



# **CHARLESTOWN LGFA**

## **Handbook**

## Contents

Section 1 Overview .....	3
1.1 Introduction .....	3
1.2 Club Policy Statement .....	3
1.3 Club Principles & Ethos .....	4
1.3.1 Importance of Childhood/Young Players.....	4
1.3.2 Atmosphere and Ethos .....	5
1.3.3 Equality .....	5
1.3.4 Competition .....	6
Section 2 Child Protection and Welfare.....	7
2.1 Child Safeguarding Statement .....	7
2.2 Garda Vetting .....	7
2.3 Club Children’s Officer .....	7
2.4 Club Designated Liaison Person .....	7
2.5 Dealing with Allegations or Concerns of Abuse.....	7
Section 3 Code of Behaviour.....	9
3.1 Dealing with Alleged Breaches of the Code of Behaviour .....	9
Section 4 Club Information .....	10
4.1 Charlestown LGFA Executive Committee .....	10
4.1.1 Children’s Officer .....	10
4.1.2 Designated Liaison Persons (DLP) .....	10
4.2 Membership/Registration & Records .....	10
4.2.1 Membership Fees .....	11
4.3 Finances .....	11
4.3.1. Fundraising.....	11
4.3.2. Team Meals/End of Year Celebrations .....	11
4.4 Recruitment of Club Officers, Coaches and Mentors .....	12
4.4.1 Supervision by Coaches and Mentors.....	12
4.5 Club AGM & Meetings .....	13
4.6 Player Awards .....	13
4.7 Club Development Policy .....	13
4.7.1 Playing Policy.....	14
Attire .....	14

Playing/Subbing Up.....	14
Minor Players .....	14
Joint Training.....	15
County Trials .....	15
4.7.2 Coaching Policy .....	15
4.8. Pitches & Facilities .....	15
4.8.2 Use of the Dressing Rooms .....	16
4.9 Club Disciplinary, Complaints & Appeals Procedure .....	16
4.9.1 Disciplinary.....	16
4.9.2 Offences .....	17
Objection.....	17
Complaint.....	17
Disciplinary Matter.....	17
4.9.3 Hearings .....	18
4.9.4 Sanctions .....	19
4.9.5 Appeals.....	19
Section 5 Other Club Policies .....	20
5.1 Social Media & Communication Policy .....	20
General Social Media/Communication Guidelines:.....	20
5.2 First Aid Policy.....	21
5.3 Trips/Travel/Team Bonding .....	21
5.4 Anti-Bullying Policy .....	22
5.5 Injury Fund Policy.....	22
5.6 Mouthguards.....	23
5.7 Concussion .....	23
5.8 GDPR/Data Protection Policy.....	24
5.9 Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policy .....	24
Appendices.....	25
Appendix 2 Anti-Bullying Statement.....	26
Appendix 3 Child Protection Definitions of Abuse .....	27
Appendix 4 Player Competency Chart .....	32
Appendix 6 Charlestown LGFA Committee.....	33
Appendix 7 Membership Fees .....	34

## Section 1 Overview

### 1.1 Introduction

This handbook outlines the codes, policies and procedures adopted by Charlestown LGFA to carry out its day-to-day business and provides best practice guidelines for all members, parents of players and supporters. The purpose of this document is to provide a realistic and common-sense approach to the practices within the Club. The content of this document is up-to-date and in line with the current best practice and legal requirements of the LGFA and the Irish Sports Council for the protection and welfare of young members. While the details in this handbook have been carefully correlated, it is accepted that errors and omissions may occur, and it is expected that the spirit of the document will be adopted by Club members in achieving best practice. The Club hopes to improve and build on this, and we would welcome any feedback on the handbook.

**Note:** This handbook should be read in conjunction with the Code of Behaviour, Bord na nOg Handbook, Children First National Guidance & LGFA Official Guide.

### 1.2 Club Policy Statement

Charlestown LGFA club's philosophy is one of participation, enjoyment and skills development in a setting of respect for all and having fun. Realising this philosophy requires a full awareness and a clear understanding of the policy by everyone involved in the club, including juveniles, adults, mentors and parents. Everyone has a vital role to play in setting and maintaining standards of behaviour which our Club can be proud of.

Charlestown LGFA is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its members. Every individual in the club should at all times show respect and understanding for members rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the principles of the club and the guidelines contained in the Sport Ireland's Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport and the Code of Behaviour as well as legal requirements in accordance with Children First legislation.

In Charlestown LGFA, one of our first priorities is the welfare of players, and the club is committed to providing an environment which will allow players to perform free from bullying and intimidation. As part of the club's commitment, it has adopted codes, policies and procedures to guide our players, members and volunteers involved with our teams. The club will take all practicable steps to protect our young players from discernable forms of abuse, harm, discrimination or degrading treatment. To ensure that the best practice is followed, the club will work closely with our Governing Body in Croke Park.

In order to promote the best practice the club will:

- Adopt and implement relevant sections of Sport Ireland's Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport and the Code of Behaviour as an integral part of the Club's policies and procedures.
- Have its constitution approved and adopted by Club members at an AGM or EGM
- Clearly define the roles of committee members, mentors and parents/guardians.
- Ensure that all Mentors and volunteers are carefully recruited, and Garda vetted and that they accept responsibility for ensuring the wellbeing of young members in their care and attend a Child Protection Course
- Appoint at least one Children's Officer and a Designated Liaison Person to deal with any issues in relation to youth welfare.
- Ensure best practice is delivered by disseminating the club's codes, policies and procedures to all its members.
- Have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- Have in place procedures for dealing with a concern or complaint made against any mentor, player or other members of the Club.
- Respond swiftly and appropriately to protect the welfare of youth members who participate in any activity in the Club.
- In the event of National Health Emergency, Public Health Guidance will be adhered to.
- Review the effectiveness of the Club codes, policies and procedures on a regular basis.

## 1.3 Club Principles & Ethos

Charlestown LGFA operates on principles outlined below which facilitate and encourage best practice in youth sport within the club. It is important that all young players are valued and treated with the highest level of respect throughout these important years of their personal, physical and social development.

The Club will provide our young players with a period in their life that enables them to have fun, make friends and present them with opportunities to improve their levels of skill.

### 1.3.1 Importance of Childhood/Young Players

The importance of childhood/young players should be understood and valued by everyone in the club. The right to happiness of the child/youth should be recognised. The club's provision of sporting experiences should be guided by what is best for the child or youth.

The following principles will apply:

- The welfare of the young person is paramount.

- All young members, whatever their age, have the right to protection from harm.
- All concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously, will be responded to swiftly and in an appropriate manner.

### 1.3.2 Atmosphere and Ethos

Charlestown LGFA promotes a positive and encouraging atmosphere that involves all players. The club is committed to providing an environment which will allow players to perform to the best of their ability. A player-centered ethos is at the centre of our club. Our aim is to foster an atmosphere of respect, discipline, learning and fun at games and training sessions. We have adopted that at all times in order to give respect; you must also get respect and the club has adopted the '*Give Respect and Get Respect*' Awareness Campaign.

The club's highest priority is that players should be safe and learn sporting values during their juvenile playing days which will remain with them for life. We encourage children's voices to be heard and respected and you will be entitled to comment and make suggestions about your training, your team and the club to your coach, mentor, children's officer or any other official.

The importance of participation, best effort and enjoyment should be stressed rather than winning. Players should be encouraged to win in an open and fair way. Behaviour which constitutes cheating in any form must be discouraged.

Due to often limited numbers in the different strands (e.g. U16, Minor, Senior) it is often normal that a child plays with two different strands. The child's first responsibility is to play in teams of their own age group. They must train and play with their own age group before playing up.

We understand that our club members play different sports and often have busy active lives so we ask that parents make their coach aware of this so they can be mindful in terms of player welfare.

You will also be challenged within your developmental age-group to improve your skills and individual programmes and constructive feedback will be provided to you and your parent/guardian about how to improve your game. We have a player competencies chart for the different age groups which provides more information for you about what will be focused on in the different strands.

We encourage parents to speak with the coaches firstly about any issues, suggestions or concerns you may have.

### 1.3.3 Equality

Players participating in the club will be treated in a fair and reasonable manner, regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social, political and ethnic background. Players, irrespective of ability or disability, should be involved in an integrated and inclusive way, whenever possible, thus allowing them to participate along with other teammates.

### 1.3.4 Competition

In Charlestown LGFA, we will attempt to strike a balance between a young player's desire to win and a young player's right to participate, irrespective of ability. Success is not the same as winning and failure is not the same as losing. A balanced approach to competition will make a significant contribution to the development of the player, while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and a sense of satisfaction and achievement. If unreasonable competitive demands are placed on a player too early in their career it can result in undue pressure which in turn often contributes to player dropout. It should be kept in mind that the welfare of the player comes first and competitive standards second.

## Section 2 Child Protection and Welfare

### 2.1 Child Safeguarding Statement

Charlestown LGFA has a document called a Child Safeguarding Statement on display in Dressing Room 4. It is also available in the Appendices of this Handbook and on our club website <http://charlestowngaa.com>. This statement is a legislative requirement which outlines the procedures, policies and practices we have in place to safeguard children as far as practicable from risk when they are attending our games or other LGFA activities. This statement is reviewed on an annual basis alongside a risk assessment completed by the Club Children's Officer and Executive Committee.

### 2.2 Garda Vetting

In Charlestown LGFA any person who carries out a role of responsibility such as coaching, managing or training underage teams or indeed adult teams that contain any player under 18 yrs. of age must be vetted. The process occurs on [foireann.ie](http://foireann.ie). If a coach/mentor is vetted through the GAA; this is recognised by the LGFA. All coaches in our club are required to have completed child safeguarding training and a record of this is maintained by the Club Children's Officer. Details on how to complete the vetting process is available on <https://ladiesgaelic.ie/lgfa-hub/clubs/child-welfare-protection/vetting/>

### 2.3 Club Children's Officer

It is the Club Children's Officer responsibility to promote a child and youth centered ethos in the club. Our Club Children's Officer is the link person between the players and adults in the club. They promote the Code of Behaviour and oversee the Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Statement process. They are available in terms of any informal child protection queries, informal breaches of the Code of Behaviour and bullying concerns. Club members will be made aware of the Children's Officer annually. They are appointed through the AGM. The contact email address for the club children's officer is [childrensofficer.charlestown.mayo@lgfa.ie](mailto:childrensofficer.charlestown.mayo@lgfa.ie)

### 2.4 Club Designated Liaison Person

The Club Designated Person shall be responsible for reporting allegations of abuse to the statutory authorities. Charlestown LGFA Designated Liaison Person is the Chairperson of the Club.

### 2.5 Dealing with Allegations or Concerns of Abuse

The safety and well-being of the child must take priority over concerns about adults against whom an allegation may be made. The welfare of the child shall always be paramount. Charlestown LGFA has adapted the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017).



You should always inform Tusla when you have reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. If you ignore what may be symptoms of abuse, it could result in ongoing harm to the child. It is not necessary for you to prove that abuse has occurred to report a concern to Tusla. All that is required is that you have reasonable grounds for concern. It is Tusla's role to assess concerns that are reported to it. If you report a concern, you can be assured that your information will be carefully considered with any other information available, and a child protection assessment will be carried out where sufficient risk is identified.

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused

Should any member of the club- parent/guardian, player, coach, mentor, supporter or volunteer become aware of any child protection concerns these should reported to Tusla or with the assistance of the club Designated Liaison Person. Any informal queries about any concerns for child abuse or welfare concerns can also be discussed with the Children's Officer.

Please see appendices for further details on how to report and categories of abuse.

## Section 3 Code of Behaviour

The Ladies Gaelic Football Association in association with GAA and Camogie Associations recently launched the updated online version of Code of Behaviour (Underage). This Code has been agreed between the LGFA, GAA, the Camogie Association, GAA Handball and GAA Rounders.

Charlestown LGFA adheres to the Code of Behaviour in ensuring child welfare and child protection standards are adhered to. The Code of Behaviour applies to all young players under 18 years of age, and those who assist them in the preparation and playing of our games, regardless of competition or age groups. It is a comprehensive good practice guidance publication, and we encourage all club members to access this document each year to accept and implement this practice code.

The Code of Behaviour is available on <https://ladiesgaelic.ie/lgfa-hub/clubs/child-welfare-protection/code-of-behaviour/>

### 3.1 Dealing with Alleged Breaches of the Code of Behaviour

Unfortunately, breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) may occur from time to time, some of which may be minor breaches and some of which may be major breaches. Breaches may happen for a number of reasons including, but not limited to, carelessness, poor practice, and a lack of understanding or there may be, in some instances, deliberate or calculated breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage).

Where the Children's Officer is of the view that the allegation is serious (because of the gravity of the allegation or for some other reason) he/she shall refer the allegation to the Secretary of the Club Executive Committee, the Secretary of the County Committee or the Secretary of the Child Safeguarding Committee as appropriate to be dealt with in accordance with the formal procedure set out in Section 4 of the Code of Behaviour (see [here](#))

Where the Children's Officer is of the view that the allegation of a breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) may be appropriately dealt with in an informal manner, he/she shall be responsible for dealing with the alleged breach informally and agreeing the procedure to be followed with the parties. This could involve meeting with the person(s) against whom an allegation has been made and resolving the matter amicably and by agreement.

If an alleged breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) is resolved informally, the Club, County or National Children's Officer will note the outcome in writing.

The offence shall be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedures set out in Section 4 of the Code of Behaviour (underage). Details of this Section is available [here](#).

## Section 4 Club Information

### 4.1 Charlestown LGFA Executive Committee

Charlestown LGFA Executive Committee members are appointed at the Club's AGM which takes place annually. To see a list of the current year's members please see Appendix 6.

#### 4.1.1 Children's Officer

The Club Children's Officer's role includes ensuring that all aspects of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) are implemented and that those working with children are vetted and have attended child safeguarding training and other training relevant to their roles. The Children's Officers shall be the Association's relevant persons or first point of contact in respect of the Child Safeguarding Statement. The Children's Officer will be a member of or have access to the Executive Committee and will be introduced to the young players in an appropriate forum. The Children's officer(s) do not have the responsibility to investigate or validate child protection allegations or concerns within our Club. A Designated Person will be appointed by the Club to deal with concerns such as allegations of abuse.

#### 4.1.2 Designated Liaison Persons (DLP)

The DLP is the person who shall assist members who wish to have allegations or concerns of abuse processed internally and with the statutory authorities in accordance with our Guidance on Dealing with Allegations or Concerns of Abuse. The Designated Officer does not have a counselling or therapeutic role or a responsibility for investigating or validating child protection concerns within the Club. The responsibility for validating/investigating child protection issues lies with the Statutory Authorities as outlined in Children's First and Our Duty to Care publications. However, child protection concerns may be brought to the attention of our Children's Officer(s). In this case, the correct procedure must be followed.

### 4.2 Membership/Registration & Records

In order for a player to be eligible to play for Charlestown LGFA she must be a Full or Youth Registered Member of the Club in accordance with Rules outlined in the LGFA Official Guide. Any such member who has not paid their membership fee by the yearly deadline shall cease to be a member from that date.

Registration is available online via [Foireann](#). Committee members are available to assist in relation to any queries about how to become a member. Once membership is paid & processed, the player will be insured to play. Application for Membership must be accompanied by full payment of the Club's Annual Subscription.

All members must agree to abide by the club rules and Code of Behaviour.

A system of records may be maintained on all volunteers, including contact details, vetting disclosures, dates and times of service, duties performed, courses completed etc. Volunteer records are afforded the same confidentiality as staff records and are maintained by LGFA and the affiliated clubs the volunteer is a member of.

### 4.2.1 Membership Fees

Membership fees must be paid at the beginning of each season and prior to any participation in training or playing. Membership fees are outlined in Appendix 7 of this Handbook. Fees are reviewed annually by the Club Committee.

## 4.3 Finances

Charlestown LGFA sources their funding through membership, fundraising (e.g. Lotto) or grant applications. Each year at the Club AGM, a financial report provides details on the Club's financial position. Charlestown LGFA has an annual cost payable to Charlestown GAA club for use of the pitch, facilities, team costs, Pitch Booking App, club maintenance and upgrade. Charlestown LGFA has additional LGFA insurance costs, team entry fees (underage and senior) and affiliation fees to county board and senior team fees such as equipment, physio, referee costs (underage and senior), strength and conditioning.

### 4.3.1. Fundraising

Fundraising occurs under the remit of Bord na nOg and the LGFA committees only. A bucket collection is organised by the committee annually solely for the purposes of raising funds to support the running of our underage teams with Bord na nOg.

Coaches or teams are not permitted to fundraise for individual teams without the discussion and approval of the LGFA committee. Team items like clothing, sponsored gear, food must be prior agreed and discussed with the committee.

In respect of Feile whereby a club team qualifies for a regional feile, special consideration will be given to fundraising for the team. However, this occurs through a fundraising meeting with the committee and coaches involved.

If parents or business wish to sponsor any team items or make a financial contribution this must go through the LGFA committee for review and approval.

Money received via donations/sponsorship must be lodged in Charlestown LGFA bank account no later than 4 days following receipt of same.

Bord na nOg and LGFA committees will be in regular communication and agreement in respect of finances. Further details in respect of specific Feile practices is outlined in Charlestown Bord na nOg handbook.

### 4.3.2. Team Meals/End of Year Celebrations

Underage team meals in restaurants funded by the LGFA and Bord na nOg are to be discontinued from the 2024 season onwards. For teams who reach finals and wish to go to restaurants these costs are to be covered by parents within the team group. Funds that had been spent on this expenditure in the past will now be spent on coach/player development programmes.

Bord na nOg (boys teams aged 13-18) and the LGFA (girls teams aged 13-18) where applicable, will cover costs of pizzas for teams who reach league and championship finals for consumption in the CBD complex or club dressing rooms after finals.

## 4.4 Recruitment of Club Officers, Coaches and Mentors

Our club will ensure that the recruitment of club officers, coaches and mentors is carefully considered by the Executive Committee. We are very fortunate in Charlestown to have a number of members and coaches with excellent footballing experience, knowledge and love for the game. The officers, coaches and mentors give so much of their free time to encouraging, promoting and developing Ladies Gaelic Football in the club and county and so we ask that they are respected by parents and guardians as per the Code of Behaviour.

Recruitment of club officers is completed annually through election at the AGM. All outgoing officers must ensure that any club property and administrative tasks are transferred to the new officer elected. Officers, coaches and mentors must be garda vetted and have relevant child protection training for their role. All must be official members of the LGFA as per the official LGFA guide.

New coaches, mentors and volunteers will be provided with the appropriate level of coaching requirements e.g. FUNdamentals, Children First. This is funded by the Club. Membership fees are also funded by the club in respect of volunteer roles as coaches and mentors with participating football teams.

Officers, coaches, mentors and members must also adhere to the Code of Behaviour and have signed this on registration with the club.

### 4.4.1 Supervision by Coaches and Mentors

The club understands that young people should always be adequately supervised regardless of activity, and it is the responsibility of Clubs to ensure that a satisfactory ratio of adults to young people is always maintained.

A female coach/mentor will always be designated in each team and a minimum of two coaches/mentors should be at all trainings/matches etc. A coach should be accompanied by at least one other adult at coaching sessions, games and in underage team dressing rooms. Coaches/Mentors must abide by a minimum ratio of 2 adults to 10 children, (2:10). This ratio level requires at least one qualified coach and at least one other responsible adult to be present at all times. Groups of 10-20 children must have a minimum of 3 adults present at all times. In the case of an all-female team, at least one of the two adults must be female.

Coaches will ensure they speak with a player in an open environment in view of others. Coaches and mentors should not enter the team's dressing room on their own without a female present and they must be accompanied by another adult. This is to protect the privacy of underage players and the credibility of the adult and to avoid any situation whereby the unaccompanied presence of an adult could give cause for concern.

Coaches and mentors will always clearly state start/finish times of training and if possible, of games (home or away) and other activities including trips away from home.

Coaches and mentors will remain with underage players until they have been collected or have left in accordance with parental or guardian permission.

Coaches and Mentors will clearly demonstrate to parents around events/day trips and advise parents of the beginning and end time of said event. In the event of players being there past clear event hours; it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing.

Coaches will keep attendance records and record any injuries/incidents as they arise.

## 4.5 Club AGM & Meetings

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is the single most important meeting of the year for the club. It is where account is given of the stewardship of the club for the previous year and where tentative plans for the following year are laid out. The AGM is also the meeting where the new Coiste (the executive of the club) is elected and where Motions & Resolutions are debated and voted upon. The club will endeavor to have monthly progress meetings and development meetings throughout the year. All nominations for positions to the Club Committees and all matters which require a proposal and seconder must be made by two separate people.

## 4.6 Player Awards

Player of the Year Awards at Senior Level are determined by the management of the Senior Team. The Player of the Year Awards are awarded at the annual Club Dinner dance. At underage level, Player of the Year awards are granted at the Bord na nOg presentation. As a guide to be eligible for this award; you must be a registered member of the club, demonstrated commitment to the club and in particular your team in terms of training, matches; development of skills, not have been involved in any disciplinary matters throughout the year and meet Code of Behaviour rules for players to the best of your ability.

## 4.7 Club Development Policy

The LGFA '*Club Player Development of Competencies Chart*' is a guide for mentors, parents and players in clubs to provide advice on what areas they need to develop in every player at key stages of their careers in the club. It is aimed to increase enjoyment and stimulation at the key stages with player welfare as they key component. We hope that this will assist members in our club reach their full potential and encourage coaches/mentors to adapt this into their own plans. Teams and players will develop at different rates and it is important that coaches are aware of this and adapt the pathways where required for their own club. A copy of the pathway is available in the appendices and on <https://ladiesgaelic.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/LGFA-Club-Player-Competency-Chart.pdf>

## 4.7.1 Playing Policy

### Attire

Players of Charlestown LGFA must wear the correct attire when representing the club. The attire to be worn shall be a jersey, shorts, socks and boots. Correct eyewear and gum shields should also be worn by players. Failure to do so may result in the player not being allowed to participate in matches/training. The jersey colour is green and white. As of the Annual General Meeting 2019; shorts must be black (all black).

### Playing/Subbing Up

- € 'Playing/subbing up' is when a player plays and/or trains with an older panel of players; e.g. an under-13 player plays with an under-14 team. Where this occurs, the following rules apply: All players must give first preference to their own age group where football is available.
- In the event whereby players from a younger age group are brought to a team above (in cases where there is a shortage of players), the players chosen must be those older i.e. in the final year of playing in that age grade.
- In the event that players are brought up, it should not impact on game time of the players within that particular age group (i.e. preference to original team)
- If a player refuses to train or play with their own age-group, then they will not be allowed 'sub up'. This will be communicated to the parents and child.
- When a team needs a player to play up a grade, the coach must seek permission of the coach of the younger team to provide a player. The coach of the younger team is responsible for communicating the offer to the parents of the player involved.

### Minor Players

If Minor players are required to play up for the adult teams, then the following rules will apply:

1. No Minor player shall be asked or expected to play in a "Challenge Game" at adult level in a 7-day period prior to a knock-out Championship, Round Robin Championship, Championship or League play-off game at Minor level.
2. Where a clash of fixtures arises, Minor players shall play with the Minor team. Exceptions can be made where the adult fixture is of a higher priority, subject to the agreement of the team managers and the Mentors concerned. In the absence of such an agreement, the Club Committee must decide based on consultation with the coaches, player (and parent if applicable).
3. Minors shall be available to train with other adult teams only if they have participated in training at their own age (subject to injury and availability).
4. Subject to the agreement of the minor manager, mentors and senior management, players may join an adult squad for training and games when the progress of the minor team in their competitions has ended.

5. Requests for minor players to play with adult teams or issues that arise regarding their attendance etc. should be directed to the minor manager.

#### Joint Training

Due to low players numbers in some teams, there may be a requirement that joint team training occurs between two different age groups. One coach may be required to coach both age groups. In the event this occurs, due consideration must be given to the number of coaches/mentors involved to ensure adequate supervision and support.

#### County Trials

All communication received from Mayo LGFA in respect of any upcoming county trials will be communicated to the relevant teams by the committee via messaging groups. Coaches for the relevant team will nominate players based on guidelines and information outlined by the county team management. The list of trialists will be sent to Mayo LGFA via the official club email. Correspondence received from the county team management in relation to nominated trialists will be sent directly to parents or adult players if applicable. Communication will be sent to team messaging group by the coach that trialists have been picked and if their child is picked, will receive further communication directly. Should parents have any queries, this should be directed to the official club email.

#### 4.7.2 Coaching Policy

As outlined, Charlestown LGFA have minimum requirements to be a coach or mentor in the club, e.g. garda vetting, child protection training, coaching course completion. Details on the recruitment and selection of coaches and mentors is available [here](#).

No ad-hoc assistance is allowed in coaching teams. Coaches and mentors must be vetted and safeguarded. If there is a shortfall in coaches, they must use the pool of coaches already vetted/safeguarded within the club.

To ensure our players have a well-rounded and diverse experience of coaches from underage to adult as is best practice, we endeavor to ensure that from U8- Senior each player receives a minimum experience of two different head coaches. This policy is adopted so that coaches are supported in their desire to deliver quality age-appropriate coaching. Teams do not become over reliant on one individual. Players are exposed to a variety of coaching styles. Coaches are encouraged to gain experience in various roles.

#### 4.8. Pitches & Facilities

To book a pitch for a match and training, you must utilise the Pitch Booking App available to the club. In the case of your match being cancelled, the app must be updated accordingly. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure correct information is input onto the app. Details on how to utilise the app and rules around the use of the pitch is available in Bord na nOg's annual club handbook.



## 4.8.2 Use of the Dressing Rooms

The following few points relating to the use of the dressing rooms should be remembered:

- Home and visiting team dressing rooms must be cleaned out by the home team.
- Dressing rooms should be swept clean after each team uses it and any damage to the dressing room or club property must be reported to the committee as soon as possible.
- Players are advised not to leave valuables or cash in the dressing rooms. The club will not accept responsibility for any loss. Visiting teams and referees should be advised in this regard.
- Please ensure that the dressing rooms are locked after use by your team. Ensure lights are turned off & dressing room is locked after each session. Return dressing rooms keys after matches to the relevant person
- Boots should be cleaned before entering the dressing room and players/coaches should leave the dressing room in an acceptable manner for the next team entering.
- Report any damage found
- Charlestown LGFA require that at least one female mentor is assigned to each team and that said mentor is always available on match and training days. In the absence of an assigned mentor; the coach must appoint another mentor/parent with garda vetting to stand in.

## 4.9 Club Disciplinary, Complaints & Appeals Procedure

Disciplinary matters, complaints and breaches of the club code can occur from time to time. When minor disciplinary breaches of the club's policies occur, it may be opportune and appropriate to deal with such breaches as they occur. Therefore, it may, depending on the level of breach, be deemed appropriate for a coach, mentor or other official to deal with such instances as they happen. Inevitably, however, there will be situations that arise from time to time where best informal efforts at mediation and counselling fail to resolve grievances, disciplinary or complaints. It is in this context, and only in this context, that a more formal and structured approach will be applied.

These more formal approaches have been established to provide a fair, transparent and consistent procedure that provides due process to all parties to the grievance or disciplinary matter.

### 4.9.1 Disciplinary

Any disciplinary matters related to players, mentors, coaches, parents should be reported to the Executive Committee. Breaches of the club Code of Behaviour will be dealt with through the Club's Code of Behaviour process for dealing with alleged breaches. The Executive Committee shall revert the discipline matter to the Club Children's Officer (if underage matter) or Club Disciplinary Officer.

The Club Disciplinary Officer will be appointed by the chairperson of the club and shall not be a member of the executive committee. The Club Disciplinary Officer will investigate or process any complaint within the club.

A Club Hearings Committee will be appointed to hear a complaint or disciplinary matter on a case-by-case basis (that has not been resolved by the Children's Officer or Disciplinary Officer). The Club Chairperson will appoint this committee with representatives from the GAA club, Bord na nOg and LGFA. This is in line with the CODA rules as per the LGFA's guidance.

For more details on how this club follows disciplinary matters (outside of Code of Behaviour breaches) please see Part 3 of the Official Guide of the LGFA available on <https://ladiesgaelic.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Official-Guide-2022.pdf>

#### 4.9.2 Offences

Offences can be distinguished into three categories Objection, Complaint and Disciplinary. Disciplinary Matters may also fall under the Code of Behaviour.

##### Objection

- (a) Fielding a player who is underage or overage
- (b) Fielding of a player who is not eligible to play for that Team, Club, County, School, College or Province
- (c) Fielding a player who is suspended or expelled from playing
- (d) Transfer of a player contrary to Rule

##### Complaint

- (a) Bullying
- (b) Intimidation
- (c) Inappropriate Language
- (d) Inappropriate conduct
- (e) Racism
- (f) Sexism
- (g) Ageism

##### Disciplinary Matter

- (a) Breach of any rules, regulations and Codes of Ethics of the Association
- (b) Verbal abuse
- (c) Physical abuse
- (d) Insulting behaviour to other competitors, match officials and/or any Officials 109

- (e) Violation of instructions and directives from match officials and/or any Officials
- (f) Failure or refusal to comply with an investigation carried out by an Official without acceptable justification
- (g) Abuse or discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion or ethnic origin
- (h) Foul play i.e. use of excessive force (i) Serious foul play inciting a brawl or violence (j) Match fixing
- (k) Forgery or falsification
- (l) Improperly influencing the outcome of a game for financial gain
- (m) Bringing the Ladies Gaelic Football Association into disrepute
- (n) Alcohol or substance abuse by minor members at an event
- (o) Criminal investigation for indictable offences
- (p) Criminal conviction likely to bring the LGFA into disrepute
- (q) Mischievous or vexatious Complaints
- (r) Participation at an event without the permission of the LGFA
- (s) Purporting to represent the LGFA without the permission of the LGFA
- (t) Taking part in an event/competition organised by a club or committee not affiliated to the LGFA with the exception of those sanctioned events listed in the Rules

#### 4.9.3 Hearings

Any Member under the age of 18 shall be accompanied by their Parent at a hearing. In all cases, but particularly where the subject of the Complaint is under 18, steps should be taken to ensure the fair treatment of both parties. The Club Children's Officer will be present at a hearing where the matter concerns an under 18-year-old Member. The Children's Officer may be invited to make submissions on behalf of the child at the hearing.

The committee shall inform the person whom the complaint is about in writing. They may then provide a response in writing or verbally at a meeting of the committee. They are invited and encouraged to be accompanied by a friend or colleague.

All stages of this process will be clearly documented and recorded and will be treated with confidentiality at all times. The outcome of any hearing's committee a report will be sent to the club secretary. These reports will be kept on file by the club secretary.

#### 4.9.4 Sanctions

Following investigation by the Children's Officer, Disciplinary Officer or Club Hearing's Committee the following outcomes or sanctions may apply:

- a) No further action required by Children's Officer and matter resolved informally
- b) Refer matter to Club Disciplinary Officer for further investigation
- c) Refer matter to Club Hearing's Committee for further investigation

The following outcomes may apply and not limited to:

- Issue warning as to future behaviour
- Conditions in respect of the membership or level of participation that a person may have including, but not limited to, training or re-training of members appropriate to their roles and interaction with children and young people in the relevant Association
- Restriction from club teams
- Suspension from the club
- Expulsion from the club

If the complaint involves child abuse, the procedure for reporting allegations of child abuse shall be used as referred to the Club's Child Protection Policy. The Hearings Committee or Appeals Committee has sole jurisdiction to impose a Sanction(s).

#### 4.9.5 Appeals

An appeal from a decision of the Club Hearings Committee shall be made to the County Board Appeals Committee (CODA).

## Section 5 Other Club Policies

### 5.1 Social Media & Communication Policy

Charlestown LGFA has adapted the LGFA Social Media and Policy Guidelines as detailed here (<https://ladiesgaelic.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/LGFA-Social-Media-Guidelines.pdf>).

The purpose of 'Charlestown LGFA' Club WhatsApp Group is to distribute club news and events to Club Members. This is a 'Broadcast List' Group only. This is one way information stream in relation to team and club related posts and announcements. Should responses be required they reply to the broadcast message which will go directly to the person writing the message e.g., availability re: volunteering, fundraising.

Team 'WhatsApp' groups are set up by the appointed Team Management for the team at the beginning of the playing year. Team 'What's App' groups are **solely** for the purpose of sharing information club and team related re: games, trainings, lift to matches, changes to games/times, club events. They should not be used to post private or confidential messages. Each team 'What's App' group must contain a member of the Club Executive.

Underage team WhatsApp groups should not contain an underage player i.e. a player under the age of 18 years of age. If a parent asks for the minor to be part of the Senior Team group; parents must be clear that the child's number and photograph will be shared with all members of the group. The minor may be included on the Senior Team WhatsApp group only if their parent is also included in this group.

Team WhatsApp groups must be deleted when no longer required. Members of groups who are no longer part of the team/committee club will be removed by Club Executive who is admin in each group.

It is not necessary to respond to every message unless it is requested e.g., numbers for games, changes to training dates/times etc.

#### General Social Media/Communication Guidelines:

- Mentors should never communicate by text or email with an individual underage player.
- Members of WhatsApp Group should be made aware that their photo, phone number and name is available to all members in that group.
- All group texts / emails should be sent to parents/adults and not underage players.
- Individual texting to an underage player by their coach or mentor is a breach of the Club Social Media Policy and will be dealt with within Club Disciplinary Procedures.
- Messages should never contain any offensive, abusive or inappropriate language. They should not be open to misinterpretation
- No coach/mentor or Club Executive members should engage in communications with children via personal social media sites.
- Charlestown LGFA will seek parental consent at the start of the season for communications and photograph approval

- Information published on the Club's websites/social networking sites must never include personal information that could identify a child e.g. home address, email address, telephone number of a child. Credit for achievements by a child should be restricted to first names e.g. Congratulations to Mary Player of the Year 2010.
- Children must never be portrayed in a demeaning, tasteless or provocative manner. Children should never be portrayed in a state of partial undress, other than when depicting an action shot within the context of the sport.
- Information about specific events or meetings that involves any player e.g. Feile, county trials, playing/subbing up, coaching sessions must not be distributed to any individuals other than to those directly concerned. If this is a minor, then the communication will be with the child's guardian/parent.
- Communications for Charlestown LGFA on social media shall be through the Club's official accounts only and not personal accounts. The Charlestown LGFA is a public account managed by the Club Executive e.g. Facebook, Twitter.
- If an underage player obtains a mentor's phone number or email address and attempts to make direct contact with the mentor, he / she must instruct the child not to do so and inform their parent/guardian of same. The Club Children's Officer should also be made aware of this.
- Should any unsuitable material to be shared the WhatsApp group, the person will be removed from the group and subject to Club Disciplinary Procedures.

## 5.2 First Aid Policy

A number of our club coaches, parents and representatives have completed First Aid and Defibrillator Workshop and are ready to help on the sidelines if ever needed. A list of these names will be made available to parents, guardians, coaches, mentors and players through social media and in the club dressing rooms.

## 5.3 Trips/Travel/Team Bonding

Any team building, bonding or away trips must be prior agreed and discussed with committee. Costs in respect of any team bonding will be primarily with the club players parent/guardian or adult player. A detailed itinerary of any proposed trips must be prepared in line with the Code of Behaviour guidelines in relation to [organising club activities](#). This is provided to parents prior to the trip.

All those attending trips in a supervisory capacity (i.e. responsible for more than one child who is not their own child) must be garda vetted and safeguarding completed.

Coaches will not transport a child alone. Transport in cars is arranged by coaches and mentors in full collaboration with parents/guardians so that everyone is clear about the arrangements and is agreeable. Coaches and Mentors will communicate via WhatsApp groups to parents/guardians prior to trip occurring.

While it may be preferential to avail of private bus or coach transport it is also recognised that in some instances this is not feasible and many of our teams cannot operate without the goodwill of volunteers and

parents who ensure that children are transported to an event or a match and are returned safely. The coaches and mentors will ensure they are aware of travel arrangements and how volunteers can make contact if any concern arises. Volunteers who provide transport should have a full driving license, insurance and ensure their car is safe (e.g. NCT, roadworthy).

## 5.4 Anti-Bullying Policy

Charlestown LGFA aim to create a supportive environment where any form of Bullying is unacceptable. We adopt 'a whole organisational approach' to addressing Bullying and are committed to implementing structures and relevant training to deal with allegations of Bullying. Incidents of Bullying are regarded as serious breaches of our Code of Behaviour (Underage). We are committed to achieving an ethos of respect so as to maximize the potential of all our members when playing or participating in our Gaelic Games".

Should concerns arise in respect of bullying; coaches/parents and mentors should make the club children's officer aware as soon as possible. Once an allegation of bullying is reported the club children's officer will screen the information provided and ascertain any level of harm to any child. The Children's Officer will talk to all underage players if required without naming anyone and explain the club's Anti-Bullying Statement.

Our Club Anti-Bullying Statement is outlined in the club dressing rooms. (see appendices)

## 5.5 Injury Fund Policy

The LGFA has an injury fund which pays out the following:

1. Medical Expenses – €5,500, which includes GP Visits, Physio (6 Sessions @ 90%), MRI's, Consultant Visits & Surgery (once prior approved)
2. Dental Expenses – €3,000
3. Loss of Wages – A maximum €200 per week for a max of 20 weeks. Applies to all adult members but if you're a juvenile with a part time job, you must pay the adult rate to qualify.

In order to claim the benefits above, you must fill in a preliminary form within 8 weeks of the injury and it must be given to the Club Secretary for signature and onwards processing. Forms are available in the club dressing room 4 or online at [ladiesgaelic.ie](http://ladiesgaelic.ie). Once treatment is completed you must fill in the full claims form along with all your paid original receipts (no photocopies) to Rosemary Coyle, LGFA, Croke Park, Dublin 3. Again, they require club and county secretary signatures.

\*There are exclusions and further details available on the LGFA website. It is your responsibility to ensure you are aware of these prior to submitting an injury claim. \*

It is the responsibility of the player/parent to ensure they are aware of the Rules and Guidelines pursuant to Injury Fund outlined in the LGFA Official Guide.

## 5.6 Mouthguards

Mouthguards are obligatory in ladies football since 1st January 2017. It is the responsibility of each player to use a mouthguard. Players may not be able to play a game, train or be covered under insurance if they do not wear one. Parents can buy these mouthguards in local shops or sports shops nationwide.

## 5.7 Concussion

Most concussion injuries occur without a loss of consciousness and so it is important to recognise the other signs and symptoms of concussion. Some symptoms develop immediately while other symptoms may appear gradually over time. There are leaflets available to coaches, mentors, parents and players about recognising the signs and symptoms of concussion in Club Dressing Room 4 and online at <http://ladiesgaelic.ie/resources/concussion-guidelines/>. Coaches will be familiar with concussion guidelines.

If a player has ANY ONE of the visible clues they MUST be immediately removed from activity and MUST NOT return until they have completed the graduated return to play protocol.

How to recognise concussion:

- Lying motionless on ground
- Slow to get up
- Unsteady on feet
- Balance problems or falling over
- Grabbing/Clutching head
- Dazed, blank or vacant look
- Confused/Not aware of plays or events
- Suspected or confirmed loss of consciousness
- Loss of responsiveness

If a player has a suspected concussion:

- The player MUST be immediately removed from activity and MUST NOT return.
- The player MUST NOT be left alone.
- The player MUST NOT drive a vehicle.
- The player MUST always be in the care of a responsible adult, who is informed of the player's suspected concussion.
- The player should be medically assessed as soon as possible.



## 5.8 GDPR/Data Protection Policy

The LGFA processes personal information to administer and conduct LGFA related activities. This includes membership and player registrations, team sheets, disciplinary processes, communications and notifications of LGFA events, club fundraising activities, coaching activities and compliance related requirements (i.e. vetting and insurance). We will never share your information with third parties for any purpose without your consent.

The LGFA uses a centralised electronic database called Foireann for processing LGFA Membership registrations. Each LGFA club has access to the database and enters the relevant information from each of their members onto this system.

The purpose for processing your Personal Data is that it is necessary for the performance of a contract in order to register and maintain your membership with the Club and the LGFA. The purpose is also to keep you informed of LGFA events and fundraisers. We will only use your personal data for this second purpose if you have provided your explicit consent for this purpose.

The club registration form outlines the details in personal data collected and provides further information on data protection. Each year the Committee will complete a GDPR Risk Assessment to ensure adherence to GDPR and Data Protection Policies.

## 5.9 Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policy

The use of drugs and tobacco is not permitted by any members whilst representing Charlestown LGFA. The misuse of alcohol is not permitted while representing Charlestown LGFA. Charlestown LGFA believe that we need to work towards creating a safe, healthy Club environment where we can develop the skills and attitudes necessary to cope with drug and alcohol related issues. All Club members, officials, coaches and volunteers as part of this Club shall follow the law when it comes to illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco and shall display leadership and good example, particularly when dealing with underage members. This policy shall apply to all users of the Club buildings and grounds.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1 Club Safeguarding Statement



# Child Safeguarding Statement

The Gaelic Athletic Associations (GAA, LGFA, Camogie, Handball and Rounders) in accordance with our Code of Behaviour (Underage), our policies, procedures and our legislative requirements have agreed this Child Safeguarding Statement, which is binding on all members and units of our Associations.

The basic aims of the Gaelic Athletic Associations include fostering and developing our Gaelic Games and Irish cultural activities among young people and children. These games and related activities are promoted by dedicated volunteers at Club, County, Provincial and National levels with the cooperation and support of an equally dedicated cohort of staff all of whom are committed to the safeguarding of children and young people in our Association as we seek to create a safe environment for young people to grow and develop.

### PRINCIPLES TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN FROM HARM

This statement recognises that in accordance with legislation and with the requirements of our Codes and Rules that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that all children and young people have a positive, developmental and enjoyable experience of Gaelic Games and when participating in our activities that they do so, as far as is practicable, in a safe and enjoyable environment.

### RISK ASSESSMENT

In preparing this statement we have completed a risk assessment of the potential for harm to children when they are participating in our games and attending our activities under the following headings: Club and Coaching Practices; Complaints & Discipline; Reporting Procedures; Facilities; Recruitment; Communications and General Risk of Harm.

To the right is a list of areas of risk identified and the list of procedures and policies that address these risks.

### RISK IDENTIFIED

Risk of harm including assault, ill treatment or neglect of a child that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare or sexual abuse of a child

Risk of harm of abuse when hosting an activity and or an away trip  
 Risk of harm of online abuse through social media  
 Bullying of a child

### PROCEDURE/POLICIES IN PLACE

Code of Behaviour (Underage) (QR code 1)  
 Maintaining Good Practice and Behaviour (QR code 2)  
 Recruitment Policy  
 Vetting Policy  
 Safeguarding Training Policy  
 Guidance for Dealing with & Reporting Allegations or Concerns of Abuse (QR code 3)



Code of Behaviour (Underage)-Hosting, Away Trips & Transport  
 Code of Behaviour (Underage)  
 Association Social Media Policy  
 Anti-Bullying Statement, Guidelines & Training

### PROCEDURES

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been prepared in accordance with the legislative requirements contained in the First Act 2015, Children's First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), the Children (NI) Order 1995, Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice and as required by our Association rules.

Each Club shall maintain a list of members who, if known, and in accordance with the Children First Act 2015, are specified in what role (any), they hold in the Club.

The following procedures contained in our risk assessment support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our services.

- Procedure in respect of the management of allegations of abuse against any member, non-member or staff/volunteer of a child availing of our services
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to the Association, Tusla and or Gateway Team as applicable
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children and young people
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person i.e. the Children's Officer (National, Club and County as appropriate) who is the relevant person for the purpose of this statement (see name below)
- Procedure for provision of and access to Gaelic Games Child Safeguarding Training and information including the identification of the occurrence of harm

### MANDATED PERSON PROCEDURES

The Mandated Person, who has a legal obligation to report harm of children as per legislation and who has been employed for the purpose of performing the child welfare and protection functions within each of our Associations is:


<b>GAA/Rounders</b>	Gearóid Ó	mandatedperson@gaa.ie
<b>Camogie</b>	Maoilmhichil Roberta	mandatedperson@camogie.ie
<b>Handball</b>	Farrell	mandatedperson.handball@gaa.ie
<b>LGFA</b>	John Kelly Paula Prunty	mandatedperson@lgfa.ie

All policies and procedures listed above are available at [www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-welfare-and-protection](http://www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-welfare-and-protection)

### IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The Gaelic Athletic Associations recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. The Associations are committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures that support our intention to keep child young people safe from harm while availing of our service. This Statement adopted and endorsed by our Club Executive Committee will be reviewed by **31st of May 2023** or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.



  
 Club Children's Officer

# Appendix 2 Anti-Bullying Statement

# GAA Tackling Bullying

**GAA**

The GAA aims to create a supportive environment where any form of bullying is unacceptable.

We adopt a whole organisational approach to addressing bullying and are committed to implementing structures and relevant training to deal with allegations of bullying. Incidents of bullying are regarded as serious breaches of our Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport, Our Games - Our Code.

We are committed to achieving an ethos of respect so as to maximise the potential of all of our members when playing or participating in our Gaelic Games.

## WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying can take many different forms:

- **VERBAL:** threatening consequences, spreading rumours, name calling, teasing, making sexual/racist/sectarian remarks, highlighting physical appearances or sporting ability.
- **PHYSICAL:** kicking, punching, hitting, spitting, biting, tripping, theft or destruction of property and kit.
- **EMOTIONAL:** ignoring, excluding, getting people into trouble, talking behind their backs, writing unpleasant notes/letters/graffiti, writing letters/text messages/emails or comments.
- **CYBERBULLYING:** when instant messages, emails, text messages, webpages or social network sites are used to spread rumours, make threats or harass. It can include written messages, photographs, videos or voice messages.

## PREVENTING BULLYING

It is the responsibility of everybody in the Club to prevent or if need be to deal with incidents of Bullying.

**GAA players, coaches, spectators and Clubs should:**

- ✓ Implement the Code of Behaviour when working with underage players
- ✓ Create a supportive environment where it is not acceptable to Bully
- ✓ Support the ethos of the Club that its 'ok to tell'
- ✓ Make everybody aware of our Anti Bullying Policy
- ✓ Promote the Give Respect - Get Respect initiative

## DEALING WITH BULLYING

How do you know if it's Bullying?  
Ask yourself the following questions:

- TARGETED** Is the behaviour targeted at a group or individual?
- DURATION** Has this behaviour been happening over a period of time?
- FREQUENCY** How frequent is the behaviour and is there a pattern occurring?
- INTENTION** Is the intention of the behaviour to cause pain/harm/distress to an individual or group?

Every person in membership of a GAA Club or attending our games or activities should be fully aware that Bullying is unacceptable in the GAA

## GIVE RESPECT GET RESPECT

Our games. Our choice.

The Children's Officer in each club has a responsibility to promote an 'anti bullying ethos' and ensure that the Club adheres to the Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport - Our Games - Our Code.

## BULLYING CAN HAPPEN FROM

- Young Person To Young Person
- Young Person To Adult
- Adult To Young Person
- Adult To Adult

## Appendix 3 Child Protection Definitions of Abuse

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger, and can be an adult or another child. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, you should consider it a child welfare and protection issue for both children and you should follow child protection procedures for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

The important factor in deciding whether the behaviour is abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the parent/carer.

The definitions of neglect and abuse presented in this section are not legal definitions. They are intended to describe ways in which a child might experience abuse and how this abuse may be recognised.

### **Neglect**

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences.

Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect.

Neglect is associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental illness and disability.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where you see the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.

The following are features of child neglect:

- Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation
- Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation

- Inadequate living conditions – unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture
- Lack of adequate clothing
- Inattention to basic hygiene
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age
- Persistent failure to attend school
- Abandonment or desertion

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children's emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer.

Emotional abuse may be seen in some of the following ways:

- Rejection
- Lack of comfort and love
- Lack of attachment
- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play)
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned) Continuous lack of praise and encouragement
- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child
- Bullying
- Conditional parenting in which care or affection of a child depends on his or her behaviours or actions
- Extreme overprotectiveness

- Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. locking child in bedroom) Ongoing family conflicts and family violence
- Seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to his/her age and stage of development

There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour.

It should be noted that no one indicator is conclusive evidence of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is more likely to impact negatively on a child where it is persistent over time and where there is a lack of other protective factors.

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health and/ or development is, may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

Physical abuse can include the following:

- Physical punishment
- Beating, slapping, hitting or kicking
- Pushing, shaking or throwing
- Pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling
- Use of excessive force in handling
- Deliberate poisoning
- Suffocation Fabricated/induced illness
- Female genital mutilation

The Children First Act 2015 includes a provision that abolishes the common law defence of reasonable chastisement in court proceedings. This defence could previously be invoked by a parent or other person in authority who physically disciplined a child. The change in the legislation now means that in prosecutions relating to assault or physical cruelty, a person who administers such punishment to a child cannot rely on the defence of reasonable chastisement in the legal proceedings. The result of this is that the protections in law relating to assault now apply to a child in the same way as they do to an adult.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography.

Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and in some instances occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members.

Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings/friends, from the suspicions of an adult, and/or by physical symptoms.

Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child
- An invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of a child's body whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
- Masturbation in the presence of a child or the involvement of a child in an act of masturbation
- Sexual intercourse with a child, whether oral, vaginal or anal
- Sexual exploitation of a child, which includes:
- Inviting, inducing or coercing a child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography [for example, exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means]
- Inviting, coercing or inducing a child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent or obscene act
- Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse Exposing a child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person

An Garda Síochana will deal with any criminal aspects of a sexual abuse case under the relevant criminal justice legislation. The prosecution of a sexual offence against a child will be considered within the wider objective of child welfare and protection. The safety of the child is paramount and at no stage should a child's safety be compromised because of concern for the integrity of a criminal investigation.

In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in criminal law the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal. However, it may not necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse

## **BULLYING**

It is recognised that bullying affects the lives of an increasing number of children and can be the cause of genuine concerns about a child's welfare.

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression – whether it is verbal, psychological or physical – that is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools. It includes behaviours such as physical aggression, cyberbullying, damage to property, intimidation, isolation/exclusion, name calling, malicious gossip and extortion. Bullying can also take the form of abuse based on gender identity, sexual preference, race, ethnicity and religious factors. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying, via mobile phones, the internet and other personal devices.


While bullying can happen to any child, some may be more vulnerable. These include: children with disabilities or special educational needs; those from ethnic minority and migrant groups; from the Traveller community; lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children and those perceived to be LGBT; and children of minority religious faiths.

There can be an increased vulnerability to bullying among children with special educational needs. This is particularly so among those who do not understand social cues and/or have difficulty communicating. Some children with complex needs may lack understanding of social situations and therefore trust everyone implicitly. Such children may be more vulnerable because they do not have the same social skills or capacity as others to recognise and defend themselves against bullying behaviour.

*(Adapted from CHILDREN FIRST National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2017)*




# Appendix 4 Player Competency Chart



**LGFA**  
PEIL na mBAN

**LGFA Club Player Competencies Chart**

The LGFA Player Development Competencies Chart is a guide for mentors, parents and players in clubs to provide advice on what areas they need to develop in every player at key stages of their careers in the club. It is aimed to increase enjoyment and stimulation at the key stages with player welfare as their key component. We hope that this will assist clubs around the country in the development of their players to reach their full potential and encourage clubs to adapt this into their own plans. Teams and players will develop at different rates and it is important that coaches are aware of this and adapt the pathways where required for their own club. The below is just a guideline on competencies of players at the various ages and new players can enter this pathway at any stage



## Learning required for Strand

Foundation Phase Three (F3) - Commitment to Gaelic Games and Active Lifestyle						
Foundation Phase One (F1) – Fundamental Movement Skills	Foundation Phase Two (F2) – Extension & Refinement of Movement					
Nursery (6-8 years)	U-9 to U-11	U-12 to U-14	U-15 to U-18	U-19 to Adult	Gaelic4Mothers & Others	
<p><b>Technical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jumping</li> <li>• Catching - Body</li> <li>• Throwing</li> <li>• Rolling</li> <li>• Bouncing the ball</li> <li>• 4steps</li> <li>• Pass (hand &amp; fist)</li> <li>• Punt kick</li> <li>• Pick Up</li> <li>• Solo</li> <li>• Shadowing</li> <li>• Encourage both sides</li> <li>• Regular testing of above basic skills</li> </ul> <p><b>Tactical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FUN games</li> <li>• Fair play</li> <li>• Friendly competition</li> <li>• Spatial awareness</li> <li>• Introduction to team games</li> <li>• Awareness of basic positional roles</li> </ul> <p><b>Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agility</li> <li>• Balance</li> <li>• Coordination</li> <li>• Running</li> <li>• Jumping</li> <li>• Landing / Stopping</li> <li>• Introduction to warm up and cool down</li> </ul> <p><b>Psycho-Social</b></p> <p><b>Mental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enthusiasm</li> <li>• Self esteem</li> <li>• Self confidence</li> <li>• Increased attention span</li> <li>• Introduction to team rather than self-centred</li> <li>• Increase concentration</li> </ul> <p><b>Lifestyle/ Personal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taught value of being on time</li> <li>• Co-operation – positive response to discipline structure</li> <li>• Awareness of health and safety issues</li> <li>• Promote practicing skills at home (Refer to LGFA Skills Booklet)</li> </ul> <p><b>Coaching Style Required</b></p> <p><b>Direct</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players need to be led or shown</li> <li>• Instructions are important</li> <li>• Allowed to make mistakes</li> <li>• Encouraged to use both sides</li> <li>• Use of target games progressed to court games and finally field games</li> </ul>	<p><b>Technical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catching – High</li> <li>• Soling – both sides</li> <li>• Pass (hand &amp; fist) – both sides</li> <li>• Punt kick – both sides</li> <li>• Hook kick</li> <li>• Tackle with hand (basic)</li> <li>• Introduction to blocking</li> <li>• Regular testing of above skills</li> </ul> <p><b>Tactical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic rules of Go Games</li> <li>• Awareness of opposition</li> <li>• Team play – basic attack and defence</li> <li>• Basic support play</li> <li>• Continued spatial awareness</li> </ul> <p><b>Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further agility, balance and co-ordination</li> <li>• Increased understanding of warm up and cool down</li> <li>• Introduction to flexibility and mobility</li> <li>• Continued jumping and landing techniques</li> <li>• Acceleration / Deceleration</li> </ul> <p><b>Psycho-Social</b></p> <p><b>Mental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued enthusiasm</li> <li>• Build confidence and motivation</li> <li>• Positive attitude to sport</li> <li>• Build concentration</li> </ul> <p><b>Lifestyle/ Personal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taught value of playing on a team</li> <li>• Identification with positive role models</li> <li>• Accepts discipline structure</li> <li>• Teamwork/ interaction skills</li> <li>• Promote practicing skills at home</li> </ul> <p><b>Coaching Style Required</b></p> <p><b>Guide</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Huge emphasis on skill development</li> <li>• Depend on coach for feedback, Look &amp; Observe</li> <li>• Coach as commentator during games</li> <li>• Begin to form small friendship groups so keep all involved</li> <li>• Invasion games and emphasis on Go Games</li> </ul>	<p><b>Technical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing all skills on both sides:</li> <li>• Hand and fist pass</li> <li>• Punt and hook kick</li> <li>• Soling</li> <li>• Near hand tackle</li> <li>• Blocking</li> <li>• Evasion skills – side step, roll off</li> <li>• Angles of run</li> <li>• Timing of pass</li> <li>• Importance of getting 'head up'</li> <li>• Regular testing of skills</li> </ul> <p><b>Tactical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of competition rules</li> <li>• Support play for ball carrier</li> <li>• Identify and address strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>• Appreciation of consequences of actions</li> <li>• Spatial awareness under pressure</li> </ul> <p><b>Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to basic fitness techniques</li> <li>• Importance of proper hydration at training emphasised</li> <li>• Introduction to speed and acceleration</li> </ul> <p><b>Psycho-Social</b></p> <p><b>Mental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve success and be praised for it – basic targets</li> <li>• Setting short term goals</li> <li>• Sportsmanship encouraged and fostered</li> <li>• Increased decision making opportunities</li> </ul> <p><b>Lifestyle/ Personal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of sport in lifestyle</li> <li>• Good health and hygiene</li> <li>• Established self-identity</li> <li>• Basic nutrition and hydration</li> <li>• Promote practicing skills at home or in own time</li> </ul> <p><b>Coaching Style Required</b></p> <p><b>Delegate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to understand rules and competition</li> <li>• Start to compare to each other</li> <li>• Spot and fix from coach is important</li> <li>• Coach can start to use open questions to increase decision making</li> <li>• Transition from Go Games to Full sided games</li> </ul>	<p><b>Technical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform multi-functional roles – marking role, target player</li> <li>• Close correction of mistakes; technical and rule based with constructive criticism</li> <li>• Skill development within small sided games</li> <li>• Sports specific skills – free taking, penalties etc.</li> <li>• Regular testing of skills</li> </ul> <p><b>Tactical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full rules of 15-a-side game</li> <li>• Introduction of the 'Sin Bin'</li> <li>• Understand game plans</li> <li>• Implement patterns of play</li> <li>• Develop positional requirements</li> <li>• Basic performance analysis with progression</li> </ul> <p><b>Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop fitness – anaerobic and aerobic</li> <li>• Basic strength and conditioning</li> <li>• Multidirectional runs</li> <li>• Explanation of training system: how to train for speed, strength, endurance etc.</li> <li>• Periodisation training system</li> <li>• Establish recovery routines</li> </ul> <p><b>Psycho-Social</b></p> <p><b>Mental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal setting – long and short term</li> <li>• Self-motivation</li> <li>• Taught how to prepare for matches; pre-match, half time and post-match</li> <li>• Basic mental preparation techniques – relaxation</li> <li>• Capable of teamwork and taking advice</li> <li>• Coping strategies during a game encouraged by coach</li> </ul> <p><b>Lifestyle/ Personal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambition – commitment to develop</li> <li>• Stressed importance on team work</li> <li>• Role model for younger players in club</li> <li>• Life balance – integration of sport, study and life goals</li> <li>• Importance of rest and recovery</li> <li>• Increased knowledge of nutrition and hydration issues</li> <li>• Coping with set-backs/ failures</li> </ul> <p><b>Coaching Style Required</b></p> <p><b>Excite</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training for competition</li> <li>• Stimulating training</li> <li>• Use of conditioned games</li> <li>• Group opinion important for evaluation</li> <li>• Coach the players to look, see, decide and act – Increased decision making</li> <li>• Set team standards</li> <li>• Individual programmes required to work on weaknesses</li> </ul>	<p><b>Technical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform multi-functional roles – play maker, decoy, distributor</li> <li>• Reinforcement of skills</li> <li>• Minimise weaknesses in individual game by correction of error using feedback &amp; self-analysis</li> <li>• Consolidate and enhance strengths</li> <li>• Competition specific training</li> </ul> <p><b>Tactical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness of oppositions tactical strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>• Use of conditioned games to assist in teaching of tactical moves</li> <li>• Adaptation of different situations i.e. environment, opponents etc.</li> <li>• Implement performance analysis</li> <li>• Ability to adapt tactical strategies during a game</li> <li>• Consideration of tactical developments within a game</li> <li>• Identify opponents game plan and develop counter tactics which are practised</li> </ul> <p><b>Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance and improvement of fitness to optimise performance</li> <li>• Structured strength and conditioning</li> <li>• Careful planning and phasing of training</li> <li>• Use of conditioned games to develop aerobic capacity for sports specific activity</li> <li>• Well established recovery routines</li> </ul> <p><b>Psycho-Social</b></p> <p><b>Mental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players take own responsibility for preparation for training and match activity</li> <li>• Use of imagery and relaxation techniques in match</li> <li>• Individualised warm up routines</li> <li>• Concentration and focus</li> <li>• Self-coping strategies – regaining focus during a match</li> </ul> <p><b>Lifestyle/ Personal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role model for all players in club</li> <li>• Openness to further development opportunities</li> <li>• Positive use of influence or power</li> <li>• The pursuit of excellence</li> <li>• Full integration of sport, career and life goals</li> <li>• Well developed, self-monitoring lifestyle</li> </ul> <p><b>Coaching Style Required</b></p> <p><b>Involve</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement of players in decision making for the team or consultation process</li> <li>• Strong on self-evaluation</li> <li>• Challenging sessions with full decision making</li> <li>• Develop style of play</li> </ul>	<p><b>Technical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn the basic skills if not already acquired or re-develop</li> </ul> <p><b>Tactical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain recreational involvement</li> <li>• Awareness of basic rules if have no previous experience</li> <li>• FUN games</li> </ul> <p><b>Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep active through participation in programme</li> <li>• Establish recovery routine</li> </ul> <p><b>Psycho-Social</b></p> <p><b>Mental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustment to team environment or re-adjustment to non-competitive environment</li> <li>• Self-confidence</li> <li>• Self-esteem</li> </ul> <p><b>Lifestyle/ Personal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport taking less of focus on life if past player but more focus if have not played</li> <li>• Importance of social activities and having fun</li> <li>• Break from hectic life schedule!</li> </ul> <p><b>Coaching Style Required</b></p> <p><b>Social</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructions, demonstrations, fun games are important</li> <li>• Short, varied sessions to ensure maintaining interest</li> <li>• Coach/Player consultation for activities</li> </ul>	

## Appendix 6 Charlestown LGFA Committee

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
<b>Chairperson &amp; DLP</b>	David Kivlehan	<a href="mailto:Charlestown.mayo@lgfa.ie">Charlestown.mayo@lgfa.ie</a>
<b>Vice Chairperson</b>	Siobhan Durkin Richella Murphy	
<b>Secretary</b>	Gemma Higgins	<a href="mailto:Charlestown.mayo@lgfa.ie">Charlestown.mayo@lgfa.ie</a>
<b>Assistant Secretary</b>	Ella Doherty	
<b>Treasurer</b> <b>Assistant Treasurer</b>	Susan Gallagher Triona Donohue	
<b>Children's Officer</b>	Nora McGovern Sinead Harkin	<a href="mailto:Childrensofficer.charlestown.mayo@lgfa.ie">Childrensofficer.charlestown.mayo@lgfa.ie</a>
<b>PRO</b>	Serena Horkan	
<b>Club Registrar</b> <b>Assistant Registrar</b>	Sharon Egan Ella Brennan	

## Appendix 7 Membership Fees

<b>MEMBERSHIP TYPE</b>	<b>MEMBERSHIP FEE</b>
U10	€45
U12	€70
U14	€70
U16	€70
U18 (Minor)	€70
Adult Player Membership	€80
Full Non-Playing Member (with voting rights)	€37
Gaelic for Mothers & Others	€25

## Version History

Version	Date	By
0.1	19/July/2019	Caroline Tiernan
0.2	25/Nov/2019	Nora McGovern
0.3	22/Feb/2021	Nora McGovern
0.4	01/April/2021	Nora McGovern
0.5	26/April/2021	Nora McGovern
0.6	28/June/2021	Nora McGovern
0.7	19/May/2022	Nora McGovern
0.8	10/April/2023	Nora McGovern
0.9	11/December/2023	Nora McGovern
1.0	13/May/2024	Nora McGovern-committee member