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SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN – GAELIC GAMES ASSOCIATIONS' AGREED PROCEDURES

The Gaelic Athletics Associations, Ladies Gaelic Football Association, the Camogie Association, GAA Handball Ireland and GAA Rounders of Ireland 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 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 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 an annual Risk Assessment procedure at Club, County and National levels.

- A Code of Behaviour (Underage) which includes:
 - Recruitment policy for those working with children
 - Child safeguarding training requirements
 - Anti-Bullying statement
 - Social Media policy
- Guidance for Dealing and Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse
- Appointing Designated Liaison Persons at Club, County and national levels.
- 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 this statement
- 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 – mandatedperson@gaa.ie

Handball – mandatedperson.handball@gaa.ie

LGFA – mandatedperson@lgfa.ie

Camogie – mandatedperson@camogie.ie

2018 Child Safeguarding Statement

The Gaelic Athletics Associations (GAA, LGFA, Camogie, Rounders, and Handball) in accordance with our Code of Behaviour (Underage) 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 Games 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 in our Associations as we seek to create a safe environment for young people to grow and develop.

We have completed an 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; Use of Facilities; Recruitment; Communications and a further heading of General Risk of Harm.

In addition to our Risk Assessment document described above, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children availing of our services:

- Code of Behaviour (Underage) which includes
 - Recruitment policy for those working with children
 - Child safeguarding training requirements
 - Anti-Bullying statement
 - Social Media policy
- Guidance for Dealing and Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse by staff or volunteers
- Appointing Designated Liaison Persons at Club, County and national levels
- 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 this statement

The GAA appointed Mandated Person, who has a legal obligation to report harm of children as per legislation is Gearóid Ó Maoilmhichíl. Contact: mandatedperson@gaa.ie.

We are committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures contained therein that outline our intentions to keep children safe from harm.

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been prepared in accordance with the legislature requirements contained in the Children First Act 2015 and the Children (NI) Order 1995 and as required by our Association rules and will be reviewed in January 2019.

GAA ANTI-BULLYING POLICY 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 Best Practice in Youth Sport - Our Games Our Code. 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 Officer

Date

Name of Club

CODE DECLARATION/SIGNATORY

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

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

DECLARATION

I _____ (print name) acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Code of Behaviour (Underage), which I have read and understood in full. I agree to be bound by the principles set out in the Code when participating, playing or attending our Gaelic Games.

Signed: _____ (Player)

Date: _____

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian)

Date: _____

Signed: _____ (Coach/Referee)

Date: _____