



Forrest Little Golf Club Safeguarding Disciplinary, Complaints & Appeals Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to effectively deal with any safeguarding disciplinary matters, complaints and appeals. This procedure is in-line with Golf Ireland Child Safeguarding requirements

As a leader/employee/volunteer of *Forrest Little Golf Club*, your behaviour must always reflect the high standards of our organisation and all that is good within our sport. Fair play in all competitions is expected. Where an allegation or complaint arises that your behaviour has fallen short of the standard expected of you, an inquiry will be made to establish if you should be subject to a disciplinary process.

Safeguarding complaints are complaints that involve a person under the age of 18. This document is written to provide a clear and easy to follow guide on how alleged poor practice complaints of a safeguarding nature are handled within *Forrest Little Golf Club*.

It is important to note that the investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the Statutory Authorities and should not be undertaken by Designated Liaison Person's or other Golf Leaders. The standard reporting procedure outlined in the Statutory Authorities guidelines will be followed.

If an incident occurs that appears to breach the expected standards, the following procedure will be followed:

Complaints Procedure for alleged Poor Practice

What is Poor Practice

Incidents of poor practice occur when the needs of a child are compromised. Examples of poor practice are likely to be once off incidents and these might include but are not limited to:

Leader

- Being negative during sessions and competitions
- Not putting the welfare of the young person first
- Giving preferential treatment to individuals and unfairly rejecting others
- Discouraging fair play and not treating participants equally
- Not recognising developmental needs, ensuring activities are appropriate for the individual
- Not planning and preparing appropriately
- Not reporting concerns in accordance with *Forrest Little Golf Club* Safeguarding Policy reporting procedures
- Spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others
- Taking sessions alone
- Constant communication with individual golfers by mobile phone or email
- Taking children to their home
- Taking children on journeys alone in their car
- Using inappropriate language

Representative Players

- Not maintaining high standards of conduct when interacting with juniors, other participants, parents, officials and organisers.
- Behaving irresponsibly and seeking out to unfairly affect a player or the outcome of the game
- Intentionally exposing any junior to embarrassment or disparagement using flippant or sarcastic remarks
- Using inappropriate language and or demonstrating threatening/abusive/bullying behavior

Parent/Guardian

- Not maintaining high standards of conduct when interacting with juniors, participants, other parents/guardians, officials and organisers.
- Behaving irresponsibly and seeking out to unfairly affect a player or the outcome of the game
- Intentionally exposing any junior to embarrassment or disparagement using flippant or sarcastic remarks
- Interfering with the coach or professional while working with the junior
- Using inappropriate language and or demonstrating threatening/abusive behavior

Spectators

- Using inappropriate language towards children, participants, coaches, referees or other spectators
- Entering the course or practice facilities or training sessions without being asked to do so
- Making inappropriate comments about a child's performance

Process for dealing with alleged Poor Practice

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 *Forrest Little Golf Club Safeguarding Policy*.

If the complainant believes the concern is of a safeguarding nature, then the following procedure should be followed:

- The complaint should be in writing to the Secretary or Club Children's Officer and should be responded to **within 7 working days**. If the complaint is against a junior, correspondence will be to the parent/guardian.
- On receiving a complaint, *Forrest Little Junior Committee* will appoint a Safeguarding Disciplinary Committee of no **less than three members**. It will be the responsibility of this committee to select a representative (investigator) to meet with the complainant and any other witnesses to ask for their explanation of what happened.
- The committee will consist of representatives from the junior golf committee, club management committee/club members and the club children's officer.
- The disciplinary committee will furnish the individual with the nature of the complaint being made against them and afford them the opportunity of providing a response either verbally or in writing, but usually at a meeting with the disciplinary committee. U18's should be accompanied by a parent/guardian.
- While maintaining confidentiality the appropriate disciplinary committee with safeguarding knowledge will hear the case of all parties involved and decide if behaviour has breached *Forrest Little Golf Club Safeguarding Policy*.
- If the complaint involves suspected abuse or a criminal offence the club children's officer/designated person will be consulted, and the disciplinary committee disbanded. The statutory authorities will then be informed.
- The Safeguarding Disciplinary Committee will review any relevant paperwork and hold any necessary meetings with all parties to proceed with complaints into any incident of suspected misconduct that does not relate to child abuse.
- Written confidential records of all complaints will be kept safely and confidentially
- Where it is established that an incident of misconduct has taken place, the disciplinary committee will notify the alleged of any sanction being imposed. The range of sanctions should reflect the seriousness of the alleged misconduct, whilst at the same time, being fair and proportionate to the complaint. The notification should be made in writing, setting out the reasons for the sanction. If the member is under 18 years of age, correspondence will be addressed to the parents/guardians.
- If the leader/employee/volunteer against whom the complaint was made is unhappy with the decision of the disciplinary committee, they have the right to appeal the decision to an Safeguarding Appeal Committee, which is impartial and independent of a Safeguarding Disciplinary Committee. The Appeal Committee can consist of a member of the GUI, a trustee

and an independent impartial member appointed at the time of an appeal. Any appeal should be made in writing within 10 days of the decision of the Safeguarding Disciplinary Committee.

- Following the appeals meeting the Safeguarding Appeal Committee will either confirm the original sanction or modify it in respect of further information provided through the appeal hearing. This decision is final and cannot be appealed against.

Suspension for Safeguarding Purposes

If any leader/employee/volunteer of Forrest Little Golf Club becomes the subject of an allegation of sexual misconduct or abuse involving a child or young person, resulting in an investigation by any statutory agencies charged with that responsibility, then *Forrest Little Golf Club* reserves the right to impose a suspension without prejudice of their role until the matter has been fully investigated and a decision reached. Upon the successful resolution of the matter by the statutory agencies, the employee/volunteer/leader may have their suspension lifted. But the removal of a suspension will only follow an additional risk assessment to consider any possible breaches of *Forrest Little Golf Club* Safeguarding policy. The recommendation by *Forrest Little Golf Club* Safeguarding Disciplinary Committee should be confirmed by the Council of *Forrest Little Golf Club* and will be communicated in writing to the employee/volunteer/leader.

In this respect the Statutory Authorities are Tusla and An Garda Síochána in the Republic of Ireland

Possible Sanctions Involving Poor Practice (but not limited to)

Leader

- Issued with a verbal and/or written warning
- To re-attend a Safeguarding Children in Sport course
- To step aside from duties for a specified period of time, or permanent removal
- Asked to work alongside a more experienced leader for a specified period of time to ensure best practice is followed at all times
- Monitored by a nominated person as directed by the appropriate committee

Representative Players

- Issued with a verbal and/or written warning and warned as to their future conduct. This will be noted on the player's record
- Loss of privileges in relation to equipment
- Reduction in order of merit points
- Removal from team/coaching panels
- Reduction or removal in subvention in relation to travelling or accommodation expenses
- Reduction or removal in grant aid
- Suspension from competing in National & Provincial/District tournaments

Parent/Guardian and Spectators

- Issued with a verbal and/or written warning and warned as to their future conduct
- Forbidden to attend coaching sessions, tournaments and championships for a period of time, or permanent removal
- To attend a Safeguarding workshop

Note: Any suspension/removal of a parent or guardian should not impact the involvement of the child. Drop off and collection of their child should be facilitated to allow the child attend coaching sessions, tournaments or championships.

Forrest Little has a complaints log to record pertinent Safeguarding Information, which is confidential to maintain privacy.