Child Safeguarding Statement

Our Commitment to Safeguarding Children from Harm

Implementation and Communication

- This statement is publicly available on our website and at all national events.
- It is provided upon request to Tusla (ROI) or Gateway Services (HSC Trusts, NI) and other statutory authorities as applicable.
- All affiliated clubs are required to comply with this policy and, where relevant, ensure awareness of The appropriate child protection authority based on their jurisdiction.

Designated Safeguarding Officers

Pickleball Ireland has appointed a National Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person(s) with responsibility for ensuring the implementation of this safeguarding policy across both the Republic of Ireland (via Tusla) and Northern Ireland (via HSC Gateway Services).

Review

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there is a change in legislation, guidance, or service delivery in either the Republic of Ireland (Tusla) or Northern Ireland (HSC Trust Gateway Teams).

Statement of Commitment

Pickleball Ireland is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people engaged in our sport across the island of Ireland.

We are dedicated to ensuring that all children, regardless of background or ability, feel safe, respected, and supported to participate fully in pickleball. This Child Safeguarding Statement has been prepared in accordance with the legislative requirements and guidance in both:

Republic of Ireland (ROI):

• *Children First Act 2015*
• *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*
• *National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012–2016*
• *Tusla – Child and Family Agency*

Northern Ireland (NI):

• *Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995*
• *Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2017)*
• *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007*
• *AccessNI – Criminal Records Checks*
• *Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts – Gateway Services*

It is also aligned with best practice guidance from:

• Sport Ireland
• Sport Northern Ireland

Our Services

Pickleball Ireland oversees and supports pickleball activities across the island of Ireland, including:
• Youth training programmes
• Coaching and competition at club, regional and national levels
• Coach and volunteer education
• Inclusive and development-focused

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• Youth training programmes
• Coaching and competition at club, regional and national levels
• Coach and volunteer education
• Inclusive and development-focused initiatives
• Events and tournaments where children and young people may participate

Our Principles

In accordance with national policy and sport sector guidance, Pickleball Ireland believes:
1. The welfare of children is paramount in all decisions and actions.
2. Every child has the right to be safe, heard, and protected from harm.
3. All children are entitled to equal protection regardless of gender, age, race, religion, disability, or background.
4. All adults involved in our sport have a responsibility to safeguard children from harm.

5. Safeguarding is a shared responsibility across national, regional, and local levels.
6. Volunteers and staff must be supported through training, vetting, supervision, and guidance

Risk Assessment and Controls

Pickleball Ireland has carried out a risk assessment of harm to children involved in our activities and identified the following potential risks and corresponding controls:

Risk of Harm Policies	**Procedures in Place**
Harm by coaches, volunteers or players	Garda Vetting (ROI), AccessNI Vetting (NI), Code of Conduct, Safeguarding Training
Lack of supervision during events	Supervision Ratios Policy, Event Management Guidelines
Bullying	Anti-Bullying Policy, Incident Reporting Procedure
Online safety concerns Requirements	Social Media Policy, Parental Consent
Failure to report concerns	Reporting Procedures, Mandated Person (Tusla), Designated Officer (Gateway Teams – NI)
Inadequate training or vetting	Safe recruitment Policy, Mandatory Safeguarding Training Levels 1–3
Unauthorised photography or data use	Child Protection & Data Policy, Consent Protocols

Procedures in Place

Pickleball Ireland has implemented the following to manage identified risks:

- Child Protection Policy (ROI & NI-compliant)
- Anti-Bullying and Complaints Policies
- Code of Conduct for children, coaches, volunteers, and parents/guardians
- Garda Vetting (ROI) and AccessNI Vetting (NI)
- Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Mandated Person (ROI)
- Safeguarding Training (Sport Ireland & Sport NI recognised)
- Supervision, drop-off/collection, and social media policies
- Incident and concern reporting procedures

Designated Safeguarding Roles

Pickleball Ireland has appointed:
- A National Children's Officer
- A Designated Liaison Person (DLP) with responsibility across ROI and NI
- A Mandated Person in accordance with Children First Act 2015 (ROI)

Each affiliated club is required to appoint a Club Children's Officer and a Club DLP, and to ensure compliance with relevant safeguarding legislation in their jurisdiction.

Implementation and Communication

- This statement is available at all national events and on our official website.
- It is shared with statutory authorities upon request – Tusla (ROI) and Gateway Services of the HSC Trusts (NI).
- All new staff, volunteers, and affiliated clubs are required to read and adopt this policy as part of their induction.
- Safeguarding requirements are embedded in club affiliation criteria and event planning.
- Awareness-raising and training are continuous priorities across the Pickleball Ireland network.

Review

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed:

- Bi-Annually, or
- Immediately, in response to legislative changes, new guidance from Tusla or HSC Trusts, or changes in organisational structure or services.

Date Agreed: December 2025.

Next Review: December 2026.