



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.

