

Dominican Province of Ireland

# **Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedure Handbook**

2020



## PROVINCIAL'S FOREWORD

I am very pleased to introduce our *Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook 2020*. It is designed to assist and facilitate the implementation of best practice in safeguarding in all our ministry with children and young people in the Irish Dominican Province.

The Dominican Province of Ireland signed up to *Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*, produced by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) in 2016. As Dominicans we are committed to upholding these seven safeguarding standards. The purpose of this *Handbook* is not to replace the contents of the NBSCCCI National Policy and Standards but is to provide policy guidelines, operational procedures, and copies of the relevant forms to support its implementation.

Each of us has an important role to play in creating and maintaining an environment in which children and young people can grow and flourish, safely, whilst helped to achieve their potential.

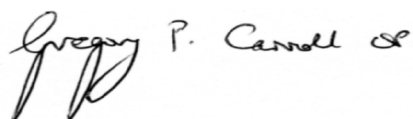
The key principles and values which we want to promote and live out when we implement these policies and procedures, are

- ◇ Children and young people must be cherished, kept safe and helped to achieve their potential
- ◇ Recognising that children and young people are an integral part of the life of our Church
- ◇ When we are concerned for the safety and welfare of a child or young person, we know what to do and how to respond.

We must never become complacent in our ministry with children and young people, and it remains a top priority for all of us involved in the work and life of the Irish Dominican Province.

With the launch of the *Handbook*, I am now confident that every Dominican, Dominican community, staff-member and volunteer who works in the Irish Province (except those who work in institutions which have their own policies and guidelines informed by statutory regulations and/or governing bodies, for example, schools) adheres faithfully to these procedures as laid out in the *Handbook*.

I am very grateful to the members of the Dominican National Child Safeguarding Committee, who generously give of their time, energy and expertise to ensure that our safeguarding standards, policies and procedures are updated and communicated throughout the Province.




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**Fr. Gregory Carroll, O.P.**

Prior Provincial,  
Dominican Province of Ireland

## QUOTE POPE FRANCIS

If we journey together, young and old,  
we can be firmly rooted in the present,  
and from here, revisit the past and look to the future.

To revisit the past in order to learn from history  
and heal old wounds that at times still trouble us.

To look to the future in order to nourish our enthusiasm,  
cause dreams to emerge, awaken prophecies  
and enable hope to blossom.

Together, we can learn from one another, warm hearts,  
inspire minds with the light of the Gospel,  
and lend new strength to our hands.

*Christus Vivit §199*

*Post-Synodal Exhortation of Pope Francis*

*to Young People and to the entire People of God*

*25 March 2019*



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## DOMINICAN SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Dominican Province of Ireland to do everything in our power to safeguard the welfare of children and young people to whom we minister or with whom we share our lives. As a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland, we recognize and uphold the dignity and rights of all children and young people. We are committed to ensuring their safety and wellbeing, and we will work in partnership with parents/guardians to do this.

We recognise each child and young person as a gift from God, and we value and encourage their participation in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

All Dominican friars, staff and volunteers, have a responsibility to ensure that children and young people are respected, and to safeguard them through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment that supports their best interests and prevents abuse.

### **Safeguarding Office Contact Details**

Name: Ms. Mary Tallon  
Co Ordinator of Safeguarding/Designated Liaison Person

Fr. Pat Lucey, O.P.  
Deputy Designated Liaison Person

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DLP Mobile Number: (089) 7087881

Email: [safeguardingoffice@dominicans.ie](mailto:safeguardingoffice@dominicans.ie)

This safeguarding statement/notice is displayed in a prominent location in all Dominican priories, communities, properties, churches, and sacristies.

## INTRODUCTION

In all our work with children, young people, the Dominican Province of Ireland recognises and promotes the fundamental rights of every child and young person to a safe environment in which he/she will be free from any form of abuse, neglect or harm. The Dominican Province of Ireland will do all that is within its power to prevent any form of abuse and will respond appropriately if concerns of abuse arise.

To build a safe and secure environment, all Dominican brethren, staff and volunteers must always strive to be child-centred in their practice and behaviour and must acknowledge their obligation to promote the well-being of all children and young people and safeguard them from abuse.

### STATUS OF THIS DOCUMENT

In March 2016 the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) replaced *Safeguarding Children Standards and 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 Dominican Province of Ireland subsequently signed a memorandum of understanding with the NBSCCCI, agreeing to adopt and implement the updated Policy and Standards Document.

The NBSCCCI has provided extensive guidance on the implementation of *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*. This *Safeguarding Children's Policy and Procedure Handbook* is a subset of that guidance and contains information, forms and signposting that are most pertinent to safeguarding children and young people in a Dominican context. It replaces the Dominican Province of Ireland Child Safeguarding Policy document issued in 2010. However, it is not designed to be a stand-alone document or sole reference for safeguarding children and young people.

The Dominican National Safeguarding Committee presents this *Safeguarding Children's Policy and Procedure Handbook* as a practical support for all our brethren in Ireland and overseas, for communities, staff, volunteers and all those involved in Dominican youth ministries.

This document offers guidance and procedures under each of the seven standards outlined in the *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016* and should be read in conjunction with that document and its guidance documents.

## DEFINITIONS

### **Definition of a Child**

#### **Republic of Ireland**

In accordance with the Child Care Act 1991, “a child” means a person under the age of 18 years, who is not or has not been married.

#### **Northern Ireland**

A child is defined by the Children (Northern Ireland) Order, 1995 as anyone who has not attained the age of 18 years.

### **Definition of Abuse**

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types, physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time.

The important factor in deciding whether the behaviour is abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the parent/carer. (*Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2017*)

### **Age of Consent (sexual activity)**

#### **Republic of Ireland**

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

#### **Northern Ireland**

Under the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008, the age of consent to any form of sexual activity between a man and a woman, a man and a man, or a woman and woman, is 16 years.



**Vulnerable Adult**

The current definition of a vulnerable adult within the Republic of Ireland is taken from The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 which states: “vulnerable person” means a person, other than a child, who:

- a. is suffering from a disorder of the mind, whether as a result of mental illness or dementia;
- b. has an intellectual disability;
- c. is suffering from a physical impairment, whether as a result of injury, illness or age, or
- d. has a physical disability, which is of such a nature or degree;
  - i. as to restrict the capacity of the person to guard himself or herself against harm by another person, or
  - ii. that results in the person requiring assistance with the activities of daily living including dressing, eating, walking, washing and bathing.

## CHILD SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS

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



### What is a standard?

A standard is the level of practice required to ensure good child safeguarding. Each standard is self-contained and is supported by indicators. It is the standard that provides the framework for action. Audits of compliance will be undertaken against the seven standards and the relevant indicators that apply to the Church body.

## DOMINICAN PROVINCE OF IRELAND ROLES IN THE SAFEGUARDING STRUCTURE

### **Provincial**

To be responsible for all safeguarding practices by

- ◇ Appointing a National Safeguarding Committee and, along with this Committee, ensuring that all appropriate child safeguarding structures and personnel are in place; and providing adequate resources to support and ensure the implementation of the required structures and appointment of relevant personnel.
- ◇ Ensuring that appropriate personnel and procedures are in place to recognise and respond to allegations of abuse.
- ◇ Ensuring, in conjunction with the safeguarding personnel, local priors and superiors, that all those who are recruited as Church personnel are suitable and appropriate for their role.
- ◇ Ensuring compliance with civil and canon law and the NBSCCCI policy in creating and maintaining safe environments.
- ◇ Liaising with the Holy See, and other Church bodies, as appropriate.

### **Dominican National Safeguarding Committee**

The Prior Provincial established a National Safeguarding Committee in October 2018. Committee members are selected for their knowledge, expertise and experience of the Church Body, in implementing policy and procedures, practical knowledge of working with children and child safeguarding, auditing and working with and supporting volunteers.

The role of the National Safeguarding Committee is primarily focused on creating, maintaining and monitoring a safe environment for all aspects of life and activity in Dominican priories, churches and centres and for advising all communities in implementing best safeguarding practice. Its role is also to be supportive and developmental and to promote child safeguarding as follows

- ◇ Developing a three-year child safeguarding plan which includes a training and communication strategy, and the establishment of local child safeguarding policy and procedures.
- ◇ Coordinating activities related to child safeguarding, e.g., training, safe recruitment of staff and volunteers within the Dominican Order in Ireland.
- ◇ Ensuring the completion of the annual audit, including the correlation of records for training-related activities.
- ◇ Ensuring, with the Provincial, that the appropriate child safeguarding personnel are in place.
- ◇ Ensuring the completion of training needs assessments across the various child safeguarding roles.

**Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC)**

The PAC has been in existence since the mid 1990s. In recent years it has been restructured in accordance with national Church standards and best practice. Advisory Committee members are selected for their knowledge and experience in canon and civil law, working with victims/survivors of abuse, assessment and/or management of those who present a risk, and working with children in child protection roles.

To be responsible for all safeguarding practices by

- ◇ Providing advice to the Provincial on the management of cases, involving allegations of child abuse made against members of the Irish Dominican Province.
- ◇ Maintaining a record of the advice provided by the PAC to the Provincial.
- ◇ Upholding the seven standards of the NBSCCCI in practice and behaviour.

**Local safeguarding representatives (LSRs)**

In a Dominican context the prior or superior of the community fulfills this role, apart from those Dominican churches which also function as diocesan parish churches. In these instances, local safeguarding representatives are appointed and work in accordance with the safeguarding requirements of the respective diocesan area.

**Coordinator of Safeguarding**

In the Dominican context, this role is carried out by the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) as set out below.

The Safeguarding Coordinator is responsible for coordination of all safeguarding practices as follows

- ◇ Directing and implementing the child safeguarding statement and associated child safeguarding policy and procedures.
- ◇ Liaising with and supporting Dominican apostolates and communities to ensure implementation of local policies and procedures.
- ◇ Liaising with the Safeguarding Committee and the Advisory Committee.
- ◇ Ensuring that all child safeguarding personnel are kept up to date with best practice, as communicated from the NBSCCCI and relevant statutory developments.
- ◇ Reporting directly to the Provincial on all child safeguarding issues.

**Designated Liaison Person (DLP)**

The Designated Liaison Person is appointed to promote safeguarding by

- ◇ Receiving and hearing child safeguarding concerns.
- ◇ Referring child safeguarding concerns to the statutory authorities, Gardai, Republic of Ireland, Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and Tusla (Child and Family Agency), Republic of Ireland and/or Health Service Social Care Trust (HSCT), Northern Ireland
- ◇ Managing cases and all associated documents.
- ◇ Offering a support person and adviser to complainants and respondents, respectively, and liaising with them thereafter.
- ◇ Liaising with the Provincial.
- ◇ Conducting internal inquiries as and when required.
- ◇ Monitoring respondents and/or, with the Provincial, appointing a suitable person to carry out this role.
- ◇ Contributing to upholding the seven standards of the NBSCCCI in practice and behaviour.
- ◇ Completing an annual report regarding compliance with Standards 2, 3 and 4 for the Provincial.
- ◇ Notifying the NBSCCCI anonymously if an allegation concerns a Dominican friar.

**Support Person**

The role of the support person is to promote safeguarding by

- ◇ Keeping the complainant informed of the process of the case.
- ◇ Helping direct the complainant to counselling and support.
- ◇ Recording whatever meetings and/or contact they have with the complainant and reporting to the DLP as appropriate.
- ◇ Upholding the seven standards of the NBSCCCI in practice and behaviour.

**Advisor**

The role of the Advisor is to promote safeguarding by:

- ◇ Keeping the respondent informed of the progress of the case.
- ◇ Helping direct the respondent to counselling and support.



- ◇ Recording whatever meetings and/or contact they have with the respondent and reporting to the DLP as appropriate.
- ◇ Upholding the seven standards of the NBSCCCI in practice and behaviour.

### ***An Garda Síochána and the PSNI***

It is the responsibility of the Gardaí and the PSNI to investigate if a crime has been committed. They will liaise with the DLP, as appropriate.

### ***Tusla (Child and Family Agency) and HSCT***

It is the responsibility of Tusla and of HSCT to promote the welfare of children who are not receiving adequate care and protection and they will liaise with the DLP, as appropriate.

### ***National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI)***

The National Board provides standards, guidance and supports, and audits their implementation in practice. The DLP will advise the NBSCCCI, anonymously, of safeguarding allegations, suspicions or concerns concerning Dominican friars.

# STANDARDS





## STANDARD 1

### Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

#### General Policy

Standard 1 provides the required standard of practice in relation to the recruitment and selection of friars, staff and volunteers. The Dominican Province of Ireland recognises and respects the rights and dignity of every child and young person. Our standards of behaviour and our relationships with children and young people must always reflect this. They must also include a firm commitment to providing a safe, caring and lifegiving environment in which children and young people can feel respected, happy and secure.

#### *The Catholic Church's standards and expectations*

It is essential that those people who work within Dominican environments, in any capacity with children or young people are, as far as possible, assessed to ensure that they do not present a risk to children or young people.

#### ***Safe recruitment means that the Dominican Province of Ireland will ensure that***

- ◇ All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that we eliminate applicants who might pose a risk to children and young people.
- ◇ Those engaged in the recruitment process are suitably trained and experienced to undertake this task.
- ◇ The Dominican recruitment procedures are transparent, adhere to best practice and comply with the rules of natural justice, appropriate record-keeping, and human resource management.
- ◇ All Dominicans are committed to the policy of inclusion and equality.

#### **1. Safe Recruitment**

The Dominican Province of Ireland acknowledges that safe care starts with the appointment of suitably qualified, skilled and vetted personnel who have the desired competencies and skills to carry out their function in an effective, efficient and safe manner. Whoever is recruited by the Dominican Province of Ireland, either in a paid or voluntary role, must be recruited safely and deemed suitable for the role that they are being asked to undertake.

### 1.1. Appointment procedures (Dominican friars)

For religious who are part of the Dominican Province of Ireland, the following procedures must be completed.

All members should have gone through a formation programme that includes an input on safeguarding children and young people. In addition, the Dominican Province of Ireland must ensure the following arrangements are in place prior to any appointment

- ◇ Ensuring the member signs an agreement form to follow the Catholic Church policy and child safeguarding standards. (Form 1 pg 58)
- ◇ Requiring the member to undergo vetting through the Garda National Vetting Bureau (Republic of Ireland) or access Northern Ireland. (Guidance 2 pg 59)
- ◇ Ensuring the member attends training, in particular, child safeguarding training.
- ◇ Requiring the member to sign a declaration form stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children or young people. (Form 2 pg 63)
- ◇ Ensuring the member is inducted into the Irish Dominican's Child Safeguarding Statement, Policy and Procedure document and agrees to follow the policy and procedures of the Dominican Province by signing the relevant agreement form. (Form 3 pg 64)
- ◇ Ensuring the member abides by the Irish Dominican Province code of behaviour.

If a Dominican friar is visiting a diocesan parish or a community and/or is seeking to minister, for more than three consecutive days, the procedures for visiting clergy/religious for the respective diocese must be followed.

### 1.2. Dominican friars visiting Ireland

Any priest coming to Ireland to perform public ministry in a Dominican community is required by civil and church law to provide the following documentation to the Dominican Provincial office

- a) *Letter of Good Standing* from his Provincial
- b) *Testimonial letter* from his Provincial
- c) Personal Declaration Form (Form 2 pg 63)
- d) A completed *Garda Vetting Invitation Form* for the particular Diocese  
(Guidance 2 pg 59)

Along with the Vetting Invitation Form copies of their ID are also required for example:

- Passport {required}

- Driving Licence
- ID Card
- Letter from his Provincial

### **1.3. Safe recruitment procedures - Staff**

- ◇ Use the recruitment and selection checklist to ensure that effective practices are followed. (Guidance 1 Checklist pg 56)
- ◇ Develop clear job and role descriptions.
- ◇ Openly advertise all vacancies as required.
- ◇ Use an application form including reference requests (Form 4 pg 65)
- ◇ Interview suitable applicants for the position by an interview panel of at least two people with appropriate competence and authority. The interview will include advising applicants of their responsibilities towards children/young people; and assessment of their suitability will include an awareness of child protection and safe care practices.
- ◇ The successful applicant will be offered a position subject to:
  - Provision of suitable reference/s
  - Completion of a declaration form by the applicant, stating there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable for working with minors. (Form 5 pg 67)
  - Proof of qualifications, where applicable.
  - Vetting through the National Vetting Bureau (Republic of Ireland) or Access Northern Ireland (Guidance 2 pg 59)
  - Positive proof of identification.

### **NOTE**

All recruitment and personnel files should be retained in accordance with the Dominican Province of Ireland record storage policy. (Appendix 1 Recording and Storage of Information)

### ***Once appointed, the following should be in place***

- ◇ Ensure that personnel recruited to work with the Dominican Order are provided with an induction into the Dominican Child Safeguarding Statement, Policy and Procedures and that they agree to follow the Policy and Procedures by signing an employee acceptance form (Form 6 pg. 00).
- ◇ Ensure the probationary period is served.



- ◇ Ensure safeguarding training is provided and attended.
- ◇ Ensure professional support, supervision and appraisals are offered as appropriate.

#### **1.4. Safe Recruitment - Volunteers**

All necessary steps should be taken to ensure that all volunteers who work with children or young people in the context of the Irish Dominican Province, are assessed as suitable. This includes conducting the following procedures

- Vetting through the Garda National Vetting Bureau (Republic of Ireland) or Access Northern Ireland (**Guidance 2 pg 59**)
- Requirement to sign a declaration form stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children or young people. (**Form 5 pg 67**)
- Depending on the role of the volunteer who may have regular and necessary contact with children or young people through their ministry, completing an application form. (**Form 7 pg 69**)
- Ensuring the volunteer is inducted in the Dominican Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and they agree to follow the policy and the procedures by signing a safeguarding agreement form. (**Form 8 pg 71**)
- Ensuring the volunteer agrees to abide by the Dominican code of conduct. (**Guidance 3 pg 72**)
- Ensuring the volunteer agrees to report all safeguarding concerns to the DLP.

#### **1.5. Induction**

On appointment, an induction programme should be put in place for the employee or volunteer to help their successful integration. Each person will be given (or should already have in place)

- ◇ The name of the DLP and Deputy DLP with information about their role in relation to child protection procedures.
- ◇ They should be inducted into the Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Document and sign a form agreeing to adhere to it. (**Form 8 pg 71**)
- ◇ Job description which clarifies the skills and qualifications necessary and tasks involved in the work. The level of contact with children and young people should be specified.
- ◇ Personnel, including volunteers, should be clear about their role and its limits, who they report to, and what to do if they need further support or if they have concerns.

- ◇ Clarity about the probationary period, where applicable.
- ◇ Information on professional support and supervision.
- ◇ Ensure safeguarding training is provided and attended.

The above induction process is completed with the employee or volunteer by the relevant prior or superior or supervisor.

### **1.6. Supervision and support of workers who have contact with children or young people**

Good supervision practice includes both formal and informal discussion, and individual and team dialogue, and is summarised as follows

- ◇ Reviewing operations and practice in the light of the Dominican mission.
- ◇ Regularly affording personnel the opportunity to raise questions, problems, or suggestions for change.
- ◇ Based on experience, assessing the need for change in policies, practice or training.

Supervisory and review considerations relevant to this policy are

- Observation and assessment of the worker's attitude and competence in the role.
- Observation of relationships between workers, and between workers and children or young people.
- Observation of relationships among children and young people.

Priors, superiors and managers should be alert to any unusual incident or activity taking place, where workers may be putting themselves in vulnerable positions, or which may constitute a breach of the Dominican code of conduct (Guidance 3 pg 72)

### **1.7. Guidance on Vetting**

#### **Legislative Basis - Republic of Ireland**

In the Republic of Ireland, Vetting is carried out through the National Vetting Bureau in accordance with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 to 2016. From the date of commencement of the legislation in April 2016, it is a criminal offence to allow anyone to engage in ministry with children or vulnerable persons, without being vetted.

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 to 2016 sets out the circumstances in which vetting is required:

- ◇ Any work or activity which is carried out by a person, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, children (and/or vulnerable persons).
- ◇ Any work or activity as a minister or priest or any other person engaged in the advancement of religious beliefs, to children (and vulnerable persons) unless such work or activity is merely incidental to the advancement of religious beliefs to persons who are not children (or vulnerable persons).
- ◇ In other words, anyone who is 18 or over and involved in ministry, employed or contracted or volunteering, who has any contact with children and/or vulnerable persons which is more than incidental, must be vetted.
- ◇ Those who are aged 16 and under 18 years may be vetted, but this can only be carried out with the written consent of their parent/guardian and of the young person themselves.

For other Church personnel whose contact with children and/or vulnerable persons is incidental, vetting is not required.

### ***Legislative Basis - Northern Ireland***

The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (Disclosure) is the legislation that allows for an enhanced criminal record check for those engaged in regulated activities with children and vulnerable adults. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 sets out the activities and work that are 'regulated activities', which a person who has been barred by the Disclosure and Barring Service must not do.

Vetting is carried out in Northern Ireland if a paid member of staff or a volunteer is to engage in a regulated activity. An enhanced check can disclose non-conviction information or 'soft intelligence' if the police consider it is relevant to the role. This could be an incident that did not go to court, or information about an ongoing police investigation.

An enhanced check also includes a barred list check for anyone applying to do paid or voluntary work that is a regulated activity. A barred list check involves checking whether the individual appears on a list of people who are prevented from doing certain types of work.

The full, legal definition of regulated activity is set out in Schedule 2 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007, as amended (in particular, by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012). Regulated activity excludes family arrangements, and personal, non-commercial arrangements.

### 1.8. Codes of Conduct

The recruitment of suitably qualified and experienced personnel is a vital aspect of the Dominicans' child safeguarding policy. In order to maintain a high level of child protection awareness and safe care, codes of behaviour are equally important.

A code of conduct is a clear and concise guide to what is and is not acceptable behaviour and practice when working with children and young people. It is an essential part of the safeguarding procedures of any Church body that has ministry with children and young people. A key aspect of any code of conduct is the creation of an environment where it is safe for children and young people to ask questions and express their concerns, confident in the knowledge that what they say will be heard, taken seriously and acted upon.

It is very important that everyone in the Dominican Province of Ireland is clear about what is and is not acceptable behaviour when working with children and young people. It is also important to involve children and parent/carers and/or guardians in the process of developing a code of conduct. When considering what sorts of behaviour are appropriate in dealing with children and young people, it is important to bear in mind that the intentions of adults are less important than the impact of their behaviour on children and young people.

In general codes of conduct should contain:

- ◇ Positive statements indicating what sorts of behaviours are appropriate, e.g., listening.
- ◇ An awareness of the scope of bullying and how to cope with the problem, as it may occur in any group context.
- ◇ Prohibitions indicating behaviours that are never acceptable, e.g., hitting a child or young person.
- ◇ Good practice guidelines that indicate what is generally acceptable or unacceptable, but that also allow for exceptions, e.g., in a medical emergency, taking a child or young person in your car without a second member of staff or adult if there is no one else around.

If it becomes necessary to depart from the code of conduct, the reasons for doing so should be carefully recorded, and steps should be taken to avoid the recurrence of such a situation in the future.

### **1.8.1. Code of Conduct for adults working with children or young people**

Prior to commencing any ministry with children and young people, it is a requirement for all Dominican personnel, staff and volunteers sign up to the Dominican Code of Conduct. (Guidance 3 pg 72)

### **1.8.2. Dealing with Breaches of Codes of Conduct**

If a person breaches the code of conduct, efforts should be made to resolve the issue by

- ◇ Discussion with and support for the adult and/or the child or young person.
- ◇ Consideration of attendance at supplementary training.
- ◇ In more serious cases, suspension or exclusion may be considered.

Any Dominican member, staff member, volunteer or lay person who becomes aware of a breach of this Code of Conduct should bring the matter to the immediate attention of

- a) Designated Liaison Person or
- b) Deputy Designated Liaison Person,

and/or

- c) Prior Provincial, St. Mary's Priory, Tallaght, Dublin 24. (01) 4048118

### **1.8.3. Code of Conduct for Children or Young People**

Children and young people should be involved in drawing up a code of conduct for themselves. It is important that in working with children/young people, an appropriate adult with relevant skills and competence, participates to support them in developing the code of conduct.

The methods used in creating a code of conduct should be age- and ability-appropriate, with children and young people being encouraged to avoid merely drawing up a list of prohibitions. Instead, the code should be comprised of positive statements about respect and should consider what consequences ensue if the code is broken. (Guidance 4, pg 75)



***Discipline and sanctions when dealing with challenging behaviour***

As far as possible,

- ◇ Disciplining of children and young people should be in the form of positive reinforcement.
- ◇ Rules about discipline and sanctions should be agreed as part of the code of behaviour and accepted by all workers, children and young people as a condition of becoming involved.
- ◇ The anti-bullying protocol should be communicated to all personnel and implemented by everyone.

Sanctions should be implemented consistently, fairly and firmly and not used as a threat. Children or young people should be helped to understand why sanctions are being imposed. When a sanction has been imposed, it is important that a child or young person is able to feel that she/he is still valued.

Sometimes, children or young people can be disruptive, and their behaviour can be challenging. Such behaviour can put at risk the safety of the child or young person, himself or herself, as well as that of other children or young people and/or of workers. Workers need to be trained and prepared for coping with disruptive behaviour.

It is recommended that

- ◇ More than one worker is present when challenging behaviour is being dealt with.
- ◇ A record is kept, signed and dated in an incident book, describing what happened, the circumstances, who were involved, any injury to a person or damage to property arising from the incident, and how the situation was resolved.

***1.9. Anti-bullying Guidance and Protocol***

We recognise the devastating effects and long-term damage that bullying can have on children or young people and we hope to create safe bullying-free environments for our children and young people.

***What is bullying?***

- ◇ Bullying is intentional, repeated and aggressive physical, verbal or psychological behaviour directed by an individual or group against others.
- ◇ Bullying can occur at any age, in any environment, and can be long- or short-term.
- ◇ Any child or young person can be a victim of bullying.
- ◇ Bullying can be perpetuated by adults towards children or young people, as well as by children or young people towards their peer group.
- ◇ Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour may not be described as bullying. However, when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing it is bullying.
- ◇ Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

**Bullying can be**

- ◇ Emotional or psychological: e.g., tormenting, excluding, extorting, intimidating.
- ◇ Physical: e.g., pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, intimidating, damaging or stealing property, or any use of violence.
- ◇ Racist: e.g., racial taunts, insults about colour, nationality, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or Traveller background, or use of graffiti or gestures.
- ◇ Sexual: e.g., harassment, unwanted physical contact, or sexually abusive comments. This may constitute actual sexual abuse, which should be reported.
- ◇ Homophobic: e.g., taunting a person of a different sexual orientation.
- ◇ Verbal: e.g., name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- ◇ Cyber: e.g., misuse or abuse of email, mobile phones, internet chat rooms, social media, text messaging, or camera and video facilities.
- ◇ Subtle: such as an unwelcome expression or gesture that is repeated and focused on an individual.

**Prevention**

To help prevent bullying, the following strategies are suggested

- ◇ Engage children or young people in discussions about what bullying is and why it cannot be tolerated.
- ◇ Encourage children or young people to take responsibility and report incidents of bullying to their leader or the person in charge.
- ◇ Review bullying guidance with children or young people and parents involved in parish or agency activities.
- ◇ Seek to promote positive attitudes of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among all personnel.

**Procedures to deal with bullying**

- ◇ All incidents of bullying should be brought to the attention of the leader or person in charge.
- ◇ All incidents will be recorded on incident report forms and kept on file.
- ◇ Leaders should report to and seek guidance and support from the friar or Dominican personnel in charge.
- ◇ Parents or carers and/or guardians should be informed of incidents of bullying and should meet with the leader or person in charge to discuss the problem.
- ◇ The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated, and the bullying quickly stopped.

All parties involved should be supported and helped throughout the process. If necessary and appropriate, the statutory services should be consulted.

### **1.10. Ensuring Safe Care for Children or Young People**

#### ***(Organising activities in a safe manner for children)***

If the Irish Dominican Province is to create safe environments in which children and young people can participate and develop well, activities need to be planned; they should be child-centred in their practice and behaviour; and there should be clear procedures to guide practice.

In practical terms, organising the safe care and participation of children and young people will include the following

- ◇ Completing a hazard or risk assessment: This assists with managing both health and safety issues, and the general welfare of children and young people. (Guidance 5 pg 77)
- ◇ Completing a child and parent/carer and/or guardian joint consent form. (Form 10 pg 80)
- ◇ Clear guidance on the participation of children or young people with specific needs.
- ◇ Guidance on taking children or young people on trips away or pilgrimage.
- ◇ Sign-in register of attendance (Form 11 pg 83)
- ◇ Ensuring adequate supervision ratios. (Guidance 6 pg 84)
- ◇ Guidance on accidents or incidents.
- ◇ Guidance on the use of technology - media policy. (Guidance 7 pg 87)

### **1.11. Guidance on Children or Young People with Specific Needs**

Some children or young people have specific needs that place additional responsibilities on those who care for and work with them. It is often the situational and environmental factors that disable the child or young person, rather than the physical or intellectual difficulty the child or young person experiences. Where possible, the environmental factors should be adapted to the child or young person's needs. Prohibitive attitudes need to be addressed through education and information. Children or young people who have a disability have the same rights as any other child or young person, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Points to consider when including a child or young person with specific needs, in your group

- ◇ Work in partnership with the child or young person, parents/carers and guardians, and all professionals involved, to establish how the child or young person can be included.
- ◇ Make sure inclusion is possible before bringing the child or young person into the group.
- ◇ Make reasonable adjustments.

- ◇ Be interested in the child or young person and build a rapport with them.
- ◇ If the child or young person has a communication impairment, acquiring some key skills in their communication method will be useful.
- ◇ Some specific training may be useful or required, e.g., the autistic spectrum, epilepsy.
- ◇ Hazard assessments may be necessary to ensure the safety of some children or young people with specific needs (Form 9 pg 79)
- ◇ Higher staff ratios may be required if the child or young person has additional needs or behavioural problems. (Guidance 6 pg 84)

### ***Intimate care issues:***

When introducing a child or young person with specific needs into an activity, it is important to establish if they have intimate care needs, and who should provide or assist with this if it is necessary.

It is important to remember that not every child or young person with a disability has intimate care needs. Intimate care is, to some extent, individually defined and varies according to personal experience, cultural expectations and gender. It may be described as help with anything of a personal or private nature that the individual is unable to do themselves.

Generally, church personnel are not expected to be involved in the provision of intimate care of children or young people. This should be undertaken by suitably qualified people.

Children or young people with specific needs may be more likely than other children or young people to be bullied or subjected to other forms of abuse, and they may also be less clear about physical and emotional boundaries.

It is particularly important that children or young people with specific needs are carefully listened to, in recognition of the fact that they may have difficulty expressing their concerns, and so that the importance of what they say is not to be underestimated.

Decisions regarding who provides intimate care for a child or young person should be discussed and agreed in advance by everyone concerned

- ◇ The child or young person's view should be ascertained.
- ◇ The parents/carers and/or guardians should be consulted, and their consent sought.
- ◇ A rota of carers of the same sex as the child or young person should be agreed.
- ◇ The age, stage of development and ethnicity of the child or young person will need to be considered.

Guidelines to be borne in mind when providing intimate care include the following

- ◇ The sensitive nature of such tasks.
- ◇ The need to treat every child or young person with dignity and respect.
- ◇ The need to ensure an appropriate degree of privacy.
- ◇ The need to involve the child or young person as much as possible in their own care.
- ◇ The need to ensure consistency in who provides care.

If a child or young person appears distressed or unhappy, this should be discussed with parents/carers and/or guardians if appropriate and the activity leader.

### **1.12. Taking children or young people on trips away and/or pilgrimage**

Trips away that involve children or young people can be rewarding and fulfilling experience for adults, children and young people involved with them. To do this safely and in a way that safeguards all concerned, requires careful planning and consideration.

Listed below are a number of areas that should be considered in planning a trip away.

#### **Have you**

- ◇ Identified the aim and outcomes of the programme?
- ◇ Followed the Dominican Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures?
- ◇ Carried out a hazard assessment? (Form 9 pg 79)
- ◇ Used safe practice guidelines when recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers?
- ◇ Selected a key staff member who has overall responsibility for the trip?
- ◇ Selected staff and volunteers for the trip who are appropriately trained, qualified and vetted?
- ◇ Nominated a staff member or volunteer who is responsible for First Aid, if appropriate?
- ◇ Checked the First Aid kit and/or received training in First Aid as relevant to the activity planned for?
- ◇ Ensured adequate and gender-based supervision in line with the Dominican Safeguarding Policies and Procedures?
- ◇ Appointed a contact person (at home) who has access to all information and contact details?
- ◇ Checked insurance and ensured that there is adequate coverage for all activities planned for?
- ◇ Checked that the transport has appropriate insurance, qualified drivers and seatbelts?
- ◇ Carried out an equipment safety check?



- ◇ Made provisions for returning home early, if required?
- ◇ Allocated a budget and contingency fund?
- ◇ Obtained from parents/carers and guardians any information which may be relevant to a child or young person staying away from home overnight, e.g., information concerning allergies, medical problems, or special needs.
- ◇ Checked out the locations and accommodation of the trip away to ensure they have
  - Appropriate safeguarding policy, practices and procedures in place
  - Insurance cover
  - Appropriately trained and qualified staff
  - Separate changing areas for boys and girls, if required
  - Disability access, if required

#### ***Have the children or young people participants***

- ◇ Been involved as much as possible in planning the trip?
- ◇ Agreed upon a Code of Behaviour?
- ◇ Agreed on boundaries around unstructured time?
- ◇ Been provided with information on appropriate clothing?
- ◇ Been provided with contact details for leaders?
- ◇ Consented to the trip away?

#### ***Have parents/carers and/or guardians***

- ◇ Met with leaders and been informed of the programme?
- ◇ Been made aware of the Dominican Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures?
- ◇ Consented in writing? (Form 10 pg 80)
- ◇ Provided contact, medical details including allergies, illnesses, medications and dietary requirements?
- ◇ Been provided with contact details of the leaders and centre or accommodation being used for the duration of the trip?
- ◇ Been provided with details for pick-up and drop-off plan for children or young people?

**Have staff**

- ◇ Received training on the Dominican Code of Conduct and Dominican Child Safeguarding Statement, Policy and Procedures, on how to deal with a disclosure, and on dealing with challenging behaviour?
- ◇ Been assigned responsibilities and scheduled for breaks?
- ◇ Been made aware of how to respond to, and whom to contact in an emergency?
- ◇ Worked with children or young people to evaluate the success of the activity?

If staying overnight, have staff checked the following:

- If there is 24/7 access to centre staff?
- If there are appropriate sleeping arrangements for children or young people, i.e., separate provision for boys and girls, and separate provision for leaders (within earshot of the children or young people)?
- ◇ Checked out the security and supervision arrangements at the centre.

**1.13. Guidance on Maintaining Adequate Supervision Ratios**

In planning a trip or activity, it is critically important to consider how many adults are needed to supervise the children or young people in a safe manner. It is recommended that a certain number of adults be available to supervise a certain number of children or young people.

At a minimum, **two adults are required for each activity**. In addition, the minimum following ratios should be applied. These ratios may need to be reviewed, depending on whether the children or young people have specific needs or requirements and on the duration of the activity.

**Supervision Ration Table**

0-1 years	1 – 2 years	2 - 3 years	3 – 6 years	7- 12 years	13 – 18 years
2 adults for the first 3 children plus one adult for every additional three children	2 adults for the first 5 children plus one adult for every additional five children	2 adults for first 6 children plus one adult for every additional six children	2 adults for the first 8 children plus one adult for every additional eight children	2 adults for the first 8 children/ young people plus one adult for every additional eight children or young people	2 adults for the first 10 children or young people plus one adult for every additional ten children or young people

If it is an overnight activity, additional staff should be considered. If the group is mixed, a gender balance should be maintained.

### **1.14. Attendance Register**

A minimum of two officially appointed leaders should be responsible for each activity involving children or young people. At least one of the leaders must have undergone a full-day training session provided by trainers registered with the NBSCCCI. These leaders must sign an attendance sheet and put their initials under each date to confirm that the children or young people and adults marked were in attendance, as indicated by the 'time in' and 'time out' for each date. (Form 11 pg 83)

### **1.15. Consent**

The consent of parents/carers and/or guardians should always be sought prior to engaging children or young people in any activity, and also the consent of the child or young person participating, confirming that they wish to participate in the activity. (Form 10 pg 80)

### **1.16. Guidance on one-to-one contact with children or young people**

In general, Church activities should not involve one-to-one contact, and should usually be supervised by at least two adults.

#### ***In general, it is best practice not to***

- ◇ Take children and young people away and/or to your own home or room, especially where they will be alone with you.
- ◇ Work with children or young people in one-to-one contact without a prior arrangement in place. (Guidance 8 pg 94)
- ◇ Ensure that activities are supervised by at least two adults. However, there may be two circumstances where this may occur:
  - a) In a reactive situation, for example, when a child or young person requests one-to-one meeting with you without warning, or where a child or young person has had to be removed from a group as part of a breach of a code of behaviour.
  - b) As part of a planned structured piece of work, for example, one-to-one music tuition.

#### ***Reactive situations***

- ◇ If you need to talk to a child or young person alone, make every effort to do so in an open environment, in view of others.

- ◇ It this is not possible, make every effort to meet in room with visual access, or with door open, or in a room or area where other people are nearby.
- ◇ You should advise another adult or a colleague that such a meeting is taking place and the reason for it.
- ◇ Maintain a record of the meeting, including names, dates, times, location, reason for the meeting, and outcome, and store the record appropriately and securely.
- ◇ Avoid meetings with individual children or young people where they are on their own in a building.
- ◇ One-to-one meetings should take place at an appropriate time, for example, not late at night; and in an appropriate venue.

### ***Planned and structured pieces of work***

- ◇ The activity should have a clear rationale.
- ◇ Parents/carers and/or guardians must be fully informed as to the nature and purpose of this work and must give their written consent for their child to participate.
- ◇ A clear code of behaviour must be signed and adhered to by both parents. This should include limits of confidentiality and safeguarding procedures.

### ***1.17. Guidance on responding to accidents/incidents***

If a child or young person has an accident and injures himself/herself whilst attending a Dominican-run event, the following procedures should be followed

1. Assess the injury and reassure the child or young person. If the injury is severe or the child or young person has lost consciousness, contact the emergency services immediately by phoning 999 or 112. You can phone 112 from a mobile that has no credit or from a phone that has no SIM card. The 112-emergency number is a European emergency number and can be called from anywhere in Europe.
2. If the emergency services are to be called, make contact urgently with the child or young person's parents/carers and/or guardians. If the parents/carers and/or guardians are not available, it may be necessary for a leader to travel with the child or young person to the hospital.
3. If the injury is minor, local application of treatment should be available from the First Aid box. Under no circumstances should a member of the Dominican team or ministry administer medication be a to a child or young person.
4. As soon as possible after the accident, write up a report, using an accident/incident report (Form 12 pg 85). Once completed, this form should be stored in a safe place, in line with data protection, and treated as a confidential document.

5. Always inform parents/carers and/or guardians of any accident that has occurred involving their child or young person, regardless of how minor you consider it to be and ask them to sign the accident/incident report form

It is good practice to give a copy of the accident/incident report form to parents/carer and/or guardians.

### **1.18. Use of Property owned by the Irish Dominican Province by External Groups**

It is a requirement that all external groups working with children and/or young people in Dominican-owned churches and/or using facilities, for example, church halls, day centres, retreat or counselling centres owned by the Dominican Order are insured and have a child safeguarding statement and policy in place. (Guidance 9, pg97)

The general principle is that the obligation to comply with requirements relating to insurance and child safeguarding is the responsibility of the external groups using church property and not of the Dominican Order. Hence it is the responsibility of any group using Dominican property to run activities involving children and young people to ensure they comply with all applicable child safeguarding and child protection legislation and guidelines. The group is also responsible for liaising with Tusla to ensure that their policy and procedures meet the statutory requirements. (Form 13 pg 99)

Dominican personnel should at no stage assist any external group in developing a child safeguarding policy but should advise all such groups to seek the advice of Tusla personnel in developing the required policies. It is the role of Tusla to validate the adequacy of the policy.

### **1.19 Protected Disclosure Policy (often referred to as “whistle blowing”)**

All Dominican members, staff and volunteers must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of their prior or superior, or a supervisor, or the Provincial.

Although this can be difficult to do, it is particularly important where the welfare of a child or young people 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., prior, line manager or superior. 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 out of feeling that this would be disloyal to the brethren, colleagues, or you may fear harassment or victimisation. The Dominican Order ensures that you feel supported to make a disclosure.

These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be at risk. It is important to note that it is often the most vulnerable children or young people who are targeted. These children or young people need an advocate to safeguard their welfare. Do not think, 'What if I'm wrong?' Think, 'What if I am right?'

### ***Reasons for making a disclosure***

- ◇ Everyone 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***

A protected disclosure can be about a range of concerns, not just safeguarding. It is important to

- ◇ Voice 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 causing concern, and why.
- ◇ Approach your immediate prior or superior or manager, or the Provincial.
- ◇ If your concern is about your immediate prior or superior or manager, or the Provincial, please contact your DLP, the statutory services, and/or the NBSCCCI.
- ◇ Make sure a satisfactory response is secured – do not let matters rest.
- ◇ Ideally, make known your concerns 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 immediate prior or superior or manager, or the Provincial 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 the Order, a staff member, or a volunteer has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health issue, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their prior or superior or manager, or the Provincial, so that professional and personal support can be offered to the person concerned. Whilst reporting will remain confidential, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children or young people.

**1.20. Complaint Procedure for Safeguarding Concerns that are not Allegations of Abuse****Introduction**

The Dominican Province of Ireland is committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of all children and young people with whom we work. We also try to ensure that children and young people have a positive and enjoyable experience when participating and engaging in Dominican ministries.

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 relevant child protection and safeguarding procedures.

All complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and confidentially. Efforts will be made to resolve complaints quickly and informally through discussion with the parents/carers and/or guardians, children, young people, volunteers, or members of staff and clergy, as appropriate. (Form 14 pg101)

**Who can make a complaint?**

Complaints can be made by

- Children or young people involved in the specific ministry
- Their parents or carers and/or guardians
- Dominican members, staff or volunteers working with the children or young people
- Other advocates on behalf of children or young people.

**Information you need to provide**

Complaints can be made verbally or in writing. By providing the following information you can help to speed up the investigation of your complaint

- The name and address of the child or young person affected
- If the complaint is being made by a parent or carer and/or guardian and/or other adult, the name and address of the parent or carer and/or guardian and/or other adult
- Exactly what the person is dissatisfied with
- The name(s) of the official(s) dealing with the complaint
- If your complaint is complicated, you may find it best to put it in writing so that no important detail is overlooked
- Remember to send copies of all relevant documentation or correspondence that you may have
- If you have special needs that may affect your ability to make a complaint, please advise at the earliest opportunity so make every effort is made to provide assistance.

**Follow up to complaint**

All complaints of this nature should be resolved using an open dialogue with Dominican personnel involved. However, if a resolution is not possible, the following steps should be taken

- ◇ The making of a complaint will have no impact on the Dominicans' interaction or dealings with the person making the complaint.
- ◇ The prior or superior, or the line manager, or the director of youth ministry or a Dominican representative should be contacted on receipt of the complaint
- ◇ A letter acknowledging receipt of the complaint will be sent within seven calendar days, enclosing a copy of the Dominican complaints' procedure



- ◇ The person receiving the complaint will endeavour to respond to the complaint within seven working days, however, in some cases this may take longer.
- ◇ An official other than those originally involved will examine the complaint; and all complaints will be thoroughly investigated
- ◇ The Dominican representative may organise a meeting with the person making the complaint, if requested, to discuss and, hopefully, resolve the complaint. This communication may also take place by telephone if a meeting is not possible. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, this will be done within fourteen calendar days of sending the acknowledgment letter to the complainant.
- ◇ Within seven calendar days of the meeting or discussion, the Dominican representative will write to the complainant to confirm what took place and to set out whatever solutions were agreed.
- ◇ If a meeting is not agreeable or possible, the Dominican representative will, within twenty-one calendar days of sending the acknowledgment letter to them, issue a detailed written reply to the complainant, setting out suggestions for resolving the matter.
- ◇ If the complainant is still not satisfied at this point, they should contact the Provincial or Dominican representative again.
- ◇ At the conclusion of this step, the Provincial may decide to take further action on the complaint. If, however, the Provincial decides not to take further action, the process is completed.

## 2

**STANDARD 2****Child Protection Procedures**

*Procedures for responding to child protection, child safeguarding concerns and/or allegations*

**Introduction**

Children and young people occupy a central place in the heart of the Christian community and have a right to be listened to and be heard. Their protection and welfare is the first and paramount consideration.

To create and maintain a safe environment, Dominicans must respond effectively to all allegations of abuse. The responsibility to report allegations of abuse to the statutory authorities is mandatory for all members of Dominican Order. (Guidance 12 pg 104).

The only exception to this is the receipt of any information by a priest under the sacramental seal of Confession (Guidance 13 pg 107)

It is important that anyone working on behalf of the Dominicans knows how to respond to allegations, including who to tell and how to record the information. This section provides guidance on these issues. Should any person be unsure of whether information they have received constitutes an allegation of abuse and/or if they want guidance on how they should manage a concern, they should contact the DLP without delay.

**2.1 Recognition:**

In order to recognise child abuse, it is necessary to know what is meant by it. Child abuse can be categorised into four different types:

1. Neglect
2. Emotional abuse
3. Physical abuse
4. Sexual abuse

(Guidance 14 pg 109)

**2.2. Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include**

- 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 another means, that he or she has been abused
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child or an alleged abuse they committed
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused.

### **2.3. Signs of abuse**

Something such as the behaviour of an adult to a child or young person may make you or them feel uncomfortable.

A child or young person may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. For example, the sexual abuse of a child or young person is also a form of emotional abuse, especially when it takes place in the context of a relationship of trust.

Abuse and neglect can take place within a family, in the community or in an institutional setting; and the abuser may be someone known to the child or young person or may be a stranger.

### **2.4. Responding:**

It is best practice to inform a person wishing to discuss suspicion of abuse, of the requirement to report child protection concerns to the civil authorities before any disclosure is made. However, it is not always possible to know when a child or young person or adult is about to disclose child abuse, so, the opportunity to inform them may not arise.

However, where a person, whether child, young person or adult, asks to speak in confidence to a Dominican friar, or staff member, and/or volunteer, it is important to tell the person that if they disclose information concerning child protection or welfare concerns, this information will have to be reported to the statutory authorities, *i.e.*, Tusla/HSCT and An Garda Síochána/PSNI. This can help the child, young person or adult to make an informed decision whether to disclose abuse or not.

It is necessary to tell a person who admits an offence against a child or young person that such information cannot be kept confidential. If such an admission is made to you, even where the admission relates to something that happened a long time ago, you must refer the matter to the DLP or Deputy DLP as soon as possible. The DLP or Deputy DLP will follow the procedures for referral to Tusla/HSCT and An Garda Síochána/PSNI.

### **2.4.1 Responding to a person making an allegation of abuse**

People may tell you about the following

- ◇ Abuse that happened to them
- ◇ Something they have 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. (Guidance 15 pg115)

### **2.4.2. Guidance on responding to children or young people disclosing abuse.**

If a child or young person tells you directly about abuse happening to them, you should allow them to speak and you should listen attentively. However, it is not appropriate to set up a meeting with a child or young person for the purpose of receiving a disclosure or taking a statement. That is the role of the statutory services.

While it is assumed that it is difficult for all people to disclose abuse, the person receiving the allegation should be aware that a child or young person may feel very frightened and may 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/young person's parents/carers and/or guardians. It is best practice to inform parents/carers or guardians unless doing so would place the child/young person at further risk.

If the allegation is about Dominican personnel, explain to the child/young person and their parents/carers or guardians that the information will be reported to the statutory authorities and church authorities.

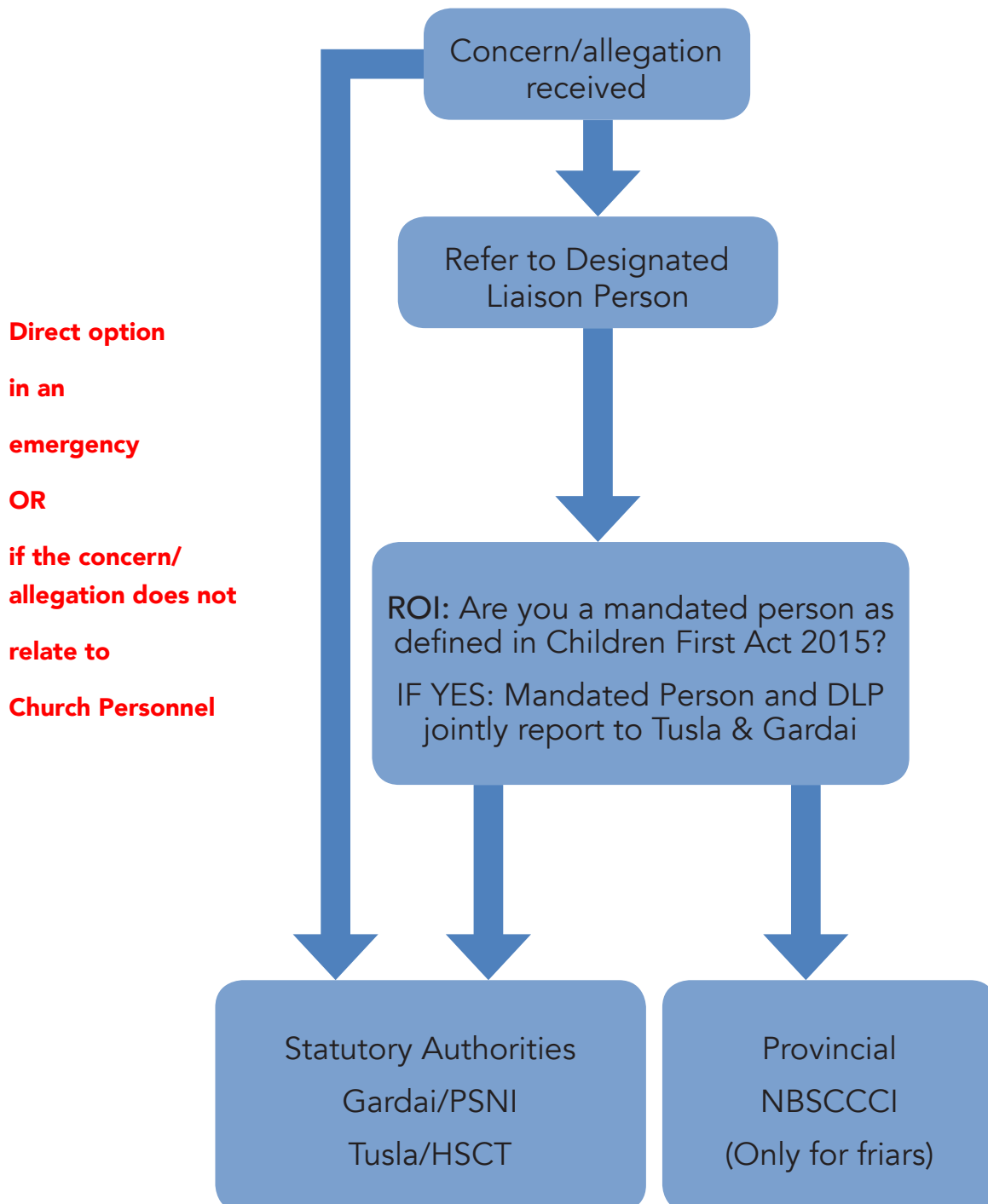
All offers of further support to the child/young person should be conveyed via the child/young person's parents/carers and/or guardians or an appropriate adult.

## **2.5 Reporting**

When you have reasonable grounds for concern that a child/young person may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected, contact the DLP or Deputy DLP without delay. The DLP or Deputy DLP will assist in ensuring the notification procedures are completed and can make a joint report to the statutory authorities with any other person.

In an emergency or if there is an immediate concern for the protection of a child/young person, a report should be made directly to An Garda Síochána/PSNI.

## REPORTING FLOW CHART



The DLP will report the matter to the statutory authorities on behalf of the person making the report about the possible abuse of a child/young person or will make a joint report if the person is a mandated person making a mandated report. If the complaint concerns a member of the Dominican Order, the Provincial and the NBSCCCI are also informed. (Guidance 16 pg 117)

Where an allegation of abuse is made against a Dominican staff member there are two procedures that are put in place

- a) the reporting procedure in respect of the child/young person
- b) the reporting procedure for dealing with the employee.

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

1. Act immediately on receipt of a suspicion, concern, disclosure or allegation of abuse, and refer the matter to the DLP or Deputy DLP without delay.
2. In respect of all allegations, the DLP or Deputy DLP must refer the allegation to Tusla/HSCT, An Garda Síochána/PSNI.
3. If there is any uncertainty about whether the allegation or concern meets the threshold for reporting, the DLP or Deputy DLP will consult with the statutory authorities, who will advise on the requirements for notification.
4. Some allegations need to be referred to other authorities with a legitimate interest. If the DLP or Deputy DLP is unsure about whether information can be shared, advice will be sought from Tusla/HSCT, An Garda Síochána/PSNI.
5. Allegations against Dominican friars, staff and volunteers will also be notified to the Provincial.
6. The NBSCCCI is notified anonymously of allegations against Dominican friars
7. If a diocesan appointment was held, the relevant bishop is notified.

### **2.5.1 Guidance for receiving and recording an allegation**

- ◇ 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 or before the end of the day.
- ◇ Record the time, date, location, persons present, and how the allegation was received, e.g., by telephone, face-to-face conversation, letter.

- ◇ This initial recorded information will be transferred to a child protection referral form and will become the first entry in a file of information about the case that will be retained by the DLP or Deputy DLP.
- ◇ Please always sign and date the record. The record would also normally include
  - Accurate identifying information of the complainant, as far as it is known. This should include the name, address, and age of the complainant when the alleged abuse occurred.
  - Where the person who has raised a concern or allegation is a child or young person, details of parents/carers or guardians should also be given.
  - Name of the individual against whom the concern or allegation is being raised, and any other identifying information.
  - Dates when the concern arose, or when the incident occurred.
  - The person's own words 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 or concern or 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 DLP or Deputy DLP.
  - Copies of retained records should be kept secure and confidential.

**Remember – it is not your role to investigate.**

- ◇ In cases of emergency (and/or outside normal business hours), where a child or young person 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 is a child or young person left in a dangerous situation pending social services intervention (see direct option arrow in Reporting Flowchart).
- ◇ In all cases, consideration should 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 Reporting Flowchart).
- ◇ Explain to the person raising the concern what will happen next. You should inform the person making the suspicion, concern or allegation that their identity and the identity of the respondent and complainant will be shared with the statutory authorities.

- ◇ Provide contact details for the DLP or Deputy DLP if the referrer needs to ask questions later. The incident or concern should not be shared with anyone other than those who need to know, apart from the statutory authorities and appropriate church authorities detailed in these procedures.
- ◇ Written confirmation should be given to the person making the referral to the DLP or Deputy DLP that the information has been passed on to the statutory authorities. If this has not happened, an explanation should be recorded (this will not be possible when dealing with anonymous allegations).
- ◇ It is essential to respond appropriately to the complainant to ensure that they feel heard and taken seriously.

## **2.6 Guidance on responding to an anonymous allegation of abuse**

Anonymous complaints are to be managed and responded to carefully. Anxiety and fear may persuade some people not to reveal their identity immediately. It is sometimes difficult to act on information under these circumstances, unless at some point the name of the person raising the concern or making an allegation becomes known. If you are unsure whether the information you have received reaches the threshold for reporting, consult with the DLP or Deputy DLP. An approach to the statutory authorities may be appropriate.

The person raising the concern should be informed that anonymity might restrict the ability of professionals to access information or to intervene to protect a child or young person. As much openness as possible should be encouraged. However, if you receive any identifiable information that relates to an allegation of abuse (current or past), you must pass this information on to the appropriate statutory authorities so that an investigation can be undertaken to assess child protection risks.



## 3

**STANDARD 3****Care and Support of the Complainant**

Those who have alleged child abuse should receive a compassionate response from all Dominican personnel and be offered access to appropriate care, advice and support.

Complainants need to be listened to and heard to ensure that any allegation or disclosure of abuse is handled compassionately, effectively and professionally. Disclosing abuse takes enormous courage and calls for a high level of trust. Child abuse by its very nature can damage trust. It is therefore imperative that when a complainant is ready to tell their story, the listener responds with great sensitivity and compassion.

The Dominican leadership and safeguarding personnel will engage in ongoing reflection to identify who is best placed to offer pastoral care to complainants, recognising that providing pastoral care may not be the sole responsibility of any one person. Pastoral care may be offered and provided by the DLP managing the case, the support person, if the offer of a support person is taken up by the complainant, the Provincial at an appropriate time, or indeed another identified representative if there is something specific, they can offer.

**3.1 How support is offered:**

- ◇ Once an allegation has been received, the DLP/Deputy DLP will arrange a face-to-face meeting with the complainant, in a manner that respects the wishes of the person.
- ◇ The complainant may be accompanied by a person of their choice to the meeting.
- ◇ Every complainant is offered access to a support person. 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 or counselling services, for example Towards Peace and Towards Healing and will be assisted in making an appointment, if required.
- ◇ The Dominican Province of Ireland is committed to funding such professional support, as appropriate.
- ◇ If the threshold for reporting has been reached, the DLP/Deputy DLP will help the complainant to understand the necessity to refer the matter to the statutory authorities.
- ◇ At an appropriate time in the process, the complainant will be invited to meet with the Provincial and/or another representative of the Dominicans if this is their wish. This meeting is

not for the purpose of determining the outcome of any investigations, but for the Provincial to hear and acknowledge the experience of the complainant.

- ◇ At the end of this meeting, the support being provided to the complainant can be reviewed. Some complainants may wish to remain engaged with their Church despite the effect that the abuse may have had on their relationship with it, and, perhaps, with God. By meeting with and listening to complainants, the response from the Church that might best meet their spiritual needs can be identified with them. Towards Peace may be of assistance in this regard.
- ◇ The Dominican Order is open to providing independent facilitation or mediation for meetings if this is required.

A leaflet is available to support people making allegations and/or complaints detailing support/counselling services. (Guidance 17, leaflet for complainants pg 118)

## 4

**STANDARD 4****Care and Management of the Respondent**

It is important that there is fair procedure with regard to the management and investigation of allegations. A proper balance should be struck between protecting children/young people and respecting the rights of respondents. Where there is a conflict, the child/young person's welfare must come first.

The Dominican Order employ different processes regarding the management of the respondent, depending on the stage the case is at. Care is an important element at every stage as people who have received an allegation against them are recognised as being vulnerable.

**4.1 Management and care are provided by specific personnel in the safeguarding structure.**

The DLP/Deputy DLP has case management responsibility and for ensuring that appropriate protective measures have been taken, and that support is offered to the respondent. Through this time, it is important that the good name of the respondent is maintained.

**Internal Case Management**

- ◇ On receipt of an allegation, the priority is to ensure that information that has reached the threshold for reporting is referred to the statutory authorities.
- ◇ The DLP/Deputy DLP will check with the Gardai/PSNI if there is any reason as to why the information cannot be shared at that time with the respondent. In rare circumstances, the Gardai/PSNI will ask the DLP/Deputy 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 Provincial (CIC, c. 1717). This canonical inquiry will be paused to allow any statutory investigation to take place.
- ◇ At the earliest opportunity, the Provincial will call a meeting with the respondent, for the purpose of informing him that an allegation has been made and invite him to bring a person for support (Advisor)
- ◇ The role of the Adviser is to support the respondent at meetings, direct him to counselling or other professional services, and to keep him informed of the progress of the case.
- ◇ At a further meeting, the DLP/Deputy DLP will share the details of the allegation with the respondent. The respondent will be offered canonical and civil legal advice. He will be advised that he can respond to the allegation if he wishes and that this response will in

shared with the statutory authorities. However, he is advised that he does not need to make a response at this stage.

- ◇ A decision will be made as to whether an interim management plan is required, which may include restrictions to sacred ministry. This plan includes a written reminder from the Provincial to the respondent advising him to continue to adhere to the child safeguarding policies and procedures.
- ◇ If required, the DLP/Deputy DLP and Advisor will meet the respondent and present him 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.
- ◇ The Provincial and leadership team have responsibility to oversee the case and ensure that the relevant personnel are in place and acting in accordance with their role.

#### **4.2. Canonical Inquiry including Preliminary Investigation**

- ◇ The preliminary investigation is the initial stage of the canonical inquiry. The preliminary investigation is completed once formal confirmation is received from the statutory authorities that their investigations have concluded.
- ◇ The preliminary investigation is an inquiry into the facts and circumstances and imputability of the alleged delict. The person conducting the investigation produces a written report for the Provincial. The DLP/Deputy DLP may complete the investigation with the support of a canon lawyer or the Provincial may appoint another appropriate person.
- ◇ If, as a result of the preliminary investigation, the Provincial concludes there is no case to answer, he informs the respondent of the decision and that he is friar in good standing.
- ◇ However, if the Provincial finds there is a case answer, the Provincial must forward a report to the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF).
- ◇ The CDF will authorise the appropriate canonical process to be followed (e.g., a judicial penal process, an administrative penal process, confirm precept).

#### **4.3. Support**

While statutory and/or church investigations are underway, pastoral support 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 offered the support of an Advisor and offered therapeutic support and canonical and legal advice.

If at the end of a preliminary investigation, it is found there is no case to answer it is important that all outstanding matters 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 Provincial or a member of the leadership team.

If the allegations are substantiated at the end of the canonical process, the person requires pastoral and therapeutic support and to help address any offending behaviour.

## 5

## STANDARD 5

### Training and Support

All members of the Dominican Order, and all their employees and volunteers have a role to play in child safeguarding particularly if their work brings them into contact with children and young people.

The Dominican Province of Ireland recognises training as the cornerstone in maintaining high standards and good practice, and all personnel are required to complete training in child safeguarding. Those in safeguarding roles will be afforded further training to enhance their effectiveness.

#### **5.1. Dominicans**

Dominican Friars of the Irish Province, are required to attend a full-day safeguarding training event and thereafter a refresher training session every three years. Members of the Province who are suffering ill health and/or engage in limited ministry or are retired will be required to attend an information session.

#### **5.2. Staff and volunteers**

Staff and volunteers employed and/or working with the Dominican Order and working with children or young people are required to attend a full-day safeguarding training event and thereafter a refresher training session every three years.

If they have minimal involvement or engagement with children and young people, they are required to attend an information session.

#### **5.3. DLP/Safeguarding Manager**

- ◇ A key function of the DLP's role is to be available to all Dominican members, employees and volunteers for advice, guidance and support.
- ◇ It is the role of the DLP to keep updated on issues relating to safeguarding children or young people, by keeping up to date on changes in policy, guidance and any new civil or church legislation, and by attending relevant courses and conferences.
- ◇ The DLP builds his/her network of professional services so that advice and specific information can be accessed.

Training attendance records are maintained, secured and stored by the Safeguarding Office and are reviewed as part of the Dominican annual self-audit.

### ***Dominican Safeguarding training requirements***

<b>NATURE OF TRAINING</b>	<b>WHO SHOULD ATTEND</b>
One-day safeguarding training event	All Dominican members Staff and volunteers who work directly or indirectly with children and young people Local Safeguarding Representatives
Safeguarding information session	Staff and volunteers, and retired Dominican members
Role-specific training	Provincial Advisory Committee, Safeguarding Committee Members, Safeguarding personnel e.g., DLP, Support persons.
Specialist training e.g., safe recruitment, running activities with young people, working with perpetrators of abuse	Any Dominican member, staff or volunteer who considers the training to be relevant to their role and responsibilities

## 6 STANDARD 6

### Communicating the Dominican Safeguarding Message

The Dominican National Safeguarding Committee, Safeguarding Coordinator, and the Provincial ensure that the message of 'keeping children safe' is communicated to all personnel, lay faithful and external agencies.

Having a child safeguarding policy and procedure document is a requirement. For the document to be effective, it must be communicated to the relevant people in an appropriate way.

#### 6.1. Practices

Practices are in place to facilitate personnel in having a good working knowledge of the policy and procedures. These practices include

- ◇ Members being inducted into the use of the safeguarding policy and procedures
- ◇ All members, employees and volunteers are required to comply with the procedures.
- ◇ Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016 along with the Dominican Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are posted on the website [www.dominicans.ie](http://www.dominicans.ie) Hard copies of the policy and procedures are available.
- ◇ Safeguarding training and awareness-raising workshops for all personnel are available.
- ◇ Child safeguarding statement and safeguarding notices, including relevant contact details, are on prominent and permanent display in Dominican churches and premises.
- ◇ The Dominican Order is committed to making best use of different media in communicating information about safeguarding.
- ◇ The Safeguarding Committee is established to regularly review safeguarding practices and help publicise the message.

The Dominican Province of Ireland works with the statutory authorities to:

- ◇ Ensure our message is in line with legislation and best practice
- ◇ Ensure the statutory authorities know what the Dominican policy is regarding safeguarding of children and young people.
- ◇ Report all allegations and share information as appropriate.





## STANDARD 7

### Quality Assuring Compliance

Quality assurance procedures are a systematic method of assessing the extent to which the previous six child safeguarding standards are implemented at all levels within the Dominican Province of Ireland. They are designed as part of our commitment to ensuring that a process of continuous improvement takes place.

#### **7.1 Safeguarding Committee**

The role of the safeguarding committee is to oversee the implementation of Standards 1, 5, 6 and 7.

In relation to Standard 7, the safeguarding committee is responsible for

- ◇ Producing and reviewing the three-year child safeguarding plan of how to maintain the seven standards across the Dominican Province of Ireland.
- ◇ Liaising with the Local Safeguarding Representatives (LSRs): in priories which are not assigned a diocesan parish, the local prior or superior may fill this role. Their task is to ensure the completion of a local safeguarding audit, and to identify areas where guidance and support on policy or practice are needed.
- ◇ Ensuring that an annual safeguarding report on Standards 1, 5 and 6 is provided to the Provincial.

#### **7.2. Safeguarding Strategic Plan**

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

#### **7.3. A training plan and communications plan**

*Resources:* It is important to set specific and realistic objectives linked to identified allocated resources.

*Implementation:* The Provincial, through the safeguarding committee, should identify clear time-frames for implementation, which should take account of the completion of the local safeguarding audits.

*Review and evaluation:* It is important that the three-year plan sets clear dates for review of each

specific objective outlined in the plan. These review dates should be achieved on an annual basis, and reviews should take account of the outcomes of the annual local safeguarding audit.

#### **7.4. Quality Assurance**

Quality assurance is achieved by applying three methods

1. Annual self-audit scheme carried out locally but coordinated by the safeguarding committee
2. Assessing compliance during systematic visits by the DLP to Dominican priories and other centres.
3. External audits by the NBSCCCI and statutory agencies e.g., Tusla/HSCT
4. Commitment to ongoing review of policy and procedures.

# GUIDANCES AND FORMS





## GUIDANCE 1

### Recruitment & Selection Checklist

<b>Contact with children and young people</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ What contact with children and young people will the position involve?</li> <li>◇ Will the position involve unsupervised contact with children or young people, or does it involve a position of trust?</li> <li>◇ What other forms of contact will the person have with children or young people, e.g., email, social media, telephone?</li> </ul>
<b>Defining the role</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Have the tasks and skills necessary for the position been considered?</li> <li>◇ Does the task description make reference to working with and having responsibility for children or young people?</li> </ul>
<b>Key selection criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Has a list of essential and desirable qualifications, skills and experience been developed?</li> </ul>
<b>Written application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Have all applicants been asked to supply information in writing, including personal details, past and current work or volunteering experience?</li> <li>◇ Have application forms been developed?</li> </ul>
<b>Interview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Have at least two representatives been identified to meet with the applicant to explore information contained in their application?</li> <li>◇ Have the applicant and application forms been carefully considered, highlighting points to raise at interview, including               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ The applicant's attitudes towards working with children and young people</li> <li>◇ Areas you want to explore in more detail</li> <li>◇ Gaps in employment history</li> <li>◇ Vague statements of unsubstantiated qualifications</li> <li>◇ Frequent changes of employment?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Declaration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ 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 and young people?</li> <li>◇ Has the successful applicant been asked to declare any past criminal convictions and cases pending against them?</li> </ul>

<b>Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Have applicants been asked, where necessary, for photographic documentation to confirm their identity and place of residence?</li> <li>◇ Will documentation relating to the applicant's identity and relevant qualifications be checked at the interview?</li> </ul>
<b>Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Are applicants asked for documentation to confirm their qualifications?</li> </ul>
<b>Garda Vetting Procedure and Access NI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Does the position require the applicant to be Garda vetted or Access NI checked?</li> <li>◇ Has the applicant been informed that they may need to undergo Garda vetting or Access NI before taking up any appointment?</li> <li>◇ Does this applicant require a certificate of police clearance from other countries in which they have worked or volunteered?</li> </ul>
<b>Records</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Are details of the selection/induction process retained in the personnel file of the successful applicant?</li> <li>◇ Are references kept on file as part of the record of the recruitment process?</li> <li>◇ Are personnel informed that information such as application and declaration forms are held on file?</li> </ul>
<b>Confidentiality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Is information about the applicant seen only by those directly involved in the recruitment process?</li> <li>◇ Are applicants reassured that information about them, including information about convictions, will be treated in confidence and not used against them unlawfully?</li> </ul>
<b>References</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ 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 or contact with children?</li> <li>◇ Are referees asked specifically to comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children?</li> <li>◇ Are all references provided in writing and verified by a follow-up telephone call?</li> </ul>
<b>Suggested questions for referees</b>	<p>The post involves substantial access to children. As a church authority, we are committed to the welfare and safeguarding of children and young people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Have you any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children and young people?</li> <li>◇ How long have you known this person?</li> <li>◇ In what capacity?</li> <li>◇ Would you have any hesitation in them taking up this position?</li> </ul>



## FORM 1

### Agreement to adhere to Dominican Child Safeguarding Policy

☐

I understand my responsibility and duty, as a priest/brother/novice working in the Irish Dominican Province, in working to safeguard children and young people.

☐

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

If applicable, e.g., ministering or working in a diocese, school, hospital or external 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.

Full name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## GUIDANCE 2

### GARDA VETTING (Republic of Ireland)

#### The National Vetting Bureau Act (Children and Vulnerable Adults) 2012 to 2016

The National Vetting Bureau Act (Children and Vulnerable Adults) 2012 to 2016 sets out the circumstances that require vetting as:

*Any work or activity which is carried out by a person, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, children and/or vulnerable adults.*

The Act also requires vetting in respect of any work or activity as a *minister* or *priest* or *any other person engaged in the advancement of religious beliefs*, to *children* and *vulnerable adults*, unless such work or activity is merely incidental to the advancement of religious beliefs to persons who are not children or young people or vulnerable adults.

A person is also required to be vetted if their ministry, work or activity is deemed relevant to children or young people or vulnerable adults. Relevant work includes the provision of training, education, treatment, supervision, therapy, counselling, transporting or conveying, giving advice or guidance, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities.

#### Interpreting the Act for the Church Context

From the sections of the Act cited above, persons requiring vetting fall into three main categories. It should be noted that anyone who is 18 or over and has any contact with children or young people or vulnerable adults which is more than incidental as part of their ministry must be vetted (see also Note 1 below).

**Category 1:** A person must be vetted if they are a minister, priest or other who engages in the advancement of religious beliefs to children or young people and vulnerable adults.

**Category 2:** A person must be vetted if he/she has necessary and regular contact with children or young people or vulnerable adults through his/her ministry, work or activity in a diocese, parish, school, or diocesan agency, or an agency of the Order.

**Category 3:** Vetting is also required for those whose ministry, work or activity includes the coaching, mentoring, counselling, teaching or training of children or young people or vulnerable adults. This applies regardless of whether this ministry, work or activity is occasional or regular and necessary.

**Note 1:** Those who are aged 16 and 17 years may be vetted, but this can only be carried out with the written consent of their parent/carers and/or guardian and the young persons themselves.

### **Minors**

The legislation is directed at applicants aged 18 years or over at the date of signing the form. However, applications can be made for those aged 16 and 17 years of age. The decision to vet 16- and 17-year olds is a policy decision for the organisation in question and this is not a legal requirement.

Where an application is being made for a 16- or 17-year-old the consent of the parent/carer/and/or legal guardian must also be obtained. This is done by asking them to fill out the form Parent/Guardian Consent Form (NVB 3). In addition, the email address and telephone number provided on the e-vetting invitation form is the email address and telephone number of the parent/carer and/or legal guardian (not the young person). Proof of identity must also be obtained for the parent/carer and/or legal/guardian and the young person.

**Note 2:** Vetting is not required for a person if his/her ministry, work or activity with children or young people is merely incidental to his/her ministry, work or activity with others who are not children or young people or vulnerable adults. In other words, vetting is not required for church personnel who may come into contact with, but do not minister or work directly with, children or young people or vulnerable adults, excluding those who fall into Category 1-3 above.

### **Examples of Roles that typically WILL Require Vetting**

(This list is not exhaustive)

- ◇ Clergy (bishops, priests, deacons, visiting clergy who provide short to long-term cover)
- ◇ Sacristans
- ◇ Youth group leaders such as those responsible for youth choirs, parish run youth clubs, Pope John Paul II Award leaders, youth liturgy groups
- ◇ Supervisors of altar servers
- ◇ Ancillary staff in schools, e.g., SNAs, caretakers



- ◇ Leaders of the *Do This in Memory* Communion programme who have contact with children outside of the public Sunday liturgy
- ◇ Leaders of the *You Shall Be My Witnesses* Confirmation programme
- ◇ Eucharistic ministers who have been commissioned to bring the Eucharist to homes, hospitals, care homes and other institutions where there may children or young people and/or vulnerable adults present
- ◇ Other roles that bring a person into direct contact with children or young people or vulnerable adults through his/her ministry, work or activity.

### **Examples of Roles that Typically WILL NOT Require Vetting:**

- ◇ Church/Parish secretaries
- ◇ Collectors
- ◇ Car park attendants
- ◇ Those present in the sacristy who don't have an official role with children or vulnerable adults (however, these adults should never be left unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults)
- ◇ Readers of the Word unless they have a dual role which directly involves contact with children or young people or vulnerable adults
- ◇ Eucharistic ministers who only distribute the Eucharist within the main body of the church during public Mass or other liturgical celebrations.
- ◇ Other roles whose contact with children or young people or vulnerable adults is merely incidental while they are carrying out their ministry, work or activities with those who are not children or young people or vulnerable adults.

### **Vetting Process**

Vetting applications for individual members of the Province, staff and volunteers and/or visiting Dominicans must be done through the Provincial's Office.

Applications for vetting are now submitted electronically in a process known as e-vetting. The National Vetting Bureau (NVB) is no longer accepting paper applications.

A *vetting request form* (NVB 3) will be issued and should be completed by the applicant. This is then returned to the Provincial's Office along with the required forms of ID.

### **Proof of Identity**

At least two forms of identification must be produced to validate the identity of the applicant when completing the E-Vetting Invitation Form (NVB 1). One of these should be photographic. There is a

points system for the verification of identity where 100 points must be reached. Different forms of identification are weighted with a sliding scale of points, please see [www.vetting.garda.ie](http://www.vetting.garda.ie) for Proof of Identity Check List.

Where an individual cannot reach 100 points an affidavit witnessed by a Commissioner for Oaths will suffice. The identity is verified locally by the Provincial Office. If the applicant does not have access to an electronic device one should be provided for them for the purpose of completing their application.

### **Email**

The applicant must provide a valid email address. If the applicant does not have their own email address, they can provide any email address that they are satisfied for their form to be sent to. This can be the email of a friend, family member or one can be provided for them by the organisation requesting the vetting.

Once submitted by the Provincial's Office to the respective Diocesan Vetting Office, the applicant will receive an email from the Garda Vetting Bureau with an online questionnaire.

### **Re-Vetting**

Vetting is required at least every three years.

### **Vetting Disclosure**

All vetting Disclosures are stored securely in the Safeguarding Office. (Appendix, Policy re vetting disclosures)

## **POLICE VETTING - Northern Ireland**

Vetting applications for individual members of the Province, and/or visiting Dominicans and others, must be done through the Provincial's Office.

Police vetting is completed via Access Northern Ireland, and the Provincial office will provide the required guidance for this process.



## FORM 2

### Personal Declaration Form of Good Standing (Friars)

Name:			
Date of birth:	Phone number:	Email:	
Church body to which you are incardinated:			
Name of Church authority:			
Address of Church authority:			
Appointment last held:	Commencement date on which you are seeking to minister in another Church body:		
Has your request to minister in another Church body been approved by your Church authority? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
Current appointment:	Date from:	Date to:	
Address 1:			
Previous appointment:	Date from:	Date to:	
Address 2:			
Previous appointment:	Date from:	Date to:	
Address 3:			
Previous appointment:	Date from:	Date to:	
Address 4:			
Previous appointment:			
Address 5:			
Additional appointments should be detailed on a separate sheet and attached to this form.			
I hereby declare as follows:	Yes	No	Comment
1. I have never been suspended or otherwise canonically disciplined.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
2. I have no criminal record or have not had criminal charges brought against me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
3. I have no behavioural problems, either past or present, which would indicate that I might deal with children in an inappropriate manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
4. I have never been involved in an incident or exhibited behaviour that called into question my fitness or suitability for priestly ministry due to alcohol misuse, substance misuse, sexual misconduct, financial error or any other lapse of judgement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
5. I have no mental or physical needs that would adversely affect performance of my sacred ministry.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
I authorise the verification of the information provided on this form as to my previous ministries and personal information.			
Signature _____ Date _____			



## FORM 3

### Induction Agreement Dominican Church Personnel

This form will be held on file in accordance with the data protection policy of the **Dominican Province of Ireland**

The data entered will be used only for the purposes indicated on the form. It may be accessed only by those with responsibility for managing files.

#### **Declaration**

As part of the recruitment process for the post of \_\_\_\_\_

I confirm that I

- ☐ Have been provided with a copy of the *Dominican Province of Ireland Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook*
- ☐ Have been given an opportunity to have any questions addressed by a representative of the Provincial.
- ☐ Have read and understood the policies and procedures document I have been provided with
- ☐ Will abide by the requirements of the Dominican child safeguarding policy and procedures.
- ☐ Will attend a child safeguarding full-day programme or information session (as appropriate).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## FORM 4

### Staff Application Form

#### Personal

Forename \_\_\_\_\_

Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Church body \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been previously known by other names? \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

If you have previously been involved in voluntary work or working with children, please give details

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Please give details of qualifications or training you have undertaken that you think may be relevant to this post:

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Please detail if you have medical conditions that we need to be aware of, which may affect you carrying out some of the requirements of this post.

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**Referees**

Please provide the names and contact details of two people whom we could contact for a reference (these people should not be relatives) who have known you well and would be able to comment on your suitability for this post.

**Referee 1**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**Referee 2**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**Declaration**

I declare that I have completed this form truthfully, and I agree that you may contact the people whose names I have given as referees. In accordance with Data Protection legislation, I give my consent that the information contained in this form be processed and stored for the purposes of recruitment and employment.

I agree to abide by and accept the terms and conditions of my involvement, if successful in the application process.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## FORM 5

### Declaration Form – Staff & Volunteers

The information contained in this form will be stored securely by the Dominican Province of Ireland. Legislation in both jurisdictions in Ireland has, at its core, the principle that the welfare of children and young people must be the paramount consideration.

#### **Who should complete this form?**

The Dominican Province of Ireland asks that everyone working or volunteering for the Dominicans, who will come into contact with children or young people and/or the personal details of children/young people, 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 or young person?

☐ 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 or position are you currently applying for? \_\_\_\_\_



## FORM 6

### Safeguarding Children - Employee Acceptance Form

I confirm that I adhere to the Dominican Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and I am prepared to participate in any required training provided in this area.

Full name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I have never been investigated by any police force or statutory health authority or a previous employer in relation to complaints made concerning my treatment of children or young people.

I agree to the prior or superior, or the line manager or the Board of Management, or organisation seeking a certificate from the Garda Síochána or the PSNI to the effect that I have not been the subject of an investigation, prosecution or conviction relating to the neglect or the physical, emotional or sexual abuse of children.

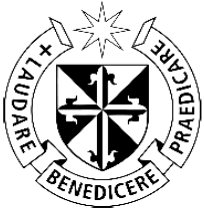
Full name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE - When signed, this form is to be placed in the employees personal file**





## FORM 7

### Volunteer Application Form

#### Personal

Forename \_\_\_\_\_

Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Church body \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been previously known by other names? \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

If you have previously been involved in voluntary work or working with children, please give details

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Please give details of qualifications or training you have undertaken that you think may be relevant to this post:

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Please detail if you have medical conditions that we need to be aware of, which may affect you carrying out some of the requirements of this post.

**Referees**

Please provide the names and contact details of two people whom we could contact for a reference (these people should not be relatives) who have known you well and would be able to comment on your suitability for this post.

**Referee 1**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**Referee 2**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**Declaration**

I declare that I have completed this form truthfully, and I agree that you may contact the people whose names I have given as referees. In accordance with Data Protection legislation, I give my consent that the information contained in this form be processed and stored for the purposes of recruitment and employment.

I agree to abide by and accept the terms and conditions of my involvement, if successful in the application process.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## FORM 8

### Volunteer Letter of Agreement

**Dominican Church** \_\_\_\_\_ **(name of community)**

Further to the appointment for the role of \_\_\_\_\_

I have agreed to attend a child safeguarding full-day training event or an information session.

I have received a copy of the Dominican Code of Conduct and I agree to read and adhere to the guidelines presented in it and/or directed by the prior or superior or community representative.

I understand and accept it is my duty to safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ *(Print name)*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**(Please sign this Agreement and return to the Prior)**



## GUIDANCE 3

### Code of Behaviour for Adults

#### It is important for all personnel to

- ◇ Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect and dignity
- ◇ Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults equally
- ◇ Model positive, appropriate behaviour to all children, young people and vulnerable adults we come into contact with
- ◇ Be aware of the child protection and child safeguarding policy of the Dominican Province of Ireland
- ◇ Challenge and report abusive and potentially abusive behaviour
- ◇ Develop a culture of openness, honesty and safety
- ◇ Develop a culture where children, young people and vulnerable adults have permission to tell and to talk about concerns or worries that they may have
- ◇ Respect each child's, young person's and vulnerable adult'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, young people and vulnerable adults in their care
- ◇ Work in open environments
- ◇ Help children, young people and vulnerable adults to know what they can do if they have a problem

#### Adults must

- ◇ Treat children, young people and vulnerable adults in a manner that fully respects their dignity and rights.
- ◇ Provide an example of good conduct at all times.
- ◇ Respect each child, young person and vulnerable adult's boundaries, avoiding unnecessary physical contact.
- ◇ Help children, young people and vulnerable adults develop an awareness and understanding of their own right to protection and a respect for the rights of others.
- ◇ Encourage positive behaviour in children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- ◇ Avoid spending time alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Should circumstances arise where this is unavoidable, inform another responsible adult and keep a note of what took place and why.

- ◇ Provide children, young people and vulnerable adults with information on how, and from whom, they can seek help if they have a concern.
- ◇ Be visible to others if working alone with a child, young person or a vulnerable adult.
- ◇ Challenge and report behaviour that is abusive or potentially abusive.
- ◇ Develop a culture where children, young people or vulnerable adults are encouraged to talk openly about their contacts with staff and others.
- ◇ Unless there are at least two adults present, avoid permitting children, young people or vulnerable adults to work and/or remain on Dominican property.

### **Adults must never**

- ◇ Hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse children, young people and vulnerable adults
- ◇ Develop sexual relationships with children, young people and vulnerable adults
- ◇ Develop relationships with children, young people and vulnerable adults that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- ◇ Act in any way that may be abusive or may place a child, young person or vulnerable adult at risk of abuse
- ◇ Use language, make suggestions or offer advice that is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- ◇ Do things for a child, young person or vulnerable adults 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 or in the presence of children or young people
- ◇ Offer alcohol, tobacco or non-prescriptive drugs to minors.

### **Adults must never and 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 be supervised by at least two adults. However, there may be two circumstances where one-to-one contact may occur.

a) 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

b) As part of a planned structured piece of work, for example one-to-one music tuition.

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Any Dominican, staff member, volunteer or lay person who becomes aware of a breach of this Code of Conduct should bring the matter to the immediate attention of

**Designated Liaison Person**  
**Dominican Province of Ireland**  
**St Mary's Priory**  
**Tallaght**  
**Dublin 24.**  
**Mobile Number: (089) 7087881**

**Deputy Designated Liaison Person**  
**St Mary's Priory**  
**Tallaght**  
**Dublin 24.**  
**Phone Number: (01) 4048118**

**and/or**

**Prior Provincial**  
**St Mary's Priory**  
**Tallaght**  
**Dublin 24.**  
**Phone Number: (01) 4048118**



## GUIDANCE 4

### Code of Behaviour for Children (Sample)

The most effective codes of conduct are those in which participants have input. Ownership promotes success. Hence, children or young people should be involved in drawing up a code of behaviour for themselves. It is important that in working with children or young people, an appropriate adult with relevant skills and competence participates to support them in developing the code of behaviour.

The methods used in creating a code of behaviour should be age- and ability-appropriate, with children or young people being encouraged to avoid merely drawing up a list of prohibitions. Instead, the code of conduct should be comprised of positive statements about respect and should consider what consequences ensue if the code is broken.

In developing the code, consideration should be given to the following

- ✓ Respect yourself, be mannerly and take care of your own safety
- ✓ Always do your best
- ✓ Act as a good role model
- ✓ Respect others, never bully, exclude or engage in name-calling against others
- ✓ Do not hurt others' feelings
- ✓ Do not use rude or abusive language
- ✓ Never use violence against another child, young person or adult
- ✓ Respect others' property
- ✓ Do not consume alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs
- ✓ Do not take things without permission
- ✓ Take care of all church equipment, putting litter in the bins
- ✓ Tell someone you trust if you feel uncomfortable with any situation or individual
- ✓ If anyone is harming or trying to harm you, tell an adult immediately
- ✓ Never bully anyone or send threatening messages.
- ✓ Attend activities on time
- ✓ Sign in and out
- ✓ Turn off your mobile phone

Any Dominican, staff member, volunteer or lay person who becomes aware of a breach of this Code of Conduct should bring the matter to the immediate attention of

**Designated Liaison Person**  
**Dominican Province of Ireland**  
**St Mary's Priory**  
**Tallaght**  
**Dublin 24.**  
**Mobile Number: (089) 7087881**

**Deputy Designated Liaison Person**  
**St Mary's Priory**  
**Tallaght**  
**Dublin 24.**  
**Phone Number: (01) 4048118**

**and/or**

**Prior Provincial**  
**St Mary's Priory**  
**Tallaght**  
**Dublin 24.**  
**Phone Number: (01) 4048118**





## GUIDANCE 5

### Hazard Assessment

When running activities with children, we have a responsibility to do what we can to make sure people do not get hurt. Completing a hazard assessment can help with this.

It is important to consider potential hazards that may lead to risk to children and to the adults who work with them. Consideration of how to control or manage hazard is critical. It is important to identify acceptable levels of hazards, as all risk cannot be removed.

#### ***Completing a hazard assessment***

You need to think through each element of your activity, of the equipment, and of the venue. Think about what could go wrong, and what you are going to do to avoid this. Then write down your decisions, and the reasons you have made them. Make sure you include things that you have already planned to do (e.g., if you are already planning to use soft mats in front of the bouncy castle, you should still include this in the risk assessment).

A risk assessment for an event or activity needs to include

- ◇ The venue where it will be held
- ◇ The equipment that will be used
- ◇ The people who will be attending. Do they have any particular needs that might make them more likely to hurt themselves?
- ◇ Do you need to make sure children are supervised?
- ◇ Is there anyone attending who could hurt anyone else?

#### ***Assessing hazards***

1. Identify the hazards: look for hazards in the nature of the activity, and in the place where you are holding the activity.
2. Identify who is at risk: decide who may be harmed and how. Everyone, or perhaps only certain people, may be at risk. Some groups may need special consideration as they may be more vulnerable to certain hazards.
3. Identify what the likelihood of harm may be.

4. Identify the consequences of injury or harm: the consequences could range from trivial to severe, or even fatal. The most severe hazards need the most urgent attention.
5. Identify the controls that need to be put in place to limit the hazard.

### **Review**

Risk should be periodically reviewed, especially in circumstances when a venue changes, a new activity takes place, or the members of the group change.



## FORM 9

### Hazard Assessment Form

Name of group \_\_\_\_\_

Date of hazard assessment \_\_\_\_\_

Person completing the hazard assessment \_\_\_\_\_

Hazard	Who is at risk?	Likelihood of harm	Consequences	Controls needed

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## FORM 10

### Child and Parent/Carer/Guardian Joint Consent

#### 1. Group details (to be completed by organiser)

Name of group \_\_\_\_\_

Duration/frequency of activity from

(start date/time) \_\_\_\_\_

(end date/time) \_\_\_\_\_

Person in Charge/Name of organiser \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Details of the child or young person

Name of young person \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Gender(circle as appropriate)    Male            Female

#### 3. Other relevant information

Please mention medical conditions, special needs or dietary requirements.

Note that the organisers cannot administer any medication. Should your child require medication or intimate care, please discuss this with the organisers who will work with you to establish how your child can be accommodated, according to relevant policies and procedures.

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#### 4. Parent/Guardian contact details

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Contact information for emergency use only (if different from above information)

#### 5. In cases of a medical emergency

In the event of illness or an accident, I give permission for medical treatment to be administered to my child, where considered necessary, by a suitably qualified medical practitioner and/or hospital. I understand that every effort will be made to contact me as soon as possible. In an emergency I can be contacted at the telephone numbers provided above.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

#### 6. Child's or Young Person's consent

I \_\_\_\_\_ (*insert full name*) would like to take part in the event or activity listed.

*(If you agree please tick the boxes below, there is no obligation to tick the first 2 boxes)*

☐ I understand that photographs may be taken during the group activities. I give my permission for my photograph to be taken and to be used in any hard copy and/or online use by the Irish Province of the Dominican Order.

☐ I understand that videos (which may include webcam) may be taken during the group activities. I give my permission for my image to be videoed and to be used in any hard copy/online (delete as appropriate) publications by the Dominican Order.

☐ I understand that during group activities I will agree to abide by the group's code of conduct.

☐ I understand that adult leader/s will also abide by a code of conduct and I am entitled to be safe while attending this activity.

## 7. Guardian's consent

I agree to allow the above-named child or young person to attend \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_(name of activity or meeting), at the times and date/s  
 stipulated in section 2 in accordance with the consent granted by \_\_\_\_\_(insert  
 name of child or young person) above.

I understand that there will be suitable supervision and an agreed code of behaviour while the children or young people are in the care of the organisers.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Name (block letters) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Parent/Carer/Guardian)

Relationship to child or young person: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Child or young person)

**Data protection:** This form will be held on file, in accordance with the data protection policy of the Dominican Province of Ireland. The data entered will be used only for the purpose indicated on the form. It may only be accessed by those with responsibility for managing records or group activities.



## FORM 11

### Attendance Register for Large Group

A minimum of two officially appointed leaders, who have completed the Dominican Province of Ireland recruitment process (including the provision of Garda Vetting or Access NI checks, if appropriate), should be responsible for each activity involving children and young people. At least one of the leaders must have undergone a full-day training session provided by trainers registered with the NBSCCCI. These leaders must sign this sheet and put their initials under each date to confirm that the children or young people and adults marked were in attendance, as indicated by the 'time in' and 'time out' for each date.

Name (children and adults)	Date		Date		Date		Date		Date	
	Time in	Time out	Time in	Time out	Time in	Time out	Time in	Time out	Time in	Time out
Leader's signature	Initials	Initials	Initials	Initials	Initials	Initials	Initials	Initials	Initials	Initials



## GUIDANCE 6

### Supervision Ratios

#### **Guidance on Maintaining Adequate Supervision Ratios**

In planning a trip or activity, it is critically important to consider how many adults are needed to supervise children or young people in a safe manner. It is recommended that a certain number of adults be available to supervise a certain number of children or young people. This is also dependent on whether the children or young people have specific needs or requirements, and on the duration of the activity.

At a minimum, **two adults are required for each activity.**

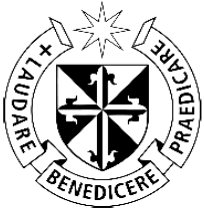
In addition, the following minimum ratios should be in place. Note: it may be necessary to review these ratios depending on whether the children or young people have specific needs or requirements and/or the duration of the activity.

#### **Supervision Ratio Table**

0-1 years	1 – 2 years	2 - 3 years	3 – 6 years	7- 12 years	13 – 18 years
2 adults for the first 3 children plus one adult for every additional three children	2 adults for the first 5 children plus one adult for every additional five children	2 adults for first 6 children plus one adult for every additional six children	2 adults for the first 8 children plus one adult for every additional eight children	2 adults for the first 8 children/ young people plus one adult for every additional eight children or young people	2 adults for the first 10 children or young people plus one adult for every additional ten children or young people

- If it is an overnight activity, having additional staff or volunteers should be considered.
- If the group is mixed, a gender balance should be maintained.





## FORM 12

### Accident/Incident Form

#### **Group details**

Name of group \_\_\_\_\_

Name of group leader \_\_\_\_\_

Names of others present \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Accident details**

Date/time of accident/incident \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person involved \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth of person involved \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Emergency contact details for the person involved (usually parent/guardian)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

*Please describe the accident/incident that occurred (continue on separate sheet if necessary)*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Action taken during and following the accident/incident*

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*People contacted (include dates and times)*

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*If medical attention was required, please note the name and address of the medical facility and the people who treated the person involved in the accident/incident*

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*Please detail any follow-up action required*

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*Name of person completing this form (print name)*

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*Signed* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date* \_\_\_\_\_



## GUIDANCE 7

### Guidance on the Use of Technology – Media Policy

Irish Dominican representatives need to assess the benefits of technology and how this can be used safely and effectively, in line with rules that respect the dignity and rights of all users, particularly children and young people.

Detailed policies and procedures should be provided on the use of technology, including digital and online systems such as:

- ◇ Use of the internet
- ◇ Texting and emailing
- ◇ Photography
- ◇ CCTV and Webcams

The majority of occasions when people use mobile phones or computers or take photographs of children and young people do not provide any cause for concern. However, there are occasions when this is not the case. At the outset, it is important to identify the risks associated with the use of technology, and then to minimise the risks by putting in place measures outlined below.

#### Consent

The consent of parents/guardians/carers and children and young people should always be sought prior to engaging in any activity that involves the use of IT equipment outlined above.

General consent may be sought at the outset and/or it may be decided to ask for permission for set occasions.

When seeking consent for the use of images or videos for Church purposes, the following should be considered:

- ◇ The issue of consent for photography/videography for Church purposes should be addressed with parents/guardians/carers and the children and young people prior to the occasion, and the policy should be explained to all families who will be attending.
- ◇ In seeking consent for photos or videos, children and young people and families should be reminded about the rights to privacy and data protection of other children or young people, their families and the wider community.
- ◇ Those organising an event for Church purposes and who are seeking consent for photography or video usage, should be sensitive to the fact that many parents/guardians

are reluctant to allow the general viewing of their children or young people, or of children or young people in their care, on sites such as You Tube, Facebook.

### **Use of Internet**

It is recognised that the internet is valuable and widely used.

When used in a Dominican context, clear guidelines must be developed and inserted into the code of behaviour for each activity involving children and young people.

### **The following are deemed unacceptable behaviours, and must be avoided in every situation**

- ◇ Visiting internet sites that contain offensive, obscene, pornographic or illegal material
- ◇ Using a computer to perpetrate any form of fraud or piracy
- ◇ Using the internet or email systems to send offensive and harassing material to others
- ◇ Using obscene or racist language in computer-assisted communications
- ◇ Publishing defamatory or otherwise false material generated by oneself or by others through social networking
- ◇ Introducing any form of malicious software into the network being used
- ◇ Intentionally damaging any information communication technology equipment
- ◇ Using another user's password or giving that password to a third party.

### **It is important that the following is made clear to all who use the internet**

- ◇ All Dominican friars, staff, volunteers and group leaders must be made aware of their responsibility and sign up to appropriate use of the internet as part of a code of behaviour.
- ◇ Responsibility is about safeguarding children, taking care of oneself, one's co-workers and group leader.
- ◇ Anyone using a shared computer requires their own individual password.
- ◇ Training in appropriate and responsible internet and computer use is imperative in order to follow best practice in all activities that concern children, young people, staff, co-workers and volunteers.

### **Texts and Emails**

It is best practice to make contact with children or young people only through their parents/guardians/carers. The most efficient way to do this via bulk texting and emailing, as texts and emails are very

quick and effective methods of communication. There are certain risks associated with the safe and appropriate use of texting and email, which must be managed.

**The risks of text and email messaging for children and young people include:**

- ◇ Inappropriate access to, use of, or sharing of personal details (names, numbers, email addresses).
- ◇ Unwanted contact with children or young people by adults with bad intent, text bullying by peers.
- ◇ Being sent offensive or otherwise inappropriate materials.
- ◇ Grooming for sexual abuse.
- ◇ Direct contact and actual abuse.

**The risks for adults include**

- ◇ Misinterpretation of their communication with young people
- ◇ Potential investigation (internal or by statutory agencies)
- ◇ Potential disciplinary action

### **Using bulk (or bundled) text and email messaging**

Contacting children or young people through text or email should be done through their parents/guardians/carers.

In exceptional circumstances where children or young people need to be contacted directly, bulk texting is the preferred method. This is where the same text or email message is sent to several young people involved with a particular activity or group.

The advantage of this approach is that it presents fewer opportunities for misuse and abuse than personal, one-to-one texting or emailing arrangements between staff or volunteers and children or young people. Therefore, one-to-one texting or emailing should be strongly discouraged and should only occur in exceptional circumstances. The same applies to emailing young people.

**The following guidance is provided to minimise risk to all in such circumstances:**

1. Consent must be obtained from children or young people and their parents/guardians / carers prior to sending children or young people text or email messages. Parents/guardians/carers of younger children should be offered the option to be copied in on texts and emails that their child will be sent.

2. Children's or young people's mobile phone numbers or email addresses should be stored safely and securely with access only available to the staff member or volunteers identified to the young people and parents/guardians/carers as a group leader.
3. All text and email messages must be sent via a bundle to a group of children or young people, *i.e.*, the same standard text message is sent to every member of the group.
4. The text and email messaging system must make it clear to the young person receiving it who has sent the message.
5. Young people should not be given the opportunity to text or email back to the system. It should only be used as a one-way communication channel.
6. The text and email message that are sent must never contain offensive or abusive or inappropriate language.
7. All of the text and email messages sent should include a sentence at the bottom that provides children or young people with the opportunity to unsubscribe from receiving further text and email messages.

### **Use of Photography**

The use of photos on websites and in other online or hard copy publications can pose direct and indirect risks to children and young people. Dominican friars, staff and/or volunteers wishing to use images of the children or young people they are working with should be aware of the following.

- ◇ The Dominicans have responsibility for the use of photography only if they plan to use the photography for Church purpose.
- ◇ Photographs taken at events organised by family and schools such as Communion, weddings or Confirmations do not fall under the responsibility of the Church or the Dominicans, unless they are being taken for Church purposes.

### **Risks to children**

A child or young person should not be able to be identified through a photograph. There is also a risk that the photo itself will be used inappropriately by others. Photos can easily be copied and adapted, perhaps to create images of child abuse, which can then find their way on to other websites.

### **How to minimise risks**

- ◇ Establish the type of images that appropriately represent the activity and think carefully about images showing children and young people on the Dominican website or publication.

- ◇ Never supply the full name(s) of the child or young person along with the image(s).
- ◇ Only use images of children or young people in suitable dress and focused on the activity, rather than one particular child.
- ◇ Obtain permission: the permission of parents/guardians/carers, and of the children and young people should always be sought when using an image of a child or young person.
- ◇ The child's or young person's permission to use their image must also be recorded (depending on his/her age and ability to give consent). This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the activity.

### ***Using photographers***

Photographers are often employed in Church contexts for certain sacramental or Church activities. When using a photographer, it is important to consider the following

- ◇ Ascertain if the photographer requires vetting and, if they do, put them through the process
- ◇ Provide the photographer with a form of identification that must always be worn
- ◇ Do not allow unsupervised access to children or young people or one-to-one photo sessions at events
- ◇ Do not allow photo sessions to take place away from the event, for instance, at a child's or young person's home
- ◇ Inform parents/guardians/carers, children and young people that a photographer will be in attendance.

### ***Responding to concerns***

Children and parents/carers and/or guardians should be informed that if they have any concern regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography, these should be reported to the Dominican DLP, or the prior or superior, or the Dominican in charge of youth ministry, or the Provincial, to ensure that reported concerns are dealt with in the same way as any other child protection or child safeguarding issue.

### ***Use of CCTV and Webcams***

The increasing use of CCTV and webcams has significant implications, and it is essential that unless such systems are used with proper care and consideration, they can give rise to concern that an individual's private space is being unreasonably invaded or eroded.

Security of premises or other property is probably the most common use of a CCTV system and, as

such, will typically be intended to capture images of intruders, or of individuals damaging property or removing goods without permission. If a data controller is satisfied that he/she can justify the installation of a CCTV system, he/she must carefully consider what it will be used for and if these uses are reasonable in the circumstances. Cameras placed to record external areas should be positioned in such a way as to prevent or minimise recording of passers-by, or of another person's private property.

***If using CCTV in the church or on Church property, it is essential to consider the following***

- ◇ If CCTV cameras are in place, it is important to have very obvious signs informing Church personnel, parishioners, volunteers and the public of this.
- ◇ All uses of CCTV must be appropriate and fit for a specific purpose. As CCTV infringes the privacy of persons captured in the images, there must be a genuine reason for installing such a system.
- ◇ If installing such a system, the purpose for doing so must be displayed in a prominent place and preferably behind a locked noticeboard where it will not be damaged or removed. In a church, an obvious place would be within the porch and at all entrances.
- ◇ Images captured should be retained for a maximum of 28 days (see Section 2 [1] c [iv] of the Data Protection Act). An exception for a longer duration would be where images need to be retained specifically in the context of an investigation.
- ◇ Tapes should be stored in a secure environment, along with a log of access to them. Access should be restricted to authorised personnel. Similar measures should be in place when using disc storage, with the creation of automatic logs of access to the images

***Webcam***

There are a number of Data Protection requirements that must be met in relation to broadcasting on the internet. Section 2 (1) c (iii) of the Data Protection Act requires that any data is 'adequate, relevant and not excessive' and fit for purpose for which it is collected.

Web cameras should be switched on only for the duration of Mass or other liturgy and switched off at the end. There should be no live streaming of churches when there is no Mass or liturgy taking place.

Recording people via a web camera and subsequently displaying such images over the internet is regarded as the processing of personal data. One of the key provisions regarding the processing of such data is that it must be done with the consent or knowledge of the individuals concerned.

Camera shots (images) of the congregation should be wide shots – minimising the possibility of easily identifying individuals with close-up images.



Consent should be obtained of altar servers and others taking part in liturgies (e.g., choirs, musicians, Ministers of the Word and of Holy Communion). In the case of children/young people, it is essential to have the consent of parents/carers and/or guardians.

Signs should be placed at a range of entrances to the church and in other prominent locations, informing people that web cameras are in operation.

Members of the clergy and pastoral workers should sign forms consenting to their image being used for web broadcasting in the course of their regular duties. Copies of consent forms should be kept in the church records.



## GUIDANCE 8

### Lone-Working Guidance

#### Introduction

The nature and range of ministries provided by Dominican members, staff and volunteers may mean that they could be required to work alone as follows

- ◇ Visit to the sick.
- ◇ Counselling
- ◇ Spiritual guidance,
- ◇ Vocation work
- ◇ "Parlour" meetings

The range of activities or services can require Dominican personnel to lone work.

#### Definition of lone working

*"Work that is specifically intended to be carried out by unaccompanied persons, without direct supervision or immediate access to another person for assistance."*

Lone working can generate additional health and safety risks. Significant risks will be identified through the process of risk assessment as detailed later. It is essential that all Dominican friars, clergy, staff and volunteers cooperate fully to implement safe systems of work.

This document should be read in conjunction with health and safety legislation and child and adult safeguarding policies and procedures.

#### Policy Aim

To ensure the following

- ◇ That the lone worker has informed a colleague, brother, staff or volunteer of their whereabouts, where the lone working will take place, and that the client is fully informed of the nature of work.
- ◇ The lone worker knows the procedural steps if issues or concerns arise.
- ◇ The lone worker understands the risks to which he/she is being exposed and an emergency response is planned.

## Scope of the Policy

The Policy is applicable to all Dominican personnel who have potential to work alone as part of their ministry.

Dominican personnel do not offer lifts to, or carry children, young people and/or vulnerable adults *unless by arrangement with parents/carers and/or guardians and with a second adult present.*

## Responsibilities and guidance for all Dominican personnel on lone working

- ◇ Ensure that all personnel understand the steps in reporting incidents in the event of an incident or of a child/young person and/or adult-safeguarding concern.
- ◇ Ensure a risk assessment or safe system analysis is carried out and is reviewed frequently.
- ◇ Ensure staff training refers to lone working policy arrangements to minimise the risks of lone working.

## Risk Assessment and safe system analysis

A risk assessment is carried out by considering the following

- Is remoteness or isolation a factor?
- Is the room part of a public building?
- Are there glass panels in the door?
- What times are the rooms free, or are there other people working at the same time or in the same building?
- Who knows you are lone working?
- What is the specific need of the client that prompts need to work one to one?
- What are the communications plans in place?
- Know the building you are working in
- Is there a known history of physical or sexual or verbal or threatening behaviours?
- Are there known triggers, or signs of health and wellbeing deterioration?
- Have you access to first aid and to toilets and to fire exits in the building?
- Do not meet with client if they present under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

**All staff must promote safe working practice**

- ◇ All Dominican brethren, staff, volunteers are obliged to introduce themselves and show ID if required.
- ◇ Be aware of current risk assessment and be alert
- ◇ Demonstrate professional boundaries when lone working
- ◇ Report any concern or incident immediately
- ◇ Ensure an accurate recording is made of any concern or incident
- ◇ Consult with Superior/Manager/DLP/Deputy DLP as appropriate



## GUIDANCE 9

### Procedures for use of Property of the Irish Dominican Province by External Groups

It is a requirement that all external groups working with children and vulnerable adults in Dominican-owned churches and/or using facilities such as church halls, day centres, retreat or counselling centres owned by the Dominican Order, are insured and have a Child Safeguarding Statement, policy and associated procedures in place.

The general principle is that the obligation to comply with requirements relating to insurance and child safeguarding rests with the external groups using Order property and not with the Dominican Order.

1. It is the responsibility of all external groups using Dominion Property to ensure that in their activities involving children and vulnerable adults they comply with all applicable child safeguarding and child protection legislation and guidelines.
2. All external groups working with children and families must have their own child safeguarding policy and procedures in place. In addition, all organisations defined as 'relevant services'<sup>1</sup> under the Children First Act 2015 must also have a Child Safeguarding Statement. This is a legal requirement.
3. External groups are also responsible for liaising with the Compliance Unit in Tusla (Child and Family Agency) to ensure their Child Safeguarding Statement is in accordance with statutory requirements.
4. Dominican personnel must not assist external groups to develop a child safeguarding statement or child safeguarding policy and procedures; but can advise all such groups to seek advice of Tusla personnel or on the Tusla website in developing the required policies.
5. It is recommended that external groups working with vulnerable adults have a safeguarding vulnerable adult policy in place.
6. All external groups must have the appropriate insurance for the activity they are running.
7. The Dominican Order must have **written confirmation (Form 13 )** from all external groups working with children using Dominican Church property that they have the required statement, policy and procedures in place. **It is not the role of the Dominican Order to validate the adequacy of these statements, policies and procedures.**
8. The Prior or Superior of the Dominican Priory or House should receive confirmation in writing from all external groups that they have appropriate insurance in place which includes the following

1

As listed in Schedule 1 of the Children First Act 2015

- ◇ Name of insurers
- ◇ Policy number
- ◇ Period of cover of the policy
- ◇ Limit of indemnity

9. The Dominican Order will not request sight of nor retain a copy of any external group's policies or procedures.

**It is not the role of the Dominican Order to validate the adequacy of this insurance policy.**



## FORM 13

### Use of Dominican Property by External Groups

The Dominican Order welcomes other organisations, groups and individuals within the community to use our facilities. While you are using the Order's facilities, we want to be assured that all reasonable steps have been taken towards safeguarding children. The responsibility for complying with good safeguarding practice rests with the group or individual using our property and not with the Dominican Order

The Dominican Order requires detailed information in respect of your application to ensure that the safety and well-being of children are maintained at all times. This form must be completed by all external groups and given to the Prior or Superior before any activity in, or use of Dominican church property, hall, retreat, or day centre can be agreed and approved.

Name of the group/organisation/activity \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose or proposed activities \_\_\_\_\_

User group, e.g., children, adults \_\_\_\_\_

Date of commencement of use \_\_\_\_\_

Date of completion of use \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency of use \_\_\_\_\_

Names, address, contact details of person/s in charge during use

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

Does the group have its own Child Safeguarding Statement in place (legal requirement for 'relevant services'<sup>1</sup> under the Children First Act 2015)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

1

As listed in Schedule 1 of the Children First Act 2015

Does the group have a Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures in place? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Does the group have appropriate (public liability and/or employer's liability and professional indemnity, if appropriate) insurance cover for the activity? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_

Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_

Period of cover of the Policy \_\_\_\_\_

Limit of Indemnity \_\_\_\_\_

I/we declare that the information provided is accurate and that changes in circumstances, if any, will be communicated to the Prior or Superior. I/we declare that the activity will be terminated if there is any breach of the above conditions.

To be signed by official co-ordinator of the external organisation or group.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I give/do not give permission for this activity to go ahead.

Signed

Prior / Superior \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:**

- a) This activity will be reviewed by the Prior/Superior and/or his Designated Representative annually.
- b) The Dominican Order will not require sight of nor retain copies of external groups' policies or procedures.





## FORM 14

### Complaints

If complaints arise during an Order-related activity (with the exception of complaints about child safeguarding issues) attempts should be made to resolve them by discussion between the parties involved. If this is not possible, this form should be completed and sent to the Prior, or the person in charge of the activity, or the Provincial.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Details of complaint (continue on separate sheet if necessary)

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Action to be taken, by whom

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Date \_\_\_\_\_



## GUIDANCE 10

### Sacristy Safeguarding Protocol

It is the responsibility of the Prior or Superior to ensure that in every sacristy an identified person is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Protocol and the maintenance of the Sacristy Register.

Children are welcome and encouraged to participate in the life of the Dominican Community and their welfare is promoted by observing the following protocol

- ◇ All Dominican friars, sacristans, altar servers and other persons involved in any form of ministry must sign the Sacristy Register Book.
- ◇ Visiting priests must show a valid celebret and a letter of good standing from their Ordinary (such as Bishop or Provincial) to be recorded in the Sacristy Register.
- ◇ Other visiting religious or lay people involved in ministry will also have secured permission from the Provincial and/or relevant diocesan bishop's office to be involved in ministry within that diocese
- ◇ Visiting priests and any other persons involved in any form of ministry will show confirmation that they have been vetted by the Dominican Province through the diocese where the house is located.
- ◇ Other persons should not be left alone with children in the sacristy.



## GUIDANCE 11

### Children's Liturgy Ministry Guidelines

- ◇ Dominican brethren involved and or lay personnel must meet to plan for the children's liturgy and must agree roles and responsibilities.
- ◇ All Children's Liturgy leaders to be Garda vetted.
- ◇ All Children's Liturgy leaders and/or volunteers must attend one-day child safeguarding training.
- ◇ Provide Leaders with a Leader's pack which includes a copy of all forms circulated, leader's role description, guidelines on registration and what is required, and a copy of the roster as relevant.
- ◇ Dominican priests to announce plans for children's liturgy at all Masses as relevant and invite parents/carers to become involved as helpers.
- ◇ Dominican priest and/or Children's Liturgy team must advise about the plans for registration and distribute a parental/carers pack which will include a joint parental/child consent form, details of the liturgy activities, and a copy of the code of conduct.
- ◇ Provide information in the Church bulletin regarding the Children's Liturgy and requirements as relevant.
- ◇ Assign a children's liturgy coordinator who will compile a register of the parental consent forms which will be copied weekly for the leaders to collect, complete and return to the sacristy afterwards.
- ◇ All forms to be filed in the Children's Liturgy folder which will be stored in a locked cupboard in a secure location, for example, in the sacristy.
- ◇ Supervision rates must be adhered to all times. Whilst the numbers may vary depending on the age and ability of the children, at a minimum there must be two adults for each activity and at least one leader present – for example, if a group of 35 children are present, aged 4 to 11 years, break into two groups of children, aged 4 to 7 years and 8 to 11 years respectively.
- ◇ Parents/carers and young people who are not vetted may assist in the activities as helpers.
- ◇ An accident- or incident-form must be completed as required and filed in the Children's Liturgy folder.
- ◇ If the required complement of leaders is not available, the Children's Liturgy does not proceed.
- ◇ Leaders are not permitted to hold information about children and or young people on personal computers or hardware, or on paper in their private possession in accordance with Dominican record storage policy.



## GUIDANCE 12

### Short Guide to Mandatory Reporting and Assisting

#### ***What is Mandatory Reporting?***

The Children First Act places a legal obligation on certain persons, known as mandated persons, to report child protection concerns at or above a defined threshold to Tusla (the Child and Family Agency). The reporting requirements apply to information that you, as a mandated person, received or became aware of since the Act came into force on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 2017. If you have a reasonable concern about abuse prior to this date, and there is a possibility of continuing risk to a child, you should report this to Tusla under Children First National Guidance 2017.

#### ***Who are Mandated Persons?***

Mandated persons are people who have contact with children, families or parents/carers in the course of their employment or profession, and who, because of their role, qualifications or training, are in a key position to help protect children from harm. Mandated persons include employees or professionals working in the areas of health, education, justice, youth and childcare. This includes members of the clergy, pastoral care workers and safeguarding or child protection officers employed by a religious body or organisation.<sup>1</sup> A full list of mandated persons is contained in Schedule 2 of the Children First Act.

#### ***What are the obligations of Mandated Persons?***

Mandated persons are required by law to

- (a) report the harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla;
- and
- (b) assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

#### ***What must be reported?***

Mandated persons must report any knowledge, belief, or reasonable suspicion that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being harmed. This includes retrospective disclosures of abuse, where adults

<sup>4</sup> Parish Safeguarding Representatives are not mandated persons as they are not employed or acting in a professional capacity.

disclose that they were abused as children. The Children First Act defines “harm” as assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child in a manner that seriously affects, or is likely to seriously affect, the child’s health, development or welfare; or, any instance of sexual abuse of a child.

Children First National Guidance outlines four categories of child abuse as follows:

- ◇ **Physical Abuse** is when someone deliberately hurts a child or puts them at risk of being hurt
- ◇ **Emotional Abuse** is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a parent or guardian and a child
- ◇ **Sexual Abuse** occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal or for that of others
- ◇ **Neglect** occurs where a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally.

If your concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but you still have reasonable grounds for concern about the welfare or protection of a child, you should report that concern to Tusla, but do not tick the ‘mandated report’ box on the report form. As a mandated person, you should be aware that the legal obligation to report mandated concerns rests with you and no one else. However, you may make a report jointly with any other person who has concerns about the same child, or with the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for your service. Where you are making a joint report, you must sign and tick the ‘mandated report’ box on the report form.

### ***How do I report?***

Reports should be submitted using [Tusla’s reporting portal](#), or, where this is not available to you, by post to the Tusla Social Work offices in the area where the child lives. The addresses of all the Tusla Social Work offices can be found at [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie).

Where there is **immediate or serious risk**, contact should be made by phone with a Tusla Duty Social Worker without delay. Mandated persons may report a concern to Tusla’s out-of-hours social work service by phone between 6pm and 6am every night; and between 9am and 5pm on Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays on 0818 776 315. The report form should be submitted to Tusla as soon as practicable thereafter, and no later than three days.

### ***Is there anyone else that I need to notify?***

Yes, any child protection concern that relates to the Dominican Province of Ireland, its activities, or related ministerial personnel, must be reported to the Coordinator of Safeguarding/Dominican DLP as soon as possible – details below.

***What is mandated assisting?***

Tusla may request assistance from any mandated person when assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report, regardless of who made the report. Mandated assistance may include a request to supply further information over the phone, produce a verbal or written report or to attend a meeting.

***Where can I go for advice or assistance?***

The Coordinator of Safeguarding/DLP for the Dominican Province of Ireland provides advice and support in deciding what needs to be reported and in submitting reports. You can also contact your local Tusla Social Work Office and ask to speak with the Duty Social Worker.

The DLP for the Dominican Province of Ireland is:

**Ms Mary Tallon**

**Mobile No: (089) 7087881**

**Email Address: [safeguardingoffice@dominicans.ie](mailto:safeguardingoffice@dominicans.ie).**



## GUIDANCE 13

### Responding to Disclosure/s of Child Abuse in the Sacrament of Confession

#### ***The Sacramental Seal***

All suspicions, concerns and allegations of child abuse must be reported to the statutory authorities through the procedure as outlined in this document. There is one exception to this rule, which is of abuse which is disclosed during the Sacrament of Confession (also known as Reconciliation or Penance).

The maintenance of trust in the Sacrament of Reconciliation requires the guarantee of absolute confidentiality, allowing no exceptions. This is known as the Seal of Confession and guarantees to the penitent that anything revealed to the confessor will not be divulged to anyone else. This is outlined in Canon 983 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law: "The sacramental seal is inviolable; therefore, it is absolutely forbidden for a confessor to betray in any way a penitent in words or in any manner and for any reason".

#### ***Definition of Confession***

Canon law provides a clear definition of what is deemed to be appropriate with regards to the hearing of Confession. This should be used as the definition to clarify when Confession has taken place.

The Sacrament begins when the penitent starts conversation with the confessor and ends when the confessor has granted absolution and made the sign of the cross.

#### ***Procedures for a penitent who discloses abuse during Confession***

If a penitent discloses abuse during the Sacrament of Confession, the confessor should follow these procedures.

The confessor should encourage the child or young person to disclose the abuse to an adult they trust (e.g., a relative, teacher, friend) and to have that person report the abuse. If the penitent expresses a wish to discuss the issue outside the Sacrament, make it clear to them that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed regarding issues of child abuse once outside the Sacrament.

***In the case of an abused penitent who is an adult***

- ◇ Remind the penitent that whatever is disclosed in Confession, the confessor will not repeat outside of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- ◇ Strongly advise them to seek professional help (e.g. counselling, consultation with their GP) and to go to the statutory authorities.
- ◇ If the penitent expresses a wish to discuss this issue outside the confessional, make it clear to them that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed regarding issues of child abuse once outside the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

***In the case of an abused penitent who is a child or young person:***

- ◇ Sensitively reassure the child or young person that they were right to tell you
- ◇ Remind them that whatever is disclosed in Confession will not be repeated outside the Sacrament of Confession by the confessor.
- ◇ The confessor should encourage the child or young person to disclose the abuse to an adult they trust (e.g., a relative, teacher, friend) and to have that person report the abuse.
- ◇ If the penitent expresses a wish to discuss the issue outside the Sacrament, make it clear to them that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed regarding issues of child abuse once outside the Sacrament.

*Safeguarding Children during the Sacrament of Reconciliation* When children attend the Sacrament of Reconciliation, all efforts should be made to provide a safe environment, which maintains the sacramental seal.





## GUIDANCE 14

### Definitions of Abuse

#### **Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse**

The term 'child' means a person under the age of 18 years, excluding a person who is or has been married.

**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.

#### **Examples**

Severe physical punishment	Beating, slapping, hitting or kicking.
Pushing, shaking or throwing	Pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling
Observing violence.	Deliberate poisoning.
Use of excessive force in handling	
Suffocation	Female genital mutilation
Fabricated/induced illness	Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child

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

**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.

### Examples

Rejection. Lack of attachment	Emotional unavailability of the child's parent/carer
Unresponsiveness of the parent/carer. Lack of comfort and love.	Use of unreasonable or harsh disciplinary measures
Conditional parenting in which the level of care shown to a child is made contingent on his/her behaviour or actions.	Premature imposition of responsibility on the child. Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned)
Under- or over-protection of the child. Continuous lack of praise and encouragement	Exposure to domestic violence. Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child

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

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

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

Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings or friends, from the suspicions of an adult, and/or by physical symptoms. It should be remembered that sexual activity involving a young person may be sexual abuse even if the young person concerned does not recognise it as abusive.

### Examples

Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child.  Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child	Intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child for sexual arousal or gratification
Masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in the act	Sexual exploitation of the child, including encouraging the child to solicit for sexual acts, recording images for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification

Sexual intercourse (oral, vaginal, anal).	Inviting, inducing or coercing a child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography [for example, exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means
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.	

### **Child pornography**

The Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998, which is amended by Section 6 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) (Amendment) Act 2007, makes it an offence to possess, produce, distribute, print or publish child pornography. Additionally, across the Catholic Church in Ireland, canon law includes the possession of, or downloading from the internet of, paedophilic pornography as a grave delict.

**Neglect** occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation, or supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect.

Neglect is associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental illness and disability. A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where you see the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.

### **Examples**

Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision	Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding
Non-organic failure to thrive, <i>i.e.</i> , 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
Unhygienic conditions	Inadequate living conditions
Lack of protection, and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age	Inattention to basic hygiene
Persistent failure to attend school	Abandonment or desertion

## **Northern Ireland**

Legislation in relation to definitions of abuse are contained in the Northern Ireland (Co-operating to Safeguard Children Order, 2016, revised 2017)

Abuse or harm can be suffered by a child or young person by acts of abuse perpetrated upon them by others. Abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health, or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment. Evidence shows that babies and children with disabilities can be more vulnerable to suffering abuse.

Although the harm from the abuse might take a long time to be recognisable in the child or young person, professionals may be in a position to observe its indicators earlier, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Effective and ongoing information sharing is key between professionals.

**Physical abuse** is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

**Sexual abuse** occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

**Neglect** is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

**Exploitation** is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; taking selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms – such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud, or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature. (*Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland*, 2016 - Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety).

**Peer Abuse** (*As defined in Children First 2015*)

In a situation where child abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, the child protection procedures should be adhered to for both the victim and the alleged abuser; that is, it should be considered a child care and protection issue for both children. All abusers must be held accountable for their behaviour and work must be done to ensure that abusers take responsibility for their behaviour and acknowledge that the behaviour is unacceptable. If there is any conflict of interest between the welfare of the alleged abuser and the victim, the victim's welfare is of paramount importance. Abusive behaviour which is perpetrated by children must be taken seriously and it is important that such cases are reported.

**Bullying** (*As defined in Children First 2015*)

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression, be it verbal, psychological or physical which is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour which is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools. It includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting or extortion by one or more children against a victim. The more extreme forms of bullying behaviour, when perpetrated by adults rather than children, would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse.

The following is a list of examples of bullying – but it is not an exhaustive list.

- ◇ Name calling
- ◇ Fighting/kicking/punching/hair pulling
- ◇ Making suggestive/sarcastic comments
- ◇ Intimidation
- ◇ Threatening
- ◇ Ignoring/excluding
- ◇ Damaging property

- ◇ Spreading rumours
- ◇ Sending abusive text messages
- ◇ Racial ethnic or cultural comments



## GUIDANCE 15

### Responding to Disclosure/s of Child Abuse

Children or young people may tell an adult whom they trust that they are being abused. This happens for many reasons, but the important thing to remember is that if they do tell, they are doing so in the hope that the abuse will be stopped. This is true even if the child or young person asks that nothing be done with the information.

#### In responding to a Disclosure...

##### Do

- ◇ Stay calm and listen to the child or young person.
- ◇ Allow him/her enough time to say what s/he needs to say, to continue at his/her own pace.
- ◇ Where a child or young person is distressed, be supportive and compassionate toward the young person to help them to calm down.
- ◇ Reassure the child or young person that it was the right thing to do, i.e., to say what they had to say
- ◇ Check with the child or young person to make sure that you have understood what they actually said
- ◇ Tell the child or young person what will happen next, i.e., that the relevant persons will be informed
- ◇ Take notes as soon as this is appropriate or possible, making efforts to remember the exact words used by the child or young person.
- ◇ Include in your notes your opinion as to the demeanour and emotional state of the child or young person
- ◇ Tell the child or young person that they will be kept up to date about what is happening
- ◇ Be aware that a person's ability to recount his or her concern or allegation will depend on age, culture, nationality and upon any disability which may affect use of language and range of vocabulary.

Reassure the child that, in disclosing the abuse, they have done the right thing. If a child or young person tells you about abuse it is important that you **Listen, Record and Report**.

##### Do not

- ◇ Make promises that cannot be kept, particularly a promise to keep a disclosure secret
- ◇ Do not suggest words but use theirs

- ◇ Use leading questions, make suggestions or prompt details
- ◇ Stop the child/young person recalling significant events
- ◇ Ask for further details or press the child/young person for more information
- ◇ Make the child/young person repeat the details unnecessarily
- ◇ Express opinions about the child/young person or members of his or her family
- ◇ Make assumptions or speculate
- ◇ Disclose details of the allegation to anyone else, even if the allegations involve them in any way

Report the child or young person's disclosure to the DLP.

### ***Listening to a person who admits abusing a child or young person***

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

### ***Guidance on how to respond to people making an allegation***

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

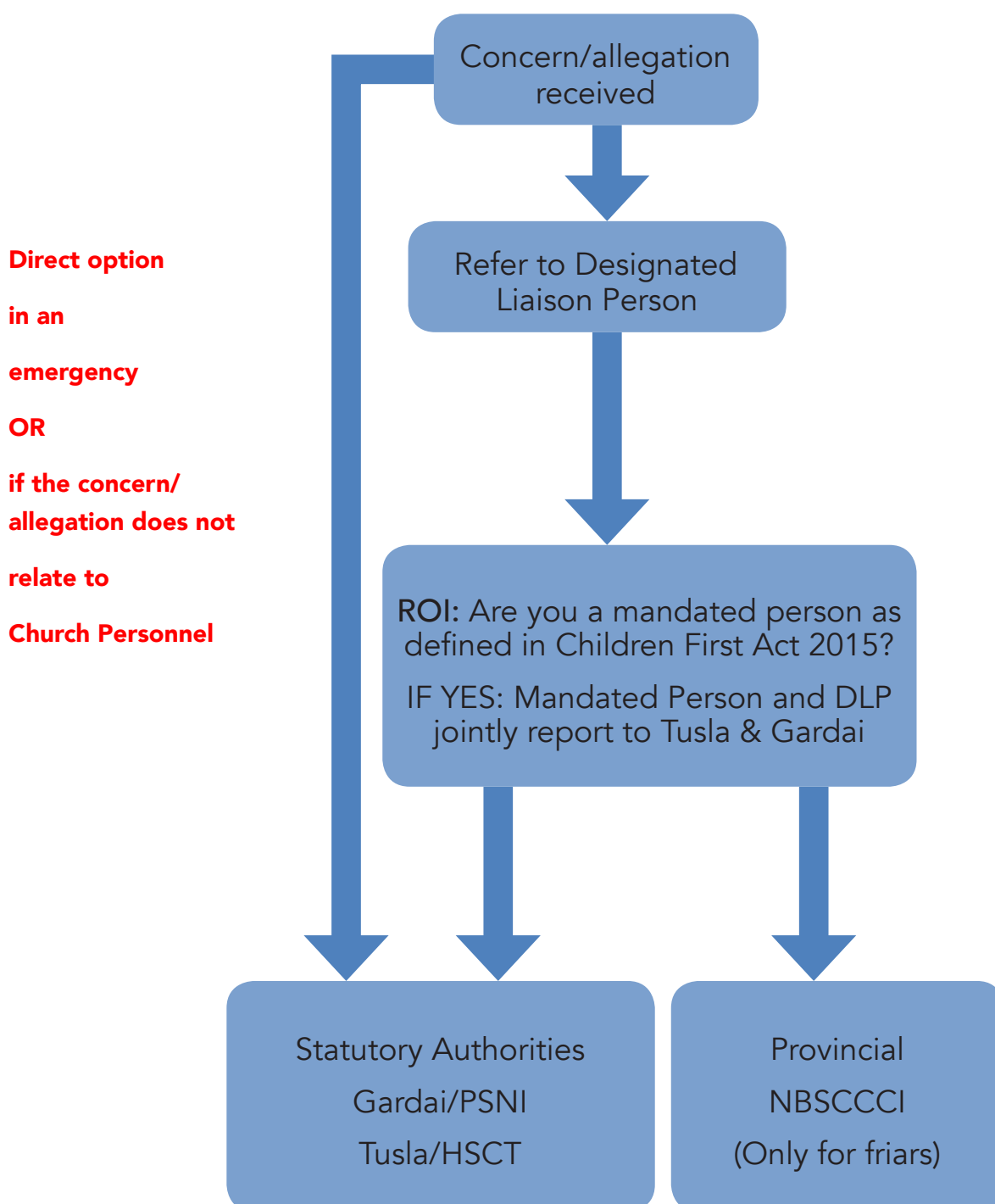




## GUIDANCE 16

### Procedure for reporting an allegation of child abuse

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.





## GUIDANCE 17

### Information for Complainants and Survivors of Child Abuse

#### ***Making a complaint of abuse***

- ◇ People are encouraged to report information about child abuse directly to the Gardai or the PSNI and/or Tusla or HSCT (see useful contacts).
- ◇ Meeting the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and/or Deputy DLP; Every person will be heard with compassion and in a spirit of acceptance. The needs of the person will be prioritised in choosing the location, time and place of a meeting.
- ◇ Offering support: The person making a complaint is encouraged to bring somebody with them to the meeting for support. They will be offered a "support person" and given information on professional support services.
- ◇ Referral to the statutory authorities, (Gardai/PSNI/Tusla/HSCT): The DLP will advise of the Dominicans' responsibility to report information on child abuse to An Garda or the PSNI and Tusla or HSCT.
- ◇ Confidentiality: Any information shared is treated as highly confidential and only shared with those with a legitimate need to know, e.g., statutory authorities.
- ◇ Role of Gardai and the PSNI: It is the responsibility of the Gardai or the PSNI to investigate and establish if a crime has been committed. The Gardai or the PSNI will not contact a victim or survivor with their consent.
- ◇ Role of Tusla and HSCT: It is the role of the social services provided by Tusla and HSCT to promote the welfare and protection of children. They will assess if a person presents as a risk to children.

#### **The Designated Liaison Person**

Contact details for the DLP and Deputy DLP are overleaf. Their role is to ensure that all child protection concerns are responded to and managed in accordance with civil law and church policy. If you decide to make your complaint directly to the Dominicans, the DLP or Deputy DLP is the person who will hear your complaint and explain the process to you.

#### ***Support for those affected by abuse***

Many people have suffered throughout their lives because of abuse they experience as children. The effects can be devastating. We wish to offer supports to those who have been affected in this way. The following supports are provided by the Dominicans.

- ◇ The Catholic Church has established an independent professional counselling support service called Towards Healing which can be accessed free to those who experience abuse (contact details below).
- ◇ Spiritual support services are available through a support service Towards Peace (contact details below).
- ◇ A pastoral meeting with the Provincial and/or an identified other is available at the appropriate time or venue that suits the person who has experienced abuse.
- ◇ An identified person known as a Support Person will be made available to any person who makes a complaint of abuse against a Dominican. The support person can help you to understand the process involved in making a complaint, they will listen to you, and they can help you to access professional support services.

### Useful contacts

An Garda Síochána

Free &

Confidential Number:

1800 555 222

PSNI

999 Emergencies

101 Non-Emergencies

Tusla/Child and Family Agency

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

Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Telephone: (028) 9442 4000

Email: [user.feedback@northerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:user.feedback@northerntrust.hscni.net)

Towards Healing

Freephone (Ireland): 1800 303416

Freephone (UK) 08000963315

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

Towards Peace

(01) 505 3028

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

### Contact Details

#### *Designated Liaison Person*

Ms Mary Tallon

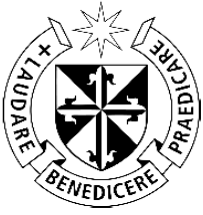
(089) 7087881

[safeguardingoffice@dominicans.ie](mailto:safeguardingoffice@dominicans.ie)

#### Deputy Designated Liaison Person

Fr. Pat Lucey, OP

(01 ) 404 8121



## APPENDIX 1

### Recording and Storage of Information

#### **Introduction**

Good record-keeping is an integral part of safeguarding children within the Catholic Church; it should not be considered to be an optional extra. There are many reasons why all those involved in safeguarding children should keep good records.

#### ***Why is record-keeping important?***

1. Doing so ensures accuracy of reporting information. Creating written records as soon as practicable after the event avoids the possibilities of memory loss and the distortion of the information.
2. Doing so assists with decision-making and case management.
3. Doing so protects both the subjects of recording and the recorder by having an agreed and accurate record. As far as possible, recorded information should be agreed with the subject of the recording, as constituting an accurate record of what took place.
4. Doing so enables accountability. Good recording is required as evidence that the safeguarding of children or young people is treated as a priority, and that all steps have been taken to prevent and minimise risk, and to manage allegations appropriately.
5. Doing so enables the proper tracking of complaints. It is important that we demonstrate through our records that complainants have been listened to and responded to in a compassionate and caring way. It is therefore vital that accurate records are kept of all complaints received and of how these have been responded to.
6. Doing so allows for continuity where there are changes in personnel managing the case. Safeguarding children can involve a number of people, including the church authority and designated liaison person. Personnel can also change over the course of managing a child abuse allegation. It is therefore important that factual details are maintained in writing to allow for a consistent and fair approach, a continuity of care for complainants, and the proper management of respondents, when required.

#### ***Principles of good record-keeping***

- All records should be legible, preferably typed or word-processed.
- All entries should be signed, and the person's name and job title should be printed alongside the entry.

- All records should be generated in correct chronological order.
- Records should be accurate and presented in such a way that the meaning is clear.
  - Records should be factual and should not include unnecessary abbreviations, jargon, opinion or irrelevant speculation.
  - Judgment should be used to decide what is recorded, e.g., is it relevant, is it as objective as possible, are facts and any necessary opinions clearly distinguished?
- Records should identify risks and should demonstrate the action taken to manage them.
- Records must not be altered or destroyed without proper authorisation. If the need for alteration arises, both the fact of such authorisation and the alteration made to any original record or documentation should be signed and dated.

### ***Data protection legislation***

The principal legislation in the Republic of Ireland dealing with data protection is the Data Protection Act 1988, amended by the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003. The Data Protection Acts 1988–2003 in the Republic of Ireland set out eight principles that define the conditions under which processing (including recording, storage, manipulation and transmission) of personal data can be determined to be legally acceptable. The Act also identifies the sensitive nature of health information and the particular need that health professionals have to communicate that information between themselves. The Act gives data subjects rights of access to their records, and it applies to electronic and paper-based record systems.

The eight principles state that the data should be:

1. Fairly and lawfully processed
2. Processed for limited purposes
3. Adequate, relevant and not excessive
4. Accurate
5. Not kept for longer than is necessary
6. Processed in line with subjects' rights
7. Secure
8. Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection.

**Access to information by data subject**

People have a right to know what personal information is held about them, by whom, and for what purpose. These rights are detailed in data protection and human rights legislation. Despite these rights, in certain circumstances such information can be shared with others. The data subject must be made aware of the creation of a safeguarding record.

If the data subject seeks access to their record, the following should take place:

- a. The contents of the file should be reviewed and assessed so that data belonging to third parties is redacted.
- b. At an agreed time and place, the file should be made available for reading by the data subject, under the supervision of the Provincial or the Designated Liaison Person.
- c. The data subject can make notes and can ask for notes to be included in the file. If agreed, an amendment can be made on the file note. The file manager should state in writing the reason for the amendment, and sign and date their written note. Such amendments, if any, should also be signed and dated by the data subject;
- d. If there is a disagreement concerning the amendment of any file, the details of the disagreement should be recorded, signed and dated by the file manager and the data subject.

**Storage of data**

It is important that all sensitive or confidential materials are retained in a case file and stored securely in a place designated by the data controller, *i.e.*, the Provincial.

- ◇ Files containing sensitive or confidential data should be locked away, and access to the relevant fireproof safe(s) or filing cabinet(s) and keys should be strictly controlled.
- ◇ Access to the files needs to be limited to people in named roles, *i.e.*, the Provincial and designated child safeguarding personnel, who either need to know about the information in those records, and/or who have a responsibility to manage such records.
- ◇ Any information of a sensitive and confidential nature, if stored electronically, must always be password protected.
- ◇ Arrangements need to be made for the contents of relevant files, as well as their location and storage arrangements, to be passed on from outgoing data controllers to their successors.
- ◇ Other records with identifying personal information, *e.g.*, church or parish records on recruitment and vetting, activity attendance records, consent forms, accident forms, must be stored in a secure locked cabinet in the church or parish office.

### ***Retention and destruction of data***

Guidance published by the Data Protection Commissioner, in relation to compliance with the Data Protection Acts 1998–2003, is a useful reference for organisations to consider, as it represents what can be regarded as best practice. This guidance states, *inter alia*, that where there is no legal requirement to retain information beyond the closure of the record, the authority will need to establish its own retention periods.

### ***Guidance***

- Each church authority should appoint a data protection officer who will take charge of responsibility for data protection within that organisation.
- The appointed data protection officer should ensure that all records associated with these standards and guidance are reviewed on a periodic basis for the purposes of determining whether such records, in whole or in part, should be kept for a further period, or whether the purpose for which such records are kept has now ceased.
- Accordingly, each file should contain a checklist that provides for such periodic reviews. The checklist should be signed and dated after completion of those reviews, with confirmation as to whether the records will be kept for a further period and the reason for same.
- In making the decision to keep such records for a further period, the reviewer should consider the assessment of danger or harm to children arising out of the destruction of the relevant records.

### ***Further support is available at***

Data protection commissioner: <https://www.dataprotection.ie>

Tusla information and advice officers:

<http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/rolesandresponsibilities/organisations/children-first-training>



## APPENDIX 2

### Further information

#### 1. *Irish Dominican communities overseas*

All communities of the Irish Dominican Province, including those in other countries, are obliged to follow the civil and ecclesiastical laws of the country they are located in. It is also essential for all Dominican brethren to follow best practice in relation to child safeguarding.

Each community in another jurisdiction will display a Dominican Safeguarding notice with contact details for the local statutory services.

The Dominican Safeguarding Office is available to provide information and support in any aspect of child safeguarding matters.

#### 2. *Additional Dominican Policies*

- ◇ Dominican Province of Ireland, Access to Safeguarding Records Policy (24/10/2018)
- ◇ Dominican Province of Ireland, Responding to Child Protection Allegations, Concerns and Suspensions against a Dominican Brother. (11/04/2019)
- ◇ Dominican Province of Ireland, Vetting Disclosure Policy (12/02/2020)

3. Definitions referenced throughout the document come from a range of sources, including Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), Cooperating to safeguarding children (Co-operating to Safeguard Children Order, 2016, revised 2017) and Code of Canon Law 1983





## APPENDIX 3

### Counselling and support services

Name of service	Contact Details
<b>Towards Healing</b>	☎: 1800 303 416 <a href="http://www.towardshealing.ie">www.towardshealing.ie</a>
<b>Towards Peace</b>	☎: 01 5053028 <a href="http://www.towardspeace.ie">www.towardspeace.ie</a>
<b>National Adult Counselling Services (HSE)</b>	<a href="http://www.hse.ie">www.hse.ie</a> see website for local HSE counselling contact number
<b>Barnardos</b>	☎: 1850 222 300 <a href="http://www.barnardos.ie">www.barnardos.ie</a>
<b>Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC)</b>	Childline text support Text 'Talk' to 50101.
<b>Childline:</b>	☎: 180066666 <a href="http://www.childline.ie">www.childline.ie</a>
<b>Connect:</b>	<a href="http://www.connectcounselling.ie">www.connectcounselling.ie</a>
<b>Useful websites for church personnel, parents/carers and children and young people in relation to child safeguarding matters.</b>	<a href="http://www.webwise">www.webwise</a> <a href="http://www.hotline.ie">www.hotline.ie</a> <a href="http://www.internetsafety.ie">www.internetsafety.ie</a> <a href="http://www.samaritans.org">www.samaritans.org</a>





