

# Athletics Ireland Child Safeguarding Statement

## Section 1 – NGB / club information

*Athletics Ireland* is the National Governing Body for the sport of Track and Field Athletics in the Republic of Ireland. Athletics Ireland and its affiliated clubs provide various sporting activities and opportunities for children and young people through participation in clubs, regional/provincial events and through to our national teams. Organised events involved the provision of athletic championships and games that involve in some instances require attendance at weekend events and overnight trips for clubs and their members. Athletics Ireland is a voluntary led organisation that provides its members with opportunities to participate in the sport of Track and Field Athletics across all age grades from Juvenile (u9 to u16), Youth (u18), Junior (u20), Senior (u35) and Master (35+).

- Name: *St. Abban's Athletics Club.*
- Sport: *Athletics*
- Location (National/Local level): *National*
- Size (Number of staff/members/clubs): *450 members.*
- Activities: *Track and Field, Cross Country, Road Running and Race Walking.*

## Section 2 - Principles to safeguard children from harm.

*Athletics 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 - Risk Assessment**

This Athletics Ireland Club 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:

<b>Risk Identified</b>	<b>Procedure in place to manage risk identified</b>
<p><b>Club and Coaching Practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervision issues.</li> <li>• Lack of gender balance amongst coaches</li> <li>• No guidance for travelling &amp; away trips.</li> <li>• Lack of adherence with misc. procedures in Safeguarding policy.</li> <li>• Shared use of toilets and changing facilities.</li> <li>• Coaching of minors one to one.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional coaches required.</li> <li>• Recruitment drive for additional female coaches.</li> <li>• Travel/Away trip policy / Child Safeguarding Training.</li> <li>• Safeguarding Policy / Complaints &amp; disciplinary policy</li> <li>• No one to one coaching with parental supervision policy in place. Must notify Child welfare officer of planned coaching outside regular club hours.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Complaints &amp; Discipline</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of awareness of a Complaints &amp; Disciplinary policy.</li> <li>• Difficulty in raising an issue by child &amp; or parent.</li> <li>• Complaints not being dealt with seriously</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints &amp; Disciplinary procedure/policy / Communications procedure.</li> <li>• Complaints &amp; Disciplinary procedure/policy / Communications procedure.</li> <li>• Clear identification of Child Welfare and Disciplinary Officer.</li> <li>• Elected Child Welfare and Disciplinary Officer.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Reporting Procedures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of knowledge of organisational &amp; statutory reporting procedures</li> <li>• Concerns of abuse or harm not reported.</li> <li>• Not clear who YP should talk to or report to.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporting procedures/policy / Coach Education policy / Code of Conduct/Behaviour.</li> <li>• Reporting procedures/policy.</li> <li>• Reporting procedures/policy / Child Safeguarding Training – Level 1</li> <li>• Post the names of CCO, DLP and Mandated person.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Use of Facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unauthorised access to designated children’s play &amp; practice areas &amp; to changing rooms, showers, toilets etc.....</li> <li>• Unauthorised exit from children’s areas.</li> <li>• Missing or found child on site.</li> <li>• Children sharing facilities with adults e.g., dressing room, showers etc...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervision policy / Coach Education.</li> <li>• Supervision policy / Coach Education.</li> <li>• Missing or found child policy.</li> <li>• Safeguarding policy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No communication of Child Safeguarding Statement of Code of Behaviour to members of visitors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information evening</li> </ul>
<p><b>General Risk of Harm</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harm not being recognised.</li> <li>• Harm caused by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Child to Child.</li> <li>➤ Coach to Child.</li> <li>➤ Volunteer to Child.</li> <li>➤ Member to Child.</li> <li>➤ Visitor to Child.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• General behavioural issues.</li> <li>• Issues of Bullying.</li> <li>• Vetting of staff/volunteers.</li> <li>• Issues of Online Safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding policy / Child Safeguarding Training.</li> <li>• Safeguarding policy / Child Safeguarding Training.</li> <li>• Code of Conduct.</li> <li>• Anti-Bullying policy.</li> <li>• Recruitment policy / Vetting policy.</li> <li>• Social Media / Online Safety policy.</li> </ul>

The Risk Assessment was undertaken on 09/01/2023.

## **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.

**Athletics 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 maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person (Club Children’s Officer).

***Please note that all procedures listed are available on request.***

Kieron Stout is the relevant person for Athletics Ireland, and he is also a mandated person as set out in the Children First Act 2015. Kieron can be contacted on 086 2450134.

## **Section 5 – Implementation**

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our club 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 volunteers and staff have been furnished with a copy of this statement.
- This statement is available to parents/guardians, the Agency & members of the public on request.
- This statement will be displayed in a prominent place by the Club.

The Athletics Ireland Child Safeguarding Plan including all policies and procedures is available on request or at the following webpage for download. <https://www.athleticsireland.ie/juvenile/child-welfare>

You can also email [childwelfare@athleticsireland.ie](mailto:childwelfare@athleticsireland.ie) if you would like any information sent to you.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on **22/02/2021**

Signed: *Pauline Lawlor*

Date: 09/01/2023

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