



SECTION
05

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF COACHES, SUPERVISORS & OTHER VOLUNTEERS

THIS GUIDANCE FORMS PART OF
THE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE) &
CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT



GOOD RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PRACTICES

From their early years to their late teens young people continue to gain from the knowledge, experience and skills that adults, acting in a coaching role, bring in the promotion of our Gaelic Games. Such supports presents these children with a sense of achievement, with an opportunity to develop their individual and team skills and promotes a sense of fun and fair play in our underage games.

This support, led primarily by adults who work in a voluntary capacity, must always be delivered in accordance with Association child safeguarding guidance and acceptable standards of coaching. We greatly rely on the thousands of adults who give freely of their time to our juvenile teams and underage membership, but equally recognise that their contribution must, at all times, be in accordance with Association guidance and statutory requirements.

Those who oversee and promote underage games at club level have a responsibility to ensure that our coaches and mentors, who have been chosen to work in coaching, supervisory and other supportive roles, are selected, supported and trained to fulfil these roles in a careful, sensible and effective manner.

Gaelic Games at underage level creates a respectful and trusting relationship that can be enhanced by the recruitment, selection and up-skilling of adults who are suitable to such roles. While the role of the adult may vary from team to team, and from age group to age group, it is however essential that regardless of such variations in role, that the chosen adult is fully aware at the outset as to what is expected of them, what supports they will receive and what levels of responsibility they themselves have on behalf of the team, the Club, the parents and the young people in their care.

This can all be achieved by adopting good practice procedures and adhering to all aspects of our Code of Behaviour (Underage) when we recruit our managers, coaches and other personnel to work with children and young people.

Statutory guidance and legislative requirements relating to adults who work with children are embedded in our recruitment and selection procedures. These requirements apply to our Gaelic Games Associations as they do to all sports bodies, to youth clubs or other recreational or educational services.

This Code of Behaviour (Underage) affirms the policy position that all coaches, prior to commencing their role(s) with children, must:

- Undergo vetting or police background checks
- Must attend relevant child safeguarding training as approved by our Associations
- Must obtain a minimum coaching qualification

The following recruitment and selection guidelines are put in place as a support mechanism so as to ensure that those recruited adhere to the best possible standards that we have adopted in ensuring that our Games are played and promoted in an enjoyable, safe and developmental environment.

GUIDANCE ON RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

It is essential that all adults who have undertaken a role of responsibility with children and young people, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, should undergo a comprehensive recruitment and selection procedure prior to commencing their role. The recruitment of adults who work with underage teams should be co-ordinated by a senior and experienced member of the club, with the advice or involvement of the Children's Officer. All such recruitment should be done confidentially.

The following procedures will assist Clubs when choosing to place coaches/mentors of underage teams in the position to which they are best suited.

1 Role clarification

The role and responsibilities envisaged e.g. manager, coach, and the team's age group should be clearly known and stated at the outset. Any specific levels of experience or qualifications required should also be clarified in advance.

2 Role assistance

The various supports available via the club, e.g. Introduction to Coaching Gaelic Games Coaching Award, Child Safeguarding Training are basic good practice that should assist adults who wish to work with underage teams in the promotion of our Gaelic Games.

3 Application form

Applicants should complete the Coach and Mentor Application Form (Appendix 2) prior to being considered for a coaching role.

4 References

Applicants should submit references. These may refer to the person's character and if applicable to their previous background in sports and in Gaelic Games. References should be verified.

5 Vetting and police checks

All applicants are required in law to complete Garda Vetting and/or Police Checks, as appropriate, prior to the commencement of their role(s) with young people in the Association.

6 Child safeguarding training and coaching qualification

All persons working with underage players are required to undertake recognised Child Safeguarding Training as promoted by the Gaelic Games Associations and must also possess a recognised coaching qualification.

7 Meet the applicant

A senior representative of the Club (and not on their own) should meet with all applicants or a short list of applicants to discuss the roles, the applicant's experience and general suitability to work with children and young people. Never choose a person to work with children unless you are satisfied that they have the attributes and temperament to fulfil what is required of them in such an important role.

8 Meet the chosen applicant again

Once the successful applicant and accompanying 'management team' have been chosen, the Club should nominate a number of representatives, including the Children's Officer, to meet with them. This meeting should enable the Club to identify any additional training or coaching needs required and to emphasise the Club's approach to development of underage players, to meaningful playing time for all and to supporting the management team in their roles.

9 Code of behaviour (underage)

All persons who work with young people will be required to sign the Code of Behaviour.

10 Support and review

Continuous supports should be made available to all coaches etc. so as to enable them to fulfil their roles as requested. The role of the Club 'Coiste na nÓg' and of the Club Children's Officer may be invaluable in identifying such supports.

SUPERVISION

All clubs providing opportunities for our young people to participate in Gaelic Games must ensure that adults placed or appointed by them in roles of responsibility are suitable to fulfil such roles and must as a minimum, prior to taking up such roles:

- **Have undertaken Vetting (Garda/AccessNI/Police) checks as directed by their Association within the jurisdiction in which they operate**
- **Attend relevant child safeguarding training**
- **Possess a coaching qualification relevant to their role as recognised by their Association**
- **Have signed the Joint Code of Behaviour**

Supervision ratios

Young people must always be adequately supervised regardless of activity and it is the responsibility of Clubs to ensure that a satisfactory supervisory ratio of adults to young people is always maintained.

Supervision ratios will depend on the nature of the activity, the age of the players and any special needs of the group.

The Gaelic Games adult - child supervision ratio agreement forms part of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) and applies as a minimum ratio to all Club and Camp activities up to and including the minor level grade and to Cumann na mBunscol Gaelic Games activities.

Ratios

- Playing and training activities must abide by a minimum ratio of 2 adults to 10 children, (2:10). This ratio level requires at least one qualified coach and at least one other responsible adult to be present at all times
- Ratios of 2:10 apply to each group of ten children or up to ten children in a group
- Groups of 10-20 children must have a minimum of 3 adults present at all times
- Any group that exceeds 20 in number must also abide by the minimum ratios as per above
- The number of coaches and or responsible adults required will depend on the number of children attending a training session, a camp or game, with consideration also given to the nature of the activity as required and the needs of the children

Coach

- Coaches, as a minimum, must have achieved the Introduction to Coaching Gaelic Games level coaching qualification, must be satisfactorily vetted and have attended relevant Child Safeguarding Training
- Club and Camp Coaches must be in membership of one of the Gaelic Games Associations
- Coaches must be at least 18 yrs. of age

Responsible adult

- The responsible adult, i.e. a person over 18 yrs. of age, if not a qualified coach, shall be deemed a Supervisor of Children. He/she must also be satisfactorily vetted and must have attended relevant Child Safeguarding Training
- Club and Camp Supervisors must be in membership of one of the Gaelic Games Associations
- When appointing a person as a Supervisor or 'responsible adult' to work at underage level, Clubs have a responsibility to appoint persons of the highest standards who shall be recognised as role models to work with children
- Persons appointed as Supervisors of Children shall be obliged to be satisfactorily vetted and must have attended relevant Child Safeguarding Training

Camp and Activity Assistant

- The role of Camp and Activity Assistant is that of assisting and not coaching or supervising
- The following applies to a Camp Assistant:
 - o Camp/Activity Assistants must be at least 16 yrs. of age
 - o Must be vetted by their Association in accordance with the GNVB or AccessNI process
 - o Must complete the Camp Assistant Safeguarding Training Programme or acceptable and equivalent safeguarding training programme www.learning.gaa.ie/safeguardingvirtual
 - o May choose to attend additional Child Safeguarding training e.g. Safeguarding 1 workshop
 - o May not act in a coaching or supervisory role, which are two other distinct roles

Gender requirements

- Where a team or training group consists of both boys and girls, the supervision and coaching personnel, must also comprise of both male and female personnel
- In the case of an all-female team, at least one of the adults (coach/supervisor) must be female and similarly in the case of an all-boys team, at least one of the two adults (coach/supervisor) must be male



A VETTING SERVICE - LOCAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL

Vetting in the Gaelic Games Associations

The Gaelic Games Associations comprising of the GAA, LGFA, Camogie, Rounders and Handball Associations, have a long established principle of vetting any person who, on our behalf, work with children or vulnerable adults in any of our Associations. This principle is enshrined in rule through our Code of Behaviour (Underage). It conforms with our legal responsibilities and is a core element of the recruitment and selection process for those who wish to work with children in our Associations, whether it be in a voluntary or paid role.

For the purpose of clarification, the GAA administers vetting for GAA Clubs and members and also for Handball and Rounders Association members while the Camogie Association and the Ladies Gaelic Football Association does likewise for their membership. When a person is vetted through any one of the Gaelic Games Associations it does not infer or provide them with an automatic 'clearance' to work with children, young people or vulnerable persons. Vetting provides our Associations with relevant information, which is part of the recruitment and selection process, that assist in deciding the suitability of that person to work in a range of chosen or relevant roles.

We do not provide a vetting service for members of the public but where a non-member has been invited to provide a coaching or training role to under 18 yr. olds they may, for that purpose only, avail of our vetting services.

Vetting services for the Association are currently overseen by our Children's Offices in Croke Park while Comhairle Uladh CLG acts on our behalf in coordinating AccessNI vetting services.

All international units are obliged to adhere to the legislative vetting and police background checks that are required in the jurisdiction in which they operate.

LEGISLATION

National Vetting Bureau

The National Vetting Bureau (Children & Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 - 2016 places a responsibility on our Associations to ensure that any person who on our behalf carries out 'relevant work' with children shall be vetted prior to taking up that role. 'Relevant work' includes coaching, being a mentor, a supervisor or indeed roles of responsibility at camps or at Scór. The Act also allowed for the establishment of the National Vetting Bureau the vetting services.

The GAA, LGFA and the Camogie Association are 'Registered Organisations' with the National Vetting Bureau for the purpose of vetting.

AccessNI Vetting

The Northern Ireland Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 is the key legislation that makes it a legal requirement prohibiting the recruitment of a person barred from engaging in regulated activities. To ensure that none of our Associations are recruiting a person who is deemed not suitable we must undertake the vetting of all personnel who wish to work with children in our Associations. This vetting is undertaken by obtaining an AccessNI Enhanced Disclosure Certificate which includes a check against the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Barred List. The DBS maintains a list of individuals who are barred from working with children and/or adults at risk and it would be an offence were we to recruit a person to work with children who is on the DBS barred list.

Comhairle Uladh/Ulster GAA is a Registered Umbrella Body with AccessNI enabling them to carry out the vetting on our behalf.

Who needs to be vetted?

In the Gaelic Games Associations any person who carries out a role of responsibility such as coaching, managing or training underage teams or indeed adult teams that contain any player under 18 yrs. of age must be vetted. This requirement also applies to organising underage activities or refereeing underage games, to bus drivers employed by a club or a team and to physios working with our underage players. Thereafter, each club shall decide if other specific roles merit a person being vetted.

Is it an offence to work with children if you are not vetted?

It is a criminal offence for a person acting on behalf of the Gaelic Games Associations, or for any of our Associations to permit any person to commence working with children on our behalf without that person first obtaining a vetting disclosure from the relevant authority in respect of the role for which they have been recruited. It is also a breach of Association rule if you are working with children or vulnerable adults on our behalf and have not been vetted.

What is the vetting applicant is under 18 yrs. of age?

Gaelic Games Associations vetting is available to any person over 16 yrs. of age fulfilling a role of responsibility with children or vulnerable adults. A parental consent form, must be completed in advance of submitting an application for persons aged between 16 and 18 yrs. of age.



NATIONAL VETTING BUREAU E-VETTING

The following outlines the vetting process carried out by the (Garda) National Vetting Bureau in collaboration with our Associations via our on-line or E-Vetting system on Foireann.

How can a member avail of Association (NVB) e-vetting services?

Vetting for a member involves 3 easy to follow steps as follows:

Step 1 – Logging in to Foireann

You will need to create an account to begin the vetting process. Log in to [Foireann](#)

You will need to select the Club that you are a member of and wish to be vetted under. Your Club will then approve your membership.

If you have an account already or have difficulties in creating an account please contact [Logging into Foireann – Gaelic Athletic Association](#)

Step 2 – Gaelic Games Vetting Invitation Form

Click [here](#) for guidance on how to complete Gaelic Games Vetting Invitation Form

Once you have logged into your account on Foireann please click on the Qualifications and Vetting tab and then click Apply to be Vetted. Please ensure your current details on your profile are correct. Please then select your Club and or Association you wish to be vetted for and the role you are applying for vetting. A list of roles can be found [here](#).

It is a requirement by the Garda National Vetting Bureau that an individual seeking vetting is validated that the individual is who they say they are. Therefore, you must provide proof of your identity to be vetted. You must complete this requirement at the initial step of your application, failure to do so will see your application rejected.

It is now a requirement to upload a copy or screenshot of your Photo ID (passport or drivers' licence) and a proof of your current address in the form of a Utility Bill (no more than 6 months old). You are also required to print and sign the Gaelic Game Vetting ID Validation Form and upload this a part of your vetting application. The full list of documents which are accepted for verification can be found [here](#)

Your Club Children's Officer will then check your ID Documentation and your signed Gaelic Games Vetting ID Validation Form. If the documents are correct your application will be validated by your Club Children's Officer and submitted to the GAA. If the documents are not correct your Club Children's Officer will reject your application and you will be required to upload the correct documentation.

Please click [here](#) on how a Club Childrens Officer review the Gaelic Games Vetting Invitation Form

Step 3 – Completing the National Vetting Bureau EVetting Application form

Once you complete the Gaelic Games Invitation Form the information provided is forwarded to the NVB by the GAA and you will receive an on-line NVB Vetting Form to complete. Please do not contact the National Vetting Bureau (NVB) regarding your application as they are unable to deal with individual requests from GAA applicants. If you have a query regarding your application, please contact the GAA and not the National Vetting Bureau.

The NVB will issue you with the NVB Vetting Application form. This will be issued to the email address you provided in your Gaelic Games Invitation Form.

Completing this form is a confidential matter between you and the NVB. All sections of the form including current and previous addresses, email address and contact telephone numbers, information on convictions and prosecutions (if any), plus other information will be required when completing the form.

Please ensure that if you have lived in an address in Northern Ireland that you enter the Postcode for the address.

Once all sections of the form have been answered this then completes your application process for E Vetting in the GAA and within a short period of time you shall be contacted by the GAA to informing you as to the outcome of the vetting application.

You and your Club Children's Officer will be notified when the vetting process has been completed.

A person must be in receipt of a vetting acceptance letter before the person can commence their role.

Recognition of vetting between each of the Gaelic Games Associations

As a result of a long standing agreement between each of the Gaelic Games Associations, any person vetted by for example by the GAA shall have their vetting outcome recognised by the LGFA, Camogie, Rounders and Handball and will not be required to undertake additional vetting by either of these Associations. A reciprocal arrangement exists between each of our Associations. Please note that at any time a member may be requested to undertake re-vetting, as directed by their Association.

ACCESS NI

In order to comply with the Northern Ireland Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 and the rules of our Associations, all persons working with children or young people in a voluntary or paid capacity, must be vetted prior to commencing their role. Those who are involved in the management of individuals appointed to work with children or young people in our Associations must also be vetted.

This vetting service is carried out by AccessNI for individuals in the Gaelic Games Associations in Antrim, Armagh, Derry, Down, Fermanagh and Tyrone where they return criminal history information in respect of each applicant. All applications and the AccessNI services are coordinated on our behalf by Comhairle Uladh/Ulster GAA who are registered with AccessNI for this purpose.

The AccessNI checks will clarify if an applicant has a criminal record; if their name is included on the Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) list of individuals barred from engaging in regulated activity with children or if relevant the DBS list of individuals barred from engaging in regulated activity with adults and any other information held by the authorities that may be relevant to the position applied for. Any information received will be treated confidentially and recruitment decisions will be made with discretion and will only have the involvement of a specifically selected Comhairle Uladh case management.

A copy of the disclosure certificate will be returned directly by AccessNI to the applicant, and if there is information contained on that disclosure certificate, Ulster GAA will make contact with the applicant to request them to forward the certificate in its original form to Ulster GAA Offices. This enables more informed recruitment decisions to be made in relation to the suitability of the applicant for specified roles. Ulster GAA process applications for vetting checks free of charge, for our volunteers at a club's request.

Clubs as always are reminded that they should not permit anyone to work with children or young people in the Club until they have been suitably vetted and approved for their role.

The AccesNI vetting services are processed as follows:

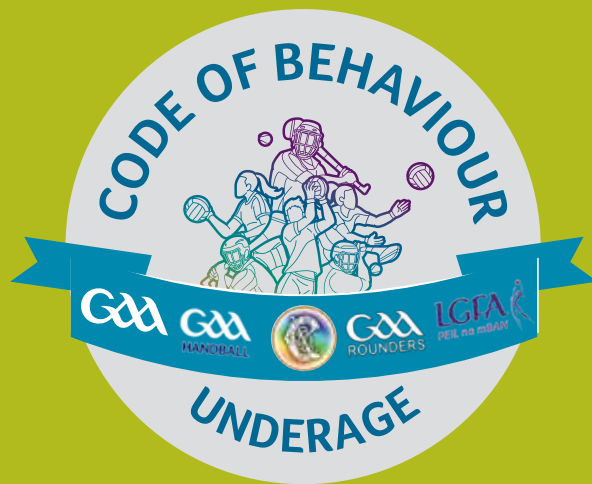
1. Applicants complete the Online Application Form
2. Club Officers signs ID Document Copies and forwards same to Ulster GAA
3. Ulster GAA approve the form and the ID and send to Access NI
4. Access NI process the form and issue the Disclosure Certificate to the applicant
5. Ulster GAA write to the applicant to confirm their vetting acceptance
6. If there is information on the applicants disclosure certificate, Ulster GAA will write out to you requesting sight of the certificate in hard copy in its original form, and the applicant provides that copy as soon as possible.
7. Ulster GAA risk assess all Enhanced Disclosure Certificates that contain information. Where there are areas of concern, the applicant is contacted, meet with and any decision with regard to their suitability for the position applied is made following this process.
8. Where required, Ulster GAA will meet with club officers to discuss any concern.
9. Applicants have the right to appeal any decision made by Ulster GAA in relation to their suitability for the position applied.
10. While applicants, in accordance with our Vetting Policy, may be re-vetted at any time they must formally undertake re-vetting within a three year period.

Further information on AccessNI services as coordinated by Ulster GAA may be found at <http://ulster.gaa.ie/safeguarding/access-ni/>

Re-Vetting

The Gaelic Games Associations' Vetting Policy stipulates that members who are required to be re-vetted must undertake the re-vetting process at a minimum within a three year time period. This requirement applies to both the vetting carried out through the Garda National Vetting Bureau and through AccessNI. Please also note that in addition to this three year re-vetting clause a member may be required to undertake re-vetting at any time, as directed by their Association.

A vetting acceptance letter issued by the Gaelic Games Associations shall cease to be valid three years after the date of issue or if withdrawn by the Association for other reasons. In order to complete the re-vetting process a new application is required to be completed from Step 1 to 3.



Produced by the Child Safeguarding Committee in association with
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