



IRISH FA

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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Introduction

Although most adults participating in Irish FA programmes generally do so in a safe and positive atmosphere, the Irish FA recognises that abuse can occur within many environments, including the home and sporting environment.

Policy Statement

The Irish FA acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults at risk from harm and abuse and is committed to ensuring its safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of adults at risk from harm and abuse are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all adults at risk from harm and abuse have:

- a positive and enjoyable experience in football in a safe environment, and
- are protected from abuse while participating in sport or any other active recreation activities

The Irish FA will encourage and support partner organisations, including clubs, to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality as set out in these safeguarding adults policy and procedures.

Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

- promote zero tolerance of harm to all adults from abuse, exploitation or neglect, and to influence the way our organisation thinks about harm to adults resulting from abuse, exploitation or neglect by embedding a culture which recognises every adult's right to respect and dignity, honesty, humanity and compassion in every aspect of their life
- prevent and reduce the risk of harm to adults, while supporting people's right to maintain control over their lives and make informed choices free from coercion
- encourage our organisations to work collaboratively across sectors and on an inter-agency and multi-disciplinary basis, to introduce a range of preventative measures to promote an individual's capacity to keep themselves safe and to prevent harm occurring
- establish clear guidance for reporting concerns that an adult is, or may be, at risk of being harmed or in need of protection and how these will be responded to
- promote access to justice for adults at risk who have been harmed as a result of abuse, exploitation or neglect
- promote a continuous learning approach to adult safeguarding

Definitions

In recent years there has been a marked shift away from using the term 'vulnerable' to describe adults potentially at risk from harm or abuse. To assist working through and understanding this policy several key definitions need to be explained:

Adult at risk from harm or abuse is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) Personal characteristics which may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain.

AND/OR

- b) Life circumstances which may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

Adult in need of protection is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) Personal characteristics AND/OR
- b) Life circumstances AND
- c) Who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests AND
- d) Where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons.

Adult is anyone over the age of 18.

Adult Safeguarding is protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Capacity refers to the ability to make a decision at a particular time, for example when under considerable stress. The starting assumption must always be that a person has the capacity to make a decision unless it can be established that they lack that capacity.

Consent is a clear indication of a willingness to participate in an activity or to accept a service. A person at risk may signal consent verbally, by gesture, by willing participation or in writing. Decisions with more serious consequences will require more formal consideration of consent and appropriate steps should be taken to ensure consent is valid. No one can give, or withhold, consent on behalf of another adult unless special provision for particular purposes has been made for this, usually in law.

Regulated Activity. There are certain types of activities with children or vulnerable adults that fall under regulated activity' as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007.

There are six categories of activity which are regulated activity with vulnerable adults. They are:

- providing health care
- providing personal care
- providing social work
- helping with general household matters
- helping with the conduct of a person's own affairs
- conveying

Self-Neglect is when a concern has arisen due to the person seriously neglecting his/her own care and welfare and putting him/herself and/or others at serious risk. Responding to cases of self-neglect poses many challenges.

Please note: Definitions are subject to review and will be amended accordingly by the Irish FA.

Guidance and Legislation

The practices and procedures within this policy are based on the principles contained within UK legislation and government guidance and have been developed to complement the Safeguarding Adults Board's policy and procedures, and take the following into consideration:

- Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership (July 2015)
- Adult Safeguarding Operational Procedures (Sept 2016).
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Family Homes and Domestic Violence (NI) Order 1998
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007
- The Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 1994 and 1998
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2015

Additional Policy and Guidance notes can be viewed through the Irish FA Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Physical Contact
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Equality Policy Statement
- Communications Policy
- Guidelines for use of Photographic and Filming Equipment
- Managing Challenging Behaviour
- Standard Parental/Guardian Consent form
- Guidelines on Confidentiality

Best practice in football

The Irish FA will endeavour to safeguard adults at risk from harm and abuse by:

- following carefully recruitment and selection procedures to check the suitability of employees and volunteers to work with adults at risk from harm and abuse
- managing staff and volunteers as this is key to ensuring best practice. Line Managers have a responsibility to implement and promote support systems to identify any concerns or additional training needs
- training staff and volunteers on issues related to the protection of adults at risk of harm and of their responsibilities to report any concerns
- adhering to the high behavioural expectations outlined in the Irish FA Codes of Conduct for staff and volunteers providing opportunities to get involved in Irish FA programmes
- reporting concerns about suspected abuse to the relevant statutory agencies
- disseminating relevant good practice to clubs and organisations in Irish FA programmes

Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers

The Irish FA recognises its responsibility to ensure that those staff and volunteers providing football opportunities for adults at risk of harm are appropriately selected, supported and have the necessary safeguarding knowledge to help them in their roles.

The Irish FA has comprehensive recruitment and selection procedures to help select the right people and to screen out and discourage those who are not suitable to work with children and young people or adults at risk in football.

As part of this process, staff and volunteers working in regulated positions will be required to:

- complete an AccessNI Enhanced Disclosure vetting check before commencing employment, to assess their suitability for working with children, young people or adults at risk of harm
- complete a Disclosure of Criminal Convictions form detailing past convictions or impending cases
- attend appropriate safeguarding training as identified by the Irish FA
- abide by the Irish FA's Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers

All applicants should consider informing the Irish FA of any criminal convictions or impending cases prior to completing the AccessNI application process.

All line managers/supervisors and full time-employees have a responsibility to ensure that all part-time and volunteer staff who assist them with their programmes adhere to the above requirements before commencing regulated activity roles. AccessNI and training records must be formally checked and recorded with the safeguarding team prior to engaging in regulated activity and updated every 3 years.. The safeguarding team must ALWAYS be informed when any new person commences a regulated activity role

Managing staff and volunteers

Managing staff and volunteer roles is central to best practice. Line managers have a responsibility to implement and promote support systems so that concerns and training needs relating to regulated activity roles can be shared. Line managers also have a responsibility to monitor the behaviour and performance of those staff and volunteers who engage in regulated activity.

Any concerns regarding the suitability of a staff member or volunteer who engages in regulated activity must be referred to the safeguarding team. The team will immediately address issues pertaining to serious poor practice or abuse, in accordance with statutory guidance and the guidelines set out in this policy document.

Training

Irish FA staff and volunteers will receive training in relation to the protection of adults at risk from harm and abuse. Training will cover:

- basic awareness and understanding of safeguarding issues
- staff and volunteers' roles in safeguarding adults at risk of harm
- How to recognise various forms of abuse, record and report concerns in line with Association requirements

Staff should participate in relevant training identified by the Irish FA and attend refresher training at three-yearly intervals.

Code of conduct

The Irish FA strives to contribute to the sporting and social development of any person by presenting them with an opportunity to engage in Association programmes. For football to be a positive experience for all participants, the Association expects high standards of behaviour to be demonstrated by everyone – coaches, volunteers, players, parents/guardians and spectators.

As such, the Irish FA have outlined behavioural expectations encompassed in the codes of conduct outlined in Appendix 1.

What is abuse?

Abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. It commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and represents an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a disabled person regardless of age, gender or race. Somebody may abuse or neglect a person by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. A person may be abused in a family, institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. The main forms of abuse are outlined below.

Neglect

- Where a person deliberately withholds, or fails to provide, appropriate and adequate care and support which is required by another adult. It may be through a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through a failure to take reasonable action given the information and facts available to them at the time.
- It may include physical neglect to the extent that health or well-being is impaired, administering too much or too little medication, failure to provide access to appropriate health or social care, withholding the necessities of life, such as adequate food, clothing or failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or to others particularly when the person lacks the capacity to assess risk.
- In some instances, it may occur if an individual is left alone or unsupervised.
- Individuals may also be deprived of love and affection.

In a sporting context

- Where a person's personal or intimate requirements are ignored, for example, if an individual needs assistance in having a drink, putting on warmer clothing, going to the toilet or has specific communication requirements.
- Where a person is exposed to a dangerous situation, for example, because they are unable to see or hear or unable to move themselves from a situation.
- Where a person's basic needs are withdrawn, for example, disconnecting the battery on a battery powered wheelchair to prevent a person moving independently.

Physical abuse

- Physical abuse is the use of physical force or mistreatment of one person by another which may or may not result in actual physical injury. This may include hitting, pushing, rough handling, exposure to heat or cold, force feeding, improper administration of medication, denial of treatment, misuse or illegal use of restraint and deprivation of liberty.

In a sporting context

- Where the nature and intensity of training or competition exceeds the capacity of the person.
- Where a person is forced to take part in any sports or recreation activities against their will.

Emotional abuse

- Psychological/emotional abuse is behaviour that is psychologically harmful or inflicts mental distress by threat, humiliation or other verbal/non-verbal conduct. This may include bullying, harassment, threats, humiliation or ridicule, provoking fear of violence, shouting, yelling and swearing, blaming, controlling, intimidation and coercion.

In a sporting context

- Where a person is subjected to unrealistic pressure by, for example, a coach, or bullied to perform to high expectations.
- Undermining of a person's self-esteem through ridicule about being unable to do an activity because of their impairment.
- Ignoring a person's right to privacy for personal or intimate care, especially if the adult is reliant on others for assistance.
- Any type of bullying by other sports people, coaches or volunteers.

- Not taking into account a person's race or culture which may affect, for example, the type of sportswear they use.
- Constant domination of or denial of access to facilities and equipment on the grounds of someone's disability.
- Talking about a person as if they are not there.

Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse is any behaviour perceived to be of a sexual nature which is unwanted or takes place without consent or understanding. Sexual violence and abuse can take many forms and may include non-contact sexual activities, such as indecent exposure, stalking, grooming, being made to look at or be involved in the production of sexually abusive material, or being made to watch sexual activities.
- It may involve physical contact, including but not limited to non-consensual penetrative sexual activities or non-penetrative sexual activities, such as intentional touching (known as groping).
- Sexual violence can be found across all sections of society, irrelevant of gender, age, ability, religion, race, ethnicity, personal circumstances, socio-economic status or sexual orientation.

In a sporting context

- The person requires personal care which involves intimate contact with another person. This situation could provide an opportunity for abuse to take place in a seemingly proper context.
- Inappropriate photography or videoing of a person by anyone for their own sexual gratification, in the vicinity of the training or competition area.
- Contacts made within sport and pursued, for example, through texts or social media to abuse adults at risk from harm and abuse. The power of coaches and other people over adults at risk or harm, if misused, could also lead to abusive situations developing.

Disability, vulnerability and abuse

Not every adult with disabilities is vulnerable in every situation. However it can be said that certain factors may mean that adults at risk from harm and abuse are more vulnerable and could therefore be more open to abuse. The following list examines some of the reasons why disabled people may be more vulnerable:

- Individuals with dependency and support needs may have found that it is easier to be pleasing and compliant than challenge those caring for them because of the consequences. Any challenge or complaint could lead to more abusive practice or retribution.
- Continuing dependency on others may make some people feel powerless.
- Lack of education regarding personal, sexual and social skills and lack of information about individual rights, together with feelings of isolation and rejection, may make some disabled people more vulnerable. This includes those people with a sensory impairment who have not had the opportunity to learn appropriate and inappropriate touching or guiding.
- A physical impairment may prevent individuals from defending themselves by being able to physically move away from a situation.
- Communication difficulties may make it hard to complain or be understood. This could be that the individual is unable to speak to tell anyone or does not have the vocabulary to describe what has happened to them.
- Individuals requiring intimate care could be in an increased vulnerable situation, especially if they have to rely on a number of different carers to support their needs.
- The general thought that no-one would abuse a disabled person, for whatever reason, has meant that procedures for reporting abuse have not been in place as it has been felt that they are not necessary.
- There may be misuse of treatments, for example, inappropriate use of medication or carers not being properly instructed or adhering to a care plan.
- The general thought that disabled people are not abused may make it difficult for them to be believed if they report an incident.

- Intrusion into body space for physical and medical care can lead to disabled people never developing ownership of their own bodies.
- Some individuals may be unable to recognise or understand abusive situations and behaviour by others, both potential and actual.
- The stress that some parents and carers experience from looking after a disabled person may lead to abuse. Parents especially are often seen as pillars of strength and wonderfully caring when they are, in fact, struggling to manage.
- Some visually impaired people may not be able to read the facial expressions or body language or other people around them. They may also not be aware that another person or a number of people are near them.
- There may be occasions when a visually impaired person would need to ask a stranger for help. This could potentially be an opportunity for the sports person to be abused.

Signs and indicators of abuse and neglect

Abuse can take place in any context and by all manner of perpetrator. Abuse may be inflicted by anyone in the club/association who a person comes into contact with, or club members, workers, volunteers or coaches may suspect that a person is being abused or neglected outside of the club setting. There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused or neglected, these include but are not limited to:

- unexplained bruises or injuries, or lack of medical attention when an injury is present
- a person having belongings or money going missing
- a person not attending/no longer enjoying their sessions
- someone losing or gaining weight or having an unkempt appearance
- a change in the behaviour or confidence of a person
- evidence of self-harm
- fear or anxiety of a particular group or individual
- a person telling you/another person that they are being abused, i.e., a disclosure.

Barriers to reporting abuse

There can be many barriers to prevent a person reporting abuse including:

- simply not accepting that abuse could be occurring
- isolation and having fewer contacts to disclose to
- a dependency on others for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate care
- an impaired capacity to resist, avoid or understand abuse
- speech and language communication needs that may make it difficult to tell others what is happening
- many adults at risk have learnt to be compliant
- others may be reluctant to challenge those who may often be viewed as valiantly coping with the burden of caring for an adult at risk and therefore not considered behaviour abusive

Football and other sports clubs can and will create positive, supportive environments where people may feel safe to disclose abuse/harm occurring in other settings or by non-club associated people.

Whilst it reflects well on the club and/or The Irish FA, it may pose challenges for staff/volunteers.

Should you have any concerns about the safety and welfare of a person participating in your activity you should discuss this with your line manager and/or the safeguarding team.

Respond, record and report any allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour

You may be informed of allegations of abuse or poor practice, suspect abuse/poor practice or receive an account from someone who has witnessed abuse/poor practice.

If this is the case you should follow these procedures and immediately report your concerns to the Irish FA Safeguarding Manager. In the event that your concern relates to that individual you should report your concerns to the Irish FA Chief Operating Officer.

Responding to suspicions or allegations of abuse/inappropriate behaviour

- React calmly so as not to frighten the individual.
- Take what the person says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what a person with learning or communication difficulties and/or differences in language, says. Do not probe. Do not lead.
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum necessary to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Always reassure the person but do not make promises of confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments.
- Make a full record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible.

Recording suspicions or allegations of abuse/ inappropriate behaviour

Staff/volunteers are instructed to record all information and actions taken in relation to the reported incident on an Irish FA Incident Reporting Form (Appendix 3) and/or through the My Concern platform (or any other platform used by the Irish FA).

Information to be recorded should include:

- the nature of the allegation
- a description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- the individual's account and/or account of any accompanying adult of what has happened
- any times dates or other relevant information
- a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay

Reporting the matter to the Police or Social Services should however not be delayed by attempts to attain information .

Records should be securely maintained and only viewed by appropriate personnel, Social Services or the Police. Reporting the matter to the police or social services should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. Wherever possible, referrals should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. A record should also be made of the social services member of staff or police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the date and time of the call, in case any follow up is needed .

Reporting suspicions or allegations of abuse/inappropriate behaviour

What to do if a person says or indicates that he or she is being abused

If a person says or indicates that he or she is being abused, or information is obtained which gives concerns that a person is being abused, the person receiving the information should:

- react calmly
- take what the person says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a person who may have speech impairment and/or differences in language
- keep questions to an absolute minimum necessary to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said

- not ask leading questions, for example, ask “Were you hit?” rather than “Did John hit you?”.
- reassure the person but do not make promises of confidentiality which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
- make a full record of what had been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible and explain that you will have to take this information to the Irish FA Safeguarding Manager
- treat the written record as being strictly confidential.
- report your concerns immediately to the Irish FA Safeguarding Manager who can then take appropriate action or advise you on the action to take

The Irish FA Safeguarding & Welfare Manager is:

Chantal Ford

Email: chantal.ford@irishfa.com

Irish Football Association
National Football Stadium at Windsor Park
Donegall Avenue, Belfast, BT12 5LU

Telephone: 07889 057992

OR

Corinne Lannie

Irish FA Risk Manager

corinne.lannie@irishfa.com or 07703610489

It may be that a person has indicated to you in ways other than speech, or his/her preferred method of communication, that abuse may be occurring. If this is the case, record what you have seen in detail.

It is never easy to take action in cases of abuse. You may be upset and worried about the impact of reporting the concern of the person, the club and the Irish FA, the person suspected of being an abuser and so on. You may also be unsure as to whether you have understood the person properly because, for example, of a speech impairment.

Remember – it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not abuse has taken place but it is your responsibility to act on what a person tells you.

What to do if you are concerned about the behaviour of a parent, relative or carer

Wherever possible, there should be a commitment to work in partnership with parents, relatives or carers when there are concerns about a person. However, in some circumstances, a person may be placed at even greater risk if such concerns were shared, if, for example, the concerns were about the parents, relatives or carers being responsible for the abuse.

The following action is suggested:

- Report your concerns to the Irish FA Safeguarding Manager. If the person is not available, then the person discovering or being informed of the abuse should immediately contact local social services or the local police.

What to do if you are concerned about the behaviour of a member of staff or a volunteer.

This would include anyone working with adults in a paid or voluntary capacity, for example, coaches, drivers, team managers, officials etc.

- Report your concerns to the Irish FA Safeguarding Manager who will then take appropriate action in accordance with the organisation's procedures.

If the Irish FA Safeguarding Manager is not available, the person discovering or being informed of the suspected abuse should immediately contact the local social services department or the local police. They should be able to give you support and advice.

Sometimes people find it very hard to believe that an adult they know and trust could have abused their son or daughter. This may especially be the case if the suspected abuser has been able to give the family some respite from caring for the disabled person, by for example, taking him or her to competitions or events. If parents do not feel there is a need for further action and you believe that there is, report your concerns to your local HSC Trust Adult Safeguarding Gateway (see appendix 4). If you think a criminal offence has been committed, then report to the PSNI, ideally with the consent of the adult concerned.

A complaint of abuse against a member of staff could result in three types of investigation:

1. A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.
2. A safeguarding protection investigation.
3. A criminal investigation.

The results of the police and safeguarding protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily. It is recognised that it is not easy to believe that a colleague or friend may be abusing a person. The Irish FA should assure all staff and volunteers that they will be fully supported and protected if they have, in good faith, reported their concerns over a colleague's behaviour towards adults at risk from harm and abuse. If an allegation is found to be false, the organisation should do all that it can to enable the coach or volunteer to continue working within sport and recreation.

What to do if you are concerned about the behaviour of another adult at risk from harm and abuse

A person could act in an inappropriate way for a number of reasons, for example:

- They may have learned the behaviour from copying another person or experienced it themselves
- They have the opportunity to control another person
- They may be feeling angry or frustrated about something and cannot find another way to express their feelings
- They may have difficulty in communicating with others and again become frustrated
- They may be frightened or anxious about something
- They may not be aware of what is the right way and the wrong way to act
- They may have limited knowledge about relationships and accepted sexual boundaries
- They may not be supervised appropriately
- They may have limited personal space and privacy
- They may not like the people they are being asked to mix with
- Their medication may be affecting their behaviour. Record the behaviour you are concerned about using the form (Appendix 3)

Report your concerns to the Irish FA Safeguarding Manager who can advise you on the next step which could be:

- talking to the person or observing the situations when their behaviour causes concern – it may be easy to change the behaviour by, for example, moving the adult from one coaching group to another if there is a clash of personalities
- discussing the behaviour which causes concern with relatives and carers, if relevant, to see if they have noticed it and what steps could be taken together with the person to change it
- referring your concerns to other professionals if the behaviour is too challenging to manage in the above ways
- referring the person to the terms of membership of your club or organisation which refer to the conduct of members to other members, coaches, volunteers and staff
- working through the procedures outlined in the section dealing with 'What to do if a person indicates that he or she is being abused'

The Irish FA currently records cases of poor practice and/or allegations of abuse using the My Concern platform provided by One Team Logic.

Code of Conduct

As an Irish FA employee/volunteer you should:

- show respect to everyone involved in the game
- be an excellent role model and display exemplary behaviour at all times. This includes not smoking, drinking alcohol, taking drugs or using foul, racial, sectarian or discriminatory language in the presence adults involved in your activity
- only develop open, honest, professional and respectful relationships with anyone participating in Irish FA programmes
- promote the positive aspects of football
- never use offensive, insulting, abusive or inappropriate language
- respect the adults right to personal privacy
- plan activities so that they involve more than one other person being present, or at least in sight or hearing of others
- make football a fun experience
- communicate in a constructive and effective manner
- be positive by giving constructive feedback, praising efforts and encouraging achievements
- ensure that if any form of manual / physical support is required, it is provided openly. If physical support is needed, talk openly to the person, explain what you are doing and why.
- recognise the developmental needs and capacity of those involved in the activity, including those with a disability, avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing any person against their will
- carry out a risk assessment and ensure that the equipment and environment used for every activity is safe
- keep a written record, and inform any parent or carer, of any injury that occurs, including details of any treatment given
- never engage in bullying behaviour and challenge any form of bullying behaviour

Staff and volunteers should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay with adults
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- allow individuals to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- let allegations a person makes go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted on
- do things of a personal nature that an adult can do for his/her self
- allow abusive activities (e.g. ridiculing, bullying)
- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others
- allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes but deal firmly and fairly with such behaviour at all times
- exaggerate or trivialise abuse issues
- show favouritism to any individual
- make sexually suggestive remarks or gestures or tell jokes or stories of a 'smutty' nature, to a person.
- rely on your good name to protect you. It may not be enough !
- get close to or have physical contact with a person without clearly explaining what you are doing

Code of conduct for participants on international duty/residentials

All those who represent the Irish FA have the right to receive the appropriate care, support and supervision required to safeguard their welfare. However, they also have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the good reputation of the Association and does not bring it into disrepute.

They should:

- show respect for everyone involved in the international programme
- treat everyone involved equally and ensure they feel valued
- never engage in any form of bullying or violent behaviour. Bullying is not acceptable behaviour towards anyone and must be challenged. All instances of bullying (whether experienced directly or witnessed) must be reported to staff
- do not use any form of foul, sectarian, abusive or discriminatory language
- be punctual: Arrive at all group meeting points on time
- stay in groups in the departure area and do not wander off on your own
- respect the accommodation/facilities/equipment and refrain from engaging in behaviour which will cause damage
- remain in your designated bedroom at night and do not leave the premises during this period unless instructed to do so by a staff member
- refrain from using mobile phones in changing rooms, unless it is an emergency
- adhere to all health and safety requirements, including emergency exit plans, in the event of a fire
- be punctual for all training sessions, matches, group meetings etc
- be a good ambassador for your team, club and country
- Behave and listen to all instructions from the staff
- show respect for staff members, team-mates, match officials and opponents alike
- do not leave the grounds of the residential/training area without permission
- be a role model – display good behaviour and be courteous at all times
- have fun and enjoy the experience
- adhere to the required dress codes
- promote an ethos of fair play and respect
- do not engage in rough or dangerous play
- wear the appropriate kit, including footwear and shin pads
- do not chew gum or wear jewellery during training or matches
- show respect for members of the public
- respect the rules of the game. Do not cheat
- encourage your team-mates
- be positive, dedicated, disciplined and committed
- have pride
- always do your best and give 100%
- stay in pairs (at least). Do not go off on your own at any time

Travelling to away fixtures/tournaments/residentials

Travelling to away fixtures, tournaments and residentials is a regular activity which may require complicated arrangements involving overnight stays. Even what may appear as the most straightforward of trips will require some level of planning and coordination by staff. This may include additional care, support and supervision to ensure it is a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

The following guidance outlines several issues that staff must take into consideration when travelling with adults who may be at risk.

In preparation for an away match, tournament or residential, staff and volunteers should:

- inform the person that they have been invited to represent Northern Ireland, or are on standby, by written correspondence (in addition to text message)
- inform parents/guardians/carers, by way of written correspondence, that they have been selected to represent Northern Ireland
- prepare and send out consent and medical questionnaire forms to all parents/guardians/carers in advance of the match, tournament or residential
- where possible risk assessments on facilities and accommodation should be carried out prior to the match, tournament or residential
- ensure all staff have completed safeguarding training and an AccessNI Enhanced Disclosure vetting check prior to the match, tournament or residential
- check that staff have the relevant qualifications, experience and insurance pertaining to their role;
- check insurance coverage is fully in place
- issue all participants with an itinerary outlining all travel arrangements, meeting points and requirements
- inform all participants of the Irish FA's Code of Conduct and ensure they agree to sign, date and return the expected codes of behaviour to the head delegate. Everyone must be made aware that any behaviour bringing the Association into disrepute will result in disciplinary action as the Association deems fit
- at least one member of staff attending a residential has a valid First Aid qualification. Staff should also familiarise themselves with the nearest hospital/A&E department
- inform the team doctor/physiotherapist of pre-existing medical conditions/injuries/allergies (food or otherwise) before the match, tournament or residential so that they can prepare necessary treatments in advance
- have access to the Safeguarding and Poor Practice Referral and Accident forms in advance. Record in writing any accidents or incidents and, if required, report them to the appropriate authorities

Code of conduct for staff and volunteers during away trips

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of all participants and place their welfare before all other considerations at all times.
- Ensure adequate supervision levels throughout the trip
- Show respect for everyone involved.
- Treat everyone involved equally and ensure they feel valued.
- Never engage in bullying behaviour. Bullying is unacceptable and must be challenged.
- Do not use any form of foul, sectarian, abusive or discriminatory language.
- Be a good role model at all times and demonstrate a high standard of behaviour – this includes not drinking alcohol, smoking or taking illegal/performance-enhancing drugs in front of participants. Staff and volunteers must also ensure that they take care of their appearance and are presentable.
- Never take advantage of your position of trust.
- Ensure all participants are presented with an opportunity to voice any concerns that arise during the tournament or residential.
- Be punctual and arrive at all departing venues well in advance of participants.

- Ensure all participants stay in groups while in the departure area ensuring nobody is left isolated.
- Arrange a group meeting point prior to boarding the mode of transport (i.e. bus, plan, train).
- Undertake a health and safety risk assessment of the accommodation/facilities upon arrival.
- Ensure, where possible, that everyone is located on the same floor of the accommodation.
- Ensure all participants are designated 'age-appropriate' and same-gender rooms, and that everyone is designated an individual bed. Staff members must never share a room/bath/ shower with a child or young person.
- Staff members should organise a rota to check that players are safely in their rooms at night. No staff member or volunteer should enter a player's bedroom unless it is deemed necessary and unless they are accompanied by another adult staff member or volunteer.
- Familiarise the group with the emergency exits in the event of a fire and agree a group meeting point – this includes at the stadium where the match(es) will take place.
- Work in an open environment with children and young people at all times.
- Never exert unnecessary physical or emotional pressure/stress on participants
- Avoid spending time alone with any participants and ensure that the team doctor and physiotherapist are supported by another member of staff when treating players.
- Do not engage in any form of inappropriate physical contact.
- Medical staff (i.e. doctors and physiotherapists) must always treat each person for illness or injury in a manner that reflects the ethos of their profession. This includes not gaining access to or inappropriately touching players for personal satisfaction.
- Staff who are the opposite gender to the players must remain outside the changing room while the players are showering and changing.
- Refrain from using mobile phones in changing rooms unless it is an emergency.
- Should a participant have to remain in the hotel during the tournament or residential due to injury or illness try to ensure two staff members remain behind to look after their welfare.
- If someone falls ill, or is seriously injured, and must remain behind after a tournament or match, ideally two members of staff should remain with the person. Staff have a duty of care to ensure that each participant returns safely to their UK residing address.
- If 'time off' is permitted by the head coach, staff and players should sightsee or partake in recreational activities as a group. Staff should undertake a risk assessment for each excursion in advance. Mobile phone contact between the team administrator and/or head coach and players must always be in place during such excursions.
- Ensure that all players partake in group excursions so that nobody is left alone in accommodation. Arrange a 'meeting point' for players in the event of a player becoming separated from the group.
- Be approachable at all times.
- Make the match, tournament or residential an enjoyable experience for everyone involved.
- Demonstrate good listening skills.
- Recognise the different developmental needs and capacities of each participant.
- Encourage teamwork.
- Promote an ethos of fair play and respect.
- Ensure disciplinary procedures are in place should they be required.
- Have access to telephones and be contactable 24/7. Staff should have contact numbers for parents and guardians, and vice versa, in case of emergency.

Staff ratios

Staff to participant ratios for events will be assessed on an individual basis for each activity considering the following factors:

- The age of the participants involved (i.e. the lower the age, the greater need for supervision).
- The specific support needs of the participants involved.
- The degree of risk involved in the activity.
- The availability of supervision staff/coaches at hosting venues/organisations.

Changing/intimate personal care

At all Irish FA events and programmes changing and the provision of intimate personal care is the responsibility of parents/guardians or teachers/group leaders. However, in exceptional circumstances when parents/guardians or teachers/group leaders are not available staff may feel it is appropriate to assist with changing/personal care to maintain the safety, dignity or wellbeing of an adult. Where this is the case, staff may only do so with the permission of the adult.

The lifting, manual support and transferring of adults at risk or harm at all Irish FA events and programmes is the responsibility of parents/guardians or teachers/group leaders. However, in exceptional circumstances when parents/guardians or teachers/group leaders are not available staff may feel it is appropriate to assist with lifting, manual support or transferring an adult to maintain the safety, dignity or wellbeing of an adult. Where this is the case, staff may only do so with the permission of the adult.

Review of away match/tournament/residential

Staff should complete a review of each away trip, recording in writing and reporting their observations to the relevant personnel within the Irish FA so that any concerns or potential improvements can be reviewed and rectified in the future.

Adults at risk: poor practise referral form

This form should be completed in the event of a staff member or volunteer or other adult, disclosing alleged abuse.

Completed by	<input type="text"/>		
Position	<input type="text"/>	Date	<input type="text" value="(DD/MM/YYYY)"/>
Name of accused person	<input type="text"/>		
Relationship (to alleged victim)	<input type="text"/>		
Gender	<input type="text"/>		
Address	<input type="text"/>		
	Postcode	Age	DOB <input type="text" value="(DD/MM/YYYY)"/>
Name of alleged victim	<input type="text"/>		
		Age	DOB <input type="text" value="(DD/MM/YYYY)"/>
Gender	<input type="text"/>		
Alleged Victim's address	<input type="text"/>		
		Postcode	<input type="text"/>
Carer/Appropriate Adult name(s)	<input type="text"/>		
Carer/Appropriate Adult address(es)	<input type="text"/>		
	Postcode	Telephone number	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>		
	Postcode	Telephone number	<input type="text"/>

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Time of incident:

Time of incident:

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Action taken

External agencies contacted: Yes ☐ No ☐

(if yes, give date and time, contact details and other details of any advice received).

Police contacted? Yes ☐ No ☐

Name and contact number

Date and time contacted:

Date

Time

Details of advice received

Health and Social Care Trust: Yes ☐ No ☐

Name and contact number

Date and time contacted:

Date

Time

Details of advice received

Other (e.g. Local Council, Education Dept):

Yes ☐No ☐

Name and contact number

Date and time contacted:

Date

Time

Details of advice received

Signature of reporting person

Date

Time

Any further action

Information regarding other alleged victims concerned

Completed by

Position

Date

Name of accused

Name of alleged victim

Age

DOB

Address

Postcode

Carer/Appropriate Adult name(s)

Carer/Appropriate Adult address(es)

Postcode

Telephone number

Postcode

Telephone number

Name of alleged victim's club

Name of person who reported concern

Address

Postcode

Telephone number

Relationship to alleged victim

Relationship to accused

Remember to maintain confidentiality on a 'need to know' basis – only if it is necessary to protect the person. Do not discuss the incident with anyone other than those who absolutely must know.

N.B. A copy of this form should be sent to the Irish FA's Safeguarding Department for monitoring purposes and, where appropriate, to the HSCT.

Useful contacts

The HSC Trust Adult Safeguarding Gateway teams can be contacted at the following numbers:

Northern Trust **028 256 35512**

Western Trust **028 716 11366**

South Eastern Trust **028 925 01227**

Belfast Trust **028 950 41744**

Southern Trust **028 374 12015** or **028 374 12354.**

Emergency (Out of Hours) Social Work **028 9504 9999**

Keeping Adults Safe: A Shared Responsibility

Standards and Guidance for Good Practice in Adult Safeguarding Volunteer Now: <http://volunteernow.co.uk/training-and-standards/keeping-adults-safe-a-sharedresponsibility> Contact: Ruth Mulholland **07871 174853** or email ruth.mulholland@volunteernow.co.uk

Ann Craft Trust

Safeguarding Adults in Sport and Activity: Website: www.anncrafttrust.org

Email: Ann-Craft-Trust@nottingham.ac.uk Telephone: **0115 951 5400**

Helpline numbers

24-hour Domestic Violence helpline: **0800 917 1414**

Action on Elder Abuse helpline: **0808 808 8141**

Other sources of advice The Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland **028 90890892**