



Child Protection Policy

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

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

Sligo Tennis Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of its members. Every individual in the club 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 the club and the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport.

"Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence; they must be kept safe from harm, and they must be given proper care by those looking after them "

(Article 19; UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

All children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. Ireland has adopted and are committed to the European Code of Sports Ethics, which defines fair play as:

"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."

(European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe, 1993)

The Childcare Act 1991 (ROI) is based on a clear and consistent set of principles designed with the common aim of promoting the welfare of children.

Children have the right to be safe. All coaches should ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedence over all other considerations.

Standards set by Sligo Tennis Club will be achieved through ensuring the Club:

- Adopt and implement the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport as an integral part of its policy on children in the club.
- Have its constitution approved and adopted by club members at an AGM or EGM
- Permit all members over 16 years of age to vote, where possible, in the running of their junior section. One parent / guardian should have one vote for all their children under 16 years of age, where relevant.
- Ensure that the Club Management Committee is elected or endorsed by registered club members at each AGM.
- Adopt and consistently apply a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting Sports Leaders.
- Clearly define the role of the committee members, all Sports Leaders and parents/guardians.
- Appoint/ Reappoint at least one Children's Officer at the AGM as outlined in the Code of Ethics and good Practice for Children's Sport. (In the event that a club caters for both boys and girls, one Children's Officer of each gender should ideally be appointed).
- Appoint a Designated Person (Micheal O Brian) to liaise with the Statutory Authorities in relation to the reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse. Any such reports should be made according to the procedures outlined in this Code/ Children First/ Our Duty to Care.
- Ensure best practice throughout the club by disseminating its codes of conduct, including the disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures in operation within the club to all its members. The club's Codes of Conduct should also be posted in all facilities used by the club.
- Have in place procedures for dealing with a concern or complaint made to the Statutory Authorities against a Committee Member or Sports Leader. Regulations should stipulate that a Sports Leader who is the subject of an allegation that has been reported to the Statutory Authorities, should stand aside while the matter is being examined. He/she should be invited to resume full duties immediately if he/she is vindicated.
- Ensure that relevant Sports Leaders report to the Club Management Committee on a regular basis.
- Encourage regular turnover of committee membership while ensuring continuity and experience.
- Develop effective procedures for responding to and recording accidents/ incidents.
- Ensure that any unusual activity (high rate of drop-out, transfers, etc.) is checked out and reported by the Designated Person to their Governing Body.
- Ensure that all club members are given adequate notice of AGMs and other meetings.
- Ensure that all minutes of all meetings (AGMs /EGMs /Committees) are recorded and safely filed.

Copies of the full policy and detailed guidelines on recruitment, reporting, recording accidents/incidents, bullying, away trips and use of photography are available from the designated person or any club official.

CHILDREN'S OFFICERS

The Children's Officers within Sligo Tennis Club are:

Name	Address	Telephone
1. Cathryn Bogan	Gortarowey, Drumcliffe, Co. Sligo	087 7540306
2. Stephen Cunningham	6 Keenaghan Crescent Ballymote Co. Sligo	087 2213857

Photographs of the Children's Officers should, if possible, be displayed on the club's notice board and website.

Names of Children's Officers shall be made known to young members, coaches and parents alike as the Designated Persons to whom concerns will be addressed. If the concern is about the Children's Officer please report to Club president.

The club has procedures in place for dealing with any concern or allegation of abuse either within the club or externally, but the first point of contact for a child, parent/guardian or coach should be the Children's Officer, although any individual has the right to contact the Health Service Executive or the Gardaí directly if they have a concern about a child's safety.

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).

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

- Dependency due to disability may make some children feel powerless
- On occasions possible limited ability to communicate their feelings
- A negative self-image can make children vulnerable to manipulation by others

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

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

We in Sligo Tennis Club recognise 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. However, information of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a 'need to know' basis.

The following Appendices form part of the Child Protection Policy of Sligo Tennis Club

- Appendix 1 Introduction to the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport**
- Appendix 2 Addition to club constitution regarding child protection**
- Appendix 3 Code of Conduct for coaches/sports leaders**
- Appendix 4 Code of Conduct for Junior Members**
- Appendix 5 Code of Conduct for Parents/Guardians**
- Appendix 6 Guidelines for reporting accidents**
- Appendix 7 Positive discipline**
- Appendix 8 Bullying**
- Appendix 9 Recruitment Procedures**
- Appendix 10 Roles and Responsibilities of Sports Leaders, Elected Officials and Other Officials**
- Appendix 11**