



Congregation of
Our Lady of Charity
of the Good Shepherd

Safeguarding Children 2019

Contents

Introduction.....	4
Glossary/Definitions	5
Important Contact Details	6
Scope of the policy	9
Legislative Requirements of the Children First Act 2015	9
Mandated Persons:	9
Child Safeguarding Statement.....	9
Status and Layout of this Document	9
Layout of the Procedures	10
Child Safeguarding Policy Statement	11
Roles in the Safeguarding Structure.....	12
Province Leader	12
Safeguarding Co-ordinator	12
Designated liaison person (DLP).....	12
Advisory panel (if applicable)	12
Support person	13
Advisor	13
Safeguarding trainers	13
Local safeguarding representative (LSR)	13
Safeguarding Committee.....	14
Section 1: Developing a Culture of Safeguarding.....	15
Recruitment & Selection Procedures	15
Garda Vetting and Police Checks.....	16
Code of Behaviour for Adults	17
Breaches of the Code of Behaviour.....	18
General Complaints Procedure:	19
For safeguarding concerns that are not allegations of abuse	19
First step	19
Second step	19
Protected Disclosure Policy	20
Reasons for making a disclosure	20

What stops people from making a disclosure	20
How to raise a concern.....	20
What happens next?	21
Self-reporting.....	21
When Members Work for Another Organisation	21
Guidance on External Groups Working with Children that Use RGS Property	22
Training.....	22
Communication	23
Communication strategy	23
Section 2: Child Abuse – Recognising, Responding, Reporting and Recording.....	25
Categories and Indicators of Child Abuse	25
Roles & Responsibilities.....	28
Procedure for reporting an allegation of child abuse & Flowchart.....	30
Responding to a person making an allegation of abuse	32
Guidance on responding to a child disclosing abuse	33
Guidance for Receiving and Recording an Allegation	33
Recording and Data Protection	34
Support and Care of the Complainant.....	35
Procedure for allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers.....	36
Action taken after reporting to statutory authorities	36
Allegations against Staff/Volunteers.....	36
Allegations against RGS members.....	37
Canonical Inquiry including Preliminary Investigation	38
If there is no case to answer	38
Risk Management.....	38
Support	38
Section 3: Quality Assurance	39
Role of Safeguarding Committee	40
Safeguarding Strategic Plan.....	40
Audit and Quality Assurance	41
Declaration	46
To be completed by Church Authority/Management of External Organisation.....	48
Safeguarding Poster	54

Training and Garda Vetting	54
Employees and volunteers	55
Safe Recruitment.....	55
Ministry with Children or Vulnerable Persons	55
Question to be discussed by phone or during visit by Safeguarding Co-Ordinator.....	55

Introduction

The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd Irish Province (RGS) strives to create an environment in which children are safe and respected. This Policy is tailored to the specific requirements in Ireland. It seeks to incorporate best practice as found in the civil documents, Safeguarding Children Policy & Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2016) issued by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCI). Our Policy has been updated to take account of the national guidance set out in the Children First 2015, the HSE guidance document "Child Protection and Welfare Practice" Handbook 2011, and other legislative provisions including the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012. This Policy expresses our commitment to best practice as outlined in these documents. We are committed to:

- Fully reporting all reports, allegations, complaints, disclosures, suspicions, or concerns (current, historical, or anonymous) to the civil authorities without delay.
- Implementing this Policy
- Doing all in our power to create a safe environment for children to ensure their welfare is paramount
- Co-operating fully with the civil authorities in all aspects of safeguarding
- Welcoming and listening to anyone who presents with a report, concern, suspicion, allegation, complaint, disclosure (historical or current or anonymous).

This Policy Handbook was approved, adopted and issued by the Province Leadership Team of the Congregation in Ireland on 30th January 2019. This Policy replaces and supersedes our previous Policy Statement issued 22nd October 2015. This Policy will be reviewed by the Province Leadership Team at least every 3 years, and more regularly if required. If any member of our Congregation in Ireland, or any employee or volunteer has any concern, they shall immediately contact the DLP. Each member of our Congregation in Ireland, and every employee and volunteer in Ireland shall be familiar with and adhere to this Policy. The name and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Officer is clearly displayed at the entrance/foyer/reception of every Congregational building, together with a copy of this Policy.

Note to parents/guardians/carers: you are welcome to and encouraged to provide the Congregation with your views and feedback on our Policy on keeping children safe.

Signed: Ethna McDermott
Sr. Ethna McDermott
Province Leader

Date: 8th February 2019

Glossary/Definitions

Child: A child or young person is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years 'excluding a person who is or has been married'

(Children's First National Guidance, 2011 p8.)

Children with specific needs:

This term is used to cover the specific or unique, out of the ordinary concerns created by the child's medical, physical, mental or developmental condition or disability. Additional services are usually needed to help a person in one or more of the following areas (among others): thinking communication, movement, getting along with others and taking care of oneself.

Church personnel:

The term 'Church personnel' is used to define those who work (voluntarily or paid) for the Church body. This includes clergy, religious, staff and volunteers.

Complainant:

This is the term used to describe a person who has made an allegation of abuse.

Contact with Children: Working on an activity or in a position that involves or may involve contact with children, either under the position description or due to the nature of the work environment.

Designated Liaison Person: The person appointed by the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, Province of Ireland, to liaise with the statutory authorities regarding child/vulnerable persons safeguarding suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations.

Intern: A student or trainee who works, sometimes without pay, in order to gain work experience or satisfy requirements for a qualification.

NBSCCCI: National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

Personnel: Personnel are either employed by an organisation, engaged by an organisation on a subcontract basis, or engaged by an organisation on a voluntary or unpaid basis.

Respondent: This term is used for the person about whom child/vulnerable person protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations have been made.

Statutory Authorities: These include TUSLA, HSE, HIQA and An Garda Síochána (Republic of Ireland) and SBNI, Department of Health and PSNI (Northern Ireland).

TUSLA: Child & Family Agency who are the statutory authority, responsible for improving well-being and outcomes for children.

Volunteer: A person who offers to take part/work for an organization without being paid.

Important Contact Details

Congregational Contacts		
Designated Liaison Officer Avril Halley Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd Province Administration 63 Lower Sean McDermott St. Dublin D01 AH97 ☎ +353 86 172 1736 ✉ dlp@rgs.ie	Safeguarding Coordinator Sr Evelyn Fergus Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd Province Administration 63 Lower Sean McDermott St. Dublin D01 AH97 ☎ +353 1 871 1109	Province Leader Sr Cait O'Leary Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd Province Administration 63 Lower Sean McDermott St. Dublin D01 AH97 ☎ +353 1 871 1109 ✉ province.leader@rgs.ie
Other Advice		
National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland	Teresa Devlin, CEO	+353 1 505 3124

Republic of Ireland		
Service	Normal Working Hours	Out of Hours
An Garda Siochana	In an emergency dial 999 Dedicated Freephone for the reporting of child sexual abuse	1800 555 222
TUSLA (Child and Family Agency)	See inserted page For local contact info	0818 776 315
Counselling Services		
Towards Healing Helpline	www.towardshealing.ie	From Republic of Ireland: 1800 303416 From Northern Ireland and the UK 0800 0963315
Towards Peace	www.towardspeace.ie	Mon – Wed: 10am – 5pm Phone: + 353 (0) 1 5053028 Mobile: + 353 (0) 86 7710533 Email: towardspeace@iecon.ie
The Samaritans	www.samaritans.org	+353 1 116 123
Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC)	www.ispcc.ie	+353 1 116 000
Childline	www.childline.ie	1800 666 666

Northern Ireland		
Service	Normal working hours	Out of hours
PSNI: Child Abuse Investigation Unit	In an Emergency dial 999 or in non-emergency dial the Central Referral Unit at 101	Same numbers as normal office hours
Children's Social Services (Gateway Services for Children's Social Work)	+44 28 9050 7000	+44 28 9056 5444
Counselling Services		
Towards Healing Helpline www.towardshealing.ie	From Republic of Ireland: 1800 303416 From Northern Ireland and the UK 0800 0963315	Same numbers as normal office hours
Towards Peace www.towardspeace.ie	Mon – Wed: 10am – 5pm Phone: + 353 (0) 1 5053028 Mobile: + 353 (0) 86 7710533 Email: towardspeace@iecon.ie	Same numbers as normal office hours
The Samaritans www.samaritans.org	+44 28 9066 4422 (9am to 10pm) National UK Freephone 116 123	Same numbers as normal office hours
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) www.nspcc.org.uk	National Helpline Tel: 0808 800 5000 Email: help@nspcc.org.uk	Same number as normal office hours

West

Service Director

John Smyth
Child and Family Agency,
Level 2 Primary Care Centre
Sceally Place
Justice Walsh Road
Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
Tel 074-9197114
john.smyth@hse.ie

Area Managers

Maria MacInnes
Child and Family Agency
Donegal
Euro House, Killybegs Road
Donegal Town
Tel 074 9743026
maria.macinnes@hse.ie

Angela Toolis
Child and Family Agency
Galway/Roscommon
25 Newcastle Road, Galway
Tel 091 546128
angela.toolis@hse.ie

Maria MacInnes
Child and Family Agency
Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan
Ardaghowen
The Mall, Sligo
Tel 071 9149638
maria.macinnes@hse.ie

Patricia O'Flynn
Child and Family Agency
Mayo
Top Floor
St Mary's Headquarters
Castlebar, Co Mayo
Tel 094 9042030
trish.oflynn@hse.ie

Tim Hanly
Child and Family Agency
Mid West
Ballycummin Ave
Raheen Business Park
Raheen, Limerick
Tel 061-482792

South

Service Director

Dermot Halpin
Child and Family Agency,
Johnstown Business Park,
Johnstown, Waterford
Tel: 051-846766
dermot.halpin@hse.ie

Area Managers

Oliver Mawe
Child and Family Agency
Kerry
Rathass
Tralee
Co Kerry
Tel 066-7195620
oliver.mawe@hse.ie

Barry Murray
Child and Family Agency
Cork
Ground Floor
Áras Sláinte
Wilton Road
Cork
Tel 021-4923503
barry.murray@hse.ie

Marie Kennedy
Child and Family Agency
Carlow/Kilkenny/South
Tipperary
Community Services
James Green
Kilkenny
Tel 056 - 7784713
marieu.kennedy@hse.ie

Jim Gibson
Child and Family Agency
Waterford/Wexford
2 St. Andrews Terrace
Newtown
Waterford
Tel 051-860048
jim.gibson@hse.ie

Area Management Structures, Contacts and Addresses



Dublin North East

Service Director

Mary Hargaden
Child and Family Agency
2nd Floor, Nexus Building
Blanchardstown Corporate
Park
Ballycool Road, Dublin 15
Tel: 8976805
sd.dne@hse.ie

Area Managers

Lorna Kavanagh
Child and Family Agency
180-189 Lakeshore Drive
Airside Business Park
Swords, Co Dublin
Tel: 01-8708000
lorna.kavanagh2@hse.ie

Linda Creamer
Child and Family Agency
Dublin North City
Ballymun Healthcare
Facility
Ballymun Civic Centre
Dublin 9
Tel 01-8467129
linda.creamer@hse.ie

Jim McGuigan
Child and Family Agency
Louth/Meath
Gilligan House
C/O Community Care Centre
Dublin Road
Dundalk
Tel 042-9381282
jim.mcguigan@hse.ie

Gerry Lowry
Child and Family Agency
Cavan/Monaghan
Support Services Building
Rooskey
Monaghan
Tel 047-30473
gerry.lowry@hse.ie

Dublin Mid Leinster

Service Director

Mary Kenny
Child and Family Agency,
Dublin Mid Leinster
Block B
Civic Centre, Main St
Bray, Co. Wicklow
Tel: 01 2744200
kenny.mary@hse.ie

Area Managers

Colette McLoughlin
Child and Family Agency
Dublin South East /
Wicklow
Centenary House,
Tivoli Tee, South,
Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin
Tel 01-2808471
colette.mcloughlin@hse.ie

Doreen McGowan
Child and Family Agency
Dublin South Central
Cherry Orchard Hospital
Ballyfermot
Dublin 10
Tel 01-6206078
doreen.mcgowan@hse.ie

Marie Faughey
Child and Family Agency
Kildare/West Wicklow
Poplar House
Poplar Square
Naas, Co Kildare
Tel 045-907891
marie.faughey@hse.ie

Maria Larkin
Child and Family Agency
Midlands
Mullingar Health Centre
Longford Road
Mullingar
Co Westmeath
Tel 044-9395019/5020
maria.larkin@hse.ie

Scope of the policy

This document sets out Safeguarding Policy and Procedures of the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd Province of Ireland (RGS). All members, staff and volunteers are required to comply with the policy, procedures and practices set out in this document.

The majority of ministries involving children undertaken by members of RGS are under the auspices of another organisation, e.g. Department of Education/school, Diocese. While RGS does not work directly with children, we have undertaken to implement this policy in relation to our representatives (including members, staff and volunteers) who come into contact with children in the course of their work.

RGS is aware of the need to make explicit and visible our determination that our work and activities must promote the safety and security of children when and if contact arises.

Throughout the process of ensuring the safety and welfare of children, we should be aware of differing family patterns and lifestyles, not only due to different racial, ethnic and cultural groups but also issues of age, disability, gender, religion, language and sexual orientation.

Legislative Requirements of the Children First Act 2015

Mandated Persons:

Certain professions and organisations are now obliged to report to TUSLA Child and Family Agency, where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been harmed, is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed. Priests, Religious and people employed as pastoral care workers are listed in the Act as “mandated persons”. Further detail about the implications of this are in Section 2 Child Abuse – Recognising, Responding and Reporting.

Child Safeguarding Statement

Organisations that provide a relevant service to children and young people must produce a child safeguarding statement. This is a written statement that specifies the service being provided and the principles and procedures to be observed in order to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child availing of the service is safe from harm. This does not apply to the RGS as we do not provide relevant services to children and young people

Status and Layout of this Document

In 2016, the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI), replaced “Safeguarding Children Standards & Guidance” (2009) with “Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016”. After extensive consultation with Dioceses and Religious Congregations and Orders “Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016” was adopted as a One-Church policy. The RGS have signed a memorandum of understanding with the NBSCCCI agreeing to adopt and implement “Safeguarding Children 2016”.

The development of a One-Church policy necessitated a review of the “Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd Safeguarding Policy Handbook, 2015”. Simultaneously

the Children First Act 2015 came into force with sections of the Act not enacted until December 2017. Towards the end of 2017, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs published a revised Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

The legislation and church and state policy documents were reviewed by the Safeguarding Committee. The current document is the outcome of this review.

Outcome:

- Our child safeguarding policy is the One-Church "Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016". This can be accessed on our website <http://www.goodshepherdsisters.com> and on the NBSCCI website www.safeguarding.ie.
- Operational procedures to accompany the policy are outlined in this document "Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd Safeguarding Children Procedures 2018".

This document offers guidance and procedures under each of the seven standards outlined in Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016.

Layout of the Procedures

Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016	Location in Safeguarding Procedures
Standard 1- Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments	Section 1: Developing a Culture of Safeguarding
Standard 2- Procedures for Responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Allegations or Knowledge	Section 2: Child Abuse – Recognising, responding, reporting and recording
Standard 3- Care and Support for the Complainant	Section 2: Child Abuse – Recognising, responding, reporting and recording
Standard 4- Care and Management of the Respondent	Section 2: Child Abuse – Recognising, responding, reporting and recording
Standard 5- Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe	Section 1: Developing a Culture of Safeguarding
Standard 6- Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message	Section 1: Developing a Culture of Safeguarding
Standard 7- Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards	Section 3: Quality Assurance

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 (ROI)

DLP: **Avril Halley**

POLICE: **An Garda Síochána**

Dedicated Freephone for the reporting of child sexual abuse: 1800 555 222

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICE:

www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker

Details of Personnel to Contact if you are Concerned about the Welfare and Safety of Children (Northern Ireland)

DLP: **Avril Halley**

POLICE: **PSNI: In an Emergency 999**
or in non-emergency dial Central Referral Unit at 101

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICE: HSCT Gateway Services

+44 28 9050 7000 Out of hours: +44 28 9056 5444

Roles in the Safeguarding Structure

Province Leader

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.

Safeguarding Co-ordinator

In the RGS context, this person manages the safeguarding service.

To be responsible for coordination of all safeguarding practices by:

- Directing and implementing the child safeguarding policy
- Liaising with and supporting RGS communities to ensure implementation of local policies and procedures
- Liaising with the safeguarding committee (and the advisory panel as required)
- Ensuring that all child safeguarding personnel are kept up to date with practice, as communicated from the NBSCCCI
- Reporting directly to the Province Leader on all child safeguarding issues.

Designated liaison person (DLP)

To promote child safeguarding by:

- Hearing child safeguarding concerns
- Referring child safeguarding concerns to the statutory authorities and supporting mandated persons in making a joint report to the statutory authorities
- Managing cases and all associated documents
- Offering a support person and adviser to complainant and respondent and liaising with them thereafter
- Liaising with the Province Leader and Safeguarding Co-ordinator
- Passing on anonymised child safeguarding concerns to the NBSCCCI and annual returns as appropriate
- Conducting internal inquiries
- Monitoring respondents or, with the Province Leader, appointing a suitable person to carry out this role.

Advisory panel (if applicable)

To promote child safeguarding by:

- Advising the Province Leader on all stages of the investigative process into alleged child abuse
- Keeping a record of all its recommendations
- Preparing and submitting an Annual Report to the PLT for approval
- Upholding the safeguarding policy and standards in practice and behaviour.

Support person

To promote child safeguarding by:

- Keeping the complainant informed of the progress of the case
- Helping direct the complainant to counselling and support
- Recording any meetings or contact they have with the complainant, and reporting to the DLP as appropriate
- Upholding the safeguarding policy and standards in practice and behaviour.

Advisor

To promote child safeguarding by:

- 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 safeguarding policy and standards in practice and behaviour.

Safeguarding trainers

To promote child safeguarding by:

- Working with the safeguarding committee to identify training needs
- Delivering full-day and information-session safeguarding training to those identified by the safeguarding committee in the Church body
- Keeping records of all of those who have been trained and furnishing the safeguarding committee with the records for safe storage
- Contributing to upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

Local safeguarding representative (LSR)

To be responsible to the safeguarding committee and province leadership team to promote child safeguarding by:

- Raising awareness of what child safeguarding is;
- Disseminating information regarding the standards and guidance, and circulating this information widely;
- Ensuring activities are provided in a way that ensures the safety and well-being of the children involved if applicable;
- Ensuring that the contact details of the DLP, Gardaí/PSNI and Tulsa/HSCT are widely publicised;
- Upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

Safeguarding Committee

To promote child safeguarding by:

- Developing a three-year child safeguarding plan which includes a training and communication strategy, and 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 completion of 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
- Ensuring, with the Province Leader, that the appropriate child safeguarding personnel are in place
- Preparing and submitting an Annual Report to the PLT for approval.

Section 1: Developing a Culture of Safeguarding

This sets out our approach to putting structures in place for safeguarding everybody. The Province of Ireland is committed to doing everything possible to create a safe and welcoming environment for children where their welfare is paramount.

Valuing children means valuing personnel as well: insisting on safe practices, eliminating the necessity for people to take risks and providing them with support will enable a healthier and safer environment.

To assist us in developing a culture of safety we are required to:

- have a written Safeguarding Policy.
- Comply with Standard 1, Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments.

Recruitment & Selection Procedures

Safe recruitment and selection procedures help to:

1. Identify those most suitable to fill a position
2. Screen out those unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable persons.

These procedures apply to new applicants for religious life, as well as lay people seeking to be employed or volunteer.

Safe recruitment procedures involve:

Recruitment checklist	Appendix 2
Application form/CV	
An interview, with the inclusion of questions of a child protection nature where candidates will be working with children.	
Declaration form: Candidate declares that there is no reason why they should be considered unsuitable to working with children.	Appendix 3
Positive identification check in compliance with requirements of National Vetting Bureau Act	Contact the Garda Vetting Contact Person
Garda Vetting: See guidance below	Sample forms are not reproduced in this document as the form is completed online. Contact the Garda Vetting Contact Person
References: At least two verified references, one from the most recent employer	
NOTE: Please remember that Garda Vetting disclosures and other information received through a recruitment process is personal sensitive data. It should be gathered and stored in a manner that is compliant with data protection law.	See Policy on Data Protection

Garda Vetting and Police Checks

In the Republic of Ireland, the National Vetting Bureau Act (2012-2016) provides a statutory basis for the vetting of persons carrying out work with children and vulnerable adults. It is a criminal offence to allow anyone to engage in ministry with children or vulnerable persons, without first having them vetted.

The National Vetting Bureau (An Garda Síochána) issues vetting disclosures to organisations employing people who work in a full-time, part-time, voluntary or student placement basis with children and/or vulnerable persons. The National Vetting Bureau does not decide on the suitability of any person to work with children and vulnerable persons. Rather, in response to a written request for vetting, the National Vetting Bureau releases criminal history and other specified information on the person to be vetted to the prospective recruiting organisation.

If an RGS member becomes involved with any group working with children or young people or in the setting up of any such group, they should in the first instance contact the RGS Safeguarding Co-ordinator for guidance, to ensure that appropriate Garda vetting procedures are fully adhered to.

If an RGS member is ministering in a Diocese/School/Hospital or another organisation, a joint vetting agreement can be put in place for the purpose of sharing vetting outcome.

Although Garda vetting is crucial, it is only one of a range of recruitment procedures. The remainder of the recruitment tasks in the table above will allow the recruiter to systematically consider what is to be known about the applicant. The recruiter must be alert to times when an applicant was out of Ireland for a sustained period of time e.g. a year or more. Police checks may be required from other countries.

Code of Behaviour for Adults

It is important for all personnel to:

- Treat all children with respect and dignity.
- Treat all children equally.
- Model positive, appropriate behaviour to all children we come into contact with.
- Be aware of and adhere to the RGS child protection and safeguarding procedures.
- Challenge and report abusive and potentially abusive behaviour.
- Develop a culture of openness, honesty and safety.
- Develop a culture where children have permission to tell and to talk about any concerns or worries that they may have.
- Respect each child's boundaries and support them to develop their own understanding and sense of their rights.
- Be aware of their responsibility for the safety of all children in their care.
- Work in open environments.
- Help children to know what they can do if they have a problem.

Adults must never:

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse children.
- Develop sexual relationships with children.
- Develop relationships with children that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- Act in any way that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse.
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice that is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
- Do things for a child of a personal nature that they can do themselves.
- Condone or participate in behaviour that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Act in any way that is intended to intimidate, shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade.
- Engage in discriminatory behaviour or language in relation to race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation or political views.
- Consume alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs while having responsibility for children/young people.

In general, it is inappropriate to:

- Take children away or to your own home, especially where they will be alone with you.
- Involve children in one-to-one contact; activities should usually be supervised by at least two adults. However, there may be two circumstances where this may occur:
 - I. In a reactive situation, for example when a young person requests a one-to-one meeting with you without warning, or where a young person has had to be removed from a group as part of a code of behaviour;
 - II. As part of a planned structured piece of work (for example one-to-one music tuition).

Breaches of the Code of Behaviour

If an RGS member, staff or volunteer has a concern about the practice of a colleague which may constitute a breach of the "Code of Behaviour", this should be reported to the DLP or line manager following the "Protected Disclosure Policy". This would be the case, for example, if the concern related to poor practice rather than abusive behaviour. Abusive behaviour would be reported using the procedure for responding to allegations of abuse.

Behaviours by a worker/volunteer that may cause concern include when a worker:

- Is secretive and evasive about their activities and time spent with children and young people;
- Creates opportunities to spend significant amounts of time away from other workers/volunteers and with a single child or children/young people on a regular basis, e.g. invites child or young person to their home;
- Seeks out vulnerable children and young people;
- Sidesteps one-to-one supervision and management of work;
- Has an unusual amount of physical contact with a child or children;
- Touches a child or children in an inappropriate way;
- Talks to a child or children in an inappropriate way;
- Excludes a particular child or children from activities;
- Disciplines a child or children inappropriately or punishes a child or children harshly;
- Handles children/young people roughly;
- Teases, taunts, insults or makes derogatory remarks about or to a child/young person;
- Restrains a child/young person as a way of punishment;
- Sexually harasses or uses sexual innuendo;
- Humiliates and/or embarrasses children/young people;
- Deprives children/young people of their basic rights;
- Inappropriately uses social media;
- Bullies children/young people.

General Complaints Procedure:

For safeguarding concerns that are not allegations of abuse

A complaint is defined as a grievance and/or the raising of a concern about breaches of codes of behaviour. Allegations or suspicions of child abuse do not fall into this category of general complaints and should always be dealt with in accordance with the procedures for allegations of abuse. This complaints procedure is not for use by RGS personnel who would use the protected disclosure procedure to raise their complaint.

All complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and confidentially. Efforts will be made to quickly and informally resolve complaints through discussion with the parents, children/young people, volunteers/members of staff and clergy, as appropriate.

A copy of a complaints form is available at Appendix 4

If a parent/guardian, young person or child is not satisfied with any aspect of the running of a particular activity, or the behaviour of any individual involved in that activity, the following steps should be taken:

First step

All complaints of this nature should be resolved using an open dialogue with the RGS personnel involved. If resolution is not possible, the following step should be taken.

Second step

1. The Province Leader/Local Leader /Manager ("RGS representative") should be contacted by completing a complaints form. They have eight weeks to consider the complaint.
2. A letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint will be sent within seven calendar days, enclosing a copy of the Complaints Procedure.
3. All complaints will be thoroughly investigated.
4. The RGS representative may organise a meeting to discuss and hopefully resolve the complaint. This communication may also take place by telephone if a meeting is not possible. Unless exceptional circumstances, this will be done within fourteen calendar days of sending the acknowledgement letter to the complainant.
5. Within seven days of the meeting or discussion, the RGS representative will write to the complainant to confirm what took place and to set out any solutions that were agreed upon.
6. If a meeting is not agreeable or possible, the RGS representative will issue a detailed written reply to the complainant, setting out their suggestions for resolving the matter within twenty-one calendar days of sending the acknowledgement letter to them.
7. If the complainant is still not satisfied at this point, they should contact the Province Leader or RGS representative again.

At the conclusion of this step, the Province Leader may decide to take further action on the complaint. If, however, the Province Leader decides not to take further action, the process is completed.

Protected Disclosure Policy

All RGS members, staff and volunteers must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of their Supervisor/ Local Leader/Province Leader.

Although this can be difficult to do, it is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk. If you have a concern, do not let the fear of getting it wrong become a barrier to speaking to the appropriate person e.g. line manager, leader. It is the responsibility of the person you report to, to inquire further and assess if there are grounds for action.

You may be the first to recognise a concern, but you may be unsure about whether and how to express your concerns. Listed below are some issues which stop people from making a disclosure. RGS recognise that such things as feeling disloyal to colleagues, or being fearful of harassment, are real concerns and we will ensure that you feel supported to make a disclosure. It is imperative that you come forward as the protection and welfare of children is our priority. Remember, it is often the most vulnerable children or young people who are targeted. These children need an advocate to safeguard their welfare.

Reasons for making a disclosure

- Each individual has a responsibility to raise concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent yourself from becoming implicated

What stops people from making a disclosure

- Fear of starting a chain of events that spirals out of control
- Disrupting the work or project
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

How to raise a concern

Members, employees and volunteers may want to make a disclosure about a range of concerns, not just child protection.

It is important to:

- Voice any concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as possible. The earlier a concern is expressed the sooner and easier action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning and why.
- Approach your immediate Superior/Supervisor/Manager.
- If your concern is about your immediate Superior/Supervisor/Manager, please contact your DLP or the statutory services.
- Make sure a satisfactory response is secured – don't let matters rest.

- Ideally, concerns should be placed in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates, locations and any other relevant information.
- You are not expected to prove the truth of your complaint, but you need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for concern.

What happens next?

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries resulting from your concern.
- Your Supervisor/Leader/Manager has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations will be considered a disciplinary offence.
- Follow up if the person to whom you reported has not responded within a reasonable period of time, and if that follow up is not acted upon, report the matter to the relevant statutory authorities.

Self-reporting

There may be occasions when a member of staff or a volunteer has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff and volunteers have a duty of care bring the matter to the attention of their line supervisor/superior/manager so that professional and personal support can be offered to the person concerned. Whilst reporting will remain confidential, in most instances this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

When Members Work for Another Organisation

The majority of ministries involving children undertaken by members of the RGS are under the auspices of another organisation e.g. Department of Education/school, Diocese. Where a member works with children for another organisation, it is expected that she is well acquainted with and adheres to that organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures.

Appendix 5

When applicable a Joint Sharing of Vetting Agreement will be completed to comply with the National Vetting Bureau Act:

12.3A) Where 2 or more relevant organisations jointly agree in writing to the employment, contracting, permitting or placement of a person to undertake relevant work or activities, it shall be a defence in any proceedings brought against a person for an offence under subsection (2) to show that another relevant organisation who was party to the agreement received a vetting disclosure in respect of the employment, contract, permission or placement of the person concerned.

(National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016)

Guidance on External Groups Working with Children that Use RGS Property

In circumstances where groups working with children are using or hiring RGS property for this purpose, it is necessary to check that they have a child safeguarding policy, have completed appropriate training and appointed, or have access to, relevant Safeguarding Personnel, and that they are insured. There is no requirement for RGS to oversee the activities or to check that their safeguarding policy is adequate. It is the responsibility of the group using the property to check with Tusla/HSCT that their policy meets statutory requirements.

RGS should obtain confirmation in writing that the group has a child safeguarding policy and details of their insurance policy [Appendix 7]

Training

Nature of training	Who should attend?
1 day safeguarding workshop & Tusla e-module "Introduction to Children First"	All members in active ministry Staff and volunteers who work with children All mandated persons
Safeguarding information session And Tusla e-module "Introduction to Children First"	Retired members Invitation to all staff and volunteers
Role specific training	Safeguarding personnel eg. DLP, support person, committee members
Specialist training e.g. Safe recruitment, running activities with young people, working with perpetrators of abuse	Any member, staff or volunteer who considers the training to be relevant to their role and responsibilities

Table: RGS safeguarding training requirements

- RGS see training as the cornerstone in maintaining high standards and good practice.
- RGS recognise our responsibility to identify what training our members, staff and volunteers need and to ensure that they receive adequate and appropriate child welfare and protection information and training .
- As most of our members are mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015, we also provide training specifically on the statutory responsibilities of mandated persons under the Act.
- The designated liaison person, deputy designated liaison person, and other personnel with specific safeguarding roles are provided with specialist training to enable them to undertake this role.
- All members in ministry, and employees and volunteers with ministry with children must complete the Tusla e-learning training module, Introduction to Children First. This is accessed via www.tusla.ie.
- Attendance records and a training audit is maintained.
- As part of their overall induction, all new employees/volunteers are made aware of the RGS Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

- 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.
- A function of the DLP's role is to be available to all members, 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.

Communication

Communicating what child safeguarding policies, procedures and practice are in place is a core element of the Church's strategy to safeguard children. Policies and procedures are only effective if everyone, including children, understands their purpose and knows how to use them.

One key purpose of communicating with children about safeguarding is the desire to empower them. We explicitly state that children have a right to be consulted with and have their views taken into account on decisions that affect them. If youth ministry is being developed, this principle needs to be translated into practice.

Note: At the time of writing this document, there are no RGS activities taking place specifically for children and young people. If this was to change, the level of activity in consultation and communication with children and families would increase proportionately.

Communication strategy

- The Safeguarding Committee is responsible for planning in the area of communication. In the three-year safeguarding plan, a section is devoted to communications. The message to be communicated and to whom is defined in the plan. The different categories of people include:
 - All RGS Members and staff and volunteers
 - Safeguarding personnel
 - Children and young people (where applicable)
 - Parents/Guardians (where applicable)
 - External agencies
- The safeguarding committee coordinates local safeguarding representatives, who are consulted with in the development of the communication plan. The LSR can identify if there are target children and young people in their area.
- It is important that children, young people and their families are consulted with where possible. Feedback from children and parent/guardians in relation to what could be improved or changed to benefit children and parents involved in RGS activities.
- Different methods of communication are utilised in order to make the information accessible e.g. hard copies of documents, website/internet, poster, newsletter.
- A complaint procedure is in place; RGS personnel are aware of the role they play in enabling people to make complaints if they need to and providing support throughout the process. Ensure this written procedure is freely available.
See Staff Handbook and section above

- Where applicable: It is important that children, young people and their families are consulted with where possible. Feedback from children and parent/guardians in relation to what could be improved or changed to benefit children and parents involved in RGS activities.

- Where applicable: Communicating with children, young people, parents/guardians:
 - Ensure relevant procedures are communicated to children and guardians.
 - Explicitly tell children about their right to be safe and listened to.
 - Check that children know that they are free to approach any worker/volunteer if they are worried about something.
 - Involve children and guardians in developing codes of behaviour and anti-bullying policies.

- Are we communicating with other agencies to 1) learn from best practice and 2) tell other agencies about our work?

Section 2: Child Abuse – Recognising, Responding, Reporting and Recording

Categories and Indicators of Child Abuse

Information taken from “Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children” (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2017)

A Child

A child is a person under the age of 18.

Neglect

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.

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

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

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

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 comes 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
 - 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.

Reasonable grounds for concern

Tusla should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected (Children First 2017). Children are sometimes abused by members of their own family, by peers or by others outside the family environment such as strangers, workers or trusted adults.

Reasonable grounds for concern are listed as:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed
- An account from a person who saw a child being abused.

Roles & Responsibilities

Mandated persons

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.

Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 specifies classes of persons as Mandated Persons for the purposes of the Act. The section most relevant to MSC personnel is:

15 (g) member of the clergy (howsoever described) or pastoral care worker (howsoever described) of a church or other religious community.

Mandated persons have two main legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015. These are:

1. To report the 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.

What is meant by *harm?

Harm is defined as follows: 'harm means in relation to a child– (a) assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects, or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare, or, (b) sexual abuse of the child.' (Section 2 of the Children First Act 2015)

What are the *thresholds?

The threshold of harm for each category of abuse at which mandated persons have a legal obligation to report concerns is outlined below.

Neglect: The threshold of harm is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child's needs have been neglected, are being neglected, or are at risk of being neglected to the point where the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

Emotional abuse/Ill-treatment: The threshold of harm is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being ill-treated to the point where the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

Physical abuse: The threshold of harm is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being assaulted and that as a result the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

Sexual abuse: If, as a mandated person, you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being sexually abused, then you must report this to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015.

If you are in doubt about whether your concern reaches the legal definition of harm for making a mandated report, Tusla can provide advice in this regard. The DLP also remains available for advice and consultation. If your concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but you feel it is a reasonable concern about the welfare or protection of a child, this will still be reported by the DLP following the MSC reporting procedures.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy DLP:

Best practice in child safeguarding according to "Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children" indicates that organisations working with children/young people or their families should appoint a DLP to be the resource person to any personnel who has child protection concerns and to liaise with outside agencies.

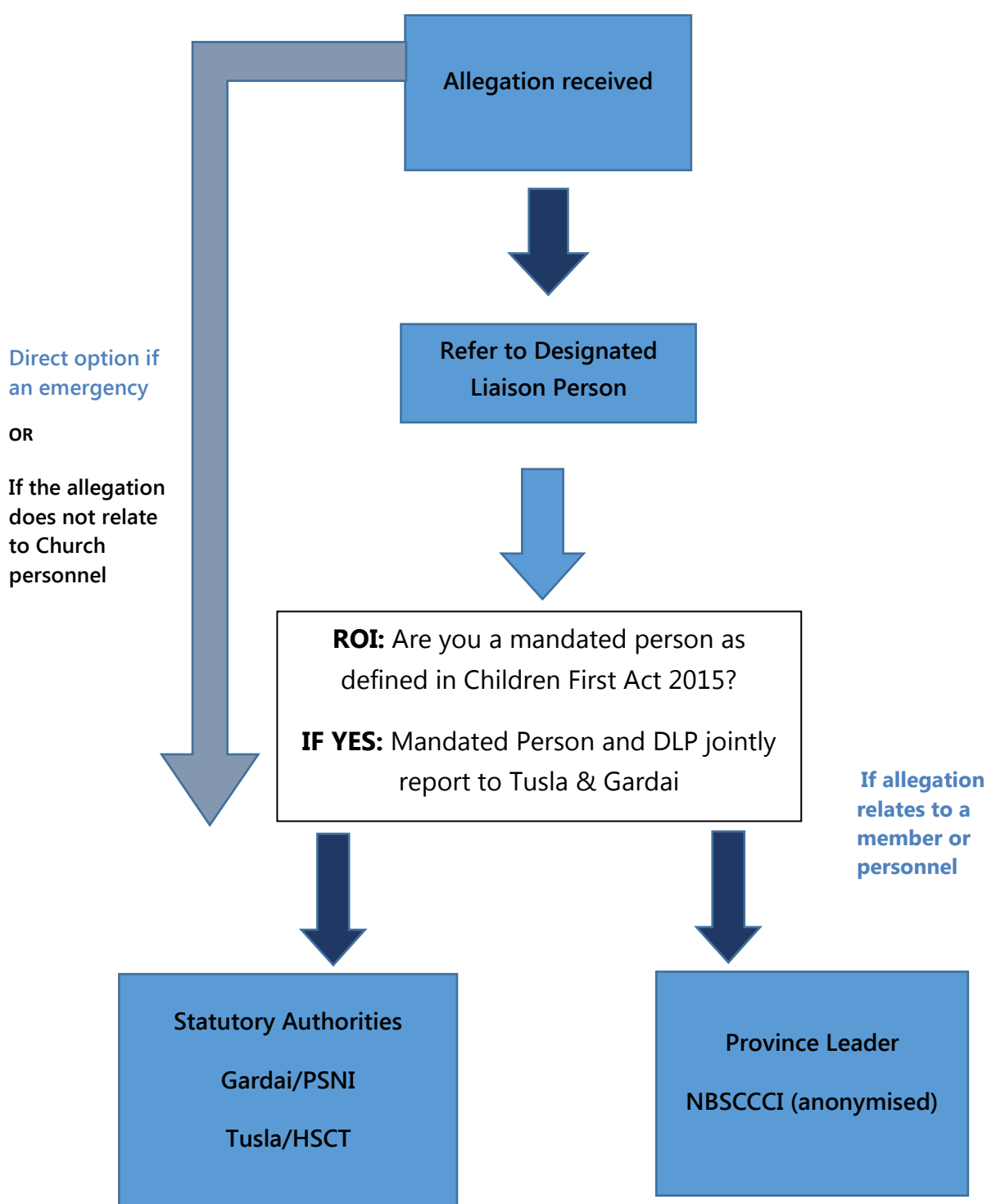
The designated liaison person is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that reporting procedures are followed correctly and promptly and they act as liaison person with other agencies.
2. Receiving child protection and welfare concerns from workers/volunteers and to report concerns which meet the threshold of 'reasonable grounds for concern' to Tusla.
3. Making joint reports with mandated persons within RGS for concerns which have reached defined thresholds.

NOTE: Full guidance on reporting procedures for mandated persons and non-mandated persons is given below.

Procedure for reporting an allegation of child abuse & Flowchart

The reporting flow chart below refers to **any child protection concern**, including where the concern is about a situation or person involved in the Church. It is the responsibility of everyone in the Church to ensure that children who may need help and protection are not left at risk of abuse.



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

1. You must refer the matter to the DLP who will report the matter to:

- Tusla/HSCT (Social Services for ROI and NI respectively)
- An Garda Síochána/PSNI (Police)

If you are in the Republic of Ireland and are a Mandated Person, this will be a joint report between you and the DLP.

Mandated persons are required under the Children First Act 2015 to report any concern that meets or exceeds the threshold for reporting under the legislation. It is appropriate that they make a joint report with the DLP but they cannot discharge this duty to the DLP or any other person. If reporting independent of the organisational DLP, the mandated persons must inform the DLP that a report under the Children First Act 2015 has been made.

2. If a child is at immediate risk, the person who has received the concern should report directly to the statutory authorities and inform the DLP at the earliest opportunity.
3. Some allegations need to be referred to other authorities with a legitimate interest. If the DLP is unsure about whether information can be shared, advice will be sought from Tusla.
 - Allegations against RGS personnel and members must be passed on to the Province Leader, who has ultimate responsibility for safeguarding in the RGS.
 - Allegations against RGS members may need to be notified to the NBSCCCI or to the local Bishop if a diocesan appointment was held. (In line with GDPR)
4. 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.
5. Cases not reported to Tusla: If a decision is made not to report concerns because it is understood that reasonable grounds for concern do not exist, a record should be maintained of a) the concern b) the reasons for the decision and c) any actions taken.

Responding to a person making an allegation of abuse

Where a child, young person or adult, discloses child abuse to a person working in any capacity for the RGS it is crucially important that the situation is handled sensitively and compassionately. It should be borne in mind that the person may feel that they have taken a huge risk in disclosing the abuse. Our response will help a person to disclose as much as they can remember, which will help any future investigation.

People may tell you about:

- Abuse that happened to them
- 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 they have witnessed that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Extra care needs to be taken if it is a child who is disclosing that they were abused. See guidance note on responding to children making allegations at the end of this section.

Where information is given in person, consider the following:

- Adopt a listening style that 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.
- 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 their own pace.
- Check with the person to make sure that you have understood what they actually said. Do not suggest words – use theirs.
- Make no promises that cannot be kept, particularly in relation to confidentiality, but listen carefully to what is being sought in this regard.
- Explain the referral procedures to the person.
- Do not make any comments about the respondent; do not make assumptions or speculate.
- Be aware that a person's ability to recount their concern or allegation will depend on their age, culture, nationality or any disability that may affect speech or language.
- Avoid statements about your reaction to the information given.
- Do not question beyond checking what has been said. It is the responsibility of Tusla/HSCT and An Garda Síochána/PSNI to investigate. There should be no probing for detail beyond that which has been freely given.
- Do not offer wording or language to the person making the allegation that may assist in the provision of an account of the concern or allegation.

Guidance on responding to a child disclosing abuse

- If a child tells you directly about abuse happening to them, you should allow them to speak and listen attentively. However it is not appropriate to set up a meeting with a child for the purpose of receiving a disclosure or taking a statement. That is the role of the statutory services.
- The person receiving the allegation should be conscious that a child may feel very frightened and need reassurance and support that they have done the right thing in disclosing the abuse.
- The DLP will consult with Tusla/HSCT about informing the child's parents/guardians. It is best practice to inform parents/guardians. You do not need to inform the family that a report is being made, if by doing so the child will be placed at further risk or in cases where the family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out an assessment.
- If the allegation is about RGS personnel, explain to the child and their parents that the information must be reported to Church authorities, along with the statutory authorities.
- All offers of further support to the child should be conveyed via the child's parents or an appropriate adult.

Guidance for Receiving and Recording an Allegation

1. Whenever possible and practical, take notes during the conversation. Always ask permission to do this and explain the importance of recording all information. Where it is not appropriate to take notes at the time, make a written record as soon as possible afterwards. Record the time, date, location, persons present and how the allegation was received, e.g. by telephone, face-to-face conversation, letter, etc. This initial recorded information will be transferred to a child protection referral form (Appendix) and will become the first entry in a file of information about the case that will be retained by the DLP. Please always sign and date the record.
2. The record would also normally include:
 - Information on the complainant including the name, address and age of the complainant when the alleged abuse occurred;
 - Where the person who has raised a concern/allegation is a child, details of parents/ guardians should also be given;
 - Name of the individual against whom the concern/allegation is being raised, and any other identifying information;
 - Dates when the concern arose, or when the incident occurred;
 - The person's own words they used to describe the event or incident. Do not make assumptions about the intended meaning of the words used;
 - Details of any action already taken about the incident/concern/allegation;
 - Do not be selective. Include details that to you may seem irrelevant. This may prove invaluable at a later stage in an investigation. All original records, including rough notes, should be passed immediately to the relevant DLP. Any copies of retained records should be kept secure and confidential.

3. **Remember – it is not your role to investigate.**
4. In cases of emergency (and/or outside normal business hours), where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, an urgent report must be made to Tusla/HSCT, as well as to the DLP. Where the appropriate Tusla/HSCT staff are not available, An Garda Síochána/PSNI must be contacted to ensure that under no circumstances a child is left in a dangerous situation pending Social Services intervention (see direct option in Flowchart).
5. In all cases, consideration should also be given as to whether an immediate referral is necessary in order to preserve and safeguard against the possibility of any loss, deterioration or destruction of forensic or other potential evidence (see direct option arrow in Flowchart).
6. Explain to the person raising the concern what will happen next. You should inform the person making the allegation that their identity and the identity of the respondent and complainant will be shared with the statutory authorities. Leave contact details of the DLP if the referrer needs to ask questions later. The information about the allegation should not be shared with anyone other than those who need to know.
7. A) Written confirmation should be given to the person making the referral to the DLP that the information has been passed on to the statutory authorities.
B) If the person who received the disclosure is a Mandated Person (Children First Act 2015), a joint report will be sent between that person and the DLP to the statutory authorities.

The appropriateness of the response given to a complainant is vital to ensure that they feel heard and taken seriously.

Recording and Data Protection

- Ensure records are factual and include details of contacts, consultations and any actions taken.
- Cooperate with Tusla in the sharing of records, where a child protection or welfare issue arises. An example of this could be information needed for a Child Protection Conference or strategy meeting or information important for the assessment of risk to a child.
- Store records on child protection concerns, allegations and disclosures securely and safely.
- Use records for the purpose for which they are intended only.
- Share records on a need-to-know basis only in the best interests of the child or young person.

Taken from: A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns: Tusla, 2017

Support and Care of the Complainant

All people who come forward to give their account of abuse will be treated with respect and care. They will be offered access to appropriate care, advice and support.

Pastoral care may be offered and provided by the DLP managing the case, the support person if taken up by the complainant, the Province Leader at an appropriate time, or indeed another identified representative if there is something specific they can offer.

How support is offered:

- Once an allegation has been received, the DLP will try to arrange a face to face meeting with the complainant. The complainant should have a choice of venue and time. They are invited to bring a person of their choice for support.
- We listen attentively to the complainant and substance of the allegation.
- 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.
- Every complainant is offered access to a support person. The role of the support person is to ensure that the complainant is appropriately supported throughout the process of disclosure and thereafter. 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 RGS makes a commitment to funding such professional support, as appropriate. Details on Towards Healing will be provided. Towards Healing is an independent support and therapy service for people abused within the Catholic Church in Ireland.
- At the right time in the process, the complainant will be invited to meet with the Province Leader or another RGS representative if this is their desire. This meeting is not for the purpose of determining the outcome of any investigations, but for the Province Leader to hear and acknowledge the experience of the complainant.
- At the end of this meeting, the support needs can be reviewed. Some complainants may identify action that is needed to address their spiritual needs. Towards Peace, a spiritual support service for survivors of abuse, may be of assistance in this regard.
- Complainants are advised of their right to seek financial redress/compensation.
- The RGS are open to providing independent facilitation or mediation for meetings if this is required.

Procedure for allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers

Action taken after reporting to statutory authorities

It is recognised that it is important that there is a fair procedure in regards 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.

Allegations against Staff/Volunteers

- If the allegation is made against a employee/volunteer, the Community Leader / Province Leader should consult with the DLP about whether the employee/volunteer should remain in role during statutory authority investigations and assessments. Factors that influence decision will include:
 - the employee/volunteer's role in the Community;
 - whether the allegation relates to the employee/volunteer's role in the Community;
 - their level of contact with children and an assessment of any risk that arises from this;
 - the degree of credibility of the allegation.
 - The DLP may wish to consult with the statutory authorities for guidance.
- If a decision is made to suspend the employee/volunteer, HR advice should be sought.
- Any suspension during the process of statutory authority investigations, and during any internal disciplinary action that may follow, should be with full pay in case of employee.
- The manager should consider offering a pastoral support person to the employee/volunteer.
- Following notification of a prosecution and/or conviction, a disciplinary process should be initiated. An investigator should be appointed by the Province Leader (possibly DLP) to gather any evidence and provide a report to the Province Leader.
- If the Province Leader determines, based on the evidence that further action is required, the employee/volunteer should be invited to attend a disciplinary meeting and may be supported at the meeting by a union representative or a friend; (as this is not a legal process a lawyer will not be permitted to support the employee).
- Any disciplinary hearing should be conducted by a panel of 3 individuals and be chaired by the Province Leader.
- Any finding should be notified to the employee/volunteer in writing.
- If the panel considers that the employee has committed gross misconduct, HR advice should be sought regarding appropriate sanction in the particular circumstances.
- If the statutory authorities' investigation results in no further action, an assessment of whether any misconduct has been committed should be undertaken by a suitably qualified person appointed by the Province Leader.

- A disciplinary panel should be established to consider the investigating person's report and consider appropriate action.
- The employee can be represented by a union representative or a friend at any disciplinary hearing.
- If a decision is made to reinstate the employee/volunteer, appropriate support should be offered for a return to work.
- If a decision is made to dismiss the employee/volunteer, and if the employee is resident or has worked in Northern Ireland, a referral must be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007. The DBS website provides further information on checks, referrals and barred lists.
- Any appeal by the employee/volunteer who has been disciplined/dismissed should be made in writing to an independent person appointed by the Church authority.

Allegations against RGS members

- 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 the Police, if there is any reason as to why the information cannot be shared at that time with the respondent. In rare circumstances, the Police will ask the DLP to delay this so as not to hamper an investigation.
- If the threshold for reporting has been reached, a preliminary investigation in accordance with canon law will be initiated by the Province Leader (CIC, c. 695). This canonical inquiry will be paused to allow any statutory investigation to take place.
- At the earliest opportunity, the Province Leader will call a meeting with the respondent and invite her 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 invited to seek canonical advice and if required, civil legal advice. She will be advised that she can respond to the allegation if she wishes and this will be recorded and referred to the statutory authorities. However, in line with civil law, she does not need to make a response at this stage.
- The respondent will be offered the support of an advisor. The role of the advisor is to attend meetings with the respondent and to help them to access advice and support.
- The Province Leader will judge the level of risk in consultation with the statutory authorities and the DLP. A decision will be made at this stage as to whether an interim management plan is required, which may include restrictions to ministry.
- A written reminder is given to the respondent by the Province Leader to advise her to continue following the child safeguarding policy and procedures.
- If required, the DLP and advisor will meet the respondent and present her with the 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.

Canonical Inquiry including Preliminary Investigation

- The preliminary investigation is the initial stage of the canonical inquiry. It is an inquiry into the facts and circumstances around the allegation. The investigator produces a written report for the Province Leader. Conclusion of this report should enable the Province Leader in deciding whether there is a case to answer, and that the case it is not manifestly false or frivolous.
- The preliminary investigation is completed once formal confirmation is received from the statutory authorities that their investigations have ended. The DLP may complete the investigation with the support of a canon lawyer or the Province Leader may instruct another appropriate person/s to complete it.
- If the preliminary investigation finds there is no case to answer, the respondent should be advised that the case is closed and she is supported in a return to ministry, if she had stepped aside.
- If the preliminary investigation finds there is a case to answer, the Province Leader will inform the respondent and compile a votum to be sent to the Congregational Leader.

If there is no case to answer

- If at the end of a preliminary investigation, it is found there is no case to answer, it is important that all outstanding matters be dealt with 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 Province Leader or a member of leadership.

Risk Management

- Once an allegation is received against a living member, a risk assessment and management process is engaged in. Protective measures may be taken at an early stage. This is covered in the earlier section "Procedure".
- Tools and templates for risk assessment and management plans are accessed from the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland "Safeguarding Children- Guidance; www.safeguarding.ie".
- If there is an adjudication criminally or canonically that abuse was committed, a permanent management plan is put in place. A clinical risk assessment may be commissioned to inform this plan. The plan will detail, amongst other things, how the respondent is to be monitored.

Support

- While statutory and/or Church investigations are underway, pastoral support is offered to the respondent. It is recognized that this is an especially difficult time for any person and they will be vulnerable. They are provided with an advisor/support person and offered therapeutic support as well as canonical and legal advice.
- If the allegations are substantiated at the end of the canonical process, the person requires pastoral and therapeutic support and also to help address any offending behaviour.

Section 3: Quality Assurance

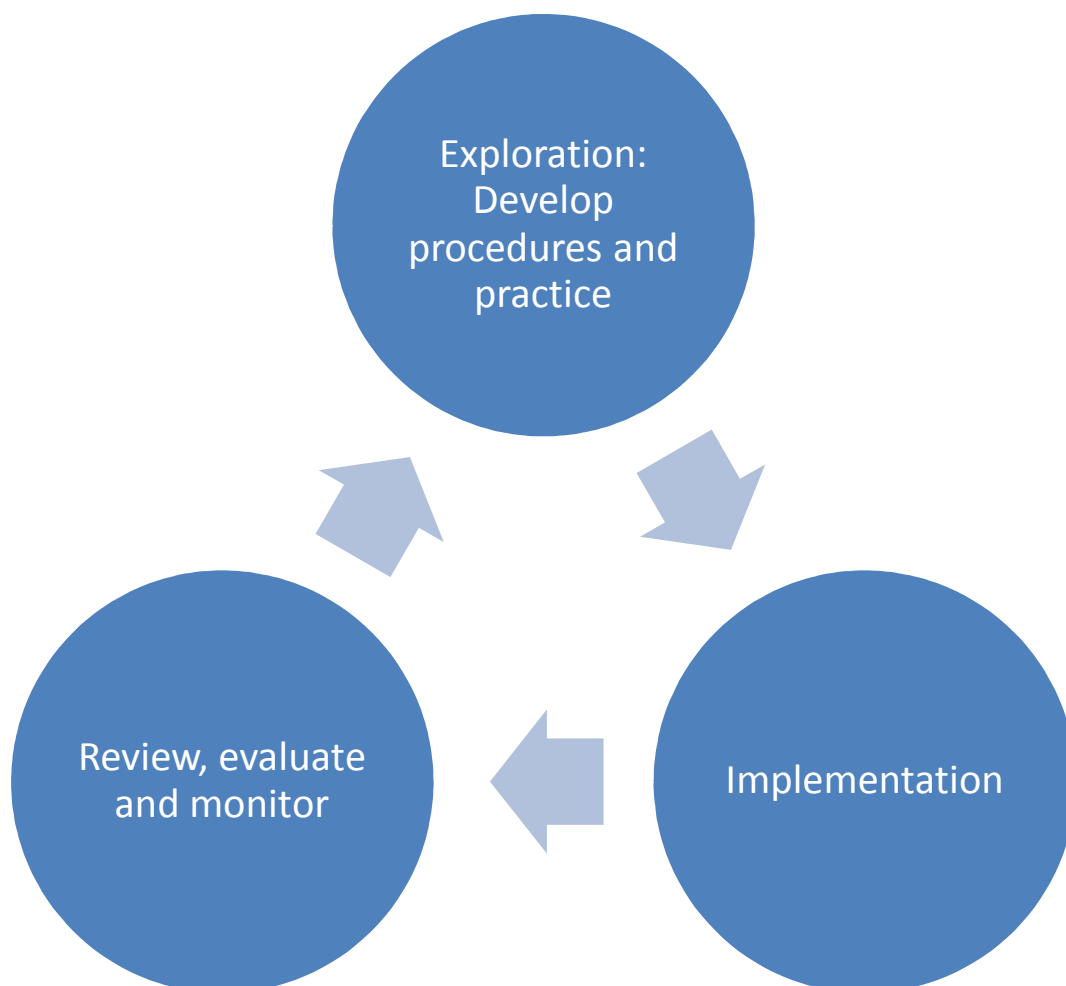


Figure: Quality assurance cycle

Outlined in the previous sections are our child safeguarding procedures and methods of communicating the procedures. To ensure the safeguarding standards and procedures are being implemented at all levels within the RGS, there is a need to monitor, further review and evaluate the effectiveness of the child safeguarding arrangements. This step provides the opportunity to reflect upon the overall process.

Role of Safeguarding Committee

The role of the safeguarding committee is to oversee the implementation of

1. The safeguarding procedures, particularly procedures relating to working with children and young people
2. The training plan
3. The communication plan
4. Self-auditing

These functions are fulfilled by the safeguarding committee through:

- Producing and reviewing the three-year child safeguarding plan of how to maintain the safeguarding standards across the RGS organisation.
- Liaising with the local safeguarding representatives (LSRs) (The local Leader often fills this role) 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 is made to the Province Leader.

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 RGS.

The RGS safeguarding plan includes the following:

- Specific objectives linked to each of the safeguarding standards and themes. 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 Province Leader, 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 audit.

Audit and Quality Assurance

This is done by applying three methods:

1. Assessing compliance during systematic visits to RGS centres or community houses
2. Annual self-audit scheme carried out locally, but coordinated by the safeguarding committee (Self audit template Appendix)
3. External audits by the NBSCCCI and statutory agencies e.g. Tusla
4. Commit to ongoing review of policy and procedures with a full review at a minimum of every three years.



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

DLP: Avril Halley, Designated Liaison Person
Tel. 00 353 86 172 1736
Email: dlp@rgs.ie

Deputy DLP: Sr Evelyn Fergus
Email: safeguarding@rgs.ie

Police: An Garda Síochána
Dedicated Freephone for the reporting of child sexual abuse:
Tel. 1800 555 222

TUSLA Child and Family Agency, Dublin City North:
Tel 01 856 7704
Out-of-hours social work service: 0818 776 315 between 6pm and 6am every night and between 9am and 5pm on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Province Administration, 63 Sean McDermott Street Lower, Dublin D01 NX93
Tel. +353 1 871 1109



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

DLP: Avril Halley, Designated Liaison Person
Tel. 00 353 86 172 1736
Email: dlp@rgs.ie

Deputy DLP: Sr Evelyn Fergus
Email: safeguarding@rgs.ie

Police: PSNI Child Abuse Investigation Unit
Tel: +44 28 9448 2633

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
Tel: +44 28 9050 7000
Tel: +44 28 9056 5444 (Out-of-Hours)

Western Health & Social Care Trust
Tel: +44 28 7131 4090
Tel: +44 28 9504 9999 (Out-of-Hours)

Province Administration, 63 Sean McDermott Street Lower, Dublin D01 NX93
Tel. +353 1 871 1109

Recruitment and Selection Checklist

Contact with children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What contact with children will the position involve? • Will the position involve unsupervised contact with children, or does it involve a position of trust? • What other forms of contact will the person have with children, e.g. email, telephone? 	
Defining the role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the tasks and skills necessary for the position been considered? • Does the task description make reference to working with and having responsibility for children? 	
Key selection criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a list of essential and desirable qualifications, skills and experience been developed? 	
Written application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have all applicants been asked to supply information in writing, including personal details, past and current work/volunteering experience? • Have application forms been developed? 	
Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have at least two representatives been identified to meet with the applicant to explore information contained in their application? • Have the applicant and application forms been carefully considered, highlighting points to raise at interview, including: The applicant's attitudes towards working with children; Areas you want to explore in more detail; Gaps in employment history; Vague statements of unsubstantiated qualifications; Frequent changes of employment? 	
Declaration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the successful applicant been asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children? • Has the successful applicant been asked to declare any past criminal convictions and cases pending against them? 	
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have applicants been asked, where necessary, for photographic documentation to confirm their identity and place of residence? • Will documentation relating to the applicant's identity and relevant qualifications be checked at the interview? 	

Appendix 2: Recruitment and Selection Checklist

Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are applicants asked for documentation to confirm their qualifications? 	
Vetting procedure/AccessNI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the position require the applicant to be vetted/AccessNI checked? Has the applicant been informed that they may need to undergo vetting/AccessNI before they take up any appointment? Does this applicant require a certificate of police clearance from other countries in which they have worked/volunteered? 	
Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are details of the selection/induction process retained in the personnel file of the successful applicant? Are references kept on file as part of the record of the recruitment process? Are personnel informed that information such as application and declaration forms are held on file? 	
Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is information about the applicant only seen by those directly involved in the recruitment process? Are applicants reassured that information about them, including information about convictions, will be treated in confidence and not used against them unlawfully? 	
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are applicants asked to supply the names of two referees who are not family members, or who are not involved in the recruitment process, and ideally who have first-hand knowledge of the applicant's experience of work/contact with children? Are referees asked specifically to comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children? Are all references provided in writing and verified by a follow-up telephone call? 	
Suggested questions for referees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The post involves substantial access to children. We are committed to the welfare and safeguarding of children. Have you any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children? How long have you known this person? In what capacity? Would you have any hesitation in them taking up this position? 	

Declaration Form

Who should complete this form?

Organisations ask that everyone working or volunteering for them, who will come into contact children or the personal details of children, abide by good practice by completing and signing this declaration.

Do you have any prosecutions pending, or have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution or binding over order?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s).

Date of offence _____

Nature of offence _____

Have you ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures or been asked to leave employment or voluntary activity due to inappropriate behaviour towards a child?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide details including date(s) _____

Full name (print) _____

Any previous surname _____

Address _____

Date of birth _____ Place of birth _____

What role/position are you currently applying for?

Declaration

I understand that if it is found that I have withheld information or included any false or misleading information above, I may be removed from my post, whether voluntary or paid, without notice. I understand that the information will be kept securely by the _____ (insert name of Organisation).

I declare that the information I have provided is accurate.

Signed _____ Date _____

Complaints Form

If a complaint (with the exception of complaints about child abuse) arises during an activity an attempt should be made to resolve this by discussion between the parties involved.

If this is not possible, this form should be completed and sent to the Line Manager/Community Leader;

Name _____

Address

Email _____ Telephone number _____

Details of complaint (continue on separate sheet if necessary).

[illegible]

Signature_____

Date_____

Working with Another Organisation

To be completed by Church Authority/Management of External Organisation

_____ (Sister) has ministry with children in _____
(Name & Address of Organisation) as a _____ (Role).

On behalf of _____ (External Organisation) I state that we have Safeguarding Policies and Procedures in place that are compliant with Children's First and that _____ (Name of Sister) is fully aware of and compliant with these.

Signed: _____ Name: _____

It is the responsibility of the External Organisation to provide adequate supervision and a safe environment for children and by signing this form you are agreeing to abide by the safeguarding children policy and procedures of the organisation whom you minister with.

To be completed by the Sister

I, _____ (Sister) verify that I am aware of the Safeguarding Policies and Procedures in _____ (External Organisation) and undertake to adhere fully to these Policies and Procedures.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by Church Authority of Sister

Dear _____ (Sister)

I wish to confirm that you are authorised to minister in _____
(External Organisation)

Duration _____ (insert start and end date)

Type of ministry _____ (insert specified ministry)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

**Agreement to abide by Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd
Safeguarding Policy & Procedures
when working with children and young people.**

Safeguarding Statement

As a member of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd we recognise and uphold the dignity and rights of all children and 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, volunteers and any other Church personnel) have a responsibility to safeguard children through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment, which support their best interest and prevents abuse.

Code of Behaviour

It is important that all personnel working with Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd will:

- treat all children with respect and dignity
- treat all children equally
- model positive & appropriate behaviour to all children with whom they come into contact
- be aware of the Safeguarding Policy
- challenge & report potentially abusive behaviour
- develop a culture of openness, honesty & safety
- develop a culture where children have permission to tell and talk about any concerns or worries that they may have
- respect each child's boundaries and support them to develop their own sense of rights

You must never:

- hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- develop relationships with children that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- act in any way that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse
- use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- do things for a child of a personal nature that they can do themselves
- condone or participate in, behaviour that is illegal, unsafe or abusive

Appendix 6: Agreement to Abide by Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

- act in any way that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade
- discriminate against, show different treatment or favour particular children to the exclusion of others
- develop sexual relationships with children

In general, it is inappropriate to:

- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others
- Take children away/to your own home, especially where they will be alone with you.



I understand my responsibility and duty, as a Sister of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, in working to safeguard children and young people.



I agree to abide by the Congregations's safeguarding policy, procedures and code of conduct in working with children and young people and will at all times honour and respect their right to safety and protection from harm and abuse.

If applicable e.g. ministering/working in Diocese, School, Hospital or Organisation: •



I confirm that the external organisation in which I minister has safeguarding policies and procedures in place and I agree that when ministering in this external organisation I will adhere to its policies and procedures.

Name of Diocese, School, Hospital or Organisation:

Full name (print):

Current Address: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Use of Property, Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

As a Congregation who provides the use of facilities and services to individuals and groups who work with children and young people (service users) it is our responsibility to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to safeguard children and young people using our facilities and services.

The obligation to comply with requirements relating to Safeguarding Children (including Garda Vetting) rests with the group using the property and not with the Congregation.

Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd has clear policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding children. Any group/organisation operating under the name/auspice of the Congregation must comply with the Congregation requirements.

However we welcome other organisations/groups/individuals within the community to use our facilities. We require detailed information in respect of an application to ensure that the safety and well-being of the service users are maintained.

1. It is the responsibility of any group using the Congregation property who 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 to ensure that the policy and procedures meet the statutory requirements.
3. The Congregation should at no stage assist any outside group in developing a child safeguarding policy.
4. The Congregation should have confirmation in writing from the group that they have a child safeguarding policy in place. It is not the role of the Congregation to validate the adequacy of the policy. That is the responsibility of TUSLA.
5. Taking a copy of the group's child safeguarding policy does not imply that the Congregation endorses it. Such endorsement can only be obtained from TUSLA.

Appendix 7: Use of Property

We would ask that you complete the following questionnaire in capital letters, using ink pen and tick response as appropriate. If any response is not applicable (N/A), please provide details of why this does not apply to your organisation.

Please indicate when additional information is provided in support of your application.

(Definition – The term child refers to those under the age of 18 years.)

Name of Group/Organisation: _____

Purpose or proposed activities: _____

User Group e.g. children, adults: _____

Facilities required: _____

Date of commencement of use: _____

Date of completion of use: _____

Frequency of use: _____ Hours of use: _____

(1) Commence at: _____ (am/pm)

(2) Finish at _____ (am/pm)

Name and addresses of person(s) who will be in charge during use:

(1) _____

Telephone Number: _____

(2) _____

Telephone Number: _____

Commitment to good practice:

1. Do you have a policy statement and procedures on the safeguarding of children and young people?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Insurance:

2. Do you have appropriate insurance cover for the activity? Yes ☐ No ☐

Name of Insurer: _____ Policy Number: _____

Period of Insurance: From: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Please provide a copy of your insurance policy and /or a letter from your insurer establishing that you have adequate cover in force for the activity in question.

To be signed by official/coordinator of the organisation/group.

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Position: _____ Date: _____

For Congregational Use Only

Evidence of insurance received

Copy of insurance policy: Yes ☐ No ☐

Received by: _____ Date received: _____

This form will be held on accordance with the data protection policy of Our Lady of Charity of Good Shepherd. The data entered will be used only for the purpose indicated in the form. It may be accessed only by those who are authorized to do so.

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

Self Audit _____ [year]

1. Name of Community: _____
2. Community Leader: _____

Safeguarding Poster

Where is the Safeguarding Poster displayed? _____

Please enter below the contact details provided on the poster (e.g. Designated Liaison Person, Police, Child Protection agency, etc.)

Training and Garda Vetting

Name	Ministry (If working for another organisation, include name of employer)	Training	Vetting

Appendix 8: Self-Audit Form

Employees and volunteers

Name	Role	Mandated Person?	Vetting required?

Identify needs of personnel, e.g. is safeguarding awareness raising needed, vetting etc.

Safe Recruitment

In recruiting workers and volunteers can you confirm that you are following effective procedures as outlined in the Safeguarding Policy?

Comment: _____

Can you confirm that persons under 18 are not employed by the community. _____

Ministry with Children or Vulnerable Persons

Do you facilitate youth ministry or groups who have children amongst them?

- a. Is there ministry with vulnerable adults? _____

If yes, please describe:

- b. Are there external groups who have activities with children renting or availing of rooms in the property?

Question to be discussed by phone or during visit by Safeguarding Co-Ordinator

1. Since the last check, have any safeguarding issues been reported to you?
2. If yes, what action did you take?
3. In the area of safeguarding, is there any concern you wish to bring to my attention?

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Use block letters when filling out this form.

Fields marked with an * are mandatory.

1. Tusla Area (this is where the child resides)*	
---	--

2. Date of Report*	
---------------------------	--

3. Details of Child

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address*			
	Date of Birth*		
	Estimated Age*		
	School Name		
	School Address		
Eircode			

4. Details of Concerns*

Please complete the following section with as much detail about the specific child protection or welfare concern or allegation as possible. Include dates, times, incident details and names of anyone who observed any incident. Please include the parents and child's view, if known. Please attach additional sheets, if necessary

Please see 'Tusla Children First – A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns' for additional assistance on the steps to consider in making a report to Tusla

5. Type of Concern

Child Welfare Concern	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Emotional Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Details of Reporter

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Is this a Mandated Report made under Sec 14, Children First Act 2015?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mandated Person's Type				

7. Details of Other Persons Where a Joint Report is Being Made

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

8. Parents Aware of Report

Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to Tusla?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If the parent/carer does not know, please indicate reasons:				

9. Relationships

Details of Mother			
First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
		Eircode	

Is the Mother a Legal Guardian?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------------------------	-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Details of Father			
First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
		Eircode	

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Is the Father a Legal Guardian?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------------------------	-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

10. Household Composition

First Name	Surname	Relationship	Date of Birth	Estimated Age	Additional Information e.g. school, occupation, other

11. Details of Person(s) Allegedly Causing Harm

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

12. Name and Address of Other Organisations, Personnel or Agencies Known to be Involved Currently or Previously with the Family

Profession	First Name	Surname	Address	Contact Number	Recent Contact e.g. 3/6/9 months ago
Social Worker					
Public Health Nurse					
GP					
Hospital					
School					
Gardaí					
Pre-school/ crèche					
Other					

13. Any Other Relevant Information, Including any Previous Contact with the Child or Family

Please ensure you have indicated if this is a mandated report in section 6.

Thank you for completing the report form.

In completing this report form you are providing details on yourself and on others. Details such as name, address and date of birth fall under the definition of 'Personal Data' in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. Tusla has a responsibility under these Acts in its capacity as a Data Controller to, amongst other things, obtain and process this data fairly; keep it safe and secure; and to keep it for a specified lawful purpose. That purpose is to fulfil our statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act 1991 to promote the protection and welfare of children. Tusla may, during the course of the assessment of this report disclose such Personal Data to other agencies including An Garda Síochána. Further details about Tusla's responsibilities as a Data Controller and your rights as a Data Subject can be found on our website, www.tusla.ie. As you are providing Personal Data on others, you are a Data Processor. We ask that you only provide those details that are necessary for the report and that you keep this report and the Personal Data contained in it secure from unauthorised access, disclosure, destruction or accidental loss.

14. For Completion by Tusla Authorised Person on Receipt of Report

Report Received by				
First Name		Surname		Date

Mandated Report Acknowledgement by



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leasú agus an Teaghlaigh
Child and Family Agency

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

First Name		Surname		Date Sent	
-------------------	--	----------------	--	------------------	--

Authorised Person Signature*	
Date*	

Child Previously Known	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allocated Case No				

Appendix 10: List of Relevant and Related Policy and Procedural Documents

1. Congregational Safeguarding Policy & Procedures
2. NBSCCCI Standards with support documentation
3. Staff Handbook
4. Data Protection Policy
5. Archive Policy