Safeguarding Policy for Club Online Sessions

The purpose of this document is to ensure best safeguarding practice and procedures exist to protect vulnerable members as well as facilitate and enhance the operations of Triathlon Ireland and its clubs (hereafter referred to as TI). The procedures following are produced to ensure all TI staff, relevant volunteers and stakeholders have a clear understanding of the policy and how it applies to their role. This document will be reviewed on a regular basis.

These procedures were submitted and approved by the TI Board. All previous procedures are superseded by this version with effect from *October 2026.*

Any issues arising from the transition between previous procedures and these shall be determined by the CEO, in consultation, where such issues are material, with the President.

This document may be amended from time to time by the Safeguarding Committee. The definitive text of this document in force from time to time is the version contained on the TI internal server under *Safeguarding Policies*. Any printed text or electronic copy held elsewhere is only a snapshot of the text at the time it is printed, copied or downloaded.

Coaching

Triathlon Ireland insurance will cover qualified coaches to coach over online video sessions. Coaches should observe the following:

1. Attendance: Either take attendance automatically or manually. Zoom can take attendance automatically once set up
2. Screening: If the coach does not have access to relevant medical/injury information as usual, ask anyone attending to submit in advance (to be stored confidentially with permission from the athlete or deleted post session).
3. Indoor sessions: Include the following advice for set up:
    - Have a set space to workout in - clutter free
    - Appropriate clothing to be worn
    - Appropriate floor surface to be used etc.
    - Ask the group to check their own equipment if required.

Safeguarding

Clubs and coaches should have the following safeguarding protocols in place for Junior online sessions.

1. All sessions must be password protected.
2. Parents/carers will be emailed a link and password directly once registered.
3. The link must not be shared with a third party under any circumstances.
4. The waiting room function should be used so people can be checked in.
5. Sharing screen option should be turned off for meeting participants.

6. Coaches/leaders taking the sessions must undergo TI safe recruitment protocol including Garda Vetting or Access NI, complete Safeguarding 1 or Safeguarding Children and Young People course and sign a code of conduct.
7. As with normal contact, meetings should not be 1:1. Therefore, either a second adult (who has gone through safe recruitment) must be present. Alternatively, this can be substituted for parental supervision If the child is under 10 years of age the parent should remain in the room with them during the session.
8. Both coaches/leader should be the first on the call and the last to leave to ensure an adult and child are not alone on the call.
9. Coaches/leaders shall not use the private/individual message function on Zoom for general communications. However, should the group want to do an activity, which requires the use of the chat, the group leaders should take into account the following safeguards in their activity risk assessment on their planning.
    a. Plan ahead who is going to be using the chat and keep a record.
    b. Ensure a record of the chat is kept.
    c. Plan what is going to be sent over the chat ahead of time.
    d. Verbally inform the group that messages might be sent for the purposes of the activity only.
10. Emojis, Giffs, Tik-Toks etc.: Due to the ambiguous nature of these images, leaders shall not use emojis, giffs, tik-toks or similar media in online meetings involving young people.
11. Ensure that there is no 'offensive material' or age-inappropriate content within the view of your video feed.
12. Do not join a meeting from a public location or where there are other adults present who have not received the appropriate safeguarding training and have undergone the relevant safeguarding protocols. Regard other adults present as you would another adult joining the youth group face-to-face
13. Meetings can be locked once all participants have been let in from the waiting room.
14. Online sessions should not be recorded.

Further Resources:

- Sport Ireland Staying safe online resources
- NSPCC keeping children safe online course
- Triathlon Ireland Social Media Guidance for Coaches
- Triathlon Ireland Social Media Guidance for Clubs
- Triathlon Ireland Social Media Guidance for Juniors