



## **Procedure for the Reporting of a 'Cause for Concern' 2024**

### **Purpose**

- The Children's First Act 2015 and Guidance places responsibility on sports leaders to help safeguard children from harm.
- This goes further than responsibility to cause no harm themselves and includes responsibility to pass on information they may become aware of regarding harm being caused to children in the club.
- In FMBC the Designated Liaison Person is the Relevant Person for this legislation and as such is charged with responsibility to advise on necessary action following on from concern being raised regarding a child member.
- The Designated Liaison Person for FMBC will liaise with and make the required reports to statutory agencies.
- The Child Safeguarding Lead will ensure that training is provided to volunteers working with club members who are under 18, so that they understand their responsibilities.

### **Scope**

- Coaches, assistant coaches and other volunteers are responsible for helping to identify children about who they have 'cause for concern' and informing, working with and supplying information to the Child Safeguarding Lead. This is because they may have direct contact with that child or be the person that a child chooses to disclose to.
- There are two main sources of information that require a prompt and full discussion with the CSL are;
  - Firstly, where a sports leader has 'cause for concern' for a child
  - Secondly where a child reports they have suffered (or are suffering) abuse.
- Training in regard to both; how to deal with 'causes for concern' and how to work with children reporting abuse will be supplied to each sports leader within FMBC in the form of one three-hour workshop entitled Safeguarding Level One provided by a tutor trained by Sports Ireland and includes Sports Ireland Certificates. This workshop must be attended every three years and is a condition of the Basketball Ireland Coaching License.

Expected attendees of Safeguarding 1 include; in accordance with Sports Ireland "Safeguarding Guidance for Children & young people in Sport" persons working with or who have interactions with or who are involved in the planning/administration of activities or events with young people.

Fr. Mathews Basketball club as part of, their commitment to child Safeguarding aspire to have club volunteers who work with children complete Safeguarding 1. The committee encourages and facilitates completion of this course.

The following groups of volunteers will attend level one training;

- Coaches, assistant coaches, both for teams and camps
  - Team managers
  - Executive Committee members (excluding specialist advisors who do not have a role with children)
  - Anyone else identified as essential by the Child Safeguarding Lead.
- The Child Safeguarding Lead can advise and will monitor attendance.
  - The DLP is responsible for reporting to Tusla. S/he will manage the process and provide advice and support to any involved volunteers in the club.

## Procedure

### Procedure for responding to any child disclosing harm

The following points should be taken into consideration:

(a) It should be explained to the child, in an age appropriate way that it is not possible to keep this information a secret;

(c) It is important to deal with any allegation of abuse in a sensitive and competent way through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem, rather than interviewing the child about details of what happened. **No one in FMBC is responsible for determining whether abuse or harm has actually occurred, but all club volunteers are responsible for reporting their concerns that harm may be, has or could occur.**

(d) It is important to stay calm and not to show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen compassionately, and take what the child is saying seriously;

(e) It should be understood that the child has decided to tell about something very important and has taken a risk to do so. The experience of telling should be a positive one so that the child will not mind talking to those involved in the investigation;

(e) No judgmental statement should be made against the person against whom the allegation is made;

(f) The child should not be questioned unless the nature of what s/he is saying is unclear. Leading questions should be avoided. Open, non-specific questions can be used if necessary such as "Can you explain to me what you mean by that". Try to let the child tell their story, use their words

(g) It should be explained **that you will inform the CSL for FMBC. Who will give further advice on what action to take. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage.**

Procedure for volunteers who identify a possible 'cause for concern'

(a) Observe and note dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information;

(b) **Report the matter as soon as possible to the Child Safeguarding Lead.** Do not discuss this with parents or other volunteers. The CSL will provide appropriate support, advice and leadership to manage the situation. If there are reasonable grounds for believing that the child has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed, s/he will seek immediate advice from the clubs Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

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**Club Designated Liason Person**...Janine Bevan....janinelbevan@gmail.com.....0894108469

(c) Volunteers are not responsible for reporting or investigating their concerns.

Procedure for DLP

On receipt of information regarding a 'cause for concern', or an actual report of harm s/he will;

1) collect and record all available and relevant information from FMBC perspective

2) Attempt with the help of the person bringing the issue to him/her to **establish if the/any child is at immediate and serious risk.** S/he will contact the relevant Duty Social Work Team for advice and record and follow advice given.

3) If advised to make a report h/she will inform the family of their intention to make a report, unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation. Again s/he will take advice from the statutory bodies on this.

4) In cases where the Child Welfare Officer feels s/he does not have reasonable grounds for reporting a concern to the Statutory Authorities, the member who raised the concern will be given a clear written statement of the reasons why s/he is not taking action. The member will be advised that, if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to consult with, or report to, the Statutory Authorities in their area themselves.

**Relevant Guidance on above is available on [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie) and should be consulted for further information.**

**Signed off By Fr. Mathews Basketball Club Committee.**

**Date;** March 2024

**To be reviewed on;** March 2026