

Junior Golf Handbook

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1.0 Junior Golf in Gort Golf Club

The Junior Club is administered by the Men's and Women's Clubs (affiliated to Golf Ireland) through the appointment of respective Junior Committees. Each Junior Committee consists of:

- A Junior Convenor as designated by the Men's and Women's Clubs
- Other adult members as designated by the Men's and Women's Clubs

The Boy's and Girl's Junior Convenors represent the Junior Committee and its junior members in the respective Men's and Women's Club committees. Any issues or suggestions raised by junior members will initially be brought to the appropriate Junior Committee, and then, if necessary, to the respective club committee by the Junior Convenor. All issues will be discussed in confidence.

1.1 Junior Committee 2025

Boy's Convenor:	PJ McAllen	Phone: 086 409 4166
Girl's Convenor:	Ann-Marie Mulry	Phone: 087 907 4860
Committee:		ard Byrne, John O'Connor, Petra O'Connor, Tony Finnegan, John Collins.

2.0 Child Protection

Gort Golf Club have adopted the guidelines contained in Golf's Safeguarding Policy as recommended by the Irish Sports Council and Golf Ireland. The guidelines are contained in the club's Safeguarding Policy, a copy of which is available on request from the Club Management, the Junior Committee or from the club's website.

Designated Liaison Person:	Ann Marie Mulry	
Club Children's Officer:	John O'Connor	Phone: 087 987 8559

Under 18's must only play in maximum of Three Ball's except if instructed by Junior/Competitions committee OR if accompanied by at least one adult (over 18).



3.0 Child Safeguarding Statement

Gort Golf Club provides various golfing activities and opportunities for young people through participation in club and regional events.

Name: Gort Golf Club Sport: Golf Location: Castlequarter, Gort, Co Galway

Gort Golf Club is committed to safeguarding children by working under our Safeguarding Policy. Our staff, both volunteers and employed, working with our young people, throughout the organisation, seek to create a safe environment for young people to grow and develop within golf by adhering to the following principles:

- **Importance of childhood:** The importance of childhood should be understood and valued by everyone involved in golf.
- **Needs of the child:** All junior golf experiences should be guided by what is best for children. This means that adults should have a basic understanding of the emotional, physical and personal needs of young people.
- **Integrity in relationships:** Adults interacting with children in golf are in a position of trust and influence and must never abuse this position of trust. They should always ensure that children are treated with integrity and respect, and the self-esteem of young people is enhanced.
- **Fair Play:** All junior golf should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. Gort Golf Club will promote fair play, respect, ethics, integrity and safety throughout our organisation.
- **Quality atmosphere & ethos:** Junior golf should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere.
- **Competition:** Competition is an essential element of golf and should be encouraged in an age-appropriate manner. A balanced approach to competition can make a significant contribution to the development of children, while at the same time providing fun, enjoyment and satisfaction. However competitive demands are often placed on children too early which results in excessive levels of pressure on them. Golf leaders should aim to put the welfare of young people first and competitive standards second.
- **Equality**: All children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion.



3.1 Risk Assessment

Gort Golf Club's written Risk Assessment document 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 contained in the following categories:

Risk Identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
Coaching Practices	
Lack of coaching qualification.Supervision issues.	 Coach education policy/recruitment policy. Supervision policy/Coach education
 Unauthorised photography & recording activities. 	 Photography & use of images policy.
Behavioural Issues.	 Code of Conduct / Safeguarding 1 / Complaints & Disciplinary policy.
 Lack of gender balance amongst coaches. 	Supervision policy.
• No guidance for travelling & away trips.	 Travel/Away trip policy / Child Safeguarding Training.
• Risk of harm of sexual abuse of a child by a volunteer/member of staff while away on an overnight trip.	 Travel/Away trip policy, Code of conducts for golf leaders and parents/supervision/recruitment policy.
 Lack of adherence with procedures in Safeguarding policy. 	 Safeguarding Policy /Recruitment Policy/Code of Conduct/ Complaints & disciplinary policy.
Complaints & Discipline	
 Lack of awareness of a Complaints & Disciplinary policy. 	 Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy / Communications procedure.
• Difficulty in raising an issue by child & or parent.	 Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy / Communications procedure.
 Complaints not being dealt with seriously. 	 Complaints & Disciplinary procedure/policy.
Reporting Procedures	
 Lack of knowledge of organisational & statutory reporting procedures. No DLP appointed. Concerns of abuse or harm not reported. 	 Reporting procedures/policy / Code of Conduct. Reporting procedures/policy. Reporting procedures/policy / Child
• Not clear who young people should talk to or report to.	 Safeguarding Training – Level 1 NCO and DLP names displayed and proactively promoted.



Use o	f Facilities	
•	Unauthorised access to designated children's play & practice areas & to changing rooms, showers, toilets etc.	• Supervision policy / General guidelines with Juniors.
•	Unauthorised exit from children's areas.	• Supervision policy / General guidelines with Juniors.
•	Photography, filming or recording in prohibited areas.	 Photography policy and use of devices in private zones.
•	Missing or found child on site.	• Missing or found child policy.
•	Children sharing facilities with adults e.g. dressing room, showers etc.	 Safeguarding policy/General Guidelines with Juniors.
Recru	uitment	
•	Recruitment of inappropriate people.	 Recruitment policy/ AccessNI/Garda vetting.
•	Lack of clarity on roles.	Recruitment policy.
•	Unqualified or untrained people in role.	Recruitment policy.
Comr	nunications	
•	Lack of awareness of 'risk of harm' with members and visitors. No communication of Child Safeguarding Statement or Code of Conduct to staff/volunteers.	 Child Safeguarding Statement / Training Policy. Child Safeguarding Statement (display) / Code of Conduct (distributed to all working with children). Proactive communication of club values and safeguarding standards.
•	Unauthorised photography & recording of activities.	Photography & Use of Images policy.
•	Inappropriate use of social media & communications by under 18's.	 Communications policy / Code of Conduct/social media policy/ disciplinary policy.
•	Inappropriate use of social media & communications with under 18's.	 Communications policy / Code of Conduct/Social media policy/Disciplinary policy.
Gene	ral Risk of Harm	
•	Harm not being recognised.	 Safeguarding policy / Child Safeguarding training.
•	Harm caused by: Child to Child. Coach to Child. Volunteer to Child. Member to Child. Visitor to Child.	 Safeguarding policy / Child Safeguarding training/ Anti-bullying policy/ Disciplinary policy.
•	General behavioural issues.	Code of Conduct.
•	Issues of Bullying.	Anti-Bullying policy.
•	Vetting of staff/volunteers.	• Recruitment policy / Vetting policy.
•	Issues of Online Safety.	Social Media guidance.



The Risk Assessment was undertaken on: **24th April 2024**

3.2 Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, (the *Children First: National Guidance*, and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: *A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*). In addition to our Risk Assessment document described above, there are further procedures that support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our activities.

Gort Golf Club has the following procedures in place as part of our Safeguarding Policy:

- Procedures for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct by staff or volunteers against a child availing of our activities.
- Procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers to work with children in our activities.
- Procedures for access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
- Procedure for reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Statutory Authorities.

The Club Children's Officer for Gort Golf Club is *John O'Connor*

3.3 Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. *Gort Golf Club* is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our activities. Please note the following:

- That all volunteers and staff have been furnished with a copy of this statement.
- This statement is available to parents/guardians, the agency & members of the public on request.
- This statement is displayed in a prominent place by Gort Golf Club.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in April 2006 (every 2 years).

Signed: John O'Connor (Club Children's Officer on behalf of Gort Golf Club)

Date: 24th April 2024



Signed: John Skehill

(Secretary Manager of Gort Golf Club)

Date: 24th April 2024

For queries on this Child Safeguarding Statement, please contact the (CCO): John O'Connor.

4.0 General Data Protection Regulations

Gort Golf Club holds personal information as voluntarily provided by members on joining the club. Some of this information is shared with the Junior Convenors and is solely used to contact you in the normal course of administration of a club including the running of competitions, advising of club or Golf Ireland topics, and matters of golf interest in general.

We will not divulge the personal information of any member to any outside or third-party organisation. In the event any member leaves the Club all such information will be removed from our records. Please be aware that you can request confirmation of any information held. Any member can opt out of all/any communications by notifying us via email at *info@gortgolfclub.ie*.

5.0 WHS Handicap Index

All new members will initially play with a Junior Handicap assigned to them by the Junior Committee. In time, once a certain standard is attained, the Junior Committee will recommend that the junior golfer is ready to apply for a WHS Handicap Index. The eligibility for handicap application is at the discretion of each Junior Committee and will not be solely determined by golfing ability but will also consider golf etiquette as well as the junior golfer's attitude and behaviour on and off the golf course.

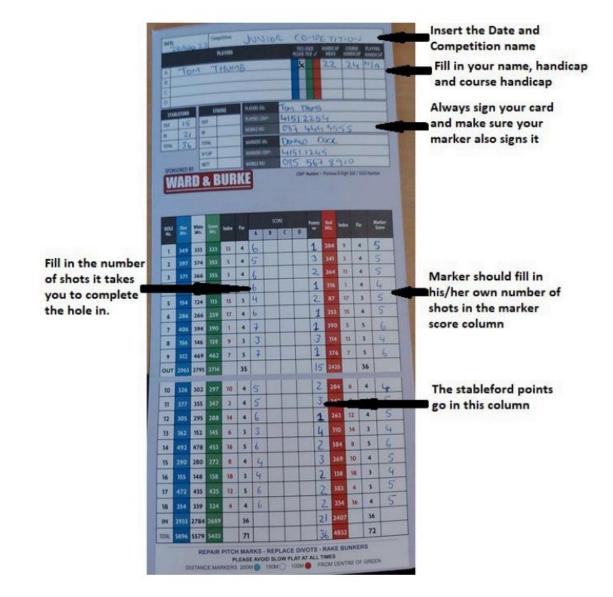
To obtain a WHS handicap Index a junior golfer must play a total of 54 holes, made up of 9- or 18-hole scores (e.g. 3×9 front nine and 3×9 back nine holes, or 3×18 holes), in Gort Golf Club with a responsible student or adult. Please note that:

- Boys play off the white tee-boxes and girls off the red tee-boxes.
- The name of the player and their BRS number need to be recorded on the scorecard.
- The score card must be signed by the player and the student/adult recording the scores.



- Ideally, hold on to all scorecards until 54 holes have been completed, at which stage all scorecards should be dropped into the scorecard box in the shop/computer room.
- Clearly mark the top of the card "FOR HANDICAP PURPOSES ONLY".

Please note that under 18's must only play in maximum of three ball's except if instructed by Junior/Competitions committee OR if accompanied by at least one adult (over 18).



6.0 Instructions on How to Complete a Scorecard



7.0 Safety on the Golf Course

Safety on the Golf Course Safety is always a priority. Junior golfers should be aware of the following:

- Prior to making a practice swing or playing a stroke, ensure that no one is standing close by or in a position to be hit by the club or ball.
- As far as possible, be very careful that you don't hit anyone with a golf ball. Wait until the golfers ahead / all course-staff are out of range before playing your shot. Shout 'FORE' if your ball is likely to land close to others on the course.
- Always stand behind the ball being struck to avoid getting hit with club or ball.
- Water is a large feature of the course. Be aware of the hazards and avoid them where possible. The lakes are deep so stay clear and do not attempt to retrieve golf balls to avoid the danger of falling in.
- To prevent harm from the chemicals used on the course and from animal droppings always wash your hands after playing golf.
- Children under the age of 15 years must be accompanied by an adult at all times.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to accompany their children (need not be in a golfing capacity) while their children play casual golf, particularly between the ages of 7 and 15 years. Parents/guardians are encouraged to familiarise themselves with course etiquette and safety.

8.0 The Golf Course

8.1 Playing Golf

Where coaching, structured competitions or other events are run by the club, appropriate provision will be made in respect of supervision of these events in accordance with the guidelines. We do not permit children under the age of 7 on the golf course and those between the ages of 7 years and 15 years must be always accompanied by an adult.

All juniors are permitted to play the course subject to booking tee times in advance on the BRS booking platform. This must be used for both casual and competitive games of golf. Avoid slow play and holding up other golfers playing on the course by keeping a reasonable pace of play, or if delayed, allow players behind you to play through.

The rules of golf are designed to help you enjoy your game. Make sure you have a rules book in your bag. Players are responsible for familiarising themselves with all golf rules. Please also be aware that there are also additional local rules which are printed on the



back of the Gort golf club scorecard. A central principle is found inside the front cover of the R&A rule book:

"Play the ball as it lies Play the course as you find it And if you can't do either do what is fair And to do what is fair you need to know the rules of Golf"

It is worth visiting <u>www.randa.org</u> for the official rules of golf. There are also Golf Ireland handbooks available free of charge in our shop.

8.2 Care of the Golf Course

Please respect the golf course. All players should avoid causing damage to the course (e.g. removing divots when taking practice swings). Please be aware of the following:

- A pitch-mark repairer is required by every golfer.
- Repair your pitch marks on every green, and whenever possible you should also repair those not made by you. A pitch mark left unrepaired for 24 hours will take 2 weeks to heal.
- Replace divots. An unreplaced divot will not repair and will require sanding and seeding by our course staff.
- Rake bunkers after playing from a bunker. A player should always leave a bunker as they wish to find it.





9.0 Code of Conduct

9.1 Code of Conduct for Junior Members

The "*Gort Golf Club-Junior/Minor Member Code of Conduct*" document is available of the club website and club office. Please go through this Code of Conduct with your child. These rules and instructions are very important and non-adherence to them may result in loss of access to the course. For access to the course to be granted **this document must be agreed and signed by both you and your child**.



Course Etiquette

Each junior member must familiarise themselves with all aspects of golf etiquette. You must conduct yourself in a disciplined manner, always demonstrating courtesy and sportsmanship when, on the course, in the clubhouse, locker room and particularly when representing the club. Junior players should:

- never throw clubs.
- keep noise at a reduced level to avoid disturbing other golfers.
- never cut in on a hole if there are players playing the previous hole.
- stand still and remain quiet while others are playing on a nearby tee-box, green or fairway.
- have their own golf bag containing a maximum of 14 golf clubs when in competition.
- carry tees, markers, pitch mark repairers at all times, and use the bins for litter.
- keep bags and trolleys off greens, outside bunkers and off tee boxes.
- avoid restricted areas as decided by the greenkeeping staff.
- wait until the greenkeeping staff signal it's OK to play if they are working on the course ahead of you.
- shout "FORE" if your ball or the ball of another player looks likely to land near another player. Also, the player who hits the ball should apologise.
- not stand in a place that causes your shadow to be cast across a player's tee shot or putting line and never walk through a player's putting line.
- leave the green as soon as the hole has been completed. Do not mark your scores on the green, instead wait until you are at the next tee-box.
- keep count at each hole of the number of strokes you have played and the score of your playing partner who's card you are marking. Never mark your own score card in competition. Always be honest with your own score.
- keep up with the group in front, and don't hold up any players behind.
- have the same respect for the practice facilities as for the course, including the repair of pitch marks.

Dress Code & Clubhouse Conduct

It is important to uphold the traditions of golf so the smart appearance of all our members is expected. For your own safety no runners are allowed while playing golf, and so appropriate golf footwear with soft spikes should be worn. Smart casual clothing must always be worn on the golf course. Beach shorts or football shorts/togs are unacceptable.



Access to the bar area is at the discretion of the bar and clubhouse staff. You cannot enter the Bar/Restaurant with **dirty shoes or grass covered shoes**. You may be asked to leave by a member of staff or committee if in breach. Junior members under the age of 18 years should be accompanied by an adult and must vacate the bar by 9:00pm.

Always keep your golf bags and shoes tidy, particularly at the front door of the clubhouse, and always clear up after you when using the bar/restaurant facilities. The Locker Rooms are for changing purposes only and are not a recreational 'hangout' area. When waiting for parents/guardians after a coaching session, children should wait either at the practice putting green or just inside the main entrance of the clubhouse.

9.2 Code of Conduct for Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians are a valuable and indispensable source of help to the Junior programme and are requested to assist by:

- providing supervision at group coaching sessions.
- providing supervision and to help with the running of junior competitions.
- providing transport to away golf competitions and events.
- teaching their children how to mark their scorecard, the rules of golf, and how to behave on and off the golf course.
- being a role model for your child and maintain the highest standards of conduct when interacting with young people, other parents, officials and organisers.

Parent/Guardians should:

- always behave responsibly and not seek to unfairly affect a player or the outcome of a game.
- never intentionally expose any young participant to embarrassment or disparagement by using flippant or sarcastic remarks.
- always recognise the value and importance of the officials and volunteers who provide sporting and recreational opportunities for your child.
- respect other golfers, coaches, and both clubhouse and course staff.
- never publicly question the judgement or honesty of referees, coaches or organisers.
- respect convenors, professionals, coaches, referees, organisers and other players. Parents are welcome to attend events and coaching sessions but should not interfere with the coach or professional while working with the player.



- encourage your child to play by the rules. Teach your child that honest endeavour is as important as winning and do all you can to encourage good sportsmanship.
- set a good example by applauding good play on both sides. Encourage mutual respect for teammates and opponents.

Parents Code of Conduct

As a parent/guardian of a Young Player I will:

- respect the rules and procedures set down by *Gort Golf Club* and *Golf Ireland*.
- respect my child's teammates and leaders as well as players, parents and coaches from opposing teams.
- encourage my child to treat other participants, professionals, coaches, convenors, selectors and managers with respect.
- give encouragement and applaud only positive accomplishments whether from my child, his/her teammates, their opponents or the officials.
- respect my child's leader(s) and support his/her efforts.
- respect the officials and their authority during sessions and events within *Gort Golf Club* and under the auspice of *Golf Ireland*.
- never demonstrate threatening or abusive behaviour or use foul language.

Any misdemeanours and breach of this code of conduct will be dealt with immediately by the Junior Convenor.

10.0 Social Media

Photographs/videos will be taken during or at golf related events and may be used in the promotion of golf, including social media. Such media will be reviewed by our Junior Convenor before promotion.

11.0 Casual Golf

Gort Golf Club would like to remind parents/guardians that the Club is not able to provide supervision outside Junior competitions and organised group activities. In other words, the Club cannot provide any guardianship during unsupervised playing of casual golf. The Club recommends that Junior golfers do not play alone and should not be dropped off or left unaccompanied at the Golf Club.



Parents/Guardians are encouraged to accompany their child (this does not need to be in a golfing capacity) while he/she plays casual golf, particularly while they are beginners. Parents are requested to familiarise themselves with course etiquette and course safety and ensure their child practices the same.

Gort Golf Club

Junior Committee



Appendix A: Junior/Minor Member Code of Conduct

Gort Golf Club - Junior/Minor Member Code of Conduct

Please go through this Code of Conduct with your child. These rules and instructions are very important and non-adherence to them may result in loss of access to the course. For access to the course to be granted this document must be agreed and signed by both you and your child.

- *** Under 18's must only play in maximum of Three Ball's except if instructed by Junior/Competitions committee OR if accompanied by at least one adult (over 18)
- *** Children under the age of 15 years must always be accompanied by an adult.
- *** Unless entered in a competition or if instructed by Junior/Competitions Committee Juniors/Minors must not take a slot on the timesheet before 10:00am on a Saturday or 12:00am on a Sunday.

All juniors are permitted to play the course subject to booking tee times in advance on the BRS booking platform whilst always adhering to the three criteria highlighted above. This must be used for both casual games of golf and competitive. Avoid slow play and holding up other golfers playing on the course by keeping a reasonable pace of play or if delayed, allow players behind you to play through.

Safety on the Golf Course

Safety is always a priority

- Prior to making a practice swing or playing a stroke, ensure that no one is standing close by or in a position to be hit by the club or ball.
- As far as possible be very careful that you don't hit anyone with a golf ball. Wait until the golfers ahead / all course-staff are out of range before playing your shot. Shout 'fore' if your ball is likely to land close to others on the course.
- Always stand behind the ball being struck to avoid getting hit with club or ball.
- All Junior members are obliged to attend an INDUCTION which will be organised by the club. At this induction, the signed Code of Conduct forms will be collected. Access to the course will NOT BE GRANTED until completion of all parts of this Induction. The dates for such meetings will be advised by the Junior Convenor.
- Junior members are not permitted to sign in guests/visitors under 18 years of age.

Care of the Golf Course

Please respect the course:

- A pitch-mark repairer is required by every golfer. Repair your pitch marks on every green, and whenever possible you should also repair those not made by you. A pitch mark left unrepaired for 24 hours will take 2 weeks to heal.
- Replace divots. An un-replaced divot will not repair and will require sanding and seeding by our course staff.
- Rake bunkers after playing from a bunker. A player should always leave a bunker as they wish to find it.

Course Etiquette

Each junior member must familiarise themselves with all aspects of Golf etiquette. You must conduct yourself in a disciplined manner, always demonstrating courtesy and sportsmanship when, on the course and in the clubhouse. Parents and Junior golfers must **respect** other golfers, coaches, and both clubhouse and course staff.

Gort Golf Club Castlequarter, Gort, Co. Galway 091 632 244



Appendix A: Junior/Minor Member Code of Conduct

In addition, Junior members must:

- Keep noise at a reduced level to avoid disturbing other golfers. Put phones on silent.
- Never cut in on a hole if there are players playing the previous hole.
- Stand still and remain quiet while others are playing on a nearby tee-box, green or fairway.
- Have their own golf bag containing a maximum of 14 golf clubs when in competition.
- Carry tees, markers, pitch mark repairers at all times, and use the bins for litter.
- Keep bags and trolleys off greens, outside bunkers and off tee boxes.
- Shout "FORE" if your ball or the ball of another player looks likely to land near another player. Also, the player who hits the ball should apologise.
- Not stand in a place that causes your shadow to be cast across a player's tee shot or putting line, and never walk through a player's putting line.
- Leave the green as soon as the hole has been completed. Don't mark your scores on the green, instead wait until you are at the next tee-box.
- Keep count at each hole of the number of strokes you have played and the score of your playing partner who's card you are marking. Never mark your own score card in competition. Always be honest with your own score.
- Keep up with the group in front, and don't hold up any players behind

Dress Code & Clubhouse Conduct

It's important to uphold the traditions of golf. Smart appearance of all our members is expected, therefore:

- For your own safety no runners are allowed while playing golf, so appropriate golf footwear with soft spikes must be worn.
- Smart casual clothing must always be worn on the golf course.
- Beach shorts or football shorts/togs are unacceptable.

You cannot enter the Bar/Restaurant with dirty shoes or grass covered shoes. You will be asked to leave by a member of staff or committee if in breach.

- Junior members under the age of 18 years should be accompanied by an adult and must vacate the bar by 9:00pm.
- Always keep your golf bags and shoes tidy, particularly at the front door of the clubhouse, and always clear up after you when using the bar/restaurant facilities.

Rules of Golf

The rules of golf are designed to help you enjoy your game. Make sure you have a rules book in your bag. Players are responsible for familiarising themselves with all golf rules. Please also be aware that there are also additional local rules which are printed on the back of our scorecard. It is worth visiting *www.randa.org* for the complete rules of golf.

> "Play the Ball as it lies Play the Course as you find it And if you can't do either do what is fair And to do what is fair you need to know the rules of Golf"

Junior Member:	Date:	
Parent/Guardian:	Date:	