



## **Howth Golf Club**

### **Safeguarding Policy**

Howth Golf Club is committed to ensuring that the sport of golf is one in which all participants can thrive and flourish in a safe environment and that all children and young people have an enjoyable, safe and positive experience when playing the game.

It is necessary that all those working or volunteering in Howth Golf Club understand their responsibility in respect of safeguarding children.

# CONTENTS

<b>Glossary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction &amp; National Policy &amp; Guidance</b>	<b>4</b>
1.0 Values and Principles	5
<b>Responsibilities</b>	
2.0 Responsibilities in Child Safeguarding and Child Protection	5-6
3.0 Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement	6
4.0 Safeguarding Audit Framework	6
5.0 Child Safeguarding and Protection – policies, procedures and practice	7
6.0 Safe Recruitment Procedures for those working with Children and Young People	8
7.0 Safeguarding Training	8
8.0 Roles and Responsibilities	8
9.0 Reporting and Protection	9
10.0 Disciplinary Complaints and Appeals of Code of Behaviour Breaches	10
11.0 Safeguarding Guidelines	10
12.0 Code of Conduct	11
13.0 Howth Golf Club Representative Players	11
14.0 Legislation	11
<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1 Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement	11-21
Appendix 2 Safe Recruitment	22-25
Appendix 3 Safeguarding Training	26-28
Appendix 4 Roles and Responsibilities	29-31
Appendix 5 Reporting and Protection	32-40
Appendix 6 Disciplinary Complaints and Appeals of Code of Behaviour Breaches	41-43
Appendix 7 Safeguarding Guidelines	44
➤ Supervision	44
➤ Away Trips/Overnight Stays	45
➤ Transport	45
➤ Film & Photography	46-48
➤ Social Media	48-49
➤ Mobile Phones	49-50
➤ Physical Contact	50-51
➤ Late Collection	52
➤ One to One Coaching	52
➤ Juniors playing on the course without adults	52
➤ Adults and Juniors Playing together	53
➤ Changing Rooms	53
➤ Accidents & Incidents	53-54
➤ Safety	54
➤ Anti – Bullying Policy	54-58
Appendix 8 Codes of Conduct	61-67
Appendix 9 Howth Golf Club Representative Players	68-72
Appendix 10 Legislation and Policy	73-74

## Glossary

**Captain/Manager:** An individual who takes overall responsibility for a team or a group of sports people and who may often have a direct input into the nature and organisation of the activity itself.

**Child/Junior/Young Person:** Any person under 18 years of age unless they are or have been married (Child Care Act 1991).

**Club Children's Officer (CCO):** A club appointee who acts as a resource for children and represents them at committee level. Her/his primary aim is the establishment of a child centred ethos in the club.

**Designated Liaison Person (DLP):** A person who is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse and welfare issues to the Statutory Authorities at club or national level.

**Junior Convener:** The individual(s) in the club who heads the Junior Golf Committee or oversees the development of junior programmes.

**Leader:** For the purpose of this document, all adults involved in junior golf who work with and/or enable those under 18 years of age, to learn and compete in golf, often in cooperation with other grownups, are referred to as leaders.

**Mandated Person: (NGB level only)** A person named under schedule 2 of Children First Act 2015. She/he has a legal responsibility to report concerns or allegations that reach or exceed the threshold of harm or abuse to Tusla.

**National Children's Officer (NCO):** A Golf Ireland official who advises on all matters in relation to safeguarding.

**Official:** An individual charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the rules of an activity are adhered to in a formal way. This category includes referees.

**PGA:** The Professional Golfers' Association

**Relevant Person:** As defined in the Children First Act 2015, this means an individual, usually the DLP or CCO who is appointed by a provider of a relevant service to be the first point of contact for Tusla, in respect of the provider's Child Safeguarding Statement and safeguarding matters.

**Relevant Service:** As defined in the Children First Act 2015, this means any work or activity specified in Schedule 1 of that Act.

**Selector:** An individual who has responsibility for the selection of participants under 18 years of age for teams and events.

**Services:** Relates to any of the following: national/provincial underage teams/panels, development services to clubs, such as those provided by Golf Ireland, any recruitment or retention initiatives involving young people/vulnerable adults.

**Statutory Authorities:** The official agencies that promote the protection and welfare of young people, which have responsibility for the investigation of alleged and/or suspected child abuse, namely Tusla & An Garda Síochána.

**Statutory Authority Guidelines on Child Protection:** *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Department of Health and Children 2017.*

**Volunteers/Assistants:** People who provide back-up for any of the roles above, often on an intermittent basis, by way of supervision, provision of lifts to matches or competitions, checking equipment or otherwise.

## Introduction

Howth Golf Club is committed to the principle that everyone should be able to enjoy golf in a safe environment and that each person in the organisation, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, has a responsibility to protect and safeguard children and vulnerable adults. These responsibilities are outlined herein, in tandem with clear guidelines for all involved.

All sections are supported by detailed appendices referenced throughout, which should be referred to while reading the relevant section.

In addition, Howth Golf Club is committed to:

- Respecting the rights of children as paramount
- Providing opportunities for every child interested in playing golf to enjoy a positive experience
- Including and involving children in decision making, providing opportunities for children to be heard
- Promoting and implementing policies and procedures that:
  - safeguard the wellbeing of children and protect them from harm or abuse, ensuring that everyone knows what to do and who they can speak to
  - prevent and respond to bullying behaviour, ensuring that everyone knows what to do and who they can speak to
- Requiring staff members and volunteers to commit to and abide by this safeguarding policy
- Training, supporting and supervising staff members and volunteers to adopt best safeguarding practice
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy

## National Policy and Legislation

This safeguarding policy document is underpinned by Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, and the requirements under The Children First Act 2015, national policy and legislation.

It is also framed in light of Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, The Child Care Act 1991, The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 and the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012-2016.

## Howth Golf Club Safeguarding Core Values and Principles

Participation in golf plays a crucial role in the development of children and young people due to the range of skills learned through their involvement in activities that contribute towards their holistic development. Whether at grassroots level or elite performance, Howth Golf Club wants to create a safe, positive and nurturing environment where all can learn important values such as honesty, teamwork and fair play. In addition, young people involved in golf can develop the capacity to respect themselves and others, discover how to adhere to rules, and acquire a healthy competitive spirit, regardless of participation level.

### The following are the club's core values and principles:

- **Importance of childhood** – This should be understood and valued by everyone involved in golf
- **Fun and health** - Howth Golf Club will endeavour to make golf activity a fun and healthy experience for all involved
- **Needs of the child** - All junior golf experiences will be guided by the principle of what is best for young people. This means that adults associated with such activities will have at least a basic understanding of their emotional, physical and personal needs
- **Integrity in relationships** - Adults interacting with children do so, from a position of influence and authority. They must never abuse this relationship of trust and should always ensure that children are treated with integrity and respect, and that their self-esteem is enhanced
- **Fair Play** - Howth Golf Club will promote the principles of fair play, respect, ethics, integrity and safety throughout the organisation
- **Quality atmosphere & ethos** - Junior golf will be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging environment
- **Competition** - This is an essential element of golf and it will be encouraged in an age appropriate manner. A balanced approach can make a significant contribution to the development of the individual, while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and satisfaction. Competitive demands are often placed on children at too young an age, which can result in excessive levels of pressure for them. Golf leaders will aim to make the stresses of competition secondary to the welfare of young people.
- **Equality** - All children will be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion

### Howth Golf Club Child Safeguarding Responsibilities

A central goal is to provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment where juniors can develop and enhance their physical and social skills, from grassroots to elite performance levels. Promoting a child centred ethos goes hand in hand with identifying and eliminating practices that impact negatively on safe and enjoyable participation in junior golf. Howth Golf Club will promote child safeguarding by:

- a) Carrying out risk assessment and producing a Child Safeguarding Statement.
- b) Reviewing its policy and procedures every three years or whenever there is a major change in legislation.
- c) Using appropriate recruitment processes which will include vetting checks and references.
- d) Having relevant officers and volunteers attend safeguarding training to raise knowledge and awareness of the standards that are expected when working with children and how/when to report a concern.
- e) Requiring all those working with juniors/young people to abide by appropriate Codes of Conduct.
- f) Appointing a Club Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person.
- g) Sharing safeguarding procedures/guidelines with staff, coaches, volunteers, parents and juniors.
- h) Ensuring that the Sport Ireland Safeguarding audit process is completed by the club.

By implementing the above it will ensure that:

- a) Howth Golf Club fulfils its legal and moral obligations for the protection of children.
- b) A positive message is sent to children and their parents/guardians about the value placed on young people as golf playing members.
- c) Staff, leaders and volunteers understand that they will be supported and guided when they are working with children and that safeguards will be in place to minimise risk to all.
- d) All involved are aware of the required standards and expectations for everyone working in golf.
- e) All legal obligations have been fulfilled and that all reasonable steps have been taken to safeguard and promote the health, welfare and development of children.

## **Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement**

### **Safeguarding Risk Assessment**

In line with requirements under Children First National Guidance 2017, that it must ensure that it prevents, as far as practicable, deliberate harm or abuse of young people while availing of its services, Howth Golf Club has carried out a risk assessment where all aspects of its provisions were examined from a safeguarding perspective. Howth Golf Club's Risk Assessment document indicates the areas of potential threat of harm, the likelihood of the risk occurring and contains an outline of the policy, guidelines and procedures required to eliminate, alleviate or minimize these risks.

### **Child Safeguarding Statement**

This is a written declaration that specifies the service being provided by Howth Golf Club and the principles by which a young person availing of such, is safe from harm, in terms of managing any risk identified as follows:

- Provision for the investigation of an allegation against any leader/staff member/volunteer about any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child availing of our service
- Selection and recruitment of leaders/staff/volunteers who are suitable to work with children
- Delivery of information and training to leaders/staff/volunteers on child protection and safeguarding issues
- Enabling leaders/staff/volunteers, whether mandated persons or otherwise, to make a report to Tusla in accordance with the Children First Act or any guidelines issued by the statutory authorities
- Appointment of a Relevant Person in Howth Golf Club for the purposes of the Act

**See Appendix 1, page 11 for the Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement**

### **Safeguarding Audit Framework**

Golf Ireland is responsible for ensuring that the audit process (outlined below) is completed by its affiliated clubs and that any improvement actions arising from this process are implemented within an agreed period of time. Golf Ireland will evaluate, quality assure and endorse submissions of their affiliated clubs. On request, Golf Ireland will also provide an analysis of returns from their respective clubs to Sport Ireland.

Sport Ireland's Safeguarding Audit Framework's main focus will be to assist National Governing Bodies of Sport across Ireland to strengthen the way that children and young people are made safer.

#### **The Audit Framework is:**

- Focused on safeguarding children
- Easy to access and simple to understand
- Designed to support the whole sporting community
- Configured to reflect the voices of children, young people, parents, carers, staff and volunteers
- Focused on a more detailed analysis of safeguarding arrangements
- Compliant with relevant legislation and guidance, including Children First 2015

Sport Ireland's Safeguarding Audit Framework has been developed for use by all sporting organisations that work with children and young people, from grassroots to national level. This includes individual golf clubs and Golf Ireland.

Its Safeguarding Audit Framework is underpinned by current legislation and the principles set out in this document. It has a fundamental focus on the context of children and young people in sport and the creation of safe spaces where they can be assisted, seen and heard.

Sport Ireland will provide leadership, co-ordinate, oversee and ensure the effectiveness of the Safeguarding Audit Framework. Implementing this audit process reflects the priority that Sport Ireland applies to safeguarding children and young people, together with the expectation that Golf Ireland and golf clubs mirror this focus at all levels.

Individual golf clubs will be responsible for the timely completion of the safeguarding audit process. They will be responsible for implementing any improvement actions that are identified through the Safeguarding Audit process and co-operating fully with any review that is commissioned in respect of their club.

## **Howth Golf Club Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Practices**

By carrying out a risk assessment and producing a Child Safeguarding Statement Howth Golf Club has in place detailed policies and procedures with respect to safeguarding children and young people.

Included therein are the roles and responsibilities of relevant individuals, processes for safe recruitment and selection and the procedures to follow in relation to identifying and reporting child welfare or child protection concerns and responding to allegations against someone in Howth Golf Club.

### **Safe Recruitment Procedures**

The vast majority of leader, coaches, staff and volunteers help out through a genuine desire to see children develop their golfing skills and with the aim of providing a fun and positive experience for the children. It is a fact, unfortunately, that a small minority of people join organisations to gain access to children with the purpose of developing inappropriate intimate relationships. They create an air of acceptability about their role, justifying their close contact with young persons. People who commit sexual offences against children often first gain the trust of those close to the child, such as family and friends. They work hard to portray themselves as caring and trustworthy and they befriend their victims to break down barriers before an offence may be committed.

In order to safeguard young people against such risks, Howth Golf Club takes all reasonable steps to ensure that only suitable people are recruited to work with children by adopting and consistently applying a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting staff and volunteers.

The use of careful recruitment and selection procedures will help to keep children and young people safe. Good management practice and supervision of workers and volunteers after appointment will provide further essential safeguards. Howth Golf Club endeavours to ensure that all volunteers and staff working with young people are suited to the role and that they have all the information they require to effectively carry it out.

This means that all individuals who occupy these roles will be required to:

- a) Undergo the appropriate vetting checks (renewed every three years)
- b) Complete safeguarding training (updated every three years)
- c) Sign codes of conduct (annually)
- d) Read and become familiar with Howth Golf Club's Safeguarding Policy

See **Appendix 2, page 21** for details on Howth Golf Club's safe recruitment process.

## Safeguarding Training

All staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding training, appropriate for their role, updated every three years.

See [Appendix 3, page 26](#) for more information on Howth Golf Club's safeguarding training requirements.

## Roles and Responsibilities

All those working with children (including parents/carers) should accept the demands of the role and their responsibilities towards the provision and maintenance of an enjoyable and safe environment. Each should be aware of the vital role they play in the development of individuals and of junior golf as a whole.

Howth Golf Club ensures through this Safeguarding Policy, that the work of all those involved with juniors is conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and fair play. The expectation is that all contact between adults and children and among young people will be courteous, considerate and equitable. Adults, including parents/carers, who create an environment in which meaningful, open relationships are valued and where the integrity of everyone is respected, can promote such interaction.

### *Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities in Howth Golf Club*

- Club Children's Officer
- Designated Liaison Person
- National Children's Officer

See [Appendix 4, page 29](#) for details of the above safeguarding roles.

## Reporting & Protection

All those involved in golf have a duty of care to report child protection concerns, in order to help create a safe environment for children. Child protection or welfare concerns should be reported to Tusla as specified under the Children First Act 2015 and should be done online following a discussion with Tusla staff.

Howth Golf Club has an obligation to promote the welfare and safety of young people. Staff and volunteers should be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact, are being abused or are at risk of being harmed. They should know how to recognise and respond to the possibility of abuse or neglect, so as to ensure that the most effective steps are taken to protect children and to contribute towards their ongoing safety and welfare.

The guiding principles on reporting child abuse or neglect are summarised as follows:

1. The safety and wellbeing of the child must take priority over concerns about adults against whom an allegation may be made.
2. Reports of concerns should be made without delay to Tusla and/or the Gardaí.

It is not the duty of anyone working in a paid or voluntary capacity in Howth Golf Club to take responsibility for deciding whether or not child abuse has occurred or is taking place. However, there is an obligation on individuals (paid or voluntary) to protect children. This means that if one has a concern, it must be reported to the appropriate agency in order that it can make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child.



Under no circumstances should any person be left with a worry or concern about a child. Each individual should feel free to discuss any concern(s), in confidence, with Howth Golf Club's Designated Liaison Person or Golf Ireland's National Children's Officer.

Details should only be shared on a "need to know" basis with those who can help with the management of the concern.

In addition, individuals can: Contact Tusla to discuss or report a child protection/welfare concern ([www.tusla.ie/children-first/contact-a-social-worker3](http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/contact-a-social-worker3))

If you think the child is in immediate danger and you cannot get in touch with Tusla, you should contact the Gardaí without delay (999/112).

**See Appendix 5, page 32 for more information on Howth Golf Club's reporting procedures.**

## Disciplinary, Complaints & Appeals

Howth Golf Club has developed a robust disciplinary, complaints and appeals process. It is important to note that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the Statutory Authorities and should not be undertaken by National Children's Officers/Designated Liaison Persons or other staff/volunteers.

**See Appendix 6, page 41 for more detail on the disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedure.**

## Safeguarding Good Practice Guidelines

A central goal for all involved in junior golf is to provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment where children can develop and enhance their physical and social skills.

Promoting a child centred ethos should go hand in hand with identifying and eliminating practice that impacts negatively on safe and enjoyable participation in junior golf.

This section of Howth Golf Club's safeguarding policy contains details on how to provide a safe environment for children and young people:

- Supervision
- Transport
- Film & Photography
- Social Media
- Mobile Phones
- Physical Contact
- Late Collection
- Adults and Juniors Playing together
- Changing Rooms
- Away Trips/Overnight stays
- Accidents & Incidents
- Safety
- Anti-Bullying Policy

**See Appendix 7 for more detailed guidelines.**

## Code of Conduct

Howth Golf Club believes that by adopting a Code of Conduct, it will ensure that all grown-ups working with children will be familiar with behaviours which are acceptable and those which are unacceptable. Adults who work with children do so from a position of trust. Therefore, it is important that they behave appropriately and present a strong positive role model, to protect both children and themselves from allegations of poor practice.

The code of conduct establishes standards that define and reflect Howth Golf Club's ethos and culture. It facilitates a proactive approach to setting the tone for all interactions and provides a framework for handling behavioural issues as they arise, while forming the basis for challenging and improving practice. Problems can be many and varied, ranging from on-course incidents, spectator abuse and mismanagement, to inappropriate social media posts, unfair treatment, poor sportsmanship and suchlike. Howth Golf Club's Code of Conduct fixes expectations for leaders, juniors and parents.

**See [Appendix 8, page 61](#) for the Junior, Leader and Parents' Code of Conduct.**

## Representative Players

Juniors who represent the club are ambassadors for the game of golf. It is important that doing so is recognised as both an honour and a singular achievement. In that role, there is an expectation that they will always conduct themselves in an exemplary way, upholding the game's reputation, by showing respect for others and playing in accordance with the rules.

**See [Appendix 9, page 68](#) for more information on the procedures relating to the investigation of alleged misconduct involving representative players.**

## Legislation

There are a number of key pieces of legislation and guidance that relate to child welfare and protection.

**See [Appendix 10, page 73](#), which outlines the legislation and guidance relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection.**

## Appendix 1

### Risk Assessment & Child Safeguarding Statement

#### Howth Golf Club Safeguarding Risk Assessment

This relates to the potential for harm that might come to children whilst they are in the care of Howth Golf Club. It indicates the areas of possible danger and the likelihood that it may happen. Included are the relevant policies, procedures and guidance documents required to alleviate these risks. This has been discussed, approved and signed by Howth Club Club Council on the date below.

This risk assessment precedes Howth Golf Club's Child Safeguarding Statement (Section 11 (1b) Children First Act 2015) and is in accordance with the requirements of Section 11 (1) of the Children First Act 2015, the risk is of abuse and not general health and safety risk.

***All policies/procedures listed below are in Howth Golf Club's Safeguarding Policy.***

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/National	Further action required ...
<b>CLUB &amp; COACHING PRACTICES</b>				
Lack of coaching qualification		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coach Education policy</li> <li>Recruitment policy</li> </ul>	Committee Head Coach	<i>Proof of qualification to be confirmed. Garda Vetting, SG1 Basic Awareness training</i>
Supervision issues		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervision policy</li> <li>Coach Education policy</li> </ul>		
Unauthorised photography & recording activities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photography and Use of Images policy</li> </ul>		
Behavioural Issues		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Code of Conduct</li> <li>Safeguarding Level 1 (min)</li> <li>Complaints &amp; Disciplinary policy</li> </ul>		
Lack of gender balance amongst coaches		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coach Education policy</li> <li>Supervision/ratio policy</li> </ul>		
No guidance for travelling and away trips		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel/Away Trip policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Training</li> </ul>		
Lack of adherence to procedures in Safeguarding policy (i.e. mobile phones, photography, transport, physical contact)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding policy</li> <li>Complaints &amp; Disciplinary policy</li> </ul>		

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/National	Further action required ...
<b>COMPLAINTS &amp; DISCIPLINE</b>				
Lack of awareness of a Complaints & Disciplinary policy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints &amp; Disciplinary procedure/policy</li> <li>Communications procedure</li> </ul>		<i>Immediate action needed. Greater communication required.</i>
Difficulty for child & or parent in raising an issue Reason: Covered above		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints &amp; Disciplinary procedure/policy</li> <li>Communications procedure</li> </ul>		<i>Review the communication/responsibilities of the procedure/policy as required.</i>
Complaints not being dealt with seriously		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints &amp; Disciplinary procedure/policy</li> </ul>		<i>Ongoing review</i>
<b>REPORTING PROCEDURES</b>				
Lack of knowledge of organisational and statutory reporting procedures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting procedures/policy</li> <li>Coach education policy</li> <li>Code of Conduct</li> </ul>		<i>Make policies and procedures available. Include in Safeguarding Training (L1).</i>
No Mandated Person appointed		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statutory Reporting procedures/policy</li> </ul>	<b>NGB level only</b>	<i>Publicise Identity of Mandated Person.</i>
No Designated Liaison Person Appointed		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statutory Reporting procedures/policy</li> </ul>		<i>Train DLP. Publicise identity of DLP.</i>
Concerns of abuse or harm not reported		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting procedures/policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Training Level 1</li> </ul>		<i>Include in Safeguarding Training (L1). Publicise names of National Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person. Publicise internal and external reporting procedures.</i>
Not clear who Junior/Young Person should talk to or report to		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post the names of Club Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person</li> </ul>		<i>Communicate across the organisation reinforcing at tournaments/training/away trips. Include in Safeguarding Training (L1).</i>

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/National	Further action required ...
<b>FACILITIES</b>				
Unauthorised access to designated children's practice areas and to changing rooms, showers, toilets etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervision policy</li> <li>Coach education</li> </ul>		<i>Clarify responsibilities before session starts.</i>
Unauthorised exit from children's areas		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervision policy</li> <li>Coach education</li> </ul>		<i>Clarify responsibilities before session starts.</i>
Photography, filming or recording in prohibited areas		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photography policy and use of devices in private areas</li> </ul>		<i>Enforce policy in private changing areas.</i>
Missing or found child on site		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Missing or found child policy</li> </ul>		<i>Refer to policy and inform Gardaí.</i>
Children sharing facilities with adults e.g. dressing room, showers etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding Policy</li> </ul>		<i>Plan with management to create a suitable child-centred environment in shared facilities.</i>
<b>RECRUITMENT</b>				
Recruitment of inappropriate people		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment policy</li> <li>Vetting procedures</li> </ul>		<i>Ongoing review</i>
Lack of clarity on roles No role descriptions or inadequate role descriptions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment policy</li> </ul>		<i>Check job description. Put supervision in place.</i>
Unqualified or untrained people in role		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment policy</li> <li>Safeguarding Training</li> </ul>		<i>Check qualification Ongoing review</i>

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/National	Further action required ...
<b>COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA</b>				
Lack of awareness of 'risk of harm' among members and visitors		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Safeguarding Statement</li> <li>Training policy</li> </ul>		<i>Communicate Child Safeguarding Statement</i>
No communication of Child Safeguarding Statement, Safeguarding Policy or Code of Conduct to members or visitors		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Safeguarding Statement - display</li> <li>Code of Conduct - distribute</li> <li>Safeguarding Policy - make available</li> </ul>		<i>Communicate Child Safeguarding Statement</i> <i>Distribute Code or Sections as appropriate (Induction booklet)</i> <i>Policy on website</i>
Unauthorised photography & recording of activities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photography and Use of Images policy</li> </ul>		
Inappropriate use of social media and communications by under 18s		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications policy</li> <li>Code of Conduct</li> </ul>		
Inappropriate use of social media and communications with under 18s		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications policy</li> <li>Code of Conduct.</li> </ul>		

Potential risk of harm to children	Likelihood of harm happening L-M-H	Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document	Responsibility Club/National	Further action required ...
<b>GENERAL RISK OF HARM</b>				
Harm not being recognised		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Training</li> </ul>		<i>Ongoing</i>
<b>Harm caused by</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>child to child</li> <li>coach to child</li> <li>volunteer to child</li> <li>member to child</li> <li>visitor to child</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding policy</li> <li>Child Safeguarding Training</li> </ul>		Ongoing
<b>General behavioural issues</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Code of Conduct</li> </ul>		<i>Take disciplinary action where necessary. Sign Code of Conduct.</i>

Explanation of terms used:

- **Potential risk of harm to children** - these are identified risks of harm to children whilst accessing activities in Howth Golf Club.
- **Likelihood of harm happening** - the likelihood of the risk occurring is measured as Low/Medium or High.
- **Required Policy, Guidance and Procedure document** - indication of the policy required to alleviate the risk.
- **Responsibility** - Howth Golf Club should indicate where the responsibility for alleviating the risk lies.
- **Further action** - indicates what might be necessary to alleviate any ongoing risk.

This Risk Assessment document has been discussed, assessed and approved by Howth Golf Club on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

Signed:

Signed:

Name:

Name:

Approved of on behalf of council:

Role: Club Children's Officer/Designated Liaison Person

Date:

Date:



# Howth Golf Club

## Child Safeguarding Statement

### Section 1

Howth Golf Club provides various golfing activities and opportunities for young people through participation in club and regional events.

- **Name:** Howth Golf Club
- **Sport:** Golf
- **Location:** Carrickbrack Road, Sutton North, Dublin 13, D13 F3C1

### Section 2

Howth Golf Club is committed to safeguarding children, guided by this Safeguarding Policy. Our employees and volunteers working with young people, throughout the organisation, seek to create a safe environment for them to grow and develop in golf by adhering to the following principles:

- **Importance of childhood** - The importance of childhood should be understood and valued by everyone involved in golf.
- **Needs of the child** - All junior golf experiences should be guided by what is best for children. This means that adults should have a basic understanding of the emotional, physical and personal needs of young people.
- **Integrity in relationships** - Adults interacting with children in golf are in a position of trust and influence and must never abuse this position of trust. They should always ensure that children are treated with integrity and respect, and the self-esteem of young people is enhanced.
- **Fair Play** - All junior golf should be conducted in the context of fair play. Howth Golf Club will promote fair play, respect, positive ethics, integrity and safety throughout the organisation.
- **Quality atmosphere & ethos** - Junior golf should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging environment.
- **Competition** - This is an essential element of the game and should be encouraged in an age appropriate manner. A balanced approach to competition can make a significant contribution to the development of children, while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and satisfaction. Competitive demands are often placed on children who are too young, which results in excessive levels of pressure being brought to bear on them. Golf leaders should aim to put the welfare of young people first and competitive success second.
- **Equality** - All children should be valued for who they are and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, political persuasion or social and ethnic background.

### Section 3

#### Risk Assessment

Howth Golf Club's Risk Assessment document indicates the areas of potential risk of harm and the likelihood of such occurring. It includes the required policy, guidance and documents required to help prevent and alleviate these risks.

Risk Identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
<b>Coaching Practices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lack of coaching qualification</li> <li>➤ Supervision issues</li> <li>➤ Unauthorised photography &amp; recording activities</li> <li>➤ Behavioural issues</li> <li>➤ Lack of gender balance amongst coaches</li> <li>➤ No guidance for travelling &amp; away trips</li> <li>➤ Risk of harm or sexual abuse of a child by a volunteer/member of staff while away on an overnight trip</li> <li>➤ Lack of adherence to procedures in Safeguarding Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Coach Education policy/Recruitment policy</li> <li>➤ Supervision policy/Coach Education policy</li> <li>➤ Photography &amp; Use of Images policy</li> <li>➤ Code of Conduct/Safeguarding 1/Complaints &amp; Disciplinary policy</li> <li>➤ Supervision policy</li> <li>➤ Travel/Away Trip policy / Child Safeguarding Training</li> <li>➤ Travel/Away Trip policy, Code of Conduct for golf leaders and parents/supervision/recruitment policy</li> <li>➤ Safeguarding Policy /Recruitment Policy/Code of Conduct/ Complaints &amp; Disciplinary policy</li> </ul>
<b>Complaints &amp; Discipline</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lack of awareness of a Complaints and Disciplinary policy.</li> <li>➤ Difficulty in raising an issue by child and/or parent</li> <li>➤ Complaints not being dealt with seriously</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Complaints &amp; Disciplinary Procedure/policy / Communications Procedure.</li> <li>➤ Complaints &amp; Disciplinary Procedure/policy / Communications Procedure.</li> <li>➤ Complaints &amp; Disciplinary Procedure/policy</li> </ul>
<b>Reporting Procedures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lack of knowledge of organisational and statutory reporting procedures</li> <li>➤ No DLP appointed</li> <li>➤ Concerns of abuse or harm not reported</li> <li>➤ Not clear who young people should talk to or report to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reporting Procedures/policy/Code of Conduct.</li> <li>➤ Reporting Procedures/policy.</li> <li>➤ Reporting Procedures/policy/Child Safeguarding Training - Level 1</li> <li>➤ CCO and DLP names displayed and roles proactively communicated and promoted</li> </ul>
<b>Use of Facilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Unauthorised access to designated children's play and practice areas, to changing rooms, showers, toilets etc.</li> <li>➤ Unauthorised exit from children's areas</li> <li>➤ Photography, filming or recording in prohibited areas</li> <li>➤ Missing or found child on site</li> <li>➤ Children sharing facilities with adults e.g. dressing room, showers etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Supervision policy/General Guidelines with Juniors</li> <li>➤ Supervision policy/General Guidelines with Juniors</li> <li>➤ Photography policy and use of devices in private zones</li> <li>➤ Missing or Found Child policy</li> <li>➤ Safeguarding policy/General Guidelines with Juniors</li> </ul>

<b>Recruitment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Recruitment of inappropriate people</li> <li>➤ Lack of clarity about roles</li> <li>➤ Unqualified or untrained people in role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Recruitment policy</li> <li>➤ Recruitment policy</li> <li>➤ Recruitment policy</li> </ul>
<b>Communications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lack of awareness of 'risk of harm' with members and visitors</li> <li>➤ No communication of Child Safeguarding Statement or Code of Conduct to staff/volunteers</li> <li>➤ Unauthorised photography &amp; recording of activities.</li> <li>➤ Inappropriate use of social media and communications by under 18s</li> <li>➤ Inappropriate use of social media and communications with under 18s</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Child Safeguarding Statement / Training Policy</li> <li>➤ Child Safeguarding Statement (display)/Code of Conduct distributed to all working with children. Proactive communication of Golf Ireland values and safeguarding standards</li> <li>➤ Photography and Use of Images policy</li> <li>➤ Communications policy/Code of Conduct/Social Media Policy/Disciplinary policy.</li> <li>➤ Communications policy/Code of Conduct/Social Media Policy/Disciplinary policy</li> </ul>
<b>General Risk of Harm</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Harm not being recognised</li> <li>➤ Harm caused by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Child to Child</li> <li>○ Coach to Child</li> <li>○ Volunteer to Child</li> <li>○ Member to Child</li> <li>○ Visitor to Child</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ General behavioural issues</li> <li>➤ Issues of Bullying</li> <li>➤ Vetting of staff/volunteers</li> <li>➤ Issues of Online Safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Safeguarding policy/Child Safeguarding Training</li> <li>➤ Safeguarding policy/Child Safeguarding Training/Anti-Bullying policy/Disciplinary policy.</li> <li>➤ Code of Conduct</li> <li>➤ Anti-Bullying policy</li> <li>➤ Recruitment policy/Vetting policy</li> <li>➤ Social Media guidance</li> </ul>

The Risk Assessment was undertaken on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 4

### Procedures

This Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, (the Children First: National Guidance, and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice). In addition to the Risk Assessment document, there are further procedures that support the intention to safeguard children while they are availing of club activities.

As part of its Safeguarding Policy, Howth Golf Club has in place, the following procedures for:

- Management of allegations of abuse or misconduct by staff or volunteers against a child partaking in club activities
- Safe recruitment of staff and volunteers to work with children and junior members
- Access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm
- Reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Statutory Authorities

The Club Children's Officer is Noel Mannion.

## Section 5

### Implementation

Recognising that it is an ongoing process, Howth Golf Club is committed to putting into practice, this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support its intention to keep children safe from harm while participating in its activities.

Please note the following:

- All volunteers and staff have been furnished with a copy of this statement
- This statement is available to parents/guardians, Tusla and members of the public on request
- This statement is displayed in a prominent place in Howth Golf Club and is available to members on the club website

The Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in \_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_ (every 2 years).

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Club Children's Officer on behalf of Howth Golf Club*

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*On behalf Council*

For queries relating to this Child Safeguarding Statement, please contact the Club Children's Officer.

## Appendix 2

### Safe Recruitment Procedures

#### Recruitment Procedure for all Leaders/Staff/Volunteers

Howth Golf Club will take all reasonable steps to ensure that adult leaders, staff and volunteers, working with juniors are experienced, motivated and suited to the role. Opportunities for young people to practice and participate in golf, in many instances depend on the willingness, commitment and selflessness of those involved in a voluntary capacity. Part of the recruitment process will involve the introduction of staff and volunteers to the requirements of the role, with a strong focus on the need to safeguard children and young people in the club.

Recruitment procedures will apply to all persons, paid or unpaid, who will have substantial access to juniors. A decision to appoint a leader is the responsibility of Howth Golf Club and not of any one individual member.

Howth Golf Club will use the following recruitment procedure to ensure safeguarding good practice:

- A clearly stated description of the role, including responsibilities, level of experience/qualifications required will be drawn up
- Leaders who have no previous experience of volunteering with juniors in a golf club setting or at regional/national level will be asked to fill in an information form, giving names of two contactable referees
- Certain roles may involve interviewing or meeting with the individual either formally or informally to be able to:
  - Gauge the individual's experience of working with children or young people and knowledge of safeguarding issues
  - Judge her/his commitment to promoting good practice
  - Assess her/his ability to communicate with children and young people
- Once voted/nominated/appointed to a position the leader will be required to read and sign the Code of Conduct
- She/he will be obliged to read and become familiar with Howth Golf Club's Safeguarding Policy.
- Current and newly appointed leaders will sign the appropriate Code of Conduct and the self-declaration statements annually.
- All leaders must successfully complete Garda Vetting prior to commencing working with children/vulnerable adults.
- All leaders will undertake training: Safeguarding 1(Basic Awareness Workshop) Safeguarding Children & Young People in Sport.
- A probation period may apply in order to assess the leader's commitment to promoting good practice in relation to young people.
- Leaders should never have to work alone with a group of juniors.
- Information in relation to applicants will be treated as highly sensitive and confidential. It will be kept in a locked cupboard, that is accessible only to the general manager.
- Names of the Club Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person will be made known to all new leaders

## Howth Golf Club Volunteer/Coach Application Form for Those with Access to Children

*(All information received in this form will be treated as strictly confidential.)*

Position Applied for: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous work/voluntary experience/relevant qualifications: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you agree to abide by Howth Golf Club's Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation in the past? *(If you have answered YES, we will contact you in confidence.)*

Yes ☐ No ☐

Any other relevant information?

Please supply the names of two responsible people who we can contact and who from personal knowledge, are willing to endorse your application. If you have had a previous involvement in a sports club, one of these names should be that of an administrator/leader in your last club/place of involvement.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

## For Official Use Only

Date application received: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewed by:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

References received and are satisfactory:

Yes ☐ No ☐

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Statutory check completed & returned (if applicable)

Yes ☐ No ☐

Proof of applicant's identity received:

Yes ☐ No ☐

Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Approved - Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Not Approved - Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Confidential Reference Form

The following person \_\_\_\_\_  
has expressed an interest in working in Howth Golf  
Club as \_\_\_\_\_  
(List position.)

*If you are happy to complete this reference, any information will be treated with due confidentiality and in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance. It will only be shared with the person conducting the assessment of the candidate's suitability for the post, if he/she is offered the position. We appreciate you being extremely candid, open and honest in your evaluation.*

1. How long have you known this person?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. In what capacity?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What attributes does this person have that would make them suited to the role applied for?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please rate this person in respect of the following.

Please tick one box for each statement:

	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Maturity					
Self-motivation					
Can motivate others					
Energy					
Trustworthiness					
Reliability					

This post involves substantial access to young people. As an organisation committed to their welfare and protection, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children and young people.

Yes ☐ No ☐

(If you have answered YES, we will contact you in confidence.)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Position in organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of club/organisation: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Appendix 3**

### **Safeguarding Training**

Any individuals whose role involves regular contact with children or vulnerable persons in Howth Golf Club must complete mandatory safeguarding training.

If certification has lapsed, safeguarding training must be completed afresh. A list of those whose roles oblige them to attend training is included at the end of this policy.

Successful completion of Golf Ireland's vetting process is necessary before anybody can work with children and/or vulnerable persons.

#### **Safeguarding Workshops**

All leaders working with children and young people must attend the relevant Sport Ireland Safeguarding workshops. These courses are delivered through Local Sports Partnership and by Golf Ireland on request. See [www.golfireland.ie](http://www.golfireland.ie) for details.

#### **Basic Safeguarding Workshops (Delivered either via Zoom or face to face)**

##### **Safeguarding 1**

- Validation period: 3 years
- Expected attendees: any person working with or who is involved in the planning/administration of activities or events in which young people participate
- Renewal: Safeguarding 1 certificate may be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding 1 (face to face workshop or online Zoom) or Safeguarding 1 Refresher (e-learning module)

##### **Safeguarding 1 Refresher (e-learning module) -**

<https://apps.ineqe.com/apps/sportireland/coaches/introduction.php>

- Prerequisite: Valid Safeguarding 1 (face to face workshop or online zoom)
- Validation period: 3 years
- Expected attendees: any person having completed Safeguarding 1 (face to face workshop or online zoom)
- Renewal: Safeguarding 1 Refresher certificate may only be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding 1 (face to face workshop or online zoom)

#### **Advanced Safeguarding Workshops - Role specific**

##### **Safeguarding 2 (Club Children's Officer Workshop)**

- Prerequisite: Valid Safeguarding 1
- Validation period: 3 years
- Expected attendees: any person taking on the role of Club Children's Officer
- Renewal: Safeguarding 2 certificate may only be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding 2 (CCO workshop)

##### **Safeguarding 3 (Designated Liaison Person workshop)**

- Prerequisite: Valid Safeguarding 1, Safeguarding 1 Refresher
- Validation period: 3 years
- Expected attendees: any person taking on the role of Designated Liaison Person
- Renewal: Safeguarding 3 may only be renewed by attendance at Safeguarding 3 (face to face workshop)

## **Safeguarding Workshops Learning Outcomes**

### **SAFEGUARDING 1:**

Golf Leaders will be able to:

- Implement best practice in protecting the welfare of participants
- Create a club child-centred environment
- List categories of abuse and some indicators associated with abuse
- Make appropriate response to disclosures
- Make a report to Designated Liaison Person or appropriate Statutory Authorities

### **SAFEGUARDING 2:**

- Understanding how to communicate with young people
- Deal with safeguarding issues
- Reflect on the Club Children's Officer (CCO) role

### **SAFEGUARDING 3:**

To provide training to the Designated Liaison Person who is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to TUSLA Child and Family Agency and/or An Garda Síochána.

- Describe how the child protection system and its associated processes work
- List the role and responsibilities of the DLP in relation to protecting and safeguarding children
- Identify the categories and indicators of abuse
- Communicate with parents and/or relevant statutory agencies as appropriate
- Carry out reporting procedures

## **Renewing Safeguarding Certificates**

Safeguarding training requires renewal, by attendance at one of the related courses outlined above, every 3 years.

## **List of Roles and Training Requirements**

<b>Safeguarding 1</b>	<b>Safeguarding 2</b>	<b>Safeguarding 3</b>
Golf Leader		
Golf Coach/PGA Professional		
Junior committee member		
Team Manager		
Volunteers		
Team Captain		

Mentor		
Mandated Person		Mandated Person (NGB level only)
Designated Liaison Person		Designated Liaison Person
National/Club Children's Officer	National/Club Children's Officer	

## Appendix 4

### Safeguarding Roles & Responsibilities

#### Club Children's Officer

A club appointee who acts as a resource for children and represents them at committee level. Her/his primary aim is the establishment of a child centred ethos in the club.

The Club Children's Officer will review current policies in relation to young people, check that all activities are safe and fun, and inform adults of how to deal with any concerns that may arise in relation to the protection of children and young people. S/he is the link between the children and the adults in the club. S/he also takes responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the Club Council on how club policy impacts on young people and Golf Leaders.

The Club Children's Officer will be a member of or have access to, Club Council. S/he will be introduced to the young people and junior members, at an appropriate forum.

The Club Children's Officer is obliged to undertake Safeguarding 1 & 2 training courses.

#### The Club Children's Officer's Role

Promote awareness of safeguarding guidelines in Howth Golf Club, among young members and their parents/guardians. This can be achieved by: the distribution of information leaflets, the establishment of a junior specific notice board, regular information meetings with the young people and their parents/guardians, posting items on the club website and including junior related material in communications with the general membership.

- To influence policy and practice in the golf club in order to prioritise children's needs
- To establish contact with the National Children's Officer in Golf Ireland
- To ensure that children know how to make concerns known to appropriate adults or agencies
- To encourage the appropriate involvement of parents/guardians in the club activities and to facilitate parent's information sessions at the start of each season
- To act as an advisory resource to golf leaders on best practice in junior golf
- To report regularly to Club Council
- To monitor changes in membership and follow up any unusual dropout, absenteeism or club transfers by children or Golf Leaders
- To ensure that the children have a voice in the running of the club and that they are aware of the steps they can take to express concerns about their golf activities/experiences
- To communicate with other branches of the club, about junior related matters, as appropriate
- To keep records on each member on file, including junior members, their contact numbers and any special needs of the child that should be known to leaders
- To ensure that each member signs an annual membership form that includes signing up to the Code of Conduct for golf leaders and young people
- Ensure that the club rules and regulations include:
  - complaints, disciplinary and appeals procedures
  - an anti-bullying policy
  - safety statement
  - rules in relation to traveling with children
  - provision for the supervision and recruitment of leaders

**Howth Golf Club Club Children's Officer:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Designated Liaison Person

Each golf club must appoint, preferably a senior member, as Designated Liaison Person (DLP), who may or may not also fulfil the role of Children's Officer. Best practice would be that they are kept as separate positions. The DLP is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána.

- The DLP is a resource for volunteers/coaches and should ensure that the club reporting procedures are followed. The DLP reports any suspected cases of child neglect or abuse to the Duty Social Worker in Tusla Child and Family Agency or An Garda Síochána.
- The DLP will also inform the Golf Ireland National Children's Officer that a report has been submitted without identifying details
- The DLP will be knowledgeable about child protection matters
- S/he will be obliged to undertake Safeguarding 1 & 3 training
- The DLP will familiarise herself/himself with the local statutory support services
- The post holder will have knowledge of the Safeguarding Code and relevant child protection legislation (Children First Act 2015).

**The Club Children's Officer or Designated Liaison Person does not have the responsibility of investigating or validating club child protection concerns and neither has a counselling or therapeutic function. These roles are filled by the Statutory Authorities. It is, however, possible that child protection concerns will be brought to the attention of the Children's Officer/Designated Liaison Person. In this event, it is essential that the correct procedure is followed.**

**Howth Golf Club Designated Liaison Person:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Relevant Person

- Clubs that operate in the Republic of Ireland must appoint a Relevant Person, defined in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) as somebody who is the first point of contact in respect of the provider's Child Safeguarding Statement.

**Howth Golf Club Relevant Person:** \_\_\_\_\_

## National Children's Officer

Golf Ireland's National Children's Officer will advise on all matters in relation to safeguarding.

### **The role of the National Children's Officer involves**

- Having knowledge of the Safeguarding Code and relevant child protection legislation, including the Children First Act 2015
- Committing to attendance at appropriate training as required in order to act as a resource to members in relation to children's needs
- Co-ordination of Child Safeguarding training
- The promotion of the values, attitudes and structures which make sport enjoyable for children
- Circulation of all relevant information and resource materials, on children's sport to clubs and affiliates of the sports organisations

- Communication with Club Children's Officers to ensure the distribution of the Safeguarding Code and the promotion of related education programmes, materials, events and governing body related data
- Liaison with all clubs to examine the rules, regulations and structures to ensure that they are child centred. Examples include the issue of equal playing time, appropriate competition structures, modified equipment to allow sense of achievement and success, anti-bullying policy and such like
- Liaison with clubs, to ensure drop-out rates and transfers are monitored so that unusual developments or trends can be addressed, including transfer of sports leaders
- Assisting in the development of a system of record keeping which maintains confidentiality while allowing for appropriate information to be passed to relevant authorities where necessary
- Ensuring that Golf Ireland develops an appropriate golf specific policy, which includes a policy statement, codes of conduct, disciplinary procedures, bullying policy, safety statement, recruitment and selection policy and reporting procedures

Golf Ireland National Children's Officer: Fiona Power [safeguarding@golfireland.ie](mailto:safeguarding@golfireland.ie)

## Mandated Person (NGB only)

The Mandated Person is someone named under Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015. S/he has legal responsibility for reporting concerns or allegations that reach or exceed the threshold of harm or abuse to Tusla.

### Legal Obligations of a Mandated Person:

S/he has two main legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015 (ROI). These are:

- To report the harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla
- To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report

Golf Ireland **Mandated Person:** Fiona Power

## Appendix 5

### Reporting & Protection

#### Responding to Child Abuse

Regardless of how a concern comes to a leader/volunteer's attention, it must be reported to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and National Children's Officer.

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP), in consultation with the person who raised the concern, will decide if reasonable grounds for concern exist. If reasonable grounds for concern exist, the Designated Liaison Person will report to a Tusla duty social worker. If the DLP decides not to report a concern to Tusla, the following steps will be taken:

- The reasons for not reporting should be recorded
- Any actions taken as a result of the concern should be recorded
- The employee or leader/volunteer who raised the concern should be given a clear written explanation of the reasons why the concern is not being reported to Tusla
- The employee or leader/volunteer should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to make a report to Tusla team and/or An Garda Síochána

A report may be made by anyone in the organisation but should be passed on to the Designated Liaison Person/National Children's Officer, who may in turn have to pass the concern to the local Statutory Authorities. It is not the responsibility of anyone working in Howth Golf Club, in a paid or voluntary capacity, to take responsibility or decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. That is the job of the local Statutory Authorities. However, there is a responsibility to protect children by assisting the appropriate agencies so that they can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the junior.

In Ireland, the individual employee or leader/volunteer has protection under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998, should they report independently.

#### Recording Procedure

- Records should be factual and include details of contacts, consultations and any actions taken
- All agencies dealing with children must cooperate in the sharing of records with the statutory authorities where a child protection or welfare issue arises
- Records relating to child protection concerns and allegations are kept securely and safely in a locked cabinet in Howth Golf Club. They are only accessed by the Designated Liaison Person and any other relevant person on a need to know basis
- Records are only used for the purpose for which they are intended
- Records are only shared on a need to know basis in the best interests of the child/young person

#### Reasonable Grounds for Concern

There are many reasons why a leader/volunteer may be concerned about the welfare or protection of a child or young person. Tusla should always be informed if there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. Persons unsure about whether or not certain behaviours are abusive and therefore reportable, can at any time, contact a social worker for an informal discussion.

Details of who to contact to discuss concerns are on the Tusla website at: <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/contact-a-social-worker3/>

It is important to remember that children/young people are sometimes abused by members of their own family, by peers or by others outside the family environment such as strangers, workers or trusted adults.

The following are reasonable grounds for concern:

- Evidence such as 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/harmed
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed
- An account from a person who saw a child being abused/harmed

Wherever appropriate, any issues should be checked with the parents/carers when considering whether a concern exists, unless doing so may further endanger the child or the person considering making the report.

It is important to remember that abuse is not always committed through personal contact with a child or young person. Sometimes it is perpetrated through social media or by the use of information and communication technology.

### **Responding to a Child/Young Person who Discloses Abuse**

A child or young person may say to a leader/volunteer that they have been or are being harmed or abused. Children/young people will often have different ways of communicating that they are being abused. If a child or young person hints at or tells a leader/volunteer that he or she is being harmed by someone, be it a parent/carer, another adult or by another child/young person (peer abuse), it should be treated in a sensitive way.

- Remember, a child/young person may disclose abuse to you as a trusted adult at any time during your work with them. It is important that you are aware and prepared for this.
- Be as calm and natural as possible.
- Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked. The experience of telling should be a positive one so that the child will not mind talking to those involved in the investigation.
- Do not panic.
- Be aware that talking about what happened to them can be very difficult for the child/young person.
- Remember that the child or young person may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Listen to what the child/young person has to say. Give them the time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to. See when listening to young people below.
- Do not pressurise the child/young person. Allow him or her to talk at their own pace and in their own language.
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger or disbelief.
- Listen to what the child or young person has to say and follow Howth Golf Club procedures - false allegations are very rare.
- It is important to refrain from making any comments about the alleged abuser.
- It is essential to reassure the child/young person that they have done the right thing in talking about what was worrying them.



- Be honest with the child/young person and tell them that it is not possible to keep information a secret but you will maintain confidentiality.
- When listening to the young person, ask open ended questions.
- Questions should be supportive and for the purpose of clarification only.
- Avoid leading questions, such as asking whether a specific person carried out the abuse.
- Avoid asking about intimate details or suggesting that something else may have happened other than what has been revealed.

Let the person talk - don't interview. Allow the child to talk by facilitating them with open questions such as:

- Tell me what happened.
- Tell me more about the part where ...
- What happened next?

To gather basic information, you may need to ask specific closed questions beginning with: who, where, when, what, how.

### Confidentiality

It is essential that there is a clear understanding of professional and legal responsibilities with regard to confidentiality and the exchange of information.

- Where child protection and welfare concerns arise, information must be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the best interest of the child/young person, with the relevant statutory authorities and with parents/guardians (see 4<sup>th</sup> bullet point).
- No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. Those working with children/young people and families and in adult services should make this clear to parents/guardians and to the child/young person.
- The proportionate provision of information to the statutory agencies necessary for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.
- Parents/guardians and children/young people have a right to know if personal information is being shared, unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk or may put the reporter at risk.

### Reporting Concerns about a Child to Statutory Authorities

Howth Golf Club has the following procedures in place for reporting concerns 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) Inform the club's Designated Liaison Person who has responsibility for reporting abuse, at the earliest possible opportunity. If the Designated Liaison Person has reasonable grounds for believing that the junior has been abused or is at risk of abuse, s/he will make a report to the local statutory authorities who have a legal duty to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse.

The following forms will be used where reasonable grounds for concern exist:

Tusla report form - <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/individuals-working-with-children-and-young-people/how-do-i-report-a-concern-about-a-child/>

- (c) In cases of emergency, where a junior appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Designated Liaison Person is unable to contact a duty social worker, An Garda Síochána should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a junior be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities.
- (d) If the Designated Liaison Person is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist s/he can informally consult with the Mandated Person (NGB) and/or the Statutory Authorities, who will advise as to whether or not the matter requires a formal report.
- (e) Where the person allegedly causing harm to a child is another child (peer abuse), reports should be made to Tusla for both children.
- (f) The Retrospective Abuse Report Form is to be completed and submitted to Tusla for cases of adults alleging childhood abuse <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms/See Non-Recent abuse for more detail.>

### Talking to Parents/Carers

It is not necessary to inform the family that a report is being made, if by so doing, the child will be placed at further risk or in cases where the family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out an assessment. It is essential that Howth Golf Club consults the statutory services for advice when considering informing the family, if the person making the report reasonably believes that it may place the young person at risk of harm from the family.

### Responding to Allegations of Non-Recent Abuse

Claims of abuse can be made a number of years after the actual incident. This may arise because of a change in circumstances for either the survivor or the alleged perpetrator. Any accusations of non-recent abuse must be processed according to Howth Golf Club's current safeguarding procedures. If there are grounds for concern, the statutory authorities, Tusla and/or the Garda Síochána, must be informed.

The following points should also be considered;

- Clearly establish with the adult complainant whether any children may currently be at risk of harm from the person that they are claiming abused them as a child.
- Advise the person making the complaint that they should inform Tusla and An Garda Síochána. Encourage her/him to do so while acknowledging the brave step s/he has already taken in beginning to talk about this childhood experience. It is important that the person knows that there is a likelihood that an abuser will not have stopped abusing, after her/his abuse ended. The person who has caused harm could continue to be a threat to others. This needs to be done without reinforcing the inappropriate guilt the survivor may already be experiencing, for not coming forward earlier.
- If the complainant refuses to talk to the statutory authorities but has provided you with enough identifying factors, this information MUST be shared with An Garda Síochána. Such a breach of the complainants' confidence is only appropriate if there is any potential that the alleged perpetrator is still a risk to children or could face prosecution (i.e. they are alive). Protection of the welfare of any

children currently at risk is paramount. This must take priority over any request for confidentiality from the person providing the information or making a complaint. This should be explained to the informant at the earliest possible stage.

- Offer support to the complainant when s/he is making a formal complaint to An Garda Síochána.
- Let the accuser know about support agencies that provide counselling in such circumstances.

When an adult making a complaint chooses not to report the matter to An Garda Síochána and the potential for harm to any child has already been discussed, Howth Golf Club must follow its reporting procedures and immediately inform the An Garda Síochána or Tusla of any identifying features of the allegation, including the name of the alleged abuser. The person making the accusation should be informed that this is the organisation's moral and legal responsibility. If the individual wishes to remain anonymous this should be respected. It should however, be pointed out that without further cooperation, there may be little action that An Garda Síochána can take to protect others. The person should be encouraged to talk directly to Tusla, and/or An Garda Síochána, in order to enable social services to consider whether they can act to protect children at risk. Tusla's intervention threshold is lower than that relating to any criminal justice prosecution.

### **Allegations of Abuse against Howth Golf Club Leaders**

The following will apply for accusations against a leader/volunteer/staff member

- The reporting procedure to Tusla in respect of the child/young person and the alleged abuser (see previous page)
- The internal personnel procedure for dealing with the leader/volunteer/staff member (Appendix 6)

An allegation of abuse may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- Behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child/young person
- Possibly committed a criminal offence in relation to a child/young person
- Behaved towards a child/young person or children/young people in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child/young person
- Acted in a way that is contrary to Howth Golf Club's Code of Conduct
- Conducted himself/herself in a way that is contrary to Howth Golf Club's guidelines

If an allegation is made against a golf leader/volunteer, Howth Golf Club will ensure that everyone involved is dealt with appropriately and in accordance with its child safeguarding procedures, the rules of natural justice and any relevant employment law.

The safety of the child making the allegation and any others who are or may be at risk, will take precedence over all other considerations. Howth Golf Club will take all necessary steps which may be immediately necessary to protect children.

### **The Reporting Procedure**

If the Designated Liaison Person has reasonable grounds for concern, the matter will be reported to the Statutory Authorities, following the standard reporting procedure. See page above.

## Procedure for Dealing with Accusations against a Golf Leader

The Designated Liaison Person will make the report to the statutory authorities and seek advice about how and when to inform the person against whom the allegation is made.

- Howth Golf Club, following advice from statutory agencies will inform the golf leader that
  - (a) An allegation has been made against them and
  - (b) The nature of such allegation. S/he will be afforded an opportunity to respond. The response will be noted and passed on to the Statutory Authorities.
- The leader may be asked to step aside pending the outcome of the investigation. In such circumstances, it should be made clear that it is only a precautionary measure and that it will not prejudice any later disciplinary proceedings. This task will be undertaken by a senior office holder other than the Designated Liaison Person who takes the responsibility for reporting.

Disciplinary action for the leader should be considered but only if this does not interfere with the investigation of the statutory authorities. It is important to consider the potential outcome of the investigation and its implications. The fact that someone against whom an allegation has been made has not been prosecuted, found guilty or no further action (NFA) deemed necessary by the statutory agencies, does not automatically mean that it is appropriate that s/he should work with juniors in the future.

Irrespective of the findings of the statutory authorities, Howth Golf Club's Disciplinary Committee will assess all individual cases, in order to decide whether a leader, member of staff or volunteer should be reinstated. and if so, how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision, especially where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the statutory authorities. In such a case the Disciplinary Committee must reach a decision based on the balance of probability, that an incident has happened or not. This means that if the decision is made on the basis of a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. This outcome has implications for juniors' safety and sanctions may be required. Young people's welfare will remain of paramount importance throughout proceedings. Howth Golf Club may need to disclose information to ensure the protection of juniors in its care.

All persons involved in the handling of a child protection matter (the child, his/her parents/carers, the alleged offender, his/her family, golf leaders) will be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure.

## Anonymous Complaints

These can be difficult to deal with but should not be ignored. In all cases the safety and welfare of the child/children is paramount. Any such complaints relating to possible child protection concerns should be brought to the attention of the Club Children's Officer/Designated Liaison Person. The information should be checked out and handled in a confidential manner.

## Rumours

They should not be allowed to hang in the air. Any such relating to possible child protection worries should be brought to the attention of the Designated Liaison Person/Club Children's Officer and checked out without delay.

## Categories of Abuse

Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 outlines four: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child/young person may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time.

Those working with children/young people should be aware of and familiarise themselves with the following:

### Neglect

This 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.

It occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that s/he 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 Abuse

The systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between her or him and a caregiver. Once-off or occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered to amount to emotional abuse. It occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from the parent or caregiver.

### Physical Abuse

When someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts him or her at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of events. 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

### Sexual Abuse

Such ill-treatment occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes contact and non-contact sexual acts such as masturbation, fondling, oral or

penetrative sex, or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

## Exploitation

The intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation, which can be sexual in nature.

NB: If further information is required on any of the categories of abuse listed above, one can consult Children First Guidance directly via the following link:

[https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children\\_First\\_National\\_Guidance\\_2017.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf)

## Signs of Abuse

Anybody dealing with children, needs to be alert to the possibility that a welfare or protection concern may arise in relation to children with whom they come in contact. A child needs to have someone s/he can trust in order to be able to feel confident about seeking help or advice about a worry s/he may have, or abuse s/he may be experiencing. S/he needs to know that they will be listened to, taken seriously and that they will be assisted in getting appropriate help. If s/he is not supported in this way, s/he may be vulnerable to continuing abuse.

Some children may be more vulnerable to the risk of abuse than others. Particular times or circumstances can arise when a child can be vulnerable to abuse in her or his life. In particular, young people with disabilities, those with communication difficulties, in care or living away from home, or those with a parent or parents who have their own problems, may be more susceptible to harm.

The following checklist is an aid list for identifying the range of issues in a child's life that may place them at greater risk of abuse or neglect. It is important for to note that the presence of any of these factors does not necessarily mean that a child in those circumstances or settings is being abused.

## Parent/Carer Factors

- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Addiction, including gambling
- Mental health issues
- Parental disability issues, including learning or intellectual disability
- Conflictual relationships
- Domestic violence
- Adolescent parents

## Child Factors

- Age
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Disability
- Mental health issues, including self-harm and suicide
- Communication difficulties

- Trafficked/Exploited
- Previous abuse
- Young carer

### Community Factors

Cultural, ethnic, religious or faith-based norms in the family or community which may not meet the standards of child welfare or protection required in this jurisdiction.

Culture-specific practices, including:

- Misogynistic attitudes
- Female genital mutilation
- Forced marriage
- Honour-based violence
- Radicalisation

### Environmental factors

- Housing issues
- Children who are out of home and not living with their parents, whether temporarily or permanently.
- Poverty/Begging
- Bullying
- Internet and social media-related concerns

### Poor motivation or willingness of parents/guardians to engage

- Non-attendance at appointments
- Lack of insight or understanding of how the child is being affected
- Lack of understanding about what needs to happen to bring about change
- Avoidance of contact and reluctance to work with services or cooperate with club.
- Inability or unwillingness to comply with agreed plans to improve the experience for the young people.

Anybody dealing with young people should be aware of these indicators, by way of being alert to the possibility that a child may be at risk of suffering abuse and in bringing reasonable concerns to the attention of Tusla.

### Statutory Contacts

#### Tusla Child & Family Agency

If there are any concerns about a child, they should be reported Tusla Child & Family Agency. The website can be accessed via the link below for contact details.

<http://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker/>

Any query or concern in relation to children out of hours should be reported immediately to An Garda Síochána.

## Appendix 6

## Disciplinary, Complaints & Appeals Procedure

Howth Golf Club leaders, employees and volunteers are expected to conform to the highest standards of behaviour, reflecting its aspirations and that of the sport of golf. Fair play in all competitions is expected. Where an allegation or complaint arises that an individual's behaviour has fallen short of the expected standard, an inquiry will be made to establish whether s/he should be subject to the disciplinary process.

Safeguarding complaints are those that involve a person under the age of eighteen years. This document provides a clear and easy to follow guide on how complaints of alleged poor practice of a safeguarding nature are handled in Howth Golf Club.

It should be noted, once again, that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the statutory authorities and should not be undertaken by Designated Liaison Person or other golf leaders. The standard reporting procedure outlined in the statutory authorities' guidelines will be followed.

**If an incident occurs that appears to breach the expected standards, the following procedure will be followed:**

### Complaints Procedure for Alleged Poor Practice

#### Poor Practice

Such incidents occur when the needs of a child are compromised. Examples are likely to be once off occurrences and these might include but are not limited to:

#### Leader

- Being negative during sessions and competitions
- Not putting the welfare of the young person first
- Giving preferential treatment to individuals and unfairly rejecting others
- Discouraging fair play and not treating participants equally
- Not recognising developmental needs or ensuring that activities are appropriate for the individual
- Not planning and preparing appropriately
- Not reporting concerns in accordance with Howth Golf Club Safeguarding Policy reporting procedures
- Spending excessive amounts of time with a child or children away from others
- Taking sessions alone
- Constant communication with individual juniors by mobile phone or email
- Taking children to his or her home
- Taking children on journeys alone in his or her car
- Using inappropriate language

#### Representative Player

- Not maintaining high standards of conduct when interacting with juniors, other participants, parents, officials and organisers
- Behaving irresponsibly and seeking out to unfairly affect a player or the outcome of the game
- Intentionally exposing any junior to embarrassment or disparagement using flippant or sarcastic remarks
- Using inappropriate language or behaving in a threatening, abusive or bullying manner



### Parent/Guardian

- Not maintaining high standards of conduct when interacting with juniors, participants, other parents/guardians, officials and organisers
- Behaving irresponsibly and seeking out to unfairly affect a player or the outcome of a game
- Intentionally exposing any junior to embarrassment or disparagement, using flippant or sarcastic remarks
- Interfering with the coach or professional while working with the junior
- Using inappropriate language or behaving in a threatening, abusive or bullying manner

### Spectators

- Using inappropriate language towards children, participants, coaches, referees or other spectators
- Entering the course or practice facilities or training sessions without being asked to do so
- Making inappropriate comments about a child's performance

### Process for Dealing with Alleged Poor Practice

All information will be treated in the strictest of confidence, in accordance with procedures concerning confidentiality outlined in Howth Golf Club's Safeguarding Policy and the allegation will be dealt with in a fair and impartial manner.

If the complainant believes the concern is of a safeguarding nature then the following will be followed:

- The complaint should be in writing to the Club Secretary or Club Children's Officer and should be responded to within 7 working days. If the complaint is against a junior, correspondence will be to the parent/guardian.
- On receiving a complaint, Howth Golf Club will appoint a Disciplinary Committee of no less than three members. It will be the responsibility of this committee to select a representative (investigator) to meet with the complainant and any other witnesses to ask for their explanation of what happened.
- The committee will consist of representatives from the junior golf committee, Club Council and the Club Children's Officer.
- The Disciplinary Committee will furnish the individual with details of the nature of the complaint being made against him/her and afford her/him the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing, but usually at a meeting with the Disciplinary Committee. Under eighteens should be accompanied to such a meeting by a parent/guardian.
- While maintaining confidentiality, the Disciplinary Committee with safeguarding knowledge will hear the case of all parties involved and decide whether the behaviour has breached Howth Golf Club's Safeguarding Policy.
- If the complaint involves suspected abuse or a criminal offence, the Designated Liaison Person will be consulted and the Disciplinary Committee disbanded. The statutory authorities will then be informed of the alleged ill-treatment.
- The Disciplinary Committee will review relevant paperwork and hold any necessary meetings with all parties, as part of the process of investigating a complaint of suspected misconduct that does not relate to child abuse.
- Written confidential records of all complaints will be kept safely and confidentially in a locked cabinet.

- Where it is established that an incident of misconduct has taken place, the Disciplinary Committee will notify the alleged perpetrator of any penalty being imposed. The type of sanction will reflect the seriousness of the alleged misconduct. The notification will be made in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction or sanctions. If the member is under 18 years of age, correspondence will be addressed to the parents/guardians.
- If the leader/employee/volunteer against whom the complaint has been made is unhappy with the decision of the Disciplinary Committee, s/he has the right to appeal the decision to an Appeals Committee (independent of a disciplinary committee). Any appeal should be made in writing within 10 days of receipt of the Disciplinary Committee's decision.
- Following the appeals meeting the Appeals Committee will either confirm the original sanction or modify it in respect of further information provided through the appeal hearing. This decision is final and cannot be appealed against.

### **Suspension for Safeguarding Purposes**

If any leader/employee/volunteer of Howth Golf Club becomes the subject of an allegation of sexual misconduct or abuse involving a child or young person, resulting in an investigation by any statutory agencies charged with that responsibility, Howth Golf Club reserves the right to impose a suspension, without prejudice to its role, until the matter has been fully investigated and a decision reached by the statutory authorities. When the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of the statutory agencies, the employee/volunteer/leader may have his/her suspension lifted. The removal of a suspension will only follow an additional risk assessment, to consider any possible breaches of Howth Golf Club's Safeguarding Policy. The Disciplinary Committee's recommendation will be confirmed by Howth Golf Club Council and subsequently communicated in writing to the employee/volunteer/leader.

In this respect, the statutory authorities consist of Tusla Child and Family Agency and An Garda Síochána.

### **Possible Sanctions Involving Poor Practice** (but not limited to)

#### **Leader**

- Issued with a verbal and/or written warning
- Re-attendance at a Safeguarding Children in Sport course
- Stepping aside from duties for a specified period of time, or permanent removal
- Requested to work alongside a more experienced leader for a specified period, to ensure best practice is followed at all times
- Monitoring by a nominated person, as directed by the appropriate committee

#### **Representative Players**

- Issued with a verbal and/or written warning and warned as to their future conduct; to be noted on the player's record.
- Loss of privileges in relation to equipment
- Reduction in order of merit points
- Removal from team/coaching panels
- Reduction or removal of subvention in relation to travelling or accommodation expenses
- Reduction or removal of grant aid
- Suspension from competing in National and Provincial/District tournaments

#### Parent/Guardian and Spectators

- Issued with a verbal and/or written warning and warned as to their future conduct
- Forbidden to attend coaching sessions, tournaments and championships for a period of time, or permanent removal
- Obligated to attend a Safeguarding workshop

Note: Any suspension/removal of a parent or guardian should not impact on the involvement of the child. Drop off and collection of her/his child should be facilitated to allow the child attend coaching sessions, tournaments or championships.

## Appendix 7 – Safeguarding Guidance

### Supervision, Ratios & Environment

There must **always be at least 2 adults present for all organised activities**. This will help to ensure the safety of the children as well as protecting grown-ups. Adults should not be over familiar with children and must remember that they are in a position of trust at all times. There should be at least one adult of each gender with mixed parties.

#### Adult/Child Ratios

- Adult/child ratios are 1:8 for under 12 years of age and 1:10 for over 12 years of age. For away trips the ratio is 1:5.  
The following factors will be taken into consideration when deciding how many adults are required to safely supervise children:
  - the nature of the activity
  - the number of children involved in the activity
  - the number of hazards associated with the activity or environment
  - the age of the participants
  - whether some of the children have any special needs, disability or are wont to present with challenging behaviour
  - if any of the volunteers are under the age of eighteen, they will not be placed in a position of sole responsibility but should be supervised by a more senior coach or volunteer who has been vetted.

#### Environment

- Away trips will necessitate higher levels of supervision. Children and young people will be supervised at all times. Parents will receive detailed information about arrangement for such trips and their child's involvement will require their full consent.
- Adults will avoid being left alone with young participants. If a leader needs to talk separately to a junior, this should be done in an open environment, in view of others.
- The privacy of young people while changing will be fully respected.

- Leaders should supervise in pairs or seek assistance, as required, keeping the safety and welfare of children as the number one priority.
- Leaders should not be left alone with young people at the end of a training session. Starting and finishing times of training and/or competitions, should be clearly stated and made known to parents/guardians.
- In the case of late collection, leaders should remain in pairs until participants have left.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make arrangements for the collection of young people. Supervision will only be provided for Howth Golf Club activities.
- Parents/ guardians will be informed, as soon as possible, if a child suffers an injury or has an accident.
- Attendance will be recorded as well as dated and signed details of any incidents/injuries that arise.
- Parents who wish to stay and supervise sessions, for safety and care purposes, not necessarily for their technical expertise, will be facilitated, if they have completed Garda vetting.

### Away Trips/Overnight Stays

Prior to each trip, Howth Golf Club will nominate a staff member/volunteer to act as the main contact for dealing with concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children whilst away from home. Parents should be informed of this person's contact details concerns arise during the outing.

- Separate permission forms will be signed by parents and participants, containing emergency contact number and any other relevant information.
- Young participants will sign a Code of Conduct agreement
- A meeting with parents and participants will be arranged to communicate travel times, competition details, other activities, gear requirements, medical necessities, special dietary needs and any other relevant details.
- Adults will not share rooms with juniors. Young people will room with those of the same age and gender. Grown-ups will knock before entering rooms.
- All group socialisation will take place in communal areas. No boys will be allowed in girls' rooms and vice versa.
- Alcohol, smoking or the use of any illegal substances by players, will be strictly forbidden.
- There will be at least one adult of each gender with a mixed party. The adult-child ratio will be at least a minimum of 1:5.
- Lights out times will be enforced.
- Juniors will be under reasonable supervision at all times. They should never leave the venue or go unsupervised without prior permission.

### Transport and Travel

Staff/volunteers are strongly discouraged from transporting children to/from activities. However, when this situation cannot be avoided the following guidelines will be followed:

- Request parent/guardian consent in advance and provide details of the journey, including who will be transporting their child, why and how long the journey will take.

- Attempt to have more than one child in the car.
- Alternate drivers if possible and which child is dropped off last; bring juniors to a central location such as the golf club car park.
- Driver must have a point of contact/mobile phone.
- A person other than the expected driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check whether s/he is comfortable with the proposed arrangement.
- Drivers must have appropriate insurance cover to carry others and where necessary, protection for the use of booster seats.
- Drivers representing and regularly volunteering on behalf of Howth Golf Club will be Garda vetted through the National Vetting Bureau.
- Parents and coaches will be encouraged to download Sport Ireland's Safe Sport Ireland App <https://www.sportireland.ie/ethics/safesport-app>. One of its features is the Travel Tracker function, which allows a child's parent or guardian to view and have oversight of her/his location for a specified period of time, while travelling on a journey with a coach or volunteer; as for example, when being driven home after a training session.

Download the Safe Sport Ireland app to your smart phone. This provides guidance and information for everyone involved in sport with children and young people.

<https://itunes.apple.com/ie/app/safe-sport/id996968605?mt=8>



<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.inege.irishsportscouncil>

## The use of booster seats

From 2006, the law in Europe requires that all children in cars, vans and other goods vehicles should be carried using an appropriate child restraint. In Ireland this applies until either they have reached the age of 12 years or are 150 centimetres (5") in height; whichever comes first with very few exceptions. The European law allowed countries to opt for a minimum height of between 135 and 150 cm.

For more information visit:

Republic of Ireland: <https://www.rsa.ie/en/RSA/Road-Safety/Child-Safety-in-Cars>

## Personal arrangements between parents

It is not the responsibility of Howth Golf Club, if carers/guardians make personal arrangements between themselves about transporting children, unless there are particular concerns about a person's ability to drive, as in the case of alcohol consumption.

## Film & Photography

### Permission to take images

Howth Golf Club will seek permission, to ensure that young people and parents/carers are aware of when and how children's images may be used. This will be obtained through:

- Individual consent where it is sought for a single or specific event and has not been requested generally through competition entry/other contract means and/or
- General assent granted through completion of competition entry/other contract where permission is included as part of the form.

A Self-Declaration Form must be completed by all third party photographers, film/videographers or other organisations employed to take images. Any other person wishing to use photographic devices at Howth Golf Club events must first register her/his device with the organiser. Each individual registering a device will be required to produce photographic identification as proof of identity.

### **Taking images in certain environments**

Third party photographers, film/videographers or other organisations shall ensure that images are not taken in such environments considered inappropriate, irrespective of any permission granted. In certain cases it may be an offence to take such images.

Taking images using any type of equipment is banned in an area where people are changing or would normally expect their privacy to be respected. Examples of such areas include:

- Changing rooms
- Open changing areas
- Individual changing/private cubicles provided for personal use.
- Toilets
- Medical/physio treatment rooms

### **Types of appropriate image**

Only appropriate images of children, such as some of the following, will be used:

- Posed photographs such as those taken during medal ceremonies, presentations or team shots where young people must be wearing t-shirt and shorts/trousers.
- Action shots of young people where the focus is on their participation in golf, not the athlete.
- Images of children will not be taken where the pose is inappropriate, as for example open legs, bending over from behind and suchlike.

### **Safe use of images**

These can be taken for a variety of purposes, including for administration or personal use, publicising golf or aiding skill development. Anyone taking photographs must be aware of action poses that may be inappropriate and unsuitable for use or publication.

### **Types of images and appropriate use:**

- Personal photographs such as those taken by parents/guardians or other family members during an event as a celebration of a young person's attendance or achievement. This includes the use of a professional photographer, with permission, taking shots for the personal use of those

attending. Other people may be included in an image and it is expected that parents/guardians and other family members will respect their privacy by not distributing such images publicly.

- Photographs or footage taken during a training sessions or during an event, specifically to aid the young person in the development of a skill or technique. These should be taken by a qualified instructor or a person specifically appointed by the junior's coach. They may be used as examples of technique or mastery of a skill for teaching/coaching purposes and will not be used for any other purpose.
- Photographs or footage taken by an individual from television, the newspapers, social media or a professional photographer, with prior parental consent, where the images are to be used for publicity or promotion of a particular event or future events.
- Images taken for general administration purposes, including those used for membership cards, competition entries and those that could potentially form part of an archive record.

### Use of images on social media

Any person responsible for posting an image on social media must be aware of the potential for its inappropriate use. The following safeguards will be in place to protect young people:

- Personal details of a young person will never accompany photographs and/or video footage.
- Captions will be in keeping with the sport represented.
- The posting and its purpose will not in any way breach the club Code of Conduct.
- The type of image will be in line with the guidelines outlined in this policy.

### Storage of Images

This refers to items stored as hard copy and/or electronically as soft copy. It may include images on social media, photographic archives or individual personal databases such as personal cameras and phones. How personal images are stored is the responsibility of parents/guardians in consultation with their child/young person.

All other images will only be stored for defined and intended purposes, such as membership, promotion, and/or archiving.

- Photographs/footage will only be stored, with parental consent, for the length of time for which they are needed.
- Where possible, the children's names or any other identifying feature will accompany the image.

Once no longer required they will be properly destroyed. Digital images stored on computer systems will be fully deleted, including from the cache memory and/or temporary files.

### Taking inappropriate images

Howth Golf Club Club Designated Liaison Person will report a concern about the nature of an image taken to the statutory authorities, as may any person with such a cause for disquiet. Contact details can be found in club Safeguarding Policy. Disquiet about somebody taking photographs or video footage at an event should be verbally reported to the Howth Golf Club representative present on the occasion. It may be necessary to directly inform the appropriate statutory authorities.

The Howth Golf Club representative will identify the person and check whether his or her device is registered for the event. If not, the person will be required to register the device, with appropriate identification. If unwilling to do so, s/he will be asked to leave.

Where the event is open to the public, such as when only part of the facility is being used, it will be necessary to report unauthorised taking of images to the club/facility manager.

### **Inappropriate use of images**

Where there is a concern about the use of images this should be reported to the Howth Golf Club representative who will take appropriate action. This will include reporting the alleged use to:

- The parent/guardian of any young person involved
- The person responsible for posting the image
- The media platform, such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, print media or such like
- The statutory authorities

Inappropriate use of images is a breach of these guidelines and the Code of Conduct. It may result in a complaint/disciplinary procedure being taken against those responsible for such misuse. Howth Golf Club will pass on any and all concerns about the publication of an image in local or national newspapers, to the newspaper, the Press Council of Ireland and the Office of the Press Ombudsman - website <http://www.presscouncil.ie/>.

### **Social Media**

**NB: Leaders will not communicate with children or young people via their personal social networking profiles, email accounts or chat rooms.**

**All communication with juniors will be open, transparent and appropriate. It will take place only with the clear consent and oversight of parents/guardians.**

### **For Leaders Using a Social Networking Site**

- Where possible all communication with juniors will take place via parents/guardians. Before leaders communicate directly with young people through social networking sites, or by any other means of internet communication, consent will be sought from the parent/guardian and young person.
- Parent and child permission will be required before pictures or video material of children or young people are posted online.
- Leaders will not 'friend' or 'follow' children or young people on social media. The content leaders post on social media should be appropriate and beyond reproach because juniors may 'follow' them and thus be open to negative or improper influence.
- Messages left to or from children on social network sites should be written on an open page, such as A Facebook 'Wall' and not in a private message or by using 'chat', in a one-on-one arrangement.
- Leaders should only network through 'Group Chat' with members of their organisation/group via and not on closed, one-on-one chats such as Facebook messenger or WhatsApp.
- Any Howth Golf Club run events or activities that are organised or publicised on the site should be closed, so that non-members cannot access them without permission from the site administrators.



- Any emails sent to juniors must be sent to at least one other leader, if necessary by 'bcc'.
- Leaders will avoid communicating with young people via email, text or otherwise late at night.
- Each leader should simply sign off a message using her or his name . it should not be done in a way that could be misconstrued or misinterpreted by the recipient, by using sign-offs such as "Luv X", "xoxoxo" or otherwise.
- All social networking allegations of abuse will be dealt with according to Howth Golf Club's reporting procedures.

### Mobile Phones

Young people value their devices as it gives them a sense of independence. Parents often give them to children for security and safety reasons and to be able to keep in touch. Technology, however, allows direct personal contact between adults and juniors. In some instances, adults have used it to cross boundaries, placing themselves and young people at risk. Where possible all communication with young people should be through their parent/guardian's mobile number or email address. Parental and juniors' permission will be sought by each leader who will be contacting children or young people. Leaders will only have children's mobile numbers, with explicit parental assent, if the nature of their involvement requires them to phone or text them.

#### As a leader

- Use only group texts for communication with players and teams. Inform parents of this arrangement at the start of the season, tournament or event.
- It is not appropriate or acceptable to have constant contact with an individual athlete.
- Use of a phone in inappropriate locations, such as changing rooms, is strictly prohibited.
- Messages must not be sent late at night.
- Remember that the principles of the Leaders' Code of Conduct apply to social media communication and consider your digital footprint before posting.
- If it turns into a conversation, communications should be ended. A leader can suggest discussing the subject further at the next event. If concerned about the child's welfare, arrange to meet up to talk further, in the company of a parent or trusted adult, as per the Safeguarding Guidelines.

#### As a junior golfer

- Do not reply to an offensive message, email or photograph. Save it, make a note of times and dates and tell a parent, the Club Children's Officer or responsible adult that you trust.
- Be careful about those to whom you give your phone number or email address. Do not respond to unfamiliar numbers.
- Avoid use of your phone in inappropriate locations, such as changing rooms, especially if your phone has a camera.
- Treat your phone as you would any valuable item so that you can guard against theft.

### Smart Phones

Smart phones should be used safely and responsibly.

Pictures can be very powerful and stir up strong emotions. Smart phone users should respect the private lives of others and avoid taking or distributing pictures of others that invade their privacy.

Leaders and young people should not send pictures that are obscene, indecent, or menacing. They should be sensitive about other people's gender identity, sexual identity, racial heritage, religion and personal background. Leaders and juniors should be fully aware that it is a criminal offence to take, make, and permit to be taken, distribute, show, or possess an indecent or sexually explicit image of a child under 18.

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity, the leader in charge will ensure that there are clear expectations and rules which apply in relation to safeguarding. Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an activity must seek Howth Golf Club accreditation by producing their professional identification for inspection and in order that details to be recorded. The leader should then:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- Issue the photographer with identification which should be worn at all times.
- Keep a record of accreditations.
- Inform leaders, children/young people, and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at the activity. Confirm that they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- Prevent unsupervised access to children or one-to-one photo sessions.
- Block photo sessions outside the activity or at a child's home.
- Anyone concerned about any photography taking place should discuss his or her concerns with the Club Children's Officer.

Smart phones can be used to make young people safer. Older children, for example, using a taxi can send a picture of the car's registration to a friend before they begin the trip, or they can use the phone to show parents where they are.

- Children can only be photographed with their written consent and that of their parent or guardian.
- Specific details of the use of photographs must be provided when seeking parental permission.
- Children should not be named individually in photographs unless necessary and with the clear agreement and consent of parents and child. It may be appropriate, for example, if the junior concerned has won a prize and the photograph is deemed worthy of publication.
- Settings should be such that children cannot be individually tagged, when posting material on social media.
- All photographs must be stored in a secure place either electronically, in password protected files or physically in a locked cabinet.
- If any electronic device/memory which contains photographs or footage is disposed of or passed on, it must be wiped clean of all material in such a way that it cannot be recovered on that piece of equipment.

### Physical Contact

During golf practice or training, this should always be intended to meet the needs of the child and not those of the adult. In the first instance, techniques should be delivered by demonstration. Appropriate physical

contact may be required to assist in the development of a competence or skill. It may also be required for safety reasons such as treatment or prevention of injury and must only occur in a public place, in other people's presence.

### **When is physical contact appropriate in golf?**

This should be determined by the age and developmental stage of the participant. Nothing should be done by an adult that a child can do for herself or himself. Physical contact between adults and children in golf should take place only when necessary to:

- Develop golf skills or techniques
- Treat an injury
- Prevent an injury or accident from occurring
- Comfort a distressed child

### **Good principles to follow**

- The basic principle on which all decisions regarding physical contact are made, is that it should be in the interest of and for the benefit of the child, rather than the adult involved.
- Adults should explain the nature of and reason for the physical contact to the child.
- Unless in case of emergency, the adult should ask for the child's permission. An example might be to aid the demonstration of a specific golf technique.
- Golf clubs and coaches should provide an induction for new young members and their parents/carers, that covers guidance about any physical contact that will be required as part of their interaction with juniors. The reasons for and the nature of the physical contact will be explained and agreed.
- Children will be encouraged to voice concerns they have if any physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.
- Contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment.
- Physical contact should always take place in an open, public environment, in the presence of others, not in secret or out of sight.
- If regularly repeated, well intentioned gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can lead to the possibility of questions being raised by observers. As a general principle, adults in positions of responsibility should not make gratuitous or unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. Resistance from a child must always be respected.

### **What about children who need specific assistance due to disability or injury?**

In the case of a young person with a disability specific support or assistance may be required. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Efforts should be made to acquire as much information as possible about the child to ensure her/his safe inclusion in all activities. There should be clear agreements on what is required to meet the child's needs.
- Parents/carers should be asked to undertake all intimate or personal care tasks for their child. This is not an appropriate role for coaches and others involved in leading activities.

- When children with disabilities are lifted or manually supported, they should be treated with dignity and respect.
- Relevant health and safety guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of the child and those assisting her/him.
- Leaders/volunteers should not take responsibility for tasks for which they are not appropriately trained.

### Late Collection

- Parents/guardians should be made aware of activities' start and finish times. The arrangements for drop off/collection must be clear by everyone.
- Parents/guardians should consent in writing if they wish to allow their children to go home unaccompanied. A duty of care requires that the activity leader still has a responsibility to consider whether this is a reasonable and safe decision on the parents' part.
- If a parent is late to collect a junior, the wellbeing of the child will take precedence. S/he must not be left alone.
- Contact should be made with the parent, using the emergency contact number. In the absence of response, the junior will be asked for another family member's contact details.
- The leader/volunteer should wait at the club or venue, preferably with other staff or volunteers.
- Parents should be reminded of the policy in relation to good practice and supervision.

### One-to-One Coaching

There may be instances where coaching is provided on a one-to-one basis with a child, possibly as part of a personal arrangement between a parent and coach.

In order to safeguard juniors and adults, the following guideline should be adhered to:

- All coaches understand, abide by and have signed up to the Code of Conduct.
- The activity should take place in an open environment, with other people in the vicinity. Any on-course sessions should be in view of the clubhouse or other golfers/members.
- Parent involvement should be promoted and they should be encouraged to attend whenever possible.
- All adults should behave in an appropriate manner, respecting the rights of the child and treating them with respect, dignity and fairness.
- Coaches will explain that techniques are delivered by demonstration, in the absence of physical contact.
- All those working alone with a junior should have the child's emergency contact number to hand and access to a phone.
- Children should be provided with information about what to do and who to contact, if they feel uncomfortable at any time during a one-to-one coaching session.
- Parents should be aware of all formal arrangements regarding the structure, location and the length of a one-to-one session. They should know who to speak to if they have any concerns.

## Junior and Cadet Playing Protocols

Juniors: Girls and boys aged 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 on 1st January

Cadets: Girls and boys aged 8, 9, 10, 11 on 1st January

1. Howth Golf Club is not responsible for providing adult supervision of juniors or cadets, except for formal junior and cadet golf coaching, matches or competitions.
2. All junior golf must be booked through the BRS system, before commencing play on the course.
3. Junior members under the age of 16 years are not permitted to play alone on the golf course.
4. Two junior members are allowed to play together on the golf course unsupervised if each has a playing handicap.
5. Juniors under 18 years of age are not allowed to play in a two ball with an unrelated adult club member.
6. One, two or three junior members under 18 years of age, may not play together with an unrelated adult.
7. In the interests of personal safety, juniors under 16 years of age must be accompanied on the course by a related adult club member after 8:00pm.
8. All juniors under 16 years of age must have left the club house, practice ground and putting green by 8:00pm, each evening.
9. Junior boys with a handicap of 18 or lower may enter their names on an integrated competition timesheet only after 48 hours have elapsed after the timesheet was opened.
10. Junior girls with a handicap of 32 or lower may enter their names on an integrated competition time sheet only after 48 hours have elapsed after the timesheet was opened.
11. On a competition day, junior members not playing in the competition are only allowed to play after 3:00pm.
12. Cadets must be accompanied out on the course, by a related adult (Eighteen years or older) club member.
13. All junior members are required to abide by the Conditions of Competition that are set out by the Men's and Ladies' Executive Committees.

## Practice Grounds

Junior members are allowed to use the practice grounds once they have checked in at the Pro Shop. Cadets are only allowed to use the the practice grounds under parental supervision.

### Adults and Junior Members Playing Golf Together

One of the reasons for the popularity of golf is that the game is not restricted either competitively or socially by skill level, age or gender. Golf can be enjoyed and keenly contested by players from diverse groups. Every effort will be made to promote this mix of physical and technical ability.

Responsible interaction between adults and children should lead to the growth of mutual respect and understanding and help junior members become familiar with good golf etiquette and club standards. When playing golf with a junior, adults should always be aware that certain age-related differences do exist and they should conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the circumstances. Each member should always show respect and understanding and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the Safeguarding Policy.

In competitive play, there should be no barrier to juniors participating fully, regardless of the format. All adults who play with juniors should be conscious of their responsibility to act as good role models, demonstrating the need to show respect and consideration to everyone who plays the game. If they cannot do that, then they should limit their play to adult company only.

Parental consent will be requested for juniors' participation in competitions where adults are also playing.

Club Council may introduce specific protocols regarding adult and junior members playing together as it sees fit.

### Guidelines for the use of Changing Rooms

One of the areas where children are most vulnerable is in the lockers/changing/shower room. Extra vigilance may be required where there is public access to the facilities. Limited changing facilities often mean that people of all ages regularly need to change and shower during the same period. To avoid possible misunderstandings and embarrassing situations, adults need to exercise care when in the changing rooms at the same time as children.

Bullying can be an issue when children are left unsupervised in locker rooms. Should it be necessary to supervise the locker room, it is best if one adult is not left alone to do so. If, in an emergency, a male needs to enter a female changing area, or vice versa, another adult of the opposite gender should accompany him or her.

To minimise embarrassment, as far as possible, the following guidelines apply:

- All persons using changing rooms should act responsibly and with appropriate modesty. Adults must exercise care when in the changing rooms at the same time as juniors.
- Parents will be made aware that adults and juniors may need to share the changing facility. The parent should discuss this with his or her child and that the young person is aware of who to talk to if any issues arise in unsupervised areas.
- Parents can choose to supervise their child while they change.
- If juniors are uncomfortable changing or showering in public, no pressure should be placed on them. Encourage them to do this at home.

- Whenever possible, adults should avoid changing or showering at the same time as children.
- Junior Members under 16 years of age are not permitted to be in changing rooms unless accompanied by another junior, or a parent of the same gender.
- Junior members are strongly advised not to use their mobile phones in inappropriate locations such as changing rooms.

### First Aid for Accidents and Incidents

Parental consent forms will be obtained for all juniors who are participating in events, activities, or coaching organised by Howth Golf Club. Leaders, staff and volunteers running the event will be made aware of any child's medical condition, existing injury and/or medication being administered. Forms containing this information will be treated in confidence and only shared with those who require it to perform their role effectively. A well-resourced first aid kit will be available at the venue.

In the event of a junior requiring medical attention:

- Parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.
- In the event of failure to contact parent/guardian, the alternative emergency contact will be used.
- The consent form will be consulted to establish whether parents have given their consent for the Howth Golf Club representative to accompany the child to seek medical attention.
- Only those with a current recognised First Aid Qualification will treat injuries.
- A record of the action taken will be made and retained by the club.

### Safety

Howth Golf Club will endeavour to:

- Ensure activities are suitable for the participants' age and stage of development.
- Maintain a record of junior members' specific medical conditions.
- Keep details of emergency contact numbers of parents/guardians and emergency services.
- Ensure any necessary protective gear is used.
- Have a well-stocked, easily reached First Aid kit combined with access to a qualified first-aider
- Ensure easy access to medical personnel if needed and have an emergency plan.
- Preserve a signed, written record of the injury, action taken and outcome, in case of accident, noting date and time. Contact the participant's parents and keep them informed of all developments.
- Officials such as convenors and referees should ensure the proper conduct of the game.
- Participants should be aware of and adhere to golf guidelines and etiquette, many of which are there for safety reasons.
- Ensure that leaders are trained and are suitably qualified.
- Confirm there is adequate insurance cover for all activities.
- Guarantee that parents/guardians are mindful of the fact that they need to be present at finishing time of sessions or events.

## Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidance

### Definition:

Bullying behaviour can be defined as repeated unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons).

### Types of Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviour exists in many different forms, some of which are not as obvious as others, but are just as damaging to the victim. One or more method, from the list below may be used by the person displaying bullying behaviour.

#### Physical

This includes any physical contact that would hurt or injure a person such as pushing, hitting, kicking, punching or tripping. Physical bullying can put the person experiencing bullying behaviour at risk of injury and makes them feel powerless. Taking something that belongs to someone else and destroying it would also be considered a type of physical bullying.

#### Verbal

This usually takes the form of name-calling or making nasty remarks or jokes about a person's religion, gender, appearance, sexuality, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or the way they look. It can also include freezing the victim out by exclusion or spreading rumours.

#### Threats

Making threats against a person or their property is also a type of bullying. It can be a threat to damage or take something belonging to the victim or to hurt them physically. Often the threat is not actually carried out, but the fear created by the threat can be enough to upset the person experiencing bullying behaviour.

#### Cyber

Cyber bullying is done by sending messages, pictures, or information using electronic media, computers (email and instant messages), mobile phones (text messaging and voicemail) and social networking websites. This activity can be upsetting and harmful to the person targeted. It can allow the person who is displaying bullying behaviour to hide their identity which may have a bigger impact on the person experiencing it.

#### Homophobic

Homophobic bullying involves hostile targeting of a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity as lesbian, gay male, bisexual, transsexual, or transgender.

#### Racist

Racist bullying focuses negatively on a person's skin colour, cultural or religious background or ethnic origin.



## The Impact of Bullying Behaviour

The damage inflicted by bullying behaviour can frequently be underestimated. It can trigger considerable distress in juniors, to the extent that it affects their health and development, or at the extreme, causes them significant harm.

## Recognising Bullying Behaviour

There are a number of signs that may indicate a person is being bullied:

- Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities
- Physical signs such as unexplained bruises, scratches, or damage to belongings
- Stress-caused illness – headaches, and stomach aches which seem unexplained
- Fearful behaviour such as fear of walking to a meeting, going different routes, asking to be driven
- Frequent loss of, or shortage of, money with vague explanations
- Having few friends or drop out of newer members
- Changes in behaviour such as becoming withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed, not eating, reduced concentration, drop in performance
- Anxiety, shown by nail-biting, fearfulness, tics

This list is not exhaustive and there are other possible reasons for many of the above. The presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that bullying is actually taking place

## How to Prevent Bullying Behaviour

- Ensure that all members follow the Code of Conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member
- Deal with any incidents as soon as they arise
- Use a whole group policy or 'no-blame approach', when working with person(s) displaying the bullying behavior and the group of juniors, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a 'shared concern' of the group
- Encourage juniors to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly new members or children with specific needs
- Offer the person experiencing bullying behavior immediate support and put the 'no blame approach' into operation
- Never tell a young person to ignore bullying - they can't disregard it because it hurts too much.
- Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands to attempt to beat the person(s) displaying the bullying behavior at his/her own game.
- Reassure the person experiencing bullying behavior that they have done nothing wrong. Reinforce the sense that there is a 'right to tell' culture in the club.

## Who should deal with bullying?

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reported to the statutory authorities, dealing with bullying behaviour is normally the responsibility of all leaders. There will be liaison with the Club Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person.

## Using the NO BLAME Approach

The aim of this process is to find a resolution for the young people involved in the bullying behaviour whilst maintaining their relationship within the club or the group.

This is important for young people who often simply want the behaviour to stop, without a need for punishments to be imposed.

It encourages young people to recognise the impact of their behaviour and then to take responsibility for changing it. By using this approach, a previous relationship between or within a team can often be re-established; this is often a preferred option for the young people involved.

The ethos behind the NO BLAME approach is to:

**Explain** the problem, which may be that someone seems to be unhappy in the club and appears to be picked on or otherwise. Outline how that person is feeling; this should not involve accusation of a particular person/s.

**Ask** for ideas as to how to help this person.

**Leave** the individuals involved to check how the behaviour has changed.

**Share** the responsibility of changing the behaviour and encouraging everyone to speak to a trusted adult if there is bullying behaviour in the club.

The NO BLAME approach does not attempt to get 'confessions'. It seeks to get an acknowledgement of conduct and provides an opportunity for young people to change hurtful behaviour.

There may be issues that are not resolved through the NO BLAME approach, where misbehaviour continues.

Bullying behaviour is a breach of the Code of Conduct and may have to be dealt with through a disciplinary process. However, the outcome for young people is far better when issues can be resolved through use of the NO BLAME approach.

## NO BLAME APPROACH

### STEP 1: MEET WITH THE JUNIOR WHO IS THE TARGET OF THE BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

If an incident of bullying behaviour is reported, the Club Children' Officer should first talk to the young person who is the target, find out who was involved and what the young person is now feeling. A decision will be made as to whether parents should be informed of the matter, at this point in time.

The following questions might be asked:

- What was the behaviour that has caused upset?
- Are you emotionally/physically hurt and/or how are you feeling?
- Who was involved in the behaviour?
- When and where did it happen?
- Actively listen and advise the young person of the next steps that will be taken.

## STEP 2: MEET WITH ALL INVOLVED

A meeting should be arranged with all those involved to include those who initiated the bullying behaviour. It should be informal, and it is better to try to meet the individuals before meeting as a group. If meeting with a group, keep the number controllable and only deal with the topic. Make sure everyone knows that the meeting's purpose is to get their point of view and find their solutions.

## STEP 3: EXPLAIN THE PROBLEM

Talk about the hurt caused in general terms without apportioning blame. It might be suggested that the focus of the bullying behaviour doesn't seem to be happy in the club, and that it has reported that they have been called names/left out/picked on or otherwise. Questions such as the following might be posed:

- What do you think she/he is feeling?
- How would you feel if it was you?
- What would you do if it happened to you?
- What could we do to see it does not happen again?

Specific details of the incident should not be recounted or blame allocated. Reference should be made to the feelings of loneliness, isolation, rejection, being mocked and how, as a consequence, that the person may be feeling.

It is best to listen, watch out for reactions and pick up on comments without accusing anybody. In a group situation, avoid isolating any particular individual. This is an opportunity to find out how others in the group feel about bullying behaviour.

## STEP 4: ASK THE GROUP/INDIVIDUAL FOR IDEAS

At this stage the group or individual is encouraged to suggest ways that would make a target of the bullying behaviour feel happier. Phrases such as: "If it were you what would help you....?" Might be used to encourage a response.

All suggestions should be listened to and noted, especially positive responses which will help create an environment for young people involved to work together.

## STEP 5: LEAVE IT TO THE GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL

Once the problem has been identified and solutions suggested, it is now handed over to the group/individual to act on. Agreement should be reached about what actions will be taken and by whom, by a given date. Arrangements should be made for a follow up meeting. Responsibility has thus been handed over to the group or individual to take the recommended action within that time frame.

## STEP 6: MEET THEM AGAIN

Included should be the person who has been responsible for the bullying behaviour and its target. Discussion should follow as to how things are going and whether there have been any other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and keeps everyone involved in the process. The parents of the young people involved will be informed of the actions taken.

## STEP 7: SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY

A meeting should be arranged with the wider group or team in order to discuss what should be in place to help prevent further incidents and what impact bullying behaviour may have on everyone.

### Useful Contacts

Childline: [www.childline.ie](http://www.childline.ie) Tel: 1800 66 66 66 or Text Talk to 50101

## Appendix 8

### Junior Code of Conduct

Howth Golf Club wishes to provide the best possible environment for all its junior members. They deserve to be given enjoyable, safe sporting opportunities, free of abuse of any kind. These participants have rights which must be respected, and responsibilities that they must accept.

Every junior will sign an annual membership application form and the Junior Code of Conduct Form, both of which will be countersigned by at least one parent.

### Code of Conduct

- Always remember that the goals of the game are to have fun, improve your skills and feel good.
- Treat other participants, leaders, organisers, team captains and coaches with fairness and respect. Accept their advice and decisions with good grace.
- Respect fellow players and team members; give them support both when they do well and when things go wrong.
- Respect opponents, be gracious in defeat and help them search if they lose a ball.
- Accept apologies when they are offered.
- Winning and losing are part of the sport experience; win with humility and lose with dignity.
- Shake hands, touch putters or otherwise with your markers by way of closing out your game.
- Treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself.
- Respect physical, cultural and racial difference.
- Always behave responsibly and avoid abusive or inappropriate behaviour, including smoking and use of foul, critical or disrespectful language.
- Abide by the rules set down by team managers when travelling to away events, representing the club, school, province or country.

- Behave in a manner that avoids bringing golf into disrepute
- Be organised and on time
- Inform someone if you are leaving a venue or competition

### Behaviours to be avoided

- Cheating
- Using violence or engaging in irresponsible, abusive, inappropriate or illegal behaviour
- Shouting or arguing with officials, team mates or opponents
- Harming team members, opponents or their property
- Using bullying tactics to isolate another player or gain advantage
- Taking banned substances, drinking alcohol, smoking or engaging in inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Keeping secrets, that may leave you or others at risk
- Telling lies or spreading rumours about other juniors or adults
- Discriminating against other players on the basis of gender, appearance, age, ability, religion or belief, gender identity, disability, social and ethnic background or political persuasion

## Personal Safety Guidelines

### Juniors are entitled to:

- Be safe and to feel safe
- Be listened to and believed
- Have fun and enjoy golf
- Have a voice in relation to their activities in Howth Golf Club
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity and respect
- Participate in an equitable and fair manner, regardless of gender, appearance, age, ability, religion or belief, gender identity, disability, social and ethnic background or political persuasion
- Experience competition at a level at which they feel comfortable
- Make complaints and have them dealt with
- Be safe from the risk of bullying behaviour
- Say 'No' to things that make them feel unsafe
- Privacy and confidentiality

### Housekeeping Rules

- Have arrangements in place for a timely pick-up at the end of your game or practice session.
- Always sign in at the Pro-Shop before going out onto the golf course and on finishing play.
- Tell someone whenever you have to leave the club or a competition.
- Look out for yourself and for the welfare of others. If you notice anything of a suspicious nature alert staff at the Pro Shop or a trusted adult.
- Observe instructions and restrictions required by the Rules of the Club and members of staff, which include compliance with playing and age restrictions applicable to the course, bar and clubhouse.

- Comply with safety notices governing the use of the driving range and other practice facilities.
- Juniors Members aged 14 years and over are permitted to caddy for a parent who is a member or when specifically approved to do so, by Club Council.
- Junior Members under 16 years of age are not permitted to be in changing rooms unless accompanied by another junior, or a parent of the same gender.
- Junior Members under the age of 16 years are not permitted to be alone on the golf course, putting greens, practice area or driving range at any time. Those under 14 years old must have an adult present, even if two or more are together.
- For safety reasons, loitering around the course, clubhouse, putting greens and practice areas or in the changing rooms is not permitted.
- Respect the privacy of all people in changing rooms, showers and toilets.
- Avoid use of your mobile phone in inappropriate locations such as changing rooms. Treat it as you would any valuable item so that you guard against theft.
- If you receive any offensive photo, email or message do not reply. Make a note of the time and date and tell a parent, respected adult or the Club Children's Officer.
- Report any form or incident of discrimination and prejudice you may have noticed in the club to a parent, trusted adult or the Club Children's Officer.
- Tell the Club children's Officer or a responsible adult that you trust, if you consider that you or others have been poorly treated.

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**Printed Name of Junior Member**

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**Signature of Junior Member**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Printed name of Parent/Guardian**

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**Signature of Parent/Guardian**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Leader Code of Conduct

Leaders are obliged to familiarise themselves with Howth Golf Club's Safeguarding Policy. Leaders must read and agree to abide by the terms of this Code of Conduct, which will be signed annually.

### As a leader in golf I agree that I will:

- Be positive during sessions and competitions; praise and encourage effort as well as results.
- Put the welfare of each young person first, while striking a balance between this and the demands of competition.
- Encourage fair play and treat participants equally.
- Ensure that activities are appropriate for each individual and her/his stage of development.
- Plan and prepare appropriately.
- Draw on relevant experience of working with juniors or hold up-to-date qualifications.
- Commit fully to the guidelines in the Safeguarding Policy.
- Involve parents where possible and inform them of progress as well as challenges
- Keep a record of attendance at training and competitions
- Keep a record of injury and action taken
- Keep a record of problem/action/outcome if behavioural problems arise
- Report any concerns in accordance with Howth Golf Club's Safeguarding Policy procedures

### I will avoid:

- Spending excessive amounts of time with a child or children away from others
- Giving preferential treatment to individuals and unfairly rejecting others
- Having favourites
- Taking sessions alone
- Transporting children to my home
- Driving any child or children on journeys alone in my car

### A Sport Leaders should never:

- Use any form of physical force or punishment on a child
- Use any type of abusive language
- Exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward
- Form intimate emotional, physical or sexual relationships with a child or children
- Engage in rough physical game or sexually provocative activities. S/he must not allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind, and/or make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child. This includes innuendo, flirting or using inappropriate gestures or terminology.
- Take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adult
- Undertake any form of therapy such as hypnosis or otherwise in the training of children

### Communication with Parents

In order to ensure that a child reaches her/his full potential and enjoys time spent playing golf, officials/coaches need to encourage parents to consider:

- What they want their child to get out of golf, as opposed to what they might wish.
- Do the parents understand what the child is trying to achieve and what support they require to reach that goal?
- Is the parent being the best role model s/he can be, to help their child gets most benefit from golf?

### Emergency Action/First Aid

All officials/coaches, leaders working directly with juniors should be prepared with an action plan in the event of an emergency and be aware of First Aid procedures.

This will include:

- Access to First Aid equipment
- Emergency telephone contact if the participant is a minor
- Being aware of telephone contact details for the Emergency Services

### Self-Declaration

1. Do you agree to abide by the guidelines contained in Golf's Safeguarding Policy?    Yes [ ]    No [ ]
2. Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation?    Yes [ ]    No [ ]
3. Is there any reason that you should not be working with young people?    Yes [ ]    No [ ]
4. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution, Bound Over Order or are you at present the subject of criminal investigation?    Yes [ ]    No [ ]

*Please provide details if you have answered yes to questions 2, 3 or 4 above.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Printed Name of Coach/Volunteer**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Coach/Volunteer**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

As a parent/guardian of a junior member, you are encouraged to consider the following messages as Howth Golf Club wants to help you continue to support your child to reach her/his full potential and enjoy time spent playing golf.

### To help your child have a positive experience, please remember to:

- Focus on what your child wants to get out of golf
- Be the best role model you can be
- Help your child achieve her/his potential
- Be respectful of other children and coaches
- Communicate with the coach and club

To assist with the promotion of good practice, you are encouraged to:

- Take an interest in your child's activity and progress but always remember that young people play sport for their enjoyment, not for that of their parents.
- Be a role model for all children and maintain the highest standards of conduct when interacting with young people, other parents, officials and organisers.
- Recognise the value and importance of the volunteer leaders who provide sporting and recreational opportunities for your children and liaise with them in relation to times, locations of training sessions, medical conditions or any requirement relating to your child's safety.
- Ensure that you and your child sign the Junior Code of Conduct Form. Go through it with your child and encourage her/him to always play by the rules of the game, work towards skill improvement and to value good sportsmanship.
- Teach your child that honest endeavour is as important as winning, so that the result of a game is accepted without disappointment.
- Set good example by applauding good play.
- Never ridicule, humiliate or remonstrate with juniors for making mistakes or losing.
- When leaving your child at the club, make sure you have made the necessary provisions for their requirements and for the weather conditions.
- Ensure that you have all necessary contact telephone numbers for the Club.
- Confirm that the club has a contact telephone number, preferably mobile, when you are away from the club and ensure that it is switched on so that you can be contacted in case of an emergency.
- The club is not a crèche for youngsters at a loose end, especially during school holidays. To assist in this matter, make sure that you have punctual set down and pick up arrangements for your child to ensure that s/he is not left waiting around at the golf club for prolonged periods.

- Encourage your child to tell you about anyone causing him/her harm.
- Discuss any concerns regarding the organisation of activities or the behaviour of adults and/or other children towards your child with the convenor or Club Children's Officer.
- Support every effort to remove abusive behaviour and bullying behaviour in all its forms, in line with the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Respect:
  - Golf rules and procedures
  - Your child's teammates and leaders as well as players, parents and coaches from opposing teams.
- Never indulge in threatening or abusive behaviour or use foul language.

Club officials will deal with any misdemeanours or breaches of this Code of Conduct. Persistent concerns or infringements will result in the parent/guardian being asked not to attend practice, matches or competitions, if such attendance is deemed detrimental to the child's welfare.

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**Signature of Parent/Guardian**

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**Printed Name of Parent/Guardian**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 9

### Representative Players

#### Representative Player and Parent/Guardian Forms

*Please Note:*

- *If you are under 18 years of age on 1<sup>st</sup> January this year, please complete all three sections.*
- *If you are over 18 years of age on the 1<sup>st</sup> January this year, please complete only sections 1 and 2.*

#### **Section 1 Player Agreement**

##### **Introduction:**

Congratulations on your selection to represent your club, province or country. It is important that you recognise this as both an honour and a great achievement. When you play representative golf, you are acting as an ambassador for the entire game. In that role, there is an expectation that you will always conduct yourself in a way that reflects the standards of the game by showing respect to others and playing in accordance with the rules.

Your selection will be supported by Howth Golf Club through the appointment of a team captain and manager. They are available to you to provide support with any matters that arise which may be a source of concern. Please feel free to speak to them and seek their guidance or help.

##### **Committing as follows:**

- I will observe all reasonable instructions from the team captain or manager to ensure my safety, the safety of others, the team's reputation and that of Howth Golf Club.
- I will adhere to the highest standards in my behaviour both on and off the course.
- I will always behave in a sporting manner.
- I will abide by Howth Golf Club's social media policy.
- I will display a professional attitude, be organised, and prepared.
- I will arrive in good time for all meetings as requested by my team captain and/or manager.
- I will promptly report all incidents that are of concern to the Team Captain, Manager or Club Children's Officer.

##### **Agreement:**

I understand that if I breach this agreement when representing my club, province or country, I may be withdrawn from the competition by my team captain or manager. If I have acted in a way that has damaged or brought Howth Golf Club into disrepute, then I understand that I may be subject to disciplinary proceedings to determine what, if any, further action should be taken.

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**Signature of Player**

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**Printed Name of Player**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 2: Essential Information

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone/Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Information:

*Please include all medical details that might be relevant to ensuring that best care is provided.*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Doctor's name, address, and contact number:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Person to be contacted in case of emergency: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Howth Golf Club should be notified of any changes to the above, as soon as possible.

### Section 3: Parent/Guardian Form

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone/Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Declaration:

I am the parent/guardian of ....., who has been selected to represent her/his club/province/country. To support his/her selection, I agree:

- To his/her participation in golf activities as requested Howth Golf Club.
- That any changes to the **Essential Information** provided in Section 2, will be reported to Howth Golf Club as requested, in the most timely possible manner.
- That photographs or videos, in which my son/daughter appears, may be used to promote the game of golf.
- To receive appropriate communication from Howth Golf Club by text or email.
- That my son/daughter has a responsibility to behave in a way that reflects the best standards of representative golf. S/he will be supported by access to a team captain and manager while playing for the team. If he/she fails to follow their reasonable directives, and thereby places himself/herself at risk of harm as a result, I absolve Howth Golf Club and all its representatives of any liability resulting from any harm, injury, or damage that results from breaching these instructions.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Privacy Notice:

Howth Golf Club uses the information collected in this document to enable it to fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities. I can confirm that I understand and agree with my data being used by Howth Golf Club in this way.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or guardian must sign if the player is under 18 years of age.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Howth Golf Club Investigation Procedure for Alleged Misconduct of Representative Players

### Introduction

As a representative player your behaviour will always be subject to scrutiny from a wide audience. It is important that you act as a good ambassador for the game. Where an allegation arises that your behaviour has fallen short of that which was expected of you, an investigation will take place that follows this policy.

### Allegation of Misconduct

All representative teams are supported by a captain and manager. They are charged with the task of ensuring that the team's performance and that of its members, both on and off the course, meets Howth Golf Club standards. If an incident is alleged to have taken place which involves a breach of the Code of Conduct by a representative player, the team captain has the authority to take action in response to that incident. This may involve the imposition of sanctions against the person who is alleged to have breached the Code, up to and including her/his withdrawal from the team. The process of determining the response to alleged misconduct below will be followed.

The nature of the sanction imposed will be determined by the seriousness of the incident or incidents. These are categorised under three headings: **Minor, Serious or Major**. It is the responsibility of the team captain and manager to decide which category applies in a given situation. In doing so, they may consult with other officers of Howth Golf Club.

**Minor** incidents of misconduct may include: late arrival for meetings, the use of bad language, or unsporting behaviour on the course or off. The sanctions imposed are likely to include verbal warnings and instructions for future behaviour issued by the team captain or manager.

**Serious** incidents of misconduct may include showing a lack of respect to officials, fellow team members, opponents, or the general public. The sanctions imposed could include a loss of privileges in relation to equipment, reduction of merit points, cutback in grant aid, or suspension from competing in national or provincial championships.

**Major** incidents of misconduct may include the breaking of curfew, serious verbal abuse or threatening behaviour to others. The sanctions imposed include all those previously listed as well as the possibility of a long suspension from any further representative golf.

### Process of Determining the Response to Alleged Misconduct

Once an allegation of misconduct has been received by the team captain or manager, they will assess the incident and determine which category applies. When they have gathered all the information considered necessary to help decide how to respond, they will inform the representative player of their decision and of any sanction which they intend to impose.

- All incidents of misconduct will be reported by the team captain or manager to Howth Golf Club.
- Upon receipt of this report, a decision will be made as to whether a Disciplinary Committee should be convened. This committee's role will be to consider and confirm the appropriate response to be made to the incident of misconduct, as reported by the team captain or manager.
- The Disciplinary Committee will comprise of no less than three members appointed by the Howth Golf Club Council.

- If the representative player who is the subject of the misconduct charge, is under the age of eighteen years, they should be accompanied to any meetings by a club official and/or their parent or guardian. If the parent/guardian declines to attend this should be noted in writing.
- A record shall be created of the discussion and decisions of the Disciplinary Committee, which will be stored on a private and confidential basis, by Howth Golf Club in accordance with its Data Protection Policy.
- The Disciplinary Committee will review all the evidence available to it and make a judgement as to appropriate sanctions for the representative player.
- The decision can be appealed, before a panel of three members, which shall be formed by the Howth Golf Club Council. The individuals asked to sit on the Appeal Panel, will not include any of those members who sat on the Disciplinary Committee. The record of the discussions and decisions of the Disciplinary Committee will be made available to the Appeal Panel.
- The Appeal Panel will consider the appeal and the Disciplinary Committee's decision and decide whether to uphold, amend or set aside the appeal.
- When it reaches its decision, the process will be considered final. The conclusion of the Appeal Panel will be made known to the person appealing and securely stored on a private and confidential basis, by Howth Golf Club in accordance with its Data Protection Policy.

### Closing Comment

Representative players are ambassadors for the game of golf. Their behaviour is important and must reflect all that is good about the game. It is recognised that this is an onerous responsibility. All who play representative golf, must be willing to do so in a way that reflects well on the game. If they feel unable to do so, then they should decline any invitation to participate in this form of golf.

## Appendix 10

### Legislation & Policy

#### Child Safeguarding and Protection Legislation

##### Child Care Act 1991

This is a key piece of legislation which regulates child care policy in Ireland. Under this Act, Tusla Child and Family Agency has a statutory responsibility to promote the well-being of children who are not receiving adequate care and protection. Its duty is to take appropriate action to promote the welfare of the child. This may include supporting families in need of assistance in providing care and protection to their children. The Child Care Act also sets out the statutory framework for taking children into care, as required.

##### Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

This Act protects a person who makes a report of suspected child abuse to designated officers of Tusla, the Health Service Executive (HSE) or to members of the Gardaí as long as the report is made in good faith and is not malicious in intent. Designated officers also include persons authorised by the Chief Executive Officer of Tusla to receive and acknowledge reports of concerns about a child from mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.

If a person reports a case of suspected child abuse and it proves unfounded, a plaintiff who takes an action would have to prove that the reporter had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the complaint. An individual who reports in good faith and in the child's best interests may also be protected under common law by the defence of qualified privilege.

A full list of persons in Tusla and the HSE who are designated officers under the 1998 Act, is available at [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie) and [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie).

##### Criminal Justice Act 2006

Section 176 of this Act created an offence of reckless endangerment of children. This may be committed by a person who has authority or control over a child or an abuser who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by:

1. Causing or permitting the child to be placed or left in a situation that creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse or
2. Failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation.

##### Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children & Vulnerable Persons) ACT 2012

It is a criminal offence to withhold information about a serious offence, including a sexual offence, against a person under 18 years or a vulnerable person. The crime arises where a person knows or believes that a specified offence has been committed against a child or vulnerable person and he or she has information which would help arrest, prosecute or convict another person for that offence, but fails without reasonable excuse to disclose that information, as soon as it is practicable to do so, to a member of An Garda Síochána.



The provisions of the withholding legislation are in addition to any reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015.

### **National Vetting Bureau (Children & Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012-2016**

Employers are obliged to obtain vetting disclosures in relation to anyone who is carrying out relevant work with children or vulnerable adults. The Act creates offences and penalties for persons who fail to comply with its provisions. Statutory obligations on employers in relation to Garda vetting requirements for persons working with children and vulnerable adults are set out in the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012-2016.

### **Children First Act 2015**

This is an important addition to the child welfare and protection system as it helps to ensure that child protection concerns are brought to the attention of Tusla without delay.

It provides for mandatory reporting of child welfare and protection concerns by key professionals, comprehensive risk assessment and planning for a strong organisational culture of safeguarding in all services provided to children. It includes provision for a register of non-compliance and the statutory underpinning of the existing Children First Interdepartmental Implementation Group, which promotes and oversees cross- sectoral implementation and compliance with Children First.

### **Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017**

It addresses the sexual exploitation of children and targets those who engage in this criminal activity. Included under this legislation are offences relating to the obtaining or providing of children for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Types of activity which may occur during the early stages of the predatory process prior to the actual exploitation of a child, are also covered, such as using modern technology to prey on children and making arrangements to meet with a child where the intention is to sexually exploit her/him. The Act also recognises the existence of underage, consensual peer relationships where any sexual activity falls within strictly defined age limits and the relationship is not intimidatory or exploitative.

### **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

As a regulation does not generally require transposition into Irish law because regulations have direct effect, organisations involved in data processing of any sort need to be aware that the regulation addresses them directly in terms of the obligations it imposes. The GDPR emphasises transparency, security and accountability by data controllers and processors, while at the same time standardising and strengthening the right of European citizens to data privacy.

Raising awareness among organisations and the public of this law involves a combined effort of the Data Protection Commission (DPC), the Government, practitioners, industry and professional representative bodies. The DPC has been proactively undertaking a wide range of initiatives to build awareness of the GDPR, in particular providing guidance to help organisations prepare for the law, which is in force as of 25th May 2018.

