

Irish Surfing

Safeguarding Policy

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GLOSSARY

Child: For the purpose of this guidance a child is any person under 18 years of age unless they are or have been married (Child Care Act 1991).

Club Children's Officers (CCO): Children's Officers are appointed within clubs to act as a resource for children and to represent them at committee level.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP): A person who is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse and welfare issues to the Statutory Authorities. This person will be a resource to anyone in the organisation/club who has a child protection/welfare concern.

Mandated Person: The mandated person is a person named under schedule 2 of Children First Act 2015 (ROI). They have a legal responsibility to report concerns or allegations that reach or exceed the threshold of harm of abuse to the Tusla (refer to NGB/Club for list of mandated persons).

National Children's Officer (NCO): The National Children's Officer should be a member of the executive committee, or have access to the committee and its accompanying documents, to ensure that children's interests are kept on the agenda and influence the decisions of the Governing Body .

Provider of Relevant Service: As defined in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI), this means, in relation to a relevant service, a person-

(a) who provides a relevant service, and

(b) who in respect of the provision of such relevant service-

(i) employs (whether under contract of employment or otherwise) one or more than one other person to undertake any work or activity that constitutes a relevant Service,

(ii) enters into a contract for services with one or more than one other person for the provision by the person of a relevant service, or

(iii) permits one or more than one other person (whether or not for commercial or other consideration and whether or not as part of a course of education or training, including an internship scheme) to undertake any work or activity, on behalf of the person, that constitutes a relevant service.

Relevant Service: As defined in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI), this means any work or activity specified in Schedule 1 [of that Act].

Relevant Person: As defined in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI), this means a person who is appointed by a provider of a relevant service to be the first point of contact in respect of the provider's Child Safeguarding Statement.

Statutory Authorities: The authorities who promote the protection and welfare of young people and who have the responsibility for the investigation and/or validation of suspected child abuse, i.e. in the ROI it is Tusla & An Garda Síochána and in NI it is the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Health and Social Care Trusts.

Sports Leaders: For the purpose of this guidance all adults involved in children's sport are referred to as Sports Leaders. All have a role to play in ensuring that procedures as described in this policy are put in place, agreed, followed and reviewed on a regular basis. The principal leadership roles (some of which overlap) include the following:

Administrators: While administrators may not be actively involved in children's sport, they may be involved in organising activities and events.

Assistants: Assistants are those people who provide back-up to any of the roles outlined in this section and often such assistants are involved on an intermittent basis (e.g. provision of lifts to matches or competitions; checking equipment, etc.).

Club/Organisation Officers: President, Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee members are appointed to oversee club activities and the development of the club/organisation.

Coach/Trainer: A coach is a person who assists a young participant to develop his or her skills and abilities in a progressive way. Instructor/Teacher: Instructors are involved in the systematic development of the core skills and abilities of an activity, sometimes in a non-competitive context.

Manager: A manager is an individual who takes overall responsibility for a team or a group of sports people and who may often have a direct input into the nature and organisation of the activity itself. **Mentor:** A mentor is an individual who undertakes an overseeing role with a group of participants under 18 years of age, often in co-operation with other mentors.

Official: An official is an individual charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the rules of an activity are adhered to in a formal way. This category includes referees, judges, umpires, etc.

Selector: A selector is an individual who has responsibility for the selection of participants under 18 years of age for teams and events.

Statutory Authority Guidelines on Child Protection: In the Republic of Ireland - Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Department of Health and Children 2017 (ROI). Northern Ireland - Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People (NI) 2003 (NI).

1.0 CONTEXT

Irish Surfing is committed to ensuring that the best interests of children and young people attending our services are of paramount importance. Our guiding principles are underpinned by national policy and legislation in ROI Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, and the requirements under The Children First Act 2015, and in Northern Ireland – the Children (NI) Order and Cooperating to Safeguarding Children and Young People 2017. Policy content credit [Safeguarding Guidance for Children & Young People in Sport](#) See Appendix 1- Legislation & Policy

2.0 VALUES & PRINCIPLES

Participation in sport plays a crucial role in the development of children and young people. The range of skills learned through being involved in sport contribute towards the holistic development of children. We want a safe, positive and nurturing environment where all children can learn important values. These can include honesty, teamwork and fair play. Children can learn to respect themselves and others, adhere to rules, and develop a healthy relationship with competition. We believe that this desired outcome is possible with the support of this guidance document. We acknowledge that the values are relevant throughout sport but identify them as being particularly essential when we talk about children's sport.

1. Fun and Healthy- Sport must be a fun and healthy experience for all.
2. Inclusion- Sport is welcoming and inclusive, offering appropriate opportunities for participation and development for all children.
3. Fair Play- We will promote fair play, respect, ethics, integrity and safety throughout the sports system when it comes to dealing with children's sport.
4. Safe- With the best interests of children in mind, we will foster best practice in safeguarding procedures and policies throughout the sports sector.

3.0 OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

A central goal for all involved in children's sport is to provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment where children can develop and enhance their physical and social skills. Promoting a child – centred ethos should go hand in hand with identifying and eliminating practice that impact negatively on safe and enjoyable participation in children's sport.

In order to create a culture of safety which promotes the welfare and protection of children in Irish Surfing, we must:

- Carry out a risk assessment of harm and produce a Child Safeguarding Statement.
- Produce, implement and review our organisational Child Safeguarding Policy which outlines procedures and practice.
- Produce, implement, and review organisational Codes of Conduct and Best Practice guidelines when working with children and young people.

4.0 RISK ASSESSMENT & CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

A **risk assessment** is an exercise where we examine all aspects of our service from a safeguarding perspective to establish whether there are any practices or features that have the potential to put children at risk of harm. The risk assessment process is intended to enable us to:

- Identify potential risk.
- 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.

As stated in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) the risk assessment is a legal requirement that must be undertaken by the providers of relevant services who engage in sporting activities with children and young people in Ireland. In Northern Ireland there is an expectation that all regulated activities have robust safeguarding procedures in place and this requirement though not a legal requirement is often linked to public funding. [Club Risk Assessment Template](#)

The Children First Act 2015 (ROI) requires Irish Surfing/ clubs to prepare a **Child Safeguarding Statement** (CSS). The Child Safeguarding Statement is a written statement that specifies the service being provided and the principles, that a child availing of the service is safe from harm. CSS must be signed by the NOC/ CCO and reviewed every three years. [Club Safeguarding Statement Template](#)

5.0 POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICE

Risk Assessment and Safeguarding Statement inform our policies and procedures for safeguarding children and young people and addresses any potential risk.

Our policies and procedures include the roles and responsibilities of the people within the organization, safe recruitment and selection of people, and the procedures to follow in relation to identifying and reporting child welfare or child protection concerns, and responding to allegations against someone within the organization.

5.1 SAFE RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

The implementation of thorough recruitment and selection procedures will help to keep children and young people safe within our organisation. Good practice in management and supervision of workers and volunteers after appointment is a further essential safeguard to help keep children safe.

The procedures outlined below are recommended best practice. This reduces the risk of someone targeting our organisation to gain access to children and/or of 'seasoned' members moving roles.

Ensure good recruitment procedures for 'all' members by:

- Insisting that a person applying for any post of responsibility within Irish Surfing/ club complete the relevant sports application form, verify qualifications, experience and gaps in employment history; person should be provided with a role descriptor.
- Obtaining two references in writing, followed up with personal contact with the reference provider (any request for references should only be sought for preferred applicants);
- Ensuring the individual completes their vetting with either the National Vetting Bureau or Access NI through Irish Surfing prior to commencement of working with children or vulnerable people.

- Setting a probationary period (six months for staff or long-term volunteers) which can be used to assess the leader's commitment to promoting good practice in relation to young people.
- Interviewing or meeting the individual either formally or informally. Appoint two officers to meet the applicant who will be able to:
 - assess the individual's experience of working with children or young people and knowledge of safeguarding issues;
 - assess their commitment to promoting good practice; and
 - assess their ability to communicate with children and young people (i.e. be approachable).
- Ensuring the Irish Surfing board/ club management committee ratifies appointments.
- Once recruited into the sports, all Sports Leaders should be adequately managed and inducted into policies and procedures.
- When storing information in relation to applicants this should be treated as highly sensitive and confidential. It should be kept in a locked cupboard that is accessible only to a nominated officer and a deputy nominated officer.
- Ensuring they have agreed to and signed up to the relevant Code of Conduct for those working with young people.
- Ensuring they have met with club officials and that they understand the role they are taking on. This is especially important if moving from one role to another among different skill sets, ages, genders, etc. Working with young people will have additional responsibilities attached due to their vulnerability.
- Ensuring they give a commitment to complete the necessary safeguarding training.
- Ensuring they understand that supervision is a vital safeguard for the club so they should avoid working alone.

- Ensuring they know who the Children's Officer/Designated Liaison Person within Irish Surfing/ club is and understand the junior structures of Irish Surfing/ club.

5.2 SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Irish Surfing requires all adults working with children and young people in our sport to complete the appropriate Sport Ireland or Sport NI Safeguarding Training.

Sport Ireland offers three different levels of safeguarding workshops, each are 3 hours long, run by Irish Surfing, other NGBs and Local Sports Partnership.

- Safeguarding 1- Sports Leaders
 - Basic Safeguarding Workshops Safeguarding 1 (online face to face workshop)
 - Validation period: 3 years
 - Expected attendees: any person working with or has interaction with or who is involved in the planning/ administration of activities or events with young people
 - Renewal: Safeguarding 1 certificate may be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding 1 (face to face workshop) or Safeguarding 1 Refresher (e-learning module)
- Safeguarding 2- Childrens Officers
 - Role specific Safeguarding 2 (Club Children's Officer Online Workshop)
 - Prerequisite: Valid Safeguarding 1
 - Validation period: 3 years
 - Expected attendees: any person taking on the role of Club Children's Officer
 - Renewal: Safeguarding 2 certificate may only be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding 2 (CCO workshop)
- Safeguarding 3- Designated Liaison Person (Designated Liaison Person workshop)
 - Prerequisite: Valid Safeguarding 1, Safeguarding 1 Refresher
 - Validation period: 3 years
 - Expected attendees: any person taking on the role of Designated Liaison Person

- Renewal: Safeguarding 3 may only be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding 3 (face to face workshop)

Sport NI offer two different levels of safeguarding workshops, each are 3 hours long, run by other Governing Bodies or Local Authorities.

- Safeguarding Children and Young People workshop - Sports Leaders
 - Basic Safeguarding Workshops Safeguarding Children & Young People in Sport (SCYPS)
 - Validation period: 3 years
 - Expected attendees: any person working with or has interaction with or who is involved in the planning/ administration of activities or events with young people.
 - Renewal: Safeguarding C&YP certificate may be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding C&YP (face to face workshop) or Safeguarding 1 Refresher (e-learning module).
- Designated Safeguarding Children's Officer Workshop – Children's Officers Safeguarding Training
 - Advanced Safeguarding Workshops – Role specific Designated Safeguarding Officer Workshop
 - Prerequisite: Valid Safeguarding Children & Young People in Sport.
 - Validation period: 3 Years
 - Expected attendees: any person taking on the role of Club Children's Officer.
 - Renewal: Designated Safeguarding Children's Officer Workshop may only be renewed by attendance at Designated Safeguarding Children's Officer Workshop.

5.3 SAFEGUARDING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

National Children's Officer (NCO)

Irish Surfing is required to have a National Children's Officer who will have access to the board and its accompanying documents, to ensure that children's interests are kept on, and influence the decisions of, the agenda of the Governing Body.

The role of the National Children's Officer involves:

- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Code and relevant child protection legislation (Children First Act 2015 (ROI)/ National Vetting Bureau Act 2012-2016, Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2017).
- Commitment to attendance at appropriate training as required in order to act as a resource to members in relation to children's needs
- Co-ordination of Child Safeguarding training.
- The promotion of the values, attitudes and structures which make sport enjoyable for children
- Circulation of all relevant information and resource materials.
- Communication with Club Children's Officers to ensure the distribution of the Code and the promotion of related education programmes, materials events and governing body related codes
- Liaison with all clubs to examine the rules, regulations and structures to ensure that they are child centred, e.g., equal playing time, appropriate competition structures, modified equipment to allow sense of achievement and success, use of protective gear, bullying policy etc.
- Liaison with clubs, to ensure drop-out rates and transfers are monitored so that unusual developments or trends can be addressed, including transfer of sports leaders
- Assisting in the development of a system of record keeping which maintains confidentiality while allowing for appropriate information to be passed to relevant authorities where necessary
- Ensuring that the Governing Body develops an appropriate sport specific policy, which includes a policy statement, codes of conduct, disciplinary procedures, bullying policy, safety statement, recruitment and selection policy and reporting procedures.

Club Children's Officer (CCO)

The appointment of Club Children's Officers is an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere. They act as a resource with regard to children's issues. In summary Children's Officers should review

current policies in relation to young people, check that all activities are safe and fun, and inform adults of how to deal with any concerns that may arise in relation to the protection of children and young people. Club Children's Officers should be child centred in focus and have as the primary aim the establishment of a child centred ethos within the club. S/he is the link between the children and the adults in the club. S/he also takes responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the Club Management Committee on how club policy impacts on young people and Sports Leaders. The Children's Officer should be a member of or have access to, the Club Management Committee and should be introduced to the young people in an appropriate forum. The Club Children's Officer should have the following role: To promote awareness of safeguarding guidelines within the club, among young members and their parents/guardians. This could be achieved by:- the production / distribution of information leaflets, the establishment of children's/agegroup specific notice boards, regular information meetings for the young people and their parents/guardians

- To influence policy and practice within the club in order to prioritise children's needs
- Establish contact with the National Children's Officer at governing body level.
- To ensure that children know how to make concerns known to appropriate adults or agencies.
- To encourage the appropriate involvement of parents/ guardians in the club activities
- To act as an advisory resource to Sports Leaders on best practice in children's sport
- To report regularly to the Club Management Committee.
- To monitor changes in membership and follow up any unusual dropout, absenteeism or club transfers by children or Sports Leaders
- To ensure that the children have a voice in the running of their club and ensure that there are steps young people can take to express concerns about their sports activities / experiences.
- Establish communication with other branches of the club, e.g. facilitate parent's information sessions at the start of the season

- Keep records on each member on file, including junior members, their contact numbers and any special needs of the child that should be known to leaders
- Ensure each member signs an annual membership form that includes signing up to the code of conduct for sports leaders and children and young people.

Ensure that the club rules and regulations include:

- complaints, disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- an anti-bullying policy.
- safety statement.
- rules in relation to traveling with children.
- supervision and recruitment of leaders.

Relevant Person

For Clubs/organisations that operate in Republic of Ireland they must appoint a Relevant Person. Defined in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) as a person who is appointed by a provider of a relevant service to be the first point of contact in respect of the provider's Child Safeguarding Statement.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Irish Surfing/Club must appoint a Designated Liaison Person (DLP). This person may or may not also fulfil the role of Children's Officer.

- The DLP is a resource for volunteers/coaches and should ensure that the clubs reporting procedures are followed. The DLP reports any suspected cases of child neglect or abuse to the Duty Social Worker in Child and Family Agency/Túsla or an Garda Síochána/ Gateway team or PSNI.

The DLP should also inform the NCO that a report has been submitted without identifying details

- The DLP should be knowledgeable about child protection and undertake any training considered necessary i.e. Safeguarding 3
- The DLP should familiarise themselves with the statutory and support services within their locality
- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Code and relevant child protection legislation (Children First Act 2015 (ROI)/National Vetting Bureau Act 2012-2016 (ROI) and Cooperating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2017.

Mandated Person

The Mandated person is a person named under schedule 2 of Children First Act 2015 (ROI). They have a legal responsibility to report concerns or allegations that reach or exceed the threshold of harm of abuse to the Tusla.

Legal Obligations of a Mandated Person:

Mandated persons have two main legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015 (ROI). These are:

- To report the harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla;
- To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

Adult-child relationships involved in sport

The trust implicit in adult-child relationships in sport places a duty of care on all adults, voluntary or professional, to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the child while engaged in their sporting activity. Adults have a crucial leadership role to play in sport. Whether they are parents/ carers or Sports Leaders or teachers, they can contribute to the creation of a positive sporting environment for young people. The unique nature of sport allows Sports Leaders to develop positive and special relationships with children. Such relationships have tremendous potential to help children to develop and express themselves in an open and secure way. Safe recruitment practices and selection of Sports Leaders should be in place, including vetting, seeking references, confirming identity and checking adequacy of qualifications. Effective management of Sports Leaders is also equally central to the promotion of good practice in the club/ organisation. This should include support, supervision, and access to training and effective communication

between members of the club/organisation.

Adults-child relationships in Sport

Adult-child relationships in Sport should be:

- open, positive and encouraging.
- entered into by choice.
- Meets the need of the child and not the adult.
- defined by a mutually agreed set of goals and commitments.
- respectful of the creativity and autonomy of children.
- carried out in a context where children are protected and where their rights are promoted.
- free from physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect or any threat of such harm.
- respectful of the needs and developmental stage of the child.
- aimed at the promotion of enjoyment and individual progress. • governed by a code of ethics and good practice in sport that is agreed and adhered to by all members of the sports club/organisation.
- mindful of the fact that some children may be more vulnerable than others.
- mindful of appropriate boundaries.
- mindful of the importance of equality of relationships with children and the potential for favouritism/special treatment.

Child to child relationships

Interaction between children should be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect, equality and non-discrimination and with a spirit of fair play. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, you should consider it a child welfare and protection issue for both children and you should follow safeguarding procedures for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

5.4 REPORTING AND PROTECTION:

All those involved in sport have a moral duty of care to report child protection concerns in order to help create a safer environment for children. The procedure in the ROI for reporting child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla is a specified procedure under the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) and should be done online following discussion with Tusla staff. In NI there is a standard UNIOCN form for statutory agencies, however voluntary sports can complete their own proforma. It is recommended that any telephone referral is followed up in writing.

Sports organisations have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of children. Staff and volunteers should be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact may be being abused or at risk of being harmed. They should know how to recognize and respond to the possibility of abuse or neglect, so as to ensure that the most effective steps are taken to protect a child and to contribute to the ongoing safety of children.

The guiding principles on reporting child abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:

1. The safety and wellbeing of the child must take priority over concerns about adults against whom an allegation may be made.
2. Reports of concerns should be made without delay to Tusla1/HSCT2

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in a paid or voluntary capacity, or those working in affiliated organisations, to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. However there is a responsibility to protect children in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person.

Responding to Child Abuse:

Regardless of how a concern comes to a coach/volunteer's attention, it must be reported to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP), in consultation with the person who raised the concern, will decide if reasonable grounds for concern exist. If reasonable grounds for concern exist, the Designated Liaison

Person will report to a Tusla duty social worker. If as the DLP 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 coach/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 coach/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.

The individual employee or coach/volunteer has protections under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998, should they report independently.

Irish Surfing /club should have a procedure for recording certain concerns which, following consideration, do not initially meet reasonable grounds for concern. This procedure should identify where such concerns are recorded, who has access to these records and who is responsible for reviewing these records in line with GDPR. Concerns which do not initially meet reasonable grounds for concern may, upon review, show patterns or clusters which may heighten the level of concern.

Recording:

- Records should be factual and include details of contacts, consultations and any actions taken.
- All agencies dealing with children must cooperate in the sharing of records with the statutory authorities where a child protection or welfare issue arises.
- Ensure that records on child protection concerns, allegations and disclosures are kept securely and safely within the organisation/club.
- Records should only be used for the purpose for which they are intended.

- Records should only be shared on a need to know basis in the best interests of the child/young person.
- Clearly state who within your organisation/club has access to particular types of records.
- State the location where records are stored.
- Indicate how long the organisation will retain these types of records.
- Child protection records should be updated as required and reviewed regularly by the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

Reasonable Grounds for concern:

There are many reasons a coach/volunteer may be concerned about the welfare or protection of a child or young person.

Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI) states that “Tusla should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected”.

It is important to remember that children/young people are sometimes abused by members of their own family, by peers or by others outside the family environment such as strangers, workers or trusted adults. Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI) lists the following as reasonable grounds for concern:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way.
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse.
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused.

- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed.
- An account from a person who saw a child being abused.

Wherever appropriate, any issues should be checked with the parents/carers when considering whether a concern exists, unless doing so may further endanger the child or the person considering making the report. The DLP should be able to support this process.

It is important to remember that abuse is not always committed through personal contact with a child or young person, sometimes it is perpetrated through social media or the use of information and communication technology.

Responding to a child/ young person who discloses abuse:

A child or young person may disclose to a coach/volunteer that they have been or are being harmed or abused. Children/ young people will often have different ways of communicating that they are being abused. If a child or young person hints at or tells a coach/volunteer that he or she is being harmed by someone, be it a parent/carer, another adult or by another child/young person (peer abuse), it should be treated in a sensitive way.

Remember, a child/young person may disclose abuse to you as a trusted adult at any time during your work with them. It is important that you are aware and prepared for this.

- Be as calm and natural as possible.
- Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked.
- Do not panic.
- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for the child/young person.
- Remember, the child or young person may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.

- Listen to what the child/young person has to say. Give them the time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to.
- Do not pressurise the child/young person. Allow him or her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language.
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger or disbelief.
- Accept what the child or young person has to say – false disclosures are very rare.
- It is important to differentiate between the person who carried out the abuse and the act of abuse itself.
- It may be necessary to reassure the child/young person that your feelings towards him or her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what they have disclosed.
- Reassure the child/young person that they have taken the right action in talking to you.

When asking questions:

- Questions should be supportive and for the purpose of clarification only.
- Avoid leading questions, such as asking whether a specific person carried out the abuse.
- You should also avoid asking about intimate details or suggesting that something else may have happened other than what you have been told.

Confidentiality:

Irish Surfing/ club is committed to ensuring the highest standards of confidentiality at all times in relation to Safeguarding and managing concerns. Confidentiality is about managing information in a respectful, professional and purposeful manner.

- Where child protection and welfare concerns arise, information must be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the best interest of the child/young person with the relevant statutory authorities and with parents/guardians.
- No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. Those working with children/young people and families and in adult services should make this clear to parents/guardians and to the child/young person.
- The proportionate provision of information to the statutory agencies necessary for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.
- Parents/guardians and children/young people have a right to know if personal information is being shared, unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk or may put the reporter at risk.

Reporting Procedure

If you have a concern, report concern to the Irish Surfing or club Designated Liaison Person.

Reasonable grounds for concern: The Designated Liaison Person (DLP), in consultation with the person who raised the concern, will decide if reasonable grounds for concern exist. If reasonable grounds for concern exist, the Designated Liaison Person will report to a Tusla duty social worker.

Informal consultation: When the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) or other person is unsure whether a report should be made, an informal consultation process to seek advice and guidance from the Tusla social work office in the child/young person's area is available

How to report a concern:

The DLP must complete the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form and to forward it without delay to the Tusla Duty Social Worker by registered post under confidential cover. Reports can also be made on

Tusla's secure web portal.

Allegations of abuse by a child: where the person allegedly causing harm to a child is another child (peer abuse), reports should be made to Tusla for both children.

Guidance on dealing with adult disclosures of child abuse: Retrospective Abuse Report form is required when reporting any concerns about retrospective abuse - [https:// www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms/](https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms/)

Immediate risk to a child: Where an immediate risk to a child is believed to exist, contact Tusla (out of hours emergency contact available) or the Gardai/ Police.

Recording:

Irish Surfing/ Club will maintain a written record, securely stored by the DLP of all concerns including reported concerns that do not initially meet reasonable grounds for concern. Concerns which do not initially meet reasonable grounds for concern may, upon review, show patterns or clusters which may heighten the level of concern.

- Records should be factual and include details of contacts, consultations and any actions taken.
- Irish Surfing/ club must share records with the statutory authorities where a child protection or welfare issue arises.
- The DLP will ensure that records on child protection concerns, allegations and disclosures are kept securely and safely within the Irish Surfing/club.
- Records should only be used for the purpose for which they are intended.
- Records should only be shared on a need to know basis in the best interests of the child/young person.
- Irish Surfing/ Club will retain these types of records indefinitely for archiving.

- Child protection records should be updated as required and reviewed regularly by the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

Talking to parents/carers: The process for discussing a concern with parents/carers 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 Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI). It should also specify (a) whether 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.

Responsibilities of a Mandated Person Mandated persons must report child protection and welfare concerns that reach or exceed the threshold for 'harm' as defined in the Act. A Mandated Person has a statutory obligation to report mandated concerns to Tusla, they cannot discharge this duty to the DLP. However 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. All records and copies of child protection and welfare concerns should be held securely by the DLP.

Reporting to Statutory Authorities: You should always inform Tusla if you have reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. You can find details of who to contact to discuss your concern on the Tusla website. If your concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but you feel it is a reasonable concern about the welfare or protection of

a child, you should report it to Tusla under Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI). Procedure for the management of allegation of abuse against a coach or volunteer. Each organisation/club should have agreed procedures to be followed in cases of alleged child abuse against a coach/ volunteer. If such an allegation is made, three steps should be taken:

- Responding to allegations of abuse made against a coaches/volunteers.
- Reporting allegations of abuse made against coaches/ volunteers to Tusla.
- Internal procedures for dealing with the coach/volunteer should to be clearly outlined.

Responding to allegations of abuse made against coaches/volunteer.

An allegation of abuse may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- Behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child/ young person;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence in relation to a child/young person;
- Behaved towards a child/young person or children/young people in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child/young person;
- Behaved in a way that is contrary to Irish Surfing/ club code of behaviour for coaches & volunteers;
- Behaved in a way that is contrary to professional practice guidelines.

If an allegation is made against a coach/volunteer, everyone involved must be dealt with appropriately and in accordance with Irish Surfing/club guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures, the rules of natural justice and any relevant employment law. Irish Surfing/ club has a dual responsibility in respect of both the child/young person and the coach/volunteer.

There are two separate procedures to be followed:

- The reporting procedure to Tusla in respect of the child/ young person and the alleged abuser;

- The internal personnel procedure for dealing with a coach/ volunteer.

Irish Surfing/ club procedures must be followed in cases of alleged child abuse against Sports Leaders. If such an allegation is made, two steps should be taken:

- The reporting procedure.
- The procedure for dealing with the Sports Leader.

Special Considerations

The following points should be considered:

- the safety of the child making the allegation and any others who are/may be at risk should be ensured and this should take precedence over any other consideration. In this regard, the Irish Surfing/club should take any necessary steps which may be immediately necessary to protect children
- if a Sports Leader is the subject of the concern s/he should be treated with respect and fairness.

Steps to be taken within Irish Surfing/ Club

Where reasonable grounds for concern exist the following steps should be taken by:

- advice should be sought from the local duty social worker with regard to any action by the club deemed necessary to protect the child/children who may be at risk.
- the matter should be reported to the local statutory authorities following the standard reporting procedure outlined above
- in the event that the concern is connected to the actions of a Sports Leader in the club, the Sports Leader involved in the concern should be asked to stand aside pending the outcome of any investigation by the Statutory Authorities.
- It is advisable that this task be undertaken by a senior office holder other than the designated liaison person/club children's officer who takes the responsibility for reporting.

When the Sports Leader is being privately informed by the senior officer of a) the fact that an allegation has been made against him/her and b) the nature of the allegation, s/he should be afforded an opportunity to respond. His/her response should be noted and passed on to the statutory authorities.

All persons involved in a child protection process (the child, his/her parents/carers, the alleged offender, his/her family, Sports Leaders) should be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure.

Once the criminal process is completed, employers should consider the need to examine whether there are grounds for disciplinary proceedings for misconduct. The fact that the alleged abuser has not been prosecuted or has been found not guilty does not mean that such proceedings are not necessary or feasible.

Internal procedures for dealing with a coach/volunteer should to be clearly outlined

In the context of an allegation of abuse against a coach/ volunteer, Irish Surfing/club disciplinary procedures will be followed to ensure that fair procedure is adhered to and take account of the employment contract/membership guidelines as well as the rules of natural justice. The following points should be incorporated into the procedure:

- In making an immediate decision about the coach/ volunteer's presence in the organisation/club, the Chairperson should as a matter of urgency take any measures necessary to protect the child/young person. These should be proportionate to the level of risk to the child/young person; 'protective measures' do not presume guilt.
- The Chairperson should privately inform the coach/ volunteer that an allegation has been made against him or her and the nature of the allegation.
- The coach/volunteer should be afforded an opportunity to respond.
- The Chairperson should note the response from the coach/ volunteer and pass on this information if making a formal report to Tusla.
- The coach/volunteer should be offered the option to have representation at this stage and should be informed that any response may be shared with Tusla.
- While Tusla will not provide advice on employment matters, advice and consultation with regard to risk to children/ young people can be sought from the local Tusla social work office.

- The Chairperson should ensure that actions taken by Irish Surfing/club do not undermine any investigations or assessments undertaken by Tusla or An Garda Síochána. The Irish Surfing/club should liaise closely with the investigating bodies to ensure this.

Once the statutory process is completed, Irish Surfing/ club should consider the need to examine whether there are grounds for disciplinary proceedings for misconduct. The fact that the alleged abuser has not been prosecuted or has been found not guilty does not mean that such proceedings are not necessary or feasible

Categories of Abuse: Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (ROI) defines four categories of abuse: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child/young person may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. When working with children/young people it is important to be aware of the four categories of abuse these are as follows:

Neglect: Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences. Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety.

Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver.

Physical Abuse: Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health and/ or development is, may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse. Physical abuse can include the following:

- Physical punishment.
- Beating Slapping, hitting or kicking.
- Pushing Shaking or throwing.
- Pinching Biting, choking or hair-pulling.
- Use of excessive force in handling.
- Deliberate poisoning.
- Suffocation.
- Fabricated/induced illness.
- Female genital mutilation.

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography. NB: If you require further information on any of the categories of abuse listed above please consult Children First Guidance directly via the following link: https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf

Signs of Abuse:

If you are dealing with children, you need to be alert to the possibility that a welfare or protection concern may arise in relation to children you come in contact with. A child needs to have someone they can trust in order to feel able to disclose abuse they may be experiencing. They need to know that they will be believed and will get the help they need. Without these things, they may be vulnerable to continuing abuse. Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. Also, there may be particular times or circumstances when a child may be more vulnerable to abuse in their lives. In particular, children with disabilities, children with communication difficulties, children in care or living away from home, or children with a parent or parents with problems in their own lives may be more susceptible to harm. The following list is intended to help your organisation/club identify the range of issues in a child's life that may place them at greater risk of abuse or neglect. It is important for you to remember that the presence of any of these factors does not necessarily mean that a child in those circumstances or settings is being abused.

Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People in Sport

Parent/Carer Factors:

- Drug and alcohol misuse.
- Addiction, including gambling.
- Mental health issues.
- Parental disability issues, including learning or intellectual disability.
- Conflictual relationships.
- Domestic violence.
- Adolescent parents.

Child Factors:

- Age.
- Gender.
- Sexuality.
- Disability.
- Mental health issues, including self-harm and suicide.
- Communication difficulties.
- Trafficked/Exploited.
- Previous abuse.
- Young carer.

Community Factors: Cultural, ethnic, religious or faith-based norms in the family or community which may not meet the standards of child welfare or protection required in this jurisdiction. Culture-specific practices, including:

- Female genital mutilation.
- Forced marriage.
- Honour-based violence.
- Radicalisation.

Environmental factors:

- Housing issues.
- Children who are out of home and not living with their parents, whether temporarily or permanently.
- Poverty/Begging.
- Bullying.
- Internet and social media-related concerns

Poor motivation or willingness of parents/guardians to engage:

- Non-attendance at appointments.
- Lack of insight or understanding of how the child is being affected.
- Lack of understanding about what needs to happen to bring about change.
- Avoidance of contact and reluctance to work with services.
- Inability or unwillingness to comply with agreed plans.

You should consider these factors as part of being alert to the possibility that a child may be at risk of suffering abuse and in bringing reasonable concerns to the attention of Tusla.

STATUTORY CONTACTS REPUBLIC OF IRELAND & NORTHERN IRELAND

TUSLA-Child & Family Agency

If in the Republic of Ireland and you have any concerns about a child you should report it to the Child & Family Agency please see website for contact details <http://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker/>

Any query or concern in relation to children out of hours should be reported immediately to An Garda Síochána

Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts

Each trust will have a Gateway team to deal with reports of abuse and also more local contacts for ongoing professional liaison for advice on concerns.

Regional Emergency Social Work service. Available 5.00 PM – 9.00 AM Monday to Thursday and 5.00 PM on Friday to 9.00 AM on Monday. There is a 24 hour cover over public holidays.

Tel: 028 9504 9999

9.00 - 5.00 Gateway Numbers

Northern HSC Trust Tel: 03001234333

South Eastern HSC Trust Tel: 03001000300

Southern HSC Trust Tel: 08007837745

Belfast HSC Trust Tel: 028 90 507000

Western HSC Trust Tel: 028 71314090

5.5 DISCIPLINARY, COMPLAINTS & APPEALS OF CODE OF BEHAVIOUR BREACHES

Each club/organisation should ensure that it has adequate disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures in place. It is important to note that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the Statutory Authorities and should not be undertaken by Children's Officers/Designated Liaison Persons or other club/organisation Sports Leaders.

The standard reporting procedure outlined in the Statutory Authorities guidelines should be followed by each sports club/organisation and adhered to by its members.

Only following advice from statutory agencies about suspected child abuse cases should NGB's begin their own internal disciplinary procedures to ensure they do not impact on any statutory investigation.

6.0 SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE

A central goal for all involved in children's sport is to provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment where children can develop and enhance their physical and social skills.

Promoting a child – centred ethos should go hand in hand with identifying and eliminating practice that impacts negatively on safe and enjoyable participation in children's sport.

6.1 OVERNIGHT, STAYING AWAY & HOSTING

Being a host family or being hosted can add to a child's enjoyment and experience of our sport. Hosting can be a challenging role but also very rewarding. Special care should be taken in the selection of homes for overnight stays (nationally or internationally). A host should be provided with as much information about the child/children staying with them and details of the competition. Where practicable more than one child should be placed with each host family. The family in turn should agree to provide references and be vetted. The organiser should follow Irish Surfing safe recruitment and selection procedures.

When arranging for events/trips abroad, the club or Irish Surfing will be dependent on the ability of the

host organisation to access vetting services and obtain appropriate references. It is the responsibility of the trip organiser to provide the hosts with the relevant information on the child and details of what is expected.

Host families should:

- Agree to abide by the National Governing Bodies Code of Conduct.
- Consent to appropriate checks and references.
- Attend host family meetings before competitions or events.
- Provide a safe and supportive environment for young people.

Irish Surfing/Clubs should:

- Provide a travel pack to hosting families.
- Check out references with hosting families.
- Provide an itinerary of the trip.
- Gather information on destination and venue.

Young People:

- Should sign a behaviour agreement.
- Should not be asked to share a bed or a room with an adult.
- Should be happy with the arrangements.
- Should show respect to the host families.

6.2 SUPERVISION, RATIOS & ENVIRONMENT

Ensure adequate Adult / Child Ratios:

Good practice dictates that a leader should try to ensure that more than one adult is present. This will help to ensure the safety of the children as well as protect adults.

Adult / Child Ratios:

- Irish Surfing recommends a minimum **1:8 ratio** with increased supervision for younger participants, participants with additional needs or activities in more challenging surfing conditions.
- There should be at least one adult of each gender with mixed parties.

Environments

- Away trips will need higher rates of supervision. Children and young people should be supervised at all times.
- Avoid adults being left alone with young participants, if a leader needs to talk separately to a participant this should be done in an open environment, in view of others.
- Respect the privacy of young people while changing, leaders may only need to enter changing rooms where the participants are very young or require special assistance.
- When necessary, leaders should supervise in pairs or seek assistance, it is the safety and welfare of the participants that is of paramount importance.
- Leaders should not be left alone with young people at the end of a training session. Clearly state times for start and finish of training and/or competitions.
- If late collections occur leaders should remain in pairs until participants have left.

- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make arrangements for collection of young people, it should

be made clear that the club is responsible for only club activities.

- If a child suffers an injury or accident the parents/ guardians should be informed.

6.3 REGISTRATION, DROPOUT & CLUB TRANSFERS

Loss of club members, including adult transfers, should be monitored. Any unusual or unexpected dropout or club transfer of children or Sports Leaders should be checked out by the Club Children's Officer and/or Irish Surfing. If any concerns regarding a child or children's welfare are raised the matter should be handled in accordance with procedures outlined in Irish Surfing Policies and Procedures.

6.4 TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL

Transporting Young People

The issue of transporting young people to and from activities can present challenges for Irish Surfing/ Clubs. Many clubs could not operate without the good will of volunteers and parent ensuring that children are transported to and returned home from events in a private car.

Irish Surfing recommends placing full responsibility on parents for ensuring appropriate transport arrangements are made and encourages coaches and other adult leaders not to take children on a journey alone in their car. This includes informal trips to surf.

The Risks

The vast majority of coaches and volunteers will help out through a genuine desire to see children or their particular sport develop. Unfortunately we must face the reality that a small minority of people will join a sports club as an opportunity to gain access to children. These adults create an air of acceptability about their role, therefore justifying their close contact with children.

Although those who want to abuse children may find it more difficult to do so in a group setting, they can

use this time to gain the trust of not only the young person but also other adults, including parents/carers. This is known as 'grooming' or 'entrapment'.

Developing credibility is an essential part of any abusers 'grooming process.' An abuser will "groom" the environment i.e. creating a justifiable reason for getting the child alone.

Easy rules to remember when a club are organizing transport

- It is good practice to receive informed consent from parents and young people who will be transporting their child, why and how long the journey will take.
- Attempt to have more than one child in the car.
- Alternate drivers if possible and which child is dropped off last.
- Driver should have a point of contact/mobile phone.
- A person other than the planned driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans.
- The driver must ensure that they have insurance to carry others.
- Drivers representing and volunteering on behalf of a club should be vetted through National Vetting Bureau/Access NI if driving regularly, and therefore meeting the regulated activity criteria.
- Late collections can present clubs and coaches with particular difficulties. Parents should be provided with guidelines addressing the issue and outlining their responsibility and the consequences of late collection.
- Consider the need for booster seats.
- Parents and coaches can also download Sport Irelands

SafeSport App @ https://www.sportireland.ie/Participation/Code_of_Ethics/Code-Of-Ethics-App. One of the

features of the App is a 'Travel Tracker' function. This allows parents and coaches who are driving someone else's child/children home, for example after a training session, to permit the child's parent or guardian to view and have oversight of their location for a specified period of time while they are travelling on a journey.

Personal arrangements between parents

If parents make personal arrangements between themselves this is not the responsibility of the club unless there are particular concerns about a parent's ability to drive for example due to the consumption of alcohol.

The use of booster seats

From 2006, the law in Europe requires all children in cars, vans and other goods vehicles to be carried using an appropriate child restraint until either they have reached the age of 12 years or are 150cm (5" in Republic of Ireland) and 135cm (4' 5" in Northern Ireland) or whichever comes first with very few exceptions. The European law allowed countries to opt for a minimum height of between 135 and 150cm. For more information visit;

Republic of Ireland: <http://www.rsa.ie/en/RSA/Your-Vehicle/>

[About-your-Vehicle/Example-of-non-Dup/Seat-belts--childrestraints-/](#)

Northern Ireland: <http://www.childcarseats.org.uk/the-law/>

6.5 FILMING & PHOTOGRAPHY

The Filming and Photography guidance provides assistance for Irish Surfing/club members on taking and using appropriate images. This guidance is not about preventing parents/guardians and supporters from taking pictures, but rather to ensure that only those who have a right to take photographs do so. This guidance is designed to promote safeguards for any photographic or filming/video activity to minimise the risk of inappropriate taking and use of images.

Definitions:

- Event: may include competition, training session, social function or any activity organised by Irish Surfing/ Club.
- Image: refers to all photographic and film/video footage.
- Responsible person: may include the children's officer, head coach, event manager, event controller or facility manager at an event.
- Young people: refers to all people U18; whilst this guidance is designed to minimise risk to U18's this guidance should be used to minimise risks for all athletes of any age.

Permission to take images

Permission is sought by the sports Irish Surfing/club to ensure that young people and parents/carers are aware of when and how their images may be used. Permission can be obtained through:

- Individual permission where permission is sought for a single or specific event and has not been sought generally through membership/competition entry/other contract means.
- General permission granted through completion of membership/competition entry/other contract where permission is included as part of the form.

For third party photographers, film/videographers or other organisations employed to take images each person must complete the Self-Declaration Form. For any other person wishing to use photographic devices at events they must first register their device with the organiser. Each person registering a device will be required to produce photographic identification as proof of identity.

Announcement at events regarding taking and the use of images

The Irish Surfing/club should ensure the following announcement is read out at the start and during an event to ensure everyone is clearly aware of the need to register:

"All persons wishing to take photographs or film footage at this event must first register their device(s) with (name of organiser). Please note photographic identification will be required as proof of identity.

If a company/person has been authorised by completing the Self-Declaration Form the following should be included in the announcement:

(Company Name) has been authorised to take photographs of individuals in accordance with Irish Surfing policy."

Taking images in certain environments

Irish Surfing members and third party photographers, film/videographers or other organisations shall ensure that images are not taken in such environments considered inappropriate irrespective of any permission sought. In certain cases it may be an offence to take such images.

Taking images using any type of equipment is banned in an area where people are changing or would normally expect their privacy to be recognised. Examples of such areas would include:

- Changing rooms.
- Open changing areas, such as the beach, car park etc.
- Individual changing/private cubicles provided for personal use.
- Toilets.
- Medical/physio treatment rooms.

Flash photography is prohibited in an environment where any performance may be affected or there is the potential for its use to cause harm to the young person.

Types of appropriate images

Only appropriate images of children should be used, for example:

- Posed images such as during medal ceremonies, presentations, club or team shots where young people must be fully clothed or wearing a changing robe, a wetsuit or lycra vest & shorts.
- Action shots of young people where the focus is on the participation in the sport, not the athlete. Images of children should not be taken where the pose is inappropriate e.g. open legs; bending over from behind, etc.

Safe use of images

Images can be taken for a variety of purposes, including for administration or personal use, publicising the sport or aiding skill development. Anyone taking images should be aware of action poses that may be inappropriate; these are not suitable for use/publication.

Types of images and appropriate use:

- Personal images – images taken by parents/guardians or other family members during an event as a celebration of a young person's attendance or achievement. This includes the use of a professional photographer, with permission, taking images for the personal use of those attending. Other people may be included in an image and we expect parents/guardians and other family members to respect this by not distributing images publicly.
- Training images – these are images or footage taken during a training sessions or during an event specifically to aid the young person in the development of a skill or technique. These images should be taken by a qualified coach or a person specifically appointed by the young persons coach. These images may be used as examples of technique or mastery of a skill for teaching/coaching purposes and should not be distributed outside this specific use.
- Media images – these are images taken by an individual from the media, i.e. TV, newspaper, social media or professional photographer where the images are to be used for publicity or promotion of the event or future events.

- Administration images – these are images taken for general administration purposes; including images used for membership cards, competition entries and could also include images that form part of an archive record.

Use of images on social media

Where images of young people are used on social media the person responsible for posting an image must be aware of the potential for an image to be used inappropriately. The following safeguards must be in place to protect young people:

- Personal details of a young person should not be included.
- Captions should be in keeping with the sport represented.
- The posting and any purpose should not breach the codes of conduct.
- The type of image should not breach guidance in this policy.

Storage of Images

Storage includes any image stored as a hard copy and/or electronically as a soft copy. This includes images on social media, photographic archives, individual personal databases e.g. personal cameras, phones, etc. How personal images are stored is the responsibility of parents/guardians with their child/young person. All other images should only be stored for defined and intended purposes e.g. membership, promotion, and/or archiving.

- If storage of images is required the images must only be stored for the length of time for which they are needed
- If possible, avoid using the names of children, or any other identifying feature

Once images are no longer required they must be properly destroyed. Digital images stored on computer systems need to be fully deleted, including deletion from the cache memory and/or temporary files.

Taking inappropriate images

If there is any concern about the nature of any image taken this should be reported to the responsible person (in the club or event/activity) who will refer to the statutory authorities. The concerned individual

may also report their concern directly to the statutory authorities. The contact details for the statutory authority can be found in the sports clubs/ organisations Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.

Non-authorized taking of images

If you are concerned about an individual taking images at an event this should be verbally reported to the relevant responsible person. It may be necessary to report the unauthorized taking of images to the appropriate statutory authorities. The responsible person will identify the person and check if their device is registered for the event. If not registered, the person must be asked to register their device, with appropriate identification. If the person is not willing to register their device they should be asked to leave. Where the event is open to the public e.g. where only part of the facility is being used, it will be necessary to report unauthorized taking of images to the facility manager.

Inappropriate use of images

Where there is a concern about the use of images this should be reported to the responsible person who will take appropriate action. This will include reporting the alleged use to:

- The parent/carer of any young person involved.
- The person responsible for posting the image.
- The media platform i.e. twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, print media etc.
- The statutory authorities.

Inappropriate use of images is a breach of this guidance and the code of conduct and may result in a complaint/ disciplinary procedure against those involved in (Enter Name of Sport). Where there is a concern about the publication of an image in local or national newspapers you should contact the individual newspaper or the Press Council of Ireland and the Office of the Press Ombudsman – website <http://www.presscouncil.ie/>

Installation And Use Of CCTV (Closed Circuit Television)

The use of CCTV is a positive step in safeguarding those that use facilities. It is important that clubs using a facility are aware of blind spots (potential risk areas), who has access, the use of images and the facility procedure for dealing with incidents or misbehaviour. The information regarding the presence of CCTV within a facility should be available to members and/or parents/guardians. A club should have a copy of the facility's policy regarding the use of CCTV, usually as part of a club/facility agreement. Queries regarding the use of CCTV are a matter for the facility or the operating company. Any queries from members should be directed through the club as the club has the agreement with the facility.

The following information should be noted:

- Who in the facility has day to day responsibility for the system and operation of the CCTV.
- The number of cameras located in the specified areas.
- Are spectator areas covered (i.e. can someone misbehaving in this area or regularly turning up for less than innocent viewing purposes be monitored).
- Identify areas of the facility that cannot be monitored – if these areas are easily identified by anyone with intent it would be important to know in order to be extra vigilant.
- Who, during sessions, is responsible for monitoring the cameras and what is the policy for dealing with any perceived misconduct or incidents viewed at the time.
- Who has access to the password protected files. CCTV does not replace vigilance and proper supervision for training sessions and activities as required by Irish Surfing/ Club

6.6 SOCIAL MEDIA

In all their contacts and communications with the members of their Irish Surfing/ Clubs, leaders must be seen to be open and transparent. This is the case whether communications are by traditional means or by electronic means.

NB: Leaders must not communicate with children or young people via leader's personal social networking profiles, email accounts, or chat rooms.

When Using/Publishing a Social Networking the following principles should be applied:

- The page/profile must be password-protected, and the password must be held by at least three leaders of the organisation.

- The site should be monitored by a designated supervisor. This person should have access to the login details of the site. This supervisor will be appointed by the Designated Person/Safeguarding Panel in Charge of Child Protection.
- Any inappropriate posts by children/young people or leaders should be removed by the designated supervisor. Reasons should then be explained to the person who posted the content. Where possible sites should be monitored before content is put up.
- The site should be kept 'Private' i.e. only permitted members or 'friends' can see what is posted on the site.
- The use of personal addresses and telephone numbers etc., should be avoided as, while sites are 'private', there is the potential for items to be copied and shared.
- Content of any postings should be consistent with the aims of the organisation. In cases of doubt leaders should seek advice.

For Leaders Using a Social Networking Site

- Leaders should not 'friend' or 'follow' children or young people on social media. (Children or young people may 'follow' leaders on social media so leaders should make sure any content they post is appropriate.)
- Messages left to or from children or young people on social network sites should be written on an open page (e.g. A Facebook 'Wall') and not in a private message or by using 'chat' [one-on-one].
- Leaders should not network with members of their organisation/group via closed [one-on-one] chats e.g. Facebook messenger, WhatsApp, etc,. This should be done only through 'Group Chat.'
- Any events or activities run by the organisation that are organised or publicised on the site should be a closed event so as non-members cannot access the event without suitable permission by the site administrators.
- Any emails sent to children or young people via the site must be sent to at least one other leader. (This can be done by 'bcc' if necessary.)
- Leaders should avoid communicating with children or young people in their organisation/group via email late at night.
- In signing off a post or email leaders should not do so in a way that could be misconstrued or misinterpreted by the recipient, e.g. "Luv X"; "xoxoxo". Simply sign your name.
- Parents/carers should be asked to give their approval for leaders to communicate with their children/young people via social networking sites, or by any other means of internet communications (e.g.

email).

- Parental and child's permission is required before pictures or videos of children or young people are posted online.
- Any disclosures of abuses reported through a social networking site must be dealt with according to your reporting procedures.

6.7 USE OF MOBILE PHONES

Those whose work with children and young people need to be aware of the opportunities for abuse through the misuse of mobile phones and text messaging. While good use of such media can be beneficial we must be vigilant and alert to the possibilities of misuse and consequent harm that can result to young people. Leaders must also take care to protect the children in their care and themselves.

- Leaders involved in sport should only have children's and young people's mobile numbers if the nature of their involvement requires them to phone or text them
- Parental permission should be sought if the leader in this role will be contacting children or young people via mobile phone.
- A method of accountability should be arranged e.g. copies of texts could also be sent to the administrator or to parents.
- If a leader had a child/young person's phone number it should only be used for the purposes it has been given, i.e., the leader should not share this information.
- It is recommended that if a leader is an employee of your organisation/club should have a separate phone for work purposes rather than using their personal phone for contacting children and young people.

Texting – Communication not Conversation!

- Texts should be used for the purposes of reminding children or young people about events which are forthcoming.
- Texts can also be used as a means to encourage children or young people if it is appropriate it, e.g., 'Hope exam goes ok.'
- If it turns into a conversation, communications should be ended. A leader can suggest discussing the subject further at the next event or, if they are concerned about the child/ young person, arrange to meet

up to talk further (within the usual child protection parameters).

Smart Phones

Smart phones should be used safely and responsibly.

Pictures can be very powerful and stir up strong emotions. Smart phone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people if it could invade their privacy.

Leaders and children/young people should not send pictures that are obscene, indecent, or menacing and should be sensitive about other people's gender identity, sexual identity, racial heritage, religion, or personal background. Both leaders and children/young people should be made aware that it is a criminal offence to take, make, and permit to be taken, distribute, show, or possess an indecent or sexually explicit image of a child under 18.

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity the leader in charge should ensure they are clear about expectations of them in relation to child protection. Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an activity should seek accreditation from leaders by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded. The leader should then:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- Issue the photographer with identification which should be worn at all times.
- Keep a record of accreditations.
- Inform leaders, children/young people, and parents, that a photographer will be in attendance is at the activity and check that they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- Not allow unsupervised access to children/young people or one-to-one photo sessions.
- Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the activity or at a child/young person's home.
- Anyone concerned about any photography taking place should discuss his or her concerns with the children's officer.

Smart phones can be used to make children/young people safer. Older children, for example, using a taxi can send a picture of the car's registration to a friend before they begin the trip, or can simply use the

phone to show parents where they are.

- Children/young people can only be photographed when permission has been provided in writing from their parent/ guardian and child.
- The scope of the use of photographs must also be stated as part of the parental permission.
- Children/young people should not be named individually in photographs unless necessary and with clear agreement and consent of parents and child, for example, if the child/young concerned was winning a prize worthy of publication.
- When posting photographs on social media settings should be such that children/young people cannot be individually tagged.
- All photographs must be stored in a secure place either electronically in a password protected file or physically in a locked cabinet.
- If any electronic device/memory which contains photographs is disposed of or passed on, then the device must be wiped of all photographs in such a way that they cannot be recovered on that device.

Use of Mobile phones during activities

Groups should, with parents and children/young people, develop a policy on the use of mobile phones during youth activities. This policy should be communicated to all parents and youth members. This guidance could include:

- Confirmation that when on activities a named leader is the primary point of communication and is to be contacted if there is an emergency or change to previously agreed arrangements.
- That the usage of smart phones including text messaging or playing games cannot be allowed to be a distraction from a safe awareness of the environment or be allowed to interfere with full participation in the activity.
- That when on camps or overnight activities, there is a stated preferred time period when parents may make contact, if they wish? Parents should be advised that contact outside of this time may not be possible due to activities.
- Consider that use of smart phones while away can worsen rather than alleviate homesickness. In this context it can be good to encourage children/young people to consider that 'no news is good news.'

Use of Computers/Tablets/Web-enabled Games Consoles/Smart TVs

If such devices are used as part of activities within the organisation, guidelines should be produced to ensure that they are used for the correct purpose, and include, for example, what websites are suitable for the age of children/ young people that the leaders are worth with. Internet Safety The Office for Internet Safety Department of Justice and Equality 51 St. Stephen's Green Dublin 2 Ph: (01) 602 8258 Email: internetsafety@justice.ie www.internetsafety.ie

6.8 PHYSICAL CONTACT

Physical contact during sport should always be intended to meet the child's needs, NOT the adult's. Appropriate physical contact may be required to assist in the development of a skill or activity or for safety reasons e.g. to prevent or treat an injury. This should be in an open environment with the permission and understanding of the participant.

When is physical contact appropriate in sport?

Contact should be determined by the age and developmental stage of the participant - Don't do something that a child can do for themselves. Physical contact between adults and children in sport should take place only when necessary to:

- Develop sports skills or techniques.
- Treat an injury.
- Prevent an injury or accident from occurring.
- Meet the requirements of the sport.
- Comfort a distressed child or to celebrate their success.

What are good principles to follow?

- Physical contact should take place in the interests of and for the benefit of the child, rather than the adult involved.

- Adults should explain the nature of and reason for the physical contact to the child.
- Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission, for example to aid the demonstration a specific sports technique.
- Sports clubs and coaches should provide an induction for new young members and their parents/carers that covers guidance about any physical contact that will be required as part of that activity. The reasons for the physical contact and the nature of the physical contact should be explained and agreed.
- Children should be encouraged to voice concerns they have if any physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.
- Contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment.
- Physical contact should always take place in an open or public environment and not take place in secret or out of sight of others.
- Well intentioned gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can, if repeated regularly, lead to the possibility of questions being raised by observers. As a general principle adults in positions of responsibility should not make gratuitous or unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. Resistance from a child should be respected.

What about children who need specific assistance due to disability or injury?

In the case of a young person with a disability specific support or assistance may be required. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Efforts should be made to receive as much information as possible on the child to ensure safe inclusion of him/her. There should be clear agreements on what is required.
- Parents/carers or their delegated care providers should be asked to undertake all intimate or personal care tasks for their child. This is not an appropriate role for coaches and others involved in leading activities.
- When children with disabilities are lifted or manually supported, they should be treated with dignity and respect. • Relevant health and safety guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of the child and those assisting.
- It is recommended that those assisting receive appropriate training in order to minimise the risk of injury both to themselves and the child.

What about physical punishment?

Any form of physical punishment is unlawful in all circumstances. It is a criminal offence and should be reported to AGS and Tusla

What about direct contact in coaching?

Some sport or physical activities are more likely to require coaches or teachers to come into physical contact with children and young people from time to time in the course of their duties. Examples include teaching a pupil how to use a piece of apparatus or equipment or demonstrating a move or exercise during a coaching or teaching session in order to reduce the risk of injury due to falls or errors when performing. Adults should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place, and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted. A number of sports governing bodies have developed sport specific guidance to assist coaches in this area. This guidance should be followed by those teaching these sports. Even in sports where there is a need to support physically or touch a child, over-handling should be avoided.

Is it ok to comfort a child or celebrate success?

There may be occasions where a distressed young person needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. A young person may also want to mark a success or achievement with a hug or other gesture. Adults should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is (and what is seen by others present) normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same young person over a period of time. Contact that an adult may feel is appropriate may be unwanted or uncomfortable to a young person. Adults should always meet the needs of the child, be age appropriate and respect resistance.

Where do specific sports science and medical roles fit in?

There may be some roles within sport or physical activities where physical contact is a requirement of the

role, particularly sports science or medicine. These tasks should only be undertaken by properly trained or qualified practitioners. This guidance does not seek to replace the specific guidance and codes of practice developed for those professionals and reference should be made to the appropriate body for that discipline.

6.9 BULLYING

What is Bullying?

Bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

Bullying

- All forms of bullying will be addressed.
- Everybody in Irish Surfing/ Club has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying.
- Bullying can include online as well as offline behaviour.

Bullying can include:

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc...
- Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation or the continual ignoring of individuals.
- Posting of derogatory or abusive comments, videos or images on social network sites.
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, sectarianism, sexual comments, suggestions or behaviour.
- Unwanted physical contact.

Children with a disability, from ethnic minorities, young people who are gay or lesbian, or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and are more likely to be targeted.

Irish Surfing/ Club will:

- Recognise its duty of care and responsibility to safeguard all participants from harm.
- Promote and implement this anti-bullying policy in addition to our safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Seek to ensure that bullying behaviour is not accepted or condoned.
- Require all members of the club/organisation to be given information about, and sign up to, this policy.
- Take action to investigate and respond to any alleged incidents of bullying.
- Encourage and facilitate children and young people to play an active part in developing and adopting a code of conduct to address bullying.
- Ensure that coaches are given access to information, guidance and/or training on bullying.

Each participant, coach, volunteer or official will:

- Respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect the feelings and views of others.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special and should be valued.
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Be committed to the early identification of bullying, and prompt and collective action to deal with it.

- Ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed for all to see.
- Report incidents of bullying they see to the club children's officer – by doing nothing you are condoning bullying.

Support to the child:

- Children should know who will listen to and support them.
- Systems should be established to open the door to children wishing to talk about bullying or any other issue that affects them.
- Potential barriers to talking (including those associated with a child's disability or impairment) need to be identified and addressed at the outset to enable children to approach adults for help.
- Children should have access to Helpline numbers.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported.
- Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.
- Children being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying.
- Sanctions for those bullying others that involve long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, will be avoided.

Support to the parents/guardians:

- Parents/guardians will be advised of Irish Surfing's bullying policy and practice.

- Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the child's parent(s)/carers.
- Parents will be consulted on action to be taken (for both victim and bully) and agreements made as to what action should be taken.
- Information and advice on coping with bullying will be made available.
- Support will be offered to the parent(s) including information on other agencies or support lines.

Useful Contacts:

Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC): www.ispcc.ie/shield

Anti-Bullying Centre DCU: www4.dcu.ie/abc/index.shtml

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Sticks and Stones: 087 9015199 or www.sticksandstones.ie

ChildLine UK: 0800 11 11 / www.childline.org.uk

ChildLine Republic of Ireland: 1800 66 66 66 or Text Talk to 50101, www.childline.ie

Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum: www.niabf.org.uk

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.antibullyingalliance.org

6.10 FACILITIES

Introduction

There is no specific legal requirements regarding the use of changing facilities. Irish Surfing/ Clubs using

facilities are advised to consider issues relevant to their context to develop and implement policies and procedures that provide a safe environment for children and young people.

Facility Policies

The following aspects should be taken into account when accessing facilities to develop and implement policies and procedures:

- Type of Facility.
- Adults members/ public using the changing rooms at the same time as children.
- Supervision.
- Who should supervise.
- Parents as Supervisors.
- Unsupervised children using the facility
- Parents' (or carers') responsibilities.
- Facility Operators Responsibilities.
- Mixed Gender Teams.

Supervision in the changing facility may also be necessary when:

- Children are too young to be left alone or change themselves. Organisers of groups of children under eight years should make arrangements for their supervision while changing before and after the activity. Although most children of school age (four years old) may be capable of changing their clothes, many leisure facilities have established guidelines that any child below the age of eight years must be accompanied.

- The group includes disabled children who require additional support and assistance with changing (note this should be undertaken by prior agreement with their parent or professional carer).
- Children could injure themselves or access a potential risk.
- There are concerns about bullying, fighting or other troublesome behaviours taking place which need to be managed.

Who should supervise?

If the club have decided that the children and young people need supervision, staff/volunteers should consider who will carry this out. This task provides access to children in circumstances of increased vulnerability and therefore careful consideration should be given to ensuring that those undertaking this task have been assessed as being suitable to do so.

- Numbers - organisers are recommended to have more than one adult supervising, as this will ensure cover in the event of an accident or incident occurring or if one supervisor is called away.
- Gender - it is considered good practice to ensure that children are supervised by staff/volunteers of the same gender while changing.
- Timings - by agreeing a very clear timetable for use of the changing facilities by children, the supervising adults and any coaches or officials respectively, the risks associated to any extended contact between the adults and children are minimised.
- Carry out safe recruitment practices.

Facility Operators Responsibilities:

When children are given access to facilities, operators assume a duty of care for them. The level of responsibility will vary depending on:

- If the child is alone and unsupervised

- With parent/ carer/s.
- Attending an activity.
- Attending an activity staffed by the facility.
- Attending a school group or club.
- Attending a public session.

Operators have a responsibility to put in place appropriate safeguarding arrangements which include promoting and implementing a policy for admitting unaccompanied children. This information should be provided to parents and other users informing them about the facility's policy regarding unaccompanied children using the facility, and any rules about the supervision of young children within the facility (particularly in changing/ shower areas where potential safeguarding risks are increased). Many facilities currently use the age of eight as a guide. In practice, while facilities need to be able to establish a lower threshold for admission that is practical to operate, identifying an age for this purpose is difficult given variations in children's physical, psychological and emotional development. While the facility may set the lower age limit, it is for parents (who know most about their children and have primary responsibility for their welfare) to judge if their child needs to be accompanied even if older than this limit.

7.0 CODE OF CONDUCT

Codes of conduct are an integral part of any club/sporting organisation. They set a standard of behaviour that help build the culture and make it easier to deal with conduct and behaviour issues as they arise. These can be many and varied, from on-field incidents, side-line abuse and mismanagement, to inappropriate social media posts, unfair treatment, poor sportsmanship and more. Codes of conduct set expectations for everyone involved – from the administrators, coaches and officials, to players, parents and spectators. The code of conduct should be informed by the club/sporting organisation's risk assessment and be a tool in the management of specific risks.

A code of conduct should be in place for administrators, coaches, officials, players and parents. They outline the agreed standard of behaviour for everyone.

Sports Leaders are expected to conform to ethical standards in a number of areas. To be part of the coaching team in an organisation or club it is required that all potential coaches will sign an agreement to abide by a code of conduct and return it to the appropriate organisation / club officials.

Irish Surfing Codes of Conduct.

- [Code for Young People](#)
- [Code for Parents/Guardians](#)
- [Code for Sport Leaders](#)
- [Code for Committees](#)
- [Code for Competition](#)

8.0 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is important to remember Irish Surfing/ club must have a plan in place and work together on its implementation in order to ensure that all of its policies, procedures and practices are fully implemented. This plan sets out the tasks required to fully realise all procedures, and to ensure that these are regularly reviewed and updated in line with ongoing risk assessments, developments in best practice and any changes to policy and legislation.

APPENDIX 1- LEGISLATION & POLICY

Relevant Legislation

There are a number of key pieces of legislation that relate to child welfare and protection. Below is list of the legislation that is applicable in the area of Safeguarding and Child Protection:

Child Care Act 1991

This is the key piece of legislation which regulates child care policy in Ireland. Under this Act, Tusla has a statutory responsibility to promote the welfare of children who are not receiving adequate care and protection. If it is found that a child is not receiving adequate care and protection, Tusla has a duty to take appropriate action to promote the welfare of the child. This may include supporting families in need of assistance in providing care and protection to their children. The Child Care Act also sets out the statutory framework for taking children into care, if necessary.

[Child Care Act 1991](#)

Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

This Act protects you if you make a report of suspected child abuse to designated officers of Tusla, the Health Service Executive (HSE) or to members of the Gardaí as long as the report is made in good faith and is not malicious. Designated officers also include persons authorised by the Chief Executive Officer of Tusla to receive and acknowledge reports of mandated concerns about a child from mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.

This legal protection means that even if you report a case of suspected child abuse and it proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that you had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report. If you make a report in good faith and in the child's best interests, you may also be protected under common law by the defence of qualified privilege.

You can find the full list of persons in Tusla and the HSE who are designated officers under the 1998 Act, on the website of each agency (<http://www.tusla.ie> and www.hse.ie).

[Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998](#)

Criminal Justice Act 2006

Section 176 of this Act created an offence of reckless endangerment of children. This offence may be committed by a person who has authority or control over a child or abuser who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by:

1. Causing or permitting the child to be placed or left in a situation that creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse; or
2. Failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation.

Criminal Justice Act 2006

Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children & Vulnerable Persons) ACT 2012

Under this Act, it is a criminal offence to withhold information about a serious offence, including a sexual offence, against a person under 18 years or a vulnerable person. The offence arises where a person knows or believes that a specified offence has been committed against a child or vulnerable person and he or she has information which would help arrest, prosecute or convict another person for that offence, but fails without reasonable excuse to disclose that information, as soon as it is practicable to do so, to a member of An Garda Síochána.

The provisions of the Withholding legislation are in addition to any reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015.

[Criminal Justice \(Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Act 2012](#)

National Vetting Bureau (Children & 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 their provisions. 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.

[National Vetting Bureau \(Children & Vulnerable Persons\) Act 2012 – 2016](#)

Children First Act 2015

The Children First Act 2015 is an important addition to the child welfare and protection system as it will help to ensure that child protection concerns are brought to the attention of Tusla without delay.

The Act provides for mandatory reporting of child welfare and protection concerns by key professionals; comprehensive risk assessment and planning for a strong organisational culture of safeguarding in all services provided to children; a provision for a register of non-compliance; and the statutory underpinning of the existing Children First Interdepartmental Implementation Group which promotes and oversees crosssectoral implementation and compliance with Children First.

[Children First Act 2015](#)

Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017

This Act addresses the sexual exploitation of children and targets those who engage in this criminal activity. It creates offences relating to the obtaining or providing of children for the purposes of sexual exploitation. It also creates offences of the types of activity which may occur during the early stages of the predatory process prior to the actual exploitation of a child, for example, using modern technology to prey on children and making arrangements to meet with a child where the intention is to sexually exploit the child. The Act also recognises the existence of underage, consensual peer relationships where any sexual activity falls within strictly defined age limits and the relationship is not intimidatory or exploitative.

[Criminal Law \(Sexual Offences\) Act 2017](#)

Child protection in Northern Ireland Legislation, policy and guidance

The Northern Ireland Executive government is responsible for child protection in Northern Ireland. They set out policy, legislation and statutory guidance on how the child protection system should work.

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) coordinates, and ensures the effectiveness of, work to protect and promote the welfare of children. The board includes representatives from health, social care, the police, the probation board, youth justice, education, district councils and the NSPCC. The SBNI is responsible for developing policies and procedures to improve how different agencies work together.

[Child protection in Northern Ireland Legislation, policy and guidance](#)

and also see

[Access NI Code of Practice \(NI\)](#)

[Children \(NI\) Order 1995 \(NI\) Children's Services Co-operation Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2015 \(NI\)](#)

[Club Framework for Safeguarding Standards In Sport](#)

[Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People 2017](#)

[Criminal Law Act \(Northern Ireland\) 1967 \(NI\)](#)

[General Data Protection Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679 \(GDPR\)](#)

[Part V of the Police Act 1997 \(NI\)](#)

[Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 \(NI\)](#)

[Rehabilitation of Offenders \(Exceptions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1979 \(as amended 2013\) \(NI\)](#)

[Safeguarding Board Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2011 \(NI\)](#)

[Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups \(NI\) Order 2007 \(NI\)](#)

[Sexual Offences \(NI\) Order 2008](#)

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

As a regulation, does not generally require transposition into Irish law (regulations have 'direct effect'), so organisations involved in data processing of any sort need to be aware the regulation addresses them directly in terms of the obligations it imposes. The GDPR emphasises transparency, security and accountability by data controllers and processors, while at the same time standardising and strengthening the right of European citizens to data privacy. Raising awareness among organisations and the public of the new law will be a combined effort of the Data Protection Commission (DPC), the Government, practitioners, and industry and professional representative bodies. The DPC has been proactively undertaking a wide range of initiatives to build awareness of the GDPR, in particular providing guidance to help organisations prepare for the new law which is in force as of 25th May 2018.

[General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#)

