



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to outline the approach taken by St. Paul's Basketball Club with regards to safeguarding children. Children are defined as those who are under 18 years of age.

POLICY STATEMENT

St. Paul's Basketball Club recognizes that it has a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring that our safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance, complies with best practice and is in line with the policies adopted by Basketball Ireland. It is paramount that all children participating in sport must be able to do so in a safe environment and that all coaches and volunteers must ensure that they give the highest standard of care and act in accordance with the club's safeguarding policy.

The club is committed to ensuring that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children and vulnerable adults regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual identify have a positive and enjoyable experience in a safe environment
- All children have the right to be protected from abuse whilst participating in basketball or outside of the activity
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately
- All coaches and volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns of abuse to the club's Child Welfare Officer
- All coaches and volunteers attend suitable training and understand that it is not their role to decide if abuse has occurred, but to report any concerns immediately

In addition, and as part of our safeguarding policy commitment, St. Paul's Basketball Club will also:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and well-being of children
- Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and are provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognize, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents and /or concerns of abuse and provide support to the individual(s) who raise or disclose the concern
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- Prevent the recruitment and/or deployment of unsuitable individuals
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation

The policy and any supporting procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in St. Paul's Basketball Club. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in exclusion from the club.

COACHES AND TRAINING

All adults who volunteer to coach children within the club will be subject to a number of checks to ensure their suitability to work with children.

All coaches within St. Paul's Basketball Club will be required to:

- Be garda-vetted
- Hold at least a intro to coaching certificate

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

St. Paul's Basketball Club fully supports the appropriate use of photography and video as a means of recording basketball-related activities. However, we ask our club and members to be vigilant and any concerns of inappropriate images being taken should be reported to the club's Child Welfare Officer immediately.

During Training:

Before any of our coaches can use photographic or video equipment as a coaching aid, all parents and players of those to be involved must have:

- Given their consent
- Been made aware that it is being used as part of the coaching programme
- Been informed of how the footage will be used and stored
- All others wishing to take photographs and/or videos during training must have the permission of St. Paul's Basketball Club.

During Matches:

For home matches, any photographs and/or videos can only be taken by individuals who have been given permission to do so by St. Paul's Basketball Club. On match days, permission will be granted by the coach of the team that the request to be photographed or videoed is made to providing:

- All members of that team and their parents have given their consent
- The away team have also given their permission

For away matches, anyone wishing to photograph and /or video the games must have

- The permission of both teams

Note: Photographs and videos must never be taken in changing rooms.

BULLYING

All bullying is classed as a form of abuse and St. Paul's Basketball Club are committed to helping to eliminate it from the sport of basketball.

St. Paul's Basketball Club will:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns
- Help the victim to speak out and make all children aware of the importance to tell the person in charge or someone in authority
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe (speak with the victim and the bully separately)
- Reassure the victim that they can be trusted and will help them, although we will not promise not to tell anyone else

- Keep records of what is said
- Ensure any concerns are reported to the club's Child Welfare Officer

If there is an allegation of bullying against a coach, a volunteer or another club member, then this should be reported to the club's Child Welfare Officer.

Note: Many 'low level' incidents of bullying are usually capable of being dealt with at the time by coaches. However, if the bullying is severe (e.g. a serious assault) or if it persists despite efforts to deal with it, these incidents should be referred to the club's Child Welfare Officer.

RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS, ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS

It is the responsibility of the club's Child Welfare Officer to investigate an incident, allegation or concern that is brought to their attention as contravening the club's safeguarding policy.

St. Paul's Basketball Club must re-emphasise that:

- It is not the responsibility of any coach, volunteer or club member with the club to decide whether or not any form of abuse has taken place
- The responsibility of any coach, volunteer or club member is to act on any incident, allegation or concern by reporting it to the club's Child Welfare Officer
- The club will fully support and protect anyone, who, in good faith reports their concern that a colleague is, or maybe abusing a child.

CONFIDENTIALITY

St. Paul's Basketball Club will make every effort of ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Any information will be handled and disseminated on a 'need to know' basis only.

Note: Where there are concerns that a child is, or maybe, at risk of significant harm, the prevailing consideration is to safeguard the child and it may be appropriate to override confidentiality in such situations.

Allegations of previous (historical abuse)

Allegations of abuse may be made sometime after the event i.e. historical abuse.

Where such an allegation is made, the club (via the Club Welfare Officer) will report the matter to Tusla and/or the Gardai. This is because other children, either within or outside of the club may be at risk from this person.

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Club's Child Welfare Officer and amended in order to comply with any changes in our ways of working and /or legislation

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

All coaches and volunteers should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behavior in order to promote children's welfare and reduce the likelihood of any allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within the club.

- Always working in an open environment
- Treating all children with equal concern and with respect and dignity
- Always putting the welfare of each child first
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process
- Making activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play. Activities should be age appropriate
- Ensuring that if any form of manual or physical support is required, it is provided openly
- Consulting with children and their parents. Involving parents and carers wherever possible
- Ensuring that appropriate qualifications and training are provided to all those working with children
- Being an excellent role model
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children including those with additional needs – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- Ensuring that up to date contact details are available and that details of adults responsible for the collection of children are recorded and adhered to
- Keeping written records of any injuries that occur and details of any treatment given

Practices to be avoided:

The following should be avoided. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the club or the child's parents.

- Avoid spending time alone with children away from others
- Avoid taking or dropping off a child at an event or activity
- Avoid taking photographs of children unless permission has been given by their parent or carer
- Practices never to be sanctioned:
 - Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
 - Sharing a toilet or changing facility with a child
 - Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching
 - Allowing children to use inappropriate language
 - Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
 - Reducing a child to tears as a form of control
 - Failing to act upon and record any allegations made by a child
 - Doing things of a personal nature for a child that they can do for themselves
 - Inviting children to 'become friends' on social networking sites