



## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

**Downpatrick Tennis Club** is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of its members. Every individual in the club should at all times show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the club and the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport.

***"Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence; they must be kept safe from harm, and they must be given proper care by those looking after them " (Article 19 ; UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)***

All children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. Ireland and the UK have adopted and are committed to the European Code of Sports Ethics, which defines fair play as:

***"much more than playing within the rules. It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing within the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialism and corruption."***  
**(European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe, 1993)**

**The Childcare Act 1991 (ROI) and The Children's (NI) Order (1995)** are based on a clear and consistent set of principles designed with the common aim of promoting the welfare of children.

Children have the right to be safe. All coaches should ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedence over all other considerations.

### **Standards set by Downpatrick Tennis Club will be achieved through ensuring the Club: -**

- Adopt and implement the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport as an integral part of its policy on children in the Club
- Have its constitution approved and adopted by clubs members at an AGM or EGM
- Permit all members over 16 years of age to vote, where possible, in the running of their junior section. One parent / guardian should have one vote for all their children under 16 years of age, where relevant
- Ensure that the Club Management Committee is elected or endorsed by registered club members at each AGM
- Adopt and consistently apply a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting Sports Leaders
- Clearly define the role of the committee members, all Sports Leaders and parents/ guardians

- Appoint/ Reappoint at least one children's officer at the AGM as outlined in the C.o.E . In the event that a club caters for both boys and girls, one children's officer of each gender should ideally be appointed
- Appoint one of the Children's Officers to act as Designated Officer to liaise with the Statutory Authorities in relation to the reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse. Any such reports should be made according to the procedures outlined in this Code/ Children First/ Our Duty to Care
- Ensure best practice throughout the club by disseminating its code of conduct, including the disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures in operation within the club to all its members. The club's code of conduct should also be posted in all facilities used by the club
- Have in place procedures for dealing with a concern or complaint made to the Statutory Authorities against a Committee Member or Sports Leader. Regulations should stipulate that a Sports Leader who is the subject of an allegation which has been reported to the Statutory Authorities, should stand aside while the matter is being examined. S/he should be invited to resume full duties immediately if s/he is vindicated
- Ensure that relevant Sports Leaders report to the Club Management Committee on a regular basis.
- Encourage regular turnover of committee membership while ensuring continuity and experience.
- Develop effective procedures for responding to and recording accidents/ incidents
- Ensure that any unusual activity (high rate of drop-out, transfers, etc.) is checked out and reported by the Designated Officer to Tennis Ireland
- Ensure that all club members are given adequate notice of AGMs and other meetings
- Ensure that all minutes of all meetings (AGMs / EGMs / Committees) are recorded and safely filed.

This policy applies to all those involved in **Downpatrick Tennis Club**, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteer drivers, parents and young people.

Copies of the full policy and detailed guidelines on recruitment, reporting, recording accidents/incidents, bullying, away trips and use of photography are available from the designated person or any club official.

### CHILDREN'S OFFICERS

The Children's Officers within **Downpatrick Tennis Club** are:

Name	Address	Telephone/ Mobile
1. Sam Murdock	112 Ballywillan Road Crossgar BT30 6UA	07740914260
2. Dawn Stocking	Ballycruttle House 7 Tullynaskeagh Rd Downpatrick BT30 7EJ	02844841490/07738116580

Photographs of the Children's Officers should, if possible, be displayed on the club's notice board and website.

Names of Children's Officers shall be made known to young members, coaches and parents alike as the Designated Persons to whom concerns will be addressed. If the concern is about the Children's Officer please report to Club Chairperson.

The club has procedures in place for dealing with any concern or allegation of abuse either within the club or externally, but the first point of contact for a child, parent/guardian or coach should be the Children's Officer, although any individual has the right to contact the HSE / Social Services or the Police if they have a concern about a child's safety.

## **EQUALITY STATEMENT**

All children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children, irrespective of ability or disability should be involved in sports activities in an integrated and inclusive way, whenever possible, thus allowing them to participate to their full potential alongside other children (Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport 2000)

DOWNPATRICK Tennis Club recognises the additional vulnerability of some children and the extra difficulties they may face when seeking help, i.e.

- Dependency due to disability may make some children feel powerless
- On occasions possible limited ability to communicate their feelings
- A negative self image can make children vulnerable to manipulation by others.

To address this vulnerability coaches will seek guidance on working with children with a disability from external agencies, parents / guardians and the children themselves.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT**

We at **DOWNPATRICK Tennis Club** recognise that the legal principle that the welfare of the child is paramount means that consideration of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. Everyone in our organisation, including children, must be aware that they can never promise to keep secrets. However, information of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a 'need to know' basis. Your statement of confidentiality should make this clear.

A full Child Protection policy document is available within club premises (if the club have their own premises) for all interested parties to read.