BKYL CONSTITUTION  
*Including:*

* **NIBFA/Irish F.A. Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy & Procedures**
* **Vetting Checks**
* **Player Training/Trials Agreement Form**
* **Article 19 Protection of minors**



**Season 2022/23**

**League Website: www.bkyl.co.uk**

***Brendan Keogh Youth League***

***Est. 1998***

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|  | |  | | --- | | AFFILIATED TO  NORTHERN IRELAND BOYS’ FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION  [www.nibfa.org](http://www.nibfa.org) | |  |

1. **NAME** – This Association of clubs shall be called the **Brendan Keogh Youth League** (hereinafter called The League) and The League, and its members shall be affiliated to the Northern Ireland Boys’ Football Association which will confer Associate Membership of the Irish Football Association.
2. **OBJECT** – The object of the League shall be to legislate for, foster, develop, and provide a fit for purpose governance structure to service and improve the game of association football among all classes of Youth Football Clubs.
3. **LEAGUE COMMITTEE** – The management of The League shall be vested in a Committee, consisting of the following office bearers, a Chairperson, a Deputy Chair, a Secretary, a Treasurer and elected and/or co-opted representatives from Clubs in the League (except where a Club is represented by an office bearer) plus additional membership duly elected or co-opted up to a maximum of nine (9) persons including office bearers.

The committee members and office bearers shall be elected bi-annually. All retiring office bearers shall be eligible for re-election. 50% of members plus 1 of the Committee shall form a quorum. In the event of a vacancy occurring during the season or should a committee member miss 4 consecutive meetings they will be required to stand down and the League Committee shall have the power to fill such vacancy. No Club shall have more than one member on the League Committee.

4. **MEMBERSHIP** –

1. Teams will be invited into membership of a league upon consideration of their application and available places. All such teams are expected to meet the terms of membership set out below.
2. All teams must affiliate to the Northern Ireland Boys’ Football Association.
3. All Teams must insure their members through the Northern Ireland Boys’ Football Association scheme with Sportsguard.
4. All Clubs in membership must be controlled and managed by a committee approved by the Northern Ireland Boys’ Football Association/IFA Safeguarding. This committee must be not less than Three (3) in numbers and should encourage a development strategy so that at least one member of each participating team shall be in possession of a current Irish Football Association Coaching Certificate. The relevant minimum certificate recommended being as follows:

For Clubs up to and including Under 12 level IFA Level 1 Coaching Award or equivalent   
 For Clubs up to and including Under 17 level UEFA C Diploma   
 For Clubs at Under 18 level UEFA B Diploma

1. It shall be mandatory for at least one coach from each participating team to hold a current First Aid Certificate or Sports Injuries Certificate. These conditions as to certification/coaching qualifications should be achieved within one year of the Club’s initial acceptance into membership of the league.
2. Club official shall mean any person aged **16** years or over who, whether registered with a member Club or not, acts on behalf of a member Club by being in the dressing room, entering the field of play on behalf of a member Club, in the absence of an official referee acts as a match referee or as a referee’s assistant on behalf of a member Club, being in a member club’s technical area or assisting in the running of the member Club. A Club official may only be a member of one Club.

Clubs shall ensure their officials are subject to the satisfactory outcome of checks by Access (NI) and adherence to the terms of the NIBFA/Irish F.A. Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy & Procedures.

Managers, Coaching or Administrative staff who move to a new club at any time must have their Access (NI) checks updated before they are eligible to take up a relevant position within the new club. All changes of Club officials, Safeguarding or Disciplinary Officer’s shall be notified to the League in writing or email within two working days of such change.   
See appendices 1 & 2 for Irish FA Safeguarding Policy and vetting checks procedures. Failure to comply with these conditions may see an official and or club having their membership revoked.

1. Any Club wishing to alter its name must first obtain the prior written consent of NIBFA.
2. Clubs who do not comply with the above criteria will not be eligible for membership. Clubs in membership who fail to comply with the criteria during the term of its membership will be reported to the NIBFA and may have their membership suspended until they fulfil their obligations.
3. Clubs who accept an offer of a place for any team in the league in any season who subsequently withdraw or fail to complete a season in the league, at the discretion of the league may not be permitted to reapply for a place for that team in the league in any following season.

5. **(A) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** – The Annual General Meeting of the League shall be held each year, not later than 14 days after the First Tuesday in June except in exceptional circumstances where the committee need an extension to the date to complete work that is relevant to the overall administration of the league. Clubs and teams in default of their financial obligations to the league of more than 30 days will not be entitled to a vote.

**(B) EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING** –

1. An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be called by the members in accordance with clause (5B - 2)
2. The league shall convene an EGM upon a receipt of a requisition, signed by a registered official of at least 25% of all Clubs in membership, within 28 days of receipt of such a requisition.
3. The requisition shall state the business to be considered and shall be accompanied by a deposit in the sum of £500.
4. The member Clubs signing the requisition may forfeit their deposit and or may be liable for   
    the reasonable expenses of the EGM should the requisition be deemed frivolous.
5. The League may call an EGM by a simple majority vote of the league committee and shall convene an EGM within 28 days of such a vote.
6. **GENERAL MEETINGS** – Meetings of The League Committee shall be held at a venue and date notified by The League Secretary. The League will hold a minimum of four general meetings of member Clubs including the Annual General Meeting in each season. Each club shall be entitled to send a representative to all General Meetings, club representatives in attendance will have one vote. All motions shall be carried by a simple majority vote of those present at the meeting and entitled to vote. Clubs and teams in default of their financial obligations to the league of more than 30 days will not be entitled to a vote.

All Clubs must send a representative to notified league meetings, failure to do so will result in a fine of £25 for non-appearance at any notified meeting. Failure to attend on more than two occasions may result in a Club being suspended. All league officials as a matter of good practice may be subject to the satisfactory outcome of Criminal Record Checks by Access (NI) and adherence to the terms of the NIBFA/Irish F.A. Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy & Procedures – See appendices 1 & 2.

1. **LIFE MEMBERSHIP** – Past Chairpersons, on retiring from office shall be granted life membership of The League. In addition, the office bearers may recommend at the A.G.M. that life membership be granted to any person whom it is considered has rendered valuable service to The League or in the cause of youth football. Persons granted membership in such fashion will not be eligible to sit on committees.
2. **DELEGATES TO THE NIBFA** – The membership are entitled to send delegates, one per affiliated team in membership of the NIBFA to the Northern Ireland Boys’ Football Association Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary Meeting.
3. **CHAIR** – The appointed Chairperson of The League shall preside over all meetings; in the event of his/her absence the chair shall be taken by either the Vice Chairperson or an agreed office bearer of The League. The Chair shall have both a deliberative and casting vote at all meetings, and his/her rule shall be final.
4. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST** - Any member of the Committee who has a vested interest in any discussion or decision under consideration MUST declare such interest. A member with such interest shall be required to retire from the meeting during the discussion or consideration or while a decision is being taken in respect of any case involving his/her Club or Officials or players connected with his/her Club.
5. **FINANCE** – The Treasurer shall be responsible for all money transactions and at the Annual General Meeting submit a detailed statement of accounts. The Audited accounts of the league will be available for inspection upon completion. The Bank account will be in the name of the LEAGUE, the signatories being a minimum of three nominated officials. Two signatures are required for all financial transactions.
6. **DISSOLUTION** – If upon the winding up or dissolution of the League there remains after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities any property or assets whatsoever, the same shall not be paid or distributed among the members of the league but shall be: -

(i) applied directly to and for the objects of NIBFA by expending the whole or part of such property or assets in whole or in part in furthering the objects of NIBFA, or

(ii) by transferring the same in whole or in part to another body having objects like the objects of NIBFA as determined by the membership of the league in general meeting.

1. **ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTION AND RULES** – No alteration shall be made to the Constitution or Rules of The League except at the Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose. On a date to be notified annually, notice must be given to the League Secretary (in writing) of any proposed alteration/s to the Constitution or Rules, a copy of which shall be made available to Clubs seven days before the Annual or Extraordinary Meetings for the consideration thereof.

No alteration shall be made to the Constitution or Rules unless carried by a simple majority of those present at the meeting and entitled to vote.

Any proposed alteration of the Constitution or Rules shall, before coming into force, be subject to compliance with the Constitution of the Northern Ireland Boys’ Football Association and if ratified be included in the overarching generic league rules as defined by NIBFA.

1. **INTERPRETATION** - The League committee shall be the final authority on the interpretation of the Constitution and Rules. Decisions by The League on questions of interpretation and on matters affecting The League not provided for by the Constitution or Rules shall be final and binding on all members.

**Appendix 1**

I**RISH FA SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE IN FOOTBALL**

Adopted by NIBFA on 20.08.2019 as the policy & procedures document for all affiliated leagues and clubs.

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**Section 1** Introduction

**Safeguarding Policy Statement**

The welfare of children and young people is paramount to our club. We endeavour to provide an environment which values and protects all children and young people. It is our policy promote good practice and ensure each young person is protected from inappropriate behaviour and all types of abuse while having a positive experience at our club.

**Our club endeavours to safeguard children and young people by adopting the standards set out by the Irish Football Association. To achieve this, we will:**

1) Appoint a Child Welfare Officer and communicate their contact details to all club members.

2) Adopt the Irish FA Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football Policy and Procedures in their entirety.

3) Ensure our coaches/volunteers engaged in Regulated Activity have completed appropriate vetting checks through the Irish FA as part of the club’s safe recruitment process before commencing their role. Vetting checks will be updated every 3 years.

4) Ensure all coaches/volunteers working with or responsible for under 18’s have attended the Irish FA Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football Workshop within 6 months of taking up their role. This should be updated every 3 years.

5) Have procedures for dealing with complaints or concerns regarding poor practice, abuse or neglect consistent with the Irish FA safeguarding policy.

6) Adhere to Irish FA Codes of Conduct and ensure these are communicated to all club coaches, players and parents.

**Scope**

This policy document covers all functions of our club and applies to all staff and/or volunteers, particularly those who engage in regulated activity with children and young people, club members and representatives.

**Equality statement**

Our club is committed to ensuring a fun and safe environment for all, regardless of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, sexual orientation, men and women generally, persons with a disability or persons without, and persons with dependents and persons without.

**Section 2** Children’s Rights

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (International Treaty)

**What is the UN convention?**

The convention is a set of minimum standards – the bottom line – in protecting children’s rights. It is a binding international treaty which the British government signed at the United Nations, committing itself to give children the rights and protections written in the convention.

**Who is a child?**

In the convention ‘a child’ means anyone who is under 18 years of age.

**What rights do children have?**

**There are many rights written into the convention which include, for example, rights relating to:**

* children having a say in their education;
* protection of the environment in which children live;
* reasonable standards of living;
* protection from violence, abuse and exploitation;
* protection for children cared for away from home and for children with a disability;
* children being able to use their own language, enjoy their own culture and practice their own religion;
* reasonable standards of health and development;
* children suspected of committing a crime and children convicted of crimes.

**Each point in the convention is called an article. There are five articles that are especially important for Irish FA staff and volunteers to be aware of:**

**Article 1:** No Discrimination

**Article 3:** Acting in The Child’s Best Interests

**Article 6:** Making It Happen (the government has promised to make laws and change policies and procedures to give children these rights)

**Article 12:** The Child’s Right to Express an Opinion

**Article 19:** Protection from Abuse and Neglect

**Are these all ‘legal’ rights?**

Since the UK government has signed the convention, no law or administrative action should contradict it. There is a committee at the United Nations which checks on whether governments are keeping their promises. Current legislation does not make all these rights available to children.

More information about children’s rights in local law can be obtained from the Children’s Law Centre, who can advise you or put you in touch with specialist groups with information relating to any issues.

**The Children (NI) Order 1995**

**The Children (NI) Order 1995 is based on a clear and consistent set of five principles designed with the common aim of promoting the welfare of children and young people, they are;**

* **Paramountcy** the welfare of the child and young person is paramount to this club
* **Parental / Guardian Responsibility** parents / guardians have responsibility for ensuring their child is safe and the young   
   person’s rights are protected rather than rights over them
* **Prevention** the club will put all good practice measures in place to reduce any potential risks of harm
* **Partnership** parents / guardians and statutory agencies will work together to prevent abuse and harm
* **Protection** the statutory agencies have a legal duty to investigate when a child or young person is at risk from harm or abuse.   
   This club is committed to working in partnership with any statutory intervention to protect a child.

Children and young people have the right to be safe. Our staff and/or volunteers have a duty to ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedence over all other considerations.

**Section 3** Responsibility for Safeguarding

Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football is a shared responsibility. Our club fully endorse the Irish FA’s Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football Policy and Procedures found under the Foundation section at www.irishfa.com. We have appointed a Club Child Welfare Officer(s) who has been ratified by our club committee.

The club child welfare officer plays a fundamental role in the creation of a child-centred ethos that promotes the positive aspects of football. This can be achieved by communicating to every adult in the club that they have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and young people and protect them from inappropriate behaviour and promote a culture of fun.

**The role and responsibilities of the child welfare officer includes the following:**

* Work with others in the club to create a positive child centred environment.
* Adopt the safe recruitment procedures outlined by the Irish FA to ensure all volunteers in Regulated Activity have completed   
   appropriate vetting checks, administered by the Irish FA prior to taking up their role.
* Ensure all club volunteers have attended Irish FA Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football training in line with NIBFA,   
   NIWFA, GDC, SSG affiliation requirements within 6 months of taking up their role.
* Be the first point of contact for any complaints relating to poor practice and/or safeguarding issues and maintain appropriate   
   records of any complaints, actions or decisions taken.
* Disseminate relevant information throughout the club as and when necessary.
* Liaise with the Irish FA, clubs, leagues and any other relevant affiliated bodies to ensure any concerns are dealt with at the  
   earliest opportunity.

As a club, we will ensure that the club welfare officer has:

* Completed the Irish FA Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football Course
* Completed the Irish FA Child Welfare Officer Course (within 6 months of being appointed)
* Completed a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure Check through the Irish FA
* Agreed to take responsibility for their own development to maintain their knowledge and skills to fulfil the role

For additional information on the roles and responsibilities of the club child welfare officer see the Irish FA Safeguarding Policy and Procedures or the Irish FA Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football App currently available at Google Play and iTunes.

**Section 4** Safe Recruitment Procedures

Our club recognises its responsibility to ensure that all staff/volunteers providing football opportunities for children and young people are appropriately selected, supported and have the necessary safeguarding knowledge to help them in their roles. Our selection process includes but is not limited to:

* An application process
* Confirmation of any experience working with children
* Previous coaching experience
* A commitment to engage in additional training as required by the club
* Reference checking

**Vetting Checks**

Our club is required to ensure that any volunteer who is engaged in regulated activity (welfare role, first aider, coach, transporting children, overnight stays) completes an AccessNI Enhanced Disclosure Check.

Once we are satisfied that the volunteer is suitable to represent our club we will ensure that an appropriate AccessNI application is completed prior to them taking up their role and at 3 yearly intervals thereafter. The process is as follows:

* We will issue a hard copy of the AccessNI application form (available at www.irishfa.com) to each applicant.
* Each applicant must complete the application in full, including the online registration for an Enhanced Disclosure Check   
   (against the Barred list if the work is unsupervised).
* Each applicant must return the application form to our club welfare officer or chairperson along with 3 pieces of identification  
   for identity checking.
* Each applicant should consider submitting a self-declaration form outlining any relevant cautions and/or convictions to Kevin  
   Doyle, Irish FA Safeguarding Manager, NFS Windsor Park, Belfast, BT12 6LU.
* The club welfare officer/chairperson should record the name, dob and AccessNI reference number and forward the application   
   form and copies of identification to Kevin Doyle, Irish FA Safeguarding Manager, NFS Windsor Park, Belfast, BT12 6LU.

On receipt of the completed application the Irish FA will:

* Process the application to AccessNI
* Receive notification from AccessNI outlining:

(i) Nothing to disclose

(ii) Certificate Issued (previous cautions and/or convictions)

(iii) Further information required from the applicant

The Irish FA will conduct a thorough risk assessment on any disclosures. Our club volunteers will provide the Irish FA with the original disclosure certificate and a detailed explanation of any disclosures identified by the AccessNI check. The Irish FA may be required to obtain third party information and/or share information with our club. This will only be done with the consent of the volunteer.

Our club will engage fully in this process and comply with any decision taken by the Irish FA Case Management Panel.

**Safeguarding Training**

All our staff and volunteers will attend the Irish FA Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football training course within 6 months of taking up their role. This will cover:

* Basic awareness and understanding of safeguarding issues
* Recognising a child protection concern including guidance on how to respond to, record and report concerns in line  
   with Irish FA guidelines
* Volunteers responsibility to safeguard children and young people who participate in Irish FA programmes
* Awareness of the Irish FA Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures – including codes of conduct

Volunteers will be required to attend refresher training in safeguarding on a 3-yearly basis either via face to face training or online learning. Face to face training must be completed after 9 years.

**Section 5** Responding to concerns, complaints or allegations

**We will take any complaint or concern about the safety and welfare of a child seriously. This includes but is not limited to the following:**

* The conduct of a club volunteer towards any other club member – child, parent/guardian, spectator, Irish FA and/or

other match officials.

* The conduct of any club representative towards any member of another football club, league, Irish FA and/or match

official.

* Any concern, raised by a child or adult, that indicates they (or another person) have been harmed or are at risk of   
   being harmed by another individual.
* The conduct of any club member that may cause reputational damage to the club.
* Any concerning behaviour that is observed by a club representative.

Any concerns you may have should initially be directed to our club Child Welfare Officer. If the complaint is about that individual, you should raise the issue with the club Chairperson or another senior official as necessary.

We will consider if your concern relates to poor practice and is a breach of our Code of Conduct. This matter may be addressed internally. Serious cases of poor practice may be referred to the Irish FA/NIBFA. All concerns will be fully investigated.

**The outcome of any investigation may be:**

* No case to answer
* Advice and warning as to future conduct
* Supervision/monitoring
* Support/additional training
* Suspension from the club
* Club membership rescinded

We will also consider if your concern is potentially child abuse or criminal behaviour. We will record the nature of the concern and immediately share this information with statutory authorities and the Irish FA/NIBFA. Our club will be guided by the advice from relevant authorities.

We may have to make a referral to the DBS. If this is the case, we will liaise with the Irish FA and any other appropriate body.

**Section 6** What is Child Abuse?

“Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings: in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them.”

*(Ref: Department Of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) NI Area Child Protection Committee’s Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures, 2005)*

Child abuse occurs when a person in a position of greater authority or power causes significant harm to a child or young person. Research indicates that this harm can take place in many settings, including sport, and that the perpetrator is more often an adult whom children and young people know and place their trust in, rather than a stranger.

Child abuse is a very difficult and emotive subject which requires education and open discussion so that everyone feels confident in recognising the potential signs and symptoms of abuse and knows how to respond to concerns in line with Association and statutory guidelines.

By creating a better understanding of the issue, and by facilitating open discussion about abuse, the Irish FA also endeavours to deter those who may wish to use football as a means of gaining access to children and young people for inappropriate reasons.

Child abuse inquiries indicate that abuse which takes place in a public setting is rarely a one-off occurrence. Therefore, it is imperative that all allegations and suspicions of abuse are taken seriously and acted upon immediately to prevent further harm to children and young people

**The Department of Health Co-operating to Safeguard Children (2017) Report formally recognises five types of abuse:**

**Physical abuse** occurs when a person deliberately hurts a child or young person or gives a child or young person access to alcohol, drugs or other dangerous substances

**Emotional abuse** occurs when a person persistently shouts, taunts or threatens a child or young person. They may also convey to them that they are worthless or inadequate

**Neglect** occurs when a person persistently fails to provide a child or young person with basic needs such as food, water and clothing. The child or young person may also be left unsupervised and not cared for

**Sexual abuse** occurs when a person takes advantage of a child or young person to gratify their own sexual needs

**Exploitation** occurs when a person manipulates or abuses their power and control over a child or young person for their own personal gain.

Although bullying is not formally recognised as a type of abuse under the Children (NI) Order, the Irish FA considers it to be a form of harm which must be taken seriously and responded to.

For more detailed information regarding the categories of abuse, refer to www.irishfa.com/foundation/youth-and-grassroots-football/ safeguarding.

**Section 7** Code of Conduct

Football should be a positive experience for all participants. Our club expects high standards of behaviour from all our representatives – players, coaches, volunteers and supporters. Football is passionate and naturally competitive and can evoke different emotions and reactions. These, at times can be both positive and negative and can spill onto the pitch. We have a shared responsibility to ensure poor conduct does not compromise the safety and welfare of children and young people. Any behaviour which compromises this ethos may result in disciplinary action.

**Players - Children and young people at our club are expected to:**

* Show respect to players, coaches/volunteers and spectators
* Play fairly, respect officials and accept their decisions
* Respect opponents and not cheat
* Not use violence
* Remain within the defined boundary of the playing area/coaching area
* Behave and listen to all instructions from the coach/supervising adult
* Take care of all equipment owned by the club/league/SSG centre
* Refrain from bad language or racial /sectarian references
* Refrain from bullying or persistent use of rough and dangerous play
* Report abuse and/or inappropriate behaviour
* Be gracious in defeat
  + Refrain from any inappropriate use of social media that may be critical of any club member or bring our club into disrepute

**Children and Young People have the right to:**

* Be safe and be listened to
* Be respected
* Privacy
* Enjoy football in a protective environment
* Be referred for professional help if needed
* Be protected from abuse/inappropriate behaviour from any other person
* Participate on an equal basis, based on their ability
* A positive experience of competition
* Have their concerns taken seriously

Any behaviour deemed to be in breach of the code of conduct will initially be addressed by the appropriate coach and the Club Welfare Officer informed. Should the inappropriate behaviour persist or become more serious the matter will be escalated within the club and the following actions may be considered (this list is not exhaustive):

* Behavioural contract
* Suspension from training/matches
* Expulsion from the club

Your parents/guardians will be informed of any action taken by the club or concerns about your behaviour.

**Code of Conduct for Parents/Guardians**

**Parents/Guardians involve with our club are expected to:**

* Show respect, appreciation and support for the club coaches and volunteers
* Complete and return club registration forms along with consent forms pertaining to your child’s participation with the club
* Inform the club of any health concerns pertaining to your child – particularly breathing, chest conditions or allergies. This   
   may include any other condition including ADHD and/or Autism prior to football related activity.
  + - Be punctual when delivering and collecting your child to and from football training or matches. Inform the coach of any change   
       of circumstance or collection arrangements
    - Ensure your child is prepared for football – appropriate attire depending on weather conditions, appropriate footwear, shin  
       guards and if required, prescription safety glasses, fluids and snacks if needed
    - Behave in a manner that reflects the good name of the club, make yourself aware of and adhere to rules of games centres   
       Encourage your child to play by the rules and to do their best
    - Be realistic and promote your child’s participation in football for fun and enjoyment
    - Accept officials and referee’s decisions
    - Behave responsibly on the side-lines and engage positively with other parents and coaches
    - Refrain from any inappropriate use of social media that may be critical of any club member or bring our club into disrepute
    - Never enter the field of play unless invited by an official

**Parents/Guardians have a right to:**

* Know their child is safe and supervised during training and matches (unless prior arrangements re supervision agreed)
* Be informed about any problems or concerns relating to their child(ren)
* Be informed if their child is injured
* Make a positive contribution to decisions made by the club
* Raise any complaints or concerns they may have related to their children’s involvement with the club

Any behaviour deemed to be in breach of the code of conduct will initially be addressed by the appropriate coach and the Club Welfare Officer informed. Should the inappropriate behaviour persist or become more serious the matter will be escalated within the club and the following actions may be considered (this list is not exhaustive):

* Behavioural contract
* Parent/Guardian may be asked not to attend training sessions and/or matches for an agreed period
* **If parental poor behaviour continues, then ultimately your child may be asked to leave the club because of your actions**

**Code of Conduct for Coaches and Volunteers**

**All coaches and volunteers at our club will:**

* show respect to everyone involved in the game (i.e. coaches, players, match officials, parents and spectators)
* be an excellent role model and always display exemplary behaviour. This includes not smoking, drinking alcohol, taking drugs or   
   using foul, racial, sectarian or discriminatory language in the presence of children and young people.
* only develop open, honest, professional and respectful relationships with children and young people
* promote the positive aspects of football and never condone rule-violations or the use of prohibited substances
* not equate success purely with results / winning, or equate losing with failure
* respect decisions made by match officials and never publicly criticise their decisions
* never enter the field of play without permission from the referee
* never use offensive, insulting, abusive or inappropriate language
* agree to complete appropriate vetting checks and engage in any subsequent risk assessment with the Irish FA
* attend appropriate training as and when required in line with Irish FA affiliation requirements – safeguarding, first aid etc

**When coaching/volunteering children and young people I will:**

* always put the welfare of children and young people before winning or achieving goals
* work in an open environment and avoid spending time alone with children and young people away from others
* only partake in one-to-one coaching with a child or young person if it is necessary, part of the overall team training session and  
   is done with the knowledge of the club and agreement with the child/young person and parent
* make them feel safe and ensure that coaching and volunteer ratios are appropriate to the needs of the group
* make football a fun experience
* communicate in a constructive, effective and age-appropriate manner
* be positive by giving constructive feedback, praising efforts and encouraging achievements
* ensure that if any form of manual / physical support is required, it is provided openly and according to agreed club guidelines.   
   If physical support is needed, I will talk openly to the child or young person, explaining what I am doing and why, but I   
   understand that for coaching purposes within football there are limited reasons for physical support. I agree that children and  
   young people should always be consulted before they are touched, and their agreement gained. Parental / guardian views   
   about manual support will always be carefully considered
* recognise the developmental needs and capacity of children and young people, including those with a disability, avoiding  
   excessive training or competition and not pushing any child against their will
* carry out a risk assessment and ensure that the equipment and environment used for every club activity is safe
* keep a written record, and inform senior coach and parent of the young person, of any injury that occurs, including details of  
   any treatment given
* never engage in bullying behaviour
* challenge any form of bullying behaviour and report it to club Welfare Officer and parent of the young person
* avoid spending any time alone with children or young people away from others.

**The following actions will never be sanctioned. I will never:**

* engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
* share a changing room, bath or shower with a child or young person
* allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
* allow children or young people to use foul, abusive, racial, or discriminatory language unchallenged
* make sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person – even in fun
* engage in sexual relationships with any player under 18 years of age while that unequal power relationship exists, and will   
   notify the Club Welfare Officer of any relationships where there is a potential or actual abuse of trust
* engage in inappropriate use of social media – this includes never posting comments on social media sites that compromise the   
   welfare of a child or young person, cause them harm, or bring the club or sport into disrepute
* reduce a child or young person to tears as a form of control
* encourage or bully a child or young person into playing while injured
* show favouritism
* allow allegations made by a child or young person to go unrecorded or not acted upon.
* undertake personal care for children or young people
* enter or remain in the changing room while players are showering or changing if they are of a different gender to myself.
* invite or allow children or young people to stay with me at my home.

Any behaviour deemed to be in breach of the code of conduct will initially be addressed by the head coach or Club Welfare Officer. Should the inappropriate behaviour persist or become more serious the matter will be escalated within the club and the following actions may be considered (this list is not exhaustive):

* Additional training
* Mediation
* Period of supervision
* Suspension
* Expulsion from the club

**Section 8** Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying is hurtful behaviour which no child or young person should have to experience. The impact that bullying can have on a child’s or young person’s life should never be underestimated. In extreme cases, bullying can lead to a child or young person self-harming or taking their own life. Our club is committed to providing an environment which promotes fun, respect, inclusivity and equality for everyone involved.

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour that compromises our club’s ethos and will therefore be challenged and responded to. Volunteers who witness bullying behaviour, whether it’s child-to-child or adult to child, must respond immediately and report it to our Club Welfare Officer. Cases of serious bullying may be reported to the Irish FA Safeguarding team.

* All volunteers must respect every child and young person’s need for, and right to, an environment where safety, security,   
   praise, recognition, opportunity and equality are available.
* Bullying behaviour will not be accepted or condoned at our club.
* Any form of bullying will be taken seriously, be investigated and be promptly and appropriately responded to.
* Everyone involved in our club must understand what bullying is and how it affects those involved.
* Everybody has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying.
* Our anti-bullying policy and reporting procedures should be made known to everyone involved in the club, so they know how to  
   respond to bullying, should it occur
* Our club will support children and young people, and their parents / guardians, should they be subjected to bullying.

**RESPONDING TO BULLYING: VOLUNTEERS**

* All cases of bullying must be reported to the club welfare officer.
* Parents and guardians should be made aware that their child is being bullied, or is bullying others, and should be invited to   
   meet with relevant club volunteers to discuss the problem.
* Where appropriate, the PSNI may be contacted
* Mediation should be used to help achieve a resolution but only if there is informal consent and agreement from all parties.
* The bullying behaviour should be promptly addressed and stopped.

**Section 9** Useful Contacts

**Irish FA Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football App**

**Health and Social Care Trusts In Northern Ireland**

Each trust has a Gateway team to deal with initial reports of abuse, and more local contacts for ongoing professional liaison and advice on concerns.

**Northern HSC Trust Tel** 0300 1234 333 (0900-1700) **Out of hours** 028 9504 9999 (1700-0900)

**South Eastern HSC Trust Tel** 0300 1000 300 (0900-1700) **Out of hours** 028 9504 9999 (1700-0900)

**Southern HSC Trust Tel** 0800 7837 745 (0900-1700) **Out of hours** 028 9504 9999 (1700-0900)

**Belfast HSC Trust Tel** 028 9050 7000 (0900-1700) **Out of hours** 028 9504 9999 (1700-0900)

**Western HSC Trust Tel** 028 7131 4090 (0900-1700) **Out of hours** 028 9504 9999 (1700-0900)

**Police Service Of Northern Ireland Public Protection Units**

The following are PSNI Public Protection Units throughout Northern Ireland. Contact them via the police exchange 028 9065 0222 or 101 and the relevant extension below:

**North/West Belfast** Tennent St PSNI x 28969

**South/East Belfast** Willowfield PSNI x 23570

**Newtownards/Bangor** Newtownards PSNI x 31065

**Carrickfergus/Newtownabbey/Antrim** Antrim PSNI x 36070

**Armagh/Newry** Lurgan PSNI x 39084

**Cookstown/Omagh/Enniskillen** Omagh PSNI x 41630

**Limavady/Londonderry/Magherafelt** Maydown PSNI x 57016

**Coleraine/Larne/Ballymena** Ballymoney PSNI x 63605 A

**NSPCC**

**Helpline** 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk

**Child Protection In Sport Unit** 028 9035 1135/011 6234 7278 | www.thecpsu.org.uk

**ChildLine** Freephone 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

**Access NI** 0300 200 7888 [www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni)

**Disclosure and Barring Service**

Information or queries relating to referrals or barring of adults from working with children and young people

01325 953795 [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs)

**Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre** (CEOP) 028 7238 2391 www.ceop.gov.uk

**Kidscape (Anti-Bullying Charity)** 0207 730 3300 www.kidscape.org.uk

**PIPS (Suicide Prevention Charity)** 028 90287836 www.pipsprogrammes.com

**Lifeline 24-hour general helpline** 0808 808 8000

**Nexus Counselling service for survivors of abuse** www.nexusinstitute.org

**Belfast** 028 9032 6803

**Derry/Londonderry** 028 7126 0566

**Portadown** 028 3835 0588

**Enniskillen** 028 6632 0046

**Sport NI** 028 9038 1212 www.sportni.net

**Volunteer Now** 028 9023 6100 [www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk)

**OTHER USEFUL WEBSITES**

www.bullying.co.uk (anti-bullying charity)

www.thinkuknow.co.uk (CEOP’s internet safety education programme)

Summary

We are committed to the good practice guidelines and procedures outlined throughout this policy. As a club, we accept our responsibility to provide an environment which always promotes the safety and welfare of children and young people.

In addition to this policy document, we are guided by additional policies outlined in the Irish FA Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football Policy and Procedures document found www.irishfa.com/foundation/youth-and-grassroots-football/ safeguarding. This includes:

* Whistle Blowing Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
* Equality Policy
* General Data Protection Regulations
* Communications and Social Media Policy
* Managing Challenging Behaviour
* Transporting Children and Young People
* Travelling to Away Fixtures/Tournaments/Residentials
* Guidelines on Confidentiality
* Organising Events/Festivals/Tournaments

**The Irish FA Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football App is available to download.**

**Appendix 2**

**VETTING CHECKS**

In order to register an official, all clubs, leagues, affiliated bodies and Associations must follow appropriate selection procedures ensuring they are satisfied with the applicant/volunteer. This process should include but is not limited to:

* An application process
* Confirmation of any experience working with children
* Previous coaching experience
* A commitment to engage in additional training as required by the club
* Reference checking

If satisfied with the applicant/volunteer, the club, league or association/affiliated body must ensure that all volunteers engaging in Regulated Activity complete an Enhanced Disclosure Vetting Check prior to confirmation of their membership.

To allow the Irish FA/NIBFA to assess the suitability of a club official to take up membership of the NIBFA, the club, league/association or affiliated body must ensure that the club official engaging in Regulated Activity completes a satisfactory vetting check.

The application process is as follows:

* When satisfied with the applicant, the club will issue a hard copy of the AccessNI application form to each applicant. This application can be found at <https://www.irishfa.com/irish-fa-foundation/grassroots-and-youth-football/safeguarding>
* Each applicant must complete the application full, including the online registration for an Enhanced Disclosure Check (against the Barred list if the work is unsupervised).
* Each applicant must return the application form to the club welfare officer or chairperson along with 3 pieces of identification for identity checking.
* Each applicant should, if necessary, submit the self-declaration form outlining any relevant cautions and/or convictions to Kevin Doyle, Irish FA Safeguarding Manager, NFS Windsor Park, Belfast, BT12 6LU.
* The club welfare officer/chairperson should record the name, dob and AccessNI reference number and forward the application form and copies of identification to Kevin Doyle, Irish FA Safeguarding Manager, NFS Windsor Park, Belfast, BT12 6LU. All information should be included on the relevant online club registration system.
* On receipt of the completed application the Irish FA will:
* Process the application to AccessNI
* Receive notification from AccessNI outlining:

1. **Nothing to disclose** – The Irish FA/NIBFA will inform the club welfare officer/chairperson that the individual could be considered for appointment
2. **Certificate Issued** – The Irish FA will request from the applicant, the original disclosure certificate and a full explanation of any disclosures outlined within. The applicant may provide or be required to provide relevant additional information allowing the Irish FA to assess the individual’s suitability to fulfil their proposed role. This may include but is not limited to written references and/or additional reports relating to the convictions. The applicant may be required to attend an interview as part of the assessment process. The Irish FA will inform the club, league or affiliated body if the applicant has been successful and any measures that should be put in place to manage any identified risk. The club/league/affiliated body may be required to engage in this assessment process.
3. **Further information required** – the Irish FA may be required to request additional information from the applicant for the purposes of progressing the application.

This decision will be taken by the Irish FA Case Management Panel.

The Irish FA is committed to equal opportunities for all and does not preclude applicants with criminal convictions. Convictions will only be considered when relevant to the position that the applicant has applied for. Applicants whose disclosure certificate returns information in relation to their criminal record will be judged on a case-by-case basis. Disclosures do not necessarily preclude a person from taking a role within affiliated youth football.

The assessment of suitability will depend on several factors:

* the nature of the position
* the self-disclosure of any prosecutions or convictions
* the seriousness, timing and any possible pattern that emerges of any information disclosed
* the potential of reoffending to cause harm to young people/vulnerable adults

The following information is considered:

* Age of applicant now and at the time of the offence
* Type and nature of the offence
* Number of offences on record
* Pattern of offending or date since last offence
* Contact with young people and/vulnerable adults
* Any mitigating factors
* Any aggravating factors
* Disclosure by applicant
* Cooperation with case management process

Disclosure of certain types of convictions/prosecutions may automatically preclude the applicant from a position working with children. Examples of offences that may prohibit an applicant are:

* Any offence of a sexual nature
* Any offence against a child
* An offence that causes gross bodily harm
* An offence of kidnapping
* A series of continuous offending that might cause concern for the well-being of children

Any applicant who submits inaccurate information (at any stage of the process), omits relevant information or does not engage meaningfully in the assessment process may not be permitted to take up membership of the NIBFA either temporarily or permanently.

All documentation will be returned to the applicant on completion of the process. The Irish FA will retain confirmation of the decision to grant membership or not.

All clubs, leagues, affiliated and associated bodies must ensure they maintain accurate and up to date record of all club officials including confirmation of vetting checks and safeguarding training, both of which should be updated every 3 years.

**Appeals**

An appeals process can be made available to any individual who is subject to a decision made by the CMP.

* All requests must be submitted in writing, by special-delivery post, within 14 days after the date the decision was intimated in writing to the individual concerned.
* A fee of £75 must be enclosed with the appeal. The fee shall be returned only where the appeal is upheld or not heard.
* The request must clearly identify the decision the individual wishes to appeal, on what grounds they wish to make the appeal, and reasons as to why it would be unfair not to change the decision. Evidence must also be submitted to support the claim.
* The Appeals Panel will exclude any person who sat on the original CMP.
* Where an appeal has been rejected or not heard, the initial decision made by the CMP will stand.
* The Appeals Panel will notify the individual, in writing, of the outcome of the appeal process.

Should an individual wish to withdraw their appeal prior to the hearing taking place, they must notify the Irish FA's Safeguarding Team in writing. In such cases, the original decision made by the CMP will be upheld. The individual may also be subject to a cancellation fee.

**Appendix 3**

**PLAYER TRAINING/TRIALS AGREEMENT FORM**

Agreement for club registered players to attend trial, training or as a guest player for another club during the period of the registration. Please PRINT ALL sections except for signature.

Name of Player \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Name of Club\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ head of youth/secretary\* of the above-named club hereby

approve the Request from Name of Club \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to invite the

above named player to a trial, to train and or to guest for the said team in a tournament between

the following dates \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ inclusive.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Role \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Declaration

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ head of youth/secretary\* of Name of Club\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledge the cooperation of; Name of Club \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

In releasing the above-named player and will comply with the agreed dates noted above. I also

understand any failure to comply with these dates will leave our club subject to sanction as per the

current league disciplinary code.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Role \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\*delete as appropriate but the approval must be authorised by an official at this level of the club.

This signed document and a copy must now be submitted to the league or leagues of the two clubs named above.

**League use only**

Name of League \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Received by; \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Print Name

Date; \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 4**

**Article 19 Protection of minors**

**1.** International transfers of players are only permitted if the player is over the age of 18.

**2.** The following three exceptions to this rule apply:

**a)** The player’s parents move to the country in which the new club is located for reasons not linked to football.

**b)** The transfer takes place within the territory of the European Union (EU) or European Economic Area (EEA) and the player is aged between16 and 18. In this case, the new club must fulfil the following minimum obligations:

(i) It shall provide the player with an adequate football education and/or training in line with the highest national standards.

(ii) It shall guarantee the player an academic and/or school and/or vocational education and/or training, in addition to his football education and/or training, which will allow the player to pursue a career other than football should he cease playing professional football.

(iii) It shall make all necessary arrangements to ensure that the player is looked after in the best possible way (optimum living standards with a host family or in club accommodation, appointment of a mentor at the club, etc.).

(iv) It shall, on registration of such a player, provide the relevant association with proof that it is complying with the obligations.

**c)** The player lives no further than 50km from a national border and the club with which the player wishes to be registered in the neighbouring association is also within 50km of that border. The maximum distance between the player’s domicile and the club’s headquarters shall be 100km.

In such cases, the player must continue to live at home and the two associations concerned must give their explicit consent.

**3.** The conditions of this article shall also apply to any player who has never previously been registered with a club and is not a national of the country in which he wishes to be registered for the first time.

**4.** Every international transfer according to paragraph 2 and every first registration according to paragraph 3 is subject to the approval of the subcommittee appointed by the Players’ Status Committee for that purpose. The application for approval shall be submitted by the association that wishes to register the player. The former association shall be given the opportunity to submit its position. The sub-committee’s approval shall be obtained prior to any request from an association for an International Transfer Certificate and/ or a first registration. Any violations of this provision will be sanctioned by the Disciplinary Committee in accordance with the FIFA Disciplinary Code. In addition to the association that failed to apply to the sub-committee, sanctions may also be imposed on the former association for issuing an International Transfer Certificate without the approval of the sub-committee, as well as on the clubs that reached an agreement for the transfer of a minor.

**5.** The procedures for applying to the sub-committee for a first registration and an international transfer of a minor are contained in Annexe 2 of these regulations

**PROTECTION OF MINORS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pertinent facts to be included in documents **Document Category** | **Pertinent Facts** |
| Documentation of academic education | A signed and stamped statement issued by the relevant academic provider that confirms the player’s enrolment, the start date of the classes, the qualification the player will receive upon completion of the course, the player’s expected date of graduation, and a signed weekly academic schedule of the player that clearly indicates the days on which each class meets and the duration of each class. |
| Documentation of football education |  For male players, the club's training category for training compensation purposes   For female players, a statement from the association concerned confirming that the applicant club is deemed to be in "line with the highest national standards" of women's football education in that country   The player's weekly football training schedule (including the day and duration of each training session)   A statement of the club wishing to register the player that specifies the team of the club that the player will be joining |
| Documentation of accommodation / care |  Address   Guardian’s name / identity & relationship to player |
| Employment contract – player or player’s parents |  Employer’s name   Employer’s address / location   Employee’s full name   Job description   Remuneration details   Employment start date   Terms of validity |
| Parental authorisation |  Parent’s full name   Player’s full name   Authorisation |
| Proof of birth date (birth certificate) – player |  Player’s full name   Date of birth   Place of birth   Parents’ full name |
| Proof of identity and nationality – player or player’s parents |  Full name   Nationality |
| Proof of residence – player’s parents |  Residence start date   Address / location |
| Request for approval of first registration / Request for approval of international transfer |  Formal request   Grounds for the request / explanation of the circumstances forming the basis of the request   Date of the request |
| Work permit – player or player’s parents |  Country   Date of issue   Permit holder’s full name   Terms of validity |
| Documentation of exchange programme | Official information about the exchange programme (name, purpose, funding, duration, etc.) provided by the organisers of the exchange programme. |
| Document Category | Pertinent Facts |
| Registration form for exchange programme | A copy of the registration form for the relevant exchange programme signed by the minor player and/or his/her parents. |
| Confirmation of player’s return | A confirmation, issued and signed by the organisers of the exchange programme or the minor player’s parents, that the minor player will return to his/her home country upon completion of the programme. |
| Documentation of academic education (specific to exchange students) | A confirmation, issued and signed by the minor player’s academic institute (school/college) in his/her host country, that indicates the dates of the envisaged duration of the relevant studies and includes a detailed timetable of the player’s classes. |
| Confirmation of player’s participation from academic institute in home country | A confirmation issued by the minor player's academic institute in his/her home country of the player’s participation in the relevant exchange programme. |
| Documentation of accommodation/care (specific to exchange students) | Specific details concerning the supervision and accommodation of the minor player during the exchange programme that include, in particular, the exact name and address of the player’s host parents. |
| Authorisation of host parents | A declaration of consent issued by the minor player’s host parents giving their consent to the player’s registration for the club of the host country's football association. |
| Proof of refugee status – player’s parents | A copy of the decision taken by the relevant national authority that grants the player’s parents the status of refugee or “protected person” or, alternatively, an official confirmation from the relevant national authority that the minor player’s parents have been admitted to the procedure for being granted the right of asylum, as well as a copy of their temporary residence permit Proof of refugee status – player’s in the host country. |
| Status of new club | A declaration issued by the football association of the minor player’s host country indicating whether the club for which the player wishes to be registered is professional or purely amateur (club without a professional team and without legal, financial or de facto links to a professional club). |
| Proof of refugee status of the player | A copy of the decision taken by the relevant national authority that grants the player the status of refugee or “protected person” or, alternatively, an official confirmation from the relevant national authority that the minor player has been admitted to the procedure for being granted the right of asylum, as well as a copy of his/her temporary residence permit in the host country. |
| Proof of custody | A copy of the decision of the competent national authority regarding the current legal custody of the minor player. |
| Authorisation of custody holder | A declaration of consent issued by the party that holds the minor player’s custody giving its consent to the player’s registration for the club of the host country's football association. |
| Parental situation | A declaration regarding the current situation and whereabouts of the player’s parents that is provided by the minor player, or the association of the player’s host country, or any other pertinent authority/entity. |
| Status of player with former club | A declaration issued by the minor player indicating whether he/she has ever been registered for a club in his/her home country (or any other country) and, if so, whether the player was previously registered as an amateur or a professional. |

