

Athletics Ireland Child Safeguarding Statement

Section 1 Club information

Dundalk St Gerard's Athletic Club is affiliated to Athletics Ireland and provides various sporting activities and opportunities for children and young people through participation in clubs, regional/provincial events and through to our national teams. Organised events include the provision of athletic championships and games that in some instances require attendance at weekend events and overnight trips for clubs and their members. Athletics Ireland is a voluntary led organisation that provides its members with opportunities to participate in the sport of Track and Field Athletics across all age grades from Juvenile (u9 to u16), Youth (u18), Junior (u20), Senior (u35) and Master (35+).

- Club Name and Address: **Dundalk St Gerards AC**, An Grianan, Park Avenue, Dundalk, Co. Louth, A91 FA02.
- Sport: ***Track and Field Athletics, Cross Country, Road Running and Race Walking.***
- Location (National/Local level): ***Dundalk, County Louth.***
- Number of members in your club: **200**
- Activities: ***Track and Field, Cross Country, Road Running and Race Walking.***

Section 2 - Principles to safeguard children from harm

Athletics Ireland is committed to safeguarding children and by working under the guidance of our Safeguarding Policies our staff, both volunteers and employed, working with our young people, throughout the organisation, seek to create a safe environment for young people to grow and develop within sport. The following set of principles should be adhered to:

- **Importance of childhood** - The importance of childhood should be understood and valued by everyone involved in sport.
- **Needs of the child** - All children's sport experiences should be guided by what is best for children. This means that adults should have a basic understanding of the emotional, physical and personal needs of young people.
- **Integrity in relationships** - Adults interacting with children in sport are in a position of trust and influence. They should always ensure that children are treated with integrity and respect, and the self-esteem of young people is enhanced.
- **Fair Play** - All children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. The principles of fair play should always be emphasised, and organisers should give clear guidelines regarding acceptable standards of behaviour.
- **Quality atmosphere & ethos** - Children's sport should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere.
- **Competition** - Competition is an essential element of sport and should be encouraged in an age appropriate manner. A child centred ethos will help to ensure that competition and specialisation are kept in their appropriate place.
- **Equality** - All children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, gender, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion.

Section 3 - Risk Assessment Document for *Dundalk St. Gerard's AC*

This risk assessment considers the potential for harm to come to children whilst they are in *Dundalk St. Gerard's* AC care. This risk assessment precedes the Child Safeguarding Statement (Section 11 (1b) Children First Act 2015) which is developed following this risk assessment process. In accordance with the requirements of *Section 11 (1) of the Children First Act 2015 the risk is of abuse and not general health and safety risk (covered under a separate H&S policy and risk assessment).*

Section 11 (1) of the Children First Act 2015 states that where a person proposes to operate as a provider of a relevant service, he or she shall, within 3 months from the date on which he or she commences as such a provider —

(a) *Undertake an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of the service (in this section referred to as a “risk”).*

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/Region/National	Further action required ...
CLUB & COACHING PRACTICES				
Lack of coaching qualification	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach education policy Recruitment policy 	Club Committee. Regional Training providers. Governing body to provide adequate training.	<i>All new coaches to be properly qualified to appropriate standard</i>
Supervision issues	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervision policy Coach education policy 	A minimum of 2 vetted club adults at each training session.	<i>Ongoing review</i>
Unauthorised photography & recording activities	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photography and Use of Images policy 	All club members, parents and spectators.	<i>Ongoing review</i>
Behavioural Issues	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code of Conduct Safeguarding Level 1 (min) Complaints & Disciplinary policy 	Club committee. Supervising coaches. Athlete and Parents/Guardians.	<i>Ongoing review</i>

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/Region/National	Further action required ...
Lack of gender balance amongst coaches	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach education policy Supervision policy 	Club committee and supervising coaches.	<i>Ongoing review</i>
No guidance for travelling and away trips	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel/Away trip policy Child Safeguarding Training 	Committee to approve travel. Appropriate numbers of vetted club adults to supervise.	<i>Ongoing review</i>
Lack of adherence with misc procedures in Safeguarding policy (i.e. mobile, photography, transport)	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding policy Complaints & disciplinary policy 	Club committee and supervising coaches.	<i>Ongoing review</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 		
COMPLAINTS & DISCIPLINE				
Lack of awareness of a Complaints & Disciplinary policy	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy Communications procedure 	Club	<i>Immediate action needed Greater communication required</i>
Difficulty in raising an issue by child & or parent Reason: Covered above	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy Communications procedure 	Club committee	<i>Review the communication/responsibilities of the procedure/policy as required</i>
Complaints not being dealt with seriously	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy 	Club Committee. Children's officer/DLP	<i>Ongoing review</i>
REPORTING PROCEDURES				
Lack of knowledge of organisational and statutory reporting procedures	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting procedures/policy Coach education policy 	NGB MP DLP	<i>Make policies and procedures available Include in Safeguarding Training (L1) Include in Coach Education Training</i>

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/Region/National	Further action required ...
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code of Conduct /Behaviour 		
No Mandated Person appointed	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting procedures/policy 	NGB	<i>Publicise identity of Mandated Person</i> <i>Train Mandated Person in their role</i>
No DLP Appointed	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting procedures/policy 	NGB Club	<i>Train all DLPs</i> <i>Publicise identity of DLPs</i>
Concerns of abuse or harm not reported	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting procedures/policy Child Safeguarding Training – Level 1 	MP DLP	<i>Include in Safeguarding Training (L1)</i> <i>Publicise names of CCOs, DLPs, MP(s)</i> <i>Publicise internal and external reporting procedures</i>
Not clear who YP should talk to or report to	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post the names of CCOs, DLPs and MP 	CCO DLP	<i>Communicate in Club</i> <i>Include in Safeguarding Training (L1)</i>
FACILITIES				
Unauthorised access to designated children's play & practice areas and to changing rooms, showers, toilets etc.	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervision policy Coach education 	NGB Club Supervising members	<i>Clarify responsibilities before session starts</i>
Unauthorised exit from children's areas	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervision policy Coach education 	Supervising coaches and adults	<i>Clarify responsibilities before session starts</i>
Photography, filming or recording in prohibited areas	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photography policy and use of devices in private zones 	All club members and parents	<i>Enforce policy in private changing and wet areas</i>
Missing or found child on site	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing or found child policy 	Supervising coaches and adults	<i>Refer to policy and inform Gardai</i>

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/Region/National	Further action required ...
Children sharing facilities with adults e.g. dressing room, showers etc.	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding policy 	Clun Committee	<i>Plan with facilities management to create a suitable child centred environment in shared facilities</i>
RECRUITMENT				
Recruitment of inappropriate people	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment policy 	NGB Club CCO Appropriate personnel	<i>Ongoing review</i>
Lack of clarity on roles	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment policy 	Club	<i>Check job description Put supervision in place</i>
Unqualified or untrained people in role	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment policy 	Club	<i>Check qualification Ongoing review</i>
COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA				
Lack of awareness of 'risk of harm' with members and visitors	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Safeguarding Statement Training policy 	National Club DLP CCO	<i>Communicate Child Safeguarding Statement</i>
No communication of Child Safeguarding Statement or Code of Behaviour to members or visitors	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Safeguarding Statement – display Code of Behaviour - distribute 	Club Executive County Committee DLP Children's Officer	<i>Communicate Child Safeguarding Statement Distribute Code or Sections as appropriate</i>
Unauthorised photography & recording of activities	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photography and Use of Images policy 	All club members and parents/guardians	<i>Ongoing review</i>
Inappropriate use of social media and	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications policy Code of conduct 	All club members and parents/guardians. Club Committee	<i>Ongoing review</i>

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/Region/National	Further action required ...
communications by under 18's			DLP and Children's officer	
Inappropriate use of social media and communications with under 18's	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications policy Code of conduct. 	All club members and parents/guardians. Club Committee DLP and Children's officer	<i>Ongoing review</i>
GENERAL RISK OF HARM				
Harm not being recognised	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding policy Child Safeguarding Training 	Supervising coaches and adults. Children's officer. All club members, committee and parents/guardians	<i>Ongoing review</i>
Harm caused by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> child to child coach to child volunteer to child member to child visitor to child 	L L L L L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding policy Child Safeguarding Training 	All club members and parents/guardians. Club Committee DLP and Children's officer	<i>Ongoing review</i>
General behavioural issues	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code of Conduct 	All club members and parents/guardians. Club Committee DLP and Children's officer	<i>Take disciplinary action where necessary</i> <i>Sign code of conduct</i>

Explanation of terms used:

- **Potential risk of harm to children** – these are identified risks of harm to children whilst accessing activities in the Club/Region/Province/NGB.
- **Likelihood of harm happening** – the likelihood of the risk occurring in the club/region/NGB measured by you as Low/Medium or High.
- **Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document** – indication of the policy required to alleviate the risk.
- **Responsibility** – provider should indicate where the responsibility for alleviating the risk lies.
- **Further action...** - indicates further action that might be necessary to alleviate any risk ongoing.

This Risk Assessment document has been discussed and completed by *Dundalk St. Gerard's AC* on 25/02/2025

Signed:

Name: Paul Cheshire

Role: Chair

Date: 25/02/2025

Signed:

Name: Peadar Grant

Role: Club Children's Officer

Date: 25/02/2025

Section 4 – Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, (the Children First: National Guidance, and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice). In addition to our Risk Assessment document described above, there are further procedures that support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our activities.

Athletics Ireland has the following procedures in place as part of our Safeguarding Policies:

- Procedures for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct by staff or volunteers against a child availing of our activities.
- Procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers to work with children in our activities.
- Procedures for access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
- Procedure for reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Statutory Authorities.
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person (Club Children's Officer).

Please note that all procedures listed are available on request.

Kieron Stout is the relevant person for Athletics Ireland, and he is also a mandated person as set out in the Children First Act 2015. Kieron can be contacted on 086 2450134.

Section 5 – Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our club is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our activities.

Please note the following:

- That all volunteers and staff have been furnished with a copy of this statement.
- This statement is available to parents/guardians, the Agency & members of the public on request.
- This statement will be displayed in a prominent place by the Club.

The Athletics Ireland Child Safeguarding Plan including all policies and procedures is available on request or at the following webpage for download. <https://www.athleticsireland.ie/juvenile/child-welfare>

You can also email childwelfare@athleticsireland.ie if you would like any information sent to you.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

(By the Club Children's Officer (Relevant Person) On behalf the Club)

Name: _____ **Phone no:** _____

For queries on this Child Safeguarding Statement, please contact the Relevant Person (CCO) _____

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed two years from the date of signing.

Version	Release Date	Author	Changes
1.0	23rd of February 2019	Child safeguarding	New Version
1.1	22 nd of February 2021	Child safeguarding	Reviewed by TUSLA Child and Family Agency – no recommendations made
1.2	15/08/2023	Child safeguarding	Tusla review
2.0	25/02/2025	DSG Committee	Review by DSG Committee – change of Club Children’s Officer