

## **Children's Officer Role Summary**

### **Policy & Practice**

- To influence policy & practice within the club in order to prioritise children's needs

### **Connect with Volleyball Ireland's NCO**

- Establish contact with Volleyball Ireland's the National Children's Officer

### **How to Make Concerns Known**

- Ensure that children know how to make concerns known to the appropriate adults or agencies.

### **Appropriate Involvement**

- Encourage appropriate involvement of parents/guardians within the junior section.

### **Advisory Resource**

- To act as an advisory resource to Sports Leaders on best practice in Children's Sport.

### **Regularly Report to Club Committee**

- To report regularly to the club committee.

### **Monitor**

- Monitor changes in membership and follow up on any unusual dropout, absenteeism or club transfers by children or sports leaders.

### **Children have a Voice**

- To ensure children have a voice in the running of their club and ensure that there are steps young people can take to express concerns about their sports activities/experiences.

### **Communicate**

- Establish communication with other branches of the club e.g facilitate parent information sessions at the start of the season.

### **Keep Records**

- Keep records on each member on file including junior members, their contact details and any special needs of the child that should be known to leaders.

### **Membership Form & Code of Conduct**

- Ensure each member signs an annual membership form that includes signing up to the code of conduct for sports leaders, children & young people.

### **Club Rules & Regulations**

- Ensure that club rules & regulations includes:
- Complaints, disciplinary & Appeals procedures
- An anti-bullying policy

## **Designated Liaison Person Role Summary**

### **A Resource for the Club**

- The DLP is a resource for volunteer/coaches and should ensure that the clubs reporting procedures are followed.

### **Report**

- The DLP reports any suspected cases of child neglect or abuse to the Duty Social Worker in Child and Family Agency/TUSLA or an Garda Siochana.

### **Inform**

- The DLP should also inform the National Children's Officer that a report has been submitted without identifying details.

### **Knowledgeable about Child Protection**

- The DLP should be knowledgeable about child protection and undertake any training considered necessary. i.e Safeguarding 3

### **Statutory and Support Service**

- The DLP should familiarise themselves with the statutory and support services within their locality

### **Knowledge of the Code & Relevant Legislation**

- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Code and relevant child protection legislation (Children First Act 2015 and National Vetting Bureau Act 2012-2016).

## CLUB CHILDREN'S OFFICER ROLE

The appointment of Club Children's Officers in a sports club/organisations is an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere. They act as a resource with regard to children's issues. In summary Children's Officers should review current policies in relation to young people, check that all activities are safe and fun, and inform adults of how to deal with any concerns that may arise in relation to the protection of children and young people. Club Children's Officers should be child centred in focus and have as the primary aim, the establishment of a child centred ethos within the club. S/he is the link between the children and the adults in the club. S/he also takes responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the Club Management Committee on how club policy impacts on young people and Sports Leaders.

The Children's Officer should be a member of or have access to, the Club Management Committee and should be introduced to the young people in an appropriate forum. The Children's Officer should have the following role:

To promote awareness of the code within the club, among young members and their parents/guardians. This could be achieved by:- the production / distribution of information leaflets, the establishment of children's/age-group specific notice boards, regular information meetings for the young people and their parents/guardians

- To influence policy and practice within the club in order to prioritise children's needs
- Establish contact with the National Children's Officer at governing body level.
- To ensure that children know how to make concerns known to appropriate adults or agencies.
- To encourage the appropriate involvement of parents/guardians in the club activities
- To act as an advisory resource to Sports Leaders on best practice in children's sport
- To report regularly to the Club Management Committee
- To monitor changes in membership and follow up any unusual dropout, absenteeism or club transfers by children or Sports Leaders
- To ensure that the children have a voice in the running of their club and ensure that there are steps young people can take to express concerns about their sports activities / experiences.
- Establish communication with other branches of the club, e.g. facilitate parent's information sessions at the start of the season
- Keep records on each member on file, including junior members, their contact numbers and any special needs of the child that should be known to leaders
- Ensure each member signs an annual membership form that includes signing up to the code of conduct
- Ensure that the club rules and regulations include:-
  - complaints, disciplinary and appeals procedures
  - an anti-bullying policy
  - safety statement
  - rules in relation to traveling with children
  - supervision and recruitment of leaders

*(Note: This may simply mean adopting the regulations set out in the governing body's code for children's sport)*

*(Taken from Sport Ireland Safeguarding Guidance for Children & Young People in Sport)*

### DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSON ROLE

Every club/organisation should designate a person to be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children. The designated person is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to Health Services Executive or Social Services (NI) and/or An Garda Síochána / PSNI. It is recommended that this person is a senior club person. However, if there is difficulty identifying a separate individual to take this role, the Children's Officer can be appointed as designated person once the club/organisation is clear about the responsibilities of the each role.

The organisation's child protection policy and procedures should include the name and contact details of the designated person and the responsibilities attached to the role.

The Designated Liaison Person should have the following role:

- Have knowledge of the Code of Ethics and statutory guidelines
- Have a knowledge of categories and indicators of abuse
- Undertake training in relation to child protection
- Be familiar with and able to carry out reporting procedures as outlined in the code
- Communicate with parents and/or agencies as appropriate
- Assist with the ongoing development and implementation of the organisation's child protection training needs
- Liaise with the national children's officer in relation to child protection training needs
- Be aware of local contacts and services in relation to child protection, i.e. principal and duty social workers and their contacts
- To inform local duty social worker in the Health Services Executive Local Area Board / local Social Services and/or An Garda Síochána/PSNI of relevant concerns about individual children, using the Standard Reporting Form, (see Appendix 6). Keep a copy of this form and ensure acknowledgement of receipt of this form
- Report persistent poor practice to the National Designated Person
- Advise club administrators on issues of confidentiality, record keeping and data protection

*Children's Officers/Designated Persons do not have the responsibility of investigating or validating child protection concerns within the club/organisation and have no counselling or therapeutic role. These roles are filled by the Statutory Authorities as outlined in Children First and Our Duty to Care. It is, however, possible that child protection concerns will be brought to the attention of the Children's Officer. In this event, it is essential that the correct procedure is followed.*

*(Taken from the Sport Ireland Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children in Sport)*