



**Sisters of the Holy Faith
Irish Region**

Child Safeguarding Manual



2023

This guide is intended to ensure that Holy Faith policies and procedures for the safeguarding of children are clear, up-to-date, and available to all. It is designed to ensure that best practice is employed when it comes to creating a safe environment for all children.

“Families need to know that the Church is making every effort to protect their children. They should also know that they have every right to turn to the Church with full confidence, for it is a safe and secure home”

(Pope Francis)

Definition of Key Terms

- A child is a person under the age of 18 years.
- Safeguarding is all the things we do to create and maintain safe environments for children involved in Church activities.
- Child protection consists of the measures we take once a threat to the safety of a child has been identified.

HOLY FAITH SISTERS SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

This statement is derived from Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016.

We recognise and uphold the dignity and rights of all children. We are committed to ensuring their safety and well-being, and work in partnership with those who hold responsibility for their care. We recognise each as a gift from God, and we value and encourage their participation in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development.

All Church personnel (including clergy, religious, staff and volunteers) have a responsibility to safeguard children through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment that supports their best interests and prevents abuse.

The following principles inform and direct our service with children as defined in Safeguarding Children Policy 2022. We are committed to implementing the following principles:

1. Mandatory reporting

Each Holy Faith Sister has a duty to notify the statutory authorities of suspicions, concerns, knowledge, or allegations that a child is being or has been abused:

- physically
- emotionally
- sexually
- through neglect

Suspicions, concerns, knowledge, or allegations may relate to possible abuse by a member of Church personnel, but they can also relate to incidents in the child's family, or elsewhere in the community.

2. Responding appropriately to suspicions, concerns, knowledge, or allegations.

Anyone who brings any suspicion, concern, knowledge, or allegation of current or past abuse of a child to the notice of the Church will be responded to sensitively, respectfully, actively and in a timely manner, in line with statutory child protection procedures and Church requirements. The same procedure is followed in the case of vulnerable adults.

All suspicions, concerns, knowledge, or allegations that reach the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities (apart from those received in the Sacrament of Reconciliation) will be reported to the appropriate statutory authorities. This will be done irrespective of the status of the person (lay, cleric or religious) who is suspected of having been abusive to a child. In the case of a child, if the allegation relates to a lay member of Church personnel, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must be reported to the Church authority. If the allegation relates to a cleric or religious, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must also be reported to the Church authority and the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland. All Church personnel will cooperate with the statutory authorities in all cases.

Implementation

The Holy Faith Sisters are committed to safeguarding children through the implementation of *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland*. This statement, our structures and the human resources committed to safeguarding support our desire to keep children safe from harm while in our ministries. As part of our annual audit against the relevant indicators of the child safeguarding standards, we will review the effectiveness of our practice as outlined in this statement and will revise, as appropriate.

HOLY FAITH SAFEGUARDING STRUCTURES AND HUMAN RESOURCES

1. Overall Responsibility
2. Safeguarding Committee
3. Team member designated to child protection portfolio
4. Designated Liaison Person
5. Deputy Designated Liaison Person
6. Support Person (supports complainant)
7. Advisor: (supports respondent)
8. Local Safeguarding Representatives
9. Advisory panel:
Millett & Matthews, Solicitors
Cloe Yates, RSM Safeguarding Officer
Aidan McGrath, OFM, Canon Lawyer
(Consulted as necessary)

ROLE OF SAFEGUARDING PERSONNEL

1. **Church Authority: Regional Leader**
Be responsible for all safeguarding practices by:
 - Ensuring that the appropriate child safeguarding structures and personnel are in place;
 - Liaising with the Holy See, as appropriate. If the Church body is a religious order or congregation, this is done through the superior general;

- Ensuring compliance with canon and civil law;
- Upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

2. **Safeguarding Committee: Irish Regional Leadership Team**

- Developing a three-year child safeguarding plan, including the establishment of the local child safeguarding policy 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 Church authority, that the appropriate child safeguarding personnel are in place;
- Upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

3. **Designated Liaison Person (DLP)**

- Respond sensitively, respectfully, actively and in a timely manner to anyone who brings any suspicion, concern, knowledge, or allegation of current or past abuse of a child, in line with statutory child procedures and Church requirements.
- Report all suspicions, knowledge or allegations that reach the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities to the appropriate statutory authority.
- If the allegation relates to a lay member of the Church personnel, the DLP will notify the statutory authorities.

- If the allegation relates to a cleric or religious, the allegation must be reported to the Church authority and the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.
4. **Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP):** Substitutes for DLP in her absence
 5. **Support Person - Caring Pastorally for the Complainant:**
 - Keep the complainant informed of the process of the case
 - Help the complainant identify and access counselling and support
 - Record any meetings or contact they have with the complainant, and pass on relevant information to the DLP, as appropriate
 - Uphold the seven safeguarding standards in practice and behaviour
 - Being attentive to the expressed needs and objectives of the complainant, the support person should encourage and support the complainant in getting suitable help and be mindful of the vulnerability of the complainant during the process.
 6. **Clarity about the role**
 - The support person is not a counsellor for the complainant and should not act in that role.
 - The support person should not act as spiritual guide for the complainant.
 - The support person does not manage the case file and will not have access to it.
 - If the complainant is a child, the support person should liaise with the parents/guardians of the child.

7. Advisor - Caring Pastorally for the Respondent:

- Keeping the respondent informed of the process of the case;
- Helping direct the respondent to counselling and support;
- Recording any meetings or contact they have with the respondent and reporting to the DLP as appropriate;
- Upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

8. Local Safeguarding Representative:

- Ensures that if a caller makes an allegation, all sisters are aware of and familiar with and implement procedures as follows:
 - Stay calm and listen carefully
 - Accept what the person says, without comment
 - Explain that the sister appointed to deal with any allegation is Sr Barbara Perry
 - Refer to Holy Faith Sisters Safeguarding Statement (Poster) for number of DLP, (Barbara Perry) who uses a specially designated phone number for safeguarding issues
 - Ensure that the Holy Faith Sisters' Safeguarding Statement/Poster is on public display.

CONTACT DETAILS

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Sr Barbara Perry

Email: barbara@luisne.ie

Phone: 083 0164527

Safeguarding and Support Officer and Deputy DLP

Sr Rosemary Duffy

Email: rcdhf3@gmail.com

Phone: 083 0164527

Church Authority and Training and Development Coordinator

Sr Evelyn Greene

Email: evelyngreenechf@gmail.com

Phone: Regional Office 01 8572100

Garda Vetting Administrator

Sr Aideen Tierney

Email address: aideentierney@gmail.com

Phone: Regional Office 01 8572100

Line Managers in Communities

Ensure staff are familiar with the safeguarding policies and practices in the region

Note on Mandated Persons:

Mandated persons (as defined in the Children First Act, 2015) are people who have contact with children and/or families and who, because of their qualifications, training and/or employment role, are in a key position to help protect children from harm.

Mandated persons have two main legal obligations under the Children First Act, 2015:

- 1 To report harm of children, above a defined threshold, to Tusla
2. To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report

Our Code of Practice

- Treat all people with justice and respect
- Encourage everyone to contribute to parish life
- Listen to and respect the views of others
- Respect people's personal boundaries
- Encourage people to speak openly about anything that may be worrying them
- Operate in accordance with the Holy Faith Safeguarding policy

The protection of children is our responsibility

It is a responsibility we share with others

Good safeguarding practice also protects the individual, the community, and the region, but the children come first.

Our Key Safeguarding Practices

- Valuing children and demonstrating respect for them
- Obtaining consent for their participation in parish activities
- Choosing carefully those who work with children (this includes Garda Vetting)
- Ensuring staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them (Code of Conduct)
- Making proper arrangements for children who attend activities
- Keeping appropriate records
- Promptly reporting all concerns for the safety and protection of children



Holy Faith Sisters - Irish Region

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

As a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland, we recognise and uphold the dignity and rights of all children, are committed to ensuring their safety and well-being, and will work in partnership with parents/guardians to do this. We recognise each child as a gift from God, and we value and encourage the participation of children in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

All Church personnel (including clergy, religious, staff and volunteers) have a responsibility to safeguard children through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment that supports their best interests and prevents abuse.

Details of Personnel to contact if you are concerned about the Welfare and Safety of Children:

Regional Designated Liaison Person, Sr. Barbara Perry (ph: 083 016 4527)

Regional Deputy Designated Liaison Person, Sr. Rosemary Duffy (ph: 083 016 4527)

An Garda Síochána (ph: 01 666 3435)

Tusla: Blanchardstown (ph: 01 897 6805) / Swords (ph: 01 870 8000)