

Children's Officer Report for 2023 season

1. Background

My role as Children's Officer within Galbally Pearses football club has been to ensure the implementation and promotion of the relevant GAA Child Welfare Codes and Guidelines for good practice throughout the Club, so that young people in our club can participate, enjoy and benefit from our Gaelic Games in safe and enjoyable surroundings.

2. Policies

A copy of all GAA policies adopted by the club is available to view on the Galbally Pearses Website. These policies are in line with the GAA codes of best practice issued by GAA Central Committee, Croke Park.

A key document I want to highlight is **The GAA Code of Behaviour, Underage**, which Galbally Pearses first adopted eight years ago and has recently been updated by the GAA. The Joint Code is a publication by the GAA, Ladies Gaelic Football Association, the Camogie Association, GAA Handball Ireland, and the Rounders Council of Ireland. The Code applies to all persons under 18 years of age who participate in our games or other activities and to those who work with them and assist them in any capacity on behalf of the GAA. The Code expresses clearly how the welfare of the child shall always be paramount consideration within our club and outlines the rights and expectations of under 18 players, coaches, parents/guardians, supporters and referees.

I encourage all our members particularly players and coaches to make themselves familiar with this document.

3. Child Protection Training and Vetting

Child Protection Training and Vetting are essential requirements for all volunteers within our club. Volunteers in our club need to undertake **both** training and vetting, **every three years** to enable them to work with children in our club.

Child Protection Training, was provided for by the Tyrone County Board Childrens Officer, Stephen Sherry, on the **8th March 2023**, in the Committee Room. The event

was very well attended and provided a useful forum for participants to learn key Child Protection issues.

4. New signs

New signs were designed and displayed across our club grounds in the summer of 2023, highlighting the importance of respect towards key stakeholders in our games from children, coaches to referees. Special thanks to Eugene Carberry for assisting with the installation of these signs.

5. New Childrens Officer

I have been Childrens Officer for the Club from January 2016, during which time the Child Protection frameworks for the Club have been devised, developed and implemented. I am now stepping aside from the Childrens Officers role in the Club. I wish the new Childrens Officer all the best with their new role. Once the Executive Committee appoints a successor, I will happily assist with queries which may arise.

In the meantime, I would like to acknowledge Bernie Fox, the Safeguarding Manager for Ulster GAA, and Stephen Sherry the Tyrone County Board Childrens Officer, for all their advice and assistance provided to the Club.

Finally, thank you to Chairmen, Sean Carberry and Noel McKeown as well as the various Committees and volunteers for their vital help and support towards Child Protection within our Club over the last seven years.

Kevin McVeigh, January 2024.