



Gaelic Games Associations' – Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment & Safeguarding Statement 2023 – Clubs

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Version 1 – 3ú Aibreáin 2023

A Chairde,

As you have been made aware, all units must conduct a Risk Assessment & Child Safeguarding Statement to be submitted by 1st May 2023. These documents are to be completed via [Foireann](#).

All responses must be submitted by **5.00pm 1st May 2023**. From 2nd May 2023, non-compliant clubs will be in breach of legislation & policy and the closure of clubs for underage activity shall be considered by the National Child Safeguarding Committee.

Clubs should be reminded that under [Sanction 5.14](#) of Section 4 of the Code of Behaviour (Dealing with Alleged Breaches of the Code of Behaviour) that;

“The Child Safeguarding Committee shall also have the authority to order that a team, unit, or member, deemed to be safeguarding non-compliant, may not participate in any competitions, games, or activities during their period of non-compliance. This is a temporary measure and is separate to the process involving a Code of Behaviour Hearings Committee and shall be subject to the same appeals procedure as would any sanction imposed under the Code.”

Please note, the onus is on the Club completing the form to ensure that all information supplied through the Risk Assessment & Child Safeguarding Statement is true & accurate. Information supplied may be subject to quality assurance follow up by the Gaelic Games Associations or statutory authorities.

If there are any questions not covered in this handbook or the supporting resources, please contact the relevant association below:

GAA:	Kayleen Iwasaki	safeguardingriskassessment@gaa.ie/kayleen.iwasaki@gaa.ie
Camogie:	TBC	
LGFA:	Aislinn Harkin	aislinn.harkin@lgfa.ie
Rounders:	Áine Nic Lochlainn	childrensofficer.rounders@gaa.ie
Handball:	David Britton	david.britton.handball@gaa.ie

Le meas,

National Child Safeguarding Committee



The Gaelic Games Associations must always ensure that we are vigilant and constantly aware as to the potential for harm that may come to a child when they are attending or participating in our games, training, or other activities. Members and parents should be aware that we have adopted excellent safeguarding policies, codes, guidelines, training, and other practices that address the risk of harm.

We depend however on our coaches, parents, children, and other club personnel to ensure that they are not only aware of these procedures but ensure they are also implemented.

Gaelic Games Associations have agreed that in line with legislation and good practice guidance that each of our units who are deemed to provide a relevant service for children i.e., Clubs, Counties, Independent and Amalgamated Teams, must undertake a Safeguarding Risk Assessment within their respective units. At a minimum, the Risk Assessment must take place at least every two years following which the relevant unit shall then agree and display a Child Safeguarding Statement. The two-year cycle is a legislative requirement in some jurisdictions and has been adopted as a good practice procedure by each of our Associations (GAA, LGFA, Camogie, Rounders and Handball). It is important to note that the risk in this context relates to the risk of harm and not general health and safety risks.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment is an exercise that requires each of our units to examine all aspects of our services, e.g., coaching, training, games, social activities, Scór etc. from a safeguarding perspective, and to establish whether there are practices or features in place that have the potential to put children at risk. As previously highlighted, the risk in this context is the risk of harm and not general health and safety risks.

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Before preparing your Child Safeguarding Statement, you must undertake and complete an assessment of any potential for harm to a child availing of your service, i.e., the 'risk assessment' as outlined above.

The next step is to produce a Child Safeguarding Statement, and the Association issues a template to assist in this process. 'The Statement' is a written statement that specifies the (safeguarding) service being provided by our Associations and our units and the principles and procedures to be observed in order to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child availing of our service is safe from harm. It should set out any potential risk of harm to a child that you have identified in your risk assessment, and the procedures that are in place to reduce the identified risks.



Units may amend the Child Safeguarding Statement template insofar and for example as it relates to facilities, named personnel, additional procedures or services that may be in place but must retain certain sections of the template that outline Association policies, procedures, and legal requirements.

Upon completion, the Child Safeguarding Statement must be agreed by the relevant Club/County Executive or Committee, signed by the Children's Officer, and must be displayed in a prominent place, e.g., in the clubhouse, noticeboard etc.

As the Child Safeguarding Statement included in the Risk Assessment document is intended as a template, please be aware that the specific details of the club/county need to be included in the document (see 'highlighted areas' on the Statement template). It is important for each club/County that adopts this template to include the name and contact details of the relevant person (i.e., Children's Officer) applicable to the club or County.

Relevant policy/procedures links

- [Code of Behaviour](#)
- [Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment & Child Safeguarding Statement](#)
- [Maintaining Good Practice & Behavior](#)
- [Dealing with Alleged Breaches of the Code of Behaviour](#)
- [Recruitment & Selection of Coaches, Supervisors & Other Volunteers](#)
- [Club & County Children's Officer](#)
- [Club & County Designated Liaison Person](#)
- [Organising Club Activities for Underage Players](#)
- [Dealing with Allegations or Concerns of Abuse](#)
- [Tackling Bullying in your club](#)
- [Social Media Guidelines](#)
- [Safeguarding Training Policy \(See appendix 10\)](#)



Frequently Asked Questions

General Information

1. I could not attend the Information webinar on March 25th or April 1st. Is there anywhere I can view this?

Please see webinar recording links below

25th March 2023 – <https://youtu.be/nUXrRFYlcoY>

1st April 2023 - https://youtu.be/6Vm_53AK29g

2. What is a Risk Assessment?

A risk assessment is an exercise we carry out where our Clubs, County Committees, and each of our Associations at national level to examine all aspects of our service from a safeguarding perspective and establish whether there are any practices or features of the service, whether they be games, training, other activities for children, or the recruitment of coaches & mentors, that have the potential to put children at risk. A risk assessment is mandatory under the Children First Act and the Gaelic Games Code of Behaviour (Underage) and must be completed every two years

3. What is a Child Safeguarding Statement?

A Child Safeguarding Statement that outlines the policies and procedures which are in place to manage and minimise the risks that have been identified. The updated 2023 template can be accessed via Foireann. The Child Safeguarding Statement must also be updated every 2 years.

4. How often must we carry out a Risk Assessment & develop a Child Safeguarding Statement?

All units are required to conduct a Risk Assessment & develop a new Child Safeguarding Statement every 2 years. The next Assessment will take place in early 2025.

5. Can we amend the Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement to make it more relevant to our club?

Clubs can, and are encouraged, to amend the Risk Assessment and/or Safeguarding Statement templates where applicable. However, please note that the Risk Assessment procedure relates to the potential risk of abuse & harm to children and not general Health & Safety risks



6. How do we fill in the 'Likelihood of it happening Low/Medium/High' column?

Clubs should discuss the 'Likelihood of it happening Low/Medium/High' column and identify if the likelihood of a risk of harm happening if your Club fails to adequately address the risks identified as High, Medium, or Low.

7. Can I print the Child Safeguarding Statement on A4 size paper?

The Child Safeguarding Statement must be printed in A3 size as not all content will fit on A4.

8. What colour is the Safeguarding Statement this year?

The Club Child Safeguarding Statement is maroon this year. In 2021, it was blue. In 2019, it was yellow/orange. All clubs must complete the maroon template.

9. Where can I access Risk Assessment template & Child Safeguarding Statement as Gaeilge?

Please contact safeguardingriskassessment@gaa.ie for templates as Gaeilge

Completing the Risk Assessment & Safeguarding Statement

10. How do I log into Foireann?

Go to foireann.ie and login using your Foireann account details.

If you do not have a Foireann account set up already, click 'New user? Register', fill in the short form and you will receive an email asking you to verify your account.

11. How do I get access assigned to me as club childrens officer?

Please read this article for info on assigning/adding administrator access to another member in your club: <https://gmssupport.zendesk.com/hc/en-gb/articles/360018414559-Assigning-Adding-Administrator-Access-to-another-Member-in-your-Club>

12. Should a County or Club Children's Officer set up a separate profile on Foireann?

No, they should not be setting up another account with their official email addresses. There is no extra protection in using an official email address vs a personal email address. They should use their own account.



13. Can I use personal email addresses rather than official Childrens Officer email address?

Foireann highly recommend that Club and County Officers use their personal email addresses in their profile and not their official email addresses. This means that when they step down, it is as simple as removing the club admin and vetting admin permissions from their account. The club's children's officer email is linked to the club, and this is the **only email** which will receive any notifications regarding vetting. The person's email will **never** receive any notifications regarding vetting unless it is to do with the member's own vetting application.

14. How do I change my email on Foireann?

It can be done via their profile, under the email address field, there is a 'change' button, and they can change the email address linked to the account and save the change by entering their current password. The member will then get an email to the new email account to verify the email before they can re-gain access to Foireann. In our opinion, we do not recommend that County Children Officers or Club Children Officers use their official email addresses and if they were to step away from the role, the handover process becomes a lot more complicated.

15. If a Club Children's officer is also the County Children's Officer and they have one profile is there anything to prevent them being given access as Club and County?

As long as they have club admin and vetting admin for the club and club admin access for the County, they should be able to view the relevant information on behalf of the club and County. It is important that all County Children's Officers contact their Association to request access.

16. Family memberships for Club Children's Officer who are assigned Vetting Admins?

If the Children's Officer is linked to a family, the other family members cannot access this information unless they physically sign into the Children's officer's Foireann account with their username and password. The way to prevent this is to advise members not to share Foireann accounts. Everyone over the age of eighteen, should have their own Foireann account and login. No one should be sharing usernames and passwords on Foireann, and that includes partners. Like anything, if a partner knows your login details to your online banking, they can login as you. There is no extra protection in using an official email address vs a personal email address.



17. If a Club Children’s Officer steps down from their role?

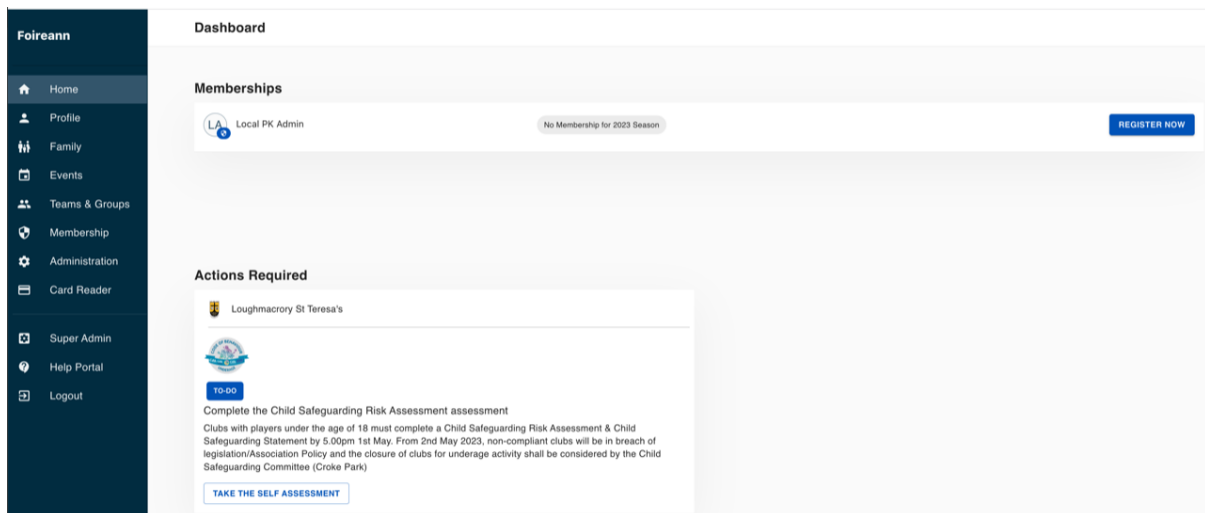
The only action required would be for Club admin to remove their club admin and vetting admin permissions.

18. If a County Children’s Officer steps down from their role?

The only action required would be to contact the relevant Association to remove their club admin permission.

19. Where can I access the Risk Assessment/Safeguarding Statement Template?

The Risk Assessment will be available on the Dashboard when the user logs into Foireann. They will need to be an Admin, Secretary or Children's Officer of a Club or County in Ireland or Britain.



20. How do I complete the Risk Assessment?

Upon clicking "TAKE THE SELF ASSESSMENT", the user will be presented with a form as below. Complete the steps as outlined

Members will be able to save their progress and complete the Risk Assessment in multiple sittings.

21. Who completes the Risk Assessment & signs off on the Child Safeguarding Statement?

The Risk Assessment must be discussed and adopted at a Club Executive Committee Meeting and must be signed by both the Club Chairperson & Club Children’s Officer. Once completed, Clubs are required



to develop a Child Safeguarding Statement to be put on prominent display (e.g., on Club social media, website, clubhouse etc.) and must be signed by the Club Children's Officer

22. There are 3 sections in my club – GAA, Camogie & LGFA. How many Risk Assessment/Child Safeguarding Statements must we produce?

Where a club is registered as a 'One Club Model' on Foireann, the club must complete one risk assessment and develop one Child Safeguarding Statement

Where a Club is not registered on Foireann as a One Club and has more than one committee registered on Foireann separately, then each Committee (section) must complete their own risk assessment and develop a Child Safeguarding statement.

23. What about Independent teams?

Independent, combined, and amalgamated teams or district teams are not mandated to complete the Risk Assessment or Safeguarding Statement as they should be covered by their Adult club. Independent, combined and amalgamated/district teams can choose to complete the County Risk Assessment & County Statement, or agree their own statement – it is not to be completed on Foireann. Independent, combined and amalgamated/district teams will not be noted as non-compliant if they do not complete this process, as they should be covered by their Adult club.

24. Our club is in the process of setting up a One Club Policy. Can we submit our Risk Assessment & Child Safeguarding Statements together?

The policy adopted should reflect the current structure of the Club Executive i.e., if there are currently two Club Executives, two Risk Assessments should be conducted.

25. Our Camogie club is a sub-committee of the GAA executive committee – are we required to do our own Risk Assessment & Safeguarding Statement?

No, as the Camogie section does not have its own independent structure its part of the one Club

26. Our club is made up of 3 parishes who share the pitches of 3 local clubs. Do we need a separate Risk Assessment & Safeguarding Statement for each pitch?

No, the Child Safeguarding Statement reflects the outcome of the Risk Assessment conducted in each club - not each pitch - as adopted by each Club Executive.



27. Our club has a girls and a boys section. Are two Risk Assessment & Safeguarding Statements required?

If there are two Club Executives, two Risk Assessments & Safeguarding Statements are required. If there is only one Club Executive, only one Risk Assessment & Safeguarding Statement is required.

28. Our club has no underage teams, but we have one underage player who plays with the Senior Team. Are we required to complete this process?

Yes. Clubs who have any players under the age of 18 must complete this process.

Submitting the Risk Assessment & Statement

29. I am the Club Children's Officer, but I do not have access to Foireann. How do I submit the form?

All Club Children's Officers should have access to Foireann, however if you are having difficulties – the Club Secretary may submit the documentation on your behalf. The Statement **must** be signed by the Children's Officer

30. Does the Risk Assessment & Child Safeguarding Statement need to be signed by relevant parties before it's submitted?

For the purposes of this procedure, typed signatures will suffice where signatures cannot be obtained but it must be adopted at a meeting of the Club Executive. The Risk Assessment must be signed by the Club chairperson and by the Children's Officer while the Children's Officer signs & dates the Statement.

31. Where do Children's Officers get an official email address?

Club Children's Officer can avail of the official email address whereby their club chairperson or secretary can email mail.support@gaa.ie using their official GAA email address. For LGFA please email info@lgfa.ie using a LGFA email address. The Children's Officer email address will then be created, and a temporary password issued which can be passed onto the club children's officer.

32. How do I download a copy of our club Risk Assessment and Statement?

Upon completing all questions, you will be able to generate your reports and download them. Any previously completed reports will be available on the Dashboard via the "DOWNLOAD" button



Foireann

- Home
- Profile
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- Events
- Teams & Groups
- Membership
- Administration
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- Help Portal
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Dashboard

Memberships

Local PK Admin No Membership for 2023 Season REGISTER NOW

Actions Required

Loughmacrory St Teresa's

DONE

Complete the Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment assessment

Clubs with players under the age of 18 must complete a Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment & Child Safeguarding Statement by 5.00pm 1st May. From 2nd May 2023, non-compliant clubs will be in breach of legislation/Association Policy and the closure of clubs for underage activity shall be considered by the Child Safeguarding Committee (Croke Park)

DOWNLOAD RE-TAKE ASSESSMENT

Risk Assessment Summary 1 21/3/2023 - 2:29 PM

Safeguarding Statement 1 21/3/2023 - 2:29 PM

Policy/Procedures

33. My club use the title Child Welfare Officer and not Children's Officer. Is this ok?

No. We do not have a role or an Officer titled Child Welfare Officer. Your Club may have been well meaning in using it, but it could send the wrong signals as the word 'welfare' has a wider meaning not to mention the confusion it could cause with player welfare. We also do not use the title 'Youth Officer.'

34. Where can I find the most up to date Child Safeguarding Policy?

The most up to date policy & guidance documents can be found here: <https://www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-safeguarding-and-protection/code-of-behaviour> The current Code of Behaviour (Underage) is the Code that is referred to throughout the Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding process.

35. What is a Designated Liaison Person?

The club Designated Liaison person is responsible for ensuring the reporting of allegations or concerns of abuse to Tusla (ROI) or Gateway Services Team at the Health and Social Care Trusts (NI) and/or An Garda Siochana/Police Service of Northern Ireland, having established reasonable grounds for concern. Should a Club or County Committee fail to appoint a DLP, the role automatically falls to the Chairperson of the Club or County Committee. More information on DLP's can be found [here](#)



36. Who is responsible to ensure a Code of Behaviour Hearings Committee is established?

It is the responsibility of the Club Executive Committee to ensure a Code of Behaviour Hearings Committee is in place. This link may be of assistance to Clubs when establishing their Code of Behaviour (Underage) Hearings Committee:

<https://www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/xcf15mjugcljoqujvp4t.pdf>

37. What is a Mandated Person?

A Mandated Person has a legal obligation to report harm of children as per legislation. There are 4 mandated persons employed for the purpose of performing the child welfare & protection functions within each of our Associations in accordance with their safeguarding employment roles:

GAA/Rounders: Michelle Harte - mandatedperson@gaa.ie.

LGFA: Paula Prunty - mandatedperson@lgfa.ie

Camogie: Sinead McNulty – mandatedperson@camogie.ie

Handball: David Britton – mandatedperson.handball@gaa.ie

As per the Children First Act and the requirements of our Child Safeguarding Statement, each Club is required to maintain a list of members 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 Club (i.e., teachers, Gardaí etc.) A list of roles a Mandated person may hold can be accessed [here](#)

38. Do clubs appoint a mandated person within the club?

No, mandated persons have already been appointed at national level in accordance with the Children First Act – see relevant section on Safeguarding Statement template.

39. Are clubs obligated to keep a list of people in the club who are by their profession mandated persons?

Yes, each club must retain a list of members who, if known, are mandated persons in accordance with the Act. This list should be retained by the Club Children's Officer as the contact person for the Child Safeguarding Statement. A list of roles a Mandated person may hold can be accessed [here](#)



Vetting, Safeguarding and Coaching related queries

40. Can I get a record of Vetting records for my County/Club?

The club childrens officer can now export a vetting list on Foireann 2020-2023 under 'membership' section. Go to the filter option and select yes for " has completed vetting". Then Click on bulk actions and export filtered members. This will pull a list for you of all those vetted, and you can see their expiry date.

41. How often is Re-Vetting required?

Garda Vetting is required to be updated every three years

42. When volunteers apply for Vetting, does it matter if people apply through LGFA or the GAA?

No, all completed vetting applications specific to Gaelic Games are recognised across all Gaelic Games Associations

43. Can I get a record of Safeguarding Training records for my County/Club?

The club childrens officer will shortly be in a position to export a safeguarding list on Foireann 2020-2023 under 'membership' section. Go to the filter option and select yes for " has completed safeguarding". Then Click on bulk actions and export filtered members. This will pull a list for you of all those who completed safeguarding, and you can see their expiry date.

44. Are coaches who are waiting to complete the face to face/practical element of Fundamentals training considered to have a coaching qualification?

No, coaches who have yet to complete the practical element of a Coaching Course have not fully completed their course and are therefore considered not to have obtained the qualification.

45. There are coaching assistants in our club who are waiting to complete Introduction to Coaching Gaelic Games courses when they become available. Can these assistants assist before their course takes place?

No, Coaches who have not completed a minimum of a Foundation level course cannot assist in coaching as they are not qualified.



46. What is the minimum course requirement to become a coach?

At minimum, Coaches must complete the **Introduction to Coaching Gaelic Games** level course. Camogie only accept Hurling foundation or the new Introduction to Gaelic Games certs.