

# Wicklow Tennis Club

## Child Protection Policy

This policy applies to all those involved in Wicklow Tennis Club including, but not limited to, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteer drivers, members, parents and young people.

### CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

**Wicklow Tennis Club 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 their rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the club and the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport.**

\*Sports Leaders are any adults involved in working with children in either a paid or unpaid capacity.

Wicklow Tennis Club supports the view that all children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. In this context the club undertakes to adopt the definition of fair play as set out in the European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe (1993).

*"Fair play is much more than playing within the rules. It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing within the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialism and corruption."*

In order to promote the best practice in children's sport, the club complies with the guidelines as set out in Section 2.7 of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport as follows:

- The club has adopted and implemented the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport as an integral part of its policy on children in the club.
- The club is operated under its Constitution. This document has been approved and adopted by club members at various Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings of the members of the club. Any changes to the Constitution have to be approved by the members of the club at a General Meeting of the members.
- The club permits all junior (i.e. under 18) members over 16 years of age to vote, where possible, in the running of the junior section of the club. One parent/guardian has one vote for all of their children under 16 years of age, where relevant.
- The General Executive of the club is elected by the club members at each Annual General Meeting in accordance with the procedures set out in the Constitution
- The club has adopted and consistently applies a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting Sports Leaders.
- The roles of the committee members, all Sports Leaders and parents/ guardians have been clearly defined.
- The club appoints one male and one female children's officer at the AGM as outlined in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport. One of the Children's officers is an ex officio member of the Executive Committee.
- The Executive Committee appoints a member of the club to act as Designated Person to liaise with the Statutory Authorities in relation to the reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse. Any such reports are made in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport.
- In order to ensure best practice throughout the club the Executive Committee disseminates its code of conduct, including the disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures in operation within the club to all its members. The club's code of conduct is posted prominently around the club premises.
- Procedures have been put in place for dealing with a concern or complaint made to the Statutory Authorities against a Committee Member or Sports Leader. A Sports Leader who is the subject of an allegation which has been reported to the Statutory Authorities, shall stand aside while the matter is being examined. He/she will be invited to resume full duties immediately that he/she has been vindicated.
- Where appropriate, Sports Leaders are required to report to the Executive Committee on a regular basis.

- The club encourages regular turnover of committee membership while ensuring continuity and experience.
- Effective procedures for responding to and recording accidents/ incidents have been put in place.
- The club monitors both the use of the facilities and participation in club activities to ensure that any unusual activity (high rate of drop-out, transfers, etc.) is identified, checked out and reported by the Designated Person to the Executive Committee.
- All club members are given notice of all General Meetings of the club in accordance with the procedures in that regard as set out in the Constitution.
- The minutes of all Executive and Committee meetings are recorded, adopted as correct and safely filed.

Wicklow Tennis Club is committed to ensuring that Sports Leaders are competent to provide safe and rewarding experiences for those in their care and that Sport Leaders are provided with the appropriate training for their activity. Appropriate training and education opportunities will also be made available to club officials, non-coaching staff and parents/guardians as appropriate.

Wicklow Tennis Club is committed to ensuring that adequate adult supervision of all club activities involving children is provided.

## **EQUALITY STATEMENT**

All children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children, irrespective of ability or disability should be involved in sports activities in an integrated and inclusive way, whenever possible, thus allowing them to participate to their full potential alongside other children (Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport 2000)

Wicklow Tennis Club recognises the additional vulnerability of some children and the extra difficulties they may face when seeking help, i.e.

- Dependency due to disability may make some children feel powerless
- On occasions possible limited ability to communicate their feelings
- A negative self-image can make children vulnerable to manipulation by others.

To address this vulnerability coaches are encouraged to seek guidance on working with children with a disability from external agencies, parents / guardians and the children themselves.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT**

Wicklow Tennis Club recognises that the legal principle that the welfare of the child is paramount means that consideration of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. Everyone in our organisation, including children, must be aware that they can never promise to keep secrets. However, information of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a 'need to know' basis.

## **APPENDICES**

Wicklow Tennis Club is committed to continual monitoring and development of this Child Protection Policy in the light of changing circumstances.

All Coaches and Sports Leaders will be required to read and sign the appropriate Code of Conduct contained in the Appendices to this policy. The original signed document will be held by the club.

The following Appendices form part of the Child Protection Policy of Wicklow Tennis Club

**Appendix 1      Club Children's Officers**

**Appendix 2      Code of Conduct for Children**

**Appendix 3      Code of Conduct for Parents/Guardians**