



# CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT


The Football Association of Ireland (FAI) in accordance with the Handbook, Child Welfare and Safeguarding policy, other policies, procedures and our legislative requirements have agreed this Child Safeguarding Statement which is binding on all members. The FAI is a National Governing Body operating on a national scale. Providing sporting activities and opportunities for children and young people through participation in clubs, regional/provincial events and through our national teams. The FAI offers sporting activities to children and young people from the age of four years old. The FAI employs over 200 staff members and over 450,000 participants as defined in the FAI Handbook. The FAI is committed to safeguarding children and by working under the guidance of our Safeguarding Policies and procedures, our staff, both volunteers and employed working with our children and young people, throughout the Association, seek to create a safe and fun environment for children and young people to participate in their sport.



## Principles to Safeguard Children from Harm

This statement recognises that in accordance with legislation and the requirements of our Handbook, Child Welfare and Safeguarding policy, other policies and procedures that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. The FAI is established on a number of core principles: - the needs of the Child, integrity and respect, environment, equality, fair play, welfare and safety in football. These underlying principles underpin our rules, policies and procedures to ensure that when Children participating in our activities, they do so, as far as is practicable, in a safe and enjoyable environment.

## Risk Assessment

In preparing this statement the FAI have completed a Risk Assessment of the potential risk of harm to children when they are participating in any of our games and attending our activities. The risks were reviewed under the following headings; Club and Coaching Practices; Complaints & Discipline; Reporting Procedures; Use of Facilities; Recruitment; Communications; and General Risk of Harm. Each Football Association of Ireland affiliated Club/ League undertakes a separate written Club Risk Assessment. The Risk Assessment was undertaken on 30/08/2022. The table below lists the area of risk identified and the list of procedures and policies for managing these risks

RISK IDENTIFIED	PROCEDURES/POLICIES IN PLACE	QR CODE SHORTCUT
Risk of harm including assault, ill treatment or neglect of a child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare or sexual abuse of child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Welfare and Safeguarding policy</li> <li>Concern-Complaint policy</li> <li>FAI Handbook, Employee Handbook</li> <li>Safeguarding training</li> <li>Specific guidance, rules or handbooks in place for event, trip, competition or camps.</li> <li>Following all health guidance set out by the HSE and government.</li> </ul>	1. Child Welfare & Safeguarding Policy  
Risk of harm of abuse when hosting an activity and or an away trip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Welfare and Safeguarding policy</li> <li>Concern-Complaint policy</li> <li>FAI Handbook, Employee Handbook</li> <li>Safeguarding training</li> <li>Specific guidance, rules or handbooks in place for event, trip, competition or camps</li> <li>Follow all health guidance on set out by the HSE.</li> </ul>	2. Concern/Complaint Policy  

RISK IDENTIFIED	PROCEDURES/POLICIES IN PLACE	QR CODE SHORTCUT
Risk of harm of online abuse through social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Welfare and Safeguarding policy</li> <li>Social Media policy</li> <li>Specific guidance, rules or handbooks in place for event, trip, competition or camps.</li> </ul>	3. Social Media Policy 
Bullying of a child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Welfare and Safeguarding policy</li> <li>Concern-Complaint policy</li> <li>Social Media policy</li> <li>Employee Handbook</li> <li>Specific guidance, rules or handbooks in place for event, trip, competition or camps.</li> </ul>	4. FAI Handbook 

The Football Association of Ireland's Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, (the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice). Each Football Association of Ireland affiliated Club/League publishes their own Club Child Safeguarding Statement.

**The FAI 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 and selection of staff and volunteers to work with children in our activities;
- Procedures for provision of and 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;
- Procedures for maintaining a list of the persons in the relevant service who are mandated;
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures/policies listed are available on request. Policies and the Handbook are available on [www.fai.ie/domestic](http://www.fai.ie/domestic).

**The Mandated Persons for the FAI are :**

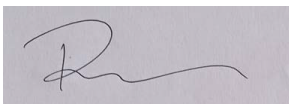
- Child Welfare & Safeguarding Manager - Kirsten Pakes - [kirsten.pakes@fai.ie](mailto:kirsten.pakes@fai.ie)
- Child Welfare & Safeguarding Officer - Cathy Condell - [cathy.condell@fai.ie](mailto:cathy.condell@fai.ie)

FAI recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our Association is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the accompanying child welfare and safeguarding policies and procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while participating in our activities.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on 05/09/2024 or as soon as practicable after there has been material change in any matter to which the statement refers. This statement has been published on the FAI website; [www.fai.ie/domestic/safeguarding/child-safeguarding-statement](http://www.fai.ie/domestic/safeguarding/child-safeguarding-statement) and displayed in a prominent place on the premises.

It has been provided to all staff, volunteers and any other persons involved with the service. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla and members of the public if requested.

**This statement has been reviewed and approved by FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Committee:**



**Peadar Ryan**  
Chair of the Child Welfare and Safeguarding Committee



**Kirsten Pakes**  
Child Welfare and Safeguarding Manager

19/10/2023

**Date**

For further information on this Child Safeguarding Statement, please contact relevant person: Kirsten Pakes at [kirsten@fai.ie](mailto:kirsten@fai.ie)