



Ardee & District Athletic Club

Child Safeguarding Reporting Procedures

1. Introduction

Ardee & District AC is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children participating in club activities. Clear procedures are in place to ensure that any concerns relating to child protection or welfare are handled appropriately, consistently, and in line with best practice.

These procedures are informed by **Athletics Ireland Child Safeguarding Procedures** and relevant national safeguarding legislation.

2. Club Safeguarding Contacts

The following Club Officers are responsible for safeguarding and reporting concerns:

- **Club Children's Officer (CCO):** Bernie Balfe
- **Designated Liaison Person (DLP):** Ben Corcoran

All safeguarding concerns should be reported to one of the above individuals.

3. Responsibility to Report

All coaches, volunteers, parents, and members have a **duty of care** to act if they have concerns regarding the welfare or safety of a child.

- Concerns should be reported **as soon as possible**
- The **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)** is responsible for making formal reports to statutory authorities

- The DLP does **not investigate**, but ensures concerns are reported appropriately ([AI Child Safeguarding Procedures](#))

Any individual may also report directly to Tusla (Child & Family Agency) or An Garda Síochána if necessary. ([AI Child Safeguarding Procedures](#))

4. Grounds for Concern

A report should be made where there are **reasonable grounds for concern**, including:

- A direct disclosure from a child
- A report from someone who witnessed abuse
- Consistent signs of emotional or physical harm
- Injury or behaviour inconsistent with normal explanation
- Sudden behavioural or emotional changes
- Patterns of concern or repeated indicators ([AI Child Safeguarding Procedures](#))

5. Reporting Procedure

Step 1: Observe and Record

- Note the **date, time, location, and context** of the concern
- Record factual observations only (no assumptions) ([AI Child Safeguarding Procedures](#))

Step 2: Report to the DLP

- Report concerns **without delay** to the Designated Liaison Person
- Provide all relevant information available ([AI Child Safeguarding Procedures](#))

Step 3: DLP Action

The DLP will:

- Assess whether reasonable grounds for concern exist
- Consult with the Club Children's Officer if necessary
- Report concerns to **Tusla or An Garda Síochána** if appropriate
- Inform Athletics Ireland's National Children's Officer of reports made ([AI Child Safeguarding Procedures](#)), ([AI Role of DLP Description](#))

Step 4: Immediate Risk

- If a child is in immediate danger, **An Garda Síochána must be contacted immediately** ([AI Child Safeguarding Procedures](#))
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6. Additional Reporting Guidance

- The DLP may consult informally with Tusla if unsure about a concern
 - Families should generally be informed unless doing so places the child at further risk
 - Reports should be made promptly, followed by written documentation
 - The person against whom an allegation is made should step aside pending investigation ([AI Child Safeguarding Procedures](#))
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7. If a Concern is Not Reported

If the DLP decides not to report:

- The reasons must be **clearly recorded**
- The person who raised the concern must receive a **written explanation**
- They must be informed of their right to **report independently** ([AI Role of DLP Description](#))

All concerns, even those not reported, should be recorded and reviewed appropriately.

8. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

- All information will be handled **confidentially and securely**
 - Records should only be accessible to designated persons
 - Records must comply with **data protection (GDPR)** requirements
 - Patterns of concern should be monitored over time ([AI Role of DLP Description](#))
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9. Protection for Reporting Individuals

Individuals who report concerns **in good faith** are protected under Irish law and will not be held liable, even if concerns later prove unfounded. ([AI Child Safeguarding Procedures](#))

10. Policy Review

This procedure will be reviewed regularly and updated in line with Athletics Ireland and national safeguarding guidance.

11. Approval and Signatures

This Reporting Procedure was formally adopted by Ardee & District AC:

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chairperson	Karen Taaffe		29/ 06 / 2026
Club Children's Officer	Bernie Balfe	Bernie Balfe	29 / 06 / 2026
Designated Liaison Person	Ben Corcoran		29 / 06 / 2026



Appendix 1: Role of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

The **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)** has a central role in safeguarding within Ardee & District AC.

Key Responsibilities

- Act as the **point of contact** for all child protection concerns
- Receive and consider reports from club members
- Work alongside the Club Children's Officer to assess concerns
- Determine whether there are **reasonable grounds for reporting**
- Report concerns to:
 - **Tusla (Child & Family Agency)**
 - **An Garda Síochána**
- Inform Athletics Ireland's National Children's Officer of any reports made ([AI Role of DLP Description](#))

Additional Duties

- Maintain confidential records of all concerns
 - Provide guidance and support to coaches, volunteers, and parents
 - Ensure reporting procedures are followed correctly
 - Be familiar with relevant legislation and safeguarding guidance
 - Undertake appropriate training (e.g. safeguarding courses) ([AI Role of DLP Description](#))
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Important Notes

- The DLP does **not investigate allegations**
 - Decisions should be made in consultation with the CCO
 - If unsure, the DLP should seek advice from Tusla
 - Individuals may still report directly to authorities if dissatisfied
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Ardee & District AC

Child Safeguarding Policy Addendum: Safe Recruitment, Training, and Allegations

1. Safe Recruitment and Garda Vetting Procedure

Ardee & District AC ensures that all coaches, committee members, and volunteers working with children are safely recruited in line with the **National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016** and the [Athletics Ireland Garda Vetting Policy](#)

- **Vetting Mandatory Requirement:** No volunteer or coach may step onto the track, instruct a minor, or supervise club activities until their Garda Vetting for Athletics Ireland application has been successfully completed, cleared, and confirmed.
- **Application Workflow:**
 - The applicant completes an identity verification form with the Club Children's Officer (CCO)
 - The applicant submits an online vetting invitation via the Athletics Ireland Vetting Portal.
 - The National Vetting Bureau issues a secure digital disclosure back to Athletics Ireland.
- **Vetting Renewal:** Vetting clearance is not permanent and must be formally renewed every three years as strictly mandated by the National Governing Body (NGB).

2. Safeguarding Training Framework

To guarantee a complete culture of safety, the club mandates formal, certified training workshops for all personnel interacting with underage athletes.

- **Minimum Requirement (Safeguarding 1):** All coaches, regular volunteers, and general committee members must hold a valid **Sport Ireland Safeguarding 1 (Child Welfare & Protection in Sport)** certification.
- **Officer-Specific Training:**
 - The **Club Children's Officer (CCO)** must additionally complete **Safeguarding 2** (Children's Officer workshop) (p. 1).

- The **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)** must complete **Safeguarding 3** (Designated Liaison Person workshop).
- **Validity and Refreshers:** Safeguarding certifications remain valid for a maximum of 3 years. Refresher training must be formally completed via the Sport Ireland/Athletics Ireland platforms before expiration.
- **Compliance Registry:** The CCO will maintain an internal, secure log of all vetting disclosure dates and safeguarding certificate expiry numbers to track continuous compliance.

3. Procedure for Managing Allegations Against Volunteers or Coaches

When an allegation of child abuse or misconduct is made against an Ardee & District AC coach, official, or volunteer, the club operates under a strict dual-track procedure encompassing both statutory reporting and internal sanctioning workflows.

- **Step 1: Immediate Protection:** The primary focus is always the immediate safety of the child (p. 1). The DLP will immediately implement temporary measures to remove any perceived risk to minors.
- **Step 2: Stepping Aside:** The person against whom the allegation is made will be required to **step aside immediately** from all club activities pending the outcome of the investigation. This is an essential protective, non-punitive measure.
- **Step 3: Mandated Reporting via NCO:** The DLP will coordinate immediately with **Athletics Ireland's National Children's Officer / Mandated Person** (Kieron Stout). Under the *Children First Act 2015*, the Mandated Person has a statutory, legal obligation to report joint concerns directly to Tusla using the standard Child Protection and Welfare Report Form (CPWRF).
- **Step 4: Internal Review Panel:** Once statutory authorities (Tusla and An Garda Síochána) have been formally notified, an internal club disciplinary process will take place in strict accordance with [Athletics Ireland Disciplinary Procedures](#), ensuring absolute confidentiality and due process for all involved parties.

Approval and Signatures

This addendum policy was formally adopted by the Executive Committee of Ardee & District AC:

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chairperson	Karen Taafe	_____	
Club Children's Officer	Bernie Balfe	Bernie Balfe	27/ 06 / 2026
Designated Liaison Person	Ben Corcoran	_____	____ / ____ / 2026
