

FAI guidelines for Concern/ Complaint Policy



Kill Celtic FC is guided by FAI polices and frameworks.

Complaints are to be made in writing and submit to the following monitored email address.

Killcelticfccomplaints@gmail.com

Glossary:

Affiliated Member of the Association shall mean all National Bodies, Provincial Associations, leagues, clubs and AGM Members who have affiliated directly to the FAI or to their respective governing body.

Children, Child or Young Person shall mean a person under the age of 18 other than a person who is or has been married.

Clubs/League Children's Officer shall mean the person who the Child welfare day to day functions are delegated to. Their remit shall be a key component of the Safeguarding Statement and they shall be the Relevant Person for the Child Safeguarding Statement.

Designated Liaison Person shall mean the person who is responsible for ensuring that reporting procedures within the Club/League are followed so that child welfare and protection concerns are referred promptly to Statutory Authorities and will also liaise with outside agencies. Additionally, they will be a resource person to any employee or volunteer who has child protection concerns.

Executive Committee shall mean the Committee of the Affiliated Member responsible for the day to day running of the Affiliated Member.

Incident Form- Shall mean the document which should be completed when making a report of poor practise.

National Body shall mean the Colleges Football Association of Ireland (CFAI), Defence Forces Football Association (DFFA), Football Association of Ireland Schools (FAIS), Football For All (FFA), Irish Soccer Referees Society (ISRS), Irish Universities Football Union (IUFU), Junior Council and the Schoolboys Football Association of Ireland (SFAI).

Provincial Associations shall mean the Connaught Football Association (CFA), Leinster Football Association (LFA), Munster Football Association (MFA) and Ulster Football Association (UFA).

Reporting Form shall mean the document which should be completed when making a report of Child abuse.

Stand Down Order shall mean an order which is issued to any person who is the subject of a complaint or inquiry by a Statutory Authority in relation to any Child welfare or Vulnerable Person concern. A Stand Down Order is issued to an individual to immediately refrain from particular activities within the FAI for a specified or indefinite period pending the outcome of an enquiry or investigation in accordance with FAI Rules.

Statutory Authorities shall mean those state bodies which promote the welfare and protection of Children and Vulnerable Persons and have a legal responsibility for the investigation and/or validation of suspected abuse, and

these include An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive and the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) and any other authority as may be appropriate from time to time.

The Policy shall mean this FAI Concerns / Complaints Policy.

Vulnerable Person means a person, other than a Child, who—

is suffering from a disorder of the mind, whether as a result of mental illness or dementia,
has an intellectual disability,
is suffering from a physical impairment, whether as a result of injury, illness or age, or
has a physical disability,

which is of such a nature or degree—

1. as to restrict the capacity of the person to guard himself or herself against harm by another person, or
2. that results in the person requiring assistance with the activities of daily living including dressing, eating, walking, washing and bathing.

Please note- within the Policy where Child/Children is referred to there may be occasions when it may also be applicable to Vulnerable Persons.

1. Introduction

1.1. This document is written to provide clear and unambiguous procedures for responding to cases of suspected poor practice and/or abuse. It aims to set out guidelines and procedures on how to take action if there are any concerns about a Child's or Vulnerable Person's safety and welfare, for those working in a voluntary or paid capacity with Children or Vulnerable Persons within the game.

1.2. There is a responsibility on all volunteers/ staff within the game of Association football in Ireland to protect Children, Young Persons and Vulnerable Persons and report suspected abuse so that the Statutory Authorities can investigate. However, it is important to distinguish between poor practice and abuse.

2. What is Poor Practice?

2.1. Incidents of poor practice occur when the needs of Children or Vulnerable Persons are compromised. Examples of poor practice are likely to be once off incidents and these might include but are not limited to:

2.2. Coach

1. Giving preferential treatment to individuals and unfairly rejecting others (e.g., singling out and only focusing on the talented Children and failing to involve the full squad).
2. Giving preference to winning games over Children's development, participation and satisfaction.
3. Encouraging Children to play while injured.
4. Using inappropriate language, gestures or comments to motivate Children or provoke a reaction.
5. Delivering a coaching session alone, without another responsible adult present.
6. Not paying due care and attention to the Children taking part in the training session or game.
7. Failing to recognise and applaud a Child's efforts to make improvements to their game.
8. Coaching alone when their own child is part of the team.
9. Entering the field of play as a coach/manager when their own child is involved in an on-field incident.

2.3. Parent / Guardian

1. Placing too much pressure on their Child to perform to a high standard and win games.
2. Criticising their Child's performances instead of highlighting the positives of their game and where improvements were made.
3. Failing to ensure that their Child is appropriately dressed for the weather conditions.
4. Making derogatory comments about their Child, or another Child during a game or training session.
5. Failing to bring their Child to training on time or collect them promptly at the end of the session.

2.4. Supporters

1. Using inappropriate language towards Children, coaches, referees or other supporters.
2. Making inappropriate comments about the performance of Children, coaches or referees.
3. Entering the field of play during a match or training session without being asked to do so.

2.5. The Club

1. Failing to provide adequate safeguarding arrangements for the Children in their care.

2. Failing to implement FAI Rules on the protection and welfare of Children, the FAI Child Welfare Policy and other supporting documents.
3. Placing undue pressure on a coach or team of Children to win games or competitions.
4. Allowing poor practice to go unreported (e.g., a coach who ridicules and criticises Children who make a mistake during a match).
5. Failing to create an environment that encourages player development and enjoyment over winning games and trophies.
6. Failing to provide appropriate safeguarding education for their coaches and members.
7. Not having procedures in place to ensure a parent/guardian does not coach their own child's team alone and that they do not enter the field of play as the coach or manager when their own child is involved in an on-field incident.

2.6. General

1. Shouting at or ridiculing Children when they make a mistake. Children should be given the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and develop.
2. Allowing Children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
3. Placing Children in potentially compromising and uncomfortable situations with adults.
4. Ignoring health and safety guidelines (e.g., allowing Children to set up goal posts unsupervised by adults).
5. Failing to adhere to the club's codes of practice.

2.7. Points to remember.

1. Judgement about whether an incident is one of Child abuse or poor practice may not be possible at the point of referral, but only after the collation of relevant information.
2. The majority of poor practice concerns should be dealt with directly by the club in the first instance. Please refer to Section 3 for guidance on how to deal with an example of Poor Practice.

3. How to Deal with Alleged Poor Practice

3.1. Where alleged poor practice has been identified or reported, it must be dealt with in a fair and impartial manner. All information should be treated in the strictest of confidence, in accordance with procedures concerning confidentiality outlined in the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy.

3.2. When an example of alleged poor practice is reported, it should be dealt with on a case by case basis.

The following steps provide guidance as to how a complaint of poor practice could be handled:

1. Alleged poor practice is observed and/or reported. This information is then passed on to the Children's Officer.
2. Initial assessment is carried out by the Children's Officer who should collate all information / reports and record what action has been initially taken, if any.
3. Inform the person(s) against which the report of alleged poor practice has been made and offer them the opportunity to respond.

4. The Children's Officer should then record what the next step will be and if any other parties need to be approached to collect information or reports from.
5. If information needs to be collected from Children this should be done in the presence of their parents or guardians. Collecting information from Children should only occur where necessary.
6. All information should be treated in the strictest of confidence, in accordance with procedures concerning confidentiality outlined in the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy.
7. If the accused agrees that poor practice has taken place, they may be subject to an appropriate sanction. The matter should be referred by the Designated Liaison Person and / or Children's Officer to their Executive Committee for review. On assessment, the Executive Committee may refer the matter to an appropriate disciplinary body. This should be the body to which the matter was reported and if investigated in full no referral to a higher body is warranted.
8. If the alleged poor practice is disputed, the Designated Liaison Person and / or Children's Officer must refer the matter to their Executive Committee for review. On assessment, the Executive Committee may refer the matter to an appropriate disciplinary body. This should be the body to which the matter was reported and if investigated in full no referral to a higher body is warranted.
9. Should a disciplinary hearing be required, the panel should be impartial consisting of at least 3 members. All parties should be provided with the opportunity to make further oral and / or written submissions.
10. Should the alleged poor practice relate to an individual that is under 18 years of age, **no meetings should be held with that person without the presence or permission of a parent/ guardian**. If a parent or guardian cannot attend then a coach chosen by the parents can attend in their place.
11. All parties should be informed of the decision of any such investigation or disciplinary hearing in **writing** as soon as possible on completion of same.

Note: If a party feels that the alleged Poor Practice has not been investigated in full, they should refer the matter to the appropriate Affiliated Member as outlined in the FAI Concern / Complaint Procedure (please see Appendix 1), for example, Club to League, League to National Body/Provincial Association, National Body/Provincial Association to FAI.

4. Possible Sanctions Involving Poor Practice

4.1. If there is cause to believe that poor practice has occurred, a sanction proportionate to the offence should be applied. Some examples of possible sanctions are likely to be, but are not limited to:

4.2. Coach

1. Issued with a verbal and / or written warning and warned as to their future conduct.
2. Required to re-attend an FAI approved Safeguarding course.
3. Required to step aside from duties for a specified period of time, or permanent removal.
4. Asked to work alongside a more experienced coach to ensure best practice is followed at all times.
5. Monitored by a nominated person as directed by the appropriate Committee.

4.3. Parent / Guardian and Supporters

1. Issued with a verbal and / or written warning and warned as to their future conduct.
2. Asked not to attend training sessions and / or games for a period of time, or permanent removal.
3. Required to attend an FAI approved Safeguarding 1 course.
4. Suspended from club and have club membership removed.

Note: Any suspension / removal of a parent / guardian should not impact the involvement of the Child.

Drop off and collection of their Child should be facilitated to allow the Child attend training and matches.

4.4. The Club

1. Issued with a verbal and / or written warning and warned as to their future conduct.
2. Required to attend an FAI approved Safeguarding 2 or 3 course as appropriate to the role.
3. If a complaint of poor practice concerns a member of the Executive Committee, they may be asked to step down from their role for a specified period of time, or permanent removal.
4. Required to comply with recommendations concerning safeguarding practices from a higher body.

5. Child Abuse

5.1. Concerns identified as Child abuse will fall within the following categories:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Neglect
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Emotional Abuse
5. Bullying

Note: Further information on each form of abuse can found in the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy.

5.2. Grounds for Reasonable Concern

There are a number of indicators of abuse / suspected abuse, which include but are not limited to:

1. A direct disclosure / indication from a Child that they are / have been abused.
2. An account or report by a person who saw the Child being abused.
3. Consistent indication, over a period of time that a Child is suffering from abuse as defined in the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy.
4. Evidence, such as an injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way.
5. A sudden change of temperament and / or personality in the Child.
6. Corroborative indicators supporting a concern e.g. pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indicators of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour.
7. If you have any concerns you should discuss these with the Designated Liaison Person in your organisation.
At any time, you can consult informally with Tusla (Child & Family Agency) if you have a concern.

Note: For more information on recognising child abuse, please refer to the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding **Policy.**

5.3. How to Respond to a Disclosure from a Child

Should a Child make a disclosure, the following points should be considered:

1. At all times, take the Child seriously.
2. Questions should be kept to a minimum. Your role is to listen, not to interview.
3. Praise the Child and assure them they have done the right thing.
4. Stay calm and do not react emotionally.
5. Do not make any judgemental statements about the alleged abuse or abuser.
6. Do not promise to keep the information a secret, but reassure the Child that any sharing of information will be to protect them.
7. Record exactly what has been said as soon as possible in line with recording procedures (Please see Appendix 2).
8. Explain to the Child what will happen next.
9. All information should be treated in the strictest of confidence, in accordance with procedures concerning confidentiality outlined in the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy.

