

Insert Club Logo

Castlecomer Golf Club

Safeguarding Policy

***Castlecomer Golf Club* is committed to ensuring the sport of golf is one within which all participants can thrive and flourish in a safe environment and that all children and young people have an enjoyable, safe and positive experience when playing golf.**

It is necessary that all those working or volunteering in *the club* understand their responsibility in safeguarding children.

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GLOSSARY

Captain/Manager: A captain/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.

Child/Junior/Young Person: A child/junior/young person is any person under 18 years of age unless they are or have been married (Child Care Act 1991).

Club Children's Officer (CCO): Children's Officers are appointed within golf clubs to act as a resource for children and to represent them at committee level. Their primary aim is the establishment of a child centred ethos within the club.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP): A person who is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse and welfare issues to the Statutory Authorities at club or national level.

Leaders: For the purpose of this document, all adults involved in junior golf who work with and/or facilitate children to learn and compete in golf are referred to as Leaders.

Mandated Person (ROI): (NGB level only) 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 Tusla.

National Children's Officer (NCO) (NGB level only): A nominated person within Golf Ireland to advise on all matters in relation to safeguarding

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.

PGA: The Professional Golfers Association

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.

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

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

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.

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)*.

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

INTRODUCTION

Castlecomer Golf Club believes everyone should be able to enjoy golf in a safe environment and that each person within the organisation either in a paid or voluntary position has a responsibility to protect and safeguard children and vulnerable adults. This policy aims to highlight these responsibilities and provide clear guidelines to all involved.

All sections of this policy are supported by detailed appendices referenced throughout the policy, which should be referred to while reading the relevant section.

In addition, we are committed to:

- Respecting the rights of children as paramount.
- Providing opportunities for every child interested in playing golf to gain a positive experience.
- Including and involving children in decision making, providing opportunities for children to be heard.
- Promoting and implementing policies and procedures that:
 - safeguard the wellbeing of children and protect them from harm or abuse, ensuring that everyone knows what to do and who they can speak to.
 - prevent and respond to bullying behaviour, ensuring that everyone knows what to do and who they can speak to.
- Requiring members of staff and volunteers to adopt and abide by this safeguarding policy.
- Training, supporting and supervising members of staff and volunteers to adopt best practice.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy.

NATIONAL POLICY & LEGISLATION

This safeguarding policy document is 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.

This guidance is also informed by Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, The Child Care Act 1991, The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 and the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012-2016. In Northern Ireland guidance is also from Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 and Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

1.0 Castlecomer Golf Club Safeguarding Core Values and Principles

Participation in golf plays a crucial role in the development of children and young people due to the range of skills learned through their involvement in activities that contribute towards the holistic development of children. Whether at grassroots level or elite performance, *Castlecomer Golf Club* want to create a safe, positive and nurturing environment where all children can learn important values including honesty, teamwork and fair play. In addition, children involved in golf can learn to respect themselves and others, adhere to rules, and develop a healthy relationship with competition at whatever level they are participating at.

The following are our core values and principles:

- **Importance of childhood** - The importance of childhood should be understood and valued by everyone involved in golf.
- **Fun and Healthy** –we will try to make golf activities a fun and healthy experience for all involved.
- **Needs of the child** - All junior golf experiences should be guided by what is best for children. This means that adults should have a basic understanding of the emotional, physical and personal needs of young people.
- **Integrity in relationships** - Adults interacting with children in golf are in a position of trust and influence and must never abuse this position of trust. They should always ensure that children are treated with integrity and respect, and the self-esteem of young people is enhanced.
- **Fair Play** - All junior golf should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. We will promote fair play, respect, ethics, integrity and safety throughout our organisation
- **Quality atmosphere & ethos** - Junior golf should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere.
- **Competition** - Competition is an essential element of golf and should be encouraged in an age appropriate manner. A balanced approach to competition can make a significant contribution to the development of children, while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and satisfaction. However competitive demands are often placed on children too early which results in excessive levels of pressure on them. Golf leaders should aim to put the welfare of young people first and competitive standards second.
- **Equality** - All children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion.

2.0 Responsibilities of Castlecomer Golf Club in Child Safeguarding

A central goal for Castlecomer Golf Club is to provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment where children can develop and enhance their physical and social skills from grassroots to elite performance. Promoting a child centred ethos goes hand in hand with identifying and eliminating practice that impact negatively on safe and enjoyable participation in junior golf. *Castlecomer Golf Club* promotes the principles of safeguarding children by:

- a) Carrying out a risk assessment and producing a Child Safeguarding Statement
- b) Reviewing our policy and procedures every three years or whenever there is a major change in legislation.
- c) Undertaking appropriate recruitment processes to include vetting checks and references.
- d) Attending safeguarding training to raise knowledge and awareness of the standards that are expected when working with children and how/when to report a concern.
- e) Implementing Codes of Conduct for all those working with juniors/young people
- f) Appointing a Club Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person
- g) Communicating safeguarding procedures/guidelines to staff, coaches, volunteers, parents, and juniors.
- h) Ensuring that the Sport Ireland Safeguarding audit process is completed

By implementing the above it ensures:

- a) We fulfil legal and moral obligations for the protection of children
- b) a positive message is sent to children and their parents/guardians about the value placed on children and their participation in golf
- c) a positive message is sent to staff, leaders and volunteers that they will be supported and guided when they are working with children and safeguards will be in place to minimise risk to all
- d) the standards and expectations for everyone working in golf
- e) a legacy for the future of golf is built
- f) the risk of legal action against the club is reduced, by ensuring that all legal duties have been fulfilled and that all reasonable steps have been taken to safeguard and promote the health, welfare and development of children.

3.0 Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement

Safeguarding Risk Assessment

In line with our requirements under Children First National Guidance 2017 (ROI) where we must ensure that we prevent, as far as practicable, deliberate harm or abuse to the children while availing of our services, Castlecomer Golf Club have carried out a safeguarding risk assessment where we examined all aspects of our services from a safeguarding perspective. Castlecomer Golf Club Risk Assessment document indicates the areas of potential risk of harm, the likelihood of the risk occurring and gives the required policy, guidance and procedures required to alleviate or minimize these risks.

Child Safeguarding Statement

The Child Safeguarding Statement is a written statement that specifies the service being provided by Castlecomer Golf Club and the principles, that a child availing of our services is safe from harm by managing any risk identified as follows:

- Investigating an allegation against any leader/staff member/volunteer about any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child availing of our service.
- Selecting and recruiting leaders/staff/volunteers who are suitable to work with children.
- Providing information and training to leaders/staff/volunteers on child protection and safeguarding issues.
- Enabling leaders/staff/volunteers in ROI, whether mandated persons or otherwise, to make a report to Tusla in accordance with the Act or any guidelines issued by the statutory authorities. In NI reports are made to the Health and Social Care Trust in accordance with their guidance.
- Maintaining a list of persons in Castlecomer Golf Club who are mandated persons under the Act.
- Appointment of a relevant person in the Club for the purposes of the Act.

Although the Children First Act does not apply as a legal requirement in Northern Ireland, these documents and the principles of best practice to safeguard children are relevant to all golf organisations/golf clubs and should be adhered to as we seek to adopt the highest possible standards and practices on an all-Ireland basis.

See appendix one for more details on the risk assessment and child safeguarding statement. [Appendix 1](#)

4.0 Safeguarding Audit Framework

Golf Ireland are responsible for ensuring that the audit process (outlined below) is completed by their affiliated clubs and that any improvement actions arising from this process are implemented within an agreed period of time. Golf Ireland will evaluate, quality assure and endorse submissions of their affiliated clubs. On request, Golf Ireland will also provide an analysis of returns from their respective clubs to Sport Ireland.

Sport Irelands Safeguarding Audit Framework will strengthen the way that children and young people are made safer.

The Audit Framework is:

- Focused on safeguarding children.
- Easy to access and simple to understand.
- Designed to support the whole sporting community.
- Configured to reflect the voices of children, young people, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.
- Focused on a more detailed analysis of safeguarding arrangements.
- Compliant with relevant legislation and guidance, including Children First 2015.

Sport Irelands Safeguarding Audit Framework has been developed for use by all sporting organisations that work with children and young people, from grassroots to the national level. This includes individual golf clubs and Golf Ireland.

Sport Irelands Safeguarding Audit Framework is underpinned by current legislation and the principles set out in this document. It has a fundamental focus on the context of children and young people in sport and the creation of safe spaces where they can be seen, heard and helped.

This safeguarding framework is a self-assessment framework where clubs will self-assess adherence to safeguarding policies and procedures and the idea is to identify any gaps and action those areas.

It is compulsory to complete this framework and Golf Ireland will assist and support your club along the way.

Individual Golf clubs will be responsible for the timely completion of the safeguarding audit process. Clubs will be responsible for responding to any improvement actions that are identified through the Safeguarding Audit process and co-operating fully with any review that is commissioned in respect of their club.

5.0 Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Practices for Castlecomer Golf Club

By carrying out a risk assessment and producing a Child Safeguarding Statement the club have in place detailed policies and procedures outlining how we safeguard children and young people.

These policies and procedures include the roles and responsibilities of the people within *Castlecomer Golf Club*, 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 club or lawfully on our property*.

6.0 Safe Recruitment Procedures

The vast majority of leader, coaches, staff and volunteers will help out through a genuine desire to see children develop within golf and with the aim of providing a fun and positive experience for the children. Unfortunately, we must face the reality that a small minority of people will join an organisation as an opportunity to gain access to children with the purpose of developing inappropriate intimate relationships. They will create an air of acceptability about their role, justifying their close contact with children. People who commit sexual offences against children often first gain the trust of people around the child, such as their family and friends. Those who commit offences work hard to portray themselves as caring and trustworthy and they befriend their victims to break down barriers before an offence may be committed.

In order to safeguard young people against such risks, *Castlecomer Golf Club* take all reasonable steps to ensure that only suitable people are recruited to work with children by adopting and consistently applying a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting staff and volunteers.

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

Castlecomer Golf Club endeavour to ensure that all volunteers and staff working with children and young people are appropriate and suitable to do so and they have all the information they require to undertake their job effectively.

This will mean that all individuals who occupy these roles undertake:

- a) the appropriate vetting checks (renewed every three years)
- b) safeguarding training (updated every three years)
- c) the signing of codes of conduct (annually)
- d) the responsibility to read and become familiar with Castlecomer Golf Club's Safeguarding Policy

See appendix two for more details on safe recruitment process. [Appendix 2](#)

7.0 Safeguarding Training

All staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding training appropriate for their role. Training is updated every three years.

See appendix three for more information on Castlecomer Golf Club's safeguarding training. [Appendix 3](#)

8.0 Roles and Responsibilities

All those working with children (including parents/carers) should accept the role and responsibilities that they undertake in their commitment to maintaining an enjoyable and safe environment and the vital role they play in the development of individuals and of junior golf as a whole.

Guided by this Safeguarding Policy, the club ensures that the work of all those working with juniors and interaction between children, their peers and adults, is conducted in a spirit of mutual respect, equality and non-discriminatory with a spirit of fair play.

Adults including parents /carers, who create an environment in which meaningful, open relationships are valued and where the integrity of everyone is respected, can promote such interaction.

Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities within Castlecomer Golf Club

- Club Children's Officer
- Designated Liaison Person

If possible, it is good practice to have a deputy CCO and DLP.

See appendix four for the roles and responsibilities of the above roles. [Appendix 4](#)

9.0 Reporting & Protection

All those involved in golf have a moral duty of care to report child protection concerns in order to help create a safer environment for children. The procedure in 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 a discussion with Tusla staff.

In NI there is a standard UNIOONI form for statutory agencies. It is recommended best practice that any telephone referral is followed up in writing.

Castlecomer Golf Club 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 abused. They should know how to recognise 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 is 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 (ROI) Tusla/Gardaí or (NI) Health and Social Care Trust/Police

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in a paid or voluntary capacity in the club to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. However, there is a responsibility on individuals (paid or voluntary) to protect children, which means if you have a concern you must report, in order for the appropriate agency to make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person.

Under no circumstances should any individual be left with a worry or concern about a child. Individuals should feel free to discuss any concern(s) with *the club's* Designated Liaison Person or Golf Ireland's National Children's Officer, where all concerns will be treated in confidence.

Details should only be shared on a "need to know" basis with those who can help with the management of the concern.

In addition, individuals in ROI can:

Contact TUSLA to discuss or report a child protection/welfare concern (www.tusla.ie/children-first/contact-a-social-worker3)

If you think the child is in immediate danger and you cannot contact Tusla, you should contact the Gardaí without delay (999/112)

For individuals in Northern Ireland you should contact **Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) Gateway Team**. Visit **gateway contacts**: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/GatewayServiceTeamContactDetails.pdf>

You can also contact the NSPCC helpline at any time to discuss any concern about a child (Telephone: 0808 800 5000, Text: 88858, Email: help@nspcc.org.uk)

If you think the child is in immediate danger, contact the **Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) (999)**

See appendix five for more information on *Insert Club Name's* reporting procedures. [Appendix 5](#)

10.0 Disciplinary, Complaints & Appeals

Insert Club Name has developed a robust disciplinary, complaints and appeals process. 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 National Children's Officers/Designated Liaison Persons or other staff/volunteers.

See appendix six for more detail on the disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedure. [Appendix 6](#)

11.0 Safeguarding Good Practice Guidelines

A central goal for all involved in junior golf 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 junior golf.

This section of Castlecomerf Golf Club's safeguarding policy provides guidance to provide a safe environment for children and young people:

- Supervision
- Transport
- Film & Photography
- Social Media
- Mobile Phones
- Physical Contact
- Late Collection
- Adults and Juniors Playing together
- Changing Rooms
- Away Trips/Overnight stays
- Accidents & Incidents
- Safety
- Anti-Bullying Policy

See appendix seven for more detailed guidelines. [Appendix 7](#)

12.0 Codes of Conduct

Codes of conduct are an integral part of Castlecomer Golf Club. We believe that adopting a Code of Conduct will ensure that all adults are familiar with what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour when working with children. Adults who work with children are placed in a position of trust and therefore it is important they behave appropriately and provide a strong positive role model for children, both to protect children and those working with children from allegations of poor practice.

The code of conduct sets a standard of behaviour that help build *the club's* culture and make it easier to deal with conduct and behaviour issues as they arise and form the basis for challenging and improving practice. These can be many and varied, ranging from on-course incidents, spectator abuse and mismanagement, to inappropriate social media posts, unfair treatment, poor sportsmanship and more. Codes of conduct set expectations for everyone and Castlecomer Golf Club have a code of conduct in place for leaders, juniors and parents.

See appendix eight for the junior, leaders and parents code of conduct. [Appendix 8](#)

13.0 Representative Players (If applicable in your club)

Representative players are ambassadors for the game of golf. It is important that this is recognised as both an honour and a great achievement. When playing representative golf, players are acting as an ambassador for the entire game. In that role, there is an expectation that they will always conduct themselves in a way that reflects the standards of the game for showing respect to others and playing in accordance with the rules.

See appendix nine for more information on the procedure to investigate alleged misconduct involving representative players. [Appendix 9](#)

14.0 Legislation

There are a number of key pieces of legislation and guidance that relate to child welfare and protection.

See appendix ten which outlines the legislation and guidance that is applicable in the area of Safeguarding and Child Protection. [Appendix 10](#)

