

**Cumann Pheadair Naofa  
(St. Peter's GAA Club, Warrenpoint)  
[www.warrenpointgaa.com](http://www.warrenpointgaa.com)**



**CUMANN PHEADAIR NAOFA C.L.G.**

**REPORT BY CLUB CHILDREN'S & VULNERABLE  
ADULTS OFFICER**

**TO CLUB AGM ON 14 NOVEMBER 2023**

**3 November 2023**

During the past 12 months, I am pleased to report that St. Peter's GAA Club, Warrenpoint has continued to successfully adopt the National GAA Code of Behaviour (Underage) incorporating:

- Child Safeguarding Statement;
- Recruitment Policy for those working with children;
- Child Safeguarding Training Requirements;
- Anti Bullying Statement; and
- Social Media Policy.

In addition the club has also adopted the GAA Speaking Up Policy, It should be noted that both these National GAA Policies along with the GAA Social Media Policy and Guidelines are fully adopted policies of Cumann Pheadair Naofa and are available for download from our club website: warrenpointgaa.com.

Child Safety and Protection is a constantly evolving area and we in Cumann Pheadair Naofa work very closely with Down GAA, Ulster GAA and the GAA Nationally along with statutory organisations to ensure that we endeavour at all times to implement best practice.

### **Access NI Vetting/Safeguarding Courses**

It is club policy, and has been for a number of years, that there is Access NI vetting of all individuals involved with children within the various sphere of club activities. The club and the GAA have been absolutely clear that each mentor must be vetted on the Access NI system and it is commendable that there is a very quick turnaround of Access NI and Ulster GAA response.

As the Club Children's & Vulnerable Adults Officer I maintain and report regularly to the club Senior Management Committee on the club register for Access NI and mentors who have undertaken the necessary GAA Safeguarding courses. Safeguarding update is on the agenda at all Senior Committee meetings.

Re Access NI the club currently has 157 members accredited and cleared.

In addition, during the past year 77 members / mentors renewed or completed their Access NI as new mentors.

In preparation for the 2024 season we will be implementing a proactive programme between now and Christmas to ensure all volunteers and any new volunteers have got their Access NI clearance and notified of upcoming Safeguarding Courses and Coaching Courses in partnership with all sections.

During the year we completed the mandatory bi-annual GAA Safeguarding Risk Assessment for all codes, and we updated the Club Safeguarding Statement which is displayed in the 125 Pavilion at Pairc Liam Uí Ír and in the clubrooms. The Club Safeguarding Committee details have been updated and displayed prominently in the clubrooms and at Pairc Liam Uí Ir.

At the start of the games season, we issued a letter from the Safeguarding Committee to all underage parents via club sections highlighting to them the Club Code of Behaviour (Underage) and requesting them to familiarise themselves with this policy and to adhere to it. We highlighted the policy was available for download from our club website. In addition, all club sections drew this key policy to the attention of all club mentors. Appreciation is expressed to section heads and underage team mentors for ensuring that this information

has been circulated to all parents/guardians. Parents/guardians also received a digital copy of a Child Friendly Code of Behaviour to share with their children.

With regard to the GAA Safeguarding Course, we regularly organise, in conjunction with Down GAA Safeguarding Courses on an annual basis and are glad to say during the past 12 months 63 members participated and completed a GAA Safeguarding Workshop. This was a combination of those attending a full Safeguarding Course or a Refresher Safeguarding Course. Down GAA and Ulster GAA provided opportunities throughout the season for mentors to participate in the full Safeguarding Course virtually and this was welcomed by mentors. The Club also hosted a Safeguarding course in St. Mark's High School on 23 February, which was delivered effectively by Conor O'Toole (Down GAA Development Manager) with a full attendance of 20 participants.

It is pleasing to report that two club administrators have completed a mandatory Safeguarding Level 3 Workshop, namely Paul McKibben (Club Designated Liaison Person) and Mike Barnett (Chairman Down LGFA)

Anne McCormack (Children's Officer) and Noreen Kelly (Deputy Club Designated Liaison Officer) attended the Down GAA Safeguarding Risk Meeting on Saturday 1 April. From a club point of view I must compliment Down GAA for the quality of the Safeguarding Workshop organised by Down Children's Officer Fergus Cooper.

Going forward we plan to carry out cold reviews on the implementation of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) throughout the club.

### **Targets for 2023-2024**

1. To continue to ensure that all new mentors / coaches complete Access NI in advance of their ratification.
2. To organise Safeguarding workshops for new mentors and update briefings for existing mentors who are required to do the Safeguarding online refresher workshop.
3. To liaise with all sections to ensure that coaches and mentors complete the relevant coaching courses.
4. To keep club Safeguarding Statement updated to reflect current best practice.
5. To organize a virtual Teams meeting for all coaches / mentors to enable them to familiarise themselves with the club's Code of Behaviour (Underage).
6. To continue to create awareness of the club Speaking Up Policy.
7. To review targets and actions agreed in the GAA Safeguarding Risk Assessment which was completed in April 2023.
8. To maintain and report to the Senior Committee on the club register for Access NI, completion of Safeguarding Workshop and club Coaches Courses.
9. To fully co-operate with the County Children's Officer, the Ulster GAA Safeguarding Manager and the National GAA Children's Officer when appropriate.
10. To liaise with the Club registrar and assistant Club registrar regarding Safeguarding information Access NI, shared medical information of underage members by parents etc on the Club Foireann System.

### **Child Welfare Issues**

Child Protection matters require the utmost confidentiality and I aim to quickly resolve issues on a club sectional basis initially if possible.

Thankfully, I did not have to formally escalate any child welfare issues during the past 12 months.

I wish to thank the various sections of the club and indeed the individual management teams and activity co-ordinators for taking such a professional and supportive approach to child welfare.

### **Thanks**

Finally, I wish to thank the club Senior Management Committee, the various club sections and team managers and activity mentors for their support and vigilance with regard to child safety and protection during the past 12 months. I particularly would like to express gratitude to Paul McKibben (Designed Children and Vulnerable Adults Officer), Noreen Kelly (Deputy Designated Children and Vulnerable Adults officer) , Hugh Carr (Deputy Children's & Vulnerable Adults Officer) and Donal McCormack (Club Secretary)

However, given the importance of the matter we will never be complacent, and I continue to ask your ongoing support. It is very encouraging that our Senior Committee place such emphasis on governance and child protection, and this hopefully will be for the benefit of all who participate in our great club.

I would also like to express sincere thanks to Fergus Cooper, the County Childrens Officer; Sean Óg McAteer, Down GAA Secretary; Bernie Fox, the Ulster GAA Safeguarding Manager; and to Conn Stevenson, the Ulster GAA Safeguarding Administrator. In addition, I express sincere thanks to the Children's Safeguarding section at Croke Park for their ongoing proactivity and advice.

Is mise le meas.

### **Aine Mhic Cormaic**

Children's and Vulnerable Adults Officer

3 November 2023