



NA FIANNA CLG

Code of Ethics & Good Practice

for

SPORT for YOUNG PEOPLE

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Core Values in Sport for Young People

The work of Na Fianna CLG is based on the following principles that will guide the development of sport for young people in this club,

- Young People's experience of sport should be guided by what is best for the
the
- young person.
- The stages of development and the ability of the young person should guide the types of activity provided within the club.
- Adults will need to have a basic understanding of the needs of young people, including physical, emotional and personal.

Integrity in Relationships:

Adults interacting with young people in sport should do so with integrity and respect for the child. All adult actions in sport should be guided by what is best for the child and in the context of quality, open working relationships

Quality Atmosphere and Ethos

Sport for young people should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. A child-centered ethos will help to ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place.

Equality

All children should be treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children with disability should be involved in sports activities in an integrated way.

Fair Play:

Fair play is the guiding principle of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport.

Competition:

A balanced approach to competition can make a significant contribution to the development of young people, while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and satisfaction.



Policy Statement

Na Fianna CLG

Na Fianna CLG is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of its members. Every individual in Na Fianna CLG should always show respect and understanding for members rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the club and the guidelines contained in the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport*.

In Na Fianna CLG our first priority is the welfare of the young people and we are committed to providing an environment which will allow participants to perform to the best of their ability, free from bullying and intimidation.

It is club policy to facilitate still photography for press and publicity purposes and the videoing of training sessions and matches under the supervision of the authorised coach.

The full Na Fianna Code of Ethics and Good Practice in Sport for Young People is available on our web site www.nafianna.ie should any person wish to read it.

A hard copy of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice in Sport for Young People is available in both Enfield and Baconstown Club House.

GUIDELINES AND CODES OF CONDUCT

Code of Conduct for Young People.

Na Fianna CLG wishes to provide the best possible environment for all young people involved in the sport. Young people deserve to be given enjoyable, safe sporting opportunities, free of abuse of any kind. These participants have rights, which must be respected, and responsibilities that they must accept. Young people should be encouraged to realise that they have responsibilities to treat other participants and sports leaders with fairness and respect.

Young players are entitled to:

- Be safe and to feel safe
- Be listened to
- Be believed
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect
- Have a voice in the club
- Participate on an equal basis
- Have fun and enjoy sport
- Experience competition at a level at which they feel comfortable
- Make complaints and have them dealt with
- Get help against bullies
- Say No
- To protect their own bodies
- Confidentiality

Young players should always:

- Treat Sports Leaders with respect,
- Play fairly at all times, do their best
- Respect team members, even when things go wrong
- Respect opponents, be gracious in defeat
- Abide by the rules set down by team managers when travelling to away events.
- Behave in a manner that avoids bringing the sports of gaelic football, hurling and camogie into disrepute
- Talk to Children's Officer (_____)
or to the Child Contact (_____)
if they have any problems.

Young players should never:

- Cheat
- Use violence or physical contact that is not allowed within the rules
- Shout or argue with officials, team mates or opponents
- Harm team members, opponents or their property
- Bully or use bullying tactics to isolate another player
- Use unfair or bullying tactics to gain advantage
- Take banned substances
- Keep secrets, especially if they have been caused harm
- Tell lies about adults / young people
- Spread rumours

Code of Conduct – Social Media

The simple rules of thumb are to keep on-topic and be respectful of others, but to be clear there are a few things that are outside what is acceptable. Our website, Twitter, Facebook page are designed to help people learn more about Na Fianna CLG and we want people to have a good experience when they are here. Anything that supports this aim is encouraged.

By using our sites, you agree that you will not post, publish or submit as work any of the following material:

- Never post malicious, misleading or unfair content about your club, colleagues, competitors or other stakeholders.
- Material that infringes the copyright of another person (plagiarism or passing off other people's material as your own) or copyright material not referenced or acknowledged.
- Unauthorised posting of personal information (names, address, phone number, email etc.) of other users.
- Material that contains vulgar, obscene or indecent language or images.
- Material which defames, abuses or threatens others.
- Statements that are bigoted, hateful or racially offensive.
- Material that advocates illegal activity or discusses illegal activities with the intent to commit them.
- No Flaming; there is a difference between voicing a legitimate concern or grievance and simply badmouthing or some other form of written abuse of someone or some service. These will be deleted upon discovery.
- Posts or other material which is deemed inappropriate by the site administrators or appropriate team managers will be deleted upon discovery. Users who violate the Terms of Service may lose their account permanently.
- Any person actively using these sites is implicitly agreeing to these rules regardless of whether they have been read or not.

Code of Conduct - Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are often given to children for security, enabling parents to keep in touch and make sure they are safe. Young people value their phones highly as it offers them a sense of independence. In addition, mobile phones allow quick and easy contact, which can make a safe and efficient way to carry out club business. However, such technology has also allowed an increase in direct personal contact with young people, in some cases used to cross personal boundaries and cause harm to young people. Therefore, we need to encourage responsible and secure use of mobile phones by adults and young people.

Club personnel should advise children:

- If you receive an offensive photo, email or message, do not reply, save it, make a note of times and dates and tell a parent or children's officer/designated person within the club.
- Be careful about who you give your phone number to and don't respond to unfamiliar numbers
- Change your phone number in cases of bullying or harassment

- Don't use the phone in certain locations; inappropriate use of your camera phone may cause upset or offence to another person, e.g. changing rooms
- Treat your phone as you would any other valuable item so that you guard against theft

As a coach/manager remember when you are communicating about children:

- Use only group texts for communication with parents and inform parents of this at the start of the season
- It is not appropriate to have communication from individual children. Advise the child's parent that communication is only between adult to adult
- If you have juveniles (under 18) playing on your senior squad you must received a letter of consent from the parent or guardian to include them in group text or chats.

Don't use your camera phone in places where it may cause upset or offence to another person, e.g. changing rooms.

Code of Conduct for Parents

Na Fianna CLG believes that parents should

- Be a role model for your child and maintain the highest standards of conduct when interacting with children, other parents, with officials and organisers.
- Always behave responsibly and do not seek to unfairly affect the game or player. Never intentionally expose any young participant to embarrassment or disparagement by the use of flippant or sarcastic remarks
- Always recognise the value and importance of the volunteers who provide sporting/recreational opportunities for your child. Do not publicly question the judgement or honesty of referees, coaches or organisers. Respect referees, coaches, organisers and other players.
- Encourage your child to play by the rules. Teach your child that honest endeavour is as important as winning and do all you can to encourage good sportsmanship.
- Set a good example by applauding good play on both sides. Encourage mutual respect for teammates and opponents.
- Parents should support all efforts to remove abusive behaviour and bullying behaviour in all its forms. Please read bullying policy within the club / organisation's guidelines.

It is important to remember:

1. I will respect the rules and procedures set down in Na Fianna CLG's Code of Ethics for Children in Sport.
2. I will respect my child's teammates, leaders, (e.g. coaches, officials, judges), and parents, as well as players, parents and coaches from opposing teams. I will encourage my child to treat other participants, coaches, selectors, and managers with respect.
3. I will give encouragement and applaud only positive accomplishments whether from my child, his/her teammates, their opponents or the officials.
4. I will respect my child's leader(s) and support his/her efforts
5. I will respect the officials and their authority during sessions and events
6. I will never demonstrate threatening or abusive behaviour or use foul language.
7. I will refrain from smoking while on playing pitches.

Code of Conduct for Sports Leaders*

Leaders in children's sport should strive to create a positive environment for the children in their care. They have an overall responsibility to take the necessary steps to ensure that positive and healthy experiences are provided.

Na Fianna CLG recognises the key role leaders (coaches, selectors and team managers, etc.) play in the lives of children in sport.

All Leaders should have as their first priority the children's safety and enjoyment of the sport and should adhere to the guidelines and regulations set out in the club's Code of Ethics.

Leaders must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child and must treat everyone equally, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.

Leaders working with young people in gaelic football, hurling and camogie should be suitable and appropriately qualified. Leaders will be expected to go through appropriate recruitment and/or selection procedures. References will be needed and may be followed up.

There will be a 'sign-up' procedure, whereby the appointed/reappointed leaders agree to abide by the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Sport* and to the policies and code of the club.

Leaders will be given access to a copy of the club's code of ethics and they should be made aware of the procedures contained within the club's code.

Once appointed the Leader must act as a role model and promote the positive aspects of sport and of gaelic football, hurling and camogie and maintain the highest standards of personal conduct.

The use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco must be actively discouraged as being incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity.

Leader's behaviour to players, other officials, and opponents will have an effect on the players in your care.

Be generous with praise and never ridicule or shout at players for making mistakes or for losing a game. All young players are entitled to respect.

Be careful to avoid the "star system". Each child deserves equal time and attention.

Care must be taken not to expose a child intentionally or unintentionally to embarrassment or disparagement by use of sarcastic or flippant remarks about the child or his/her family.

*Leaders in this instant are all managers, team contacts, coaches, trainers, etc

Physical punishment or physical force must never be used. Insist that players respect the rules of the game. Insist on fair play and ensure players are aware that cheating or bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.

Encourage the development of respect for opponents, officials, selectors and other coaches.

When travel/overnight travel is involved, the Leaders traveling with children must sign a separate agreement with the club to ensure the Code of Behaviour is adhered to. Parents and participants will also be asked to sign permission forms in these instances.

Leaders are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with players. It is advisable for coaches not to involve young players in their personal life i.e. visits to coaches' home or overnight stays.

Avoid working alone and ensure there is adequate supervision for all activities.

Do not engage in communications with underage players via social network sites.

When young players are invited into adult groups/squads, it is advisable to get agreement from a parent/carer. Guidelines do not change because of the Team a child plays in.

Leaders should communicate and co-operate with medical and ancillary practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their players' medical or related problems. Avoid giving advice of a personal or medical nature if you are not qualified to do so. Any information of a personal or medical nature must be kept strictly confidential unless the welfare of the child requires the passing on of this information.

The nature of the relationship between leader and a participant can often mean that a leader will learn confidential information about a player or player's family. This information must be regarded as confidential and except where abuse is suspected, must not be divulged to a third party without the express permission of the player/family.

Set realistic goals for the participants and do not push young players. Create a safe and enjoyable environment.

Leaders should avoid the use of alcohol, before coaching, during events, on trips with young players.

Code of Conduct for the Club's Children's Officer

The Children's Officer will act as a resource for all members of the club with regard to children's issues. They will ensure that the children have a voice in the running of their club and can talk freely about their experiences in their sports activities. The Children's Officer will have access to the Club Executive Committee and will have as a primary aim the establishment of a child centred ethos within the club.

The Children's Officer will:

- Promote awareness of the Na Fianna Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland within the club and particularly among the children and their parents/guardians.
- Influence policy and practice within the club in order to prioritise children's needs
- Provide an accessible resource to children
- See that children know how to make concerns known to appropriate adults or agencies. Information disclosed by a child to the Children's Officer or any other adult within the club should be dealt with in accordance with the Department of Health and Children's Guidelines Children First and the Department of Health and Social Services.
- Encourage the involvement of parents/guardians in the club activities and co-operate with parents/guardians in ensuring that each child enjoys his/her involvement in sport
- Act as an advisory resource to Sports Leaders on best practice in children's sport
- Report regularly to the Club Executive Committee

Children's Officers do not have the responsibility of investigating or validating child protection concerns within the club and have no counselling or therapeutic role. It is, however, possible that child protection concerns will be brought to the attention of the Children's Officer.

POLICIES

Recruitment and Selection Policy for Leaders/Volunteers

Na Fianna CLG will take all reasonable steps to ensure that people working with young people are suitable and appropriately qualified. Recruitment and selection procedures are therefore necessary and these procedures apply to all persons with substantial access to young people, whether paid or unpaid.

Every effort will be made to manage and support appointed Sport Leaders. Adequate supervision will always be provided; a leader should not have to work alone.

There will be a “sign-up” procedure, whereby all volunteers, agree to abide by the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Sport* and to the club / association’s Code and policies.

All Volunteers will be Garda Vetted.

The decision to appoint a Sports Leader is the responsibility of the recruitment committee (Chairperson, Secretary and Juvenile Chairperson)

Policy for Travelling with Children

There is extra responsibility taken on by leaders when they travel with children to events. When traveling with young people you should:

- Ensure that there is adequate insurance cover.
- Not carry more than the permitted number of passengers.
- Ensure use of safety belts.
- Avoid being alone with one participant, put passenger in the back seat, drop off at central locations or seek parental permission to transport an individual participant on a regular basis and clearly state times of pick-up and drop off.

Supervision

- Make sure there is an appropriate adult: child ratio.
- Where there are mixed groups there should be leaders of both genders.
- Avoid being alone with one participant, if you need to talk separately do so in an open environment, in view of others.
- In changing rooms, ask parents to take responsibility and supervise in pairs of appropriate gender.
- Leaders should not have to enter the changing rooms unless children are very young or need special assistance, where supervision should be in pairs of appropriate gender.
- Clearly state time for start and end of training sessions or competitions, leaders should remain in pairs until all participants have been collected.
- Keep attendance records and record of any incidents / injuries that arise.
- Try to get parents to stay and supervise sessions, (for safety and supervision, not necessarily for their 'technical' expertise)

Away trips / Overnight stays

- Separate permission forms should be signed by parents and participants, containing emergency contact number.
- Young participants should sign a behaviour agreement.
- Appoint a group leader who will make a report on returning home.
- A meeting with parents and participants is useful to communicate travel times, competition details, other activities, gear requirements, medical requirements, special dietary needs and any other necessary details.
- Rooming arrangements – adults should not share rooms with children, children share rooms with those of same age and gender and adults should knock before entering rooms.
- All group socialisation should take place in communal areas (i.e. no boys in girls' rooms and vice versa).
- Alcoholic drink, smoking or other illegal substances are forbidden to players.
- There must be at least one adult of each gender with a mixed party, there should be a good adult – child ratio, Lights out times should be enforced.
- Young players should be under reasonable supervision at all times and should never leave the venue or go unsupervised without prior permission.

Policy on the Use of Photographic and Filming Equipment

Na Fianna CLG has adopted a policy in relation to the use of images of athletes on its websites and in other publications to alleviate concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on sports websites and other publications.

Only athletes whose parent or guardian have ticked the permission to use an image on the Club membership form will be used.

Where possible we will try to use models or illustrations when promoting an activity and avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside the sport.

Videoing as a coaching aid: This medium is not used frequently but if and when it is video equipment can be used as a legitimate coaching aid.

Anyone concerned about any photography taking place at events or training sessions can contact the Children's Officer or the Juvenile Chairperson and ask them to deal with the matter.

Policy on Reporting Accidents or Incidents

In the event of an accident or incident occurring while training or during a match, the occurrence must be reported to the Juvenile Secretary by calling and following up with an email to secretarybng.nafianna.meath@gaa.ie.

In the event of an accident contact should be made with the parents/guardians and the emergency services/GP if required. All the facts surrounding the incident or accident should be recorded.

If the incident or accident occurs during a match (official or challenge) please make sure the Referee has recorded all the relevant details for his match report.

Child Welfare and Protection Procedures (Also see Appendix 4)

Na Fianna CLG accepts that organisations, which include young people among its members, are vulnerable to the occurrence of child abuse. Below are the procedures for dealing with any welfare or protection issue that may arise. Child welfare and the protection of young people is the concern of all adults at all times, irrespective of their role within the organisation.

- If there are grounds for concern about the safety or welfare of a young person you should react to the concern.
- Persons unsure about whether or not certain behaviours are abusive and therefore reportable should contact the duty social worker in the local HSE or social services department where you should seek an informal consultation and you will receive advise.
- Grounds for concern include a specific indication from a child, a statement from a person who witnessed abuse or an illness, injury or behaviour consistent with abuse.
- A report may be made by any member in the club but should be passed on to the Children's Officer or Juvenile Chairperson who may in turn have to pass the concern to the local Statutory Authorities.
- It is not the responsibility of anyone working within Na Fianna CLG in a paid or voluntary capacity, or those working in affiliated organisations, to take responsibility or decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. That is the job of the local statutory authorities. However, there is a responsibility to protect children by assisting the appropriate agencies so that they can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person.

Discipline, Complaints and Appeals

Discipline in sport should always be positive in focus, providing the structure and rules that allow participants to learn to set their own goals and strive for them. It should encourage young people to become more responsible for themselves and therefore more independent.

The main form of discipline should be positive reinforcement for effort. It should encourage the development of emotional and social skills as well as skills in sport.

Children should be helped to become responsible about the decisions and choices they make within sport, particularly when they are likely to make a difference between playing fairly and unfairly.

There should be no place for fighting, over-aggressive or dangerous behaviour in sport. Participants should treat others in a respectful manner. They should not interfere with, bully or take unfair advantage of others.

No two children are ever the same and there is no exact science as to how a child will respond to certain coaching styles or discipline. One thing that is clear is that negative put-downs, shouting or even physical punishment (such as extra laps of the track / push-ups for misbehaving) will not improve a child's belief in themselves or how they value the opinion of their coach. It may well increase the child's fear of the coach, but it will not increase the child's desire to remain involved in the sport.

It is a useful rule of thumb to consider:

- It is easier to change the behaviour than the person
- It is easier to change the situation than the behaviour.

Positive Discipline

Works by:

- Creating a good relationship with the young people in your charge
- Being a good role model – not swearing or being abusive to opponents
- Positive reinforcement – emphasising behaviour such as being honest, accepting defeat, shaking hands
- Listening to the view of child members and agreeing codes of conduct with them. Children like security and boundaries in which they know they are safe Avoid harsh punishment
- Having clear simple rules reducing the amount of 'grey areas' that children can manipulate
- The coach remaining calm and reasonable
- Acknowledging the young person's feelings that they may be or at least perceive themselves as being unfairly treated
- Keep criticisms to a minimum
- Criticising the behaviour not the child.

Do not become trapped in circular arguments which do nothing but reinforce the child's frustration. Allow children opportunities to 'escape' from a debate about poor behaviour i.e. asking how else they could have dealt with the situation. Remember bad behaviour is not a personal attack on you or your coaching style but may be more a reflection of the child's limited ability to obtain attention for positive behaviour.

Discipline Levels

The use of sanctions is an important element in the maintenance of discipline. Coaches have the authority to apply sanctions where deemed necessary, however, coaches should have a clear understanding of where and when sanctions are appropriate.

The age and developmental stage of the child should be taken into consideration when using sanctions.

Challenging behaviour can be defined as behaviour which

- Interferes with the child's own ability to participate in the training session
- Challenges your ability to run your training session successfully
- Challenges other children's right to enjoy and participate in the training session
- Has a duration, frequency, intensity or persistence that is beyond the normal range of what you can accept
- Is less likely to be responsive to the range of interventions such as verbal correction or time out.

Behaviour types include

- Annoying Behaviour – could include behaviour such as whining, pouting, screaming, tantrums
- Aggressive behaviour - which can include pushing, punching, kicking, biting, scratching and threatening behaviour
- Disruptive behaviour - includes screaming, tantrums, verbal abuse, non-co-operation, running away
- Destructive Behaviour – which can include destruction of property and the environment
- Withdrawn Behaviour – includes failure to respond or avoidance of people or activities
- Self-Injurious Behaviour – including head banging, scratching or poking.

Prohibited Sanctions

The following should never be permitted as a means of managing a child's/young person's behaviour or sanction:

- Physical punishment or the threat of such;
- Refusal to speak with or interact with the child/young person;
- Being deprived of food, water, access to toilets or other essential facilities;
- Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

Sanctions

The following sanction steps are suggested:

Minor Offences

- A warning should be given if a rule is broken, e.g. poor conduct.
- The issue of a sanction (for example, use of time out¹) should be applied if a rule is broken for a second time.
- If a rule is broken three or more times, the child should be spoken to, and if necessary, the parents/guardians should be informed.
- Over time if the offences continue the coach can request that the player be suspended from training & matches for a defined period

Serious Offences

In the event of a serious incidents occurring, the coach can ask the parent/guardian to collect their child from the training/match and suspend the player from playing or training for a defined period.

The coach may also report the incident to the disciplinary committee of Na Fianna CLG if s/he deems it necessary. On receipt of any such complaint the disciplinary committee will investigate the incident and recommend any further punishment deemed proportionate to the offence involved.

Appointment of Disciplinary Committee

The Disciplinary Committee should consist of a representative from the Juvenile Committee for example the Children's Officer and an ordinary registered member of the club. Regular turnover of this committee is recommended.

The issue of confidentiality is important.

Information is on a need to know basis.

The make up of this Committee will be decided if or when an incident needs to be examined.

Where there are potential contentious issues, due consideration should be given to ensure the independence of the disciplinary committee/panel and therefore, it is advisable that members of the disciplinary committee/panel should not be Offices/Directors of the body concerned as lack of independence is often cited as a ground for appeal.

¹ A 6 year-old child should probably receive about a **5 minute** time-out while a 10 year old child would receive a **10 minute** time-out. A general guideline can be: 6-8 years of age, **5 minutes**; 8-10 years of age, **10 minutes**; 10-14 years of age, **10 to 20 minutes**.

Complaint Procedure

It is the responsibility of the Disciplinary Committee to resolve problems relating to the conduct of its members.

A complaint of any incident of suspected misconduct, including bullying, but does not relate to child abuse should be dealt with by the Disciplinary Committee.

The Disciplinary Committee should inform the individual and his/her parents/guardians with details of the complaint being made against him/ her and afford him/ her the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing.

It is recommended that the Disciplinary Committee meet with all parties involved, affording each party the same rights and opportunities. The Disciplinary Committee should form a written report outlining the procedure followed, findings, conclusions and any disciplinary actions to be taken.

All parties should receive a copy of this report. This report should also be kept on record. The Disciplinary Committee should, as soon as possible, inform the Executive Committee of the progress and conclusions of the disciplinary process.

Sanctions

Where it is established that an incident of misconduct has taken place, the disciplinary committee should notify the member of any sanction being imposed. The notification should be made in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction. If the member is under 18 years of age, correspondence should be addressed to parents/ guardians.

Appeal Procedure

If the member or his/her parents against whom the complaint was made is unhappy with the decision of the Disciplinary Committee s/ he should have the right to appeal the decision to an Appeals Committee (independent of the Disciplinary Committee). Any appeal should be made in writing within 7 days after issue of the decision of the Disciplinary Committee. The Chairperson of the Appeals Committee should be a member of the Executive Committee or elected by the members at an AGM.

The Appeals Committee have the power to confirm, set aside or change any sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Committee. If any party is not satisfied with the outcome, the matter can be referred to the National Children's Officer. However, efforts to resolve the issue at local level should be exhausted before the National Children's Officer is engaged in attempts to resolve the matter. Any Appeal submitted at National level will be heard by the Executive Committee, with their decision being final.

Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints can be difficult to deal with however, they cannot be ignored. All complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour/poor practice should be brought to the attention of the Chairperson of the Club. In all cases the safety and welfare of the child/children is paramount.

All complaints should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner. It is important to record all such complaints and actions taken. Specific advice on dealing with anonymous complaints can be got from your local HSE duty social worker or alternatively the GAA's Ireland National Children's Officer.

Rumours

Rumours should not be allowed hang in the air. Any rumour/s relating to inappropriate behaviour/s circulating in the club should be brought to the attention to the Chairperson and checked out promptly. All ensuing information should be handled confidentially and with sensitivity.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is about managing information in a respectful, professional and purposeful manner. It is important that the rights of both the child and the person about whom the complaint has been made are protected. Therefore, appropriate confidentiality will be maintained in respect of all issues and people involved in concerns about the welfare of a child or bad practice within the club.

The following points will be borne in mind:

- A guarantee of confidentiality or undertakings regarding secrecy cannot be given, as the welfare of the child will supersede all other considerations
- All information should be treated in a careful and sensitive manner and should only be discussed with those who need to know
- Information will be conveyed to the parents/guardians of a child about whom there are concerns in a sensitive way. Giving information to others on a "need to know" basis for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality

APPENDIX 1

Code of Conduct

Leaders should familiarise themselves with the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport* and with the Na Fianna's Code of Conduct and follow the procedures if they suspect or receive complaints of abuse of any sort

Leaders should be

- Positive during session, praise and encourage effort as well as results
- Plan and prepare appropriately
- Put welfare of young person first, strike a balance between this and winning / results
- Encourage fair play, treat participants equally
- Recognise developmental needs
- Qualified and up-to-date with knowledge and skill of sport for young people
- Involve parents where possible and inform parents when problems arise
- Keep record of attendance at training
- Keep a brief record of injury(s) and action taken
- Keep a brief record of problem/action/outcomes, if behavioural problems arise

Do you agree to abide by the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport?

Yes No

Do you agree to abide by the rules of the governing body / club?

Yes No

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution; a Bound Over Order; or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations?

Yes No

Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation?

Yes No

(If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence)

I have read the above and the Na Fianna CLG's Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Young People in Sport and agree to abide by the guidelines

_____ (signed) _____ (date)

Print Name

APPENDIX 2

Permission Form
Traveling with Underage Participants

EVENT: _____

VENUE: _____

DATES: _____

Travelling Volunteer

I hereby agree to abide by the guidelines and regulations contained in the Na Fianna CLG's Code of Conduct

Name: _____ Role _____

Date: _____

Parent / Guardian of Participant

I have read and accept the conditions and rules set down by Na Fianna CLG for children travelling to matches and events.

Parents/Carers Name: _____ Date: _____

Emergency Contact Number(s)

Young Participant

I have read and accept the conditions and rules set down by Na Fianna CLG for children traveling to matches and events. I agree to abide by the rules

Name _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 3

Format for Disciplinary Committee's Report

Below is a suggested outline of how to write up a report following a complaint. Additional information may be added to the format.

Complaint:

State the nature of the complaint and individuals involved

Procedure:

Body of the report should include the following points

Who the Disciplinary Committee consisted of

Who the Disciplinary Committee met with

Any additional parties who the Disciplinary Committee met with/ spoke to, for example the Health Board may have been contacted

Conclusion:

Summarise the main findings from the above meetings and the final decision met by the Disciplinary Committee following these meetings

Sanctions:

State any sanctions, which the Disciplinary Committee have imposed on any individuals as a result of the complaint

Recommendations:

State any recommendations which the Disciplinary Committee feel are necessary to prevent such a complaint occurring again e.g. all club members involved with underage players attend a Child Protection course

Signature:

All members of the Disciplinary Committee should sign and date the report

APPENDIX 4

Chapter Four – Child First Guidelines

Responsibilities of Organisations Dealing with Children and Young People

AIM OF CHAPTER The aim of this chapter is to help all organisations working with children and young people to create a culture of safety that promotes the welfare of children and young people availing of their services. Most of these organisations will provide 'relevant services' as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and will have specific statutory obligations under the Act. This chapter will help staff and volunteers of these organisations to fulfil their statutory obligations.

The chapter also outlines best practice procedures in child safeguarding that all organisations dealing with children and young people should consider. This is in addition to any statutory obligations under the Act.

For the purpose of this chapter, the definition of children includes young people up to the age of 18.

STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS OF RELEVANT SERVICES One of the main objectives of the Children First Act 2015 is to ensure that your organisation keeps children safe from harm while availing of your service. The legislation and this Guidance relate to the obligations of relevant services to prevent, as far as practicable, deliberate harm or abuse to the children availing of their services. While it is not possible to remove all risk, your organisation should put in place policies and procedures to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

The Act places specific obligations on organisations which provide services to children and young people, including the requirement to: Keep children safe from harm while they are using your service Carry out a risk assessment to identify whether a child or young person could be harmed while receiving your services Develop a Child Safeguarding Statement that outlines the policies and procedures which are in place to manage the risks that have been identified Appoint a relevant person to be the first point of contact in respect of the organisation's Child Safeguarding Statement

The legislation imposes deadlines on organisations in both carrying out a risk assessment and preparing a Child Safeguarding Statement. If your organisation is already in existence, you must complete the requirements for a risk assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement within three months of the relevant sections of the Children First Act 2015 coming into force. If your organisation is established after the Children First Act 2015 comes into force, you must comply with the requirements within three months from the date the service commenced.

The Children First Act, in section 11(4), requires providers of relevant services to have due regard to this Guidance and any guidelines issued by Tusla – Child and Family Agency concerning child safeguarding statements. Any guidance issued by Tusla concerning Child Safeguarding Statements may be found on its website (www.tusla.ie).

What are relevant services under the Act?

The organisations that have statutory responsibilities under the Children First Act 2015 are those that provide a relevant service to children and young people.

The types of organisations and services to which the legislation applies include the following: Early years services Schools and centres of education Hospitals, hospices and health centres, and other centres providing physical or mental health services to children Residential care settings, including residential centres providing care to children with disabilities Special care units Children detention schools Reception or accommodation centres where children seeking asylum may be accommodated Domestic violence shelters where children may be accommodated Any work or activity which consists of inspecting services provided to a child Any inspection, examination or investigation undertaken by the Ombudsman for Children Any work or activity which involves providing treatment, therapy or counselling to a child Any work or activity which involves providing: » Educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children » Care or supervision of children » Formal consultation with, or formal participation by, a child in matters which affect his or her life Any work or activity which involves providing advice or guidance services to a child Any work or activity as a minister, priest or other person involved in the advancement of any religious belief Any work or activity as a driver, assistant to a driver, conductor or supervisor of children on a vehicle where children travel unaccompanied by a parent or guardian Any work or activity as a member of An Garda Síochána whose work involves access to, or contact with, children

National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children

To qualify as a relevant service under the Act, the service provider must employ at least one other person to provide that service. In effect, this means that types of activity and services provided by persons who work alone and do not employ another person (e.g. tutors who provide one-to-one tuition or childminders) are exempt under the Act. Activities which are undertaken in the course of a family or personal relationship for no commercial benefit, for example a grandparent who minds their grandchild or the person who gives the neighbour's children a lift to school, are also exempt.

Risk assessment Under the Children First Act 2015

If your organisation is providing a relevant service, you must undertake a risk assessment. This considers the potential for harm to come to children while they are in your organisation's care. It should be noted that risk in this context is the risk of abuse and not general health and safety risk. Your organisation then uses this risk assessment to draft a Child Safeguarding Statement to outline how these risks will be managed.

A risk assessment is an exercise where your organisation examines all aspects of your service from a safeguarding perspective to establish whether there are any practices or features of your service that have the potential to put children at risk.

The risk assessment process is intended to enable your organisation to: Identify potential risks Develop policies and procedures to minimise risk by responding in

a timely manner to potential risks Review whether adequate precautions have been taken to eliminate or reduce these risks

UNDERSTANDING WHAT RISKS TO ASSESS

You should consult the full list of organisations which are classified as relevant services under the Act to establish if your organisation is a relevant service. This list can be found in Appendix 1 of this Guidance.

Section 11(1)(a) of the Children First Act 2015 defines risk as “any potential for harm to a child while availing of the service.” Section 2 of the Act defines harm as follows: “harm means in relation to a child – (a) Assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child’s health, development or welfare, or (b) Sexual abuse of the child, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances or otherwise.”

CARRYING OUT A RISK ASSESSMENT

As part of the risk assessment process, your organisation should reflect on what specific risks arise as a result of the service you provide and how these risks can be managed. The following steps in the diagram are a guide to help your organisation consider where the potential for risk lies and how these risks can be managed.

Think about who or what might cause harm to children or young people using your service. Make sure all persons in the service, including children, are involved in this process. Different people will have different perceptions of what is a risk.

Rank each risk in terms of low, medium and high risks. To help rank each risk, consider the likelihood of the risk occurring and how serious the consequences could be.

Who owns the risk? Assign risk owners. What current controls are in place to reduce the risk? What future actions must be done to reduce the risk? What else do you need to do about the risk?

Are the controls effective? Are the actions effective?

It is not possible to eliminate risk completely, but risks can be significantly reduced if they are properly managed.

STEP 1 Identify potential risks

STEP 2 Rank each risk

STEP 3 Control and manage the risks

STEP 4 Monitor and review

After the risk assessment has been completed, organisations are required to develop a Child Safeguarding Statement that outlines the policies and procedures which are in place to manage the risks that have been identified.

Child Safeguarding Statement The Children First Act 2015 requires organisations that are providers of relevant services to prepare a Child Safeguarding Statement. This is a written statement that specifies the service being provided and the principles and procedures to be observed in order to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child availing of the service is safe from harm. Your service should ensure that your Child Safeguarding Statement has due regard to this Guidance and any other child protection guidelines issued by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs or any guidelines issued by Tusla concerning child safeguarding statements under section 11(4) of the Children First Act 2015.

WHAT THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT SHOULD CONTAIN

As outlined above, the Children First Act 2015 places obligations on organisations that provide relevant services to children. These obligations are:

1. To keep children safe from harm while they are using the service [section 10]
2. To carry out a risk assessment to identify whether a child or young person could be harmed which using the service [section 11(1)(a)] and
3. To develop a Child Safeguarding Statement [section 11(3)] which must include both the written risk assessment and the procedures that are in place to:
 - » Manage any risk identified
 - » Investigate an allegation against any staff member about any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child availing of the service
 - » Select and recruit staff who are suitable to work with children
 - » Provide information and training to staff on child protection and safeguarding issues
 - » Enable staff members, whether mandated persons or otherwise, to make a report to Tusla in accordance with the Act or any guidelines issued by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs
 - » Maintain a list of persons in the organisation who are mandated persons under the Act
 - » Appoint a relevant person in the organisation for the purposes of the Act

The Child Safeguarding Statement should provide an overview of the measures that your organisation has in place to ensure that children are protected from harm. It may also refer to more detailed policies which can be made available on request. Further help on developing a Child Safeguarding Statement is available on the Tusla website (www.tusla.ie).

MAKING THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT AVAILABLE

Upon completion, you must circulate the Child Safeguarding Statement to all staff members. Your organisation must also display the Child Safeguarding Statement publicly and make it available to parents and guardians, Tusla and members of the public upon request.

The Child Safeguarding Statement must be reviewed every two years, or sooner if there has been a material change in any of the issues to which it refers.

REGISTER OF NON-COMPLIANCE

There is a provision in the Children First Act 2015 for Tusla to establish and maintain a register of non-compliance for service providers who fail to provide a copy of the Child Safeguarding Statement to Tusla when requested to do so. Under the Act, Tusla must make the register available for inspection by the public at all reasonable times at its principal office.

SAFEGUARDING BEST PRACTICE PROCEDURES FOR ALL ORGANISATIONS

All organisations that provide services to children should develop specific policies and procedures on how to create a safe environment. If your organisation provides a relevant service, as listed in Schedule 1 of the Children First Act 2015, this will be achieved by preparing and implementing your Child Safeguarding Statement. All other organisations should consider the need to have detailed policies and procedures in place on the following: Dealing with child protection concerns Reporting child protection concerns Working safely with children Recruiting and managing staff Child safeguarding awareness and training Involving parents and children Implementing and reviewing the safeguarding strategies

If you are an adult working on your own to provide a service to children, you should ensure that your procedures follow best practice in child protection.

Tusla has prepared additional guidance on child safeguarding and on reporting child welfare and protection concerns, which your organisation may find useful. This may be found on the Tusla website (www.tusla.ie).

Appointing a designated liaison person Both public and private organisations that are providing services to children should consider appointing a designated liaison person in keeping with best practice in child safeguarding. This person will be the resource person for any staff member or volunteer who has child protection concerns and will liaise with outside agencies. The designated liaison person should be knowledgeable about child protection and should be provided with any training considered necessary to fulfil this role.

You should make the name and contact details of the designated liaison person available to all staff and volunteers working within your organisation. It may also be useful to appoint a deputy designated liaison person who will assume responsibility when the designated liaison person is not available or on leave.

ROLE OF DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON

The designated liaison person is responsible for ensuring that reporting procedures within your organisation are followed, so that child welfare and protection concerns are referred promptly to Tusla. Details on what is a reasonable concern and how to report it to Tusla can be found in Chapter 2 of this Guidance. The designated liaison person should record all concerns or allegations of child abuse brought to his or her attention, and the actions taken in relation to a concern or allegation of child abuse.

If, as a designated liaison person, you decide not to report a concern to Tusla, the following steps should be taken: The reasons for not reporting should be recorded Any actions taken as a result of the concern should be recorded The employee or volunteer who raised the concern should be given a clear written explanation of the reasons why the concern is not being reported to Tusla The employee or volunteer should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to make a report to Tusla or An Garda Síochána

DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSONS AND MANDATED PERSONS

Some designated liaison persons will be working in organisations where mandated persons are also employed. It is important to note that the statutory obligation of mandated persons to report under the Children First Act 2015 must be discharged by the mandated person and cannot be discharged by the designated liaison person on their behalf.

If you are a mandated person and also have the role of designated liaison person in your organisation, you must fulfil the statutory obligations of a mandated person as detailed in Chapter 3. This means that if, as a designated liaison person, you are made aware of a concern about a child that meets or exceeds the thresholds of harm for mandated reporting, you have a statutory obligation to make a report to Tusla arising from your position as a mandated person.

While mandated persons have statutory obligations to report mandated concerns, they may make a report jointly with another person, whether the other person is a mandated person or not. In effect, this means that a mandated person can make a joint report with a designated liaison person.

Reporting concerns about a child All organisations should have procedures in place for reporting any concerns about the welfare or protection of a child that arise. You should make sure the procedures are available and followed by all staff members, volunteers, and individuals undertaking work experience or internships within your organisation.

Procedures for your staff and volunteers on reporting concerns should include:

- Seeking advice and guidance: When to seek advice and guidance from the designated liaison person or Tusla where someone is unsure about whether or not to report a concern about a child availing of your service.
- Reasonable grounds for concern: The responsibility of staff and volunteers to report to Tusla using the Report Form (available on the Tusla website: www.tusla.ie) where reasonable grounds for concern exist. Further details on reporting reasonable concerns can be found in Chapter 2 of this Guidance.
- How to report a concern: Procedures for non-mandated and mandated persons and contact details for any designated liaison person, if applicable, within your organisation.
- Immediate risk to a child: The steps to be taken where an immediate risk to a child is believed to exist.
- Recording: Guidance on how the details of the concern and the actions taken are to be recorded.
- Talking to parents/guardians: The process for discussing a concern with parents/guardians before reporting and the circumstances in which this is not advised, as it may further endanger the child or the person making the report. You do not need to inform the family that a report is being made, if by doing so the child will be placed at further risk or in cases where the family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out an assessment. Also, it is not necessary to inform the family if the

person making the report reasonably believes it may place them at risk of harm from the family. Cases not reported to Tusla: The process for recording both the reasons for the decision and any actions taken. Information for mandated persons: If your organisation employs mandated persons, your reporting procedure should state clearly that mandated persons must report concerns of harm above a particular threshold under the Children First Act 2015. Refer them to Chapter 3 of this Guidance for further information. It should also specify (a) whether mandated persons are expected to make their mandated report jointly with the designated liaison person and (b) whether mandated persons must provide a copy of their mandated report to their employer.

Vetting Statutory obligations on employers in relation to Garda vetting requirements for persons working with children and vulnerable adults are set out in the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012–2016. Under these Acts, it is compulsory for employers to obtain vetting disclosures in relation to anyone who is carrying out relevant work with children or vulnerable adults. The Acts create offences and penalties for persons who fail to comply with its provisions. Your organisation should ensure that it fully complies with all the requirements of this legislation.

The National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána issues vetting disclosures to organisations employing people who work in a full-time, part-time, voluntary or student placement basis with children and/or vulnerable adults. The National Vetting Bureau does not decide on the suitability of any person to work with children and vulnerable adults. Rather, in response to a written request for vetting, the National Vetting Bureau releases criminal history and other specified information on the person to be vetted to the prospective recruiting organisation.

Advice, information and training for staff and volunteers of organisations It is the responsibility of your organisation to identify what training your staff and volunteers need and to ensure that they receive adequate and appropriate child welfare and protection information and training. Your organisation should provide all staff members and volunteers with good-quality information on the recognition and reporting of child protection and welfare concerns. Training should also include clear information about the role of the statutory agencies with primary responsibility in child protection and welfare, namely, Tusla and An Garda Síochána.

If your organisation has employees who are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015, you should also ensure that training specifically on the statutory responsibilities of mandated persons under the Act is made available to them.

If your organisation has a nominated designated liaison person or deputy designated liaison person, you should ensure that they receive adequate child protection and welfare information and training to enable them to undertake this role.

Tusla provides information resources on Children First, including in relation to child safeguarding statements and reporting child welfare and protection concerns. Tusla has also developed an e-learning training module, Introduction to Children First, which covers recognising and reporting child abuse, the role of mandated persons, mandated assisting, the responsibilities of organisations working with children to safeguard children using their services, and the role of

designated liaison persons. You can access the e-learning module and other Tusla resources through the Tusla website (www.tusla.ie).

Information is also available on the Tusla website to assist your organisation if it wishes to develop its own specific Children First training (Tusla Children First – Best Practice Principles for Organisations in Developing Children First Training Programmes).

Decisions on suitability for recruitment rest at all times with the recruiting organisation and the results of vetting should form only one part of the recruitment decision.