CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Through the IRFU and related Branch, Old Christians RFC provides rugby activities to young people through participation in mini and youth coaching, and competitions and participation programmes in related schools and/or the community. The club is committed to the enjoyment of rugby by young people. It values and encourages the participation of parents, coaches and volunteers in rugby for participants under 18-years of age. The club will adhere to the IRFU safeguarding policy, which strives to respect the dignity and rights of Age Grade Players.

The club will strive to promote, create and maintain safe environments for Age Grade Players. It will endeavour to maintain the key values of Respect, Inclusivity, Integrity, Excellence and Fun. A detailed safeguarding policy can be found here, https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/spirit-of-rugby/safeguarding/safeguarding-policy/ and is available through the Club Welfare Officer (Ellen O'Brien). The Sports Councils' Code of Ethics/Safeguarding Guidance should be used where the IRFU has not published specific guidelines, in particular with regard to the principles to safeguard children from harm, https://www.sportireland.ie/ethics/safeguarding-guidance-for-children-and-young-people-in-sport

The club carried out a risk assessment for any potential harm to a child while involved in rugby. These risks were categorised under the following headings Recruitment, Club and Coaching Practices, Reporting, Complaints, Facilities, Communication and General Risk of Harm. The assessment reviewed the areas of potential risk of harm, the likelihood of the risk occurring, and gives the required policy, guidance and document links required to manage these risks. The written risk assessment and the procedures for managing these risks is available at the end of this statement.

Our child safeguarding statement has been developed in line with requirements of the IRFU and under the Children First Act 2015 and in Northern Ireland, the Club Framework for Safeguarding Standards. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the club adheres to the following procedures that are in place as part of the IRFU Safeguarding Policy and our intention to safeguard children:

- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children, http://www.irishrugby.ie/playingthegame/development/safeguarding/recruitment.php
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm, http://www.irishrugby.ie/playingthegame/development/safeguarding/training.php
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection and welfare concerns to Tusla (Ireland) and Gateway (Northern Ireland) through the National Safeguarding Officer and appointed Mandated Person within IRFU: Stephen Gore. The Club Welfare Officer **(Ellen O'Brien)** is the Relevant Person as per Children First Act. Other staff and volunteers within the club may hold the role and responsibility of a Mandated Person as per Schedule 2 of the Act but have not been appointed by the club/IRFU. They are always expected to act as a Mandated Person and when making a report in their professional capacity that involves rugby should always inform the IRFU Mandated Person that such a report has been made by them.

- Procedure for the management of allegation of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service and can be found in the case management policy, http://www.irishrugby.ie/playingthegame/development/safeguarding/concerns.php
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person for the purposes of the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement
- Procedures to minimise risk of harm of a child have been put in place and are available in the IRFU Safeguarding Policy, https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/spirit-of-rugby/safeguarding/safeguarding-policy/

All procedures listed are available on the IRFU website, http://www.irishrugby.ie/safeguarding

The club management expects those involved within age-grade rugby to adopt and supervise the implementation of these safeguarding principles and standards. The club recognises that implementation is an ongoing process. It is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and accompanying safeguarding policy and procedures to keep children involved in rugby safe from harm. We will do this through the implementation of the IRFU Club Safeguarding Guide and annual audit, https://d19fc3vd0ojo3m.cloudfront.net/irfu/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/14123920/Club-Safeguarding-Guide.pdf

A link to the IRFU Safeguarding Policy is included in relevant club documentation and is available here. https://www.oldchristiansrfc.ie/pages/safeguarding-and-vetting Coaches and volunteers have received a copy of the policy and signed adherence through the Declaration of Intent. The Child Safeguarding Statement and related safeguarding policies are available to all parents/guardians and members of the public though the IRFU website and is available on request from the Club Welfare Officer, https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/spirit-of-rugby/safeguarding/

The club will work with the Branch Spirit of Rugby Officer on the implementation of the policy and are available to assist Club Welfare Officers and related personnel and to deal with club queries. They can be contacted at:

- Munster: Emily O'Leary – emilyoleary@munsterrugby.ie

Club Welfare Officers have completed relevant safeguarding training. Their ID templates are on display within club grounds and/or club websites. The club has completed the necessary risk assessment and published the child safeguarding statement. The club follows the Club Safeguarding Guide, the anti-bullying statement, uses the club pavement signs and Spirit of Rugby 'Let Them Play' video clips. Coaches and volunteers have also received safeguarding training through the IRFU. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in September 2025, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers. For queries please contact the Relevant Person, Ellen O'Brien ,Email: cwo.oldchristiansrfc@gmail.com

Signed: Donal Scully — Chair

Signed: Ellen O'Brien — Club Welfare Officer

SAFEGUARDING RISK ASSESSMENT

This risk assessment considers the potential for harm to come to children whilst they are in the care of this club and gives the required policy, guidance or process documents required to alleviate these risks. This risk assessment has been carried out prior to the publication of the Child Safeguarding Statement (Section 11 (1b) Children First Act 2015). In this context and in accordance with the requirements of *Section 11 (1) of the Children First Act 201, that states "as a provider of a relevant service we will undertake an assessment of any potential harm to a child while availing of the service"; the risk is of abuse and not general health and safety risk. This risk assessment is also in accordance with Sport Northern Ireland's Club Framework for Safeguarding Standards in Sport and as such can be used by the IRFU's constituent Provinces and clubs.*

The risk assessment indicates the areas of potential risk of harm, the likelihood of the risk occurring, and gives the required policy, guidance or process documents required to alleviate these risks. *The list of risks identified and procedures to manage these risks are listed in relevant categories overleaf and are based on the IRFU Safeguarding Guide.*

Responsibilities

- The club has **appointed a Club Welfare Officer** to implement the Child Safeguarding Statement and IRFU Safeguarding Policy and to monitor the implementation of the associated Safeguarding Guide
- The Club Welfare Officer holds the role of Relevant Person for the organization's Child Safeguarding Statement and links with the nationally appointed Mandated Person of the IRFU
- This risk assessment has been completed with Club Welfare Officer and other members of Club Committee
- The Committee recorded this risk assessment at the September 2024 club meeting and published a Child Safeguarding Statement thereafter.
- All Age-Grade staff and volunteers (e.g. coaches, manager, team assistants) working regularly and continuously with minis or youths (or where their role is a necessary part of working) with young people and/or vulnerable adults have been vetted and have signed the Declaration of Intent.
- The IRFU has a Mandated Person and their contact is listed in the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- The CSS and related policies are available to parents and the public through the Club Welfare Officer

This document was completed by the Club Welfare Officer on behalf of the Club Committee and approved by the Committee in September 2024. On completion of this the club will now complete and publish the Child Safeguarding Statement signed by Officers of the Club

*Donal Scully*_____ *Ellen O'Brien*_____

Donal Scully Ellen O'Brien

Signed by Chair *Signed by Club Welfare Officer*

The Risk Assessment was undertaken in 27/09/2024 and will be reviewed in September 2025 in line with updated Safeguarding Polices

The prevention of harm requires both awareness and practical implementation of the policies and procedures listed below put in place to manage risks identified by IRFU to keep children safe from harm as defined in legislation.

Risk Assessment

Risk Identified: Club and Coaching Practices	Level	Procedures in Place	Monitoring of Risk
Risk if relevant staff and volunteers are not aware of the safeguarding policy as it relates to club and coaching practices Considerations • Risk of harm if there is not **a consent form** for each player U-18 years of age, with parental permission, with relevant medical information and permission to participate, photographic permission and travel consent, (use template in IRFU Registration system Rugby Connect) • **Codes of Conduct** for age-grade players and parents published and/or on view • Risk of harm if staff and volunteers do not know policies in relation to **supervision, social media and photographs** • Risk of harm if staff and volunteers are not aware of **travel and away trips** procedures • Risk of harm of abuse, including **online**, through **bullying** and inappropriate use of social media These policies have been made known to those working with Age-grade players and available through registration process for parents	High	**Safeguarding Policy** - https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/spirit-of-rugby/safeguarding/safeguarding-policy/ **Codes of Conduct -** https://d19fc3vd0ojo3m.cloudfront.net/irfu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/16153845/Code-of-Conduct-Parents.pdf **Bullying** https://d19fc3vd0ojo3m.cloudfront.net/irfu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/31120508/Anti-Bullying-Statement.pdf **Social media guidance -** https://d19fc3vd0ojo3m.cloudfront.net/irfu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/31120545/Staying-Safer-Online.pdf **Travel guidance** - including hosting and away trips https://d19fc3vd0ojo3m.cloudfront.net/irfu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/25120840/Travel-touring-hosting.pdf	CSS and Codes on display at event / in clubhouse / on website / social media Information sessions to parents, coaches and members, includes codes of conducts Anti-bullying statement is on display – use IRFU templates

Risk Identified: Communication	Level	Procedures in Place	Monitoring of Risk
Risk of harm if not communicating with staff, volunteers, parents and players Considerations • Child Safeguarding Statement and safeguarding policies communicated to members and staff so there is high awareness of safeguarding information • CWO ID template visible and communicated to parents and volunteers so contact can be made if harm is identified • Safeguarding information made available on sign up so that parents and players know standards of behaviour	High	IRFU Policy and Child Safeguarding Statement visible on website and available to all parents on registration process - https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/spirit-of-rugby/safeguarding/safeguarding-policy/ ID template distributed to Spirit staff and made available to CWOs Policy is available through Rugby Connect membership registration	CWO ID template on website
Risk Identified: Recruitment	**Level**	**Procedures in Place**	**Monitoring**
Risk of recruiting inappropriate people to work with young people		**Recruitment** Policy, https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-ga	

Considerations • There is a CWO that is vetted and trained to SG2 standard • All relevant **Age-Grade coaches and volunteers** successfully completed the necessary vetting requirements • All relevant Age-grade volunteers signed Declarations of Intent that clearly outlines their role • Age-grade section have put in place adequate **supervision** processes in accordance with IRFU Safeguarding Policy • Copies of reference for visiting / unknown coaches if applicable are sought	High High High	me/spirit-of-rugby/safeguarding/recruitment/ Audit of Rugby Connect for outstanding **vets** weekly, emails Spirit of Rugby Officer as necessary for update. CWO to check with head coaches that adequate **supervision** is in place according to guidelines, https://d19fc3vd0ojo3m.cloudfront.net/irfu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/25120828/Supervision-Safety.pdf	Vetting and DoI renewals every 2-years through Rugby Connect, CWO has access to confirm coach/volunteer has completed their vet

Risk Identified: Complaints / Concerns	Level	Procedures in Place	Monitoring
Risk of harm if complaints and reporting procedures are not in place Considerations • **Risk of harm (physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect) of a child by a coach/volunteer/child** if reporting procedure not known • Name of Branch & National Safeguarding Person is listed and visible within club • The IRFU Mandated Person is listed on the CSS • Parents know how to raise a concern • Age-grade member can make their concerns known • Coaches/Volunteers know how to deal with complaints and raise a concern using case management form and/or contact with Spirit of Rugby Officer	High Med High High High Med Med	**Reporting Procedures** - https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/spirit-of-rugby/safeguarding/concerns/ **Parents information -** https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/spirit-of-rugby/safeguarding/parents-guardians/ **Case Management Reporting Form** https://forms.office.com/FormsPro/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=JRvazqodokKeM_5uIrGDeIERAZC3HTJNlFmj9hBUz8ZUMllVSjQxNjEzUTQ4MFRRMVBIOVpXSTBGUi4u **Young People rights and reporting procedures -** https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/spirit-of-rugby/safeguarding/young-people/	Necessary links to IRFU policy are displayed within CSS Spirit Officers deliver training regularly
Risk of harm when using facilities Considerations • If hiring facilities has the squad / club checked that appropriate safeguarding procedures have been put in place • Anti-bullying statement is made available to all for display and		**Facilities Information** - https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/medical/ Coach/club member hiring facility to request CSS and/or safeguarding policy, along with anti-bullying statement and CWO ID templates	

distribution to children and parents at camps, etc. ● Appropriate medical procedures are in place at the facility		https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/medical/	

Risk Identified: General	Level	Procedures in Place	Monitoring
Risk of untrained people working with young people Considerations ● Safeguarding personnel completed all Sport Ireland / SNI safeguarding training and other necessary staff and volunteers received appropriate safeguarding training as per IRFU training factsheet ● Risk of harm (physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect) of a child by a staff/volunteer/child if coaches are not trained ● Coaches completed safeguarding training presentation with Spirit Officer and/or SG1 ● Coaches working with Age-grade squads are appropriately trained for the level of rugby they are coaching		**Training Policy**, https://www.irishrugby.ie/playing-the-game/spirit-of-rugby/safeguarding/training/ Spirit staff send out link to online training CWO to link with Spirit of Rugby Officer for course facilitation of face-to-face module after coaches have completed first 2 modules on Gainline	Coaches training recorded in Gainline and Rugby Connect