



# **Missionary Society of St. Columban**

Region of Ireland  
**2017**

## **Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**



Missionary Society of St. Columban

**Safeguarding Office Region of Ireland**

Dalgan Park, Navan, Co Meath

Telephone: 087 984 4779 Email: [neville.sandra@gmail.com](mailto:neville.sandra@gmail.com)

## Table of Contents

<b><i>Glossary/Definitions</i></b> .....	<b>1</b>
--	----------

<b><i>Introduction</i></b> .....	<b>2</b>
----------------------------------	----------

### SCOPE OF THE POLICY

Scope of the Policy .....	<b>3</b>
Context of the Policy .....	<b>3</b>
Safeguarding – Responsibilities & Standards .....	<b>4</b>

### SECTION 1 – DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF SAFEGUARDING

Developing A Culture of Safeguarding .....	<b>6</b>
Safeguarding Place .....	<b>6</b>
Safeguarding Standards .....	<b>10</b>

### SECTION 2 – RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

Responding to Concerns .....	<b>13</b>
Reporting Procedures .....	<b>14</b>

### SECTION 3 – QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality Assurance .....	<b>15</b>
-------------------------	-----------

### APPENDIX

#### ***Developing A Culture of Safeguarding***

<b>1. Policy Statement</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>2. Recruitment &amp; Selection Procedure</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>3. Codes of Behaviour for Adults working/dealing with Children</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>4. Safe Care</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>5. Whistle-blowing</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>6. Complaints Procedure/Grievances &amp; Disciplinary Policy</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>7. Use of Images of Children</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>8. Hazard Assessment</b> .....	<b>38</b>
<b>9. Visiting Groups</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>10. External Groups Using Property</b> .....	<b>41</b>
<b>11. Safeguarding Training</b> .....	<b>43</b>
<b>12. Guidance on Support &amp; Supervision</b> .....	<b>45</b>
<b>13. Communications</b> .....	<b>47</b>

## Table of Contents

### APPENDIX *cont.*

<b><i>Responding to Concerns</i></b>	
1. Policy Statement .....	48
14. Definitions & Indicators of Child Abuse.....	49
15. Care & Support of the Complainant.....	69
16. Care & Management of the Respondent .....	72
<b><i>Quality Assurance</i></b>	
17. Action & Compliance .....	82
18. Recording, Storage & Retention of Data .....	84
<b>ROLES.....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>CONTACT INFORMATION: STATUTORY AUTHORITIES / SUPPORT GROUPS.....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>SAFEGUARDING FORMS</b>	
Recruitment & Selection.....	94
Safe Care .....	100
Activities.....	109
Reporting – TUSLA Reporting Form.....	113
Quality Assurance.....	116



## GLOSSARY/DEFINITIONS

**Child:** A child or young person is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years 'excluding a person who is or has been married' (Children's First National Guidance, 2011 p8.)

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

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

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

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

**Designated Liaison Person:** The person appointed by the Region of Ireland, the Missionary Society of St. Columban to liaise with the statutory authorities regarding child/vulnerable persons safeguarding suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegation.

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

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

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

**Statutory Authorities:** These include TUSLA, HSE, HIQA and An Garda Síochána

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

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



## Introduction



On behalf of the Columban Missionaries, Region of Ireland, I welcome this revised and updated policy document. This revised document builds on previous documents. It is vitally important that we learn from past experience to ensure the development of better policies and improved good practice among all our members and workers in the Region of Ireland. It also enhances our efforts to ensure that all children are safeguarded.

As Columban Missionaries of the Region of Ireland we have a duty to ensure that children and young people, with whom we come into contact, are treated with care and respect. This revised document will enhance and add to the work that we have undertaken to date in the area of Safeguarding children.

This Policy and Procedures is based on best practice and is compliant with 'Children First', the National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and in line with the NBSCCCI's Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016.

I am fully conscious that the work of Safeguarding has to be based on best practice. It is an ongoing work to which we Columban Missionaries are deeply committed and must apply ourselves to at all times. It is my duty as Regional Director to ensure that every member/worker fully commits himself/herself to this Safeguarding Policy. I commit our personnel to the implementation of this policy.

I am conscious that this policy document will need to be reviewed in three years or sooner should there be changes in legislation.

*Patrick Raleigh*

Patrick Raleigh ssc.,  
Regional Director

“Our generation will show that it can rise to the promise found in each young person when we know how to give them space. This means that we have to create the material and spiritual conditions for their full development; to give them a solid basis on which to build their lives; to guarantee their safety and their education to be everything they can be; to pass on to them lasting values that make life worth living; to give them a transcendent horizon for their thirst for authentic happiness and their creativity for the good; to give them the legacy of a world worthy of human life; and to awaken in them their greatest potential as builders of their own destiny, sharing responsibility for the future of everyone. If we can do all this, we anticipate today the future that enters the world through the window of the young.”  
*Pope Francis*





## SCOPE OF THE POLICY

---

---



## SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- **This document sets out the Region of Ireland, Missionary Society of St. Columban's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. All members, staff and volunteers are required to comply with the policy, procedures and practices set out in this document.**
- **The Region of Ireland does not work directly with children. However, we have undertaken to implement this policy in relation to our representatives (including members, staff and volunteers) who come into contact with children in the course of their work.**
- **The Region of Ireland is aware of the need to make explicit and visible our determination that our work and activities must promote the safety and security of children.**
- **Throughout the process of ensuring the safety and welfare of children, we should be aware of differing family patterns and lifestyles, not only due to different racial, ethnic and cultural groups but also issues of age, disability, gender, religion, language and sexual orientation.**

## CONTEXT OF THE POLICY

### **Definition of a child:**

*In both jurisdictions in Ireland, a child or young person is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years 'excluding a person who is or has been married'. (Children First: National Guidance, 2011 p8.)*

The Missionary Society of St Columban recognises and is committed to the rights of all children to be protected from harm in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

**United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:** The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the UN in 1989 and ratified by Ireland in 1992.

**The National Children's Strategy** is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and as such, sets out the vision for children in Ireland over a ten-year period. The National Children's Strategy advocates that all work with children and young people should, by its very nature, recognise, implement and promote the fundamental tenets of the Convention.

**Children First:** National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011) provides the national guidance for the protection and welfare of children in Ireland. A child is defined under the Child Care Act 1991 as anyone under the age of 18 years who is not, or has not been married. The guidance outlines key principles to inform best practice in child protection and welfare and is a roadmap to help parents, professionals, organisations and the general public to identify and report child abuse and welfare concerns. It sets out definitions of abuse and the signs that abuse may be taking place. It also states what organisations need to do to keep children safe, and what different bodies and the general public should do if they are concerned about a child's safety and welfare.

**The Children First Act 2015** puts elements of the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011) on a statutory footing. The legislation forms part of a suite of child protection legislation which includes the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act, 2012 and the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

---

The Act provides for a number of key child protection measures, which included:

- A requirement on organisations providing services to children to keep children safe and to produce a Child Safeguarding Statement;
- A requirement on defined categories of persons (mandated persons) to report child protection concerns over a defined threshold to the Child and Family Agency (TUSLA);
- A requirement on mandated persons to assist the CFA (TUSLA) and “to give to the Agency such information and assistance as it may reasonably require” in the assessment of a child protection risk.
- To provide for the abolition of the common law defence of reasonable chastisement and, for that purpose, to amend the Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997. (This section has been commenced and from 11th December 2015 a person who administers corporal punishment to a child will no longer be able to rely of the defence of reasonable chastisement in the courts).
- Placing the Children First Interdepartmental Group on a statutory footing.

### **Our Duty to Care**

Our Duty to Care was published by the Department of Health and Children in October 2002. It offers a practical guide to staff and volunteers who work with children by outlining a number of fundamental principles of good practice.

### **Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children & Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012**

### **National Vetting Bureau Act (Children & Vulnerable Persons) 2012 - 2016**

## **SAFEGUARDING – RESPONSIBILITIES & STANDARDS**

The Region of Ireland takes very seriously its responsibility for the safeguarding of children and to ensure that every child in contact with the Region of Ireland either directly or indirectly will be treated with respect and dignity.

This policy and accompanying standards describe the steps needed to become effective in keeping children safe. They have been drawn up and reflect national and international best practice with regard to Child Protection and Safeguarding and reflect where appropriate the Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2016). We believe that these standards when put in place will significantly strengthen and ensure that we can become effective in keeping children safe.



**All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation.**

**All children should be encouraged to fulfil their potential and inequalities should be challenged.**

**Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.**

**Organisations, agencies and congregations have a duty of care to children with whom they work and with whom their representatives work.**

**The standards are based on the following set of principles:**

All children have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured, cared for and protected. This right is also embedded in Gospel values, best practice guidelines and international and domestic laws.

**Advantages of implementing these standards:**

- **Children are protected:** No standards can offer complete protection for children but following these standards minimises the risk to children of abuse and exploitation.
- **Members, Staff and Volunteers are protected:** By implementing these standards members, staff and volunteers will be clear about how they are expected to behave with children and what to do if there are concerns about a child
- **The Society is protected:** By implementing these standards, the Region of Ireland makes clear their commitment to keeping children safe. The standards will help them to move towards best practice in this area.

**OVERVIEW OF STANDARDS****STANDARD****1****CREATING AND MAINTAINING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS****PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO CHILD PROTECTION  
SUSPICIONS, CONCERNS, KNOWLEDGE OR ALLEGATIONS****STANDARD****2****STANDARD****3****CARE AND SUPPORT FOR THE COMPLAINANT****CARE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE RESPONDENT****STANDARD****4****STANDARD****5****TRAINING & SUPPORT FOR KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE****COMMUNICATION THE SAFEGUARDING MESSAGE****STANDARD****6****STANDARD****7****QUALITY ASSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE STANDARDS**

---

---

# Section 1

## DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF SAFEGUARDING

---

---



## SECTION 1. DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF SAFEGUARDING

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

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

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

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

### SAFEGUARDING POLICY

**Child Safeguarding Policy statement of the Constituent Members of the Catholic Church in Ireland:**

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

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

#### Foundations

In developing and implementing the Child Safeguarding Policy, this Church body is guided by the following foundations:

1. **Gospel:** Children have a key place in the heart of Jesus who said ‘Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it’ (Luke 18:17). This places a sacred obligation on the Church, to ensure that children are welcomed, cherished and protected in a manner consistent with their central place in the life of the Church.
2. **Children’s Rights, International and National Law:** The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) outlines the forty-two fundamental rights to be implemented in national law by signatories to the convention (this includes the Holy See, Ireland and United Kingdom). Full realisation of these rights will ensure that children will be ‘brought up in a spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity’<sup>1</sup>, whilst respecting the cultural identity of each child.

A number of the child protection rights contained in the UNCRC are already present in key pieces of national law, Canon law, and child and family policy and guidance including:

#### Republic of Ireland Law, Policy and Guidance

- Children First Act 2015
- Better Outcomes for Better Futures, DCYA, 2014

<sup>1</sup>UNCRC Preamble

- National Vetting Bureau (Children & Vulnerable Persons Act), 2012
- Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act, 2012
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, DCYA, 2011
- Criminal Justice Act, 2006
- Our Duty to Care, DCYA, 2002
- Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998
- Child Care Act 1991
- The Constitution of Ireland

### **Northern Ireland Law, Policy and Guidance**

- Safeguarding Board Act (NI), 2011
- Our Duty to Care (Volunteer Now), 2011
- Our Children & Young People: Our Pledge, 2006
- Co-Operating to Safeguard Children, 2003
- Children (NI) Order, 1995
- Criminal Law Act (NI), 1967

In the laws of both jurisdictions, where there is a conflict between the best interests of the child and the interests of other parties, the best interests of the child are considered to have paramourcy.

### **3. Learning from the Past**

In his *Ad Limina* address to the Irish Bishops on 28 October 2006, Pope Benedict XVI stressed the need to (i) 'establish the truth of what happened in the past'; (ii) 'to take whatever steps are necessary to prevent it from occurring again'; (iii) 'to ensure that the principles of justice are fully respected'; and, (iv) 'above all, to bring healing to the victims and to all those affected by these egregious crimes'.

The statutory<sup>2</sup> reports into historical child abuse that has involved the Catholic Church in Ireland, as well as the reports of the reviews conducted by the National Board of individual Church bodies, highlight past errors and recommend how child safeguarding can be significantly improved.

As a Church we commit to this journey of justice, truth, healing, and abuse prevention.

### **Commitments**

Together with the foundations outlined above, this Church body as part of the Catholic Church commits to:

- **Mandatory reporting**

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

- Physically
- Emotionally
- Sexually
- Through Neglect

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

---

<sup>2</sup> For further details see Department of Children and Youth Affairs (2013). An examination of recommendations from inquiries into events in families and their interactions with State services, and their impact on policy and practice. Stationary Office: Dublin.

- **Caring for the welfare of all children and the adults who work with them**

Measures to create and maintain environments which are safe for children, which prevent abuse, and create nurturing caring conditions within the Church for children and the adults who work with them, will continue to be strengthened and reviewed. This will be done through training, support, communications and quality assurance.

- **Responding appropriately to child protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations**

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

All suspicions, concern, knowledge or allegation that reach the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities (apart from those received in the Sacrament of Reconciliation<sup>3</sup>) will be reported via the designated liaison person to the appropriate statutory agencies. This will be done irrespective of the status of the person (lay, cleric or religious) who is suspected of having been abusive to a child. If the allegation relates to a lay member of Church personnel, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must also be reported to the Church Authority. If the allegation relates to a cleric or religious, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must also be reported to the Church Authority and the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland

All Church personnel will cooperate with the statutory authorities in all cases.

In responding to complaints of child sexual abuse relating to clergy and all those in forms of consecrated life, Church Authorities will act in accordance with the requirements of civil law and canon law, and so will respect the rights and uphold the safeguards afforded in these, both to the complainant and respondent.

- **Caring pastorally for complainants and other affected persons**

Those who have suffered child abuse by Church personnel will receive a compassionate and just response and will be offered appropriate pastoral care, counselling and support as they seek to rebuild their lives.

An appropriate pastoral response to the family, parish, congregation or order and to the wider community will be provided, with due regard to the right of privacy of those directly involved, and to the administration of justice.

- **Caring pastorally for respondents and other affected persons**

This Church body in its response to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of child sexual abuse will respect the rights under civil law and canon law of an accused cleric or religious or other Church personnel. A legal presumption of innocence will be maintained during the statutory and Church inquiry processes. As the processes develop, additional assessment, therapy and support services may be offered to the respondent.

The Church Authority will take responsibility for ensuring that any cleric or religious who is considered to constitute a danger to children is managed according to a risk management plan.

All requisite steps will be taken to restore the good name and reputation of anyone who has been wrongly accused of abusing a child.

Respondents belong to families and diocesan or religious communities. The Church body will be

---

<sup>3</sup> 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 - Canon 983.1

mindful of the need to provide support to members of families and communities affected by the respondent's changed situation.

### **SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

This policy applies to all Church bodies and is addressed to all Church personnel who are required to comply with it. Full understanding of and adherence to this policy should lead to a deepening in the understanding of, and respect for, the rights of children and young people to participate as people of faith in the life of the Church.

The care and protection of children involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church, and is a requirement that applies regardless of the nature of the Church activities in which children are involved. Everyone who participates in the life of the Church has a role to play in creating an environment in which children can develop and be safe.

### **PUTTING THE POLICY INTO ACTION**

This Church body will implement this policy by ensuring that all our ministry and activities comply with applicable indicators of the seven safeguarding standards.

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

### **COMMITMENT BY THE CHURCH AUTHORITY**

On behalf of this Church body, as part of the Catholic Church in Ireland – I commit to safeguarding children by agreeing to follow this Child Safeguarding Policy.

I will abide by and uphold the seven Standards and the applicable indicators in our entire ministry and contacts with children.



Church Authority Signature



Date

On behalf of: The Missionary Society of St. Columban, Region of Ireland.

---



**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. Audit of compliance will be undertaken against the seven standards and the relevant indicators that apply to the Church body.

*Reference: Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*

## Creating & Maintaining Safe Environments (Standard 1)

We provide an environment for children that is welcoming, nurturing and safe. We provide access to good role models whom the children can trust, who respect, protect and enhance their physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual and social development.

Indicators that ensure the Standard is being met:

<b>A. Recruitment &amp; Selection</b>	We follow effective practice guidelines and legislative requirements in the recruitment of all personnel and in assessing their suitability to work with children. See Appendix 2, page 17.
<b>B. Codes of Conduct</b>	We implement effective practice on the expected standards of adults' behaviour towards children. We implement effective practice in encouraging children's positive behaviour. See Appendix 3, page 25.
<b>C. Safe Care</b>	We will implement effective practice in safe care for all children, including those with specific needs if required. See Appendix 4, page 29.
<b>D. Whistle Blowing Procedures</b>	We have in place clearly written whistle-blowing procedures to support and assist personnel to raise concerns about possible dangerous or unethical conduct by others towards children involved in our activities. See Appendix 5, page 30.
<b>E. Complaints Procedure</b>	We have a clearly written complaints procedure regarding safeguarding concerns that are not allegations of abuse. See Appendix 6, page 32.
<b>F. Information Technology / Social Media</b>	We implement effective practice for the appropriate use of information technology, including social media by personnel. See Appendix 7, page 33.
<b>G. Hazard Assessment</b>	We implement effective practice for personnel on assessment of hazards when working with children. See Appendix 8, page 38.
<b>H. Visiting Groups</b>	See Appendix 9, page 39.
<b>I. External Groups using Society Property</b>	See Appendix 10, page 41.

---

### Training & Support for Keeping Children Safe (Standard 5)

Personnel are trained and supported in all aspects of safeguarding relevant to their role, in order, to develop and maintain the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills to safeguard and protect everyone involved. Indicators that ensure the Standard is being met:

- A. Induction of Personnel.** We will ensure that the induction of personnel will include training on the safeguarding policy & procedures. See Appendix 11, page 43.
- B. Training Needs Analysis.** We will conduct an annual training needs analysis that identifies all personnel that require training and develop a training plan based on this. See Appendix 11, page 43.
- C. Specific Safeguarding Responsibilities.** We will ensure that personnel that have specific safeguarding responsibilities have appropriate role specific training. See Appendix 11, page 43.
- D. Information for Children.** We will provide children, their parents/guardians with information on how to keep safe where applicable. See Appendix 11, page 43.
- E. Support.** We will facilitate the provision of an appropriate level of support to all involved in relation to their responsibility to safeguard. See Appendix 12, page 45.

### Communicating the Safeguarding Message (Standard 6)

We will appropriately communicate the Safeguarding Message. Indicators that ensure the Standard is being met:

- A Communication Plan.** We have a written plan that details how the safeguarding message will be communicated. See Appendix 13, page 47.
- B Information on Safeguarding.** We will have information regarding how to safeguard available to all. See Appendix 13, page 47.
- C Communicating the Message.** We will ensure that the safeguarding message is communicated to people whose first language is not English, as well as to people who have specific needs. See Appendix 13, page 47.
- D Local/National Organisations.** We will establish links with other local/national organisations in order to promote a safe and caring community and to share best safeguarding practices. See Appendix 13, page 47.

---

# Section 2

## RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

---



## SECTION 2. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

This sets out our approach to raising awareness about abuse of children and ensuring that everybody working or dealing with children knows how to respond to concerns raised.

To assist us in responding to concerns we are required to:

- Comply with Standard 2, Procedures for responding to Child Protection, suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations.
- Comply with Standard 3, Care & Support for the Complainant.
- Comply with Standard 4, Care and Management of the Respondent.

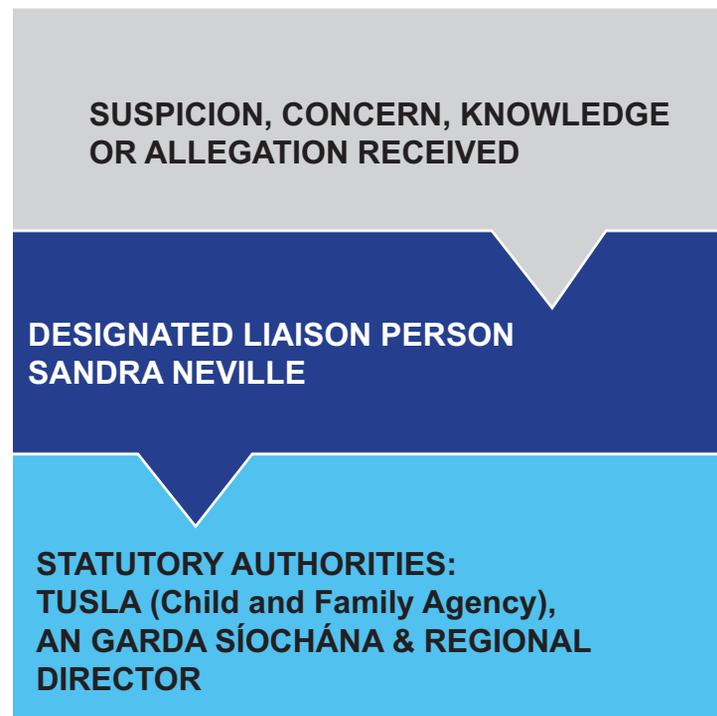
### Procedures for responding to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations. (Standard 2)

We have clear procedures and guidance on what to do when suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations arise regarding a child's safety or welfare that will ensure there is a prompt response. We will meet all national and international legal and practice requirements and guidance.

Indicators that ensure the Standard is being met:

<b>A. Recognising Abuse</b>	We will outline the definitions of abuse (Children's First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2011). See Appendix 14, page 49 to 68.
<b>B. Responding to an Allegation of Abuse</b>	We will have procedures in place on how to respond to an adult or child making an allegation of abuse. See Appendix 14, page 49 to 68.
<b>C. Reporting Procedures</b>	We will have a clearly written procedure and access to personnel to implement them, if suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations are received about the abuse of a child. These procedures specify that suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations that meet the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities will be reported. See Appendix 14, page 49 to 68.
<b>D. Recording</b>	We will record all suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations and action taken that complies with relevant data protection legislation, statutory guidance on confidentiality and storage of information. See Appendix 14, page 49 to 68.
<b>E. Information Sharing</b>	We will share information about child protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations with those who need to know in order to keep children safe. See Appendix 14, page 49 to 68.
<b>F. Designated Liaison Person (DLP)</b>	We will appoint a designated liaison person who will liaise on our behalf with the statutory authorities. See Appendix 14, page 49 to 68.

## REPORTING PROCEDURES



### CARE & SUPPORT FOR THE COMPLAINANT (STANDARD 3)

Complainants who have suffered abuse receive a compassionate response when they disclose their abuse. The complainant and their families, are offered appropriate support and advice. Indicators that ensure the Standard is being met:

#### **A. Support**

We work in cooperation with relevant organisations and seek specialist advice from the statutory protection services when necessary. See Appendix 15, page 69.

### CARE & MANAGEMENT OF THE RESPONDENT (STANDARD 4)

There is in place a fair process for investigating and managing safeguarding concerns. Indicators that ensure the Standard is being met:

#### **A. Informing the Respondent.**

We have arrangements in place to inform the respondent that an allegation has been received about them and how their job/role within the Society will be managed. See Appendix 16, page 72.

**These standards should be read in conjunction with:**

- Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe.
- Standard 7: Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards.

These will be found in Section 1 Creating a Culture of Safeguarding and Section 3 Quality Assurance.

---

# Section 3

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

---



## SECTION 3. QUALITY ASSURANCE

This sets out our approach to carrying out audits/monitoring to ensure continuous improvement and maintaining best practice.

To assist us in implementing and monitoring we are required to:

- Comply with Standard 7, Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards.

### Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards Standard 7

The Region of Ireland will develop a plan of action to quality assure compliance with the safeguarding standards. This plan will be reviewed annually. We have responsibility to monitor, evaluate and report on the compliance with the indicators under each standard that apply to it.

**Indicators that ensure the Standard is being met:**

- A. Safeguarding Action Plan.** We will produce a three year safeguarding action plan, that will outline the actions that will be taken to safeguard. This will identify who is responsible for implementing these actions, will construct a time frame to complete actions and make available resources required to do so. See Appendix 17, page 82. Action Plan: See website ([www.columban.eu](http://www.columban.eu))
- B. Evaluation/Report.** We will ensure that arrangements are in place to evaluate our compliance with the safeguarding standards. We will produce an annual report on the level of compliance established through the audit process. See website ([www.columban.eu](http://www.columban.eu)).
- C. Recording, Storage and the Retention of Data:** See Appendix 18, page 84.

**These standards should be read in conjunction with**

- Standard 1: Creating & Maintaining Safe Environments.
- Standard 2: Procedures for Responding to Child Protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations.

These will be found in Section 1, Developing a Culture of Safeguarding and Section 2, Responding to Concerns.



# Child Safeguarding Policy Statement of the Constituent Members of the Catholic Church in Ireland

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

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

If you have a safeguarding concern please contact:

**SANDRA NEVILLE**  
Designated Liaison Person  
**Telephone: 087 984 4779**  
neville.sandra@gmail.com

Or you can  
report your  
concerns  
directly to:

**TUSLA**  
(Child and Family Agency)  
**Telephone: 046 909 7870**  
or  
**An Garda Síochána**  
**Telephone: 01 666 3445**  
**Reporting Phone Line:**  
**1800 555 222**

***Columban Missionaries***

