



SECTION  
01

# INTRODUCTION

## INDEX & APPENDICES

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF THE  
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)



## CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)

The publication by the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Ladies Gaelic Football Association, the Camogie Association, GAA Handball Ireland and the Rounders Council of Ireland of this joint Code of Behaviour (Underage) provides our membership, and particularly those who work with young people and children, with specific direction and guidance when fulfilling their roles at local and national level.

Such is the importance of the child safeguarding and protection agenda in our work that each of the Gaelic Games Associations have brought together the collective best practices based on many years of experience as we seek to provide a safe environment in which we can promote our games and enable young people and children to develop in a caring and respectful environment.

This Code applies to all persons under 18 yrs. of age who participate in our games or other activities and to those who work with them and assist them in any capacity on our behalf.

The value of providing a joint Code for our members enables us to jointly promote organisational and statutory guidance and legislation that governs our work with young people and children. This will assist and direct our members and units in our work and provide a platform and support for those working with young people and children at all levels in our Associations.

Our Associations, in common with others who work with young people and children, will continue to abide by and integrate child welfare legislation and statutory guidance into our work, regardless of the jurisdiction in which we operate. In upholding this principle, the welfare of the child shall always be our paramount consideration, whether it is on the playing fields, in the training of our underage players, the recruitment of our coaches, the active involvement of parents in our work or the many other developmental and social opportunities that we offer our underage players on a daily and weekly basis.

Young people will spend some of the most enjoyable days of their lives playing our games and socialising with their friends in our local Clubs. Whether attending or playing GAA matches, playing Ladies Football or Camogie, or participating in Rounders or Handball activities, they will do so during some of the most important developmental years of their lives.

We hope to see as many of these players as possible progressing to coaching, mentoring and refereeing roles in the years ahead. The enjoyment they experience, the friendships they make, the winning and the losing will all be part of the development of these young people as will the bond they build within each of our Gaelic Games Associations.

Our role and our responsibility is to ensure that they benefit from and participate in our Gaelic Games in a safe, enjoyable and developmental environment where our Games are conducted in a spirit of fair play with everyone who works on our behalf emphasising respect, equality, safety and non-discrimination in all aspects of our work with children and young people. Each member of our Associations has a responsibility to accept and implement this Code as it directs us in such work.

## ALLEGED BREACHES OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)

The Code outlines in Section 4 of this Code ‘Dealing with Alleged Breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage)’ how alleged breaches may be dealt with informally through the services of the relevant Children’s Officer or if deemed more appropriate may be dealt with formally through a Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings.

Breaches of the Code, whether by an adult or a child, should always be addressed in a proportionate manner and should a sanction ever be required, following a breach of the Code, it should be applied in accordance with the provisions of the Code, as outlined for that purpose.

The Child Safeguarding Committee shall also have the authority to order that a team, unit or member, deemed to be safeguarding non-compliant, may not participate in any competitions, games or activities during their period of non-compliance. This is a temporary measure and is separate to the process involving a Code of Behaviour Hearings Committee and shall be subject to the same appeals procedure as would any sanction imposed under the Code.

In the interest of clarity and accuracy, any amendments to the Code of Behaviour (Underage) shall be in accordance with the Code that is available on each of our Associations’ websites.

*Mol an Óige agus tiocfaidh sí.*

Adopted by the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Ladies Gaelic Football Association, the Camogie Association, GAA Handball Ireland and GAA Rounders.

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SECTION  
02

# CHILD SAFEGUARDING

## RISK ASSESSMENT & CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF THE  
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)



The Gaelic Games Associations must at all times ensure that we are vigilant and constantly aware as to the potential for harm that may come to a child when they are attending or participating in our games, training or other activities. Members and parents should be aware that we have adopted excellent safeguarding policies, codes, guidelines, training and other practices that address the risk of harm.

We depend however on our coaches, parents, children and other club personnel to ensure that they are not only aware of these procedures but ensure they are also implemented.

The Gaelic Games Associations have agreed that in line with legislation and good practice guidance that each of our units who are deemed to provide a relevant service for children i.e. Clubs, Counties, Independent and Amalgamated Teams, must undertake a Safeguarding Risk Assessment within their respective units. At a minimum the Risk Assessment must take place at least every two years following which the relevant unit shall then agree and display a Child Safeguarding Statement. The two year cycle is a legislative requirement in some jurisdictions and has been adopted as a good practice procedure by each of our Associations (GAA, LGFA, Camogie, Rounders and Handball). It is important to note that the risk in this context relates to the risk of harm and not general health and safety risks.

The completion date for the Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement process is agreed by the Gaelic Games Associations and we provide user friendly templates to assist in completing these requirements all of which are available to download from our respective websites.



## WHAT IS A CHILD SAFEGUARDING RISK ASSESSMENT?

The Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment is an exercise that requires each of our units to examine all aspects of our services, e.g. coaching, training, games, social activities, Scór etc. from a safeguarding perspective, and to establish whether there are practices or features in place that have the potential to put children at risk. As previously highlighted, the risk in this context is the risk of harm and not general health and safety risks.

## THE RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS IS INTENDED TO ENABLE EACH OF OUR UNITS TO:

- Identify potential risks
- Identify Association policies and procedures that have been adopted to minimise risk by responding in a timely manner to any potential risks
- Review whether adequate precautions have been taken to eliminate or reduce these risks
- Identify any gaps in provision, if they exist, and how and when these gaps will be addressed

Upon completion, the Safeguarding Risk Assessment must be agreed by the relevant Club/County Executive or Committee and signed by the Chairperson and the Children's Officer.

## WHAT IS A CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT?

Before preparing your Child Safeguarding Statement, you must undertake and complete an assessment of any potential for harm to a child availing of your service, i.e. the 'risk assessment' as outlined above.

The next step is to produce a Child Safeguarding Statement, and the Association issues a template to assist in this process. 'The Statement' is a written statement that specifies the (safeguarding) service being provided by our Associations and our units and the principles and procedures to be observed in order to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child availing of our service is safe from harm. It should set out any potential risk of harm to a child that you have identified in your risk assessment, and the procedures that are in place to reduce the identified risks.

Units may amend the Child Safeguarding Statement template insofar and for example as it relates to facilities, named personnel, additional procedures or services that may be in place but must retain certain sections of the template that outline Association policies, procedures and legal requirements.

Upon completion, the Child Safeguarding Statement must be agreed by the relevant Club/County Executive or Committee, signed by the Children's Officer and must be displayed in a prominent place, e.g. in the clubhouse, noticeboard etc.



The Gaelic Athletic Associations (GAA, LGFA, Camogie, Handball and Rounders) in accordance with our Code of Behaviour (Underage), our policies, procedures and our legislative requirements have agreed this Child Safeguarding Statement, which is binding on all members and units of our Associations.

The basic aims of the Gaelic Athletic Associations include fostering and developing our Gaelic Games and Irish cultural activities among young people and children. These games and related activities are organised and promoted by dedicated volunteers at Club, County, Provincial and National levels with the cooperation and support of an equally

dedicated cohort of staff all of whom are committed to the safeguarding of children and young people in our Association as we seek to create a safe environment for young people to grow and develop.

## PRINCIPLES TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN FROM HARM

This statement recognises that in accordance with legislation and with the requirements of our Codes and Rules that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that all children and young people have a positive, developmental and enjoyable experience of Gaelic Games and when participating in our activities that they do so, as far as is practicable, in a safe and enjoyable environment.

### RISK ASSESSMENT

In preparing this statement we have completed a risk assessment of the potential for harm to children when they are participating in our games and attending our activities under the following headings: Club and Coaching Practices; Complaints & Discipline; Reporting Procedures; Facilities; Recruitment; Communications and General Risk of Harm.

To the right is a list of areas of risk identified and the list of procedures and policies that address these risks.

### RISK IDENTIFIED

Risk of harm including assault, ill treatment or neglect of a child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare or sexual abuse of a child

Risk of harm of abuse when hosting an activity and or an away trip

Risk of harm of online abuse through social media

Bullying of a child

### PROCEDURE/POLICIES IN PLACE

**Code of Behaviour (Underage) (QR code 1)**  
**Maintaining Good Practice and Behaviour (QR code 2)**  
 Recruitment Policy  
 Vetting Policy  
 Safeguarding Training Policy  
**Guidance for Dealing with & Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse (QR code 3)**



Code of Behaviour (Underage)-Hosting, Away Trips & Transport

Code of Behaviour (Underage)  
 Association Social Media Policy

Anti-Bullying Statement, Guidelines & Training

### PROCEDURES

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been prepared in accordance with the legislative requirements contained in the *Children First Act 2015, Children's First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), the Children (NI) Order 1995, Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice* and as required by our Association rules.

Each Club shall maintain a list of members who, if known, and in accordance with the Children First Act 2015 are specified as mandated persons, regardless of what role (if any), they hold in the Club.

The following procedures contained in our risk assessment support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our services.

- Procedure in respect of the management of allegations of abuse against any member, non-member or staff/volunteer of a child availing of our services
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children and young people
- Procedure for provision of and access to Gaelic Games Child Safeguarding Training and information including the identification of the occurrence of harm
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to the Association, Tusla and or Gateway Team as applicable
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person i.e. the Children's Officer (National, Club and County as appropriate) who is the relevant person for the purpose of this statement (see name below)

### MANDATED PERSON PROCEDURES

The Mandated Person, who has a legal obligation to report harm of children as per legislation and who has been employed for the purpose of performing the child welfare and protection functions within each of our Associations is:

<b>GAA/Rounders</b>	Gearóid Ó Maoilmhichíl	<a href="mailto:mandatedperson@gaa.ie">mandatedperson@gaa.ie</a>
<b>Camogie</b>	Roberta Farrell	<a href="mailto:mandatedperson@camogie.ie">mandatedperson@camogie.ie</a>
<b>Handball</b>	John Kelly	<a href="mailto:mandatedperson.handball@gaa.ie">mandatedperson.handball@gaa.ie</a>
<b>LGFA</b>	Paula Prunty	<a href="mailto:mandatedperson@lgfa.ie">mandatedperson@lgfa.ie</a>

All policies and procedures listed above are available at [www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-safeguarding-and-protection](http://www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-safeguarding-and-protection)

### IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The Gaelic Athletic Associations recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. The Associations are committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures that support our intention to keep children and young people safe from harm while availing of our service. This Statement adopted and endorsed by our Club Executive Committee will be reviewed by **31st of May 2023** or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Produced by the Child Safeguarding Committee in association with  
Cumann Lúthcleas Gael, Cumann Camógaíochta, Cumann Peil na mBan,  
Liathróid Láimhe CLG na hÉireann and Comhairle Cluiche Corr na hÉireann.





SECTION  
03

# MAINTAINING GOOD PRACTICE AND BEHAVIOUR

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF THE  
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)



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## 01. YOUNG PLAYERS

Young Players can benefit greatly from sports in terms of personal development and enjoyment. Our players are encouraged to realise that as a result of their participation in our Gaelic Games that they also have a responsibility to treat all other players and officials with fairness.

The term young players, i.e. any person who is under 18 years of age, also refers to children regardless of what team, grade or age group they play with. 'Underage' is a general term given to the players and competitions up to Minor grade level and to whom the Code of Behaviour (Underage) applies.

Young Players, and those who work with them in our Associations are required to 'sign up' and abide by this Code of Behaviour and to any other policies or codes in our Clubs or Associations.

### YOUNG PLAYERS SHOULD BE ENTITLED TO:

- Be safe and feel safe.
- Have fun and experience a sense of enjoyment and fulfilment.
- Be treated with respect, dignity and sensitivity.
- Be afforded appropriate confidentiality.
- Participate in games and competitions at age appropriate levels.
- Be afforded adequate and meaningful playing time to assist in the development of their playing skills, within their own age group and in accordance with Rule.
- Make their concerns known and have them dealt with in an appropriate manner.
- Be protected from abuse.
- Be listened to and have their suggestions heard in a constructive manner.

### YOUNG PLAYERS SHOULD ALWAYS:

- Play fairly, do their best and enjoy themselves.
- Respect fellow team members and opponents regardless of ability, cultural or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation or religion.
- Support fellow team members regardless of whether they do well or not.
- Represent their team, their Club and their family with pride and dignity.
- Respect all coaches and decisions of officials.
- Be gracious in defeat and modest in victory.
- Shake hands before and after a game as part of the Give Respect - Get Respect initiative.
- Inform their coach/mentor/manager in advance if they are unavailable for training and games.
- Take due care of Club equipment.
- Know that it is acceptable to talk to the Club Children's Officer with any concerns or questions they may have.
- Tell somebody else if they or others have been harmed in any way.

**YOUNG PLAYERS SHOULD ENGAGE IN GOOD PRACTICE:**

- Never cheat – always play by the rules.
- Never shout at or argue with a game's official, with their coach, their team mates or opponents.
- Never use violence towards team mates, coaches, officials, opponents or supporters.
- Accept the decisions of referees and other officials.
- Never use unfair or Bullying tactics to gain advantage or isolate other players.
- Never spread rumours.
- Never tell lies about adults or other young people.
- Never play or train if they feel unwell or are injured.
- Never use unacceptable language or racial and/or sectarian or homophobic references towards a team mate, an opponent, a fellow player, coach, official or supporter by words, deeds or gestures.
- Never consume non-prescribed drugs or performance enhancing supplements.
- Never use social media to discuss team mates, opponents, coaches, match officials or other individuals.
- Never use social media or social media apps to distribute or redistribute offensive content or to taunt, bully or racially abuse others.

**YOUNG PLAYERS ON ADULT TEAMS**

The progression of a player from underage grades to adult teams is always welcomed and may come sooner for some rather than others. While it is not unusual for players under 18 yrs. of age to be part of adult club teams their participation requires additional attention as they still legally hold recognition as a child which their parents, fellow players, their Club and mentors and their Association must recognise and uphold.

This may require their fellow team members being spoken to by the team mentors so as to address the legal status of the under 18 yr. olds and to emphasise that adults must always conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and an assurance that the adults will not encourage or facilitate the under 18 yr. olds to participate in adult related socialising or activity.

**Mentors of adult teams that include underage players must be vetted, must have attended child safeguarding training and must have a minimum coaching qualification.**



## 02. COACHES, MENTORS AND TRAINERS

All Coaches, Mentors and Trainers of young players (referred to hereafter as coaches) should ensure that these players benefit significantly from our games by promoting a positive, healthy and participatory approach with underage players. In developing the skills levels of every player, coaches should always encourage enjoyment and fun while ensuring meaningful participation in our games and activities. Coaches should always remember that they are role models for the players in their care.

### RECRUITMENT OF COACHES

- Coaches working with young players are required to be suitable for their chosen role(s), and should be appropriately trained, qualified and supported when fulfilling such roles.

**Coaches are required to:**

- o Undertake agreed vetting and background Police checks within the jurisdiction(s) in which they operate
- o Attend relevant Gaelic Games child safeguarding training
- o Possess a coaching qualification relevant to their role as recognised by their Association
- Coaches of adult teams, which includes any player under 18 years of age, must also undertake the vetting, child safeguarding training and coaching requirements as outlined above.

**COACHES SHOULD MAINTAIN A CHILD CENTRED APPROACH**

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person.
- Treat each person equally regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
- Be positive during coaching sessions, games and other activities.
- Recognise the development needs and capacity of all underage players, regardless of their ability, by emphasising participation for all while avoiding excessive training and competition.
- Recognise that skills development and personal satisfaction should have priority over competition when working with underage players.
- Ensure all those eligible to participate in any team within the Club are provided with an opportunity to do so with preference given to playing in their own age group.
- Develop an understanding of relevant coaching methods and ensure that they have the appropriate level of coaching accreditation.
- Do not equate losing with failure and do not develop a preoccupation with medals and trophies. The level of improvement made by underage players is the best indicator of effective coaching.

**COACHES SHOULD LEAD BY EXAMPLE**

- Never use foul language or provocative language/gestures towards any player, fellow coach, match official or supporter.
- Only enter the field of play with the referee's permission.
- Do not question a referee's decisions or integrity.
- Encourage players to respect and accept the judgement of match officials.
- Promote Fair Play and encourage all players and fellow officials to always play by the rules of the game.
- Do not encourage or threaten a player by deed or gesture to act in any unacceptable manner towards, a fellow player, coach or official.
- Promote the RESPECT campaign amongst your players, fellow coaches, parents and supporters.
- Do not smoke while working with underage players.
- Do not consume alcohol or non-prescribed drugs immediately prior to or while underage players are in your care.
- Encourage parents to become involved in your team and Club activities wherever possible.

**CONDUCT OF COACHES WHEN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

- Develop an appropriate working relationship with children based on mutual trust and respect.
- Challenge Bullying in any form whether physical or emotional. Bullying is not acceptable behaviour be it from a young person, coach, parent/guardian, spectator or match official.
- Do not shout at or lecture players or reprimand/ridicule them when they make a mistake. Children learn best through trial and error. Children and young people should not be afraid to risk error so as to learn.
- Never engage in the use of physical interventions as a form of response to misbehaviour, unless it is necessary by way of restraint.

- Avoid incidents of horse play or role play or telling jokes etc. that could be misinterpreted.
- Never undertake any form of therapy or hypnosis with children.
- Never encourage players to consume non-prescribed drugs or take performance enhancing supplements.
- Do not make energy enhancing products available to children.
- Never use racial and/or sectarian or homophobic references towards another coach, player, official or supporter by words, deeds or gestures.

## AVOID COMPROMISING YOUR ROLE AS A COACH

Some activities may require coaches to come into physical contact with underage players in the course of their duties. However, coaches should;

- Avoid taking coaching sessions on your own.
- Any delivery of one to one coaching must be within a group setting.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with an underage player and never engage in inappropriate touching of a player.
- Be aware that any necessary contact should be determined by the age and development of the player and should only take place with the permission and understanding of the player and in an open environment in the context of developing a player's skills and abilities.

## BEST PRACTICE

- Ensure that all of your players are suitably and safely attired to play their chosen sport. e.g. helmets (Hurling and Camogie), goggles (Handball), shin guards, gum shields (Football).
- As a coach always be punctual and properly attired.
- Be accompanied by at least one other adult at coaching sessions, games and in underage team dressing rooms.
- Abide by a minimum ratio of 2 adults to 10 children, (2:10). This ratio level requires at least one qualified coach and at least one other responsible adult to be present at all times.
- Groups of 10-20 children must have a minimum of 3 adults present at all times.
- In the case of an all-female team, at least one of the two adults must be female and similarly in the case of an all-boys team, at least one of the two adults must be male.
- Where a team or training group consists of both boys and girls, the supervision/coaching personnel, must also comprise of both male and female personnel.
- Clubs may choose to appoint suitable persons to the role of Supervisor, i.e. Supervisor of Children. A supervisor is not a coach, but a person appointed to assist in normal supervisory roles which could include access and entry to club grounds, registration, dressing room duties, supervision at away trips etc.
- A Supervisor must be a member of one of our Associations, must be an adult and is required to be vetted and have attended relevant Child Safeguarding Training.
- The number of coaches required will naturally depend on the number of children attending a training session, camp, game or other activity. When assessing how many coaches are required always note that Supervisors and Camps Assistants (at camps) do not have a coaching role.

- Set realistic – stretching but achievable – performance goals for your players and teams.
- Keep a record of attendance at training and at games by both players and coaches.
- Rotate the team captaincy and the method used for selecting teams so that the same children are not always selected to the exclusion of others.
- Afford meaningful playing time to young players so as to assist in the development of their playing skills, within their own age groups.
- Keep a record of any injuries and actions subsequently taken. Ensure that another official referee/team mentor is present when a player is being attended to and can corroborate the relevant details.
- Make adequate provision for First Aid services.
- Do not encourage or permit players to play while injured.
- Inform parents/guardians if their child has been injured or becomes unwell at games and training as soon as is practical.
- Be aware of any special medical or dietary requirements of players as indicated on the medical consent/registration or FOIREANN forms or as informed by parents/guardians.
- Be willing to keep the necessary and emergency medication of players in a safe and accessible place in accordance with the wishes and permission of the parents/guardians.
- Do not administer medication or medical aid unless you are willing to do so and have received the necessary training to do so.
- Avail of the FOIREANN registration and communication system to communicate with the parents of young players.
- If necessary use mobile phones, only via a group text or email system, for communicating with the parents of players. Any exception to this form of group texting can only be proceeded with following permission from parents/guardians.
- Do not communicate individually by text, email or via social network sites and or apps with underage players.
- Encourage parents/guardians to play an active role in organising and assisting various activities for your teams and your Club.
- If it is necessary to transport a child/young person in your car, ensure that they are seated in a rear seat with seat belts securely fastened and that all drivers are adequately insured.
- With the exception of their own child a coach should not transport a child alone, except in emergency or exceptional circumstances.
- Ensure that all dressing rooms and the general areas that are occupied by your players and other Club personnel, prior to, during or immediately following the completion of any match are kept clean and are not damaged in any way.
- Should you be aware of or have concerns regarding the possible abuse of a child you should, without delay, report this to the relevant statutory authority or may seek the assistance of your Designated Liaison Person (DLP) so that they may assist you in processing this matter. All such reports must also be forwarded to your Association's National Designated Liaison Person/ Mandated Person, without delay.



## 03. PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Our Associations constantly seek the active participation of all parents and guardians, particularly at Club level, where the ethos of volunteerism forms the basis of our community led Clubs and also enables us to promote and participate in many other community based endeavours.

In common with coaches and club personnel the parents/guardians of underage players should act as role models for their children and are welcome to attend their child's training activities and games.

### PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD ENCOURAGE THEIR CHILD TO:

- Always play by the rules.
- Improve their skills levels.
- Appreciate everybody on their team and their opponents, regardless of ability.
- Respect and appreciate the contribution made by their coaches towards developing players and teams.
- Maintain a balanced and healthy lifestyle with regard to exercise, food, rest and play. Advice may be sought if necessary from Club officials on this issue.

### PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD LEAD BY EXAMPLE:

- Adopt a positive attitude to their children's participation in our games.
- Respect officials' decisions and encourage children to do likewise.
- Do not exert undue pressure on your child.
- Never admonish your own child or any other child for their standard of play.
- Be realistic in their expectations.
- Show approval for effort, not just results.
- Avoid asking a child or young person, 'How much did you score today' or 'What did you win by' or 'What did you lose by.' Ask them 'Did they enjoy themselves.'
- Never embarrass a child or use sarcastic remarks towards a player.
- Applaud good play from all teams.
- Do not criticise playing performances. Identify how improvements may be made.
- Do not seek to unfairly affect a game or player.
- Do not enter the field of play unless specifically invited to do so by an official in charge.

### PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD:

- Complete through Foireann or on the Child/Youth Membership Form the annual registration/permission and medical consent information for their child's participation in the Club.
- Inform the coaches, and any other relevant Club personnel, of any changes in their child's medical or dietary requirements prior to coaching sessions, games or other activities.
- Ensure that their child punctually attends coaching sessions/games or other activities.
- Provide their child with adequate clothing and equipment as may be required for the playing of our games including for example helmets, shin guards, gum shields etc.

- Ensure that the nutrition/hydration and hygiene needs of their child are met.
- Never encourage their child to consume non-prescribed drugs or take performance enhancing supplements.
- Listen to what their child may have to say.
- Show approval whether the team wins, loses or draws a game.
- Never attempt to meet their own needs and aspirations for success and achievement through their children's participation in games.
- Raise any issues or concerns they may have regarding their child's participation or performance in a team with the team coach(es) and should do so in a constructive and non-confrontational manner and not in the company or vicinity of young players or other parents.
- Bring complaints about the conduct or practice of a coach to the attention of the relevant Club or County Children's Officer.
- Support your Club by becoming an active member and by participating in Club activities.

#### **PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD ASSIST THEIR CLUB BY:**

- Showing appreciation to volunteers, coaches and Club officials.
- Attending training and games on a regular basis.
- Assisting in the organising of Club activities and events as requested.
- Respecting the rights, dignity and worth of every person and by treating each one equally regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
- Not entering team dressing rooms unless deemed necessary by the team coach(es) so as to protect the privacy of all players.

#### **PARENTS/GUARDIANS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:**

- Know their child is safe and to make a complaint if they believe that their child's safety is in any way compromised.
- Be informed of problems/concerns relating to their child.
- Be informed if their child gets injured or becomes unwell.
- Complain to the relevant persons if they have concerns about the standard of coaching.
- Have, as a member, a say in relation to decisions being made within the Club.





## 04. SUPPORTERS

Young Players are eager to enjoy and benefit from the support they receive from parents, guardians, friends and other members of the Club who attend our games as supporters of the team and Club. Active, loyal and well behaved supporters add to the enjoyment of our games and are always welcome to attend our games but should be aware that their conduct will always reflect upon the team, players and Clubs that they support and represent.

Fellow supporters have a responsibility to ensure that all spectators conduct themselves in an acceptable and well behaved manner at all times, when attending our games and competitions or indeed before or after our games. Unacceptable conduct by supporters should be reported to stewards or officials in charge (if appropriate) or at Club level to the Children's Officer.

Supporters should realise and consider that young players are encouraged to participate in Gaelic Games so that they may enjoy themselves while also improving their skills levels.

### WE EXPECT OUR SUPPORTERS TO:

- **Encourage and applaud good performance and effort from players and opponents alike, regardless of the result.**
- **Never engage in the use of violence, on their own or with others.**
- **Demonstrate appropriate good behaviour by not using foul language, and by not engaging in racially abusive language or deeds or by harassing players, supporters, coaches or officials.**
- **Never enter the field of play, before, during or after a game.**
- **Respect the decisions of all officials.**
- **Never ridicule or scold a player for making a mistake during games or competitions.**
- **Show respect to your Club's opponents. Without them there would be no games or competitions.**
- **Uphold the principles of FAIR PLAY and RESPECT for all.**

## 05. REFEREES

Throughout this Code of Behaviour emphasis has been placed on the need to co-operate with and facilitate those who organise and deliver our games and activities. Referees, and other officials who officiate at our games, are key people in the delivery of our games and should be respected and assisted in their roles at all times.

Referees are conscious of the fact that they are instrumental in ensuring our games are played in a sporting manner and in accordance with the rules of the game.

Players, coaches, mentors, parents/guardians and other Club personnel have a key role to play in the delivery of this aspect of our Gaelic Games particularly when working with underage players. The manner in which we accept the role, authority and decisions of a referee will naturally be scrutinised very closely by our underage players and adults need to show good example to players and to their children in how they show their respect for referees and other match officials.

Parents and Clubs should encourage underage players, at an appropriate age level, to attend referee training courses and to subsequently officiate age appropriate games which could result in refereeing being their preferred pathway or role in our Gaelic Games Associations.

Any referee, under 16 years of age, must be accompanied by a suitable adult who shall act as a supervisor to the referee. This supervisor must fulfil the requirements of a supervisor, as outlined elsewhere in the Code of Behaviour (Underage).

### IN THEIR CAPACITY AS REFEREES OF UNDERAGE GAMES WE EXPECT OUR REFEREES TO:

- Apply the playing rules on an impartial and consistent basis.
- Act with integrity and objectivity in all games.
- Communicate decisions to players and team officials in an effective and constructive manner in consideration of the age groups playing our games.
- Deal with dissent firmly and fairly.
- Work as a team with other match officials.
- Maintain composure regardless of the circumstances.
- Avail of assessments and supports to improve performance.
- Uphold and implement the Give Respect – Get Respect initiative at all levels.
- Report any misconduct of players, team officials or supporters conscious of the fact that such matters may be followed up by Club or County Children's Officers.
- Undertake agreed vetting and background Police checks within the jurisdictions in which they officiate and attend relevant child safeguarding training.

**Players, Coaches, Supporters, Parents/Guardians and other Club personnel should recognise the pivotal role that referees play in our underage games and should support them at all times when fulfilling their roles.**

## 06. GIVE RESPECT – GET RESPECT

Give Respect – Get Respect is an awareness initiative that promotes the playing of our games in a positive, fair and enjoyable manner and where Parents, Players, Coaches, Spectators and Referees Give Respect – Get Respect from each other.

The RESPECT campaign applies at all levels and amongst all players regardless of age, competition or ability. The key participants in the Give Respect – Get Respect campaign are not just the Players themselves but Coaches, Clubs, Parents, Referees and Supporters.

Delivering the principles of the Give Respect – Get Respect initiative at ‘underage’ level is a key factor in ensuring that Young Players and Children are made aware of the need to be respectful of others, not merely while playing our games, but as part of society in general.

The Give Respect – Get Respect initiative is supported by the GAA, Ladies Gaelic Football Association, the Camogie Association, GAA Handball Ireland and the Rounders Council of Ireland.

### THE GIVE RESPECT – GET RESPECT INITIATIVE HIGHLIGHTS THE FOLLOWING GOOD PRACTICES:

- All players and coaches shake hands with their opponents and the referee before and after each game.
- Host Clubs or home teams should mark out a designated spectators’ area around the playing area
- Teams should strive to achieve the maximum participation of all players in accordance with agreed playing models at underage level.
- Host Clubs should formally welcome referees and opposing team to all games.
- A merit award, at County level, based on sporting endeavour and fair play, shall be awarded to players and teams who have upheld the RESPECT principles.
- Adopt and implement the Code of Behaviour when working with underage players as the minimum level of agreement between the Club and players, coaches, parents, guardians and supporters at underage level.
- Organise half time exhibition games during Club, Inter-County League and Championship Games that promote the principles of the RESPECT campaign in association with schools, other Clubs and Cumann na mBunscol.
- Clubs should ensure that the coaches of underage teams are aware of and also implement the Give Respect – Get Respect initiative.

### RESPECT

- Responsible
- Encouraging
- Supportive
- Positive
- Enabling
- Considerate
- Tolerant



## 07. THE CLUB

All Clubs that cater for underage players must do so with a child centred approach and philosophy that recognises that maintaining best practice in the safeguarding of children and young people is paramount at all times.

Clubs must ensure that those chosen to work on their behalf with underage players and teams have been selected following thorough recruitment, selection and training procedures.

### **Coaches are required to**

- o **Undertake agreed vetting and background Police checks within the jurisdiction(s) in which they operate**
- o **Attend relevant Gaelic Games child safeguarding training**
- o **Possess a coaching qualification relevant to their role as recognised by their Association**

A number of non-coaching roles with children, carried out on behalf of the Club, may also require that some the above conditions are met, prior to commencing such roles.

While the purpose of any specified role and the frequency of activity by an individual in a Club may influence what recruitment criteria must be met, Clubs are advised that they should act on the side of caution and where deemed appropriate seek the vetting and child safeguarding training of individuals relevant to their roles. Such individuals could include bus drivers of underage club teams employed by the Club, parents who regularly drive children to games on behalf of the Club, physios etc.

All of the above are part of a range of support services that are available from Clubs for those seeking to work with children in our Associations.

Such requirements are elaborated upon in greater detail in Section 5 of the Code of Behaviour (Underage), The Recruitment and Selection of Coaches and other Volunteers.

Clubs must ensure that those chosen to work with children and young people are at all times competent and confident in their roles and have received relevant child welfare and sports related training, as provided or instructed by our Associations to enable them fulfil such roles.

### **CLUBS SHOULD PROMOTE QUALITY PARTICIPATION BY:**

- Adopting the Code of Behaviour as a basic level of agreement between the Club and their players, their coaches, parents/ guardians and supporters and others who work with young people.
- Leading by example and ensuring that a user-friendly and child centred approach is adopted in our work with young people and that equal opportunities are available for all to participate in our games and activities, regardless of an individual's ability.
- Developing effective procedures for responding to and recording all attendances, incidents, accidents and injuries.
- Ensuring that any concerns of abuse or alleged breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) are recorded and acted upon, without delay, in accordance with Association procedures.
- Ensuring that all Club personnel are made aware as to the identity of their Club Children's Officer and their Designated Liaison Person and that these persons and their deputy officers are suitably trained for their roles.

- Availing of relevant information on health and wellbeing initiatives for young people and other club personnel including the Healthy Club Project.
- Distributing information on Anti-Bullying strategies in our work with young people and by adopting and implementing an Anti-Bullying Statement in the Club.

### **CLUBS SHOULD ENCOURAGE THE PARTICIPATION OF THEIR MEMBERS BY:**

- Agreeing the specific role of each and every coach or mentor or others working with young people.
- Adopting and implementing clearly defined recruitment and selection procedures when choosing coaches and other relevant personnel to work with children and young people.

### **ENCOURAGE THE PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PLAYERS BY:**

- Ensuring that training schedules, playing rules, use of equipment and length of games are structured to facilitate greater participation by all young players, and are suitable to all age categories, and to the ability and maturity level of players.
- Not imposing responsibilities or roles on young people that may be inappropriate to their age.
- Respecting the rights, dignity and worth of all players and treating them equally regardless of their age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background or religion.
- Creating pathways for young people to participate in our games not just as players but by affording them other developmental opportunities including training to become referees, coaches etc.
- Ensuring that when the team may travel away and stay overnight that separate sleeping facilities are provided for all adults and for young people. Similarly, for mixed groups, separate sleeping quarters for males and females shall be required.
- When a group consists of both males and females, that an adequate adult to player ratio of male and female coaches is present, in accordance with Association agreed adult to child supervision ratios.

### **ENCOURAGE THE PARTICIPATION OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS BY:**

- Encouraging parents/guardians to become members of their Club and to make themselves aware as to the running of juvenile games and activities and to the rules and codes that direct us in our work.
- Welcoming all parents/guardians to attend the games and training sessions that relate to their children. Information relating to such events should be made known to them at all times.
- Informing parents/guardians as to the identity of their Children's Officer. This person should be available to assist with any concerns or enquiries that parents/guardians may have regarding the welfare and safety of children and young people in the Club and the implementation of the Code of Behaviour (Underage).

### **DEVELOP BEST PRACTICE IN CLUB STRUCTURES AND ADMINISTRATION BY:**

- Ensuring that the Juvenile Section of the Club is structured in accordance with good practice guidelines and that young people are afforded a role in decision making at an appropriate level.
- Ensuring all those eligible to participate in their age appropriate team within the Club are provided with an opportunity to do so.

- Ensuring that all Club members are aware as to their responsibilities to all children and young people.
- Appointing a Children's Officer (and Deputy Children's Officer) whose role shall include the monitoring of the child centred ethos of the Club and compliance with any policies and guidelines as issued by the Club, by our Associations, or by statutory authorities and agencies in their jurisdiction.
- Appointing a Designated Liaison Person (and Deputy Designated Liaison Person) whose role shall include liaising with Statutory Authorities and assisting members in relation to the reporting of allegations, concerns and/or suspicions of child abuse.
- Ensuring that all players are covered by their relevant Injury Scheme and that all premises etc. in use by your Club and players are equally covered for property/liability insurance as deemed necessary.
- Adopting procedures that facilitate the privacy and safety of all young people in the Club and that all such procedures are maintained and regularly reviewed so as to ensure that young people feel safe and are safe in the Club.
- Seeking the agreement of parents/guardians when their sons/daughters under 18 years of age are invited into adult squads. Being aware that boundaries of behaviour in adult groups are normally different from the boundaries that apply to underage teams and squads.
- Appointing a Club Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings Committee, comprising of three people, as outlined in detail in the Code of Behaviour (Underage). This Committee shall be appointed and mandated by the Club Executive to hear any alleged breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) and to reach a determination following their enquiries as to what sanction, if any, may apply in the event of a breach of the Code.
- Adopting, on an annual basis, the Club Child Safeguarding Statement, with amendments if necessary, which must be made known to Club members and put on prominent display in the Club premises.
- Ensure that Club members are aware of our Child Safeguarding procedures including the policy documents Code of Behaviour (Underage) and the Guidance for Dealing with and Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse and of our responsibilities to report concerns and allegations of abuse to the relevant statutory authorities and to the Association's DLP/Mandated Person, as required.





## 08. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN GAELIC GAMES ASSOCIATIONS' PROCEDURES

The Gaelic Athletics Associations, Ladies Gaelic Football Association, the Camogie Association, GAA Handball Ireland and GAA Rounders have agreed a number of joint Child Safeguarding initiatives and policies so as to ensure, in so far as is practicably possible, the safety of children from the risk of harm while playing our games and participating in our activities.

The adoption of such agreed documents alone will not achieve this aim. However, the continuous commitment and implementation of such good practices by dedicated volunteers at Club, County, Provincial and National levels, with the cooperation and support of an equally dedicated cohort of staff, will assist us as we seek to create a safe environment for young people in which to grow and develop.

Equally so the role of parents in supporting our work and the vigilance of our members is vital as we jointly pursue this aim.

In particular, agreed procedures now require that all coaches of underage teams or teams that include any person under 18 years of age must fulfil the following criteria;

- Undertake agreed vetting and background Police checks within the jurisdiction(s) in which they operate.
- Attend relevant Gaelic Games child safeguarding training.
- Possess a coaching qualification relevant to their role as recognised by their Association.

**Our agreed policies and procedures are in accordance with current legislative requirements and include:**

- The publication of a Child Safeguarding Statement which is binding on all members and units of our Associations.
- Carrying out a Risk Assessment procedure at Club, County and National levels, prior to publishing the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- A Code of Behaviour (Underage) which includes:
  - o Recruitment policy for those working with children
  - o Child safeguarding training requirements
  - o Anti-Bullying statement
  - o Social Media policy
  - o Guidance for Dealing and Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse
  - o Appointing Designated Liaison Persons at Club, County and national levels.
  - o Appointing Children's Officers at Club, County and National levels who shall be the Association's relevant persons or first point of contact in respect of the Child Safeguarding Statement.
  - o Appointing a Mandated Person in the GAA, LGFA, Camogie and Handball Associations. (The GAA Mandated Person also fulfils the mandated role with GAA Rounders).

**MANDATED PERSONS MAY BE CONTACTED AT**

GAA/ROUNDERS – [mandatedperson@gaa.ie](mailto:mandatedperson@gaa.ie)

LGFA – [mandatedperson@lgfa.ie](mailto:mandatedperson@lgfa.ie)

Camogie – [mandatedperson@camogie.ie](mailto:mandatedperson@camogie.ie)

Handball – [mandatedperson.handball@gaa.ie](mailto:mandatedperson.handball@gaa.ie)



## 09. CODE DECLARATION/SIGNATORY

*PLEASE CUT OUT THIS PANEL AND RETURN IT TO YOUR CLUB CHILDREN'S OFFICER  
OR OTHER NOMINATED OFFICIAL*

This Code of Behaviour addresses the minimum levels of behaviour, practice and conduct required from our Young Players, Coaches, Officials, Managers, Supporters, Referees, Parents/Guardians and Clubs.

[www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-welfare-and-protection/code-of-behaviour](http://www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-welfare-and-protection/code-of-behaviour)

### DECLARATION

I \_\_\_\_\_  
(print name)

I acknowledge that I have read, understand and accept the **Code of Behaviour (Underage)** and I agree to be bound by the principles set out in the Code when participating, playing or attending our Gaelic Games'.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Underage Player)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Coach/Referee)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

The Gaelic Athletic Associations (GAA, LGFA, Camogie, Handball and Rounders) in accordance with our Code of Behaviour (Underage), our policies, procedures and our legislative requirements have agreed this Child Safeguarding Statement, which is binding on all members and units of our Associations.

The basic aims of the Gaelic Athletic Associations include fostering and developing our Gaelic Games and Irish cultural activities among young people and children. These games and related activities are organised and promoted by dedicated volunteers at Club, County, Provincial and National levels with the cooperation and support of an equally

dedicated cohort of staff all of whom are committed to the safeguarding of children and young people in our Association as we seek to create a safe environment for young people to grow and develop.

## PRINCIPLES TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN FROM HARM

This statement recognises that in accordance with legislation and with the requirements of our Codes and Rules that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that all children and young people have a positive, developmental and enjoyable experience of Gaelic Games and when participating in our activities that they do so, as far as is practicable, in a safe and enjoyable environment.

### RISK ASSESSMENT

In preparing this statement we have completed a risk assessment of the potential for harm to children when they are participating in our games and attending our activities under the following headings: Club and Coaching Practices; Complaints & Discipline; Reporting Procedures; Facilities; Recruitment; Communications and General Risk of Harm.

To the right is a list of areas of risk identified and the list of procedures and policies that address these risks.

### RISK IDENTIFIED

Risk of harm including assault, ill treatment or neglect of a child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare or sexual abuse of a child

Risk of harm of abuse when hosting an activity and or an away trip

Risk of harm of online abuse through social media

Bullying of a child

### PROCEDURE/POLICIES IN PLACE

**Code of Behaviour (Underage) (QR code 1)**  
**Maintaining Good Practice and Behaviour (QR code 2)**  
 Recruitment Policy  
 Vetting Policy  
 Safeguarding Training Policy  
**Guidance for Dealing with & Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse (QR code 3)**



Code of Behaviour (Underage)-Hosting, Away Trips & Transport

Code of Behaviour (Underage) Association Social Media Policy

Anti-Bullying Statement, Guidelines & Training

### PROCEDURES

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been prepared in accordance with the legislative requirements contained in the *Children First Act 2015, Children's First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), the Children (NI) Order 1995, Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice* and as required by our Association rules.

Each Club shall maintain a list of members who, if known, and in accordance with the Children First Act 2015 are specified as mandated persons, regardless of what role (if any), they hold in the Club.

The following procedures contained in our risk assessment support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our services.

- Procedure in respect of the management of allegations of abuse against any member, non-member or staff/volunteer of a child availing of our services
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children and young people
- Procedure for provision of and access to Gaelic Games Child Safeguarding Training and information including the identification of the occurrence of harm
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to the Association, Tusla and or Gateway Team as applicable
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person i.e. the Children's Officer (National, Club and County as appropriate) who is the relevant person for the purpose of this statement (see name below)

### MANDATED PERSON PROCEDURES

The Mandated Person, who has a legal obligation to report harm of children as per legislation and who has been employed for the purpose of performing the child welfare and protection functions within each of our Associations is:

<b>GAA/Rounders</b>	Gearóid Ó Maoilmhichíl	<a href="mailto:mandatedperson@gaa.ie">mandatedperson@gaa.ie</a>
<b>Camogie</b>	Roberta Farrell	<a href="mailto:mandatedperson@camogie.ie">mandatedperson@camogie.ie</a>
<b>Handball</b>	John Kelly	<a href="mailto:mandatedperson.handball@gaa.ie">mandatedperson.handball@gaa.ie</a>
<b>LGFA</b>	Paula Prunty	<a href="mailto:mandatedperson@lgfa.ie">mandatedperson@lgfa.ie</a>

All policies and procedures listed above are available at [www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-safeguarding-and-protection](http://www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-safeguarding-and-protection)

### IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The Gaelic Athletic Associations recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. The Associations are committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures that support our intention to keep children and young people safe from harm while availing of our service. This Statement adopted and endorsed by our Club Executive Committee will be reviewed by **31st of May 2023** or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

## 11. CHILD/YOUTH MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM (PAGE 1 OF 4)

This template Child/Youth Membership Form outlines the minimum level of information required when registering your child (under 18 yrs. of age) with your Club. It is recommended that membership registration should be completed by using the Foireann registration system.

**Ainm/Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Seoladh/Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Gender:**

I hereby apply to: \_\_\_\_\_ Club ("the Club") for Membership of the Club and Membership of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael (The Gaelic Athletic Association) ("GAA") ("Membership")

I subscribe to and undertake to further the aims and objectives of (Association) to abide by its Rules including the **Code of Behaviour (Underage)**, which is available at: [gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-welfare-and-protection](http://gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-welfare-and-protection)

**Sínithe/Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Dáta:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent(s)/Guardian(s), on behalf of the above named:-**

- We/I consent to the above Application and to undertakings given by the Applicant.
- We/I understand the personal data on this form will be used by the Club and the Association for the contractual purpose of registering (or re-registering) and maintaining the Applicant's Membership and notification of Club activities such as matches, meetings and Club events.
- We/I understand that the Personal Data will be retained by the Club and the Association for such period as the Applicant's Membership subsists and for a reasonable period thereafter.
- We/I understand that We/I can resign the Applicant's Membership by writing to the Club or the Association and their Personal Data will then be erased except where the Club or the Association has a clear justification to retain such Personal Data (e.g. for child safeguarding purposes, insurance, etc.
- We/I understand that the Applicant's Personal Data will also be used for administrative purposes to maintain their Membership including club and team administration, registrations, teamsheets, referee reports, disciplinary matters, injury reports, transfers, sanctions, permits and for statistical purposes.
- We/I understand that if I do not provide the Applicant's Personal Data their Membership cannot be registered with the Club and the Association.

**Sínithe/Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Parent/Guardian)**

**Print name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Dáta:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. CHILD/YOUTH MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM (PAGE 2 OF 4)

### MEDICAL INFORMATION

Please outline any medical information (i.e. allergies, conditions, medication) which may impact on your child's health, welfare or behaviour while participating in our activities.

- ☐ I consent to the processing of the personal medical data as outlined above for the purpose of administering medical assistance to my child if required.
- ☐ In the event of illness/injury, I give permission for medical treatment to be administered by a nominated first aider, or by suitably qualified medical practitioners.
- ☐ If I cannot be contacted and my child requires emergency hospital treatment, I authorise a qualified medical practitioner to provide emergency treatment or medication.

**Sínte/Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Parent/Guardian)**      **Dáta:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian mobile no:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the important Data Protection information on the reverse of this form and have given my consent, by ticking the boxes and signing below, for my information to be used as follows *(Please tick as appropriate)*

- ☐ To provide me on my own behalf and on behalf of my child with updates regarding Club activities such as games, training, meetings and Clubs events
- ☐ To provide me with details of Club fundraising activities including, social occasions, ticket sales etc.
- ☐ I am aware that my child's photograph or video image may be taken whilst attending or participating in games or activities connected with the Club and I consent to it being used in the promotion of Gaelic Games, print, online/digital and social media mediums of communication

## 11. CHILD/YOUTH MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM (PAGE 3 OF 4)

I understand that I can withdraw my consent at any time by writing to the [Club or my Association].

I understand my rights under Data Protection legislation, as outlined on later on this form

**Sínithe/Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Parent/Guardian)**

**Print name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Dáta:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My contact preferences are as follows:**

☐ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ **Text** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of full member; proposing new member:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Dáta:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of full member; seconding new member:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Dáta:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**For Official Use only:**

Registered in Central Membership Database on \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Identification Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Upon election, your membership details will be entered on the Association's membership database in accordance with Rule.



## 11. CHILD/YOUTH MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM (PAGE 4 OF 4)

### IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION

The following Privacy Information is being provided to you as outlined in the General Data Protection Regulation. It is intended to inform you of how the Personal Information provided on this form will be used, by whom and for what purposes. If you are unclear on any aspect of this form, or want any further information, please contact the GAA's Data Protection Officer (01 8658600 or [dataprotection@gaa.ie](mailto:dataprotection@gaa.ie)).

### Who is the data controller?

The Club and the GAA are Joint Data Controllers of the Personal Data contained on this form and contact details for the Club are as follows [Club Name, Address, Phone / email].

### Who is the Data Protection Officer for the GAA and the Club?

Details of the GAA's Data Protection Officer are available on the GAA's website [gaa.ie/dataprotection](http://gaa.ie/dataprotection). You can contact our Data Protection Officer by emailing [dataprotection@gaa.ie](mailto:dataprotection@gaa.ie) or by calling 01 8658600, if you have any questions or wish to make any request in relation to your personal data.

### What is the purpose of processing my Personal Data?

The purpose for processing your Personal Data is that it is necessary for the performance of a contract in order to register and maintain your membership with the Club and the GAA.

The purpose is also to keep you informed of GAA events and fundraisers. We will only use your personal data for this second purpose if you have provided your explicit consent for this by ticking the boxes on this form.

If you provide your child's medical information and your explicit consent for the Club to process this information, this information shall only be processed for the purpose of administering medical assistance and where necessary the information provided shall be shared with qualified medical practitioners.

### Will anyone else receive a copy of my Personal Data?

Your Personal Data can be accessed by certain members of the County Committees, Provincial Councils and the Central Council of the Gaelic Athletic Association for administrative purposes. This will be done in accordance with our data protection policy only.

In the event of an injury or insurance claim, details of your claim which will include your Personal Data will be passed to our Injury Fund Administrators, DWF based at 5 George's Dock, IFSC, Dublin 1.

### Where is your Personal Data stored?

Your data will be stored electronically on the GAA Membership Database which is provided by Dawson Andrews, based at 17a Ormeau Ave, Belfast BT2 8HD.

### Who is Dawson Andrews?

Dawson Andrews is a "data processor" who hosts the database on which your information is stored. We have a contract in place with Dawson Andrews to ensure your Personal Data is stored safely and securely.

### How long will your Personal Data be stored for?

Your Personal Data will be held for the duration of your Membership and it will be deleted by us in the event that you resign your Membership or you are expelled in accordance with the Official Guide. However, we may retain your Personal Data after your Membership ceases if we decide that it is strictly necessary to do so in the circumstances in accordance with our data retention policy.

### How can I obtain a copy of the Personal Data held by the Club/GAA?

You have the right to request a copy of all of your Personal Data and can do so by contacting us. This information will be provided to you within one month.

### What are my privacy rights relating to my Personal Data?

You have the right to have your Personal Data updated, rectified, or deleted in certain circumstances. You have the right to object to your Personal Data being processed and to withdraw your consent to processing - You can do so by contacting us.

### Where can I get further information?

Further information regarding your rights can be obtained through the Data Protection Commission, 21 Fitzwilliam Square South, Dublin 2, D02 RD28 or on the website [www.dataprotection.ie](http://www.dataprotection.ie)

### How do I make a complaint or report a breach?

Should you wish to make a complaint or report a breach under in relation to your Personal Data, you can do so by filling in a webform on their website at [www.dataprotection.ie](http://www.dataprotection.ie), or by phone at 057 868 4800.

Produced by the Child Safeguarding Committee in association with  
Cumann Lúthcleas Gael, Cumann Camógaíochta, Cumann Peil na mBan,  
Liathróid Láimhe CLG na hÉireann and Comhairle Cluiche Corr na hÉireann.





SECTION  
04

## DEALING WITH ALLEGED BREACHES OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF THE  
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)

OCTOBER 2021 (VIII)



LGFA  
PEIL na mBAN





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**NÓTAÍ**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Code of Behaviour (Underage) is a joint code of good practice in accordance with Rule published by:-**
- 1.1.1 The Gaelic Athletic Association (“the GAA”);
  - 1.1.2 Ladies Gaelic Football Association (“the LGFA”);
  - 1.1.3 The Camogie Association;
  - 1.1.4 GAA Handball Ireland;
  - 1.1.5 Rounders Council of Ireland.  
(collectively “the Associations”)
- 1.2** The Code of Behaviour (Underage) outlines the standards of practice required of those participating in underage games and activities, regardless of what role they may play and in doing so, brings together the collective good practice experiences of our Associations while also recognising the legislative, organisational and statutory guidance that governs our work with young people and children.
- 1.3** Our Associations are committed to creating and maintaining a safe and enjoyable environment for all young people and children who participate in our games and other activities. In upholding this principle, our Associations will continue to abide by and integrate child welfare legislation and statutory guidance into our work in all jurisdictions in which we operate.
- 1.4** The welfare of the child shall always be our paramount consideration, whether it is on the playing fields, in the training of our underage players, in the recruitment of our coaches or the many other developmental and social opportunities that we offer our underage players on a regular basis.
- 1.5** The promotion and implementation of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) is everybody’s responsibility.
- 1.6** Unfortunately, breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) may occur from time to time, some of which may be minor breaches and some of which may be major breaches. Breaches may happen for a number of reasons including, but not limited to, carelessness, poor practice, and a lack of understanding or there may be, in some instances, deliberate or calculated breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage).
- 1.7** This document, Dealing with Alleged Breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage), forms part of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) and sets out the procedures to be followed in the event of alleged breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage), the level of disciplinary procedures that may be applied following a breach and the sanctions that may be imposed for breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage).

## 2. GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR DEALING WITH AN ALLEGED BREACH OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)

### **2.1 Status**

- 2.1.1. Breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) may also be a breach of the rules of the relevant Association.
- 2.1.2. In circumstances where an allegation could constitute a breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) or a breach of rule, it shall be dealt with under the rules of the relevant Association and the disciplinary procedure contained in the rules, unless it is determined, in accordance with paragraph 5.1.6 below, that the allegation should be dealt with under the provisions of the Code of Behaviour (Underage).
- 2.1.3. Members of the GAA, LGFA, Camogie, Rounders and Handball Associations are obliged to cooperate with the informal or formal procedures for Dealing with Alleged Breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) as outlined in section 3-5 below. Any failure to do so shall be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedures of the relevant Association's rules.

### **2.2 False Allegations**

- 2.2.1 Any member found to have made a false or vexatious allegation shall be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedures in the relevant Association's rules.

### **2.3 Allegations of Abuse**

- 2.3.1 Allegations of abuse shall be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Guidance for Dealing with and Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse, and not under the provisions below.

### **2.4 Role of Children's Officer**

- 2.4.1 The Children's Officer at Club, County, Provincial and National levels shall have a central role to play in promoting and implementing the Code of Behaviour (Underage). The Children's Officer may be called upon to facilitate a Code Hearings Committee although not in membership of that Committee or may (see [Section 4](#) of this document) deal with an alleged breach of the Code in an informal manner.
- 2.4.2 Due to their role(s) it is not permitted for a Children's Officer to be in membership of any Committee, at Club, County, Provincial or National level dealing directly with an alleged breach of the Code that has arisen within their County. Should such an alleged breach be discussed at any Committee, to which the Children's Officer is a member, they must absent themselves from the meeting while the matter is being discussed.

### **3. REPORTING AN ALLEGED BREACH OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)**

**3.1 An allegation of a breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) may be made by any person or persons (“the Complainant”) to one of the following as appropriate in the circumstances:-**

- 3.1.1 The Club Children’s Officer;
- 3.1.2 The County Children’s Officer;
- 3.1.3 The National Children’s Officer;
- 3.1.4 The Secretary of the Club Executive Committee;
- 3.1.5 The Secretary of the County Committee;
- 3.1.6 The Secretary of the Child Safeguarding Committee

**3.2 While an allegation of an alleged breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) may initially be made verbally or in writing it must be submitted in writing by a complainant so as to enable it to be processed and should include the following information:**

- 3.2.1 The complaint must contain the time, date, venue and provision of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) that has been allegedly breached, the identity and names of any person(s) allegedly involved and the name(s) of person(s) who may have witnessed the alleged breach. The complaint must contain the name and contact details of the complainant.

**3.3 Any failure to provide the information outlined at clause 3.2.1 above shall not invalidate an allegation.**

**3.4 Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with, however they cannot be ignored. All such complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour/poor practice should, in accordance with section 3.1, be brought to the attention of the relevant person and assessed for processing if possible.**

#### 4. INFORMAL PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGED BREACHES OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)

- 4.1** It is acknowledged that certain breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) that occur at Club, County or National level may be instances of poor practice which may appropriately be dealt with in an informal manner.
- 4.2** Where an allegation has been made to the Club, County or National Children's Officer, the Children's Officer will consider the allegation and establish the facts and the context of the allegation.
- 4.3** Where the Children's Officer is of the view that the allegation is serious (because of the gravity of the allegation or for some other reason) he/she shall refer the allegation to the Secretary of the Club Executive Committee, the Secretary of the County Committee or the Secretary of the Child Safeguarding Committee as appropriate to be dealt with in accordance with the formal procedure set out at clause 5 below.
- 4.4** Where the Children's Officer is of the view that the allegation of a breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) may be appropriately dealt with in an informal manner, he/she shall be responsible for dealing with the alleged breach informally and agreeing the procedure to be followed with the parties. This could involve meeting with the person(s) against whom an allegation has been made and resolving the matter amicably and by agreement.
- 4.5** If an alleged breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) is resolved informally, the Club, County or National Children's Officer will note the outcome in writing.
- 4.6** In the event that either party to the allegation objects to the allegation being dealt with informally, the Club, County or National Children's Officer shall refer the allegation to the Secretary of the Club Executive Committee, the Secretary of the County Committee or the Secretary of the Child Safeguarding Committee as appropriate to be dealt with in accordance with the formal procedure set out at clause 5 below.
- 4.7** In the event that:-
  - 4.7.1** It is not possible to resolve the issue, the subject matter of the allegation, in an informal manner the Club, County or National Children's Officer shall refer the allegation to the Secretary of the Club Executive Committee, the Secretary of the County Committee or the Secretary of the Child Safeguarding Committee as appropriate in the circumstances; or
  - 4.7.2** The person against whom the allegation has been made or the complainant, is dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal procedure, he/she may refer the matter to either the Secretary of the Club Executive Committee, the Secretary of the County Committee or the Secretary of the Child Safeguarding Committee as appropriate in the circumstances.

## 5. FORMAL PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH AN ALLEGED BREACH OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)

### 5.1 Consideration of allegation

- 5.1.1 The Secretary of the Club Executive Committee, the County Committee or the Child Safeguarding Committee (or any sub committees nominated for that purpose) shall refer any allegations he/she receives from a complainant to the respective committee for consideration.
- 5.1.2 The Club Executive Committee, or in the interests of greater efficiency and confidentiality a sub-committee nominated by the Executive, shall be responsible for initial consideration and investigation of any allegation made.
- 5.1.3 The County Committee shall appoint a committee known as the Code of Behaviour (Underage) County Determining Committee ("the Determining Committee"). The County Committee shall nominate three persons to the Determining Committee. In its appointment of the Determining Committee, the County Committee shall seek to appoint a nominee of the relevant County Committee of each of the LGFA, the Camogie Association and the GAA to the Determining Committee. Any allegation of failure to appoint nominees of any of the Associations shall not undermine the validity of the Determining Committee as appointed or its decisions.
- The Determining Committee shall be responsible for initial consideration and investigation of any allegation made.
  - The GAA, LGFA and Camogie County Committees shall each ratify the membership of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) County Determining Committee.
- 5.1.4 The Child Safeguarding Committee shall appoint a Child Safeguarding Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings Committee to investigate and consider allegations at Provincial and National level and may also investigate and consider allegations at Club and County level as are referred to it.
- 5.1.5 If any member of the relevant committee is conflicted in relation to an allegation, that member shall notify the members of the relevant committee and shall not be involved in investigating or considering the allegation.
- 5.1.6 In circumstances where an allegation could constitute a breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) or a breach of rule of the relevant Association, the Club Executive Committee, the Determining Committee or the Child Safeguarding Committee appointed National Hearings Committee as the case may be, may determine, in its absolute discretion that the allegation shall be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour (Underage). If no such determination is made, the allegation shall be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedures set out in the rules of the relevant Association.



**5.2 Investigation of an allegation at Club/County/National level**

- 5.2.1 Provided that the allegation is to be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour (Underage), the relevant committee (see 5.1.2/5.1.3/5.1.4) may investigate any allegation that has come to its attention as it considers appropriate.
- 5.2.2 Where the relevant committee (see 5.1.2/5.1.3/5.1.4) deems it necessary to conduct an investigation, it may carry out the investigation or delegate the investigation to one or more of its members as it considers appropriate in the circumstances.
- 5.2.3 The level of investigation required will depend on the circumstances. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from the Complainant and/or the Respondent, members or witnesses and/or reviewing relevant documents.
- 5.2.4 If the Respondent is under 18 years of age, meetings or interviews should not take place with the Respondent without the presence of his or her parent or guardian, unless the Respondent's parents or guardians have been notified of the allegation and invited to attend the meeting or interview but have refused to do so. In circumstances where the Respondent's parents or guardian refuse to accompany him or her to a meeting or interview, the Respondent shall be entitled to be accompanied to the meeting or interview by an adult of his/her choosing. If the Respondent chooses not to be accompanied to the meeting by an adult, the meeting or interview may proceed.
- 5.2.5 If a witness is under 18 years of age, meetings or interviews should not take place with the witness without the presence of his or her parent or guardian or of a nominated adult on behalf of the parent/guardian, unless their parent(s) or guardian(s) have been notified of the meetings or interview and invited to attend and have refused to do so. In circumstances where the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a witness who is under 18 years of age refuse to accompany him or her to a meeting or interview, or nominate a person in their place, the witness shall be entitled to be accompanied to the meeting or interview by an adult of his/her choosing. If they choose not to be accompanied to the meeting by an adult, the meeting or interview may proceed.
- 5.2.6 The investigation is solely for the purpose of fact-finding and no decision on disciplinary action will be taking by the relevant committee.
- 5.2.7 At the conclusion of the investigation, the relevant committee may decide:-
  - 5.2.7.1 That no further action should be taken;
  - 5.2.7.2 To refer the allegation to a Club, County or National Children's Officer to deal with the allegation informally;
  - 5.2.7.3 To refer the allegation for hearing to the Club, County or National Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings Committee; or
  - 5.2.7.4 To refer the allegation to be dealt with under the relevant Associations disciplinary rules.

**5.2.8 GAA Code of Conduct:** When consideration is given as to whether an alleged breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) is best dealt with under the Code or under other rule provisions it may be necessary to explore, in the case of a member of the GAA, if the GAA Code of Conduct for Members, Officers, Players, Parents/Guardians, Mentors, Supporters, Match Officials, Team and Units could apply to the case as referred.

**5.3** In circumstances where the relevant committee refers the allegation to the Club, County Hearings Committee or National Child Safeguarding Hearings Committee or refers the allegations to be dealt with under the relevant Associations disciplinary rules, it shall prepare a report (“the Report”).

**5.4** In the event that the relevant committee omits from the Report evidence that is subsequently shown to be relevant, this shall not of itself affect the validity of the Report.

**5.5 The Report shall contain:**

5.5.1 The identity of any person(s) or Unit(s) against whom action is being taken (“the Respondent”);

5.5.2 A statement of the alleged breach quoting the provision(s) of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) it is alleged has been breached;

5.5.3 Copies of all relevant documents available to the relevant committee (including where appropriate, the original allegation); and

5.5.4 A list of witnesses, if any, who will be required to attend the hearing on behalf of the relevant committee. This list may be updated at any stage up to 24 hours before any hearing.

**5.6** Appointment of the Club Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings Committee (“The Club Code Hearings Committee”)

5.6.1 The Club Executive Committee shall appoint the Club Code Hearings Committee consisting of three individuals to hear allegations of breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) at Club level.

5.6.2 Where two or more Clubs amalgamate for the purpose of fielding underage team(s) the Club Executive Committee representing each of the amalgamating Club shall endorse the membership of a joint Club Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings Committee who shall act as the Club Code Hearings Committee for the amalgamated unit.

5.6.3 In appointing the Club Code Hearings Committee, the Club Executive Committee will have regard to the extent of integration of the Associations in the particular Club (if any) in selecting the Hearings Committee.

5.6.4 Any allegation of failure to comply with the obligation to have regard to the extent of integration of the Associations in a particular Club, shall not undermine the validity of the committee as appointed or its decision.

5.6.5 If an individual appointed to the Club Code Hearings Committee is conflicted in relation to the parties to or the subject matter of the Report, that individual shall notify the Club Executive Committee of the conflict and shall be removed from the Club Code Hearings Committee.

5.6.6 If an individual is removed from the Club Code Hearings Committee, the Executive Committee shall appoint a different individual to the Club Code Hearings Committee on a temporary or permanent basis.

5.6.7 The Club Code Hearings Committee shall appoint from within its membership a Chairperson and a Secretary.

### **5.7** Appointment of the County Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings Committee (“The County Code Hearings Committee”)

5.7.1 The County Committee shall appoint the County Hearings Committee consisting of three individuals, including a nominee from each of the GAA, the LGFA and the Camogie Association. If a nominee is not proposed from one of the Associations, the County Committee can appoint an individual in their place. The GAA, LGFA and Camogie County Committees shall each ratify the membership of the County Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings Committee.

5.7.2 If an individual appointed to the County Hearings Committee is conflicted in relation to the parties to or the subject matter of the Report, that individual shall notify the County Committee of the conflict and shall be removed from the County Hearings Committee.

5.7.3 If a nominee is temporarily or otherwise removed from the County Hearings Committee, the County Committee shall appoint a different nominee from the same Association as the removed nominee to the Hearings Committee on a temporary or permanent basis.

5.7.4 The County Hearings Committee shall appoint from within its membership a Chairperson and a Secretary.

### **5.8** Appointment of the National Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings Committee (“The National Code Hearings Committee”)

5.8.1 The Child Safeguarding Committee shall appoint the National Hearings Committee consisting of three individuals, one of whom it shall nominate as the Chairperson.

5.8.2 The National Hearings Committee shall hear allegations of breaches at Provincial and National level and may hear allegations of breaches at Club and County level if referred to it.

5.8.3 If any individual appointed to the National Hearings Committee is conflicted in relation to the parties to or the subject matter of the Report, that individual shall notify the Child Safeguarding Committee of the conflict and shall be removed from the National Hearings Committee.

5.8.4 If an individual is removed from the National Hearings Committee, the Child Safeguarding Committee shall appoint a different individual on a temporary or permanent basis to the National Hearings Committee while the allegations of breaches are being heard.

5.8.5 The National Hearings Committee shall appoint from within its membership a Secretary.

**5.9 Case Presenter**

Where the relevant Committee refers the allegation to the Club, County or National Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings Committee the Committee shall also appoint a Case presenter from within its membership or may by agreement request the complainant to present the case.

**5.10 Notification of Hearing**

5.10.1 The Chairperson of the relevant Club Hearings Committee, County Hearings Committee or National Hearings Committee shall notify the person against whom the allegation has been made (“the Respondent”) and his or her parents, if the Respondent is under 18 years of age, the Complainant, the Case Presenter, the relevant Hearings Committee members of the following:

5.10.1.2 The date, time, and location of the hearing which must commence within 21 days of the relevant Hearings Committee Chairperson receiving a copy of “the Report”.

5.10.1.3 A copy of the Report;

5.10.1.4 The Respondent’s right to be accompanied to the hearing and to cross examine witnesses;

5.10.1.5 If the Respondent is under 18 years of age, he/she will be informed that his/her parent have been notified and invited to the hearing;

5.10.1.6 A list of witnesses that will attend and inviting the Respondent to call witnesses.

**5.11 The Hearing at Club, County National Level (“the Hearing”)**

5.11.1 If the Respondent is an individual member, that Respondent shall attend the Hearing personally and may be represented by one full member of his or her Club or Unit.

5.11.2 If the Respondent is not a member, that Respondent shall attend the Hearing personally and may be represented by a nominated colleague.

5.11.3 If the Respondent is a Club, that Club shall be represented at the Hearing by a maximum of two of its full members.

5.11.4 If the Respondent is under 18 years of age, that Respondent may also be accompanied by his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) or by an individual nominated by his/her parent(s)/guardian(s). (See also 5.2.4).

5.11.5 The Case Presenter [see 5.9] shall attend the Hearing and present the evidence contained in the Report and may call witnesses as deemed relevant by the Hearings Committee.

5.11.6 The relevant Hearings Committee will decide on matters of procedure and may adjourn Hearings and take such steps as are necessary and appropriate to the Hearing.

5.11.7 Any person found by the relevant Hearings Committee to have deliberately given false evidence, whether orally or in writing, or to have deliberately mislead any hearing shall be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedures provided for by the Associations in their rules.

- 5.11.8 No evidence shall be given or submissions made in the absence of any party to the Disciplinary Action unless they fail to attend at the Hearing without reasonable explanation. If evidence is so given through inadvertence, it shall be repeated in the presence of all parties, so that no prejudice is caused to the party previously absent.
- 5.11.9 The relevant Hearings Committee, on consideration of the 'Report' and any other documentation forwarded to them for the purpose of the Hearing, may decide not to direct that a Hearing should take place if they believe the matter should be heard elsewhere. The relevant Hearings Committee shall return all documents to the relevant committee (see 5.1.2/5.1.3/5.1.4) outlining the reason(s) for their decision. Any such decision would not constitute the commencement of the Hearing.
- 5.11.10 In circumstances where a witness, who is under 18 years of age is subject to cross examination during the Hearings, any such interaction must take place in an age appropriate manner and under the strict guidance of the Chairperson of the Hearings Committee.
- 5.11.11 Minutes or detailed notes of the Hearing should be retained and made available if required to to the Complainant, the Respondent and the relevant committee who referred the allegation to the Hearings Committee in order to clarify key issues discussed, evidence submitted and decision(s) taken. The minutes/notes may be required to ensure accuracy of the decision(s) taken and in the event of an appeal.

**5.12 Decision**

- 5.12.2 At the conclusion of the hearing, the relevant Hearings Committee will retire to consider its decision as to whether the alleged breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) occurred and what sanction (if any) is appropriate and proportionate in the circumstances.
- 5.12.3 A decision shall be made by the majority of the members of the relevant Hearings Committee presiding over the Hearing.
- 5.12.4 The decision shall be recorded and shall be notified to the Complainant, the Respondent and the relevant committee who referred the allegation to the Hearings Committee.

**5.13 Sanctions**

The following sanctions are available to the Hearings Committees if it finds that there has been a breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) :-

- 5.13.1 Conditions in respect of the membership or level of participation that a person may have including, but not limited to, training or re-training of members appropriate to their roles and interaction with children and young people in the relevant Association;
- 5.13.2 Restrictions on the manner and level of participation that a person may have in the relevant Association;
- 5.13.3 Debarment in respect of a member from identified privileges of the relevant Association such as playing games, attending games, holding office, handling funds, attending occasions other than games etc.

### 5.14 Safeguarding compliance – Child Safeguarding Committee temporary action

- 5.14.1 All members, teams and other units participating in activities and games for children and young people within the Gaelic Games Associations must at all times be safeguarding compliant in accordance with Association Child Safeguarding procedures and legislative requirements.

The Child Safeguarding Committee may, at any time, make a determination that a team, unit, or member is non-compliant with Association child safeguarding procedures or in breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) (a “Determination of Non-Compliance”). If such a Determination is made, the team, unit, or member shall be notified in writing.

The team, unit, or member in receipt of a Determination of Non-Compliance shall not be permitted to participate in any competitions, games or activities under the jurisdiction of any of our Associations (GAA, LGFA, Camogie, Rounders Handball) from the date of receipt (or deemed date of receipt) of notice of the Determination of Non-Compliance until the Child Safeguarding Committee has determined that it is in compliance (“a Determination of Compliance”). The Child Safeguarding Committee shall review a Determination of Non-Compliance no later than two weeks after it has been made and shall review it at intervals of no more than four weeks thereafter. Where a team, unit or member remains non-compliant, a further Determination of Non-Compliance shall be made and notice of that Determination shall be given to the team, member or unit concerned.

If a team, unit or member in receipt of a Determination of Non-Compliance wishes to appeal a Determination of Non-Compliance, it/they may appeal this decision to the Child Safeguarding Appeals Panel by submitting their appeal to the Secretary of the Child Safeguarding Appeals Panel ([cwpappeals@gaa.ie](mailto:cwpappeals@gaa.ie)) within two days of receipt of the Determination of Non-Compliance.

The Secretary of the Child Safeguarding Committee shall notify relevant County, Provincial or National Committees of a Determination of Non-Compliance and the County, Provincial or National Committee concerned shall ensure that the sanction attached to the Determination of Non-Compliance is applied. Failure by the relevant Committee to enforce this sanction shall result in disciplinary action, in accordance with Association Rules.

### 5.15 Appeals

- 5.15.1 A Respondent who is aggrieved by the decision of the relevant Hearings Committee, or by a temporary safeguarding non-compliance order agreed by the Child Safeguarding Committee, may appeal the decision by serving notice in writing (“the Appeal”) to the Secretary of the Child Safeguarding Appeals Panel (“the Appeals Committee”), within three days from the date and time of notification of the decision. Email [cwpappeals@gaa.ie](mailto:cwpappeals@gaa.ie)
- 5.15.2 The Appeal shall be signed by the Appellant, or in the case of a Club or Unit, by its secretary and shall set out the grounds of appeal.
- 5.15.3 The Secretary of the Appeals Panel shall notify the Chairperson of the Appeals Panel that an Appeal has been lodged.

**5.16 Appointment of the Appeals Panel**

- 5.16.1 The Associations shall have an Appeals Panel comprised of no more than ten individuals which include representatives from each of the Associations.
- 5.16.2 The Chairperson of the Appeals Panel shall appoint an Appeals Committee comprised of three members from the Appeals Panel to consider an appeal from a decision of the relevant Hearings Committee.

**5.17 Notification of the Appeal and the Appeal Hearing**

- 5.17.1 All parties to any original Hearing shall have the right to be present at the hearing of an Appeal.
- 5.17.2 The Appeal shall be heard as soon as reasonably convenient.
- 5.17.3 A copy of the Appeal, together with notification of the place, date and time of the Appeal Hearing shall be sent by the Secretary to the Appeals Committee and to all parties of the original Hearing.
- 5.17.4 The Appellant may only call witnesses who gave evidence in the original Hearing.
- 5.17.5 An Appeal shall be limited to the matters raised in the Appellant's Appeal as originally lodged and shall be upheld only where (i) there has been a clear infringement or misapplication of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) by a Hearings Committee or (ii) the Appellant's Right to a fair hearing has otherwise been compromised to such an extent that a clear injustice has occurred. No determination of fact by a Hearings Committee shall be set aside unless shown to be manifestly incorrect.
- 5.17.6 The Appeal's Committee appointed to hear the appeal shall not have been connected to the investigation or the complaint previously, and no member of the Appeal's Committee shall have been a member of the Hearings Committee considering the original Report

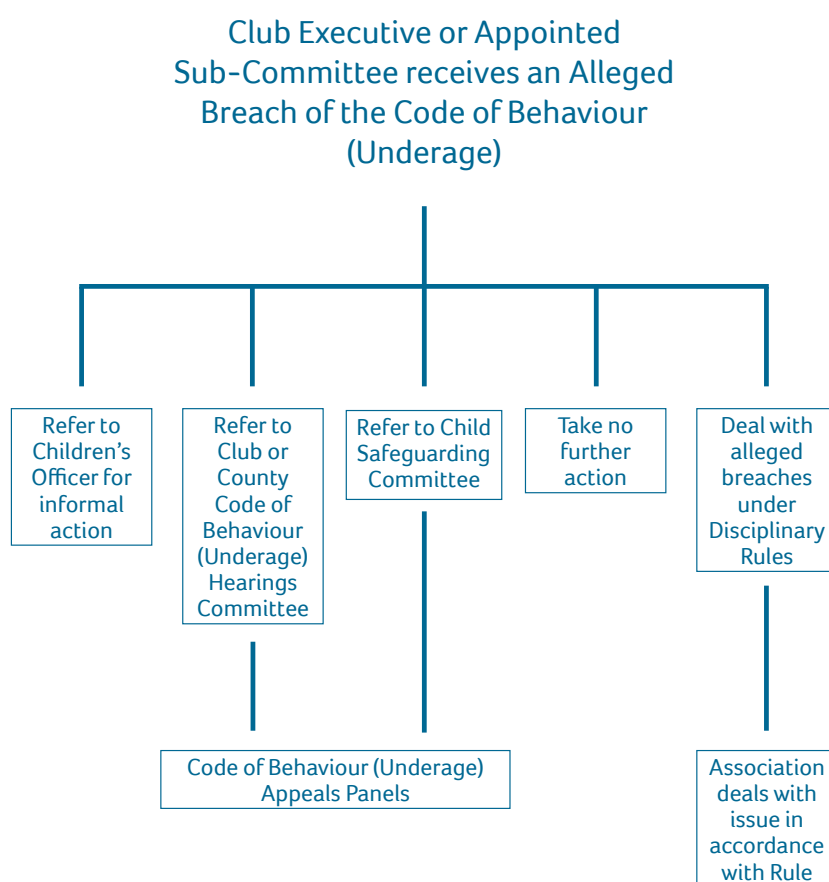
**5.18 Appeals Decision**

- 5.18.1 A decision shall be made by the Appeals Committee on foot of the Appeal and such decision shall be notified to the Appellant, the Hearings Committee, and any other relevant party. In the event of the Appeal being upheld, the Appeals Committee shall either:
  - 5.18.1.2 Annul the decision appealed against and direct no further action be taken by the Hearings Committee;
  - 5.18.1.3 Remit the matter for re-hearing or re-processing by the appropriate committee (with or without recommendations as to procedure), or
  - 5.18.1.4 Substitute its own decision on the matter.



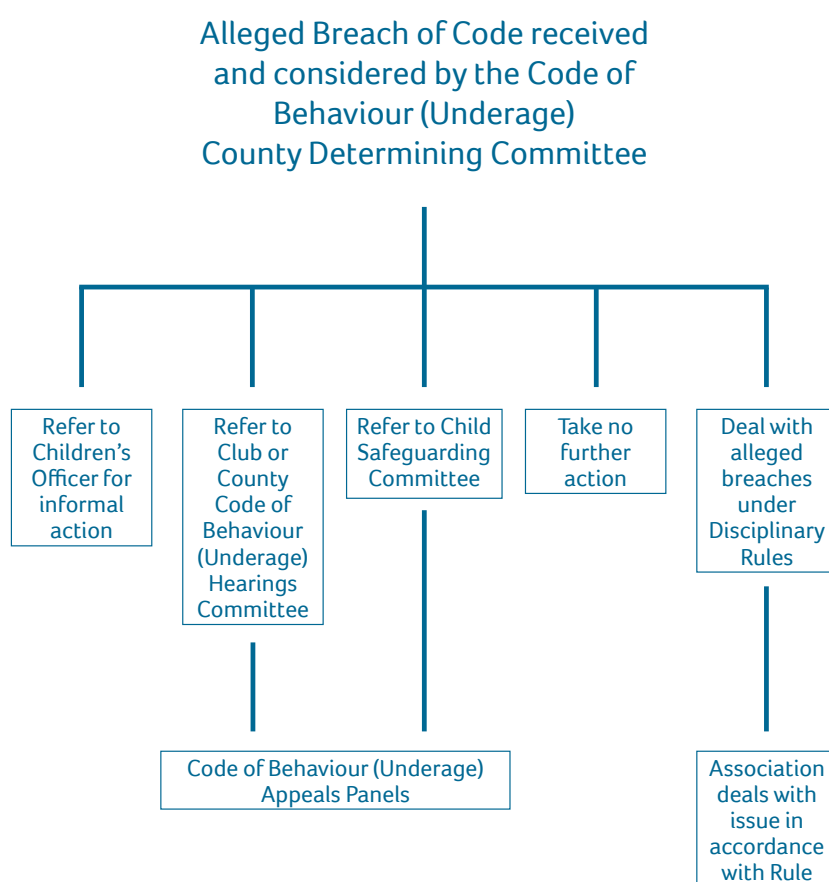
## APPENDIX 1. PROCESSING AN ALLEGED BREACH OF THE CODE AT CLUB LEVEL

### DEALING WITH ALLEGED BREACHES OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE) AT **CLUB** LEVEL



## APPENDIX 2. PROCESSING AN ALLEGED BREACH OF THE CODE AT COUNTY LEVEL

### DEALING WITH ALLEGED BREACHES OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE) AT **COUNTY** LEVEL



## GAELIC GAMES COUNTY CHILDREN'S OFFICERS 2021

	ASSOCIATION	NAME	EMAIL	TELEPHONE
<b>Antrim</b>	GAA	Barney Herron	childrensofficer.antrim@gaa.ie	07756713111
	Camogie	Imelda McLeod	childrensofficer.antrim@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Clare Cauldwell	childrensofficer.antrim@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Armagh</b>	GAA	Réamonn Ó Ciaráin	childrensofficer.armagh@gaa.ie	07711689665
	Camogie	Noreen Barrett	childrensofficer.armagh@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Paula Murphy	childrensofficer.armagh@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Carlow</b>	GAA	George Darcy	childrensofficer.carlow@gaa.ie	087 2890773
	Camogie	Margaret Condell	childrensofficer.carlow@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Joanne O'Brien	childrensofficer.carlow@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Cavan</b>	GAA	Anne Fortune	childrensofficer.cavan@gaa.ie	087 9874 758
	Camogie	Marie Brady	childrensofficer.cavan@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Brigid Sheridan	childrensofficer.cavan@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Clare</b>	GAA	Kathy Hogan	childrensofficer.clare@gaa.ie	085 7293363
	Camogie	Aideen McCormack	childrensofficer.clare@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Sandra McCarthy	childrensofficer.clare@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Cork</b>	GAA	Eoghan O'Connor	childrensofficer.cork@gaa.ie	087 6895421
	Camogie	Norry Cotter-Lynch	childrensofficer.cork@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Miriam O'Connell	childrensofficer.cork@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Derry</b>	GAA	Sean Devlin	childrensofficer.derry@gaa.ie	07884482165
	Camogie	Michelle Friel	childrensofficer.derry@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Joanne O'Kane	childrensofficer.derry@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Donegal</b>	GAA	Daireen McMenamin	childrensofficer.donegal@gaa.ie	086 8267211
	Camogie	Manus O'Donnell	childrensofficer.donegal@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Lisa McGlynn	childrensofficer.donegal@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Down</b>	GAA	Fergus Cooper	childrensofficer.down@gaa.ie	07779291670
	Camogie	Oonagh Sharkey	childrensofficer.down@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Irene Fitzsimmons	childrensofficer.down@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Dublin</b>	GAA	Pauline Mooney	childrensofficer.dublin@gaa.ie	087 9643292
	Camogie	Sinead Feeney	childrensofficer.dublin@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Bernice Jones Moore	childrensofficer.dublin@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Fermanagh</b>	GAA	Anita Kehoe	childrensofficer.fermanagh@gaa.ie	078 45708349
	Camogie	N/A	-	-
	LGFA	Karen McGoldrick	childrensofficer.fermanagh@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Galway</b>	GAA	Pat Monaghan	childrensofficer.galway@gaa.ie	087 9592068
	Camogie	Catherine Dillon	childrensofficer.galway@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Sandra McGrath	childrensofficer.galway@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Kerry</b>	GAA	Bernie Reen	childrensofficer.kerry@gaa.ie	087 2020143
	Camogie	Kathleen Fitzgerald	childrensofficer.kerry@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Hannah Devlin	childrensofficer.kerry@lgfa.ie	-

## DEALING WITH ALLEGED BREACHES OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

	ASSOCIATION	NAME	EMAIL	TELEPHONE
<b>Kildare</b>	GAA	Dermot Lavin	childrensofficer.kildare@gaa.ie	083-4477301
	Camogie	Sinead Tarrant	childrensofficer.kildare@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Alicia Kirwan	childrensofficer.kildare@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Kilkenny</b>	GAA	Caroline Clifford	childrensofficer.kilkenny@gaa.ie	086 2330026
	Camogie	Lillian Holohan	childrensofficer.kilkenny@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Keith Goff	childrensofficer.kilkenny@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Laois</b>	GAA	Seamus Lahart	childrensofficer.laois@gaa.ie	087 6628132
	Camogie	Rachel Dunican	childrensofficer.laois@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Phil O'Keeffe	childrensofficer.laois@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Leitrim</b>	GAA	Mark Heslin	childrensofficer.leitrim@gaa.ie	086 3607370
	Camogie	N/A	-	-
	LGFA	Ann McGloin	childrensofficer.leitrim@lgfa.ie	-
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	Camogie	Máiri McMahon	childrensofficer.limerick@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Maria Sheehan	childrensofficer.limerick@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Longford</b>	GAA	Patrick Maguire	childrensofficer.longford@gaa.ie	087-6613384
	Camogie	N/A	-	-
	LGFA	Brona Fox	childrensofficer.longford@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Louth</b>	GAA	Dermot Clarke	childrensofficer.louth@gaa.ie	086 8268128
	Camogie	Orla McGeeney	childrensofficer.louth@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Lily Dowdall	childrensofficer.louth@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Mayo</b>	GAA	Padraic Carolan	childrensofficer.mayo@gaa.ie	086.6003021
	Camogie	Elaine Tenner	childrensofficer.mayo@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Niamh Ansboro	childrensofficer.mayo@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Meath</b>	GAA	Michael Bennett	childrensofficer.meath@gaa.ie	087 7692951
	Camogie	Carmel O'Reilly Higgins	childrensofficer.meath@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Ellie Lane	childrensofficer.meath@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Monaghan</b>	GAA	Mary McEneaney	childrensofficer.monaghan@gaa.ie	087 6887332
	Camogie	Lisa McGlynn	childrensofficer.monaghan@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Niall Treanor	childrensofficer.monaghan@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Offaly</b>	GAA	Elaine Kelly Dunne	childrensofficer.offaly@gaa.ie	086 0873855
	Camogie	Sarah King	childrensofficer.offaly@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Anne Marie McCormack	childrensofficer.offaly@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Roscommon</b>	GAA	Oliver Donagher	childrensofficer.roscommon@gaa.ie	087 2981462
	Camogie	Patricia Mc Cormack	childrensofficer.roscommon@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Maire Allen	childrensofficer.roscommon@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Sligo</b>	GAA	Terence Marren	childrensofficer.sligo@gaa.ie	086 8229972
	Camogie	N/A	-	-
	LGFA	Jacinta Monaghan	childrensofficer.sligo@lgfa.ie	-

## DEALING WITH ALLEGED BREACHES OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

	ASSOCIATION	NAME	EMAIL	TELEPHONE
<b>Tipperary</b>	GAA	Nicholas Moroney	childrensofficer.tipperary@gaa.ie	087 8369630
	Camogie	Mark Hassett	childrensofficer.tipperary@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Anne Marie Martin	childrensofficer.tipperary@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Tyrone</b>	GAA	Adrian Nugent	childrensofficer.tyrone@gaa.ie	077 1773 2011
	Camogie	Vicky O'Hagan	childrensofficer.tyrone@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Karen McElhill	childrensofficer.tyrone@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Waterford</b>	GAA	TBC	childrensofficer.waterford@gaa.ie	TBC
	Camogie	Michelle Kiely	childrensofficer.waterford@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Tanya Frost O'Grady	childrensofficer.waterford@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Westmeath</b>	GAA	Dermot Brady	childrensofficer.westmeath@gaa.ie	087 9843737
	Camogie	Jackie Jackson	childrensofficer.westmeath@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Clodagh Flanagan	childrensofficer.westmeath@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Wexford</b>	GAA	Des Croke	childrensofficer.wexford@gaa.ie	086 2944249
	Camogie	Barbara Ryan	childrensofficer.wexford@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Yvonne Flynn	childrensofficer.wexford@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Wicklow</b>	GAA	Frances Stephenson	childrensofficer.wicklow@gaa.ie	087 2499 362
	Camogie	Nicky Flynn	childrensofficer.wicklow@camogie.ie	-
	LGFA	Andrea Dunne	childrensofficer.wicklow@lgfa.ie	-
<b>Ulster</b>		Bernie Fox	bernie.fox.ulste@rgaa.ie	00447920429205
<b>Britain</b>		Julie Duffy	childrensofficer.britain@gaa	07780 762969
<b>National Children's Officers</b>	GAA	Gearóid Ó Maoilmhichíl	nationalchildrensofficer@gaa.ie	087 2301420
	Camogie	Roberta Farrell	roberta.farrell@camogie.ie	086 7502988
	LGFA	Paula Prunty	paula.prunty@lgfa.ie	087 2741393

SECTION  
**04**

## DEALING WITH ALLEGED BREACHES OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

### NOTAÍ

SECTION  
**04**

## DEALING WITH ALLEGED BREACHES OF THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR



Produced by the Child Safeguarding Committee in association with  
Cumann Lúthcleas Gael, Cumann Camógaíochta, Cumann Peil na mBan,  
Liathróid Láimhe CLG na hÉireann and Comhairle Cluiche Corr na hÉireann.





SECTION  
05

## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF COACHES, SUPERVISORS & OTHER VOLUNTEERS

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF THE  
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)



## GOOD RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PRACTICES

From their early years to their late teens young people continue to gain from the knowledge, experience and skills that adults, acting in a coaching role, bring in the promotion of our Gaelic Games. Such supports presents these children with a sense of achievement, with an opportunity to develop their individual and team skills and promotes a sense of fun and fair play in our underage games.

This support, led primarily by adults who work in a voluntary capacity, must always be delivered in accordance with Association child safeguarding guidance and acceptable standards of coaching. We greatly rely on the thousands of adults who give freely of their time to our juvenile teams and underage membership, but equally recognise that their contribution must, at all times, be in accordance with Association guidance and statutory requirements.

Those who oversee and promote underage games at club level have a responsibility to ensure that our coaches and mentors, who have been chosen to work in coaching, supervisory and other supportive roles, are selected, supported and trained to fulfil these roles in a careful, sensible and effective manner.

Gaelic Games at underage level creates a respectful and trusting relationship that can be enhanced by the recruitment, selection and up-skilling of adults who are suitable to such roles. While the role of the adult may vary from team to team, and from age group to age group, it is however essential that regardless of such variations in role, that the chosen adult is fully aware at the outset as to what is expected of them, what supports they will receive and what levels of responsibility they themselves have on behalf of the team, the Club, the parents and the young people in their care.

This can all be achieved by adopting good practice procedures and adhering to all aspects of our Code of Behaviour (Underage) when we recruit our managers, coaches and other personnel to work with children and young people.

Statutory guidance and legislative requirements relating to adults who work with children are embedded in our recruitment and selection procedures. These requirements apply to our Gaelic Games Associations as they do to all sports bodies, to youth clubs or other recreational or educational services.

**This Code of Behaviour (Underage) affirms the policy position that all coaches, prior to commencing their role(s) with children, must:**

- Undergo vetting or police background checks
- Must attend relevant child safeguarding training as approved by our Associations
- Must obtain a minimum coaching qualification

The following recruitment and selection guidelines are put in place as a support mechanism so as to ensure that those recruited adhere to the best possible standards that we have adopted in ensuring that our Games are played and promoted in an enjoyable, safe and developmental environment.

## **GUIDANCE ON RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

It is essential that all adults who have undertaken a role of responsibility with children and young people, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, should undergo a comprehensive recruitment and selection procedure prior to commencing their role. The recruitment of adults who work with underage teams should be co-ordinated by a senior and experienced member of the club, with the advice or involvement of the Children's Officer. All such recruitment should be done confidentially.

The following procedures will assist Clubs when choosing to place coaches/mentors of underage teams in the position to which they are best suited.

### **1 Role clarification**

The role and responsibilities envisaged e.g. manager, coach, and the team's age group should be clearly known and stated at the outset. Any specific levels of experience or qualifications required should also be clarified in advance.

### **2 Role assistance**

The various supports available via the club, e.g. Foundation Level Coaching, Child Safeguarding Training are basic good practice that should assist adults who wish to work with underage teams in the promotion of our Gaelic Games.

### **3 Application form**

Applicants should complete the Coach and Mentor Application Form (Appendix 2) prior to being considered for a coaching role.

### **4 References**

Applicants should submit references. These may refer to the person's character and if applicable to their previous background in sports and in Gaelic Games. References should be verified.

### **5 Vetting and police checks**

All applicants are required in law to complete Garda Vetting and/or Police Checks, as appropriate, prior to the commencement of their role(s) with young people in the Association.

### **6 Child safeguarding training and coaching qualification**

All persons working with underage players are required to undertake recognised Child Safeguarding Training as promoted by the Gaelic Games Associations and must also possess a recognised coaching qualification.

### **7 Meet the applicant**

A senior representative of the Club (and not on their own) should meet with all applicants or a short list of applicants to discuss the roles, the applicant's experience and general suitability to work with children and young people. Never choose a person to work with children unless you are satisfied that they have the attributes and temperament to fulfil what is required of them in such an important role.

### **8 Meet the chosen applicant again**

Once the successful applicant and accompanying 'management team' have been chosen, the Club should nominate a number of representatives, including the Children's Officer, to meet with them. This meeting should enable the Club to identify any additional training or coaching needs required and to emphasise the Club's approach to development of underage players, to meaningful playing time for all and to supporting the management team in their roles.

## 9 Code of behaviour (underage)

All persons who work with young people will be required to sign the Code of Behaviour.

## 10 Support and review

Continuous supports should be made available to all coaches etc. so as to enable them to fulfil their roles as requested. The role of the Club 'Coiste na nÓg' and of the Club Children's Officer may be invaluable in identifying such supports.

## SUPERVISION

**All clubs providing opportunities for our young people to participate in Gaelic Games must ensure that adults placed or appointed by them in roles of responsibility are suitable to fulfil such roles and must as a minimum, prior to taking up such roles:**

- **Have undertaken Vetting (Garda/AccessNI/Police) checks as directed by their Association within the jurisdiction in which they operate**
- **Attend relevant child safeguarding training**
- **Possess a coaching qualification relevant to their role as recognised by their Association**
- **Have signed the Joint Code of Behaviour**

### Supervision ratios

Young people must always be adequately supervised regardless of activity and it is the responsibility of Clubs to ensure that a satisfactory supervisory ratio of adults to young people is always maintained.

Supervision ratios will depend on the nature of the activity, the age of the players and any special needs of the group.

The Gaelic Games adult - child supervision ratio agreement forms part of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) and applies as a minimum ratio to all Club and Camp activities up to and including the minor level grade and to Cumann na mBunscol Gaelic Games activities.

### Ratios

- Playing and training activities must abide by a minimum ratio of 2 adults to 10 children, (2:10). This ratio level requires at least one qualified coach and at least one other responsible adult to be present at all times
- Ratios of 2:10 apply to each group of ten children or up to ten children in a group
- Groups of 10-20 children must have a minimum of 3 adults present at all times
- Any group that exceeds 20 in number must also abide by the minimum ratios as per above
- The number of coaches and or responsible adults required will depend on the number of children attending a training session, a camp or game, with consideration also given to the nature of the activity as required and the needs of the children

### Coach

- Coaches, as a minimum, must have achieved a Foundation level coaching qualification, must be satisfactorily vetted and have attended relevant Child Safeguarding Training
- Club and Camp Coaches must be in membership of one of the Gaelic Games Associations
- Coaches must be at least 18 yrs. of age

**Responsible adult**

- The responsible adult, i.e. a person over 18 yrs. of age, if not a qualified coach, shall be deemed a Supervisor of Children. He/she must also be satisfactorily vetted and must have attended relevant Child Safeguarding Training
- Club and Camp Supervisors must be in membership of one of the Gaelic Games Associations
- When appointing a person as a Supervisor or 'responsible adult' to work at underage level, Clubs have a responsibility to appoint persons of the highest standards who shall be recognised as role models to work with children
- Persons appointed as Supervisors of Children shall be obliged to be satisfactorily vetted and must have attended relevant Child Safeguarding Training

**Camp and Activity Assistant**

- The role of Camp and Activity Assistant is that of assisting and not coaching or supervising
- The following applies to a Camp Assistant:
  - o Camp/Activity Assistants must be at least 16 yrs. of age
  - o Must be vetted by their Association in accordance with the GNVB or AccessNI process
  - o Must complete the Camp Assistant Safeguarding Training Programme or acceptable and equivalent safeguarding training programme [www.learning.gaa.ie/safeguardingvirtual](http://www.learning.gaa.ie/safeguardingvirtual)
  - o May choose to attend additional Child Safeguarding training e.g. Safeguarding 1 workshop
  - o May not act in a coaching or supervisory role, which are two other distinct roles

**Gender requirements**

- Where a team or training group consists of both boys and girls, the supervision and coaching personnel, must also comprise of both male and female personnel
- In the case of an all-female team, at least one of the adults (coach/supervisor) must be female and similarly in the case of an all-boys team, at least one of the two adults (coach/supervisor) must be male





## **A VETTING SERVICE - LOCAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL**

### **Vetting in the Gaelic Games Associations**

The Gaelic Games Associations comprising of the GAA, LGFA, Camogie, Rounders and Handball Associations, have a long established principle of vetting any person who, on our behalf, work with children or vulnerable adults in any of our Associations. This principle is enshrined in rule through our Code of Behaviour (Underage). It conforms with our legal responsibilities and is a core element of the recruitment and selection process for those who wish to work with children in our Associations, whether it be in a voluntary or paid role.

For the purpose of clarification, the GAA administers vetting for GAA Clubs and members and also for Handball and Rounders Association members while the Camogie Association and the Ladies Gaelic Football Association does likewise for their membership. When a person is vetted through any one of the Gaelic Games Associations it does not infer or provide them with an automatic 'clearance' to work with children, young people or vulnerable persons. Vetting provides our Associations with relevant information, which is part of the recruitment and selection process, that assist in deciding the suitability of that person to work in a range of chosen or relevant roles.

We do not provide a vetting service for members of the public but where a non-member has been invited to provide a coaching or training role to under 18 yr. olds they may, for that purpose only, avail of our vetting services.

Vetting services for the Association are currently overseen by our Children's Offices in Croke Park while Comhairle Uladh CLG acts on our behalf in coordinating AccessNI vetting services.

All international units are obliged to adhere to the legislative vetting and police background checks that are required in the jurisdiction in which they operate.

## **LEGISLATION**

### **National Vetting Bureau**

The National Vetting Bureau (Children & Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 - 2016 places a responsibility on our Associations to ensure that any person who on our behalf carries out 'relevant work' with children shall be vetted prior to taking up that role. 'Relevant work' includes coaching, being a mentor, a supervisor or indeed roles of responsibility at camps or at Scór. The Act also allowed for the establishment of the National Vetting Bureau the vetting services.

The GAA, LGFA and the Camogie Association are 'Registered Organisations' with the National Vetting Bureau for the purpose of vetting.

### **AccessNI Vetting**

The Northern Ireland Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 is the key legislation that makes it a legal requirement prohibiting the recruitment of a person barred from engaging in regulated activities. To ensure that none of our Associations are recruiting a person who is deemed not suitable we must undertake the vetting of all personnel who wish to work with children in our Associations. This vetting is undertaken by obtaining an AccessNI Enhanced Disclosure Certificate which includes a check against the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Barred List. The DBS maintains a list of individuals who are barred from working with children and/or adults at risk and it would be an offence were we to recruit a person to work with children who is on the DBS barred list.



Comhairle Uladh/Ulster GAA is a Registered Umbrella Body with AccessNI enabling them to carry out the vetting on our behalf.

### **Who needs to be vetted?**

In the Gaelic Games Associations any person who carries out a role of responsibility such as coaching, managing or training underage teams or indeed adult teams that contain any player under 18 yrs. of age must be vetted. This requirement also applies to organising underage activities or refereeing underage games, to bus drivers employed by a club or a team and to physios working with our underage players. Thereafter, each club shall decide if other specific roles merit a person being vetted.

### **Is it an offence to work with children if you are not vetted?**

It is a criminal offence for a person acting on behalf of the Gaelic Games Associations, or for any of our Associations to permit any person to commence working with children on our behalf without that person first obtaining a vetting disclosure from the relevant authority in respect of the role for which they have been recruited. It is also a breach of Association rule if you are working with children or vulnerable adults on our behalf and have not been vetted.

### **What is the vetting applicant is under 18 yrs. of age?**

Gaelic Games Associations vetting is available to any person over 16 yrs. of age fulfilling a role of responsibility with children or vulnerable adults. A parental consent form, must be completed in advance of submitting an application for persons aged between 16 and 18 yrs. of age.



## NATIONAL VETTING BUREAU E-VETTING

The following outlines the vetting process carried out by the (Garda) National Vetting Bureau in collaboration with our Associations via our on-line or E-Vetting system. Since the National Vetting Bureau (NVB) legislation came into being we have replaced previous 'paper vetting applications with the new on line or E –Vetting system.

### How can a member avail of Association (NVB) e-vetting services?

Vetting for a member involves 3 easy to follow steps as follows:

#### Step 1 – The ID process

An applicant, i.e. a member of one of the Gaelic Games Associations, must through their own Associations website, complete the first step which is the completion of the Association's E-Vetting ID Form. This form compels you to provide proof of your identity to your Club Children's Officer, who must verify that they have received the ID documentation as required. The ID verification shall be retained by the Club Children's Officer for the duration of the e-vetting process or it may be attached by the applicant at Step 2 to the online Vetting Application Form.

The primary purpose of this form provides for an applicant to provide their name, address and club that they state the role for which they applied, and they then present their ID (e.g. copy of their passport plus a utility bill with their current address). They will also supply a valid email address for future reference.

#### Step 2 – Completing the E-Vetting Application Form

The initial online E-Vetting Application Form is available to download from each of our Associations websites.

Once the applicant completes the online E-Vetting Application Form the information provided is forwarded to the NVB by the GAA, LGFA or Camogie vetting personnel, as relevant. The applicant will then be forwarded by email the online NVB Vetting Form to complete.

For security and administrative purposes the details entered by the applicant will be emailed back to them. The applicant's Club Secretary will also receive an email inform them that a named person in the Club has applied as a member of the club to be vetted and are being issued with the NVB Vetting Application Form.

#### Step 3 – NVB Vetting Application form

The NVB will issue the applicant with the NVB Vetting Application form. This will be issued to the email address provide by the applicant in Step 2.

Completing this form is a confidential matter between the applicant and the NVB. All sections of the form including current and previous addresses, email address and contact telephone numbers, information on convictions and prosecutions (if any), plus other information will be required when completing the form.

#### Step 4 – Outcome of vetting process and notification

Once all sections of the form have been completed and forwarded online to the NVB this then completes the application process for E Vetting in the Gaelic Games Associations and within a short period of time the applicant shall be contacted by their respective Association informing them as to the outcome of

their vetting application. The applicant's Club Secretary will also be notified when the vetting process has been completed and if the application has been successful.

### **Recognition of vetting between each of the Gaelic Games Associations**

As a result of a long standing agreement between each of the Gaelic Games Associations, any person vetted by for example by the GAA shall have their vetting outcome recognised by the LGFA, Camogie, Rounders and Handball and will not be required to undertake additional vetting by either of these Associations. A reciprocal arrangement exists between each of our Associations. Please note that at any time a member may be requested to undertake re-vetting, as directed by their Association.

### **ACCESS NI**

In order to comply with the Northern Ireland Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 and the rules of our Associations, all persons working with children or young people in a voluntary or paid capacity, must be vetted prior to commencing their role. Those who are involved in the management of individuals appointed to work with children or young people in our Associations must also be vetted.

This vetting service is carried out by AccessNI for individuals in the Gaelic Games Associations in Antrim, Armagh, Derry, Down, Fermanagh and Tyrone where they return criminal history information in respect of each applicant. All applications and the AccessNI services are coordinated on our behalf by Comhairle Uladh/Ulster GAA who are registered with AccessNI for this purpose.

The AccessNI checks will clarify if an applicant has a criminal record; if their name is included on the Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) list of individuals barred from engaging in regulated activity with children or if relevant the DBS list of individuals barred from engaging in regulated activity with adults and any other information held by the authorities that may be relevant to the position applied for. Any information received will be treated confidentially and recruitment decisions will be made with discretion and will only have the involvement of a specifically selected Comhairle Uladh case management.

A copy of the disclosure certificate will be returned directly by AccessNI to the applicant, and if there is information contained on that disclosure certificate, Ulster GAA will make contact with the applicant to request them to forward the certificate in its original form to Ulster GAA Offices. This enables more informed recruitment decisions to be made in relation to the suitability of the applicant for specified roles. Ulster GAA process applications for vetting checks free of charge, for our volunteers at a club's request.

Clubs as always are reminded that they should not permit anyone to work with children or young people in the Club until they have been suitably vetted and approved for their role.

### **The AccessNI vetting services are processed as follows:**

1. Applicants complete the Online Application Form
2. Club Officers signs ID Document Copies and forwards same to Ulster GAA
3. Ulster GAA approve the form and the ID and send to Access NI
4. Access NI process the form and issue the Disclosure Certificate to the applicant
5. Ulster GAA write to the applicant to confirm their vetting acceptance

6. If there is information on the applicants disclosure certificate, Ulster GAA will write out to you requesting sight of the certificate in hard copy in its original form, and the applicant provides that copy as soon as possible.
7. Ulster GAA risk assess all Enhanced Disclosure Certificates that contain information. Where there are areas of concern, the applicant is contacted, meet with and any decision with regard to their suitability for the position applied is made following this process.
8. Where required, Ulster GAA will meet with club officers to discuss any concern.
9. Applicants have the right to appeal any decision made by Ulster GAA in relation to their suitability for the position applied.
10. While applicants, in accordance with our Vetting Policy, may be re-vetted at any time they must formally undertake re-vetting within a three year period.

**Further information on AccessNI services as coordinated by Ulster GAA may be found at <http://ulster.gaa.ie/safeguarding/access-ni/>**

### Re-Vetting

The Gaelic Games Associations' Vetting Policy stipulates that members who are required to be re-vetted must undertake the re-vetting process at a minimum within a three year time period. This requirement applies to both the vetting carried out through the Garda National Vetting Bureau and through AccessNI. Please also note that in addition to this three year re-vetting clause a member may be required to undertake re-vetting at any time, as directed by their Association.

A vetting acceptance letter issued by the Gaelic Games Associations shall cease to be valid three years after the date of issue or if withdrawn by the Association for other reasons. In order to complete the re-vetting process a new application is required to be completed from Step 1 to 3.

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SECTION  
07

## CLUB AND COUNTY CHILDREN'S OFFICER

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF THE  
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)



The role of Children's Officer is central to maintaining the safeguarding of children and young people in our Gaelic Games Associations and to the implementation of the *Code of Behaviour (Underage)* at both Club and at County level. In addition to these core responsibilities the Children's Officer must also ensure, with the cooperation of other Officers, that legislative requirements governing the participation of children/young people and those who work with them are maintained at all times.

Achieving the above is a task that requires the cooperation of other Officers, coaches, parents and our underage players and given the legislative role that the Children's Officer must fulfil their work should be supported at all times by their respective Club Executive or County Committees.

Persons chosen as Children's Officers shall have the confidence of parents, mentors and children alike as somebody that can represent the views of others and we must ensure that their Club and/or County Committees acknowledges and delivers upon their child safeguarding responsibilities at all times.

### CHILDREN'S OFFICER - AN OFFICER AT CLUB AND COUNTY LEVEL

In accordance with our rules, and due to wide range of responsibilities attached to the role, the Children's Officer, both Club and County, are appointed as Officers to their respective Club Executive Committee or County Committee/Board. This is not 'an elected' position as happens in the case of other Officers.

When appointing a Children's Officer, the relevant Committee should also appoint a Deputy Children's Officer whose services may be called upon in the event of the absence, unavailability or in the event of a conflict of interest involving the Children's Officer.

Given the key and over-arching Association and legal responsibilities attached to working with children it is recommended that the Children's Officer participates fully in all aspects of their respective Club or County Committee's work and where possible should report on a monthly basis, if possible, to their Committee as to appropriate levels of safeguarding compliance and adherence to our rules and our statutory requirements. Non-adherence to rules and the failure to remain compliant with statutory safeguarding requirements can have serious consequences for a Club, County and for the individual concerned.

Children's Officers should submit a written report to the Club AGM or County Convention, depending on their role. The report, while maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality, should summarise their work and highlight any relevant issues on an annual basis.

The Club Children's Officer shall have the confidence of all Club mentors and parents while their County counterpart shall equally enjoy the confidence and support of their fellow County Officers and of their Club Children's Officers.

While the overall implementation of our *Code of Behaviour (Underage)* is the principal role for all Children's Officers the appointed person is a key influencer in the promotion of safeguarding, child welfare and the interests of children and young people in their Club/County and Association.

Neither the Club or County Children's Officers has the responsibility to validate allegations or concerns of abuse whether at Club or County level. The Club/County Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is the relevant person to assist in the processing of such matters as per our agreed [Guidance for Dealing with & Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse](#).





## CHILDREN'S OFFICER TRAINING

- Both the Club and County Children's Officer must attend the *Gaelic Games Safeguarding 2 - Club Children's Officer Workshop*, and prior to that must have also completed the *Gaelic Games Safeguarding 1 - Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshop* and must be vetted
- Throughout the year safeguarding information and themes related seminars and webinars are organised by our National Children's Offices and both Club and County Children's Officers are urged to attend these events where up to date information on legislative changes or internal amendments to Code or Rules are outlined and discussed
- Children's Officers should avail of external training or attend seminars relevant to their role. The Gaelic Games Associations will continue to appraise our Children's Officers on changes to child safeguarding practices, legislation and requirements and will receive updates on such matters from their Association
- Where necessary it is recommended that County Children's Officers should organise training and information events for Club Children's Officers in their County



## CLUB CHILDREN'S OFFICER – KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure that all persons working with children and young people are vetted, have attended child safeguarding training in accordance with the requirements of the [Gaelic Games Safeguarding Training Policy](#) and possess a minimum safeguarding qualification and maintain a record of such compliance
- Assist, and oversee the Garda Vetting and/or Access NI application process as applicable to the jurisdiction of the Club
- Retain Vetting ID Documentation of club members as required
- Assist with the organising of the delivery of the *Child Protection in Sport Awareness* workshops, *Tackling Bullying* workshop and other appropriate training in consultation with the Club's Designated Liaison Person
- Ensure that all Players, Coaches/Team mentors, Parents/Guardians, Officials and spectators sign the *Code of Behaviour (Underage)* declaration form, as required
- Make copies of the *Code of Behaviour (Underage)* and of the *Maintaining Good Practice and Behaviour booklet* (Section 3 of the Code) available to relevant Club personnel
- Upload the joint *Code of Behaviour (Underage)* and the *Maintaining Good Practice and Behaviour booklet* (Section 3 of the Code) to the Club website and provide a link via other Club social media platforms in use by the Club
- Upload the *Club Child Safeguarding Statement* to the Club website and other social media platforms in use by the Association
- Liaise in particular with parents of underage players and ensure that they are aware of and understand the basic elements of the *Code of Behaviour (Underage)* and that they, with their son/daughter, sign the *Code declaration form*
- Be familiar with their role in processing alleged breaches of the 'Code', on how to deal informally with alleged breaches and of the booklet '*Dealing with Alleged Breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage)*'
- Ensure that the Club has established a Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings Committee and that the Club Executive is aware of its responsibilities in this matter
- Oversee, in cooperation with the Club Executive, the completion of the *Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment* and the *Child Safeguarding Statement* in accordance with the time frame agreed by our Associations
- The Club Children's Officer is the relevant person who shall be the first point of contact in respect of the *Club's Child Safeguarding Statement*
- Influence policy and practice within the Club in order to prioritise children's and young people's needs
- Promote greater consultation with underage players and participation by them in Club activities and planning
- Promote the *Give Respect – Get Respect* initiative amongst all team mentors and parents and as part of underage games and training and at inter Club events
- Encourage the involvement of parents/guardians in organising Club activities and co-operate with parents in ensuring that every young person enjoys his/her involvement with the Club

- Liaise with Coiste na nÓg to ensure that the “child centred ethos” is being adhered to through coaching and games development
- Develop good practice procedures in the recruitment and selection of persons working with young people in the Club
- Monitor, in association with team coaches, any significant drop out rates, lack of attendance or Club transfers of underage players and report accordingly to the Club Executive or Management Committee
- Maintain on-going contact with the County Children's Officer and with other Club Children's Officers in their locality
- Ensure that all coaches/mentors and managers of underage teams have fulfilled the minimum requirement of vetting, attendance at relevant child safeguarding training and have a minimum coaching qualification
- Ensure access to Foireann (Gaelic Games Management System) for relevant persons working with children and young people and that the information recorded in respect of the Club is accurate and up to date
- Make themselves known to the general membership of the Club and in particular to team mentors, managers and parents





## COUNTY CHILDREN'S OFFICER – KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assist Club Children's Officer in identifying their roles at Club level and the manner in which they may implement an annual work plan to deliver upon such roles
- Promote the *Code of Behaviour (Underage)* at County level and ensure that the Code and the *Maintaining Good Practice and Behaviour* booklet (Section 3 of the Code) are uploaded to the Club website and provide a link via other County social media platforms
- Upload the *County Child Safeguarding Statement* to the County website and other social media platforms in use by the Association
- Coordinate, with the assistance of Club Children's Officers, the delivery of the *Safeguarding 1 - Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshops* and *Safeguarding 2- Club Children's Officer Workshops* throughout the County
- Coordinate, with the assistance of the County Designated Liaison Person, the delivery of *The Designated Liaison Person Workshops – Safeguarding 3*
- Oversee, in cooperation with the County Committee, the completion of the Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment and the *Child Safeguarding Statement* in accordance with the time frame agreed by our Associations
- The County Children's Officer is the relevant person who shall be the first point of contact in respect of the *County Child Safeguarding Statement*
- Assist where necessary the County Vetting Coordinator (where it applies) in the processing of vetting applications of all persons working in any capacity with children and young people. on behalf of our Associations

- Ensure that in accordance with their role and responsibilities that they have access to relevant data, including the Foireann (Gaelic Games Management System) that confirms all persons, who on behalf of our Associations work with children and young people, comply with our vetting, safeguarding and coaching qualifications requirements
- Ensure that all relevant personnel working with underage squads and county teams are compliant with Association safeguarding requirements
- Promote the *Give Respect – Get Respect* initiative as part of all underage Club games and in particular ensure, as deemed appropriate, the Respect Handshake prior to or at the end of games
- Influence policy and practice within the County with the assistance of Club Children's Officer so as to prioritise the safeguarding needs of children and young people in the Association.
- Promote consultation with underage players and participation by them in Club and County activities
- Liaise with the County Bord/Coiste na nÓg and Games Development Committee to ensure that the "child centred ethos" is being adhered to throughout the County as required
- Monitor, in association with Club Children's Officers, any significant drop out rates, lack of attendance or significant Club transfers of underage players and report accordingly to the County or other appropriate forum
- Maintain on-going contact, and organise regular meetings with the Club Children's Officers in the County
- Make themselves known to the Club Children's Officers in the County, to development squad and county underage team personnel
- Maintain regular contact with the Association's National Children's Office

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SECTION  
08

## CLUB AND COUNTY DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF THE  
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)



## THE DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON

All Clubs and County Boards shall appoint a Designated Liaison Person who on their behalf shall be responsible for dealing with concerns relating to the possible abuse of children.

The Designated Liaison Person, or DLP as referred to hereafter, must be familiar with the safeguarding and child welfare roles and responsibilities of statutory authorities and agencies within their jurisdiction, and the *Association's Guidance for Dealing with & Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse* and our *Code of Behaviour (Underage)*.

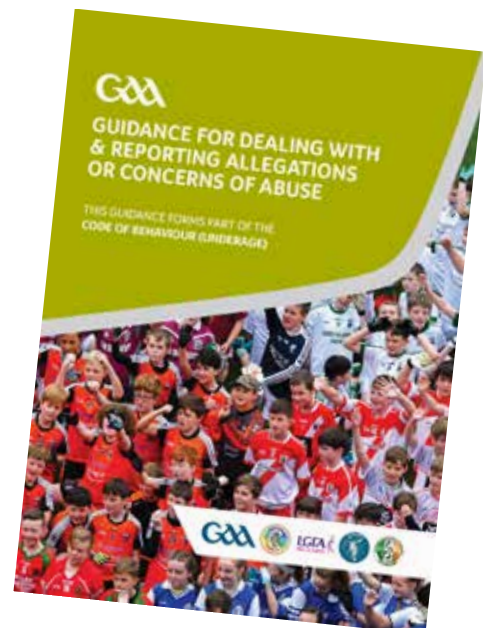
The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for ensuring the reporting of allegations or concerns of abuse to Tusla (ROI) or Gateway Services Team at the Health and Social Care Trusts (NI) and/or An Garda Síochána/Police Service of Northern Ireland, having established reasonable grounds for concern. A report may be made by the Club or County DLP or the County DLP, as appropriate, or as a joint report with a Mandated Person (ROI) and must be done without delay once reasonable grounds for concern have been established.

When appointing a DLP the relevant committee should also appoint a Deputy DLP whose services may be called upon in the event of the absence or unavailability of the DLP or in the event of a conflict of interest involving the DLP. Should a Club or County Committee fail to appoint a DLP, the role automatically falls to the Chairperson of the Club or County Committee.

If deemed appropriate Provincial Councils may also appoint a Designated Liaison Person.

Each of the Gaelic Games Associations shall appoint a National Designated Liaison Person to ensure that County Committees and Club Executives are appraised as to their child protection and safeguarding responsibilities and shall, in consultation with other Designated Liaison Persons, represent their Associations on matters relating to the reporting of child abuse allegations, where such representations may be required.

[The Gaelic Games Guidance for Dealing with and Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse](#) acts as a directive for DLPs, parents and members of our Association when dealing with concerns of abuse.



## THE CLUB DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON

The Designated Liaison Persons at Club level, appointed by their Club Executive Committee, shall be responsible for dealing with concerns relating to the possible abuse of children.

The appointed person must complete the *Gaelic Games Designated Liaison Persons Safeguarding Training* workshop, regardless of any external prior training or additional qualifications, and have the ability to approach child welfare and protection matters in a sensible, balanced, facilitative and nonthreatening manner and should be aware of the responsibilities that they are required to fulfil on behalf of their Club and their Association.

The DLP must be familiar with the safeguarding and child welfare roles and responsibilities of statutory authorities and agencies within their jurisdiction and with the role of the National Designated Person and Mandated Persons.

It is important to note that the Designated Liaison Person does not have a counselling or therapeutic role or a responsibility for investigating or validating child protection concerns within their Club or County.

If the Club DLP is conflicted in relation to the parties to, or the subject matter of an allegation/concern, the matter should be referred to the Deputy DLP. If for whatever reason the Deputy DLP may also be conflicted then the matter should be notified to the Chairperson of the Club and a temporary DLP should be appointed to address the matter or it may be referred to the National DLP for their consideration.

The Club Designated Liaison Person is responsible for ensuring the reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse to Tusla (ROI) or Health and Social Care Trusts (NI) and/or An Garda Síochána/Police Service of Northern Ireland, having established reasonable grounds for concern.

### THE CLUB DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON SHALL:

- Be aware and committed to the *Association's Guidance for Dealing with & Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse* and our *Code of Behaviour (Underage)*
- Have knowledge of relevant child protection and safeguarding legislation in the jurisdiction in which they operate
- Have a knowledge of categories and indicators of abuse
- Undertake relevant child safeguarding training (*Safeguarding 1 & 3*)
- Be aware of local contacts and services in relation to child protection i.e., principal and duty social workers and their contact details, Gardai/PSNI, Tusla/Gateway teams etc. (Appendix 5 and 7)
- Consult informally with statutory authorities on child abuse concerns or allegations, if deemed necessary
- Communicate with parents and/or Statutory Agencies as and when appropriate
- Follow reporting procedures and inform Statutory Agencies and their Association's DLP/ Mandated Person of any concerns or allegations as a matter of urgency
- Maintain regular contact with their National DLP/Mandated Person and seek their advice whenever required



- When reasonable grounds for concern exist where a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused, a report should be made without delay to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána, or to the relevant Gateway Team or PSNI
- A report may be made by the Club DLP or the County DLP, as appropriate, or as a joint report with a Mandated Person (ROI) and must be done without delay
- Always forward a copy of reported concerns and allegations received, whether reported to statutory authorities or not, to your Association's DLP/Mandated Person
- Advise club administrators on issues of confidentiality, record keeping and data protection
- Inform the National DLP/Mandated Person if you are aware that a member of the Association, in your Club or County, is or has been subject to a statutory investigation, a prosecution or a conviction in relation to the abuse of a child or an adult
- Be aware of and maintain regular contact with their National DLP/Mandated Person and always inform the National DLP/Mandated Person of any concerns or reports made and seek advice from the National DLP/Mandated Person as appropriate
- Make themselves known to the general membership of the Club and in particular to team mentors, managers and to parents



## THE COUNTY DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON

The County Designated Liaison Person, appointed by their County Committee, shall be responsible for dealing with concerns relating to the possible abuse of children arising from County related or referred matters. The County DLP may be called upon to assist, advise or carry out the role of Club DLP in certain circumstances.

The appointed person must complete the *Gaelic Games Designated Liaison Persons Safeguarding Training* workshop, regardless of any external prior training or additional qualifications, and have the ability to approach child welfare and protection matters in a sensible, balanced, facilitative and nonthreatening manner and should be aware of the responsibilities that they are required to fulfil on behalf of their County and their Association.

Appointment to this role does not infer or grant the DLP a role as an Officer of their County Committee (Board).

The County Designated Liaison Person shall be required in certain situations to lead on child welfare and protection matters in the County in a knowledgeable, sensible, balanced, facilitative and non-threatening manner and should be aware of the responsibilities that they are required to fulfil on behalf of their County.

### THE COUNTY DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON SHALL:

- Ensure that all Clubs have appointed a Designated Liaison Person and that these officers have Gaelic Games Designated Liaison Persons Safeguarding Training, are fully aware of their responsibilities and of the contents of the *Guidance for Dealing with & Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse* booklet and the *Code of Behaviour (Underage)*
- Act as the formal liaison person between the County Board and statutory authorities on all matters related to allegations of child abuse arising from activities organised under the auspices of the County Board
- Have knowledge of statutory guidelines and relevant legislation as they relate to child protection and welfare of young people in their jurisdiction
- Liaise with the National Designated Liaison Person on matters appropriate to their role
- Communicate with parents and external agencies as appropriate
- Assist with and identify the need for *Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshop* training within the County through their liaison with Club Designated Liaison Persons and Children's Officers at Club and County level
- Be aware of local contacts and support services that may assist in developing and delivering their role
- Ensure that all individual case records pertaining to their role are maintained, that all actions taken are recorded and that such records are kept in a secure and confidential place
- Formally report allegations or concerns of child abuse to the statutory authorities as required, having established that reasonable grounds for concern exist
- When making a report to Tusla DLPs are encouraged to use the Tusla reporting portal when submitting the Tusla Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

- When making a report to a Gateway Team//PSNI the report should include the child's name, address and age and the name address of parents/guardians, the name, if known, of the alleged perpetrator, the grounds for concern including details of the allegation, dates of incidents, description of injuries etc.
- Always forward a copy of reported concerns and allegations received, whether reported to statutory authorities or not, to your Association's DLP/Mandated Person by completing the *Gaelic Games Associations' Internal Reporting Allegations of Abuse Form* (Appendix 8)

## THE PROVINCIAL DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON

A Provincial Designated Liaison Person may be appointed by the relevant Provincial Council as the need for such a role is identified and agreed. The person appointed shall ensure that each County in their Province has appointed a County Designated Liaison Person and that such persons are fully au fait with their roles and responsibilities.

### THE PROVINCIAL DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON SHALL:

- Have comprehensive and detailed knowledge and experience of child welfare, protection and reporting procedures and be familiar with all such procedures in the jurisdictions in which they operate
- Promote the role of Club and County Designated Liaison Persons and provide information and advice for them in assisting them to fulfil their role
- Promote the joint *Code of Behaviour (Underage)*, the *Guidance for Dealing with & Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse*
- Liaise and consult with statutory authorities and other relevant agencies on child report welfare and protection matters if required to do so
- In consultation with National Designated Liaison Person represent the Association on matters relating to the reporting of child abuse allegations, if so required
- The Provincial Designated Liaison Person may be required in situations to lead on child welfare and protection matters in a knowledgeable, sensible, balanced, facilitative and non-threatening manner and should be aware of the responsibilities that they are required to fulfil on behalf of their Province and their Association
- The Provincial Designated Liaison Person shall forward a report of all reported concerns and allegations received, whether reported to statutory authorities or not, to their Association's DLP/Mandated Person

## DEBARMENT OF A PERSON FROM GAELIC GAMES ACTIVITIES

Where it has been established that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a child has been, is being or is at risk of being abused a debarment order against any person named in the complaint or report shall be considered.

- Consultation on a debarment should take place with the National DLP
- In most circumstances it is the DLP, or a person on their behalf, who following consultations with the National DLP shall issue a debarment order and shall do so in writing.

- Inform the person against whom allegations have been made as to the nature of the allegations or may delegate such action to another officer
- The debarment of any individual should be done in a confidential manner and the presumption of innocence remains until proven otherwise
- A debarment decision, must be confirmed in writing, is a temporary decision, and once communicated, comes into effect immediately and recipient and may only be removed by a Case Management Committee, as appointed by the Child Safeguarding Committee, or if successfully appealed to the National Child Safeguarding Appeals Panel

## HOW TO CONTACT YOUR NATIONAL DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON

- The GAA/Rounders/Handball National Designated Liaison Person is Gearóid Ó Maoilmhichíl [nationaldlp@gaa.ie](mailto:nationaldlp@gaa.ie) or by telephone at 01- 8658675
- The LGFA National Designated Liaison Person is Paula Prunty [nationaldlp@lgfa.ie](mailto:nationaldlp@lgfa.ie) or by telephone at 01-8363156
- The Camogie Association National Designated Liaison Person is Roberta Farrell [nationaldlp@camogie.ie](mailto:nationaldlp@camogie.ie) or by telephone at 01-8192934



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SECTION  
09

# ORGANISING CLUB ACTIVITIES FOR UNDERAGE PLAYERS

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF THE  
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)



## ORGANISING CLUB ACTIVITIES FOR UNDERAGE PLAYERS

### AWAY TRIPS

Many teams and Clubs participate in trips away from home throughout the year. These trips are seen as additional to the regular games that take place as part of a County fixtures schedule or during inter Club blitzes. Trips away from home are often viewed as a means by which young teams and players may be rewarded for their endeavours at the end of their season or as a means by which greater team morale and camaraderie can be developed, regardless of age.

An example of rewarding a team or organising a trip is to invite the team or a number of teams to attend intercounty matches. This is a popular means by which young people may see and attend games where their chosen code is played at a high level of skill and competitiveness. Visiting other Clubs and playing matches against teams of a similar age group in other areas or Counties will also give younger players an insight into the broad geographical nature and community ethos attached to our Games while creating greater camaraderie with their colleagues and within their own Clubs.

The pre-planning and detailed organising of such trips for younger players will require a high degree of care and preparation and adults should always remember the key roles of responsibilities they have during such trips on behalf of their Club, on behalf of parents and on behalf of the young people themselves.





### Pre-trip preparations

- A detailed programme of activity should be approved in advance at Club level following agreement with the other Club(s) involved in the away trip.
- Where possible, a member of your organising group should be familiar with the away venue, should visit the venue in advance if deemed necessary and ensure themselves that the venue can cater for the planned programme of activities. This is particularly relevant should an overnight stay be required.
- Parental/guardian written consent must be obtained so as to permit any young person under 18 yrs. of age participate in any organised trip. This consent should be in addition to the **CHILD/ YOUTH MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM (Appendix 1)**
- Contact details for all parents/guardians must be obtained in advance of the trip.
- Young people (of an appropriate age) and their parents/guardians should sign a form agreeing to abide by the programme and to any agreed procedures that relate to the organised trip.
- An agreed Code of Conduct, specifically designed for the trip, should be discussed, outlined and agreed with all players and adults that are participating on the trip.
- The Code of Conduct should outline agreed procedures and the penalties that may apply regarding agreement on:
  - o The use of mobile phones during the trip
  - o No alcohol regulations
  - o No unauthorised photography or recording
  - o Rules on changing room access
  - o Accommodation arrangements
- Medical, allergy and food intolerance information, deemed relevant by the parents/guardians of players, should be made known to the leaders of the Club trip and what action, if any, may be required of them in the case of an emergency. (See Appendix 1)
- A detailed programme which includes the following should be presented to all players and their parents/guardians in advance of the trip:
  - o The named leader of the trip and their contact details
  - o A time schedule of departure and arrival at your destination
  - o Full information about the trip; including all activities and events planned
  - o Emergency contact numbers of Club personnel who are accompanying the group
- All adults accompanying the underage team should be compliant with Vetting/AccessNI and safeguarding requirements and be aware as to what are their responsibilities and what role(s) they may have during the trip.
- It is the Club's responsibility to ensure that the trip itself and all activities taking place throughout the trip adhere to insurance cover, that all participants are eligible members of their Association's relevant injury scheme and that the activities of the trip do not compromise the conditions of their injury scheme or other additional insurance policies.
- Where it is deemed necessary the organisers of all such trips should seek and gain the permission of their County Board, to enable the trip take place, prior to announcing the details of the programme to their members.

### During the trip

- It is essential that at least one individual with first aid qualifications be part of your organising group and that this individual be present or available throughout the trip.
- Young people must be adequately supervised throughout the trip as per the agreed supervision ratios of 2 adults to 10 young people. This ratio may differ depending on the age group of participants, the activities to be undertaken, whether there is an overnight stay, if the trip is abroad etc. (See Appendix 12).
- Organisers of Club trips should always be mindful of ensuring that additional adults accompany their group on trips away for supervision purposes and in case of emergencies or unforeseen circumstances. These adults are subject to our vetting and child safeguarding requirements. (See Appendix 12).
- Where a team or training group consists of both boys and girls, the supervision and coaching personnel must also comprise of both male and female personnel.
- In the case of an all-female team, at least one of the adults (coach/supervisor) must be female and similarly in the case of an all-boys team, at least one of the two adults (coach/supervisor) must be male.
- Adults are required to be familiar with the agreed rules on smoking and on the consumption of alcohol during the trip, as outlined in the GAA Code of Behaviour. As a basic minimum, adults are required to avoid smoking while working with young players and must not consume alcohol or non-prescribed drugs while young players are in their care.

### Overnight stays

When participating in an overnight stay a number of matters require careful preplanning and agreement.

By agreement with all parties, including players and parents, a decision is required whether the Club will avail of hotel or guest house accommodation, or if invited will avail of a hosting arrangement by the host Club in the houses of their Club members.

Regardless of what form of accommodation is agreed upon, adequate and specific supervisory ratios of adults to children must be agreed in advance. This ratio, which is very dependent on the age category of the children/young people, may also vary should the group be participating in certain outdoor activities or in water sports and will also vary if the group is a mixed gender group.

### Hotel or guest house accommodation

- Check out the proposed accommodation for children/young people and Club mentors. Ensure that it complies with health and safety regulations, is accessible, is of a suitable standard and is appropriate for the particular age group and programme of events.
- When availing of overnight accommodation adults (except parents) should not share a room with a child. If exceptional or emergency circumstances so dictate and the presence of an adult is deemed necessary there should be more than one child in the room with the adult at all times.
- Where children are sharing a room it must be with others of the same age grouping and gender.
- All children should be provided with a bed each and should not have to share a bed with another child.
- It is also preferable that the sharing of rooms be done with fellow Club members at inter Club events and that such arrangements are made known in advance of the trip to the child's parents.



### Home stay accommodation

- When availing of home stay accommodation the host Club is responsible for choosing a host family that has been recommended to them and have been satisfactorily vetted in accordance with Association requirements.
- When availing of home stay accommodation adults (except for the parent of a child) should not share a room with a child. If exceptional or emergency circumstances so dictate and the presence of an adult is deemed necessary there should be more than one child in the room with the adult at all times.
- When availing of home stay accommodation Children must not share a room with adults from the host family.
- All children should be provided with a bed each and should not have to share a bed with another child.
- Where children are sharing a room it must be with others of the same age grouping and gender. It is also preferably that the sharing of rooms be done with fellow Club members at an inter Club event and that such arrangements are made known in advance of the trip to the child's parents.

### Review of trip

A full review of the trip should involve all who participated from the Club and the result of the review should be retained and reviewed if and when the group intend organising another or similar trip, or if the Club intends revisiting the area or the host Club again.

## HOSTING AN EVENT

**The hosting of a series of games, a challenge match, an underage blitz or an inter Club tournament is now seen as a normal event for most Clubs in Hurling, Football, Camogie, Ladies Football, Rounders and Handball.**

While such events are generally organised by age category and by code, so as to provide inter Club games and offer skill development opportunities, these events by their very nature can also provide young people of all ages with a positive social experience allowing them to develop within a safe environment.

The safeguarding criteria and guidance that applies to away trips, recruitment, travel, health and safety also apply to the hosting of an event with the additional responsibility that when hosting you are organising the games or the event for more than your own Club or team.

**A number of ground rules apply to hosting an event.**

- 1 Don't be pressurised into offering to host an event if you cannot do it or if you do not have adequate resources or facilities to cater for the proposed event
- 2 Be absolutely clear that you have the full support of your own Club when embarking on hosting an event
- 3 Clarify with those who requested of you to host the event (e.g. Juvenile Board, Féile Committee etc...) what is required of your Club
- 4 Form an organising team, with a nominated person in charge, to oversee, plan and implement the hosting
- 5 Allocate specific responsibilities to each member of the organising team
- 6 Agree a timescale and a plan for the delivery of all of your actions (see Event Action Plan)
- 7 Agree your plan or outline your plan with the governing body who requested your Club to host the event (e.g. Juvenile Board, Féile Committee etc...)
- 8 Meet regularly to review all work in progress
- 9 If you are providing a home stay option for your guest Clubs you must abide by the guidance given under the Home Stay Accommodation
- 10 Never presume that somebody else had done it!

### Event action plan

#### **Event: inter club under 15 tournament**

It is very useful to draw up an event action plan that can be used as a guide for all persons working on the event and also as a check list for the organising committee in reviewing their progress to date.

Below is the commencement of an Event Action Plan for an U15 Inter Club Tournament that your Club had been invited to organise by the County Board. It contains some identified actions, some of which have a time scale inserted while blank spaces remain to be completed when agreeing dates and timescales for other actions or completing tasks.

This template is only an example and is based on an 8 week lead in period. It should be amended and completed by the relevant person in charge as each target or task is completed or achieved.

## ORGANISING CLUB ACTIVITIES FOR UNDERAGE PLAYERS

ACTIONS	By When? (Date)	Responsibility? (Name)	Done? (Date)
<b>APPROX. 8 WEEKS BEFORE EVENT</b>			
Accept invitation to host event	8 weeks before	Relevant Club Committee	
Establish Organising Committee and named person in charge	8 weeks before	Appointed by Club Committee	
1st meeting of Tournament Committee	7 weeks before	Organising Committee Chair	
Allocate responsibilities at 1st meeting		Name the tasks and people	
Agree correspondence to visiting Clubs		Agree with Secretary	
Prepare budget at 1st meeting		Responsibility of Treasurer	
Identify sponsors (if appropriate)		Overseen by Treasurer	
Book pitches or venues as appropriate		A Committee member	
Agree on home stay option and plan accordingly (see Home Stay Section)			
<b>APPROX. 6 WEEKS BEFORE EVENT</b>			
Organising Committee meeting			
Post correspondence to visiting Clubs with relevant forms etc.			
Check insurance implications if any			
Complete event plan and circulate			
Check out all venues by visit			
<b>APPROX. 4 WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT</b>			
Organising Committee meeting			
Confirm participating teams and Clubs			
Make 'draws' and circulate information			
Arrange for First Aid at tournament			
<b>APPROX. 2 WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT</b>			
Organising Committee meeting			
A team withdraws from the Tournament			
<b>APPROX. 1 WEEK BEFORE THE EVENT</b>			
2nd team withdraws from tournament			
New sponsor seeks role in the Tournament			
<b>DAY OF THE TOURNAMENT</b>			
<b>Up early!</b>			
Register each team and their coaches			
Check dates of birth			
<b>AFTER THE EVENT REVIEW</b>			
Organising Committee meeting			
Financial report			
Event report			
Treat the organising Committee and all helpers!			

## TRANSPORT

Adequate preparation and an insistence on the use of safe transport arrangements regardless of the length of journey are key elements of good practice when considering any trip taken by an underage team or players. This applies regardless of the length of journey or indeed the mode of transport availed of, whether it is public, private or personal transport.

The transport arrangements for underage players is a priority safety matter for Gaelic Games clubs, teams, parents and for young people themselves. While it may be preferential to avail of private bus or coach transport it is also recognised that in some instances this is not feasible and certain Clubs and teams could not operate without the goodwill of volunteers and parents who ensure that children are transported to an event or a match and are returned safely.

In so far as we rely on many parents to provide transport in our Clubs, the challenge we also face is to ensure that that all such services are provided in a safe environment that complies with our own standards of good practice and with local or national legislative requirements.

It is recognised that the use of the private cars of parents and members is a common practice for many Clubs and teams when transporting children to games whether it be for County fixtures schedules or inter Club blitzes, tournaments, trips etc . It is however advisable if possible not to use members' cars when travelling on away trips of great distance. In such circumstances, Clubs are advised to avail of bus or coach transport and it is essential therefore that all aspects of the transport arrangements are checked out and agreed in advance. The safety and welfare of children is paramount and must be considered a priority at all times when transporting our underage players from one venue to another.

### **A number of basic requirements apply when travelling to games as follows:**

- A parent/guardian of a participating child is supplied with at least two emergency contact numbers of the team coaches that may be used in the event of an emergency concerning their child or in the event of a change in schedule
- All players participating on the trip have completed a travel consent form and indicated acceptance of the Code of Conduct drawn up for the trip
- That any medical conditions of players are made known to team coaches in advance of any trip and as part of the annual registration process
- That any particular rules or regulations relating to a trip are made known to parents and children alike and agreed in advance of departure
- That the Club is satisfied that the proposed trip has been planned and agreed in accordance with child safeguarding procedures where the safety of the child is paramount in all preplanning of the trip

### **Bus and coach transport:**

#### **The following should be considered when availing of bus and coach transport:**

- The company chosen must be a reputable transport company with a proven track record in transporting children
- The driver must be vetted in advance of the trip by the bus company or by your Club
- All vehicles should be well-maintained and roadworthy and should be properly taxed and insured
- Transport should be fully accessible for people with disabilities whether they are members of the group or for others who may accompany them



- Seat belts must be worn at all times on buses and coaches
- Alternative transport should be available in case of emergency
- Vehicles should be equipped with a First Aid kit and a fire extinguisher and leaders of the group should be familiar with how to use them
- When hiring a vehicle Club personnel should have no hesitation in enquiring as to the company's reputation and reliability
- Adult coaches should ensure that children remain safely seated at all times during the journey
- An adequate ratio of adults to children on the bus must be ensured at all times taking the age of the group members into consideration and the need for male/female ratios with mixed gender groups

### Private transport in cars

**If an adult has to transport a child/children to a game, training or organised event there are a number of safety measures that should be agreed so as to minimise any potential child welfare or safety risks to children and or adults:**

- If a child is being transported by car the parents of the child should be informed as to who will be transporting their child, why this mode of transport has been chosen, how long the journey may take, the departure time and the estimated time of return
- It is important that children are comfortable with whoever may be the driver of the car in which they travel and are made aware as to what are the transport arrangements made for them by their Club
- Drivers must ensure that they have adequate insurance to carry the required number of passengers
- If the driver is in a paid position in the Club or in the Association or is in receipt of expenses for the trip they may be required to have additional insurance cover to enable them transport any passengers
- Central collection and drop off points are recommended when transporting children
- The driver (and other team personnel) should be contactable by mobile phone in case of emergencies
- Parents and coaches may wish to use the Sport Ireland 'Travel Tracer' app as an additional travel security. <https://www.sportireland.ie/ethics/safesport-app>. One of the features of the App is a 'Travel Tracker' function that 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 via their telephone as to their location while they are travelling on a journey
- With the exception of their own child, an adult should not transport any other child alone, except in emergency or exceptional circumstances
- In accordance with transport legislation children must use appropriate child restraints and seat belts when travelling in a car or other vehicles
- No driver should ever consume alcohol or non-prescribed drugs prior to driving
- No driver should smoke in the car when transporting children on behalf of the Club or Association



- Where a driver may be under medical care or taking prescribed medication he/she must ensure that such medication does not inhibit their driving abilities
- All drivers and persons who have access to children on our behalf should have undertaken a vetting background check in accordance with the Association's guidelines
- European law 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). See Republic of Ireland: [RSA.ie](http://RSA.ie) - [The Law](http://TheLaw) Northern Ireland: [www.childcarseats.org.uk/the-law/](http://www.childcarseats.org.uk/the-law/)

### Public transport

**When using public transport please ensure that**

- That the full travel schedule is made known in advance to all parents and players
- That drop off and pick arrangements have been agreed in advance
- That where available, seat booking arrangements are agreed in advance e.g. trains
- Where a team or training group consists of both boys and girls, the supervision and coaching personnel, must also comprise of both male and female personnel
- In the case of an all-female team, at least one of the adults (coach/supervisor) must be female and similarly in the case of an all-boys team, at least one of the two adults (coach/supervisor) must be male
- That a contingency plan is in place in the event of a scheduled public transport arrangement or booking being cancelled, is delayed, or has been missed by the group



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SECTION

11

## DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS OF ABUSE

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF THE  
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)



**The Gaelic Athletic Association, the Ladies Gaelic Football Association, the Camogie Association, GAA Handball Ireland and the Rounders Council of Ireland engage with tens of thousands of young people each week in the promotion and delivery of our Gaelic Games and must therefore, amongst the many responsibilities we face, be alert and be prepared to the possibility that children with whom we are working may be suffering from abuse or neglect.**

We all have a legal duty of care to children and young people. This means that we have an obligation to provide them with the highest possible standards of care and safety as we promote their wellbeing and as we safeguard them from abuse, particularly while they are in our care or attending our activities.

Coupled with that responsibility and the assistance we provide in the form of training, policies, codes and legislation is the requirement to work closely with statutory authorities and to report allegations or concerns of abuse that may be known to us to the relevant authorities, in whatever jurisdiction in which we operate.

As organisations that provide a service to children we will assist our members and employees in whatever way possible in reporting concerns or suspicions of abuse whether it has come to our attention as a result of reported abuse within our Associations or due to external matters.

This section of the Code, Dealing with Allegations or Concerns of Abuse, provides a broad outline as to our roles and responsibilities in relation to reporting abuse, what is the role of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and the Mandated Person, while Appendix 4 of this Code outlines definitions and types of abuse.

Detailed instruction and directives in relation to reporting abuse and neglect are contained in the joint policy booklet ['Guidance for Dealing with and Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse'](#). The primary purpose of the Guidance is to ensure that reporting procedures are known to our members and staff, that guidance and assistance is available for those who wish to report concerns of abuse and neglect and that our Associations adhere in full to our legal obligations in respect of reporting abuse or neglect to the statutory authorities.



## REASONABLE GROUNDS FOR CONCERN

The term 'Reasonable Grounds for Concern' is used where a person may form the view that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. Child abuse may not be visible to all and we therefore rely on adults to be vigilant and to observe any forms of abuse and to ensure that such matters are reported to their Designated Liaison Person and to the relevant statutory authority. The term 'Reasonable Grounds for Concern' is used in many jurisdictions and similarly, if an individual has such concerns about an adult they should report such matters to the relevant statutory authority.

### Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

- 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 the child being abused

Our Association DLPs, at Club, County or National level, will always be available to assist any person who may wish to report a concern to the relevant statutory authority. Mandated Persons, identified by our Associations, may also assist an individual in making a report or passing on a concern or if they so wish.

It is not necessary for an individual to prove that abuse has occurred when they wish to report such matters. It is the role of the statutory authority to carry out their enquires and assess each case on its own merits. The Associations Mandated Person or the Club Designated Liaison Person may assist an individual in making a report or passing on a concern if they so wish.

**The safety and well-being of the child must take priority over concerns about adults against whom an allegation may be made. The welfare of the child shall always be paramount.**

## CONFIDENTIALITY

It is important that all parties dealing with concerns of allegations of abuse have a clear understanding as to what constitutes confidentiality and what is permissible in the exchange of information.

- Use and disclose the information collated only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was initially given
- If a young person discloses information relating to possible child abuse it cannot be dealt with as a 'secret' between the young person and the person to whom they have reported their concerns
- All information regarding concern or allegations of abuse should be treated in a careful and sensitive manner and should be discussed on a need to know basis only with those who need to know
- The sharing of information on a 'need to know basis' is not deemed to be a breach of confidentiality
- The sharing of information with statutory agencies or with your Association Mandated Person, solely for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection
- It must be clearly understood that information gathered for one purpose must not be used for another without consulting the person who provided that information



- Be aware that all persons involved in a child protection and welfare process (the child, his/her parents/guardians, the alleged offender, his/her family, coaches) should be afforded appropriate, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure
- Information should be stored in a secure place, with limited access internally only by the relevant Designated Persons or Association Mandated Person
- Breaches of confidentiality shall be deemed a serious matter and dealt with accordingly within the GAA, Ladies Gaelic Football Association, the Camogie Association, GAA Handball Ireland and GAA Rounders



## ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON (DLP)

The Club or County Chairperson automatically assumes the role of DLP unless another person is chosen and ratified by the relevant Committee to undertake the role. The DLP should be ratified by their Club or County Committee on an annual basis. Detailed information on the Role of the Club and County Designated Liaison Person is available in Section 8 of the Code of Behaviour (Underage)

### The Designated Liaison Person shall:

- Be aware and be committed to the Association's *Guidance for Dealing with & Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse* and our *Code of Behaviour (Underage)*
- Have knowledge of relevant child protection and safeguarding legislation in the jurisdiction in which they operate
- Have a knowledge of categories and indicators of abuse
- Undertake relevant and recognised child safeguarding training (*Safeguarding 1 & 3*)
- Be aware of local contacts and services in relation to child protection i.e., principal and duty social workers and their contact details, Gardai/PSNI, Tusla/Gateway teams etc. (*Appendix 5 and 7*)
- Consult informally with statutory authorities on child abuse concerns or allegations, as required
- Communicate with parents and/or statutory agencies as and when appropriate
- Follow reporting procedures and inform Statutory Agencies and their Association's DLP/Mandated Person of any concerns or allegations as a matter of urgency
- Maintain regular contact with their Association DLP and the Mandated Person and seek their advice whenever required
- When reasonable grounds for concern exist where a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused, a report should be made without delay to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána, or to the relevant Gateway Team or PSNI
- Make a report to the statutory authorities, as appropriate, or make a joint report with a Mandated Person and without delay
- Always forward a copy of reported concerns and allegations received, whether reported to statutory authorities or not, to your Association's DLP/Mandated Person
- Advise Club administrators on issues of confidentiality, record keeping and data protection
- Inform the National DLP/Mandated Person if you are aware that a member of the Association, in your Club or County, is or has been subject to a statutory investigation, a prosecution or a conviction in relation to the abuse of a child or an adult
- Make themselves known to their immediate membership and in particular to team mentors, managers and to parents

**Club Executive Committees and County Boards shall appoint a Designated Liaison Person. The Club or County Chairperson automatically assumes the role of DLP unless another person is chosen and ratified by the relevant Committee to undertake the role.**



## MANDATED PERSON

The Children First Act 2015 (ROI) places a legal obligation on certain people, many of whom are professionals, to report child protection concerns at or above a defined threshold to Tusla - Child and Family Agency 'as soon as practicable'. These people, known as 'Mandated Persons' must also assist Tusla, on request, in its assessment of child protection concerns about children who have been the subject of a mandated report.

Mandated Persons are people who have contact with children and/or families who, by virtue of their qualifications, training and experience, are in a key position to help protect children from harm. Mandated Persons include key professionals working with children in the education, health, justice, youth, sports and childcare sectors.

The majority of volunteers in sports clubs are not Mandated Persons. A Mandated Person is normally a paid professional. However, there are some situations where a paid professional (or other unpaid persons due to their profession) volunteering in a sports club may be regarded as a mandated person.

Please note, and in accordance with the Child Safeguarding statement issued by the Gaelic Games Associations that Clubs, Counties and other units are obliged to maintain a list of members who, if known, and in accordance with legislation are specified as Mandated Persons, regardless of what role (if any) they hold in our Associations.

### Mandated Persons may include:

- A person who is employed by a sports club or sports organisation to be the a 'safeguarding officer, child protection officer' and 'is employed for the purpose of performing the child welfare and protection function' of the sporting organisation, is a mandated person. (This does not apply to DLPs in local Clubs)
- A member of An Garda Síochána, who is a mandated person 24/7
- A physiotherapist, acting in their role as a physiotherapist for the sports Club
- A doctor or nurse, whose role in the Club is that of a doctor or nurse administering medical assistance
- A counsellor, whose role in the Club is that of providing counselling

Volunteers in our Associations are not identified as mandated persons but will continue to report any allegations or concerns of child abuse, internally in their Association as per Association rules and externally to the relevant statutory authority as per legislation.

The Mandated Person now has a legal and Association role in that if they know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed, they must report that knowledge, belief or suspicion, as the case may be, to Tusla. A similar directive applies in our Associations to reporting such matters to Gateway Services teams in Northern Ireland.

The Mandated Person must report concerns of harm above a particular threshold to the statutory authorities.

**The Mandated Persons in our Gaelic Games Associations may be contacted at:****GAA/Rounders** [mandatedperson@gaa.ie](mailto:mandatedperson@gaa.ie)**LGFA** [mandatedperson@lgfa.ie](mailto:mandatedperson@lgfa.ie)**Camogie** [mandatedperson@camogie.ie](mailto:mandatedperson@camogie.ie)**Handball** [mandatedperson.handball@gaa.ie](mailto:mandatedperson.handball@gaa.ie)

- » *Appendix 4 of this Code outlines types of child abuse and how they may be defined*
- » *Appendix 5 contains contact details for Tusla Child and Family Agency*
- » *Appendix 6 contains Standard Report Forms for Reporting Child Protection and/or Welfare Concerns to Tusla*
- » *Appendix 7 contains contact details for Health and Social Care Trusts NI*



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SECTION  
**12**

# TACKLING BULLYING IN YOUR CLUB

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF THE  
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE)



The Gaelic Games Associations is currently reviewing the content of the 'Lets Tackle Bullying' training programme. This Section - Tackling Bullying in Your Club - shall be amended on completion of this review. Clubs are reminded to discuss and adopt the Anti-Bullying Policy Statement below and to use this statement when addressing any issues of bullying in their club.

## GAA ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT

The GAA aims to create a supportive environment where any form of bullying is unacceptable. We adopt a whole organisational approach to addressing bullying and are committed to implementing structures and relevant training to deal with allegations of bullying. Incidents of bullying are regarded as serious breaches of our Code of Behaviour (Underage). We are committed to achieving an ethos of respect so as to maximise the potential of all our members when playing or participating in our Gaelic Games.

### DEFINITION

Bullying is defined as repeated aggression, be it verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others.

### THE GAA SEEKS TO ENSURE THAT:

- Incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed appropriately.
- All persons in membership of the Association or attending our games or activities are aware that bullying behaviour is unacceptable in the GAA.

### DEALING WITH BULLYING

The **Code of Behaviour** when working with underage players provides good practice guidance in relation to the prevention of bullying.

If you are aware of or have a concern that bullying behaviour is happening within your Club you should report the matter to your Club Children's Officer.

We recognise that incidents of bullying are a breach of the **Code of Behaviour** and of our Give Respect - Get Respect initiative and all such incidents will be dealt with accordingly.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Club Children's

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Club

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