

CHILD PROTECTION & WELFARE POLICY

Introduction

We at **Derrynoose GAC** aim to promote the participation of children in our club by creating a culture of safety and fun.

“Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence. They must be kept safe from harm and they must be given proper care by those looking after them”

(Article 19 : UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

All children’s sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. Ireland and the UK have adopted, and are committed to, the European Code of Sport Ethics which defines fair play as:

“much more than playing within the rules. It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing within the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialism and corruption.”

(European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe, 1993)

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order (1995) is based on a clear and consistent set of principles designed with the common aim of promoting the welfare of children. Children have the right to be safe. All coaches should ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedent over all other considerations.

Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Policy Statement

The **Gaelic Athletic Association** is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all young people who wish to participate in our Gaelic Games and activities. We shall take all practicable steps to protect them from discernable forms of abuse, from harm, discrimination or degrading treatment and shall respect their rights, wishes and feelings.

We do this by:

- Recognising that all children and vulnerable adults have the right to be protected from harm.
- Ensuring that all our coaches and volunteers are carefully selected and vetted and that they accept responsibility for ensuring the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults in their care.
- Responding swiftly and appropriately to protect the welfare of children and vulnerable adults who participate in our games and related activities.

- Providing parents, children, and vulnerable adults with the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have.
- Appointing Children's Officer in our Club.
- Appointing a Designated Person in our Club who will liaise with the statutory authorities as appropriate.
- Ensuring that all allegations of abuse of young people, and vulnerable adults, are confidentially dealt with in accordance the Associations Guidelines for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse (Fourth Edition 2009) and with statutory guidelines and relevant legislation.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of our Child Protection and Welfare procedures and policies on an ongoing basis.
- Ensuring that members, coaches, team mentors, administrators, parents/guardians and non playing members sign-up to and adhere to our Code of Behaviour.
- Raising awareness of the issues which lead to children being harmed
- Applying codes of behaviour for coaches/volunteers, children and young people
- Applying good and safe working/playing practices
- Identifying parental responsibility through annual membership form

The policy applies to all those involved in **Derrynoose GAC**: coaches, administrators, officials, volunteer drivers, parents and children.

Designated Person

The 'contact person' or Designated Person within **Derrynoose GAC** is:

Name: Eileen Hamilton
 Address: 43 Listrakelt Road
 Derrynoose
 Co. Armagh

Name of designated person shall be made known to all club members. This person is the designated person to whom concerns will be addressed. If the concern is about the designated person, the concerns should be forwarded to the Club Chairman.

The Club has procedures for dealing with concerns or allegations of abuse either within the club or externally but the first point of contact for the child, parent/guardian or coach is the designated person. However, any individual has the right to contact Social Services or PSNI directly if they have concern about a child's welfare.

Children's Officers

The Children's Officer within **Derrynoose GAC** is:

Name: Donagh Nugent
Address: Crossmore Downs
Keady
Co. Armagh

This officer shall be made known to all club members. The Children's Officer shall have as his/her primary aim the establishment of a child and youth centred ethos within the Club and will be viewed by many as the link between the children/young people or their parents and the Club. It is the responsibility of the Children's Officer to regularly report to their Club Executive or Management Committee on how Club policy and procedures and the participation of young people in the Club may be impacting on the welfare and safeguarding of under age players and their coaches/mentors.

Children's Officers do not have the responsibility to investigate or validate child protection allegations or concerns within the Club. The liaison person appointed by the Club to deal with such concerns is the Club's Designated Person as per the GAA Guidelines for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse (Fourth Edition).

Guidelines for Reporting Accidents

In the event of an accident the following procedure will be followed:

- Contact parents/guardians
- Contact emergency services/G.P. if necessary
- Record detailed facts surrounding accident, witnesses etc.
- Complete accident Form – available from Player Injury Officer

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING ALLEGATIONS/INCIDENTS

Good and Safe Working/Playing Practices

Derrynoose GAC will ensure:

- Proper supervision of children within the club with adequate numerical and sexual coach:child ratio
- Supervision of equipment used and safe for purpose
- Public Liability insurance covering all members of the club
- First-aider and first aid equipment is available in case of accident, with accident/incident books documented where necessary
- N.B. All accidents will be reported to parents
- A safe environment for members.

- Ongoing training and information for Coaches
- Implementation of policy and procedures in line with guidance from GAA: *Code of Behaviour for all persons working with Young People*
- Support to members who report allegations of abuse
- Suspected abuse information is treated confidentially
- Appropriate action is taken if members breach standards of reasonable behaviour
- The establishment and maintenance of a coaching register
- The setting of standards of good practice
- The designated officer has knowledge of statutory child protection procedures and responsibility in reporting concerns
- The implementation of good and safe working practice is developed to the mutual benefit of the member, local area and community

Derrynoose GAC has the right to:

- Expect leaders to comply with its Code of Conduct
- Expect all children to maintain standards of reasonable behaviour
- Take appropriate action if members breach the Code of Conduct or Child Protection Policy
- Expect all members to undertake appropriate training when advised to
- Take appropriate action in the event of accusations
- Acquire vetting checks on all coaches
- Maintain records on individuals in line with advice from data protection agency, i.e. only hold records on individuals that they have justifiable reason for holding

The Executive Committee of Derrynoose GAC commit to ensuring that we follow the GAA Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport and the GAA Code of Behaviour for all Persons Working with Young People and Vulnerable Adults.

We have nominated the following people in the position of Childrens' Officers and Designated Person respectively. Full training has been provided in order to ensure full implementation of the club Child Protection and Welfare Policy.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Childrens' Officer

Signed; _____ Date: _____
Designated Person

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairperson

Signed; _____ Date: _____
Secretary

This statement will be reviewed: July 2014