



Passage West GAA Club  
Child Protection Policy  
2021 Season



## **INTRODUCTION**

Children are the most important members in our club. We at Passage West GAA Club aim to promote the participation of children in our club by creating a culture of safety and fun.

Children have the right to be safe. All coaches should ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedent over all other considerations. All club members, through their actions should reflect the principles and guidelines contained in the '[GAA Code of Behaviour](#)' and the '[Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland.](#)' We promote the aims and ideals of our Association, adhere to its policy and nurture our Gaelic culture.

This document sets out the Child Protection Policy of Passage West GAA Club. It follows the guidance set out in the GAA Underage Code of Behaviour and GAA Guidelines on Dealing With Alleged Breaches of the Code of Best Practise in Youth Sports. This policy applies to all those involved in Passage West GAA Club as coaches, administrators, officials, volunteer drivers, parents/guardians and children. It also sets out procedures for Coaches relating to communications with underage players, dealing with concerns relating to children's welfare.

## **CHILD PROTECTION COMMITMENTS**

To guarantee child safety and encourage positive participation in club activities, Passage West GAA will ensure that Juvenile Coaches:

- are Garda vetted
- complete Irish Sports Council approved Child Protection Training
- complete an annual Child Protection / Code of Behaviour refresher course and sign the Club Juvenile Coaches Code of Conduct annually
- complete a minimum of one coach education qualification
- maintain a child centred approach and apply the GAA Code of Behaviour at all times when they are working with children on behalf of the Club.

### **The Club will ensure that Parents and Guardians:**

- are made aware of and have access to the GAA Code of Behaviour and the Passage West Child Protection Policy
- And are encouraged to implement the GAA and Club's Code of Behaviour

### **The club will ensure that Children**

- are at all times encouraged to abide by the principles set out in the Codes of Behaviour



### **The club will ensure that:**

- safe recruiting procedures for coaches/volunteers are implemented
- breaches of the Code of Behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with the [GAA Guidelines on Dealing With Alleged Breaches of the Code of Behaviour Procedures](#)

### **The Club has the right to:**

- expect coaches and mentors to comply with its Code of Behaviour
- expect all children to maintain standards of reasonable behaviour
- take appropriate action if members breach the Code Of Behaviour or Child Protection Policy
- expect all coaches and mentors to undertake appropriate training when advised to
- acquire pre-employment checks on all coaches
- maintain records on individuals in line with advice from Data Protection Agency, i.e. only hold records on individuals that they have justifiable reason for holding, ensuring confidentiality at all times
- expect leaders to adhere to an [Cumann Lúthchleas Gael's Our Games Our Code-Code of Best Practice for Youth Sport](#) and to the [Give Respect-Get Respect initiative](#)
- expect leaders to adhere to an [Cumann Lúthchleas Gael's Guidelines For Dealing With Allegations Of Abuse.](#)

## **PROMOTION OF SAFE WORKING AND PLAYING PRACTICES**

### **The Club will**

- promote a healthy lifestyle by practice and example
- promote and support positive approaches to mental health protection
- ensure proper supervision of children within the club with adequate numerical and gender coach : child ratio
- ensure safe use and supervision of recommended equipment



- provide a clearly defined, fenced play area that is safe from vehicular traffic
- maintain public liability insurance covering all members of the club
- ensure that only children of similar age will train/play together (i.e. no children training/competing with children two or more age groups older than their own age group);
- provide first aid assistance and ensure that first aid equipment is available in case of accident, with accident/incident books documented where necessary
- ensure that all accidents are reported to parents/guardians
- ensure that transport provided and supervised by volunteers in possession of driving licences and roadworthy vehicles only (prior parental permission is essential as per registration form)
- provide ongoing training and support in issues relating to child protection for coaches and mentors and club officers
- facilitate open discussion on member protection issues
- provide support to members who report allegations of abuse
- ensure that allegations relating to child protection are treated confidentially
- ensure that coaches are made aware of any special needs (disability) relating to a child and are supported to respond accordingly
- maintain a coaching register
- ensure that parents/guardians are kept informed and have access to the club's policy guidelines for away trips/overnight stays and use of photography/videos.

## **DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON AND CHILDREN'S OFFICER**

Passage West GAA Club has appointed a Children's Officer and a Designated Liaison Person to deal with issues relating to children's welfare which may come to the club's attention.

## **DESIGNATED PERSON FOR DEALING WITH ISSUES RELATING TO CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

The club has appointed a Designated Liaison Person who will deal with concerns or allegations relating to child abuse or neglect. Any such concerns can be brought to the attention of the Designated Liaison Person whose role it is to refer these onto the necessary authorities. However, any individual has the right to contact Tusla or the Gardaí directly if they have concern about a child's welfare.



## CLUB CHILDREN'S OFFICER

The Children's Officer is the link between youth mentors, members and management. The Children's Officer may be assisted by other members of the Juvenile or Senior Committee. The Children's Officer's function is to engender a child centred club ethos, promote ethics and good practice, influence club policy, and report to the management committee and the Designated Person (see below). You should contact the Children's Officer if you have a concern relating to a breach in the underage Code of Behaviour.

Contact Details for the Designated Liaison Person and for the Children's Officer are on the last page of this document.

## GUIDELINES

The following section sets out basic procedures relating to child welfare concerns, communications and dealing with accidents and injuries. Further detail is available in the GAA Code of Behaviour, [GAA Guidelines on Dealing With Alleged Breaches of the Code of Behaviour Procedures](#) and the [Club Safeguarding Statement](#)

### A) Guidelines For Reporting Concerns Relating To Child Welfare or Breaches In The Code Of Behaviour

All Coaches, the Children's Officer and Committee members should be familiar with the [GAA Code of Practise in Youth Sport](#) and the [GAA Underage Code of Behaviour](#). In the event of identifying a concern in relation to child welfare/protection, the following procedure should be followed:

- concerns relating to Child Abuse or Child Neglect should be reported to the Designated Liaison Officer or directly to the Gardaí or Tusla.
- breaches of the Code of Behaviour identified by any coaches should be brought to the attention of the Children's Officer. In the event that the Children's Officer is unavailable, you can contact the Juvenile Club Chairman or Senior Club Chairman as soon as possible after the incident has occurred, or a concern is identified.
- where a breach of the Code of Behaviour is brought to the attention of any coach by a parent, child, referee or any other club member or supporter, the coach should advise the concerned person to contact the Children's Officer, or in their absence, the Juvenile Club Chairman or Senior Club Chairman, and provide the relevant contact details.
- all complaints/allegations should be dealt with in absolute confidence by Coaches and Officers of the Club.

Passage West GAA has established a sub-committee of made up of representatives of the Senior and Juvenile Committees who will assist the Children's Officer to determine how allegations relating to breaches in the Code of Behaviour will be dealt with. All incidents referred to the Children's Officer will be brought to the attention of this sub-committee in the first instance. The sub-committee will determine how the complaint is to be dealt with, in accordance with the [GAA Guidelines on Dealing With Alleged Breaches of the Code of](#)



**Behaviour Procedures.** The club has also appointed a Club Hearings Committee who may be assigned the task of investigating allegations relating to breaches in the Code of Behaviour in accordance with the Guidelines.

- Allegations in relation to minor breaches of the Code of Behaviour will normally be dealt with by the Children's Officer working with the concerned parties.
- Allegations relating to more serious breaches in the Code of Behaviour will normally be referred to the Club Hearings Committee who will be involved in investigating allegations and determining what action is required. The Club Hearings Committee is a three member committee nominated by the Senior Committee on an annual basis.
- Allegations relating to very serious breaches in the Code of Behaviour will be referred to a County Hearings Committee.

## **B) Guidelines For Communicating With Underage Players.**

Passage West GAA Club requires that when we pass on information regarding games, training or other activities for our underage players that we do so via group texts and that these group texts are only sent to parents or guardians of underage players. Coaches and /or the Club Rúnaí should obtain these relevant contact numbers when an underage player is being registered.

## **Relevant Contact Details 2021 Season**

Children's Officer – Laura O'Caoimh (087) 767 5288

Designated Liaison Officer – Ian Lester (086) 879 5011 Juvenile

Chairman Juvenile Committee – John O'Connor (086) 834 0885

Chairman Senior Committee - Eoin Barry (086) 850 3410

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