

TENNIS IRELAND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

This policy applies to all those involved in Tennis Ireland including, but not limited to, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteer drivers, members, parents and young people.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

Tennis Ireland is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its members. Every individual in the organisation should at all time show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of Tennis Ireland and the guidelines contained in this policy.

(Please refer to our website for our Safeguarding Statement)

Safeguarding or Child Protection

The term child protection has been expanded to safeguarding as it reflects the wider responsibility for health and safety and prevention as well as just protection from abuse. The word safeguarding has been used with increasing frequency over the last few years in a wide range of settings and situations, going well beyond the world of children and child protection. It may be defined as “Doing everything possible to minimise the risk of harm to children and young people.”

Safeguarding is about being proactive and putting measures in place in advance of any contact with children to ensure that children are going to be kept safe and this is what Tennis Ireland wish to have in place.

This could include:

- Ensuring staff / volunteers are properly checked when they are recruited;
- Guidelines for people who come into contact with children as part of their role to ensure they know what they need to do to keep children safe; and
- Guidelines for planning an event or activity with children and putting measures in place to minimise the risk of safeguarding issues occurring.

Code of Conduct

Tennis Ireland supports the view that all children’s sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. In this context the NGB undertakes to adopt the definition of fair play as set out in the European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe (1993).

“Fair play is much more than playing within the rules. It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing within the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialism and corruption.”

In order to promote the best practice in children’s sport, Tennis Ireland has adopted and implements the guidelines as set out in Safeguarding Guidance for Children & Young People in Sport and as required by law, has conducted a risk assessment of their facility and children’s programmes and the potential for harm to come to young participants whilst they are in their care.

As a follow up to the risk assessment exercise, the Board of Directors has written a Safeguarding Statement signed off by our chairperson and in conjunction with our Children’s Officers and Desig-

nated Liaison Person, put in place the policies and procedures required to bring all risks down to low levels.

Tennis Ireland's Safeguarding Statement is posted prominently on the Organisation's Website and in their premises. We require all adults associated with children's activities to have signed our relevant code of conduct.

Tennis Ireland is operated under its Memorandum of Articles. This document has been approved and adopted by the members of the Association at various Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings of the members of the Association.

Any changes to the Memorandum of Articles, has to be approved by the members of Tennis Ireland at a General Meeting of the members.

The Board of Directors of Tennis Ireland is elected by the members of the Company (The Clubs) at the Annual General Meeting in accordance with the procedures set out in the Memorandum of Articles.

Safe Recruitment

Tennis Ireland has adopted and consistently applies a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting Volunteers, Officials, Coaches and any other Employees or Contractors who have contact with children.

Details of this can be found in Appendix 4 in our Safeguarding Guidance for Children & Young People in Tennis Manual.

Tennis Ireland expects all affiliated clubs/organisations to adhere to our safe recruitment procedure.

The roles of the committee members, all Sports Leaders and parents/ guardians have been clearly defined.

Reporting Procedures

Tennis Ireland has a National Children's Officer and four Provincial Children's Officers appointed by the Board of Directors and Provincial Branches.

**National Children's Officer: Roger Geraghty – Email: roger.geraghty@tennisireland.ie
Mob: 086 2316478**

**Designated Liaison Officer - Richard Fahey - Email: richard.fahey@tennisireland.ie
Mob: 087-2352198**

**Tennis Ireland Vetting Liaison Officer: Lisa Murphy - Email: lisa.murphy@tennisireland.ie
Phone: 01-8844010**

To contact one of our Provincial Branch Children's Officer please visit the relevant Branch Websites.

The Board of Directors appoints a Child Welfare Committee and one of the Board's Directors is tasked to act as the Designated Liaison Person to liaise with the Statutory Authorities in relation to the reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse. Any such reports are made in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Tennis Ireland procedures.

Procedures have been put in place for dealing with a concern or complaint made to the Statutory Authorities against a Volunteer or Sports Leader.

A Sports Leader who is the subject of an allegation which has been reported to the Statutory Authorities, shall stand aside while the matter is being examined.

He/she will be invited to resume full duties following consultation and advice from statutory services and an internal Tennis Ireland assessment to ensure there is no risk to our members.

Monitoring

All groups in charge of Tennis Ireland Children's activities are required to report to the Board of Directors on a regular basis.

Tennis Ireland encourages regular turnover of committee membership while ensuring continuity and experience.

Effective procedures for responding to and recording accidents/ incidents have been put in place.

Tennis Ireland monitors both the use of the facilities and participation in their organised activities to ensure that any unusual activity (high rate of drop-out, transfers, etc.) is identified, checked out and reported by the Designated Liaison Person to the Board of Directors.

All Clubs (The members) are given notice of all General Meetings of the NGB in accordance with the procedures in that regard as set out in the Memorandum of Articles.

The minutes of all Board meetings are recorded, adopted as correct and safely filed.

Tennis Ireland is committed to ensuring that adequate adult supervision of all activities involving children is provided.

Training

Tennis Ireland is committed to ensuring that Sports Leaders are competent to provide safe and rewarding experiences for those in their care and that Sport Leaders are provided with the appropriate training for their activity. They are required to attend safeguarding workshops as part of their coach education and licensing and ensure their knowledge is updated.

Appropriate training and education opportunities will also be made available to officials, non-coaching staff and parents/guardians as appropriate.

EQUALITY STATEMENT

All children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children, irrespective of ability or disability should be involved in sports activities in an integrated and inclusive way, whenever possible, thus allowing them to participate to their full potential alongside other children

Tennis Ireland recognises the additional vulnerability of some children and the extra difficulties they may face when seeking help. That is –

- The increased likelihood of social isolation
- Having fewer contacts to disclose to than non-disabled children
- A dependency on others for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate care

- An impaired capacity to resist, avoid or understand abuse
- Their speech and language communication needs may make it difficult to tell others what is happening
- Their particular vulnerability to bullying
- Being viewed as a “safe target” for abusers
- Their relative powerlessness physically, psychologically and socially and the opportunities this presents for grooming by potential abusers
- A reluctance to challenge carers who may often be viewed as valiantly coping with the burden of a disabled child and therefore not considered as potential risks
- The denial of the possibility of (particularly sexual) abuse of disabled children
- Disabled children being less likely to be heard or listened to.

To address this vulnerability coaches are encouraged to seek guidance on working with children with a disability from external agencies, parents / guardians and the children themselves.

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

Tennis Ireland recognises that the legal principle that the welfare of the child is paramount means that consideration of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm.

Everyone in our organisation, including children, must be aware that they can never promise to keep secrets. Information, however, of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a ‘need to know’ basis.

APPENDICES

Tennis Ireland is committed to continual monitoring and development of this Safeguarding Policy in the light of changing circumstances.

All Coaches, Volunteers and Sports Leaders will be required to read and sign the appropriate Code of Conduct contained in the Appendices of the Safeguarding Guidance for Children & Young People in Tennis Manual.

The original signed document will be held by Tennis Ireland.

The following Appendices form part of the Safeguarding Policy of Tennis Ireland and they can be downloaded from our Child Protection page on our Website under "Safeguarding Children".

Appendix 1 - Legislation

Appendix 2 - Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement

Appendix 3 - Safeguarding Audit Framework

Appendix 4 - Safe Recruitment

Appendix 5 - Safeguarding Training

Appendix 6 - Roles, Responsibilities & Relationships in Sport

Appendix 7 - Reporting and Protection

Appendix 8 - Disciplinary, Complaints & Appeals of Code Breaches

Appendix 9 - Safeguarding Guidance

Appendix 10 - Codes of Conduct

Appendix 11 - Additional Forms

Appendix 12 - Missing child Policy

Roger Geraghty

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S OFFICER