

Gorey Tennis Club - Safeguarding Policy June 2023

This policy applies to all those involved in Gorey Tennis Club including, but not limited to, Coaches, Junior Tennis Assistants, Officials, Volunteers, Members, Parents and Young People.

Safeguarding Policy Statement

Gorey Tennis Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its members. Every individual in the organisation should at all times show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of Gorey Tennis Club and the guidelines contained in the Club's 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 setting 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 and Gorey Tennis Club wish to have in place. This includes:

- 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.
- 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

Gorey Tennis Club supports the view that all children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. In this context we undertake 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 defined as a way of thinking not just a way of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the gamesmanship, elimination of cheating, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialism and corruption'.

In order to promote the best practice in children's sport, Gorey Tennis Club has adopted and implemented the guidelines as set out in Section 2.7 of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport as follows:

<https://www.sportireland.ie/news/archive-code-of-ethics-and-good-practice-for-childrens-sport>

In order to ensure best practice throughout the club, the Committee disseminates its code of conducts, including the disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures in operation within the club to all its members. Gorey Tennis Club Code of Conduct is posted prominently on the Organisation's Website and around their premises. We require all coaches with a Tennis Ireland coaching award to have signed our Code of Conduct.

Safe Recruitment

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

Reporting Procedures

The Designated Liaison Person for Gorey Tennis Club is Orla Murray and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person is Leona Byrne. Gorey Tennis Club has two Children's Officers: Leona Byrne and Ed Whelan.

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

Monitoring

All groups in charge of Gorey Tennis Club's children's activities are required to report to the committee on a regular basis. Gorey Tennis Club encourages regular turnover of committee membership while ensuring continuity and experience.

Training

Gorey Tennis Club is committed to ensuring that Coaches and Junior Tennis Assistants are competent to provide safe and rewarding experiences for those in their care and 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.

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. (Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport 2000)

<https://www.sportireland.ie/news/participation>

<https://www.sportireland.ie/news/archive-code-of-ethics-and-good-practice-for-childrens-sport>

Gorey Tennis Club recognises the additional vulnerability of some children and the extra difficulties they may face when seeking help, i.e.

- The increased likelihood of social isolation.
- 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.
- 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 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.

Gorey Tennis Club is committed to continual monitoring and development of this Safeguarding Policy in the light of changing circumstances. All Coaches, Junior Tennis Assistants and Volunteers will be required to read and sign the appropriate Code of Conduct contained in the Child Protection Policies of Gorey Tennis Club.

Signed: 

Date: 1st June 2023

Chairperson Gorey Tennis Club