

Irish Table Tennis Association Ltd

ULSTER BRANCH



Child Safeguarding Policy

Table Tennis Ulster (TTU) is committed to providing an environment that will allow children and young people to perform to the best of their ability, free from abuse, neglect, bullying and intimidation.

All children and young people who take part in table tennis are entitled to participate in a fun and safe environment, and we believe that everyone involved in our sport can play a part to safeguard and protect children from harm.

All clubs and club members have a legal and moral duty of care to protect children and young people from abusive and harmful behaviour. Children and young people should get the help they need, when they need it, and their safety is paramount.

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the commitment of TTU to build a safer future in table tennis for children, and our responsibility to:

- keep children and young people safe by valuing, listening to and respecting them
- promote the wellbeing of children through opportunities to take part in athletics safely
- put in place policies and procedures to promote the wellbeing and protection of children
- recruit, train and support all our staff and volunteers to prioritise the safety of children who take part in our activities.

DEFINITION OF A CHILD

For the purposes of this policy, a child means a person who has not attained the age of 18 years.

KEY PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on the following key principles:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- The protection and wellbeing of all children in our care is everyone's responsibility.
- Children and young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.
- Children and young people have the right to express views on all matters that affect them, should they wish to do so.
- Children and young people's rights and opinions should be respected and promoted.
- The best way to promote the wellbeing, health and development of a child is to work in partnership with the child, parents/carers and other relevant organisations.

IMPLEMENTATION

TTU will implement this policy and keep children safe by:

- Communicating to all your club volunteers that children and young people have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse and harm.
- Ensuring those supervising children and young people have been subject to appropriate recruitment and selection processes and are properly vetted either through Access NI or Garda Vetting Procedures
- promoting the health and wellbeing of children through the provision of opportunities to take part in table tennis safely
- put in place procedures to promote the wellbeing and protection of children and young people
- seek to prevent and address bullying through the development and implementation of effective anti-bullying policies and practices
- appoint a National Safeguarding Officer who should be a member of the Executive Committee.
- recruit, train and support our volunteers and staff to prioritise and safeguard the wellbeing of children who take part in our activities and protect them from harm
- require clubs, volunteers and staff to adopt and abide by this safeguarding policy and related procedures including the codes of conduct for working with children
- respect the rights of all children to express views on any matter which affect them, should they wish to do so
- respond to any child wellbeing or protection concerns in line with this policy and related procedures
- regularly monitor, review and evaluate the implementation of this policy and related procedures through open discussion with its members, Sports Councils and Statutory Authorities.
- ensure that all allegations of abuse are responded to promptly, in a confidential manner and in line with statutory guidelines.
- ensure that effective disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures are in place.
- implementing a club safeguarding policy and procedures that should be made available to everyone at club level.

Clubs and club members can help to safeguard children and young people by:

- sharing information about safeguarding best practice with everyone involved in your club.
- educating volunteers about the signs and indicators of abuse and how to respond appropriately.
- implement the guidelines and procedures related to this policy

- appoint a Club Welfare Officer
- safely recruit volunteers/staff in accordance with the recruitment guidance
- promote best practice and establish and implement club guidelines
- ensure all volunteers, officials, coaches, athletes and parents agree to and sign the club's code of conduct
- accept that all club committee members have a responsibility for safeguarding children's wellbeing and protecting them from harm, and are prepared to respond to any concerns of abuse or poor practice
- challenge and change poor practice
- promote an environment where all concerns can be raised without fear of victimisation or reprisal
- ensure that everyone volunteering or working with children at their club attends a relevant child safeguarding training course every three years

SAFE RECRUITMENT

Effective recruitment and selection procedures ensure that staff and volunteers have clearly defined roles and responsibilities which will help to protect children and young people within our sport. The majority of people who want to work or volunteer with children and young people within sport are well motivated, however some individuals will try to use sports organisations to gain access to children for inappropriate motives. Having safe recruitment and selection processes in place will help deter and screen out unsuitable individuals from your club.

Table Tennis Ulster recommends that all persons applying for a post within our sport should be the subject of an AccessNI Enhanced Disclosure check to ensure that they are suitable to work in regulated activity.

ACCESSNI OVERVIEW

Regulated activity involves working frequently (once a week or more) or unsupervised with children. For example, you work in regulated activity if you: teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children. An Enhanced Disclosure check for regulated activity will include a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which keeps lists of people who are unsuitable for work with children.

When appointing staff or engaging volunteers to work with children and young people, employers need to obtain an AccessNI Enhance Disclosure check to ensure that the individual is not barred from working with children and young people.

When applying for an AccessNI check Table Tennis Ulster require all applicants to complete an application form and produce identification. The application form can be downloaded from TTU's website.

Children and Young People with a Disability

Whilst disabled children are likely to suffer the same type of abuse as other children, research suggests that children with a disability are three to four times more likely to be abused than non-disabled children. Research has also shown that children with communication impairments, behavioural disorders, learning disabilities and sensory impairments are particularly vulnerable.

The most common forms of abuse experienced by disabled children are neglect and emotional abuse, although they may experience multiple abuses.

Communicating abuse is difficult for any child. They may be confused, fearful, traumatised and uncertain about what has happened and what might happen in the future. Not every child will disclose abuse or harm and there should be no greater expectation that disabled children will disclose more readily than any other children. Disclosing abuse can be more difficult for children who have a wide range of communication styles, and this can be more problematic if the perpetrator is also in a trusted role.

Contacts:

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Comprehensive guides to keeping children safe in sport are available from the NSPCC help@nspcc.org.uk and from Sports Coach UK www.sportscoachuk.org .