



Child Protection Policy

Birr Leisure Centre is first and foremost a family-orientated organisation, and the protection and safeguarding of children is a priority of the highest order for the company.

We are committed to developing policies to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children who come to Birr Leisure Centre.

We are committed to developing a training plan for all who work with children.

This leisure complex is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its members. Every individual in the facility should, at all times, show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of our organization, Child Protection and Welfare Guidelines of Swim Ireland and the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport.

Recommendations from Swim Ireland

Supervision Policy

"Swim Ireland has a policy that no individual should be alone with a child all pool and dry-land training sessions must be supervised. Adequate supervision is required for all other activities in accordance with best practice requirements."

"Young people are left at the pool or training facilities by parents/guardians who expect their children to be safe. This can only happen when everybody works together to put safeguards in place for everyone's protection. Parents/guardians must understand safe practices for their children. Parents/guardians must be willing to help."

Recommendations from the Irish Sports Council

(Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport)

Supervision and general guidelines

"Ensure adequate adult: child ratios. Good practice dictates that a leader should try to ensure that more than one adult is present. This will help to ensure the safety of the children as well as protect adults."

"Adult: Child ratios will depend on the nature of the activity, the age of the participants and any special needs of the group."

"There should be at least one adult of each gender with a mixed group."

"Avoid adults being left alone with young participants".

"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 it is the safety and welfare of the participants that is of paramount importance."

"If a child suffers an injury or accident the parents/guardians should be informed".

Birr Leisure Centre **Recommendations**

To ensure that Birr Leisure Centre follows the best practice, we shall work to promote best practices in our facility. We shall comply with the guidelines of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport and the Child Welfare Guidelines of Swim Ireland.

- Always have two helpers in the changing area, and never be left on your own. This is for the adult's safety as well as the child's.
- Teachers would be ideal for helping out because they would have already been garda vetted. Still, if they are unwilling to enter the changing area, then we see no reason why parents/guardians/helpers cannot enter the changing area as long as they follow the recommendations above.
- All parents should be notified of who will be helping their children and draw up a rota of parents that will be involved. All parents must read and sign this document.
- Photographic and mobile equipment are not permitted in the changing rooms; adults helping out should leave their mobiles with an adult who is not going into the changing area or leave them at reception.
- A group photograph may be taken around the reception area with children in appropriate clothing, if the parents/guardians agree to it, at the end of the swimming year.

We recommend that the above practices and policies from Swim Ireland and the Irish Sports Council are put into place along with some of our clubs' recommendations before you attend swimming, have all parents/guardians/helpers and teachers read and sign this document.

If you wish to discuss any issues regarding our Child Protection Policy, you can contact our Child Liaison Officers.

Valerie Meagher & Stephen Ryan