

Mallow Tennis Club

Child Safeguarding Statement

October 2026

1. Club Information

Name: Mallow Tennis Club

Sport: Tennis

Location: Ballyellis, Mallow, Co. Cork, P51 FX53

Size: 250 (including staff and members)

Mallow Tennis Club provides tennis activities and opportunities for children and young people through coaching, organised play, club, regional and provincial events, and representative teams. The club adheres to Tennis Ireland's rules and regulations and works under its safeguarding guidance. Our staff and volunteers seek to create a safe environment for children and young people to participate in tennis. A child is a person under 18 years of age.

Chairperson: Tadhg Crotty.

Club Children's Officers: Carmel O'Callaghan and John Keane.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Relevant Person: Carmel O'Callaghan, 086 3920170.

Junior Coordinator: Melanie O'Driscoll, 087 9747532.

Club phone: 087 1093658.

Club coach: Cillian Dollion, appointed January 2026.

2. Principles to safeguard children from harm

Mallow Tennis Club is committed to safeguarding children. Our staff and volunteers work under Tennis Ireland's safeguarding guidance to provide a safe environment in which young people can grow and develop through sport. The following principles guide our activities:

- **Importance of childhood** — The importance of childhood should be understood and valued by everyone involved in tennis.
- **Needs of the child** — All children's sport experiences should be guided by what is best for children. Adults should understand the emotional, physical and personal needs of young people, listen to them and take their views seriously.
- **Integrity in relationships** — Adults interacting with children in tennis are in a position of trust and influence. Children must be treated with integrity and respect, appropriate boundaries maintained and their self-esteem enhanced.
- **Fair Play** — Children's sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play, friendship, respect for others and playing in the right spirit. Fair play is a way of thinking as well as behaving. The club emphasises these principles and gives clear guidelines on acceptable behaviour.
- **Quality atmosphere and ethos** — Children's sport should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere.
- **Competition** — Competition is an essential element of tennis and should be encouraged in an age- and level-appropriate manner. A child-centred ethos helps to keep competition and specialisation in their appropriate place.
- **Equality** — All children should be valued and treated fairly and equitably regardless of ability, age, gender, religion, social or ethnic background or political persuasion. Discrimination and bullying are unacceptable.

3. Risk Assessment

The club's written Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment identifies potential risks of harm to children, the likelihood of harm occurring, the procedures required to manage those risks, responsibilities and further action. The assessment was reviewed alongside this statement in October 2026.

The table below summarises the risks and procedures under the categories used in the original statement and Tennis Ireland's template. It must be read with the separate Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment. "Harm" in this safeguarding assessment concerns abuse or neglect, including sexual abuse, within the meaning of the Children First Act 2015.

Risk identified	Procedure to manage the risk identified
Club and Coaching Practices Lack of coaching qualifications; inadequate supervision or unsafe adult-child boundaries; unauthorised photography or recording; behavioural issues; lack of appropriate gender balance; inadequate arrangements for travel and away trips; failure to follow safeguarding procedures.	Coach education and safe recruitment procedures: verify qualifications, suitability and training. Supervision procedures: appropriate adult-to-child ratios, at least two adults for club-organised children's activities, gender balance where practicable, attendance and collection arrangements; avoid isolated one-to-one situations. Photography and use-of-images procedures; codes of conduct; safeguarding training; complaints and disciplinary procedures. Travel, away-trip and hosting procedures, including parental consent and named responsible adults.
Complaints & Discipline Children or parents unaware of complaints procedures or unable to raise an issue safely; complaints not taken seriously.	Complaints, disciplinary and communications procedures: explain accessible ways to raise concerns; listen to children; identify the Children's Officers and DLP; record and respond promptly. Child protection reporting takes priority and must not be delayed by an internal complaints process.
Reporting Procedures Lack of knowledge of club or statutory reporting procedures; DLP unavailable or reporting roles unclear; concerns unrecognised or unreported; children unsure whom to approach.	Reporting procedures, safeguarding training and codes of conduct: publicise DLP and Children's Officer details and explain reporting routes to children, families, staff and volunteers. Report reasonable child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla. Anyone may report directly, including where the DLP is unavailable or implicated. Maintain secure records and clarify any mandated persons' individual duties.

Risk identified	Procedure to manage the risk identified
Use of Facilities Unauthorised access to children’s activity areas, changing rooms, showers or toilets; unauthorised exit; photography or recording in private areas; missing or found child; risks from children sharing facilities with adults.	Supervision and collection procedures: clarify responsibility before activities and manage access and departure. Photography and device rules: prohibit photography or recording in private changing, shower and toilet areas. Missing-child procedure: act promptly and contact An Garda Síochána as appropriate. Plan children’s use of shared facilities, manage adult access and protect children’s privacy.
Recruitment Recruitment of unsuitable people; unclear roles; unqualified, untrained or insufficiently vetted staff or volunteers working with children.	Safe recruitment, vetting and training procedures: check suitability, references and qualifications; complete required Garda vetting before relevant work begins; provide clear role descriptions and induction. Maintain and review recruitment and training records, including when personnel change.
Communications Members or visitors unaware of safeguarding risks, the statement or codes of behaviour; unauthorised photography or recording; inappropriate social-media use or communications by or with under-18s.	Display and circulate the statement; make procedures available and explain codes of conduct. Photography and use-of-images procedures: appropriate consent, storage and sharing. Communications and online-safety procedures: set appropriate adult–child boundaries, involve parents or guardians as required and respond to concerning content or contact.
General Risk of Harm Abuse or neglect not recognised; harm by another child, coach, volunteer, member or visitor; harmful behaviour or bullying; inadequate vetting; online harm.	Safeguarding procedures and training: recognise and respond to abuse or neglect, including child-to-child harm. Apply codes of conduct and anti-bullying procedures; use statutory reporting procedures where concerns indicate abuse or neglect. Safe recruitment and vetting procedures; social-media and online-safety guidance; monitor adherence and take appropriate action.

General health-and-safety hazards, including stray golf balls from the nearby course and falls on the steps to the courts, are recorded separately in the accompanying risk assessment and must be managed through the club’s health-and-safety arrangements. They are distinct from risks of abuse or neglect. Safeguarding aspects of supervision remain included above.

4. Procedures

This Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed with reference to the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, and Tennis Ireland's Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People in Tennis, including its statement template on pages 31–34.

In addition to the Risk Assessment, the following procedures support the club's commitment to safeguarding children while they take part in our activities:

- **Management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff or volunteers** — prioritise the child's safety, follow statutory reporting procedures and manage any employment or disciplinary process separately and fairly. A person implicated in an allegation must not control the response.
- **Safe recruitment of staff and volunteers** — check suitability, references and relevant qualifications; complete required Garda vetting before relevant work begins; clarify roles and provide safeguarding induction.
- **Access to safeguarding training and information** — provide role-appropriate training, including recognising harm, responding to disclosures, reporting concerns and codes of conduct; monitor training and renewal requirements.
- **Reporting child protection or welfare concerns to statutory authorities** — bring concerns promptly to the DLP and report reasonable concerns about abuse or neglect to Tusla. Proof is not required. Listen calmly, avoid leading questions, do not promise secrecy and record facts accurately. The club does not investigate suspected child abuse.
- **Maintaining a list of mandated persons** — the committee, supported by the DLP, maintains and updates a list of any persons in the service who fall within Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015. Appointment as DLP does not itself make someone a mandated person. Mandated persons retain their individual statutory duties.
- **Appointing a Relevant Person** — the committee records the appointment, publishes contact details and communicates changes. Carmel O'Callaghan is the club's Relevant Person and first point of contact for this statement: 086 3920170.
- **Managing trips away and hosting children** — apply travel and hosting procedures, parental consent, appropriate supervision, named responsible adults and clear transport and handover arrangements.

All procedures listed are available on request from the Relevant Person. Safeguarding records must be held securely and shared only for appropriate safeguarding or statutory purposes.

There is no deputy DLP. Anyone may report directly to Tusla, including if the DLP is unavailable or the concern relates to her. Where appropriate, the Chairperson should be contacted for club action. Internal complaints or committee processes must not delay a child protection report. If a child is in immediate danger, contact An Garda Síochána on 112 or 999.

5. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Mallow Tennis Club is committed to implementing this statement and the supporting procedures to keep children safe from harm while taking part in our activities. The committee oversees implementation with the DLP, Children's Officers, Junior Coordinator, coaches, staff and volunteers.

- This statement will be furnished to all staff, coaches and volunteers.
- The statement and supporting procedures will be available to parents and guardians, Tusla and members of the public on request.
- The statement will be displayed prominently at the club. Children and families will be told who the Children's Officers and DLP are and how to raise concerns.
- All coaches and sports leaders must read and sign the appropriate Code of Conduct. The club retains the signed records.

The committee monitors implementation of the procedures, assigns and follows up any outstanding actions, and maintains the relevant recruitment, vetting, qualification and training records.

This statement and the accompanying risk assessment will be reviewed at intervals of no more than 24 months, and as soon as practicable after any material change in the matters covered. The committee will consider relevant changes, concerns, incidents, guidance and feedback from children and families, and follow up agreed actions.

The club holds Tennis Ireland's appendices as reference guidance supporting its procedures. They are not reproduced as appendices to this statement. The references are: 1. Legislation; 2. Risk Assessment & Child Safeguarding Statement; 3. Safeguarding Audit Framework; 4. Safe Recruitment; 5. Safeguarding Training; 6. Roles, Responsibilities & Relationships in Sport; 7. Reporting & Protection; 8. Disciplinary, Complaints & Appeals of Code Breaches; 9. Safeguarding Guidance; 10. Codes of Conduct; 11. Additional Forms; 12. Missing Child Policy.

Queries about this statement: Carmel O'Callaghan, Relevant Person, DLP and Children's Officer, 086 3920170. Club activity details: Melanie O'Driscoll, Junior Coordinator, 087 9747532. Club phone: 087 1093658.

Adopted by the Mallow Tennis Club Committee on: 14/10/26

Accompanying Risk Assessment review completed on: 14/10/26

Next review due (no later than 24 months after adoption): 14/10/28

Signed on behalf of Mallow Tennis Club: Tadhg Crotty

Tadhg Crotty, Chairperson

Date: 15/10/26

Relevant Person signature: Carmel O'Callaghan

Carmel O'Callaghan

Date: 15/10/26