

**Safeguarding Guidance - Supervision, Transportation,**

**Physical Contact with a junior/coaching,**

**Junior’s with specific needs.**

**Supervision, Ratios and Environment**

There must **always be at least 2 adults present for all organised activities**. This will help to ensure the safety of the children as well as protecting adults. They should not be over familiar with the children and must remember that they are in a position of trust at all times. There should be at least one adult of each gender with mixed parties.

**Adult / Child Ratios:**

* Adult/child ratios are 1:8 for under 12 years of age and 1:10 for over 12 years of age.

For away trips the ratio is 1:5.

The following factors will be taken into consideration when deciding how many adults are required to safely supervise children:-

* the nature of the activity
* the number of children involved in the activity
* if there are any hazards associated with the activity or environment
* the age of the participants
* whether any of the children have any special needs, disability or challenging behaviour
* whether any of the volunteers are under the age of 18 – while some volunteers may be U18, they should not be placed in a position of sole responsibility but should be supervised by a more senior coach or volunteer who has been vetted.

**Environment:**

* If away trips occur then higher rates of supervision, children and young people will need to be supervised at all times. Parents should receive full information about arrangement for such trips and will be required to provide their consent for their child’s participation.
* Avoid adults being left alone with young participants, if a leader needs to talk separately to a participant this should be done in an open environment, in view of others.
* Respect the privacy of young people while changing, leaders may only need to enter changing rooms where the participants are very young or require special assistance.
* When necessary, leaders should supervise in pairs or seek assistance, it is the safety and welfare of the participants that is of paramount importance.
* Leaders should not be left alone with young people at the end of a training session. Clearly state times for start and finish of training and/or competitions.
* If late collections occur leaders should remain in pairs until participants have left.
* It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make arrangements for collection of young people, it should be made clear that supervision will only be provided for Balcarrick Golf Club activities.
* If a child suffers an injury or accident the parents/ guardians should be informed.
* Keep attendance records and records of any incidents / injuries that arise
* Facilitate parents who wish to stay and supervise sessions, (for safety and supervision, not necessarily for their ‘technical’ expertise)

**Transport and Travel**

Coaches are discouraged from transporting children to/from activities. However, when this situation cannot be avoided the following guidelines should be followed:

* Request parent/guardian consent in advance and provide details of the journey e.g. who will be transporting their child, why and how long the journey will take.
* Attempt to have more than one child in the car.
* Alternate drivers if possible and which child is dropped off last or drop off at a central location such as the golf club car park
* Driver should have a point of contact/mobile phone.
* A person other than the planned driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans.
* The driver must ensure that they have insurance to carry others and where necessary the use of booster seats
* Drivers representing and volunteering on behalf of Balcarrick Golf Clubshould be vetted through National Garda Vetting Bureau if driving regularly, and therefore meeting the regulated activity criteria.
* Parents and coaches can also download Sport Irelands SafeSport App <https://www.sportireland.ie/ethics/safesport-app> One of the features of the App is a ‘Travel Tracker’ function. This allows parents and coaches who are driving someone else’s child/children home, for example after a training session, to permit the child’s parent or guardian to view and have oversight of their location for a specified period of time while they are travelling on a journey.

**Personal arrangements between parents**

If parents make personal arrangements between themselves this is not the responsibility of Balcarrick Golf Club unless there are particular concerns about a parent’s ability to drive for example due to the consumption of alcohol.

**Physical Contact**

Physical contact during golf should always be intended to meet the child’s needs, NOT the adult’s. In the first instance, techniques should be delivered by demonstration. Appropriate physical contact may be required to assist in the development of a skill or activity or for safety reasons e.g. to prevent or treat an injury. This should be in an open environment with the permission and understanding of the participant.

**When is physical contact appropriate in golf?**

Contact should be determined by the age and developmental stage of the participant - Don’t do something that a child can do for themselves. Physical contact between adults and children in golf should take place only when necessary to:

* Develop golf skills or techniques.
* Treat an injury.
* Prevent an injury or accident from occurring.
* Comfort a distressed child or to celebrate their success.

**Good principles to follow:-**

* Physical contact should take place in the interests of and for the benefit of the child, rather than the adult involved. This is the basic principle that all other decisions around physical contact are based on.
* Adults should explain the nature of and reason for the physical contact to the child.
* Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission, for example to aid the demonstration a specific golf technique.
* Golf clubs and coaches should provide an induction for new young members and their parents/carers that covers guidance about any physical contact that will be required as part of that activity. The reasons for the physical contact and the nature of the physical contact should be explained and agreed.
* Children should be encouraged to voice concerns they have if any physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.
* Contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment.
* Physical contact should always take place in an open or public environment and not take place in secret or out of sight of others.
* Well intentioned gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can, if repeated regularly, lead to the possibility of questions being raised by observers. As a general principle, adults in positions of responsibility should not make gratuitous or unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. Resistance from a child should be respected.

**What about children who need specific assistance due to disability or injury?**

In the case of a young person with a disability specific support or assistance may be required. The following guidelines should be followed:

* Efforts should be made to receive as much information as possible on the child to ensure safe inclusion of him/her. There should be clear agreements on what is required.
* Parents/carers should be asked to undertake all intimate or personal care tasks for their child. This is not an appropriate role for coaches and others involved in leading activities.
* When children with disabilities are lifted or manually supported, they should be treated with dignity and respect.
* Relevant health and safety guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of the child and those assisting.
* Leaders/volunteers should not take responsibility for tasks for which they are not appropriately trained.

**Is it ok to comfort a child or celebrate success?**

There may be occasions where a distressed young person needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. A young person may also want to mark a success or achievement with a hug or other gesture. Adults should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is (and what is seen by others present) normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same young person over a period of time. Contact that an adult may feel is appropriate may be unwanted or uncomfortable to a young person. Adults should always meet the needs of the child, be age appropriate and respect any resistance or hesitancy by the young person.

**Late Collection**

* Parents/guardians should be made aware of the start and finish times and the arrangements for drop off/collection are understood by everyone.
* Parents/guardians who wish to allow their children to go home unaccompanied should give consent in writing to do so. The activity leader still has a responsibility to consider under their duty to care if this is a reasonable safe decision made by the natural parent.
* If a parent is late to collect a junior, the wellbeing of the child will take precedence and they must not be left alone.
* Contact the parent using the emergency contact number. If there is no answer, ask the junior if there is another family member to contact.
* Wait with the junior at the club or venue, preferably with other staff or volunteers.
* Remind parents of the policy in relation to good practice and supervision.

**One to One coaching**

Due to the nature of golf there may be instances where coaching is provided on a one to one basis with a child. This may also be a personal arrangement between a parent and a coach.

In order to safeguard juniors and adults, the following guideline should be adhered to:

* All coaches understand, abide and have signed up to the code of conduct - See Appendix 8
* Activity to take place in an open environment with others around and any on-course sessions in view of the clubhouse or other golfers/members.
* Involve parents and encourage them to attend wherever possible.
* All adults should behave in an appropriate manner, respecting the rights of the child and treating them with respect, dignity and fairness.
* Advise that coaching techniques are delivered by demonstration and avoid physical contact.
* All those working with children alone should have a copy of the child’s emergency contact number and access to a phone.
* Children should be provided with information on what to do and who to contact if they feel uncomfortable at any time during a one to one coaching session.
* Ensure parents are aware of all formal arrangements such as the structure, the location and the length of a one to one session and they are provided with guidance on who to speak to if they have any concerns.

**Juniors playing on the course with adults**

As Balcarrick Club have a number of unmanned access and egress points which limit the control of juniors playing alone or with another junior, but this in itself should not preclude the club from attempting to minimise potential problems involving juniors playing together. Balcarrick Pro Shop should endeavour to have procedures in place for juniors to register in and out when using the golf club. This is to help ensure that they are aware when juniors are playing or on club premises.

Balcarrick Golf Club is not responsible for providing adult supervision of juniors, except for formal junior golf coaching, matches or competitions.

**Adult and juniors playing together**

One of the reasons for the popularity of golf is that the game is not restricted either competitively or socially by skill, age or gender. Golf can be enjoyed and keenly contested by players from and between any number and/or apparently diverse groups. That this diversity, almost unique to golf is encouraged is essential to ensure the continuity of one of the most endearing traditions of the game. Every effort must be made to promote this mix of physical and technical ability.

The involvement of juniors in golf is critical to their development as players and their enjoyment of the game. It is important that the commitment, given by the Balcarrick Golf Club and by the game of golf, to ensuring their protection and wellbeing is respected fully, when facilitating their participation. Each member should always show respect and understanding and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of Golfs Safeguarding Policy.

Responsible interaction between adults and juniors helps bring mutual respect and understanding and helps the standards of the club to be understood and maintained. Nevertheless, when playing golf with a junior, adults should always be aware that certain age-related differences do exist and should conduct themselves in a manner that recognises this. In competitive play, there should be no barrier to juniors participating fully, regardless of the format. What is recommended is that all adults who play with juniors should be conscious of their responsibility to act as good role models, demonstrating the need for showing respect and consideration to everyone who plays the game. If they cannot do that, then they should limit their play to adult company only.

It is also advisable to ask for parental consent for the juniors to participate in competitions where adults are also playing and to make sure that the juniors are also comfortable playing with adults.

**Changing Rooms**

As golf clubs are seen as a recreational facility, members, visitors and juniors are entitled to the use of the changing rooms, this means that often people of all ages regularly need to change and shower during the same period. Where possible adults should avoid changing or showering at the same time as juniors, but parents should be made aware that with limited changing room space there may be occasions where adults and children may need to share the facility. Where a parent does not consent to their child accessing the changing rooms, it is their responsibility to either supervise the child while in the changing room or ensure they do not use them.

Therefore, the following guidance in relation to adults and juniors using the changing rooms should be followed:

* Adults should exercise care when in the changing rooms at the same time as juniors
* Parents/guardians should be made aware that adults and juniors may need to share the changing facility. The parent/guardian should discuss this with their child ensuring their child is aware of who to talk to if any issues arise in unsupervised areas.
* Parents can choose to supervise their child while they change.
* If juniors are uncomfortable changing or showering in public, no pressure should be placed on them. Encourage them to do this at home.

However, Balcarrick Golf Club advise that parents/guardian accompany the junior to the shower facility if required.

**Accidents, incidents and First Aid**

Parental consent forms will be obtained for all juniors who are participating in events or activities, or attending coaching organised by Balcarrick Golf Club. This ensures coaches running the event are made aware of any medical conditions/medicines being taken by the participant or any existing injuries. These forms will be treated in confidence and only shared with those who require the information to perform their role effectively. A well-resourced first aid kit is be available at the Pro Shop.

In the event of a junior requiring medical attention

* Parent/guardian will be contacted immediately
* In the event of failure to contact parent/guardian, the alternative emergency contact will be used.
* The consent form will be consulted to establish whether parents have given their consent for the Balcarrick Golf Club representative to accompany the child to seek medical attention
* Only those with a current recognised First Aid Qualification should treat injuries
* A record of the action taken will be made and retained by Balcarrick Golf Club.

**Safety**

Balcarrick Golf Club will endeavour to:

* Ensure activities are suitable for age and stage of development of participants
* Keep a record of any specific medical conditions of the participants
* Keep a record of emergency contact numbers for parents / guardians
* Ensure any necessary protective gear is used
* Ensure First Aid kit is available with access to a qualified first-aider
* Know the contact numbers of emergency services
* Keep first aid kit appropriately stocked for Balcarrick Golf Club events
* Ensure easy access to medical personnel if needed and have an emergency plan
* If an incident occurs, make a brief record of injury and action taken. Make a brief record of the problem/action/outcome. Contact the participant’s parents and keep them informed of all details
* Officials (convenors and referees, etc.) should ensure the conduct of the game
* Participants should know and keep the etiquette guidelines of golf, keeping in mind that many rules are there for safety
* Ensure Leaders are trained and hold appropriate qualifications required for their position
* Ensure there is adequate insurance cover for all activities
* Ensure parents / guardians know they need to be present at finishing time of sessions or event.