



Duty of Care and Child Protection

Dualgas Cúraim agus Cosaint Leanaí

CLUB MAITH TOOLKIT



INTRODUCTION

The Gaelic Athletic Association (Cumann Lúthchleas Gael) is a community-based family orientated organisation and as such believes that a transparent youth centred approach should be adopted by all units involved in the promotion and development of Gaelic games, culture and other activities at underage levels . Under age is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

A philosophy should be developed that promotes the importance of fair play, participation, enjoyment and equality for young people where young people strive to achieve their full potential as they mature and develop and respect the value of discipline.

POLICY

- All GAA Clubs must implement and abide by the GAA Code of Behaviour in their work with Children and Young People.
- All clubs must complete their annual Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Safeguarding Statement, ensuring the statement is on display in a visible location of their club facilities.
- All personnel working with children or young people must be appropriately vetted and trained relevant to their role in Safeguarding and Coaching as per the GAA Training and Vetting Policies.
- All clubs must appoint a Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person as selected and ratified by the club executive on an annual basis. Children's Officers are responsible for the implementation of the GAA Code of Behaviour and Designated Liaison Persons are responsible for dealing with Allegations of abuse in line with GAA Policy on same. Both persons should complete GAA Safeguarding training relevant to their roles.

These policies are taken in line with Rule 1.13 Safeguarding of Children/Young People in the Official Guide 2020.

BEST PRACTICE

- Clubs should ensure all members sign up annually to and abide by the GAA Maintaining Appropriate Levels of Behaviour in our work with Children and Young People.
- Appoint a Code of Best Practice Hearings Committee to deal with alleged breaches of the code.
- GAA clubs should obtain parental consent forms for children and young people for photography, videography, communications, trips away or overnight stays.
- All Safeguarding and Medical information should be stored and retained in line with GAA GDPR guidelines.
- Clubs should adopt and implement GAA safe recruitment procedures in their selection of coaches, mentors and others who work with children and young people as per the GAA Code of Behaviour.
- The club executive should ratify all appointments made within the club.

EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION

Some examples of how the policies and best practice can be implemented within clubs:

- Annual club registration night where children and young people, parents, coaches, and others who volunteer to work with children and young people are informed of the GAA Maintaining Appropriate Behaviour in our work with Children and Young People and sign up to same. They should also be informed of management teams working with Underage, how

communications will take place and introduce the Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person so they are all aware of who to go to for support and help.

- On an annual basis the club should cross check records of those successfully vetted through either Access NI/Garda vetting and Safeguarding Training to ensure that there are no gaps and to request renewals of same as appropriate in line with GAA Policy.
- Promote GAA Save our Smiles Parents in Sport Week where the club celebrates the vital role Parents play in the development of young players. Encourage positive engagement and roles within the club and thank them for the valuable role they play.
- Promote a zero-tolerance whole club approach towards Bullying Behaviour and promote the Anti Bullying week in November each year. Clubs should address such behaviour at the earliest opportunity and follow the alleged breaches of the code in challenging same.
- Clubs should provide opportunities for children and young people to feedback their opinions on their experiences and involvement in the club in a bid to try and understand what could be done differently and better.
- Clubs should link in with their County Children's officer and work together to implement the GAA Code of Behaviour and deal with any Safeguarding Matters as they arise.
- Clubs should ensure that parental and player consent to photography and videography is obtained from their own members, the County Board and the opposition team, providing a copy of same to the opposition as soon as is possible after the game.

Where examples are used, they are only samples and not exhaustive as a myriad of variations exist in everyday life and operations