

# PASSIONISTS

ST PATRICK'S PROVINCE



## SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES (IRELAND)

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# FOREWORD

The Passionists of St. Patrick's Province are committed to creating a safe, healthy and inclusive environment for all, particularly the children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom we work. The participation of children and young people is valued and encouraged by all Passionists in their pastoral ministry and in activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional and social development. The Passionists recognise the dignity and rights of all children and vulnerable adults and are committed to their support and safeguarding. The Passionists undertake to ensure through best practice to create a safe environment for children and young people and to ensure their protection from all forms of abuse.

The Passionists are committed to:

1. Best practice in ensuring the safeguarding of children and young people, protecting their rights and promoting their welfare.
2. Minimizing risks in order to safeguard the interests of children and young people.
3. Ensuring that all Passionists are carefully selected, trained, supported and supervised.
4. Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are carefully recruited, trained, supported and supervised.
5. Ensuring that all Passionists are aware of, trained in and work to the Province Procedures for working with Children
6. Ensuring that all relevant staff and volunteers are aware of, trained in and work to the Province Procedures for working with Children
7. Supporting all victims of abuse.
8. Reporting concerns to statutory agencies who need to know and involving parents, carers, children, young people and vulnerable adults appropriately; and working closely with statutory authorities to ensure that all allegations of abuse are dealt with justly and promptly.

Fr James Sweeney CP  
Provincial



# INTRODUCTION

This document has been produced in accordance with policy published by The NSBCCCI Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church 2016, which has been endorsed by the Passionists. The purpose of the standards is to ensure there is understanding of how to safeguard children and develop good practice throughout church organisations. The purpose of this document is to provide procedures and guidance for those who engage with children, young people and vulnerable adults while carrying out the work of the Passionists. These procedures should be read in conjunction with Children First – National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 and Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016.

The definition of a child for the purposes of this document is a person under the age of 18 years who is not or has never been married.

**The document is the reference guide for the Passionists in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The principles apply for all Province members wherever they are working.**

## FOUNDING PRINCIPLES FOR OUR WORK WITH CHILDREN

The founding principles for our work with children are that all children have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured, cared for and protected. This right is embedded in Gospel values, best practice guidelines and international and domestic law. In the light of the teaching of the Church, civil legislation and guidance, the Passionists are committed to taking the necessary steps to:

- Demonstrate that the right of the child to protection from harm is paramount
- Cherish and safeguard children and young people
- Foster best practice
- Demonstrate accountability through establishing effective structures
- Support Church organisations and personnel in safeguarding children
- Establish safe recruitment and vetting practices – aimed at preventing those who pose a risk to children from holding positions of trust
- Maintain codes of behaviour – having clear guidelines that set out what is and is not acceptable behaviour as an essential part of keeping children safe
- Operate safe activities for children – helping ensure they can play and learn in a safe environment.

## CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016* was adopted as a One-Church policy. It follows seven standards; these procedures are set out in sections as per the One Church policy. This document offers guidance and procedures under each of seven standards:

- **Standard 1** Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments
- **Standard 2** Procedures for Responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Allegations or Knowledge
- **Standard 3** Care and Support for the Complainant
- **Standard 4** Care and Management of the Respondent
- **Standard 5** Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe
- **Standard 6** Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message
- **Standard 7** Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards



# CREATING & MAINTAINING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

## STANDARD ONE

### 1.1 SAFEGUARDING STRUCTURES AND PERSONNEL

The safeguarding structure represents the way for the Passionists to ensure effective procedures and practices are in place to keep children safe, and allows for the procedures to be monitored regularly. The policies and procedures are to ensure children are properly safeguarded and requires co-operation and a willingness to work across traditional boundaries to ensure that any allegation or disclosure of abuse is handled compassionately, effectively and professionally.

Those fulfilling any of the roles listed below must abide by the highest possible standards of professional conduct in all aspects of their work, including the maintenance of appropriate confidentiality.

#### 1.1.1 *Provincial*

To be responsible for all safeguarding practices by:

- Ensuring that the appropriate child safeguarding structures and personnel are in place and providing adequate resources for same;
- Liaising with the Holy See, and other Church bodies, as appropriate;
- Ensuring compliance with canon and civil law.

#### 1.1.2 *Safeguarding Coordinator*

In the Passionists this role is held by an independent person who manages the safeguarding service and also fulfils the role of Designated Liaison Person (DLP) as set out below.

They are responsible for coordination of all safeguarding practices by:

- Directing and implementing the child safeguarding policy;
- Liaising with and supporting Passionist communities to ensure implementation of local policies and procedures;
- Liaising with the safeguarding committee and the advisory panel;

- Ensuring that all child safeguarding personnel are kept up to date with good practice, as communicated from the NBSCCCI;
- Reporting directly to the Provincial on all child safeguarding issues.
- In addition the DLP is the person to whom all personnel go in the event that they have a concern about a child or other safeguarding issue, and for children disclosing abuse.

The role of the DLP:

- Responding to child safeguarding concerns;
- Passing on child safeguarding concerns to the statutory authorities;
- Managing cases and all associated documents;
- Liaising with the support person, adviser and the Provincial;
- Passing on child safeguarding concerns to the NBSCCCI;
- Conducting internal inquiries;
- Contributing to upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour;
- Completing an annual report regarding compliance with Standards 2, 3 and 4 for the Provincial;
- Monitoring respondents, that is persons against whom an allegation has been made and those against whom an allegation has been substantiated.

#### 1.1.3 *Safeguarding Committee*

The Safeguarding Committees is at Provincial level. The role of the committee is to be a support to the Provincial and to assist in developing safeguarding practice. The role of the Committee is primarily focused on creating, maintaining and monitoring a safe environment for children in all aspects of Church life and activity. It is not related in any way to the management of individual cases of suspected or alleged abuse.

It is to promote child safeguarding by:

- Developing a three-year child safeguarding plan and safeguarding policies and procedures;
- Coordinating local safeguarding representatives (LSRs);
- Coordinating activities related to child safeguarding, e.g. training;
- Ensuring the annual audit, including the correlation of records for training-related activities;
- Ensuring the completion of training needs assessments across the various child safeguarding roles in the Church body;
- Ensuring, with the Provincial, that the appropriate child safeguarding personnel are in place;
- Upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

#### 1.1.4 *Advisory Panel*

The Advisory Panel is a consultative panel appointed by the Provincial in order to advise and assist him in the management of Passionists against whom an allegation has been made or in relation to those who are out of Ministry. The Panel provides a consistent and accessible source of guidance, through a process of risk assessment for the Provincial who is charged with specific responsibilities. The Panel will consist of five members who collectively provide expertise, experience and impartiality necessary in this field of safeguarding. The members shall include each of the following competencies:

- Canon Lawyer
- Civil lawyer
- Child care professional (being either a psychologist or a social worker) knowledgeable in the field of child protection issues and the effects of child abuse
- Priest or religious with strong pastoral experience
- Lay person with qualities and expertise relevant to the functions of the Panel.

In relation to new complaints the Provincial may seek advice from the NBSCCCI through the National Case Management Committee. The NCMC exists as a function of NBSCCCI, and is chaired and administered by its staff; The NCMC functions as an all-island group, offering advice to Church authorities on all aspects of the investigative process into alleged abuse.

#### 1.1.5 *Local Safeguarding Representatives*

It is expected that two people within each location or Community will be identified to act as Local Safeguarding Representatives to work alongside the Diocese and the Passionist Safeguarding Coordinator. The position is voluntary, but Local Safeguarding Representatives will be provided with induction, support and regular training.

Their role is to promote the safeguarding of children within that Church organisation by:

- Raising awareness of what safeguarding is;
- Disseminating information on Child Protection Policy and Procedures, and circulating information widely to the public;
- Ensuring that any activities run within that Church organisation are provided in a manner which ensures the safety and well-being of the children involved (e.g. appropriate level of supervision is in place for the activity, or that insurance has been provided, and so on);
- Ensuring that the contact details of the relevant DLP/delegate are widely publicised.

**The overall responsibility for safeguarding children in each Passionist Community/location remains with the Parish Priest and/or Superior.**

### 1.1.6 *Support Person*

The role of the Support Person is to assist, where appropriate, with communication between the child or adult making an allegation/disclosure and the DLP, to facilitate the child or adult in gaining access to information and help, and to represent their concerns during the inquiry process. The Provincial may appoint Support Persons to be available to those who make an allegation/disclose abuse under these procedures.

The Support Person needs to be clear about his/her role and should receive appropriate training. The Support Person is not appointed as a counsellor to the child or adult, and must not be or act as their therapist although they may have the relevant background.

In addition, the Support Person should:

- take into account any wishes of the child or adult disclosing abuse, in regard to a pastoral response by the Church to his or her family;
- be available to the child or adult throughout the course of the inquiry process, and thereafter as required;
- ensure the child or adult is kept informed of developments in relation to them;
- represent the wishes and any therapeutic needs of the child or adult to the DLP, as required;
- arrange, if considered helpful, a meeting between the child or adult and the Provincial or the respondent.

*Under no circumstances should the same Support Person be provided for the child or adult making the allegation / disclosure of abuse and for the respondent.*

### 1.1.7 *Priest Adviser*

The Provincial is responsible to ensure there is a panel of potential Advisers to be available to the respondent. Advisers represent the needs of the respondent to the Provincial and the DLP and assist, where appropriate, with the care of the respondent and with communication between the respondent, the DLP and the Provincial. The respondent's adviser cannot be the respondent's therapist or spiritual adviser. Advisers need to be alert to the sense of isolation and vulnerability which a respondent may experience following an allegation of this nature. The Adviser may be a Priest, Religious or lay person.

He or she will:

- accompany, if so requested, and be available after the respondent's meeting with the Provincial and the DLP;
- inform the respondent of his or her right to obtain advice in both in civil and Canon Law;
- identify any therapeutic or other needs of the respondent and suggest how these may be met;
- consider the wishes of the respondent in regard to a pastoral response by the Provincial to their family;

- be available to the respondent throughout the inquiry process, and thereafter as required;
- ensure that the respondent is kept informed of developments in regard to the inquiry;
- represent the needs and wishes of the respondent to the DLP, as required.

*Under no circumstances should the same Support Person be provided for the child or adult making the allegation/ disclosure of abuse and for the respondent.*

## **1.2 CODES OF PRACTICE AND SAFE CARE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER 18**

Children and young people need warmth and security in order to thrive. Fostering a nurturing and affirming environment is therefore an essential element of Church activities. This should always be reflected in the practice of those who work with children and young people. To build a safe and solid environment for children, the Passionists seek to be child-centred in their practice and behaviour.

### *1.2.1 Organising safe activities for children will involve:*

- Completing a hazard assessment; this assists with managing both health and safety issues, and the general welfare of children;
- Having clear guidance on children with specific needs;
- Having a clear procedure for taking children on trips away;
- Seeking ‘Child & Guardian Consent’ as appropriate (See Local Safeguarding Folder);
- Register of attendance. A minimum of two officially appointed leaders must be responsible for each activity involving young people. The leaders should be adults and at least one should be suitably mature. At least one of the leaders must have undergone a full day training session provided by trainers registered with the NBSCCCI;
- Supervision ratios: Considering how many adults are needed to supervise a specific group of children dependent on their age and activity being undertaken and being mindful of gender balance;
- Guidance on accidents;
- Guidance on the use of technology, photographs and videos. (See 1.2.14).

### *1.2.2 Code of Behaviour for working with children*

It is important that all those working with children and young people, including priests and religious, staff and volunteers should:

- Treat all children in a manner that fully respects their dignity and rights;
- Provide, in their own behaviour, an example of good conduct at all times;
- Operate within the principles, guidance and specific procedures in relation to safeguarding children as set out in these guidelines;

- Respect each child's boundaries;
- Help children develop an awareness and understanding of their own rights and a respect for the rights of others;
- Provide children with information as to how they can seek help if they have a problem and from whom;
- Be visible to others when working with children;
- Be accompanied – children should be accompanied by two adults or where in exceptional circumstances only one adult is available, in a place not open to public view, an open door policy must be implemented;
- Challenge and report behaviour that is abusive or potentially abusive;
- Develop a culture where children can talk openly about their contacts with staff and others;
- **It is inappropriate to:**
  - Spend excessive time alone with children away from others;
  - Take children to his or her own home;
  - Use alcohol, tobacco or non-prescriptive drugs when in the company of children, nor should they be offered to those under 18 years.
- **Passionists, staff and volunteers must never:**
  - Hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse a child.
  - Engage in a sexual relationship with anyone under 18.
  - Engage in inappropriate conversations with those under 18.
  - Develop relationships with children or young people which could be deemed to be in any way exploitative or abusive.
  - Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse.

### 1.2.3 *Supervision Ratios*

In planning a trip or activity, it is critically important to consider how many adults are needed to supervise children in a safe manner. It is recommended that a certain number of adults be available to supervise a certain number of children; however, this is also dependent on whether the children have specific needs or requirements, and on the duration of the activity. There should be a minimum of two adults for every activity.

### 1.2.4 *Code of behaviour for children*

All children have a right to be protected, treated with respect, listened to and have their views taken into consideration. The welfare of children must always come first, regardless. It is not acceptable for anyone, an adult or a child, to discriminate either by their behaviour or language in relation to any person's race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political views. If you are initiating a children activity it can be helpful for them to be involved in drawing up a code of behaviour. In developing the code, consideration should be given to the following:

- Treating everyone with respect;
- Treating property with respect;
- Not consuming alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs;
- Agreeing not to bring any physical item into the Church activity that may cause offence or harm to others;
- Acting as a good role model;
- Attending activities on time;
- Signing in and out;
- Turning off your mobile phone;
- Telling someone you trust if you feel uncomfortable with any situation or individual;
- Not using bad language or other inappropriate activity when communicating by phone or email;
- Never bullying anyone or sending threatening messages.

#### *1.2.5 Discipline and unacceptable behaviour*

The use of discipline with children should, as far as possible, be in the form of positive reinforcement. It is recommended that:

- More than one worker is present when unacceptable behaviour is being dealt with.
- A record is kept in a report book, describing what happened, the circumstances, who was involved, any injury to a person or to property and how the situation was resolved.

#### *1.2.6 Bullying*

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression, be it verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating. Persistent bullying can have a devastating effect on a child's self-esteem. They may feel it is somehow their fault, or that there is something wrong with them. It is important that bullying is addressed with all parties and parents consulted when appropriate.

#### *1.2.7 Complaints Procedure*

Each location should have a named person to whom all complaints are referred and all such concerns and complaints should be followed up in a timely and efficient manner. A record should be kept regarding any complaints received and what action was taken. Children and parents should be informed as to how they may make a complaint.

#### *1.2.8 Provision of intimate care to young children and children with disabilities*

Intimate or personal care with young children and children with disabilities should not be carried out in the normal course of the work by members of the Passionists, staff or volunteers. However in the event that it does occur tasks of a personal nature should only be carried out:

- For very young children or children with disabilities
- With the full understanding and consent of the parents
- In the event of an emergency situation, parents should be fully informed afterwards.

#### 1.2.9 *Meetings with children and young people*

If the pastoral care of a child or young person necessitates meeting alone with them, such meetings should not be held in an isolated environment. The times and designated locations for meetings should allow for transparency and accountability (for example, be held in rooms with a clear glass panel or window, in buildings where other people are present, and where appropriate with the door of the room left open).

- Both the length and number of meetings should be limited.
- Parents or guardians should be informed that the meeting(s) took place, except in circumstances where to do so might place the child in danger. Ideally a parent or Guardian should be present or adjacent when a child is being met.
- Visits to the homes or private living quarters of Church personnel should not occur, nor should meetings be conducted in such locations.
- When the need for a visit to the home of a child or young person arises, professional boundaries must be observed at all times.
- Passionists who are working with young people in a professional context such as social work or counsellors must have the following: professional indemnity, be accredited or affiliated to a professional body or working vigorously towards accreditation; they must be working under a code of ethics and receiving professional supervision.

#### 1.2.10 *Health and safety*

It should be ensured that the following guidelines are adhered to:

- Adequate and appropriate supervision must be provided for all events and activities organised for children and young people.
- Arrangements and procedures for arriving and leaving activities or centres should be explicit.
- In places such as changing areas, toilets and showers, separate provision should be made for boys and girls. There should be adequate and gender-appropriate supervision of boys and girls in such areas.
- It should be agreed in advance with parents and guardians on the taking of photographs and the making of video recordings of children or young people involved in Church-related activities or events. This also relates to the generation of computer images. In addition, it should be agreed as to where and for what purpose photographs and images may be displayed.

### **1.2.11 *Responding to Accidents***

It is essential that all Church personnel are familiar with the procedures outlined below. If a child has an accident and injures himself/herself while attending an event, these procedures should be followed:

1. Assess the injury and reassure the child. If the injury is severe or the child has lost consciousness, please contact the emergency services immediately by phoning 999 or 112. You can phone 112 from a mobile that has no credit and even from a phone that has no SIM card. If the emergency services are to be called, contact with the child's parents/guardians must be made urgently. If the parents/guardians are not available, it may be necessary for a leader to travel with the child to the hospital. If medical treatment is required, personnel may be asked about known allergies or existing medical conditions.
2. If the injury is minor, local application of treatment should be available from the first aid box. There should be a fully stocked first aid box to hand at all Church-related events. Under no circumstances should any medication be given to a child.
3. As soon as possible after the accident, write up a report using an accident/incident report Form (See Local Safeguarding Folder). Once completed, this form should be stored in a safe place, in line with data protection, and treated as a confidential document.
4. Always inform parents/guardians of any accident that has occurred involving their child, regardless of how minor you consider it to be. It is good practice to give a copy of the accident/incident report form to parents/guardians.

### **1.2.12 *Hazard Assessment***

Hazard assessment is an important part of working with children. It assists with managing both health and safety issues, and the welfare of children.

As adults we assess hazards throughout our lives, but when working with children it is important to consider potential hazards that may lead to risk to children and to the adults who work with them. Consideration of how to control or manage hazard is critical. It is important to identify acceptable levels of hazards, as not all risk can be removed.

Whilst this guidance is concerned primarily with hazards associated with failure to follow effective safeguarding practice, it must be understood alongside the health and safety regulation and policy of the Church body. Whilst the focus on hazard assessment should be on groups of children with whom you are working, as opposed to the physical venue, if a problem with the venue is discovered during the course of assessing (e.g. broken glass, electrical cabling, etc.) this needs to be raised with the appropriate authority in charge of health and safety for the Church body.

### **1.2.13 *Use of computers, the Internet and Social Media***

Computers should be monitored regularly to ensure that they are being used in accordance with the stated policy.

- Where a computer is used by more than one person, each person should be obliged to have a unique username and password, or where this is not possible, to maintain a signed record of the date, time and duration of their use of the computer.
- Where a computer in a Passionist organisation or institution can be accessed by children or young people, it should be accessible only through the use of a username and password unique to each child. Where this is not possible, the children or young people should be obliged to provide a signed record of the date, time and duration of their use of the computer.
- Computers which can be accessed by children or young people should always have appropriate filtering software.
- All computers in Church organisation and institutions should be monitored regularly to ensure that they are being used in accordance with the stated policy. Where there is any suspicion or doubt, a person with specialist knowledge of computer hardware and software should be asked to assess the purposes for which the computer has been used.

### *Social Media*

Follow best practice in relation to social media (Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram etc.):

- Do not use your personal social network profile to communicate with or share images of children/young people and their parents/carers. Communicate using your professional platform or organizational Church equipment.
- Do not accept children and young people/ parents and carers as friends on your personal page.

#### *1.2.14 Broadcasting of Ceremonies from the Church*

Broadcasting of people via a web camera is regarded as a data protection issue and must be managed as such. Clear notices should be posted indicating when recording is taking place and where. Passionists, staff, volunteers should all give signed consent for the broadcasting of their images. In the case of children parental consent should be sought. Consent forms should be retained for the period of the broadcast.

#### *1.2.15 Use of Photography*

The use of photos on websites and in other online/hard copy publications can pose direct and indirect risks to children and young people. Those wishing to use images of the children they work with, or are otherwise in contact with, should consider these guidelines. The Church only has responsibility for safeguarding and the use of photography if it plans to use the photographs for Church purposes.

*Photographs taken at events organised by family and schools such as Communion, weddings or Confirmations do not fall under the responsibility of the Church, unless they are being taken for Church purposes.*

## How to minimise risks:

- Establish the type of images that appropriately represent the activity and think carefully about any images showing children and young people on the Church website or publication;
- Never supply the full name(s) of the child or children along with the image(s);
- Only use images of children in suitable dress and focused on the activity, rather than one particular child;
- Obtain permission: the permission of parents/guardians and children should always be sought when using an image of a young person. Parents/guardians should be aware of the Church's policy on using children's images and of the way these represent the Church or activity. The child's permission to use their image must also be recorded if they are under eighteen years of age. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the activity.

## *Responding to Concerns*

Children and parents/guardians should be informed that if they have any concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography, these should be reported to the DLP to ensure that any reported concerns are dealt with in the same way as any other child protection or child safeguarding issue.

### *1.2.16 Guidelines for Trips away from home*

All trips, including day trips, overnight stays and holidays, need careful advance planning, including adequate provision for safety in regard to transport, facilities, activities and emergencies. Adequate insurance should be in place.

- Written consent by a parent or guardian specifically for each trip and related activities must be obtained well in advance. (See Local Safeguarding Folder)
- A copy of the itinerary and contact telephone numbers should be made available to parents and guardians.
- There must be adequate, gender-appropriate, supervision for boys and girls.
- Arrangements and procedures must be put in place to ensure that rules and appropriate boundaries are maintained in the relaxed environment of trips away.
- Particular attention should be given to ensuring that the privacy of young people is respected when they are away on trips.
- The provision of appropriate and adequate sleeping arrangements should be ensured in advance of the trip.
- Sleeping areas for boys and girls should be separate and supervised by two adults of the same sex as the group being supervised.
- At least two adults should be present in dormitories in which children or young people are sleeping. Under no circumstances should an adult share a bedroom with a young person unless it is a parent and child.

- If, in an emergency situation, an adult considers it necessary to be in a children's dormitory or bedroom without another adult being present they should (a) immediately inform another adult in a position of responsibility and (b) make a diary note of the circumstances.

See Resource folder for Guidelines and further information on trips away.

#### 1.2.17 *Pilgrimages and Retreats*

Pilgrimages and retreats together with events such as World Youth Day are all important parts of the Church's pastoral and spiritual engagement with children and young people. Those involved in the planning and delivery of pilgrimages and retreats should adhere to the same guidance as outlined for other activities with children and young people and trips away from home within the Church.

#### 1.2.18 *Communication with Children and Young People and their Parents*

It is fundamental to the Passionist child safeguarding policy that children participate in church activities with the knowledge and consent of their parents. Information about church activities involving children must be shared with the parents, rather than directly with the children. For example, parents should be informed when their children are expected to serve at mass or attend choir practice. It is not appropriate for any person acting on behalf of the Passionists to collect, retain or use a young person's personal mobile phone number or email address, to become a child's 'Facebook Friend' or similar or otherwise to use social media to enter into personal communication with a child or young person.

Those working with children may use text or email to inform older young people (16 and 17 year olds) of events and arrangements provided that they have obtained the consent of their parents to do so. Such messages should come from a parish or community account rather than from a personal phone or email address. Messages should not contain any personal information about young people. Photographs of children and young people can only be placed on the websites of parishes and diocesan agencies with their consent and that of their parents. Groups considering setting up their own website or webpage as a means of communicating with young people are strongly advised to seek advice and guidance from Safeguarding personnel. Careful consideration must be given to the following: who will be responsible for setting up, managing and moderating (overseeing, reviewing and responding to posted content) the site; what content is to be uploaded onto the site; who can be linked to the site; and communication or interaction with users.

### 1.3 EXTERNAL GROUPS WHO USE CHURCH PROPERTY

It is a requirement that all groups working with children in Passionist property and/or using facilities owned by the Passionists or any Trust, are insured and that they have a Child

Safeguarding Policy in place. The general principle is that there is an obligation to comply with requirements relating to child safeguarding and insurance rests with the group using Church property.

1. It is the responsibility of any group using Passionist property to run activities involving children to ensure that they comply with all applicable child safeguarding and protection legislation and guidelines.
2. The group should have a Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. The group is also responsible for liaising with Tusla / HSCT (as appropriate), to ensure that the policy and procedures meet the statutory requirements.
3. The group should also have appropriate insurance for the activity they are running.
4. The local Rector or Parish Priest should ensure that the group complete the Annual User Information Form (See Local Safeguarding Folder). A copy must be retained securely in the location. It is not the role of the Rector/ Parish Priest to validate the adequacy of the policy; that is the responsibility of Tusla / HSCT.
5. The local Rector or Parish Priest should have confirmation on the Annual User Information Form from the group that they have appropriate insurance in place, which includes the following:
  - The Name of their insurers
  - The policy number
  - The period of cover of the policy
  - Limit of Indemnity
  - It is not the role of the local Rector or Parish Priest to validate the adequacy of this insurance policy.
6. Each location will be required to complete an annual inventory of all the groups using Passionist Property where children are present to ensure compliance.
7. Under 18s seeking to use the property must be part of an organization or must identify a Key Adult to act as Guarantor.
8. For once off events such as Birthday Parties or Family Celebrations the parties must agree in principal to the rules of the centre and must ensure children are supervised at all times. A signed letter of assurance should be requested.

#### 1.4 RECORD KEEPING

The Passionists are committed to Good record-keeping which is an integral part of safeguarding children within the organisation. There are many reasons why all those involved in safeguarding children should keep good records. These include: helping to improve accountability; demonstrating how decisions relating to safeguarding children are made; supporting effective assessments; providing documentary evidence of actions taken; helping to identify risks, and demonstrating how those risks have been managed. Good record-keeping also helps to safeguard the rights of all concerned.

The following records will be maintained:

TYPE OF RECORD	WHERE TO STORE
Application forms of those successful	Parish/local congregation
Application forms of those unsuccessful	Parish/local congregation
Attendance lists/sign-in and sign-out records for each activity involving children	Parish/local congregation
Parental and children's consent forms	Parish/local congregation
Accident/incident forms	Parish/local congregation
List of those vetted	Provincial & /local congregation
Codes of behaviour for groups involving children	Parish/local congregation
Evidence of concerns raised through whistle-blowing, and actions taken	Provincial

## 1.5 RECRUITMENT, VETTING AND TRAINING OF EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

### 1.5.1 *General Principles*

*Safe practice starts with safe recruitment procedures.*

Most people, who apply to work with children and young people in the Church are well-motivated and potentially suitable for the various tasks involved. It is most important, however, that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that this is, in fact, the case.

Some of the principles which enhance the safety of recruitment include:

- Always applying thorough selection procedures regardless of who the applicant is and whether the position is full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary, paid or voluntary.
- Judging the suitability of applicants across a broad range of criteria, through interview.
- Ensuring that interviews are conducted by more than one person and that at least one of those interviewing has an established competence in interviewing and selection for posts involving work with children.
- Taking all reasonable steps to exclude unsuitable candidates by insisting on and verifying references, qualifications and previous records of employment.

### 1.5.2 *Clear definition of role*

A clear definition of role includes being specific about the roles and responsibilities that the person will be required to undertake, and identifying the personal qualities and skills needed to carry out the work. A detailed job description and information about the organisation or group responsible for the post should be sent to all applicants.

### *1.5.3 Written application*

Applicants should be asked to supply information in writing (See Local Safeguarding Folder). The form is designed to collect all relevant information about the applicant, including past and current experience of working with children. The information supplied by the applicant should be seen only by those directly involved in the recruitment process.

### *1.5.4 Interviews*

Interviews should always be conducted by more than one person. The interview is a critical opportunity to explore with candidates the information provided in their written application and to assess their attitudes and skills, in particular their commitment to the welfare and protection of children.

The recommendation for appointment agreed by the interview panel should be submitted for ratification to the management committee or person making the appointment.

### *1.5.5 Declarations*

All applicants should be required to sign a declaration (Template 4 Application form) stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children or young people and declaring any past criminal convictions or cases pending.

### *1.5.6 References*

An applicant should be expected to supply the names of two referees, who are not family members, who will testify to their general character, their suitability for working with children and young people, and any other detail relevant to their ability to perform the tasks associated with the post. At least one referee should have first-hand knowledge of the applicant's previous work with children or young people. An acceptable reference will indicate that the person is known to the referee and is considered by them to be suitable to work with children and young people. All references should be provided in writing and later verified by telephone, or in person.

### *1.5.7 Background Checks*

All Passionists, staff and volunteers are to be vetted in accordance with local legislation North and South of Ireland, and other jurisdictions in which St. Patrick's Province is situated. It is the policy of the Passionists to seek a background check on the relevant staff and volunteers prior to taking up employment. Applicants have the right to decline to undergo a background check; however Passionists will be unable to proceed with applications without this consent.

### *1.5.8 Vetting Procedures*

All Passionists, staff and volunteers on the island of Ireland who work with or come into contact with children are required to be vetted; the procedures differ north and south.

## *Republic of Ireland*

It is against the law for people to commence work with children or vulnerable adults unless they have been vetted. There is a requirement for the Passionists to verify the identity of the applicant. The forms of identity deemed acceptable by NVB are explained on the vetting form. The period for revetting is 3 years in line with good practice.

**Minors:** The legislation is directed at applicants aged 18 years at date of signing the form. However applications can be made for those aged 16 and 17 when a **parental / guardian consent form** is also completed. In this case proof of identity must also be obtained for the parent / guardian.

### *Vetting Process (Republic of Ireland)*

1. For all vetting applications, Passionists, staff and volunteers must complete an Invitation to Vet Form. Each applicant must also supply identification. The Invitation to Vet Form NV1 plus the photocopied ID must then be forwarded to the Provincial Office.
2. The Provincial's secretary will be responsible for ensuring that the applicant's identification meets the required standard and is verified; the identification must be photocopied and signed by the Provincial.
3. The Provincial will sign the form and the Secretary in the Provincial Office will retain the photocopied ID and a copy of the NV1 and place the details on the Vetting Record for the Provincial Office. The original NV1 will then be forwarded to the Dublin Archdiocese for processing by the Provincial's Secretary.
4. The applicant will then receive an email with a personalised link to complete their vetting application. Before they begin the applicant will need their mother's maiden name and all their previous addresses. After they complete the form the applicant will receive an email confirming that their application has been accepted and they will now be vetted.
5. Following the completion of the Garda Vetting Process the Provincial receives confirmation from the Garda Vetting Bureau as to the status of the Applicant. If the Vetting indicates previous convictions or concerns the Provincial will refer the matter to the Decision Making Committee.
6. Each section administrator will be responsible for ensuring that each member, staff or volunteer applies for Vetting every 3 years.
7. All vetting applications will be recorded in the Provincial Office.

### *Decision making*

The role of the Decision Making Committee will be fulfilled by the Provincial Council whereby they will assess the suitability of applicants for positions within the Organisation regarding any Garda vetting disclosures that may be received in respect of them. The Provincial Council will consider any information received from the Gardaí or Tusla in relation to an applicant.

## *Vetting Process (Northern Ireland)*

Vetting in Northern Ireland is only required where a person is working or is a volunteer providing services to or having close and regular supervision of children or vulnerable adults. In this case an Enhanced Check is carried out. The Access NI process can be completed at the same time as the application process. The Confidential Declaration Form must be completed by the applicant in confidence and posted to The Registered Person, Northern Dioceses Vetting Office by the applicant. ID verification must be completed after sending the forms to the applicant; only the Rector, PP or their nominee can verify ID. Page 2 of the Verification Form outlines the verification procedure and acceptable documentation. All queries regarding vetting can be made to the Vetting Office Catholic Church Northern Dioceses Tel: (028) 9049 2783 Email: [vetting@soddc.org](mailto:vetting@soddc.org).

### 1.6 VISITING CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS

All clergy (secular or religious, bishop, priest or deacon) who seek to minister in the Catholic Church in Ireland must have incardination in a diocese or equivalent. This means that they must belong to a diocese (or its equivalent in canon law, including an institute of consecrated life). The cleric must be in good standing and enjoy the faculties necessary to minister. The Provincial has a responsibility to take measures to ensure the safety and welfare of children. It is therefore important that certain checks are carried out to ensure that all clergy are in good standing prior to faculties being received.

#### *1.6.1 Procedures for visiting clergy within Ireland*

All clergy incardinated into a Diocese or religious order will have been Garda/AccessNI vetted as part of safe recruitment. Visiting clergy should follow best practice and contact the local parish priest/Superior of a religious house before undertaking ministry in that ecclesiastical jurisdiction. If this ministry is considered to be regulated activity, then the guidance regarding the vetting process must be undertaken and a letter of good standing received from the ordinary of the cleric.

#### *Procedures to be followed by visiting clergy from Ireland wishing to minister at a one-off event*

However, should the cleric be present for one event, such as a funeral, baptism or wedding, he should sign the register in the sacristy to declare his presence on a particular time and date. Furthermore, should the priest not be incardinated in the ecclesiastical jurisdiction that he visits, he must provide his celebret for inspection by the parish priest or duly delegated person, and this should be noted beside the visitor's signature in the register.

### *1.6.2 Procedures to be followed by visiting clergy from outside Ireland wishing to minister on a short-term basis*

When clergy from outside Ireland visit with the intention of being involved in short-term ministry, evidence should be provided by their Ordinary that confirms they are priests in good standing and that they are fit for ministry. Clergy who come from parts of the world where police vetting arrangements are not in existence may seek to minister in Ireland. As a consequence, the statutory route is not always available as a means of confirming that there is no adverse information known about them that would prevent them from carrying out ministry in Ireland.

1. Prior to visiting Ireland, where there is an intention to engage in public ministry in a Passionist location, all visiting priests must write seeking permission of the Provincial, giving details about the duration of the visit, the type of ministry and the location of ministry being considered. The contact details of the Provincial or Bishop of the visiting priest must be provided in advance;
2. Upon receipt of a request from visiting clergy to carry out ministry, the Provincial will acknowledge same, and respond in writing to request the visitor for a celebret or confirmation of good standing signed by their Provincial;
3. The visiting priest must be asked to complete a declaration of good standing.
4. A vetting check must be carried out through the Garda National Vetting Bureau/Access NI);
5. If the Provincial is satisfied that there are no concerns about the visiting religious, permission should be given in writing to the visitor, outlining the specified ministry, including its duration and location;
6. A copy of this permission should be forwarded to the Provincial of the visitor.
7. A copy of the permission should be stored in the offices of the Superior and the Provincial, in line with confidentiality and storage of information.

### *Procedures to be followed by visiting clergy from outside Ireland wishing to minister at a one-off event*

Should a cleric be present for one event in a Passionist parish or Church, such as a funeral, baptism or wedding, he should sign the register in the sacristy to declare his presence on a particular time and date. Furthermore, should the priest not be incardinated in the ecclesiastical jurisdiction that he visits, he must provide his celebret for inspection by the parish priest or duly delegated person, and this should be noted beside the visitor's signature in the register.

For any public ministry in one of our churches, the relevant diocesan procedures must also be followed.

### **1.6.3 *Procedures for visiting persons in any form of consecrated life within and outside Ireland***

- 1. Prior to their visit, where there is an intention to engage in public ministry, all visiting religious must write seeking permission of the Church authority, giving details about the duration of the visit, the type of ministry and the location of ministry being considered. Contact details of the Church authority of the visiting religious must be provided in advance;**
- 2. Upon receipt of request from the visiting religious to carry out ministry, the Church authority must acknowledge the same, and then make a request in writing to the visitor for a confirmation of good standing by their Provincial ;**
- 3. A vetting check must be processed through the Garda National Vetting Bureau/Access NI);**
- 4. If the Church authority is satisfied that there are no concerns about the visiting religious, permission should be given in writing to the visitor, outlining the specified ministry, including its duration and location;**
- 5. A copy of this permission should be forwarded to the Provincial of the visitor, and also retained by the Provincial or local Superior of the location of the ministry outlined in the letter, in line with confidentiality and storage of information.**

**For any public ministry in one of our churches, the relevant diocesan procedures must also be followed.**

### **1.7 CELEBRETS**

**Every priest or deacon member of the Province in good standing is issued with a Celebret on an annual basis. It is a requirement for members of the Congregation, who are in transition between ministries/locations, to have a celebret. No one may be invited to concelebrate Mass without a celebret or letter of good standing. All Passionist Houses are to record the concelebrants of public masses. Local Superiors and Parish Priests are responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented.**

### **1.8 PASSIONISTS WORKING IN EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

**All Passionists who are ministering with children in an external organisation must have agreement from that organisation that safeguarding procedures are in place. The member working in the external organisation must agree to follow the safeguarding policies and procedures of that organisation.**

### **1.9 ATTENDANCE REGISTER FOR SACRISTY**

**An attendance register must be maintained in all locations recording who celebrated masses and who was in attendance in the Sacristy. All clergy, altar servers, sacristans and others who visit the sacristy before or after liturgical services are requested to sign. A new page to be used when the date changes. Where date continues from previous page it should be re-entered on subsequent page. (See Local Safeguarding Folder)**

### **1.10 WHISTLE-BLOWER POLICY**

**The Passionists are committed to supporting any priest or religious, member of staff or volunteer who comes forward with a concern in relation to child safeguarding or regarding the behaviour of any person which is of concern in relation to children. We recognise there may be impediments which could prevent someone from making a report and we will treat all concerns brought forward in confidentiality. The Passionists will work to ensure no one is victimised in any way for bringing forward concerns. All reports and concerns should be brought to the attention of the Designated Person for Child Protection or to the appropriate authorities in the police or social services. (Appendix 2)**

## **STANDARD TWO**

# **PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO CHILD PROTECTION SUSPICIONS, CONCERNS, ALLEGATIONS OR KNOWLEDGE**

### **2.1 HOW TO MANAGE CONCERNS, SUSPICIONS, ALLEGATIONS AND DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE INVOLVING PASSIONISTS, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

The Passionists are committed to promoting the safety, welfare and protection of children and will take all concerns, allegations, suspicions and disclosures of abuse very seriously. This procedure sets out the action that must be taken if any concern, allegation, suspicion or disclosure is made, whether current or historical, that indicates a Passionist, a member of staff or volunteer (current or former) has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- committed a criminal offence against a child or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The procedure applies to all Passionists, staff and volunteers.

Following receipt of an allegation, suspicion or concern, the following steps should be taken.

1. Immediately on receipt of a suspicion, concern, disclosure or allegation of abuse, refer the matter to the DLP without delay.
2. If the allegation relates to a staff member or a volunteer, the DLP will report the allegation to:
  - Tusla/ Gateway Services teams for Children's Social Work at the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust
  - An Garda Síochána/PSNI
  - In addition to informing the Provincial.
3. If the allegation relates to a Passionist, the DLP will report the allegation to:
  - Tusla/ Gateway Services teams for Children's Social Work at the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust
  - An Garda Síochána/PSNI
  - In addition to informing the Provincial and referring the allegation to the NSBCCCI.

4. If the allegation is in relation to someone other than a Passionist, staff or volunteer, the DLP will follow normal referral procedures and refer the allegation to:
  - Tusla /Gateway Services teams for Children’s Social Work at the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust
  - An Garda Síochána/PSNI
5. If there is any uncertainty about whether the allegation/concern meets the threshold for reporting, a consultation should take place by the DLP with the statutory authorities, who will advise on the requirements for notification.

## 2.2 ACTION WHEN YOU RECEIVE A CONCERN, SUSPICION, DISCLOSURE OR ALLEGATION OF ABUSE

Remember: it is not your role to investigate.

1. If you receive a concern, suspicion, disclosure or allegation of abuse, you must act immediately and refer the matter to your DLP as soon as possible; the DLP will refer the complaint to the Social Services / Police without delay. **(For clergy, pastoral care and safeguarding staff see section below on Mandated Reporting).**
2. Whenever possible and practical, take notes during the conversation. Always ask permission to do this and explain the importance of recording all information. Record the time, date, location (or if the matter has been communicated by letter or telephone), and persons present.
3. Not all persons raising a concern will wish to go through the process described. Nonetheless, information about the existence of a potential allegation must always be communicated to the DLP.
4. In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, an immediate report should be made to the Social Services as well as to the DLP. Where the appropriate Social Services staff are not available, Police should be contacted to ensure that **under no circumstances a child is left in a dangerous situation pending Social Services intervention.** (contacts Appendix 2)

It is important not to discuss the incident/concern with anyone other than those detailed in these procedures.

### 2.2.1 Mandated Persons (Republic of Ireland)

Under the Children First Act 2015, certain people must by law report to Tusla any incidences of harm that meet or exceed a specified threshold. These people are known as ‘mandated persons’ under the legislation. Mandated persons are people who have ongoing contact with children and/or families and who because of their qualifications, training and experience are in a key position to protect children from harm. The list of mandated persons includes members of the clergy, pastoral care workers and safeguarding officers/ child protection officers employed for the purpose of performing the child welfare and protection

function of religious organisations. As a mandated person, you should make any referrals jointly with the DLP.

### 2.3 GUIDANCE ON HOW TO RESPOND TO PEOPLE MAKING AN ALLEGATION

It is often very difficult for people to talk about abuse so it is important to make sure that you are patient, listen carefully and actively, and create a safe environment in which they feel able to tell you as much as they can remember. This will help those people whose responsibility it is to investigate the incident(s) to do so as thoroughly as possible.

People may tell you about:

- abuse that's happened to them now – current
- abuse that happened to them some time ago – historical
- something they've been told by someone else and that they strongly believe is true
- seeing signs of abuse, such as physical injuries on a child
- something that they have witnessed, such as the behaviour of an adult to a child that made them feel uncomfortable.

Where information is given in person, consider the following.

- Listen carefully to that person, but do not ask intrusive or leading questions.
- Stay calm, take what the person raising the concern says seriously, and reassure them.
- Allow the person to continue at his/her own pace.
- Check with the person to make sure that you have understood what they actually said. Do not suggest words, but use theirs.
- Make no promises that cannot be kept, particularly in relation to secrecy, but listen carefully to what is being sought.
- Explain the referral procedures to the person and your obligations.
- Offer to accompany the person to the DLP.
- Do not make any comments about the respondent, make assumptions or speculate.
- Be aware that a person's ability to recount his or her concern or allegation will depend on age, culture, nationality and upon any disability which may affect use of language and range of vocabulary.
- Adopt a listening style which is compassionate, calm and reassuring. If the information given to you shocks, disgusts or distresses you, do not allow these feelings to show. If you do, you may inadvertently dissuade the person from giving any further information.
- Avoid statements about your belief or otherwise, of the information given.
- Do not question beyond checking what has been said. It is the job of the Social Services and Police to investigate. There must be no probing for detail beyond that which has been freely given.

Listening does not mean telling a person to stop when they are freely recalling events; because some facts are only ever told once, the information given must be fully and accurately recorded. However, it is better that such detail is given directly to a professional from one of the Social Services or Police, to allow proper procedures to be observed and to avoid the distress of having to repeat the account more than once.

**A Priest must be clear about the status of such a conversation. Make sure there is no misunderstanding about whether the Seal of Confession applies.**

#### 2.4 LISTENING TO A CHILD

##### *How to respond*

When responding it is of utmost importance that allegations are handled in a sensitive and discreet manner and any response to a child making an allegation should take the following into consideration:

- Take what the child says seriously.
- React in a calm manner as over-reaction may intimidate the child and increase any feelings of guilt and that he/she may have.
- Reassure the child that it was right to tell somebody what happened.
- Use language that the child understands: for example, when naming different parts of the body adopt the child's words rather than substituting your own.
- Listen carefully and attentively to the child.
- Be careful when seeking clarification. Conversation should be supportive and for the purpose of clarification only. Never ask leading questions such as, whether specific acts not mentioned by the child occurred or whether a specific person not named by the child carried out the abuse. Do not seek intimate details beyond those volunteered by the child. Such questions and suggestions could complicate an official investigation by the Social Services/Police.
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser to the person reporting to you.
- Do not confront the alleged abuser.
- Write down immediately afterwards what was said, including where, when, any other significant factors, noting marks and signs observed. All reports should be signed, timed and dated by the person recording the event.
- Check with the child to ensure what has been heard and understood by you accords with what the child actually said.
- Make no promises that cannot be kept.
- Do not promise to keep secret what will be revealed. You can avoid this by telling the child that the confidential nature of an allegation does not result in the allegation remaining a secret and that the matter will have to be investigated as it is referred.
- Explain and make sure that the child understands what will happen next.

## **2.5 LISTENING TO A PERSON WHO ADMITS ABUSING A CHILD**

**It is necessary to tell a person who admits an offence against a child or young person that such information cannot be kept confidential. If such an admission is made to you, even where the admission relates to something which happened a long time ago, you must refer the matter to the DLP as soon as possible, who will follow the procedures for referral to the Social Services/ Police.**

## **2.6 ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS**

**Anonymous complaints are to be treated carefully. Anxiety and fear may persuade some people not to reveal their identity immediately. It is sometimes difficult to act on information under these procedures unless at some point the name of the person raising the concern/making an allegation becomes known. The person raising the concern should be informed that anonymity might restrict the ability of professionals to access information or to intervene to protect a child. As much openness as possible should be encouraged.**

## STANDARD THREE

# CARE AND SUPPORT FOR THE COMPLAINANT

Anyone who has alleged child abuse will receive a compassionate response from Passionist personnel and be offered access to appropriate care, advice and support. Complainants will be listened to and heard to ensure that any allegation or disclosure of abuse is handled compassionately, effectively and professionally.

Disclosing abuse takes enormous courage and calls for a high level of trust. Child abuse by its very nature can damage trust; it is therefore imperative that when a complainant is ready to tell their story, the listener responds with great sensitivity and compassion. Pastoral care may be offered and provided by the DLP or a Support Person if it is the preference of the complainant.

### 3. SUPPORT OFFERED

- Once an allegation has been received, the DLP will try to arrange a face to face meeting with the complainant, in a manner that respects the wishes of the person;
- The complainant may be accompanied by a person of their choice to the meeting;
- Every complainant is offered access to a support person. It is the prerogative of the complainant whether or not they wish to accept the assistance of a support person;
- The complainant will be provided with details of support services and assisted in making an appointment if required;
- The Passionists are committed to funding such professional support, as appropriate;
- If the threshold for reporting has been reached, the DLP will help the complainant to understand the necessity to refer the matter to the statutory authorities;
- At an appropriate time in the process, the complainant will be invited to meet with the Provincial or another representative of the Passionists if this is their desire. This meeting is not for the purpose of determining the outcome of any investigations, but for the Provincial to hear and acknowledge the experience of the complainant;
- At the end of this meeting, the support needs can be reviewed. Some complainants may wish to remain engaged with their Church despite the effect that the abuse may have had on their relationship with it, and, perhaps, with God. By meeting with and listening to complainants, the response from the Church that might best meet their spiritual needs can be identified with them. Towards Peace may be of assistance in this regard.

## STANDARD FOUR

# CARE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE RESPONDENT

The Passionists employ different processes regarding the management of the respondent dependent on the stage the case is at. Care is an important element at every stage as people who have received an allegation against them are recognised as being vulnerable. It is important that there are fair procedures with regard to the management and investigation of allegations. A proper balance should be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights of respondents. Where there is a conflict, the child's welfare must come first.

The DLP has responsibility for case management and ensuring that appropriate protective measures have been taken and also that support is offered to the respondent. The role of the adviser is to support the respondent at meetings, direct him to counselling or other professional services, and keep him informed of the progress of the case. The Provincial has responsibility to oversee the case and ensure that the relevant personnel are in place and acting in accordance with their role.

### 4.1 INTERNAL CASE MANAGEMENT

- On receipt of an allegation, the priority is to ensure that information that has reached the threshold for reporting is referred to the statutory authorities. The DLP will check with An Garda Síochána/PSNI if there is any reason as to why the information cannot be shared at that time with the respondent. In certain circumstances, An Garda Síochána/PSNI may ask the DLP to delay this so as not to hamper an investigation. Should the complainant first approach the statutory authorities An Garda Síochána/PSNI may not disclose the identity of the complainant if it is at a preliminary stage of their investigation.
- At the earliest opportunity, the Provincial will call a meeting with the respondent and invite him to bring a person for support.
- At the meeting the DLP will share the details of the allegation with the respondent. The respondent will be supported to seek canonical advice and if appropriate, civil legal advice. He will be advised that he can respond to the allegation if he wishes and this will be recorded and referred to the statutory authorities. However, he does not need to make a response at this stage.

- The Provincial will judge the level of risk in consultation with the statutory authorities, DLP, and the Advisery Panel/ NCMC. A decision will be made at this stage as to whether an interim management plan is required, which may include restrictions to sacred ministry.
- There may need to be consideration as to whether a public statement is required.
- If the threshold for reporting has been reached, a preliminary investigation in accordance with canon law will be initiated by the Provincial (CIC, c. 1717). This canonical inquiry will be paused to allow any statutory investigation to take place.
- A written reminder is given to the respondent from the Provincial to advise him to act in accordance with the child safeguarding policies and procedures.
- If required, the DLP and the Provincial will meet the respondent and his adviser to present him with an interim management plan, which the respondent will be asked to agree to and sign. During this meeting, the respondent must be advised that the preliminary investigation will be resumed following the conclusion of any statutory authority enquiries.
- The role in relation to the pastoral care of the respondent remains with the Provincial as before.

#### 4.2 CANONICAL INQUIRY INCLUDING PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION

- The preliminary investigation is the initial stage of the canonical inquiry. It is completed once formal confirmation is received from the statutory authorities that their investigations are completed. The DLP may complete the Preliminary Investigation with the support of a canon lawyer or the Provincial may instruct another appropriate person/s to complete it. At the end of the investigation, a report is prepared for the Provincial.
- Conclusion of this report should enable the Provincial to assist in deciding whether there is a case to answer, and that the case is not manifestly false or frivolous.
- If the preliminary investigation finds there is no case to answer, the respondent should be advised that the case is closed and returned to ministry if relevant.
- If the preliminary investigation finds there is a case to answer, the Provincial must forward a report to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF).
- The CDF will authorise the appropriate canonical process to be followed (e.g. a judicial penal process, an administrative penal process, confirm precept).

#### 4.3 SUPPORT

- While statutory and/or Church investigations are underway, pastoral support will be offered to the respondent. It is recognised that this is an especially difficult time for any person and they will be vulnerable. They are provided with an adviser/support person and counselling and other support may be offered as well as canonical and legal advice.

- If at the end of a preliminary investigation, it is found there is no case to answer it is important that all outstanding matters are addressed to allow the person to move forward with their life and ministry. Therefore, in preparation, the respondent should be provided with counselling and support to assist them to deal with any residual anger/distress. This may include spiritual direction, reflection and discussions with the Provincial or a member of leadership.
- There may need to be consideration as to whether a public statement is required.
- If the allegations are substantiated at the end of the canonical process, the person requires pastoral and therapeutic support to help address any offending behaviour.
- The person will at this point be required to sign a Ministry and Lifestyle Plan. This plan is subject to annual review.

## TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

### STANDARD FIVE

All relevant personnel must complete training in child safeguarding. Those in safeguarding roles are offered further training to enhance their effectiveness.

- All Passionists, employees and volunteers have a role to play in child safeguarding particularly if their work brings them into contact with children and young people.
- The Passionists ensure that all members attend either a safeguarding information session or full-day training, depending on their ministry and retirement status.
- Staff and volunteers working with children on behalf of the Passionists are fully inducted and trained in child safeguarding.
- Attendance records and a training audit are maintained.
- As part of their overall induction, all new employees/volunteers are made aware of the Passionist Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- The Passionists are committed to ensuring that everyone has the required knowledge and skills to exercise their specific safeguarding function. Funding is provided for training in this regard.
- The DLP is expected to keep updated on issues relating to safeguarding children, by keeping abreast of changes in policy and guidance and attending relevant courses and conferences.
- A function of the DLP's role is to be available to all Passionists, employees and volunteers for advice, guidance and support.
- The DLP builds his/her network of professional services so that advice and specific information can be accessed.

# COMMUNICATING THE CHURCH'S SAFEGUARDING MESSAGE

## STANDARD SIX

Having a child safeguarding policy and procedure document is a requirement but in order for the document to be effective, it must be communicated to the relevant people in an appropriate way. The Passionist Safeguarding Committee together with the DLP will ensure that the Passionist Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are communicated to all personnel, lay faithful, parents and children, and external agencies. Practices are in place to facilitate personnel in having a good working knowledge of the policy and procedures.

These practices include:

- Passionists being inducted into the use of the safeguarding policy and procedures;
- All Passionists, employees and volunteers are required to comply with the procedures;
- *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016* along with the Passionists Safeguarding Procedures are posted on our website [www.passionists.ie](http://www.passionists.ie). Hard copies of the policy and procedures are available.
- Safeguarding training and awareness-raising workshops for all personnel are available;
- The child safeguarding statement and relevant contact details are on prominent and permanent display in Passionist premises;
- Use is made of the website, newsletters, pastoral letters etc. to further communicate the safeguarding message;
- The Safeguarding Committee is established to regularly review safeguarding practices and help publicise the message;
- The Passionists work with the statutory authorities to:
  1. Ensure our message is in line with best practice and legislation;
  2. Ensure the statutory authorities know what the Passionist policy is in regard to safeguarding of children and young people;
  3. Report all allegations and share information as appropriate.

# QUALITY ASSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE STANDARDS

## STANDARD SEVEN

Quality assurance procedures are a systematic method of assessing the extent to which the previous six child safeguarding standards are implemented at all levels within the Passionists. We want to ensure that a process of continuous improvement takes place.

### 7.1 SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

The role of the safeguarding committee is to oversee the implementation of Standards 1, 5, 6 and 7. In relation to Standard 7, the safeguarding committee is responsible for:

- Producing and reviewing the three-year child safeguarding plan of how to maintain the seven standards across the Passionist organisation;
- Liaising with the local safeguarding representatives (LSRs) to ensure the compilation of a local safeguarding audit, and to identify areas where guidance and support on policy or practice is needed;
- Ensuring that an annual safeguarding report on Standards 1, 5 and 6 is made to the Provincial.

### 7.2 SAFEGUARDING STRATEGIC PLAN

The safeguarding strategic plan is to assess the effectiveness of the steps being taken to keep children safe. The purpose of this internal child safeguarding plan is to set out what, how, who and in what time frame key elements of child safeguarding practices and procedures are going to be met by the Passionists.

The Passionist safeguarding plan includes the following:

- Specific objectives linked to each of the safeguarding standards. These objectives can be broken down into set actions. A training plan and communications plan is included.
- Resources: It is important to set specific and realistic objectives linked to identified allocated resources.

- **Implementation:** The Provincial, through the safeguarding committee, should identify clear time frames for implementation, which should take account of the completion of the local safeguarding audits.
- **Review and evaluation:** It is important that the three-year plan sets clear dates for review of each specific objective outlined in the plan. These review dates should be achieved on an annual basis, and reviews should take account of the outcomes of the annual local safeguarding audit.

### 7.3 QUALITY ASSURANCE

This is done by applying three methods:

1. Assessing compliance during systematic visits to Passionist centres or community houses;
2. Annual self-audit scheme carried out locally, but coordinated by the safeguarding committee;
3. External audits by the NBSCCCI and statutory agencies eg. Tusla.



# APPENDIX 1

## DEFINITIONS

### DEFINITION OF A CHILD

Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child a child is defined as any person under the age of eighteen years who is not married.

### DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The important factor in deciding whether the behaviour is abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the parent/carer. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts.

#### a. *Neglect*

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences. Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties.

The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect.

Neglect is associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental illness and disability. A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical

of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where you see the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.

The following are features of child neglect:

- Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision
- Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding
- Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation
- Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation
- Inadequate living conditions – unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture
- Lack of adequate clothing
- Inattention to basic hygiene
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age
- Persistent failure to attend school
- Abandonment or desertion.

#### b. *Emotional Abuse*

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children's emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer.

Emotional abuse may be seen in some of the following ways:

- Rejection
- Lack of comfort and love
- Lack of attachment
- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play)
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned)
- Continuous lack of praise and encouragement
- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child
- Bullying

- Conditional parenting in which care or affection of a child depends on his or her behaviours or actions
- Extreme overprotectiveness
- Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. locking child in bedroom)
- Ongoing family conflicts and family violence
- Seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to his/her age and stage of development.

There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour. It should be noted that no one indicator is conclusive evidence of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is more likely to impact negatively on a child where it is persistent over time and where there is a lack of other protective factors.

### c. *Physical Abuse*

Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health and/or development is, may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

Physical abuse can include the following:

- Physical punishment
- Beating, slapping, hitting or kicking
- Pushing, shaking or throwing
- Pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling
- Use of excessive force in handling
- Deliberate poisoning
- Suffocation
- Fabricated/induced illness
- Female genital mutilation

The Children First Act 2015 (Republic of Ireland) includes a provision that abolishes the common law defence of reasonable chastisement in court proceedings. This defence could previously be invoked by a parent or other person in authority who physically disciplined a child. The change in the legislation now means that in prosecutions relating to assault or physical cruelty, a person who administers such punishment to a child cannot rely on the defence of reasonable chastisement in the legal proceedings. The result of this is that the protections in law relating to assault now apply to a child in the same way as they do to an adult.

#### *d. Sexual Abuse*

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography.

Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and in some instances occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members.

Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings/friends, from the suspicions of an adult, and/or by physical symptoms.

Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child
- An invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of a child's body whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
- Masturbation in the presence of a child or the involvement of a child in an act of masturbation
- Sexual intercourse with a child, whether oral, vaginal or anal
- Sexual exploitation of a child, which includes:
  - Inviting, inducing or coercing a child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography [for example, exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means]
  - Inviting, coercing or inducing a child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent or obscene act
  - Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse
- Exposing a child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person

An Garda Síochána will deal with any criminal aspects of a sexual abuse case under the relevant criminal justice legislation. The prosecution of a sexual offence against a child will be considered within the wider objective of child welfare and protection. The safety of the child is paramount and at no stage should a child's safety be compromised because of concern for the integrity of a criminal investigation.

In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in criminal law the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal. However, it may not necessarily be regard-

ed as child sexual abuse. Details on exemptions for mandated reporting of certain cases of underage consensual sexual activity can be found below.

### *Exemptions from Requirements to Report*

#### **Underage Consensual Sexual Activity.**

Under the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2006, the legal age of consent is 17 years. While a sexual relationship where one or both parties is under 17 years of age is illegal, when making a mandated report to Tusla, it might not be regarded as child sexual abuse.

There are certain exemptions from reporting underage consensual activity under section 14(3) of the Children First Act 2015. If you are satisfied that all of the following criteria are met, you are not required to make a report to Tusla:

- The young person(s) concerned are between 15 and 17 years old
- The age difference between them is not more than 24 months
- There is no material difference in their maturity or capacity to consent
- The relationship between the people engaged in sexual activity does not involve intimidation or exploitation of either person
- The young persons concerned state clearly that they do not want any information about the activity to be disclosed to Tusla.
- In effect, this means that if all the above criteria are met, you as a mandated person do not have to report consensual sexual activity between older teenagers as sexual abuse to Tusla.

**All persons, including mandated persons, must uphold the key principle that the welfare of the child is paramount and if you have any concerns, even where all the above criteria are met, you may make a report to Tusla.**

## APPENDIX 2

### CONTACTS DETAILS

#### *Designated liaison Person*

Suzanne Phelan  
Provincial Office  
St Paul's Retreat  
Mount Argus  
Dublin 6W  
Tel: 01 4992050 mob: 085 1146391  
Email; phelansuzanne@gmail.com

#### *Deputy Designated Liaison Person*

Fr Bernard Lowe  
St Paul's Retreat  
Mount Argus  
Dublin 6 W  
Tel: 087 6324995

#### Child Protection Services

Duty Social Worker  
Chamber House  
Chamber Square  
Dublin 24  
Tel: 01 4686289

#### N. IRELAND

Duty Social Worker  
Gateway Services  
110 Saintfield Road  
BELFAST BT8 6HD  
Tel: 028 9050 7000

Down Gateway Team  
Children's Services  
81 Market Street  
Downpatrick BT30 6LZ  
Tel: 0300 100 0300

Western Gateway Team Enniskillen Office  
2 Coleshill Road,  
Enniskillen,

**Co Fermanagh BT74 7HG**

**Tel: 028 7131 4090**

**Local Social Service Gateway Teams:**

- **Belfast HSC Trust 028 9050 7000**
- **SE HSC Trust 0300 1000 300**
- **Northern HSC Trust 0300 1234 333**
- **Southern HSC Trust 0800 7838745**
- **Western HSC Trust 028 7131 4090**
- **Regional Emergency Social Work Service 028 9504 9999**
- **NSPCC 0808 800 5000**

**POLICE**

**GARDA**

**Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Investigation Unit**

**National Bureau of Criminal Investigation**

**Garda Headquarters**

**Harcourt Square**

**Dublin 2**

**Tel: 01 6663430**

**Garda Confidential Child Sexual Abuse Reporting**

**Tel: 1800 555222**

**PSNI**

**Child Abuse Investigation Unit**

**48 Queen St, Enniskillen,**

**Co Fermanagh.**

**Tel: 046 66321562**

**Should you need to report any incident of child abuse, contact:**

- **The police service on 101, the non-emergency telephone number, where you will be put in contact with a specially trained police officer.**
- **In an emergency situation dial 999.**

## APPENDIX 3

### REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION AND WELFARE CONCERNS (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND) USING THE PORTAL

To support efficient, safe and secure making of reports of child protection and welfare Concerns, Tusla (The Child and Family Agency) have launched an online web Portal (for making reports of concern. This new portal currently allows Mandated Persons to register and report a concern online.

#### *Submitting a Report*

This is now to be the main method\* of submitting a report of a Child Protection and Welfare Concern to Tusla.

The Portal should be used to report all types of child protection and welfare concerns, i.e. (a) mandated reports of child harm and (b) reasonable grounds of concern. You cannot currently submit Retrospective Abuse Report Forms (RARFs) using the web portal so please do so through the current existing method\*. All personnel are advised to watch the video guide (<https://youtu.be/9nux91Ce5yM>) for the online portal.

\*If there is a difficulty using the portal, the referral can be made in writing on the form.

#### *How to use the Tusla Portal*

Each individual must first register as a user on the Portal. The current list of professionals on the portal gives those listed as mandated reporters for the purposes of the Children First Act 2015. However, all other professionals can register using the 'other' category.

The online report consists of 10 separate screens (through which you will be navigated) where information is inputted. Before commencing an online report it is advised that you gather the relevant information in advance. Once an online report commences the user will have twenty-four hours to submit to Tusla before data inputted is wiped, in line with data protection best practices. If it is a joint report, the online report has a screen for the reporter to complete the details of another professional.

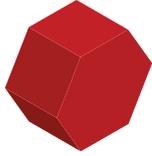
Once a report is submitted to Tusla, the reporter will receive an email within one (1) day confirming the report has been submitted successfully. If you do not receive this email you

should consider your report as not received and contact your local Tusla office directly to clarify. For data protection reasons, no personal information (including the name or initials of the child) will be kept on the portal. The portal will only retain a high level record of your submission (Reference Number).

Please note: Where multiple reports are made by an individual, it is advisable to keep a record of the relevant Reference Number provided that is associated to the child for whom the report of concern has been made. You may also print a copy of the referral for your records

All personnel are reminded to make themselves familiar with the Children First Act 2015 and relevant guidance materials available at [www.hse.ie/childrenfirst](http://www.hse.ie/childrenfirst) and <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first>.

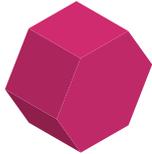
If, as a MANDATED PERSON, you have a CONCERN in relation to a child OUT OF HOURS, please contact 0818776315



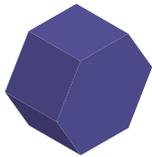
**STANDARD 1  
CREATING & MAINTAINING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS**



**STANDARD 2  
PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO CHILD PROTECTION  
SUSPICIONS, CONCERNS, ALLEGATIONS OR KNOWLEDGE**



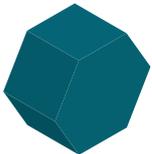
**STANDARD 3  
CARE AND SUPPORT FOR THE COMPLAINANT**



**STANDARD 4  
CARE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE RESPONDENT**



**STANDARD 5  
TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE**



**STANDARD 6  
COMMUNICATING THE CHURCH'S SAFEGUARDING MESSAGE**



**STANDARD 7  
QUALITY ASSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE STANDARDS**

# **PASSIONISTS**

**ST PATRICK'S PROVINCE**

[www.passionists.ie](http://www.passionists.ie)

