**Report for St. Sylvester’s GAA AGM 28th November 2019**

**Children’s Officer**

**Garda Vetting requirements**

The Children’s Act 2015 placed statutory obligations on all organisations including sporting organisations in relation to all their activities with children and young people. Central to this is mandatory garda vetting for all those undertaking ‘relevant work’ for the associations. This continues to be a priority of the juvenile sections. To date 49 new applicants have undergone the garda vetting process in 2019. It is anticipated that these numbers could continue to rise with the increase of juvenile players across all sections.

**Child Safeguarding Training – level 1 for mentors and coaches**

The associations require that all coaches and mentors are required to undertake Child Safeguarding Training (level 1). This forms part of the agreed procedures across the associations that seek to create a safe environment for young people when involved in the association’s activities.

The Club hosted three workshops in Child Safe Guarding (level 1) in February, March and October of this year. A total of 71 mentors and coaches across all sections attended the training. We aim to schedule more training days with the Dublin Co. Board (GAA and LGFA) to ensure that all club mentors and coaches fulfil this requirement.

**Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment**

Following the introduction of Children First legislation and the upgrading of the Code of Behaviour (2018) all clubs are required to undertake a child safeguarding risk assessment. It outlines the safeguarding measures and adherence to the legislation that is in place to assist us in our day to day activities in our club.

Carrying out a risk assessment is now an annual requirement. The club reviewed the risk assessment recently and we are obliged to furnish this assessment on a yearly basis.

**Promotion of the Code of Behaviour**

The code of behaviour continues to be a central tenant of the GAA/LGFA/Camogie’s philosophy of promoting sporting and positive behaviour both on and off the field for players, coaches, supporters, administrators and parents.

As directed by the associations, members will be asked to sign up to and agree to the code of behaviour at the point of membership application / renewal.

Additional signage was erected during the year, primarily on the all weather pitch, ball wall and dressing rooms, promoting the associations ‘give respect get respect’ campaign. Many mentors continue to promote the code of behaviour within their teams. We will continue to explore other initiatives to continue to promote the code of behaviour throughout the club.

**Promotion of children’s participation in the club.**

This year we sought to increase children’s participation in the club outside of the general activities of games. Alongside the ladies and juvenile boys’ section, we hosted a very successful family fun run last August on Broomfield pitches. This event was well supported with an excess 100 boys and girls along with their families participated in the event. This was also a fundraising activity which raised €1247 for a local charity- Malahide Portmarnock Substance Abuse Mental Health Service (SAMH). The monies raised will help to fund a youth counsellor – a free service for young people in the area. A sincere thank you to all the volunteers from the club who put in a big effort to run the event. A thank you also to Londis and Centra Malahide for their sponsorship too.

**Healthy Clubs Committee**

As the children’s officer I am a member of the club’s healthy club committee. This group aims to promote positive mental health and physical wellbeing amongst club members and the wider community. This include initiatives in supporting our young players. Several workshops were held during the year that focused on young people. This included managing exam stress, diet for good health and the family fun run which was also a fundraising event.

The club are active stakeholders in the newly established Malahide Portmarnock SAMH service. (substance abuse mental health ) I along with our healthy clubs officer are the clubs representatives on this committee. It aims to support young people where substance misuse and mental health issues are of concern. This service is free of charge for our young players to access (12-18) years.

Finally, a word of thanks to the clubs executive committee, our club coach, juvenile boys section, ladies and camogie section for their ongoing support throughout the year. All the initiatives and work could not be undertaking without their support. A further thank you to all the coaches and mentors who have been so willing to give up their time but have also taken on the additional requirements around safeguarding in the best interests of our young players.

Miriam Slattery

Children’s Officer