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# CORK CITY MARATHON

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## **Child Protection and Safeguarding Statement & Policies**

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Cork City Marathon is committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children and young people. It is central to the philosophy of Cork City Marathon that children are unconditionally respected and kept safe from harm while engaging with Cork City Marathon.

Our aim is to create a safe, creative and fun environment where children can participate in the under age Cork City Marathon activities such as the 10K Race.

To realise this aim, we adhere to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Youth Affairs, Government Stationery Office, Dublin 2011.

We operate a code of good practice for all our staff , sub-contractors, interns. Henceforth the term, "staff" will be used to refer to staff, sub-contractors, interns and volunteers working under the direction of Cork City Marathon.

## **1. Policy Statement**

Cork City Marathon is committed to the following:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to enjoy Cork City Marathon related activities in a fun and safe environment
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- all employees and volunteers who work with children will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and child protection procedures where appropriate
- we recognise that working in partnership with parents/primary carers and children is essential for the protection of children.

## **2. Promoting Good Practice**

### **Introduction**

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore NOT the responsibility of employees or participants in Cork City Marathon to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. However, we do acknowledge that it is our responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and act if we have concerns about the welfare of the child.

### **Good Practice**

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and action:

Treat all children and young people equally, with respect, dignity and as individuals.

- Always put the welfare of the young person first
- Listen to and respect children and young people
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of ability)
- Offer constructive criticism when needed
- Use appropriate language (physical and verbal). Temper language to the needs and sensitivity of the children present. Casual strong language should be eliminated completely in the presence or hearing of children and their minders. This includes being sensitive to the effects on children of comments made or the way things are phrased. (Regardless of how innocently any comments are made, if a child appears to be disturbed in any way change/retract to the words immediately).
- Children's use of inappropriate language must not go unchallenged
- Encourage a positive atmosphere of trust
- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets)
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with children (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them)
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of manual/physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the

consent of the young person and in the present of a parent/guardian/another adult e.g. medical check of potential injury.

- Check with children/young people about their level of comfort.
- Involve parents/guardians/in loco parentis wherever possible
- Be an excellent role model, this includes not smoking, drinking alcohol or abusing substances in the company of young people
- Be aware of accident procedure and follow accordingly
- Don't 'not do anything' in relation to concerns

In the case of an observed incident of bullying:

- Separate the children the instant the bullying incident has been observed
- Observe further interactions between children
- Notify the designated person or duty manager if they are not already aware of the problem

If during your care you accidentally hurt a young person, the young person seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions and/or if the young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

## **Poor Practice**

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel:

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others
- Taking young people alone in a car, private room, or bathroom.
- Doing things of a personal nature that the young person can do for themselves
- Don't allow/engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Don't socialise inappropriately with children/young people (e.g. outside of structured organisational activities).
- Don't allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form

- Making sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Don't use/allow offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language. Allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Reducing a young person to tears as a form of control
- Don't single out a particular child/young person (for unfair favouritism, criticism or ridicule)
- Don't hit or physically chastise children/young people
- Don't allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- When a case arises where it is impractical/impossible to avoid certain situations e.g. treating an injured child, the tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parent/carer and the young person involved.

### **Use of Photographic/Filming Equipment at Cork City Marathon Events**

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- Taking photographic and filming/video footage at Events of children or young people is a normal activity for an event such as Cork City Marathon.
- Parents/guardians should be advised that the event that their child is attending may record and/or take photographs for the promotion of the sport, club or the event.
- Only appropriate images of children are to be used:
  - • Posed images e.g. medal ceremonies, presentations and team shots should be of children wearing tracksuits or t-shirt and shorts
  - • Action shots of children may be used where the focus is on the participation in the sport and not the child
  - • Images of children should not be taken where the pose is inappropriate e.g. open legs; from behind bending over, etc.
- *Image Use*
- Images may be taken for a variety of purposes; these can include administration or personal use, publicising the sport or enhancing skill development within the sport. Persons taking images are reminded that some action poses may be inappropriate and not suitable for use/publication.

- a) Personal images – these are images taken by parents/guardians or other family members during an event as a celebration of a young person’s attendance or achievement. This could include a professional photographer with permission to take images for the personal use of those attending. Other people may be included in an image and we expect parents/guardians and other family members to respect this by not distributing images publicly.
- b) Media images – these are images taken by an individual from the media, i.e. TV, newspaper or professional photographer where the images are to be used for publicity or promotion of the event or future events.
- c) Administration images – these are images taken for general administration purposes and may also include images that form part of an archive.

### *Use of images on social media*

- Where images of young people are used on social media the person responsible for posting an image must be aware of the potential for an image to be used inappropriately and safeguards must be in place to protect young people:
  - i) Any caption should be in keeping with the sport represented
  - ii) The purpose of the posting should not breach the codes of conduct
  - iii) The type of image should not breach any requirement stated within this policy
- If there is any concern about the nature of images being taken or by someone taking photos/footage, this should be reported to a steward who will notify Event Control and who will refer to the statutory authorities and Child Protection Officer
- Signs will be put in changing facilities to remind people of responsible use of phones and photography in areas people are changing.

### **Safe Use Of Changing Facilities**

- Where solo use of changing facilities for children cannot be provided, at least 2 members of staff will be in the same room when children are around as a safeguarding measure.
- Parents will be informed about the organisation’s expectations about the supervision of their children, including the use of changing rooms and must make the decision in relation to their unaccompanied child using the facilities and by allowing their children to change there they give consent, as highlighted in the terms and conditions when signing up to the 10K Youth Race. The organisation has a duty of care and is providing appropriate

safeguarding arrangements but the staff/volunteers will not be taking responsibility for their unaccompanied children within the changing facilities.

Signs will be put in changing facilities to remind people of responsible use of phones and photography in areas people are changing.

### **Parent/Guardian's Role**

Parents and guardians will be informed in advance of the activity and facilities. It's the parent/guardian's responsibility to judge whether it is appropriate or safe to allow their unaccompanied child to participate in the activity and to attend the facilities.

This judgement should be based on:

- Their child's general development maturity
- Their child's awareness of the potential risks
- The level of supervision and care provided at the activity/facility.

### **Missing Child**

If a lost child is found during an event, the following procedure will apply:

1. Report the incident to the Event Director and/or Designated Safety Officer
2. Children under the age of 16 years will be kept in a Safe Area until collected by a parent, guardian or a member of an Garda Siochana. Children will be supervised at all times by two responsible adults.
3. Children over the age of 16 years will be free to leave or remain at the Safe Area if they wish after a Found Child form has been completed.
4. A responsible adult is one over the age of 18 years who the lost child or vulnerable person is comfortable with, and who demonstrates responsibility for the person/child and is not considered to pose an obvious threat to the person/child.
5. A Found Child form will be completed for each child including those over 16 who chose not to remain in the Safe Area.
6. Proof of identity may be requested by the Safe Area steward if they consider it necessary.

7. Children not collected by the end of the event will be passed over to the protection of the Gardaí. Stewards should not escort a child or vulnerable person away from the scene alone. There should be two stewards or a steward and another responsible adult with a child at all times. At all times the comfort and wellbeing of the child must be of paramount concern. If a child or vulnerable person appears unwilling to go with the other member of their group, consider contacting the Gardaí for further advice.

Guidelines for missing child at sports event If a child goes missing during an event, the following procedure will apply:

1. Report the incident to the Event Director and/or Designated Safety Officer
2. Ensure that all other children continue to be supervised appropriately (if applicable), while a search for the child concerned is carried out.
3. Organize the remaining available responsible adults to conduct a search of the surrounding area allocating each individual to a specific area.
4. Request all those searching report back within a short specified time, dependent on the size of the area being searched.

If the child cannot be found after an initial search of the immediate surroundings, contact the child's parents to advise them of the concern and reassure them that everything is being done to locate the child. Record (Appendix 2 missing child form) the circumstances in which the child has gone missing and where he/she was last seen and prepare a detailed physical description of the child, to include their hair and eye colour, approximate height and build and clothing he/she was wearing, as this will be required by the Gardaí and other searchers. Report the concern to the Gardaí if the search is unsuccessful and no later than 20 minutes after the initial missing person report if the search is ongoing. Follow Gardaí guidance if further action is recommended and maintain close contact with the Gardaí. Ensure that you inform all adults involved including the parents, searchers and Gardaí when the child is located.

### *3. Responding to Suspicions and Allegations*

#### **Introduction**



It is not the responsibility of anyone working in Cork City Marathon in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young person.

## Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening or it may be reported to us by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

It is particularly important to respond appropriately. If a young person says or indicates that they are being abused, you should:

- **stay calm** so as not to frighten the young person
- **reassure** the child that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell
- **listen** to the child, showing that you are taking them seriously
- **keep questions to a minimum** but ensure that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. Only ask questions to clarify
- **inform** the child that you have to inform other people about what they have told you. Tell the child this is to help stop the abuse continuing.
- **safety of the child** is paramount. If the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue
- **record** all information

**report** the incident to the Designated Officer and/or Director of Cork City Marathon.

## Reporting the Concern

All suspicions and allegations MUST be reported appropriately. It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

### **What are Reasonable Grounds for Concern?**

- Explicit indication from the child or young person that s/he has been abused
- An account by a person who saw the child/young person being abused
- Evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way
- An injury or behaviour, which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation, but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse. For example, a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child or young person is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- Consistent indication, over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

### **Reporting procedure: who to contact regarding child protection and welfare**

- Edel Doran has been designated the person to contact if you have an issue or concern about any aspect of a child's safety or young person's safety and welfare. It is the responsibility of this person to support and advise staff about policy and procedures in relation to child protection and to ensure that procedures are followed. It is also the responsibility of the designated person to liaise with the Health Service Executive or Gardaí where appropriate.

Edel Doran can be contacted at [edel.doran@davisevents.ie](mailto:edel.doran@davisevents.ie) 0867033937.

Julie Sebode has been designated as Deputy Designated Person and can be contacted at [julie.sebode@davisevents.ie](mailto:julie.sebode@davisevents.ie)

**Records will be stored securely and confidentiality will be maintained (see Confidentiality statement below).**

**Staff should record the following information in relation to children and vulnerable adults:**

- Suspicions;
- Concerns;
- Worrying observations;
  
- Behavioural changes;
- Actions and outcomes.

### **Reporting procedures**

Organisations should develop very clear reporting procedures for matters relating to a child/young person's safety and welfare.

The reporting procedure should be known and accessible to all staff;

The person who expresses the concern should be involved and kept informed; Actions and outcomes should be noted;

Record all details, including the date, time and people involved in the concern or disclosure and the facts. Information recorded should be factual. Any opinions should be supported by facts. The sample report form in Appendix 1 should be used.

Inform the Designated Person or his or her deputy, if unavailable;

The most appropriate person should discuss the concern or consult with primary carers. Parents, carers or responsible adults should be made aware of a report to the Health Service Executive unless it is likely to put the child/young person at further risk;

The Designated Person may contact the Health Service Executive Duty Social Work Department for an informal consultation prior to making a report;

Information will be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis (see Confidentiality statement);

If there are reasonable grounds for concern as outlined above, the designated person will contact the Duty Social Worker in the Health Service Executive area

using the standard reporting form available from the Health Service Executive. Reports to the Duty Social Worker can be made verbally initially and then followed by the standard reporting form. Reports should be made to the Health Service Executive without delay;

If the Designated Person or Deputy Designated Person is not available, contact the local Duty Social Worker of the Health Service Executive directly;

In case of emergencies outside of Health Service Executive Social Work Department hours, contact the Gardaí. In situations that threaten the immediate safety of a child/ young person, it may be necessary to contact the Gardaí.

## **Confidentiality statement**

**Cork City Marathon are committed to ensuring peoples' rights to confidentiality. However, in relation to child protection and welfare we undertake that:**

Information will only be forwarded on a 'need to know' basis in order to safeguard the child/vulnerable adult;

Giving such information to others for the protection of a child or vulnerable adult is not a breach of confidentiality;

We cannot guarantee total confidentiality where the best interests of the child or vulnerable adult are at risk;

Primary carers, children and vulnerable adults have a right to know if personal information is being shared and/or a report is being made to the Health Service Executive, unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk;

Cork City Marathon expects its members and staff to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the Designated Officer or the person in charge of the service and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken.

## **Allegations against a staff member/volunteer**

In the event of an allegation against an employee/volunteer -

- The priority is to ensure that no child or young person is exposed to unnecessary risk
- The reporting procedures should then be followed. Parents/carers and children (age appropriate) should be informed of actions planned and taken
- The staff member/volunteer will be informed as soon as possible that an allegation has been made against him/her and the nature of the allegation
- The staff member/volunteer should be given the opportunity to respond

- Inform the chairperson/head of the relevant organisation as soon as possible
- Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee should be taken in consultation with the Health Service Executive (HSE) and Gardaí
  - After consultation, chairperson/head of relevant organisation will advise person accused and agreed procedures will be followed
- Complaints/comments will be responded to within one day
- Verbal complaints will be logged and responded to at the time

As mentioned previously in this document Cork City Marathon are not child protection experts and it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. All suspicions and allegations must be shared with professional agencies that are responsible for child protection.

Social services have a legal responsibility to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making inquiries jointly with the police.

#### *4. Accident Procedures*

- Staff should keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given

#### *5. Suitability of Personnel*

Cork City Marathon will ensure that staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people where appropriate.

New staff/volunteers will be made aware of the organisation's Child Protection and Welfare Policy, designated persons and their role in procedures and policies.

- All employees and volunteers will receive formal or informal induction during which Cork City Marathon's child protection procedures are explained and training needs identified
- Staff and volunteers will be encouraged to analyse their own practice against what is deemed good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations
- Staff and volunteers will be encouraged to recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice and/or abuse


## **6. *Mutual Protection***

In order to ensure mutual protection, other organisations working with Cork City Marathon will be made familiar of Cork City Marathon's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Our Child Protection policy, procedures and practice will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Signed  
Date

Director Cork City Marathon.

  
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# APPENDIX 1: Standard Report Form

## STANDARD REPORT FORM (For reporting CP&W Concerns)

**A. To Principal Social Worker/Designate:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Date of Report** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Details of Child**

Name:		Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address:		DOB		Age	
Alias		School			
Telephone		Correspondence address (if different)			
		Telephone			

**3. Details of Persons Reporting Concern(s)**

Name:		Telephone No.	
Address:		Occupation	
		Relationship to client	
Reporter wishes to remain anonymous	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reporter discussed with parents/guardians	<input type="checkbox"/>

**4. Parents Aware of Report**

Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported	- Mother	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	- Father	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Comment	_____		

**5. Details of Report**

*(Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) if known.)*

## Appendix 2- Missing Child Form

### Missing Child Reporting Form (member of public or participant)

Event Name:

Date:

Event Director:

<b>Child's Name:</b> <b>Male or Female:</b>	<b>Age of child:</b> <b>D.O.B.:</b>
<b>Time and place child last seen:</b>	<b>Time event staff informed:</b>
<b>Hair Colour:</b> <b>Eye Colour:</b>	<b>Clothing (Colour &amp; Pattern):</b>
<b>Ethnicity:</b>	<b>Any other relevant information</b>
<b>Parent/Guardian name (as reported or from registration form if participant)</b>	<b>Phone Number:</b> <b>Address:</b>
<b>Action taken:</b>  <b>Event Security informed:</b>  <b>Gardai informed:</b>  <b>Other:</b>	<b>Timeline:</b>