

Rugby League Ireland

Child Safeguarding Statement



Section 1 – NGB information

Rugby League Ireland (RLI) is the National Governing Body (NGB) for the sport of Rugby League for the whole island of Ireland. Rugby League Ireland and its affiliated clubs are tasked with growing our sport, running Domestic competitions, and managing Representative squads to compete internationally.

Rugby League Ireland and its affiliated clubs provide various sporting activities and opportunities for young people through participation in clubs, events and through to our national teams.

- Name: **Rugby League Ireland**
- Sport: **Rugby League**
- Location (National/Local level): **National**
- Size (Number of staff/members/clubs): **Is a voluntary lead organisation with approximately 500 members across 8 clubs**
- Activities: **Rugby League**

Section 2 - Principles to safeguard children from harm

Rugby League 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 - Rugby League Ireland Risk Assessment (RS)

This risk assessment considers the potential for harm to come to children whilst they are in Rugby League Ireland (RLI's) 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 (ROI) 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 (ROI) 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 —

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

This Rugby League Ireland's written Risk Assessment document indicates the areas of potential risk of harm, the likelihood of the risk occurring, and gives the required policy, guidance or process documents require to alleviate these risks. The list of risks identified and procedures to manage these risks are contained in the following categories:

| Risk Identified | Policy and/or procedure in place to manage risk identified |
|--|---|
| NGB Programme and Coaching Practices | |
| Lack of coaching qualification. Supervision issues. Behavioural Issues. Lack of gender balance amongst coaches No guidance for travelling & away trips Lack of adherence with procedures in Safeguarding policy | Recruitment policy. Supervision policy and ratios Codes of Conduct Roles and responsibility templates Safeguarding training Complaints & Disciplinary policy and training Travel/Away trip policy |
| Complaints & Discipline | |
| Lack of awareness of a Complaints & Disciplinary policy. Difficulty in raising an issue by child & or parent Complaints not being dealt with seriously Failure to raise concerns | Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy/ Communications procedure. Complaints and Disciplinary training |
| Reporting Procedures | |
| Lack of knowledge of organisational & statutory reporting procedures Concerns of abuse or harm not reported. Not clear who YP should talk to or report to. | Code of Conduct Reporting procedure training Reporting procedure policy Safeguarding Training – Level 1 Name contact of NCO/DLP communicated with clubs Board/volunteer training |
| Use of Facilities | |
| Lack of supervision when accessing facilities Children sharing facilities with adults e.g. dressing room, showers etc... Children sharing facilities with members of the public | Supervision policy and ratios Sport Ireland Safeguarding policy Codes of conduct Safeguarding training |
| Recruitment | |
| Recruitment of inappropriate people. Lack of clarity on roles. Unqualified or untrained people in role. | Recruitment policy. Roles and responsibilities Sport Ireland safeguarding policies Safeguarding training |

| Communications | |
|---|--|
| Lack of awareness of 'risk of harm' with members and visitors. No communication of Child Safeguarding Statement of Code of Behaviour to members of visitors. Unauthorised photography & recording of activities. Inappropriate use of social media & communications with under 18's. | Child Safeguarding Statement Safeguarding Training Child Safeguarding Statement and policy distributed Code of Behaviour (distribute). Photography & Use of Images policy Communications policy Code of conduct |
| General Risk of Harm | |
| Harm not being recognised. Harm caused by: Child to Child. Coach to Child. Volunteer to Child. Member to Child. Visitor to Child. General behavioural issues. Issues of Bullying. Vetting of staff/volunteers. Issues of Online Safety | Safeguarding policy / Child Safeguarding Training. Safeguarding policy / Child Safeguarding Training. Code of Conduct. Anti-Bullying policy. Recruitment policy / Vetting policy Social Media / Online Safety policy. |

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.

Rugby League 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 appointing a relevant person.

Please note that all procedures listed are available on request.

The Mandated/Relevant Person for NGB is (Adam Cox).

Section 5 – Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Rugby League Ireland 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 clubs and volunteers have been furnished with a copy of this statement.

This statement is available to parents /guardians, the Agency and members of the public on request.

This statement will be displayed in a prominent place by the NGB.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in September 2024

Signed: 

Date: 12th September 2022

(On behalf of Rugby League Ireland)

Name: Adam Cox

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For queries on this Child Safeguarding Statement, please contact Adam Cox