



Appendix 19

Guidelines on Confidentiality

The Irish FA has a responsibility to demonstrate a clear commitment to confidentiality and the respect thereof.

Families and children and young people involved in Association programmes should be confident that personal and sensitive details which they have confided about their lives or family situations will not be talked about or passed on to others without their consent.

However, the legal principle that 'the welfare of the child and young person is paramount' means that considerations of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children and young people to be protected from harm. Everyone involved in Irish FA programmes, including children and young people, should be made aware that Irish FA staff and volunteers can never promise to keep secrets. Information of a confidential nature, however, will only be communicated on a 'need to know' basis.

In any situation where there is an allegation or suspicion of abuse, it is important that the rights of both the victim and the alleged perpetrator are protected by ensuring that only those who need to know are given the relevant information. This will mean, at the very least, informing (only where appropriate):

- the Irish FA's Child Welfare Department
- a statutory safeguarding agency
- the PSNI
- the parent or guardian of the child or young person (unless doing so would further compromise the welfare of the child or young person)
- the alleged perpetrator (following consultation with statutory authorities, if they are involved)

The Irish FA recognises that when informing the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a child or young person about whom staff or volunteers have concerns, a sensitive approach must be adopted, and acknowledges that this will only occur after consultation with the relevant statutory safeguarding organisations. The Association also acknowledges that any individual under suspicion of acting inappropriately, whether or not he / she is an Association staff member or volunteer, has a right to be notified of the cause of the concern. This is another matter that will be carefully considered and only be undertaken in consultation with statutory safeguarding organisations, where relevant.

Depending on the outcome of the initial inquiries, coaches, volunteers and other agencies who have contact with either the child or young person concerned, or the alleged perpetrator, may need to be given brief details of the incident and subsequent actions taken. The Irish FA will consult with the relevant statutory safeguarding organisations to ascertain who should be told, when they should be told and the kind of information that it is appropriate to share.