CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Down GAA, 2B Sand Lane, Ballykinlar, Down, Ireland, BT30 8DL

Down County (incorporating GAA) in accordance with our Child Safeguarding Policy, our policies, procedures and our legislative requirements has agreed this Child Safeguarding Statement, which is binding on our members.

The basic aims of the Gaelic Athletic Associations include fostering and developing our Gaelic Games and Irish cultural activities among young people and children. These games and related activities are organised and promoted by dedicated volunteers at Club, County, Provincial and National levels with the cooperation and support of an equally dedicated cohort of staff all of whom are committed to the safeguarding of children and young people in our Association as we seek to create a safe environment for young people to grow and develop.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was agreed by the Down GAA County Executive Committee on May 10, 2025

PRINCIPLES TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN FROM HARM

This statement recognises that in accordance with legislative requirements, and our commitments in our Gaelic Games Child Safeguarding Policy, (see QR Code 1), to safeguard all children regardless of race, ability, ethnicity or sexual orientation from harm, that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. The Child Safeguarding Policy aims to ensure that children and young people have a positive, developmental and enjoyable experience of Gaelic Games and other activities and that they do so, as far as is practicable, in a safe and enjoyable environment in accordance with the Children First Act (2015) and the Children (NI) Order 1995.

PROCEDURES

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been prepared in accordance with the legislative requirements contained in the Children First Act 2015, *Children's First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), the Children (NI) Order 1995, Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice* and as required by our Association rules and Child Safeguarding Policy.

PROCEDURES IDENTIFIED

The following procedures, addressed in our Child Safeguarding Policy (QR Code 1), support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our services and activities.

- Procedure in respect of the management of allegations against any member, non-member or staff /volunteer availing of our services (QR Code 3)
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and vetting of volunteers & staff to work with children and young people (QR Code 1)
- Procedure for provision of and access to Gaelic Games Child Safeguarding Training and information including the identification of the occurrence of harm (QR Code 1)
- Procedure for the reporting allegations of abuse, protection or welfare concerns of a child to the Association, Tusla or Gateway Team, availing as applicable (QR Code 3)
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person i.e. the County Children's Officer who is the relevant person appointed for the purpose of this statement (QR Code 1)
- Our County shall maintain a list of membership who, if known, and in accordance with the Children First Act 2015 are specified as mandated persons, regardless of what role (if any), they hold in the County.

RISK ASSESSMENT

In preparing this statement we have completed a risk assessment under the following headings, and identified the list of procedures and policies for managing these risks which addresses the potential for harm* to children when they are participating in our games and attending our activities.

Our County Risk Assessment was undertaken on **May 10, 2025**.

- **Club/County and Coaching Practices**
- **Communications and General Risk of Harm**
- **Complaints & Discipline**
- **Reporting Procedures**
- **Club Facilities**
- **Recruitment**

* Harm means in relation to a child - Assault, ill treatment or neglect of a child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare or sexual abuse of a child.

RISK IDENTIFIED	PROCEDURES IN PLACE TO MANAGE RISK IDENTIFIED	QR CODE
Risk of harm to a child by an adult or a visitor or another child including definitions of abuse	• Child Safeguarding Policy • Guidance for Dealing with & Reporting Concerns of Abuse • Safeguarding Training • Employee (Staff) Handbook • GAA Protected Disclosure Policy	QR Code 3
Risk of harm to a child when hosting an activity or away trip	• Child Safeguarding Policy Child Safeguarding Policy Directives on; • Recruitment, Vetting and Safeguarding Training; • Guidance for Coaches, Parents & Supporters on Maintaining Good Practice & Behaviour; Hosting events, Away Trips & Transport; Social Media Guidance; Photography, Recording & Streaming • Guidance for Dealing with & Reporting Concerns of Abuse • Employee (Staff) Handbook • GAA Protected Disclosure Policy	QR Code 1
Risk of harm to a child through lack of supervision	Child Safeguarding Policy Directives on; • Recruitment, Vetting and Safeguarding Training; • Supervision Ratios Policy	QR Code 1
Risk of harm to a child by bullying	Child Safeguarding Policy Directives on; • Anti Bullying Policy & Anti Bullying Statement	QR Code 2
Risk of harm to a child of online abuse and social media	• Child Safeguarding Policy • Social Media Guidance	QR Code 1
Risk of harm to a child through inappropriate use of photography	• Child Safeguarding Policy • Photography, Recording & Streaming Policy	QR Code 1

MANDATED PERSONS AND SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS

Down Children's Officer	Seamus Ennis	*childrensofficer.Down@gaa.ie*
Down Designated Liaison Person	Maureen O Higgins	(Cathaoirleach)
GAA/Rounders	Michelle Harte	*mandatedperson@gaa.ie*
Camogie	Roberta Farrell	*mandatedperson@camogie.ie*
Handball	David Britton	*mandatedperson.handball@gaa.ie*
LGFA	Paula Prunty	*mandatedperson@lgfa.ie*

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The Gaelic Athletic Associations and Down GAA are committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures that support our intention to keep children and young people safe from harm while availing of our service. This Statement, adopted and endorsed by Down GAA County Executive Committee, shall be reviewed by **May 10, 2027** or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

All policies and procedures listed above are available at www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-safeguarding-and-protection/child-safeguarding-policy

The Gaelic Games Associations **Child Safeguarding Policy and Child Safeguarding Statement** provides detailed guidance to our Clubs and other units on the minimum standards of good practice and behaviour that we seek from everybody, who on our behalf, work with children. The Child Safeguarding Policy seeks to safeguard children and young people who participate in our games and attend our activities.

Seamus Ennis **Children's Officer**