropriate child restraint until either they have reached the age of 12 years or are 150 cm (5' in Republic of Ireland) and 135 cms (4' 5" in Northern Ireland) or whichever comes first with very few exceptions. The European law allowed countries to opt for a minimum height of between 135 and 150 cm. For more information visit;

[Republic of Ireland: http://www.rsa.ie/en/RSA/Your-Vehicle/About-your-Vehicle/Example-of-non-Dup/Seat-belts--child-restraints/](http://www.rsa.ie/en/RSA/Your-Vehicle/About-your-Vehicle/Example-of-non-Dup/Seat-belts--child-restraints/)

[Northern Ireland: http://www.childcarseats.org.uk/the-law/](http://www.childcarseats.org.uk/the-law/)

Incidents of racism shall be challenged and dealt with in accordance with the Filming & Photography

The Filming and Photography guidance provides assistance for organisation/club members on taking and using appropriate images. This guidance is not about preventing parents/guardians and supporters from taking pictures, but rather to ensure that only those who have a right to take photographs do so. This guidance is designed to promote safeguards for any photographic or filming/video activity to minimise the risk of inappropriate taking and use of images.

Definitions:

- Event: may include competition, training session, social function or any activity organised at any level of (*Enter Name of Sport*).
- Image: refers to all photographic and film/video footage.
- Responsible person: may include the children's officer, head coach, event manager, event controller or facility manager at an event.
- Young people: refers to all people U18; whilst this guidance is designed to minimise risk to U18's this guidance should be used to minimise risks for all athletes of any age.

Permission to take images

Permission is sought by the sports organisation/club to ensure that young people and parents/carers are aware of when and how their images may be used. Permission can be obtained through:

- Individual permission where permission is sought for a single or specific event and has not been sought generally through membership/competition entry/other contract means.
- General permission granted through completion of membership/competition entry/other contract where permission is included as part of the form.

For third party photographers, film/videographers or other organisations employed to take images each person must complete the Self-Declaration Form. For any other person wishing to use photographic devices at events they must first register their device with the organiser. Each person registering a device will be required to produce photographic identification as proof of identity.

Announcement at events regarding taking and the use of images

The sports organisation/club should ensure the following announcement is read out at the start and during an event to ensure everyone is clearly aware of the need to register:

"All persons wishing to take photographs or film footage at this event must first register their device(s) with (name of organiser). Please note photographic identification will be required as proof of identity."

If a company/person has been authorised by completing the Self-Declaration Form the following should be included in the announcement:

(Company Name) has been authorised to take photographs of individuals in accordance with sports club/organisation policy."

Taking images in certain environments

Sports organisation/club members and third party photographers, film/videographers or other organisations shall ensure that images are not taken in such environments considered inappropriate irrespective of any permission sought. In certain cases it may be an offence to take such images.

Taking images using any type of equipment is banned in an area where people are changing or would normally expect their privacy to be recognised. Examples of such areas would include:

- Changing rooms.
- Open changing areas such as 'villages'
- individual changing/private cubicles provided for personal use.
- Toilets.
- Medical/physio treatment rooms.

Flash photography is prohibited in an environment where any performance may be affected or there is the potential for its use to cause harm to the young person.

Types of appropriate images

Only appropriate images of children should be used, for example:

- Posed images such as during medal ceremonies, presentations or team shots where young people must be wearing t-shirt and shorts/tracksuits.
- Action shots of young people where the focus is on the participation in the sport, not the athlete.

Images of children should not be taken where the pose is inappropriate e.g. open legs; bending over from behind, etc.

Safe use of images

Images can be taken for a variety of purposes, including for administration or personal use, publicising the sport or aiding skill development. Anyone taking images should be aware of action poses that may be inappropriate; these are not suitable for use/publication.

Types of images and appropriate use:

- Personal images – images taken by parents/guardians or other family members during an event as a celebration of a young person's attendance or achievement. This includes the use of a professional photographer, with permission, taking images for the personal use of those attending. Other people may be included in an image and we expect parents/guardians and other family members to respect this by not distributing images publically.

- Training images – these are images or footage taken during a training sessions or during an event specifically to aid the young person in the development of a skill or technique. These images should be taken by a qualified coach or a person specifically appointed by the young persons coach. These images may be used as examples of technique or mastery of a skill for teaching/coaching purposes and should not be distributed outside this specific use.
- Media images – these are images taken by an individual from the media, i.e. TV, newspaper, social media or professional photographer where the images are to be used for publicity or promotion of the event or future events.
- Administration images – these are images taken for general administration purposes; including images used for membership cards, competition entries and could also include images that form part of an archive record.

Use of images on social media

Where images of young people are used on social media the person responsible for posting an image must be aware of the potential for an image to be used inappropriately. The following safeguards must be in place to protect young people:

- Personal details of a young person should not be included.
- Captions should be in keeping with the sport represented.
- The posting and any purpose should not breach the codes of conduct.
- The type of image should not breach guidance in this policy.

Storage of Images

Storage includes any image stored as a hard copy and/or electronically as a soft copy. This includes images on social media, photographic archives, individual personal databases e.g. personal cameras, phones, etc. How personal images are stored is the responsibility of parents/guardians with their child/young person.

All other images should only be stored for defined and intended purposes e.g. membership, promotion, and/or archiving.

- If storage of images is required the images must only be stored for the length of time for which they are needed
- If possible, avoid using the names of children, or any other identifying feature

Once images are no longer required they must be properly destroyed. Digital images stored on computer systems need to be fully deleted, including deletion from the cache memory and/or temporary files.

Inappropriate Images

Taking inappropriate images

If there is any concern about the nature of any image taken this should be reported to the responsible person (in the club or event/activity) who will refer to the statutory authorities. The concerned individual may also report their concern directly to the statutory authorities. The contact details for the statutory authority can be found in the sports clubs/organisations *Safeguarding Policies and Procedures*.

Non-authorised taking of images

If you are concerned about an individual taking images at an event this should be verbally reported to the relevant responsible person. It may be necessary to report the non-authorised taking of images to the appropriate statutory authorities.

The responsible person will identify the person and check if their device is registered for the event. If not registered, the person must be asked to register their device, with appropriate identification. If the person is not willing to register their device they should be asked to leave.

Where the event is open to the public e.g. where only part of the facility is being used, it will be necessary to report non-authorised taking of images to the facility manager.

Inappropriate use of images

Where there is a concern about the use of images this should be reported to the responsible person who will take appropriate action. This will include reporting the alleged use to:

- The parent/carer of any young person involved.
- The person responsible for posting the image.
- The media platform i.e. twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, print media etc.
- The statutory authorities.

Inappropriate use of images is a breach of this guidance and the code of conduct and may result in a complaint/disciplinary procedure against those involved in (Enter Name of Sport). Where there is a concern about the publication of an image in local or national newspapers you should contact the individual newspaper or the Press Council of Ireland and the Office of the Press Ombudsman – website <http://www.presscouncil.ie/>

Installation and use of CCTV (Closed Circuit Television)

The use of CCTV is a positive step in safeguarding those that use facilities. It is important that clubs using a facility are aware of blind spots (potential risk areas), who has access, the use of images and the facility procedure for dealing with incidents or misbehaviour. The information regarding the presence of CCTV within a facility should be available to members and/or parents/guardians.

A club should have a copy of the facility's policy regarding the use of CCTV, usually as part of a club/facility agreement. Queries regarding the use of CCTV are a matter for the facility or the operating company. Any queries from members should be directed through the club as the club has the agreement with the facility.

The following information should be noted:

- Who in the facility has day to day responsibility for the system and operation of the CCTV.
- The number of cameras located in the specified areas.
- Are spectator areas covered (i.e. can someone misbehaving in this area or regularly turning up for less than innocent viewing purposes be monitored).
- Identify areas of the facility that cannot be monitored – if these areas are easily identified by anyone with intent it would be important to know in order to be extra vigilant.
- Who, during sessions, is responsible for monitoring the cameras and what is the policy for dealing with any perceived misconduct or incidents viewed at the time.
- Who has access to the password protected files.

CCTV does not replace vigilance and proper supervision for training sessions and activities as required by (*Organisation Name*).

Social Media

In all their contacts and communications with the members of their organisation/group, leaders must be seen to be open and transparent. This is the case whether communications are by traditional means or by electronic means.

NB: Leaders must not communicate with children or young people via leader's personal social networking profiles, email accounts, or chat rooms.

For an Organisation/Club Using/Publishing a Social Networking the following principles should be applied:

- The page/profile must be password-protected, and the password must be held by at least three leaders of the organisation.

- The site should be monitored by a designated supervisor. This person should have access to the login details of the site. This supervisor will be appointed by the Designated Person/Safeguarding Panel in Charge of Child Protection.
- Any inappropriate posts by children/young people or leaders should be removed by the designated supervisor. Reasons should then be explained to the person who posted the content. Where possible sites should be monitored before content is put up.
- The site should be kept 'Private' i.e. only permitted members or 'friends' can see what is posted on the site.
- The use of personal addresses and telephone numbers etc., should be avoided as, while sites are 'private', there is the potential for items to be copied and shared.
- Content of any postings should be consistent with the aims of the organisation. In cases of doubt leaders should seek advice.

For Leaders Using a Social Networking Site

- Leaders should not 'friend' or 'follow' children or young people on social media. (Children or young people may 'follow' leaders on social media so leaders should make sure any content they post is appropriate.)
- Messages left to or from children or young people on social network sites should be written on an open page (e.g. A facebook 'Wall') and not in a private message or by using 'chat' [one-on-one].
- Leaders should not network with members of their organisation/group via closed [one-on-one] chats e.g. facebook messenger, WhatsApp, etc.,. This should be done only through 'Group Chat.'
- Any events or activities run by the organisation that are organised or publicised on the site should be a closed event so as non-members cannot access the event without suitable permission by the site administrators.
- Any emails sent to children or young people via the site must be sent to at least one other leader. (This can be done by 'bcc' if necessary.)
- Leaders should avoid communicating with children or young people in their organisation/group via email late at night.
- In signing off a post or email leaders should not do so in a way that could be misconstrued or misinterpreted by the recipient, e.g. "Luv X"; "xoxoxo". Simply sign your name.
- Parents/carers should be asked to give their approval for leaders to communicate with their children/young people via social networking sites, or by any other means of internet communications (e.g. email).

- Parental and child's permission is required before pictures of videos of children or young people are posted online.
- Any disclosures of abuses reported through a social networking site must be dealt with according to your reporting procedures.

Use of Mobile Phones

Those whose work with children and young people need to be aware of the opportunities for abuse through the misuse of mobile phones and text messaging. While good use of such media can be beneficial we must be vigilant and alert to the possibilities of misuse and consequent harm that can result to young people. Leaders must also take care to protect the children in their care and themselves.

- Leaders involved in sport should only have children's and young people's mobile numbers if the nature of their involvement requires them to phone or text them
- Parental permission should be sought if the leader in this role will be contacting children or young people via mobile phone.
- A method of accountability should be arranged e.g. copies of texts could also be sent to the administrator or to parents.
- If a leader had a child/young person's phone number it should only be used for the purposes it has been given, i.e., the leader should not share this information.
- It is recommended that if a leader is an employee of your organisation/club should have a separate phone for work purposes rather than using their personal phone for contacting children and young people.

Texting – Communication not Conversation!

- Texts should be used for the purposes of reminding children or young people about events which are forthcoming.
- Texts can also be used as a means to encourage children or young people if it is appropriate it, e.g., 'Hope exam goes ok.'
- If it turns into a conversation, communications should be ended. A leader can suggest discussing the subject further at the next event or, if they are concerned about the child/young person, arrange to meet up to talk further (within the usual child protection parameters).

Smart Phones

Smart phones should be used safely and responsibly.

Pictures can be very powerful and stir up strong emotions. Smart phone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people if it could invade their privacy.

Leaders and children/young people should not send pictures that are obscene, indecent, or menacing and should be sensitive about other people's gender identity, sexual identity, racial heritage, religion, or personal background. Both leaders and children/young people should be made aware that it is a criminal offence to take, make, and permit to be taken, distribute, show, or possess an indecent or sexually explicit image of a child under 18.

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity the leader in charge should ensure they are clear about expectations of them in relation to child protection. Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an activity should seek accreditation from leaders by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded. The leader should then:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- Issue the photographer with identification which should be worn at all times.
- Keep a record of accreditations.
- Inform leaders, children/young people, and parents, that a photographer will be in attendance is at the activity and check that they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- Not allow unsupervised access to children/young people or one-to-one photo sessions.
- Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the activity or at a child/young person's home.
- Anyone concerned about any photography taking place should discuss his or her concerns with the children's officer.

Smart phones can be used to make children/young people safer. Older children, for example, using a taxi can send a picture of the car's registration to a friend before they begin the trip, or can simply use the phone to show parents where they are.

- Children/young people can only be photographed when permission has been provided in writing from their parent/guardian and child.
- The scope of the use of photographs must also be stated as part of the parental permission.

- Children/young people should not be named individually in photographs unless necessary and with clear agreement and consent of parents and child, for example, if the child/young person concerned was winning a prize worthy of publication.
- When posting photographs on social media settings should be such that children/young people cannot be individually tagged.
- All photographs must be stored in a secure place either electronically in a password protected file or physically in a locked cabinet.
- If any electronic device/memory which contains photographs is disposed of or passed on, then the device must be wiped of all photographs in such a way that they cannot be recovered on that device.

Use of Mobile phones during activities

Groups should, with parents and children/young people, develop a policy on the use of mobile phones during youth activities. This policy should be communicated to all parents and youth members. This guidance could include:

- Confirmation that when on activities a named leader is the primary point of communication and is to be contacted if there is an emergency or change to previously agreed arrangements.
- That the usage of smart phones including text messaging or playing games cannot be allowed to be a distraction from a safe awareness of the environment or be allowed to interfere with full participation in the activity.
- That when on camps or overnight activities, there is a stated preferred time period when parents may make contact, if they wish? Parents should be advised that contact outside of this time may not be possible due to activities.
- Consider that use of smart phones while away can worsen rather than alleviate homesickness. In this context it can be good to encourage children/young people to consider that 'no news is good news.'

Use of Computers/Tablets/Web-enabled Games Consoles/Smart TVs

If such devices are used as part of activities within the organisation, guidelines should be produced to ensure that they are used for the correct purpose, and include, for example, what websites are suitable for the age of children/young people that the leaders are working with.

Internet Safety

The Office for Internet Safety
Department of Justice and Equality
51 St. Stephen's Green
Dublin 2
Ph: (01) 602 8258
Email: internetsafety@justice.ie
www.internetsafety.ie

Physical Contact

Physical Contact

Physical contact during sport should always be intended to meet the child's needs, NOT the adult's. Appropriate physical contact may be required to assist in the development of a skill or activity or for safety reasons e.g. to prevent or treat an injury. This should be in an open environment with the permission and understanding of the participant.

When is physical contact appropriate in sport?

Contact should be determined by the age and developmental stage of the participant - Don't do something that a child can do for themselves. Physical contact between adults and children in sport should take place only when necessary to:

- Develop sports skills or techniques.
- Treat an injury.
- Prevent an injury or accident from occurring.
- Meet the requirements of the sport.
- Comfort a distressed child or to celebrate their success.

What are good principles to follow?

- Physical contact should take place in the interests of and for the benefit of the child, rather than the adult involved.
- Adults should explain the nature of and reason for the physical contact to the child.
- Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission, for example to aid the demonstration of a specific sports technique.
- Sports clubs and coaches should provide an induction for new young members and their parents/carers that covers guidance about any physical contact that will be required as part of that activity. The reasons for the physical contact and the nature of the physical contact should be explained and agreed.
- Children should be encouraged to voice concerns they have if any physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.

- Contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment.
- Physical contact should always take place in an open or public environment and not take place in secret or out of sight of others.
- Well intentioned gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can, if repeated regularly, lead to the possibility of questions being raised by observers. As a general principle adults in positions of responsibility should not make gratuitous or unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. Resistance from a child should be respected

What about children who need specific assistance due to disability or injury?

In the case of a young person with a disability specific support or assistance may be required. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Efforts should be made to receive as much information as possible on the child to ensure safe inclusion of him/her. There should be clear agreements on what is required.
- Parents/carers or their delegated care providers should be asked to undertake all intimate or personal care tasks for their child. This is not an appropriate role for coaches and others involved in leading activities.
- When children with disabilities are lifted or manually supported, they should be treated with dignity and respect.
- Relevant health and safety guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of the child and those assisting.
- It is recommended that those assisting receive appropriate training in order to minimise the risk of injury both to themselves and the child.

What about physical punishment?

Any form of physical punishment is unlawful in all circumstances. It is a criminal offence and should be reported to AGS and Tusla

What about direct contact in coaching?

Some sport or physical activities are more likely to require coaches or teachers to come into physical contact with

children and young people from time to time in the course of their duties. Examples include teaching a pupil how to use a piece of apparatus or equipment or demonstrating a move or exercise during a coaching or teaching session in order to reduce the risk of injury due to falls or errors when performing. Adults should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place, and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted.

A number of sports governing bodies have developed sport-specific guidance to assist coaches in this area. This guidance should be followed by those teaching these sports. Even in sports where there is a need to support physically or touch a child, over-handling should be avoided.

Is it ok to comfort a child or celebrate success?

There may be occasions where a distressed young person needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. A young person may also want to mark a success or achievement with a hug or other gesture. Adults should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is (and what is seen by others present) normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same young person over a period of time. Contact that an adult may feel is appropriate may be unwanted or uncomfortable to a young person. Adults should always meet the needs of the child, be age appropriate and respect resistance.

Where do specific sports science and medical roles fit in?

There may be some roles within sport or physical activities where physical contact is a requirement of the role, particularly sports science or medicine. These tasks should only be undertaken by properly trained or qualified practitioners. This guidance does not seek to replace the specific guidance and codes of practice developed for those professionals and reference should be made to the appropriate body for that discipline.

Bullying

What is Bullying?

Bullying is defined by the Department of Education and Skills guidelines as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

Bullying

- All forms of bullying will be addressed.
- Everybody in the club/organisation has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying.
- Bullying can include online as well as offline behaviour.

Bullying can include:

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc...
- Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation or the continual ignoring of individuals.
- Posting of derogatory or abusive comments, videos or images on social network sites.
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, sectarianism, sexual comments, suggestions or behaviour.
- Unwanted physical contact.

Children with a disability, from ethnic minorities, young people who are gay or lesbian, or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and are more likely to be targeted.

The club or organisation will:

- Recognise its duty of care and responsibility to safeguard all participants from harm.
- Promote and implement this anti-bullying policy in addition to our safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Seek to ensure that bullying behaviour is not accepted or condoned.
- Require all members of the club/organisation to be given information about, and sign up to, this policy.
- Take action to investigate and respond to any alleged incidents of bullying.
- Encourage and facilitate children and young people to play an active part in developing and adopting a code of conduct to address bullying.
- Ensure that coaches are given access to information, guidance and/or training on bullying.

Each participant, coach, volunteer or official will:

- Respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect the feelings and views of others.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special and should be valued.
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Be committed to the early identification of bullying, and prompt and collective action to deal with it.
- Ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed for all to see.
- Report incidents of bullying they see to the club children's officer – by doing nothing you are condoning bullying.

Support to the child:

- Children should know who will listen to and support them.
- Systems should be established to open the door to children wishing to talk about bullying or any other issue that affects them.
- Potential barriers to talking (including those associated with a child's disability or impairment) need to be identified and addressed at the outset to enable children to approach adults for help.
- Children should have access to Helpline numbers.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported.
- Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.
- Children being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying.
- Sanctions for those bullying others that involve long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, will be avoided.

Support to the parents/guardians:

- Parents/guardians should be advised on the organisation/club's bullying policy and practice.
- Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the child's parent(s)/carers.
- Parents will be consulted on action to be taken (for both victim and bully) and agreements made as to what action should be taken.
- Information and advice on coping with bullying will be made available.
- Support should be offered to the parent(s) including information on other agencies or support lines.

Useful Contacts:

Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC): www.ispcc.ie/shield

Anti-Bullying Centre DCU:
www4.dcu.ie/abc/index.shtml

NSPCC Helpline: 0800 800 5000

Sticks and Stones: 087 9015199 or www.sticksandstones.ie

ChildLine UK: 0800 11 11 / www.childline.org.uk

ChildLine Republic of Ireland: 1800 66 66 66 or Text Talk to 50101, www.childline.ie

Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum: www.niabf.org.uk

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.antibullyingalliance.org

Facilities

Introduction

Clubs, facilities and those with responsibility for children and young people have a general duty of care towards them. However there are no specific legal requirements regarding the use of changing facilities. This document is therefore intended as practice guidance to support individuals and organisations to consider issues relevant to their particular context; and to develop and implement policies and procedures that provide a safe environment for children and young people.

Existing National Governing Body, Local Authority or Facility Policies

Many national governing bodies of sport and other organisations, such as local authorities and private sports facilities, may already have guidance and policies in place which should be followed by affiliated clubs or other user groups.

This guidance may be used in the absence of any other guidelines, and to address issues or circumstances not covered in such a policy. It may assist in the review and updating of existing policies and procedures to support improvements in safeguarding and to develop a safer environment. The following aspects should be taken into account when accessing facilities:

- Type of Facility.
- Adults using the changing rooms at the same time as children.
- Supervision.
- Who should supervise.
- Parents as Supervisors.
- Unsupervised children in sport or leisure facilities.
- Parents' (or carers') responsibilities.
- Facility Operators Responsibilities.
- Mixed Gender Teams.

Supervision in the changing facility may also be necessary when:

- Children are too young to be left alone or change themselves. Organisers of groups of children under eight years should make arrangements for their supervision while changing before and after the activity. Although most children of school age (four years old) may be capable of changing their clothes, many leisure facilities have established guidelines that any child below the age of eight years must be accompanied.
- The group includes disabled children who require additional support and assistance with changing (note this should be undertaken by prior agreement with their parent or professional carer)
- Children could injure themselves or access a potential risk such as a swimming pool that is unattended
- There are concerns about bullying, fighting or other troublesome behaviours taking place which need to be managed.

Who should supervise?

If the club have decided that the children and young people need supervision, staff/volunteers should consider who will carry this out. This task provides access to children in circumstances of increased vulnerability and therefore careful consideration should be given to ensuring that those undertaking this task have been assessed as being suitable to do so.

- Numbers - organisers are recommended to have more than one adult supervising, as this will ensure cover in the event of an accident or incident occurring or if one supervisor is called away.
- Gender - it is considered good practice to ensure that children are supervised by staff/volunteers of the same gender while changing.
- Timings - by agreeing a very clear timetable for use of the changing facilities by children, the supervising adults and any coaches or officials respectively, the risks associated to any extended contact between the adults and children are minimised.
- Carry out safe recruitment practices.

Facility Operators Responsibilities:

When children are given access to facilities, operators assume a duty of care for them. The level of responsibility will vary depending on:

- If the child is alone and unsupervised
- With parent/carer/s.
- Attending an activity.
- Attending an activity staffed by the facility.
- Attending a school group or club.
- Attending a public session.

Operators have a responsibility to put in place appropriate safeguarding arrangements which include promoting and implementing a policy for admitting unaccompanied children. This information should be provided to parents and other users informing them about the facility's policy regarding unaccompanied children using the facility, and any rules about the supervision of young children within the facility (particularly in changing/shower areas where potential safeguarding risks are increased).

Many facilities currently use the age of eight as a guide. In practice, while facilities need to be able to establish a lower threshold for admission that is practical to operate, identifying an age for this purpose is difficult given variations in children's physical, psychological and emotional development.

While the facility may set the lower age limit, it is for parents (who know most about their children and have primary responsibility for their welfare) to judge if their child needs to be accompanied even if older than this limit.

APPENDIX 10

Codes of Conduct

Code for Young People

Children have a great deal to gain from sport in terms of their personal development and enjoyment. The promotion of good practice in sport will depend on the co-operation of all involved, including child members of sports organisation/clubs. Children must be encouraged to realise that they also have responsibilities to treat other children and Sport Leaders with fairness and respect.

In your sport you should:

- Be happy, have fun and enjoy taking part and being involved in your sport.
- Be treated fairly by everyone, adults and other athletes.
- Feel safe and secure when you are taking part in your sport.
- Be listened to and allowed to reply.
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect.
- Have a voice in the decisions that affect you within the Club and organisation.
- Say no to something which makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Train and compete at a level that is suitable for your age, development and ability.
- Know that any details that are about you are treated with confidentiality but if you are at risk of harm or we are worried about your safety we may need to pass this information on.
- Know who to go to if you feel unsafe.

Your responsibilities are to:

- Treat all sports leaders/coaches with respect.
- Be fair at all times, do your best to achieve your goals; be gracious if you do not achieve your goals.
- Respect other athletes and your opponents.
- Be part of the team and respect and support other team members both when they do well and when things go wrong;
- Never bully or use bullying actions against another person; you should never hurt other team members, athletes or your opponent, this includes never taking/damaging their property, never spreading rumours or telling lies about other young people or adults.
- Keep to rules and guidelines set by your National Governing Body of Sport, the Region and your Club and make sure you understand the rules e.g. if you play a team sport what contact is allowed.

- Take part in your sport without cheating; you are responsible for not cheating and must not allow others to force you to cheat.
- Listen to and respect decisions made by others; if you feel unjustly treated you can talk to your Club Children's Officer or your parents;
- Behave in a manner that is respectful towards your organisation and your club.
- Never use violence or bad language; do not shout or argue with leaders, team mates or opposing participants – talk to someone if you are upset or angry or if someone has caused you to be upset or angry.
- Talk with your Coach or Club Children's Officer if you have any difficulties or do not understand something; you should never keep secrets about any person who may have caused you harm or has made you feel upset.
- Do not, or allow others to make you, try or take banned substances to improve your performance.

Code for Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers play a key role in the promotion of an ethical approach to sport and young people's enjoyment in sport. Parents/guardians therefore need to be aware, informed and involved in promoting the safest possible environment for children to enjoy their participation in sport. Sports Leaders need the support of parents/guardians in conveying the Safe, Fun and Fair Play message.

You should help and support the implementation of best practice policies in your child's/children's Club by following the guidance below.

- Become members of the Club and contribute your time and effort in the daily running of the Club; no club can operate successfully and safely without the help of volunteers.
- Understand and ensure your child/children abide by the Code.
- Be available for specified duties if and when required; some duties are mandatory and form part of the procedures for safeguarding your children; some will be at the request of the Club.
- Have an awareness of and respect for Leaders and other adults and their roles within the Club.
- If you wish to raise an issue with a Leader this should be addressed with the Leader in an appropriate manner and not in front of children and young people
- Respect and abide by the decisions made by the Committee and other Leaders, these should be made in the best interests of the children in the Club.

- Understand the complaints process and follow the proper procedure if you feel unjustly treated, with the knowledge that any complaint will be dealt with effectively and confidentially.
- Know your child's training and/or competitive programme, and accept it is your responsibility for delivering and collecting your child/children. Parents/carers should ensure they do not leave their child/children waiting unsupervised at any time.
- Ensure the environment is safe and enjoyable for your child/children.
- Promote fair play and the positive aspects of sport.
- Be a role model for your children and young people by maintaining the highest standards of personal conduct and respectful behaviour in any activity related to the sports club/organisation.
- Allow your child to focus their efforts and success in terms of their goals rather than winning being the main objective.
- Promote participation for children that is fun, safe and in the spirit of fair play
- Ensure appropriate leaders are informed regarding any absenteeism, medical conditions or other relevant matters concerning your child.
- Arrange an appropriate time and place for discussing any matter with leaders and coaches; communication should not take place whilst leaders and coaches are in a position of supervision or responsible for other young people.
- You should have the opportunity to put forward suggestions and comments.
- Provide the Club with appropriate information in relation to your child to ensure their safe inclusion in the club and with emergency contact information and to be reasonably available in case of emergency.
- Abide by the procedures and policies in this document especially with regard to the use of smart phones, any type of camera and videoing equipment.
- Be aware and abide by the safeguarding policy, the rules and constitution of your organisation and the rules and constitution of your own Club.

Code for Sport Leaders

Sport Leaders play a vital role in children's sport. Sports organisations and sports groups should ensure that the work of Sport Leaders which occurs mainly on a voluntary basis, is guided by this safeguarding guidance and best practice whilst also recognising that they are entitled to obtain a healthy sense of achievement and satisfaction through their involvement in children's sport.

In order to act as a role model and to promote their safety and the safety of young people Sport Leaders should:

Create a safe and enjoyable environment for children by:

- Planning and preparing appropriately and be positive during sessions.
- Making sure all levels of participation should be enjoyable and fun.
- Prioritising skill development and personal satisfaction over highly structured competition.
- Setting age appropriate and realistic goals.
- Avoiding favouritism – each child will need attention according to their sporting needs.
- Praising and encouraging effort as well as results.
- Showing respect for all involved, children and adults.

Recognise and ensure the welfare of children by:

- Keeping attendance records.
- Not exposing a child to criticism, hostility or sarcasm.
- Never swearing at, ridiculing, shouting unnecessarily or arguing with a child.
- Being aware of a child's developmental needs and how a child may be psychologically or physically affected (if relevant for your role).
- Working in an open environment.
- Ensuring there is adequate supervision.
- Involving and updating parents, especially if a problem has arisen.
- Respecting a child's sensitivity.
- Never using physical punishment or force.
- Not using verbal or physical punishments or exclusion for mistakes.

Additional Information:

- Do not allow or engage in bullying behaviour, rough physical games, sexually provocative games, never allow or engage in inappropriate physical contact of any kind or make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child.
- Co-operate with the recommendations from medical and ancillary practitioners in the management of a child's medical or related problems. You may request a certificate of medical fitness to ensure safe continued participation.
- Avoid carrying out any medical testing or giving advice of a personal or medical nature if not qualified to do so or undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children. Any such activity, if qualified, must only be with parent/guardian consent and the understanding of the child.
- Keep any information in relation to a child/young person of a personal or medical nature strictly confidential unless the welfare of the child requires the passing on of this information on a need to know basis.
- Never exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Acknowledge the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco is incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity and must be discouraged. Avoid the use of alcohol at all times whilst responsible for young people e.g. training sessions, events and on trips with young people

Code for Committees

CLUB:

Committees should follow the points as below:

- Be familiar with the National Governing Bodies/ Organisation and any Club rules.
- Within a Club ensure and approve the appointments of Club Children's Officers and a Designated Liaison Person. Inform all members of who the person is through your communication channel.
- Carry out your required duties for sports club/organisation understanding that the welfare of children is paramount.

Follow the sports club/organisation policies & procedures so that all activities are in accordance with this document:

- Create safe environment for young people.
- Ensure the codes of conduct are in place for all involved.
- Provide adequate supervision for training sessions with attendance record being kept.

- Recruit volunteers/employees including vetting and training is completed.
- Understand and implement the complaints and disciplinary procedures.
- Ensure safe induction and supervision of volunteers/ employees.
- Ensure other activities follow procedures e.g. away trips.
- All required procedures contained in this document are adopted.

Ensure complaints including rumours are not ignored and dealt with appropriately, following the relevant procedures including

- Recording all incidents.
- Reporting the incident/accident or injury.
- Informing the parent or guardian (if child involved).

Additional Information:

- Keep and store securely all documentation with respect to meetings, correspondence and minutes of committee meetings together with General Meetings, including the Treasurers report.
- Set up, maintain, revise and implement rules in the best interests of young people and taking into consideration the best interest of the club(club/organisation name). Rules should not contravene any (club/organisations name) rules and must be communicated to the relevant members.
- Ensure effective communications with members through recognised means e.g. e-mail, web posting, use of noticeboards, etc.
- Inform parents/guardians in advance and obtain consent for children to be involved in events outside the normal activities within the aquatic disciplines e.g. fun day out, fundraising.
- Inform parents/guardians where a matter or problem arises relating to their child.
- Monitor with the Club Children's Officer any changes in membership and any unusual dropout, absenteeism or Club transfers by children or leaders. Ensure these are followed up to determine the reason for the trend.
- Club Children's Officers and Coaches must be invited to at least 50% of committee meetings per annum to report and advise the Committee. Club Children's Officers and Coaches/Teachers may not be appointed/elected members of the committee.

Notes

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