

The Gaelic Games Council of Britain (GGCB)

Dealing with Allegations of Abuse

Procedure for reporting allegations of abuse

1. Any member/employee of the GGCB, the Provincial Councils, Board, County Boards and/or Clubs who is informed, knows, suspects or is concerned that a child may be or may have been subject to child abuse, while engaged in gaelic games or associated activities or involving persons acting on behalf of the GGCB the Provincial Councils, Board, County Boards and/or Clubs or its members, has a duty to convey such concerns as a matter of urgency to the Designated Officer (whose name and contact details can be found in Schedule 1) in accordance with GGCB's procedures, as outlined elsewhere in these Guidelines.
2. Members of the GGCB, the Provincial Councils, Board, County Boards and Clubs, in common with all other members of the public have a responsibility to report allegations of abuse directly to the statutory authorities. The GGCB is happy to facilitate our members in reporting these matters to the statutory authorities and have appointed the Designated Officer to assist this procedure.
3. Members/Employees of the GGCB, the Provincial Councils, Board, County Boards and Clubs are furthermore obliged to facilitate and co-operate with any review or consideration of a complaint, report or allegation of abuse which may be carried out by statutory authorities or by the Designated Officer or by the relevant National Children's Officers in Croke Park.
4. It should be noted from the outset that when a report of abuse has been received all members of the GGCB, the Provincial Councils, Board, County Boards and Clubs are obliged to consider the following:
 - a. The safety and welfare of the child must be of paramount concern to all members of the GGCB, the Provincial Councils, Board, County Boards and Clubs. Any steps deemed necessary to protect the child should be implemented as a matter of urgency while also being careful that the person against whom the allegation has been made is not unreasonably penalised.
 - b. All actions taken should be carefully considered by the relevant Designated Officer(s).
 - c. Issues of debarment and reporting to statutory authorities should be considered in the strictest of confidence. The formal reporting of any allegation to statutory authorities and the issuing of a debarment order shall be made by the relevant Designated Officer or the relevant National Children's Officers in Croke Park.
 - d. All matters concerning any allegation of abuse must be dealt with in strict confidence.
 - e. The principle of natural justice must always be adhered to thus ensuring that the presumption of innocence applies until otherwise proven.
 - f. When an allegation has been made and where reasonable grounds for concern have been established the matter shall be reported to the relevant authorities as a matter of urgency and to the relevant Designated Officer.
 - g. The need to invoke the temporary debarment or standing aside of the person against whom an allegation has been made shall be done in a confidential manner, notwithstanding the urgency of the matter and the need to ensure that the welfare of the child is deemed to be of paramount importance.
 - h. If an allegation of child abuse is received the statutory authority must be consulted before contact is made with the person against whom the allegation is made thus ensuring that any action by the GGCB, the Provincial Councils, Board, County Boards and Clubs does not impact negatively on possible future external investigations.

- i. All reports made, whether internal or external to the GGCB, the Provincial Councils, Board, County Boards and Clubs, shall note times, dates, locations etc. shall be signed by the person that raised the concern or made the allegation.
- j. The Designated Officer shall accept reports on allegation or concerns of abuse from members or non-members of the GGCB, the Provincial Councils, Board, County Boards and Clubs verbally or in writing.
- k. Any reports or concerns regarding allegations of abuse once received by the Designated Officer shall be recorded, signed, dated and where reasonable grounds for concern have been established shall be reported by Designated Officer to the Statutory Authorities and to the relevant National Children's Officers in Croke Park.
- l. Responses to and the reporting of allegations, reports or concerns of abuse to the Designated Officer to the Statutory Authorities and to the National Children's Officer in Croke Park (as appropriate) shall be carried as soon as possible and as a matter of priority.

Guidelines for dealing with allegations of abuse

- 5. The following steps should be taken in reporting a concern or an alleged incident of child abuse to the statutory authorities:
 - a. Observe and note dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information.
 - b. Report the matter as soon as possible to the relevant Designated Officer. If the Designated Officer has reasonable grounds for believing that the child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, she/he will make a report to the relevant statutory authorities who have statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse.
 - c. In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Designated Officer is unable to be contacted a duty social worker or the Police should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous or vulnerable situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities.
 - d. If the Designated Officer is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist she/he can informally consult with the local social services.
 - e. If the Designated Officer, having consulted with the statutory authorities decides not to make a formal report she/he should inform the person making the original report of the decision and should provide that person with the necessary information should they personally wish to pursue the matter with the relevant statutory authorities.
 - f. The Designated Officer should keep a record of all actions, decisions taken during the process.
 - g. The Designated Officer reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities should first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation

Schedule 1

GGCB Designated Officer

| Name | Address | Email | Mobile |
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