

Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy



Safeguarding Children Information

Policy, Principles and Guidance Document

October 2009

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(Note: This policy is under review and the updated policy will available shortly)

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CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY

SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN

Policy, Principles and Guidance Document

Introduction

"Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me" (Mt.18:5)

The words of Jesus and the way He treated children combined with the sound advice of Catherine McAuley, challenge us as responsible Christian and Mercy women to consistently protect the interests of the child. Respect for the dignity and integrity of every person and particularly that of children, is a basic principle for us. Failure to live up to this principle is a serious offence that requires an immediate and appropriate response. The offence is all the more unacceptable if it involves the abuse¹ of a vulnerable child.

In creating and maintaining a Safeguarding Children focus, commitment to this policy is imperative for Sisters of Mercy, for those who work in our convents and to our colleagues in ministries where children are involved. It has been devised to provide clear guidance for us in relation to behaviours with children and for the effective management of people who pose a risk to them. Our behaviours must consistently mirror openness, transparency and balance - hallmarks of true Christian love.

The procedures in this document are also concerned with ensuring that the rights in natural justice of a person who is accused of abuse are respected and that appropriate pastoral care is provided for them. This is important. However in a situation where there is a conflict of rights we, the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy, hold the protection of children as paramount.

Our Congregation's Safeguarding Children Policy is based on the well established right of all children to be respected, nurtured and protected. The information contained in this document is drawn primarily from the Safeguarding Children - Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2008), and our Congregation's earlier Child Protection Document (2000).

¹ See definitions of abuse and how to recognise it in appendix 1.1

OVERVIEW

Safeguarding Children Policy of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy

Inspired by Jesus' great love, respect and care for children and challenged by Catherine McAuley's faithfulness to His example, we, Sisters of Mercy and all who work with us, commit ourselves to the wholesome development of every child and to their protection from harm or abuse of any form. Our Principles, Standards and Guidelines will keep us focussed on this Policy, will ensure we respond



Ref.: National Safeguarding children Doc.

Local Safeguarding Representatives	<i>Raise Awareness & Promote Best Practice</i>
Designated Officers	<i>Manage Response to Allegations of Abuse from Start to Finish</i>
Local Support Person	<i>Provides Support for the Alleged Victim.</i>
Local Advice Person	<i>Provides Support & Advice for the Alleged Abuser</i>
Safeguarding Committee	<i>Creates and Maintains a Safe Environment eg training etc.</i>
Advisory Panel	<i>Advises & Assists Provincial at All Stages of Investigative Process</i>
National Safeguarding Board	<i>Provides Independent Advice & Monitoring (Ire)</i>
National Office for Safeguarding Children	<i>Provides Independent Advisory, Audit & Inspection Functions (Ire)</i>
Review Panel	<i>Reviews the Process of Handling Complaints. Available through the National Safeguarding Office (Ire.)</i>

SECTION 1 OUR CONGREGATION'S COMMITMENT ²

1.1 *Implementation of a written Child Protection Policy*

Our Policy

Inspired by Jesus' great love, respect, and care for children and challenged by Catherine McAuley's faithfulness to His example we, Sisters of Mercy and all who work with us, commit ourselves fully to the wholesome development of children who are involved in any way with us and to safeguarding them from all forms of harm or abuse. Our Principles, Standards and Guidelines will keep us focussed on this Policy, will ensure that we are appropriately responsive to any allegation of abuse and will act as criteria for regular monitoring.

Core Principles underpinning our Policy

1. Each child is a gift of God and hence a person with innate dignity. This must be recognised and affirmed, by according him/her the inalienable right to the following:
 - ✚ to dignity of life and bodily integrity
 - ✚ to respect - being listened to, consulted and taken seriously
 - ✚ to wholesome nurturance in a caring, developmentally supportive and safe environment
 - ✚ to justice - being treated fairly and safe from any form of abuse or neglect.

These Rights are embedded in Gospel Values; Best Practice Guidelines; Domestic and International Laws and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2. Sisters of Mercy and colleagues must operate from a values based, child-centred model which represents the required level of performance by all. They must be fully conversant with the Congregation's Policy, Principles and Guidelines and be open to regular monitoring to ensure these are being implemented fully.

² **Standard 1 Safeguarding Children** Standards & Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2008

3. While seeking a balance between the rights of the child and those of adults/carers, the welfare and best interests of the child must be paramount at all times and especially where conflict arises.

The above *Policy and Principles* indicate a total commitment by the Sisters of Mercy and colleagues to ensuring the wholesome nurturance, and safeguarding of all children with whom we come in contact. Every possible measure will be taken to prevent abuse, to ensure none of our personnel engages in behaviour that could allow abuse to occur and to respond promptly to concerns or allegations of abuse in accordance with the procedures in this document.

The Policy will be clearly displayed and attention drawn to it, in all areas where we have contact with children. Each Provincial's signature on the policy (for the area in which she is responsible) signals its importance and indicates a zero tolerance of any form of abuse.

GUIDANCE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR POLICY

Flowing from our Policy and Principles and the 7 Standards in the Safeguarding Children Document of the Catholic Church in Ireland, our Congregation has adopted the following set of child protection guidelines to ensure we enact our commitment.

1.2 A CODE OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR ³

The effective implementation of this policy requires commitment by all Sisters of Mercy and colleagues to our Code of Good Behaviour. It indicates what is and what is not acceptable and gives guidance for the safe operation of all activities for children. The Code must be signed by each person as an indication of her/his commitment to fully enact it in her/his work with children. The Code of Good Behaviour requires all to:

-  *treat all children with respect and be mindful of their boundaries*
-  *lead by example*
-  *adhere to principles and guidelines as set out in this policy*

³ **Standard 3** Safeguarding Children Standards & Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2008.

- ✚ *be visible to others when working with children*
- ✚ *challenge and report potentially abusive behaviour*
- ✚ *develop a culture that enables children to talk openly about their contacts with staff or others*
- ✚ *help children to develop a sense of their own rights and to know what to do if they are being violated.*

In general, this policy deems it is inappropriate to:

- ✚ *spend excessive time alone with children away from others*
- ✚ *take children to your home especially where they will be alone with you.*

Sisters of Mercy and colleagues must never:

- ✚ *act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse*
- ✚ *do things of a personal nature that the child can do for her/himself*
- ✚ *develop a sexual relationship with children*
- ✚ *develop relationships with children that could be deemed in any way to be exploitative or abusive*
- ✚ *use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive*
- ✚ *behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate e.g. striking, slapping or being sexually provocative*
- ✚ *have a child with whom they are working stay overnight with them*
- ✚ *sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom they are working*
- ✚ *condone or participate in behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive*
- ✚ *act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade*
- ✚ *discriminate against, show different treatment to or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.*

Children with disabilities: In dealing with child abuse, it is crucial to be aware of the particular vulnerability of children with disabilities, especially those who require intimate care. They may be less able to resist abuse due to a number of factors which make detection especially difficult:-

- ✚ *bruising or inappropriate sexual behaviour may be confused or explained away due to the nature of the disability and their dependency for intimate care*
- ✚ *they may be unable to recognise abusive behaviour due to learning difficulties and less exposure to the norm for adult/child interactions*
- ✚ *they may have a poor and/or incomplete body image due to disabilities*
- ✚ *they may have little involvement with adults outside their home or care setting*

- ✚ children with a communication difficulty may be unable to convey their experiences to others or adults may be unable to communicate with them - special advice should be sought in relation to this matter.

It is important to remember there is still societal and professional reluctance to accept that disabled children could be abused.

This code of behaviour must be signed by each person as an indication of her/his commitment to fully enact it in her/his work. Clear ways are spelt out for personnel to raise concerns around unacceptable behaviour of colleagues towards children. (Outlined in 2.1)

SECTION 2 OUR CONGREGATION'S RESPONSE ⁴

THIS SECTION GUIDES US ON HOW TO RESPOND TO CONCERNS, SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

In line with its commitment to ensuring the wholesome development and safeguarding of children, our Congregation will take all concerns, allegations, suspicions and disclosures of abuse very seriously. The following gives clear, written, step by step guidance to inform our response to any allegation or suspicion about a child's safety or welfare. This honours best practice and legal requirements at national and international levels. While we all have a responsibility to report suspicions or allegations of child abuse it is also important that we have structures in place and people mandated to hold special responsibilities for child protection e.g. Designated Officers.

2.1 PROCEDURE FOR RESPONDING TO A CONCERN, SUSPICION, OR ALLEGATION OF ABUSE

- Listen:** Follow the advice notes in this procedure (2.1)
- Record:** Ensure the child protection recording form is completed (appendix 1.2)
- Refer:** Take the matter to the Designated Officer - contact details (p.11)

It is often difficult for people, especially children, to talk about abuse. For this reason make sure you are actively and sensitively listening and that you create an environment conducive to disclosure whether it is being made by a child or an adult . This could be helped by:

⁴ **Standard 2 Safeguarding Children** Standards & Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2008

- + careful listening to what the person is saying and what s/he is seeking while allowing her/him to go at her/his own pace
- + stay calm, take the person seriously and reassure her/him
- + do not ask intrusive or leading questions or suggest words to them or probe for detail beyond that which has been freely given
- + reflect back to the person what you have heard to ensure it is correct
- + explain these procedures and referral procedures
- + offer to accompany the person to the Support Person or Designated Officer
- + do not make assumptions, comments or speculate about the respondent
- + be aware that the person's ability to recount details will depend on age, culture, nationality and/or disability (e.g. use of language or the range of vocabulary)
- + adopt a compassionate, calm and reassuring listening style and do not allow yourself to display feelings of shock
- + do not comment on the information given
- + make no promises that cannot be kept particularly in relation to secrecy and let the person know the information will be passed on to the Statutory Authorities and the Designated Officer.

If the abuse is being disclosed by a child it is important to reassure her/him that she/he is not to blame, that she/he is doing the right thing in reporting it and that you will do what you can to help.

2.2 HOW TO MANAGE AN ALLEGATION AGAINST A SISTER OF MERCY, A COLLEAGUE OR OTHER PERSONS.

The following procedure sets out the **action** to be taken and applies whether the abuse is current or historical:

Initial Contact Procedure:

1. Refer the issue immediately to the Designated Officer who will take the matter further. You do **not** investigate.
2. Take notes of the meeting (ask permission to do so from person reporting and from the child also, if appropriate.) If this is not possible make a written record immediately afterwards.
3. Record the following information:
 - ✓ *the time, date, location and persons present*
 - ✓ *name and address of the person who has raised the concern - if the concern is raised by a child include date of birth and name and address of parents/carers*

- ✓ *the name and any other identifying information of the individual against whom the allegation is being made*
- ✓ *any relevant information including dates about the circumstances that led to the allegation and its relevance to the welfare and safety of the child*
- ✓ *any explanations offered to account for the risk, injury or concern*
- ✓ *a verbatim record of the child's own statement in so far as this is possible using the recording form to record details. (This, together with any rough notes taken, must be passed on to the Designated Officer.)*
- ✓ *details of any action already taken about the incident/concern/allegation*
- ✓ *views expressed by the child's parent(s)/carer(s) about the matter*
- ✓ *do not be selective and include detail which to you may seem irrelevant.*

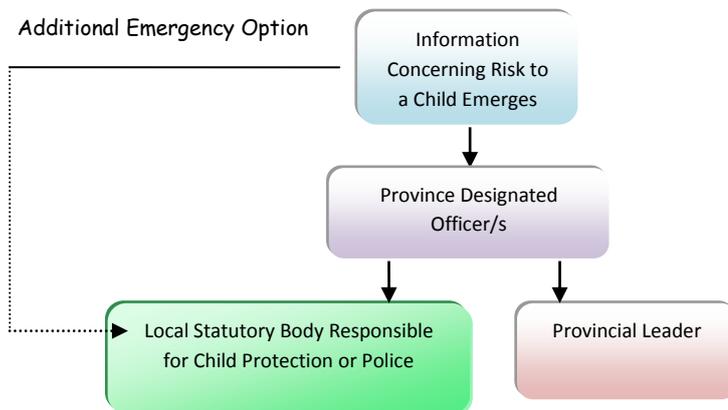
Use the Child Protection recording form (appendix 1.2) to document this and all other information requested.

- 4 Pass all records, including rough notes to the Designated Officer immediately. The initial recording will form the first entry in a file of information about the case which will be retained by the Designated Officer in a safe and confidential manner.
- 5 Not all persons raising a concern will wish to take the matter further. Nonetheless information about the existence of a potential allegation must always be communicated to the Designated Officer.
- 6 Under no circumstance should a child be left in a dangerous situation. In cases of emergency where there appears to be an immediate and serious risk, a report should be made to the local statutory body with responsibility for child protection as well as to the Designated Officer. If these are not available contact your local police service.
- 7 Explain to the child/person raising the concern what will happen next. Indicate who will be made aware of information given by them. Leave contact details⁵ of the Designated Officer with them.

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

⁵ Contact details of Designated Officer on p.11

2.3 Reporting Abuse Flowchart ⁶



The guiding principle in reporting is the safety of the child. It is important therefore to strictly follow this procedure

SECTION 3 THE FORMAL STRUCTURE FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN EACH PROVINCE

The following diagram illustrates the formal structure for *safeguarding children* in each province of the congregation. Its purpose is to ensure that children, with whom Sisters of Mercy and their colleagues interact, are protected from any form of harm or abuse. Personnel are carefully selected and mandated for participation in this safeguarding structure. Their Roles and Responsibilities are clearly spelt out and they will be subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

3.1 OUR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN STRUCTURE



⁶ It is essential to comply with the legal requirements of the country in which you are domiciled.

3.2 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANDATED PERSONNEL

The **Provincial Leader** has overall responsibility to ensure that the Safeguarding Children structures in her province are effectively achieving their objectives.

Designated Officers fulfil the following responsibilities:

1. They manage responses to allegations of abuse from start to finish i.e. preliminary internal enquiry, referral to local statutory child protection authority or police and any subsequent internal investigation. They carefully record all steps undertaken using the Child Protection Recording template. This is to be signed and dated when completed.
2. They provide regular information on progress of enquiry to all involved.
3. They liaise with a recognised support agency for child protection (e.g. equivalent of National Safeguarding Office in Ireland) as necessary.

Name and contact details of Designated Officers in your Province

Name	Telephone No.	Mobile
Teresa Burns (DO)	028 8554 8127 (from NI)	07803 566214 (from NI)
	048 8554 8127 (from RoI)	00447803 566214 (from RoI)
Sr Kathleen Savage (Deputy DO)	028 9071 5478	077 1527 3147
	048 9071 5478	0044 77 1527 3147

Local Safeguarding Representatives (LSR) have the following responsibilities:

1. Raising awareness around the safeguarding of children and promoting best practice. This will include disseminating information on our Mercy Congregation's Safeguarding Policy and drawing attention to the name and contact details of the Designated Person/s on a regular basis.
2. Ensuring that any activities with children are carried out in accordance with our Code of Best Practice.
3. Any safeguarding concerns raised must be dealt with in accordance with the initial contact procedures as outlined in this document.
4. Co-operate, contribute to and assist any investigation being carried out by your local child protection statutory authorities.

Safeguarding Committee. The role of this committee is supportive, developmental and unrelated to the management of individual cases of suspected or alleged abuse.

It has responsibility for the following:

- ✚ ensuring that training is provided
- ✚ the safe recruitment of volunteers and staff within their Province
- ✚ the creation, maintaining and monitoring of a safe environment for the children we work with
- ✚ advises the Provincial on the human resources required to ensure best safeguarding of children practice.

Advisory Panel. The role of the Advisory Panel is essentially about case management. The Panel collectively offers expertise, experience and impartiality in relation to the Congregation's commitment to safeguarding children. The safety and welfare of the child must be paramount for the Panel at all times. The Panel may advise on:

- ✚ the complaint itself
- ✚ the appropriateness of providing help to the child making an allegation and to the child's family
- ✚ the issue of the respondent remaining in present ministry
- ✚ the right of the respondent to her/his good name and a fair trial
- ✚ the necessity or otherwise for a specialist risk assessment
- ✚ the needs of the community/family to which the respondent belongs
- ✚ the needs of the wider community
- ✚ the appropriateness and timing of a public statement.

The Panel must keep records on the matters presented for advice, documents considered (including those noting any previous allegations) and recommendations made. The advice given by an Advisory Panel must be included in any inspection of an incident/allegation report file conducted by the National Safeguarding Children Office or other such recognised authority where your Province is located. No member of the panel shall act in a professional capacity to either the person making the allegation or the respondent.

The National Board (Ireland) In addition to our Congregation's Safeguarding Children structure we maintain a positive relationship with the National Safeguarding Board through its office in Maynooth. This is an important resource for us and in particular for those who have been mandated to hold special responsibilities in the

area of the Safeguarding of Children. Staff at the office welcome all who seek assistance. The National Board's independence allows for advisory, audit and inspection functions through its **National Office** in Maynooth. (Where similar bodies exist in the country where you are domiciled, it is recommended that you liaise with the service.)

3.3 ACCESS TO ADVICE AND SUPPORT ⁷

Child abuse is distressing and warrants speedy access to advice and support. Personnel with special responsibilities for keeping children safe must ensure this is readily available and provide all supports needed in a compassionate and just manner. Extra support may be necessary for children with disabilities. All involved with children should know where to access details of the local services and authorities that provide assistance to children. These details must be updated regularly and be available to everyone.

Those against whom allegations of abuse have been made or who have abused must also be offered support and advice in addition to ensuring that their rights in natural justice are respected. Appropriate support may be extended to the family of the alleged victim and to the family of the alleged abuser. Others with whom the alleged abuser shared ministry or community may need support.

3.4 Contact details for your local Statutory & Civil Child Protection Services

Statutory/Civil Services	Name of contact person	Tel. number
Local Duty Social Work Department/HSE Office in your area	(See Appendix 6)	
Local Duty Social Worker, Health & Social Care Trust in your area	(See Appendix 6)	

3.5 Contact details for local Support and Advice Persons

Name of Support Person(s) for alleged victim	Tel. number	Name of Adviser/Support person for alleged abuser	Tel. number
Sr Teresa Martin Sr Margaret McQuaid	028 3086 0441 042 974 0069	Appointed as required	

⁷ **Standard 5 Safeguarding Children** Document Standards & Guidance Document for the Catholic Church 2008

See contact details for other children's service providers in appendices 5 & 6

3.6 COMMUNICATING OUR CONGREGATION'S SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN MESSAGE

As a Congregation we are committed to transparency and openness at all times. Communicating our *Safeguarding Children* message is crucial to the effective implementation of our procedures to keep children safe. Our Child Protection Policy must be openly displayed and available to everyone. This policy and its procedures are only effective if all our Sisters, staff, the children they care for, their families and any others with whom we interact, understand them and know how to use them. The following processes are in place to communicate our Safeguarding Children Policy:

1. Personnel (LSR) who are able to attentively listen to and communicate with children, make them and their families/carers aware of every child's right to be safe from abuse. They will advise them on who to speak to if they have concerns and will help them build their confidence to speak out. Special attention must be given to communication with children who have disabilities and may be unable to communicate verbally.
2. Copies of our Code of Behaviour and Complaints Procedure are publicised and attention drawn to them on a regular basis.
3. Everyone in the organisation knows the name and contact details of the Designated Officers⁸ and of local child protection services.⁹

SECTION 4 OUR CONGREGATION'S BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE ¹⁰

Children have a right to an environment where their wholesome development is nurtured and where they are safeguarded from abuse or neglect by people who subscribe to the values underpinning this Policy and who act as good role models.

Best Practice Policies and Procedures will include the recruitment of personnel, the assessment of their suitability to work with children and obtaining official vetting for them as required by legislation and guidance in your particular context.

⁸ See page 11

⁹ See page 13

¹⁰ **Standard 3 Safeguarding Children** Standards & Guidance Document for the Catholic Church 2008

4.1 OUR BEST PRACTICE RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

We value and rely heavily on the time and commitment given by our Sisters of Mercy and colleagues to participate in our Mercy Mission. We will ensure good recruitment procedures by:

- 1) Defining the role the individual is applying for. (job description)
- 2) Insisting that a person applying for any post of responsibility completes the relevant form and provides proof of identity.¹¹
- 3) Obtaining the individual's signed permission in order to request a check from the police vetting service.
- 4) Interviewing the individual to assess her/his experience of working with children and young people and her/his knowledge of child protection issues; assess her/his ability to communicate with children and young people.
- 5) Obtaining 2 references in writing. The request for references and reference checks will only be sought for preferred applicants.¹² Ensure that any appointment whether paid or voluntary, is approved.
- 6) Setting a probationary period (6 months for staff or long term volunteers).
- 7) Maintaining and storing the following records process for one year from the selection: process date; applications, notes on the screening process, interviews, notes and final selection.
- 8) Providing initial and periodic updates on Safeguarding Children training to all Sisters of Mercy and colleagues (where there is involvement with children) as may be required for their own protection and under the law.
- 9) Enabling all personnel in our ministries and communities to be jointly responsible for ensuring that Safeguarding Children Policies are upheld and adhered to.
- 10) Providing all personnel with a copy of our Congregation's Safeguarding Children Policy and ensuring they are given an opportunity to look for clarity on any aspect of this.

4.2 VETTING

People in a position of trust with children should generally be vetted. It may not be possible to vet for "one off" events but those involved must at least sign a form declaring any previous or pending convictions or concerns relating to children and

¹¹ Application form Appendix 2.2

¹² Form for confidential reference check in Appendix 2.4

they must be adequately supervised. There must also be a signed agreement with individuals/organisations supplying a service for children or who are involved in activities or events with children, that they will comply with our Congregation's Safeguarding Children Policy.¹³

It is essential to ensure that any person who has not been vetted and who has regular contact with children or is in a position of trust completes a form declaring any previous court convictions and complies with any checks required by legislation and guidance.

4.3 INDUCTION

A good induction programme is essential for all personnel engaged with children. It needs to include: introductions to all involved in the particular ministry, our Congregation's Ethos and Values, our Safeguarding Children Policy, explanations of day-to-day processes, expectations, conditions and procedures for dealing with discipline, procedures for dealing with grievances and allegations. Familiarity with lines of management and supervision are particularly important. On appointment, each person will be given:

name and contact details of the Designated Officer and advised of her role

copy of our Code of Good Practice for working with children and young people.

To maintain high standards and good practice generally, training will be provided on an ongoing basis.

4.4 TRAINING AND EDUCATION¹⁴

Caring for children to the highest possible standards requires initial and on-going training. The use of a questionnaire to identify training needs is recommended.¹⁵

Sisters and colleagues who work with children will receive training in our Congregation's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures. Training will focus on attitudes deemed to be consistent with our Mercy Ethos and Values. From this reference place, opportunities for skill development and up-to-date knowledge around the individual's role in child protection are provided according to need. This

¹³ Declaration form in appendix 2.3

¹⁴ **Standard 4 Safeguarding Children** Standards & Guidance Document for the Catholic Church 2008

¹⁵ Questionnaire re: training needs appendix 3

will include clear information on how to respond to suspicions and allegations of child abuse.

Those who hold additional responsibilities for child protection, participate in specific training programmes approved by the National Board for Safeguarding Children or a similar recognised body in the country where you are domiciled. All other training programmes must be approved by the Provincial or Designated Officer. Our Child Protection Policy is kept very much to the fore at all times.

SECTION 5 OUR MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ¹⁶

Good Management Practices will minimise the opportunities for accidents or harm to children and will enable our ministries to run smoothly and efficiently.

5.1 GOOD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ¹⁷

In the best interests of children:

- ✓ have clear criteria for membership of any activity provided
- ✓ have an application form to record pertinent details for each child including medical details, any special needs and emergency contact telephone numbers
- ✓ always listen attentively to children, be alert to their non-verbal communication and consult with them where it is age appropriate.

In the best interests of safety and accountability keep records of:

- ✓ attendance, complaints or grievances
- ✓ accidents -accident records should be reviewed regularly and any unusual patterns reported to senior management
- ✓ consent forms.

In the best interests of responsible and trustworthy staff:

- ✓ follow through recruitment and selection procedures as detailed in this document
- ✓ display daily work schedules so that everyone knows who is on duty
- ✓ respond immediately to any allegations or complaints made about workers as outlined in this document
- ✓ when boys and girls are present ensure there are always sufficient workers of both sexes to supervise activities.

¹⁶ **Standard 3 Safeguarding Children** Standards & Guidance Document for the Catholic Church 2008.

¹⁷ Throughout this section 'staff' includes voluntary and paid persons.

In the best interests of health and safety ensure that:

- ✓ buildings being used are safe and meet required standards
- ✓ fire precautions are in place
- ✓ adequate insurance cover is in place
- ✓ there is sufficient heating and ventilation
- ✓ toilets, shower areas and washing facilities meet required standards
- ✓ first aid facilities and equipment are adequate
- ✓ there is access to a phone
- ✓ all equipment is checked regularly.

5.2 SUPERVISING CHILDREN IN ALL ACTIVITIES

Children are less likely to experience accidents or other harms if they are supervised properly. Activities should be organised so that they maximise participation, fun and learning, but they must also be safe. It is important to ensure that:

- + children are never left unattended
- + when boys and girls are present, adequate numbers of workers of both sexes are available to supervise the activities.

Recommended (not statutory) ratio of adults per number of children:

0-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	3-7 yrs	8 yrs & over
1 staff to 3 children	1 staff to 4 children	1 staff to 8 children (6 children for outdoor activities)	2 staff to 20 children (15 children for outdoor activities)

There should be 1 additional staff member for every 10 children

If the activities involve staying away from home overnight, attention should also be paid to the following:

- + safe methods of transport
- + adequate insurance to cover all aspects of the trip
- + written parental consent for each individual trip - this should include emergency contact details, permission for treatment in the case of an emergency and other pertinent information in relation to the child ¹⁸
- + relevant information about the children, such as allergies, medical problems and special needs
- + appropriate and well supervised sleeping arrangements

¹⁸ Parental consent form appendix 1.4

- ✚ respect for the privacy of children and young people in dormitories, changing rooms and toilets.

5.3 SAFEGUARDING RISKS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

There must be a clear policy on the use of email and the internet. It must include a statement that using a computer to send offensive emails or to receive, view or send pornography of any kind, or other forms of offensive or inappropriate material will be subject to disciplinary proceedings. Where it is suspected that a computer has been used to receive, view or send pornographic images of children or young people, this will be regarded as a child protection issue requiring immediate action in accordance with the procedures for responding to suspicions or allegations of child abuse.

Where a computer can be accessed by children or young people, it should always employ appropriate filtering material. Access should only be gained through the use of a username and password unique to each child. Where this is not possible, the children or young people should be obliged to provide a signed record of the date, time and duration of their use of the computer.

5.4 DISCIPLINE AND DEALING WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

The use of discipline with children should, as far as possible, be in the form of positive reinforcement. It is important that staff and children together agree on the rules, discipline and sanctions within projects/activities. A policy on Dignity and Respect¹⁹ will make clear to all staff and children that bullying behaviour is unacceptable. Sanctions must be implemented consistently, fairly and firmly and never used as a threat. When a sanction is applied, children must be helped to understand the reason why and to be reassured that they are still valued as people.

Staffs need to be trained to deal with situations where there is disruptive and challenging behaviour that can place the safety of the child and others at risk. It is recommended that:

- ✚ more than one worker is present when challenging behaviour is being dealt with
- ✚ a record is kept in an incident book describing the circumstances, what happened, who was involved, injury to a person or to property and how the situation was resolved

¹⁹ This is in line with legislation on bullying in the workplace

✚ the person with overall responsibility must be alerted to this record.

5.5 SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT OF STAFF

Supervision of staff is a key element of best practice. It allows those with responsibility to assess the attitudes, relationships and competencies of each staff member. It may also highlight the need for additional training and for change in policies or practice.

It is useful to keep a brief, written record of the discussion that takes place during supervision and the recommendations made. It is also important to have a system of written review of staff so that they can be given recognition for the good work they are doing and helped to develop their skills further, where necessary.

Those with responsibility for the supervision of staff need to be alert to any unusual incidents or activities that take place where staff may be putting themselves in vulnerable positions.

SECTION 6 OUR MONITORING AND EVALUATION ²⁰

Our Congregation's Safeguarding Children Policy will only be effective if it is implemented consistently throughout the Congregation and in its ministries. To ensure this is happening, a clear step-by-step action plan for on-going monitoring including name/s of person/s responsible and the necessary resource allocation must be in place.

6.1 THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Plan must include the following: (please tick if in place)

Clear implementation objectives		People/agencies that can help	
Formal & informal ways of communicating		Potential difficulties	
Resource budget		Methods for updating & regular review	
Realistic timescale		Accountability structure in relation to implementation of Plan.	

²⁰ **Standard 7 Safeguarding Children** Standards & Guidance Document for the Catholic Church 2008

6.2 SELF AUDITS

Regular **self audits** are crucial to monitoring the effectiveness of our Safeguarding of Children Policy and Procedures. Two useful forms have been drawn up by the National Board for Safeguarding Children - *A check-list for Compliance with Standards*²¹ and *Ways of Providing Evidence*²² - to assist in the self-audit process. These forms when completed are to be returned to the National Office by the 31st December each year (applicable in Irish context).

Feed-back from children, families, colleagues and outside agencies on a regular basis will also be helpful to this process.

In addition to self-audits, planned audits will be carried out by the National Board on a discretionary basis. The National Board anticipates that each church organisation in Ireland will be subject to an audit at least once every 5 years. The purpose of the audit is: to confirm compliance with Safeguarding Children Standards; to identify any risks; to educate and guide where this is necessary; to keep the focus on Safeguarding Children.

Conclusion

In conclusion, each Provincial as the person with ultimate responsibility for safeguarding children within her province must ensure that:

- ✓ up to date Child Protection Policies are in place
- ✓ training is implemented for all relevant personnel
- ✓ there is supervision/ management of personnel involved with children
- ✓ comprehensive records are maintained and stored safely in relation to recruitment, training, and allegations of abuse
- ✓ grievance, discipline and complaints procedures are in place for all personnel
- ✓ risks of child abuse are assessed and action is taken accordingly
- ✓ the management of allegations and concerns of abuse are dealt with thoroughly.

²¹ Checklist in appendix 4.1

²² Ways of Providing Evidence in Appendix 4.2

It is also important that each person takes her/his personal responsibility around the safeguarding of children very seriously. Each section in this document must be fully operative and evidenced throughout the Congregation and in its ministries. While some sections may appear to be more imperative than others, all are essential to ensure the policy promotes the highest standards in our care and protection of children and young people at all times.

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX 1.1

*In the context of this document a **Child** is a person under 18 years and **Child Abuse** refers to a form of maltreatment of a child which generally involves one or more of the following:*

Physical abuse which is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child;

Emotional abuse is the persistent or significant emotional ill-treatment or rejection of a child resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and /or behavioural development of the child. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment;

Sexual abuse is the sexual exploitation of a child. It entails the involvement of children and adolescents in sexual activities which they do not fully comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the sexual taboos of family roles;

Neglect is the persistent or significant neglect of, or the failure to protect a child from any kind of danger, or the persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

How to recognise Child Abuse: Recognising child abuse is not easy. It is **not** an individual's responsibility to decide if it has taken place. Her/his responsibility is to be alert to its signs and to contact the Designated Officer if there are concerns. (Remember many children will at times exhibit some of these indicators that can be explained.) Some useful indicators of child abuse are:

Physical abuse	Emotional abuse	Sexual abuse	Neglect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ unexplained bruising, or marks of injuries on any part of the body including hand or finger marks ○ cigarette burn/s ○ bite marks ○ broken bones ○ scalds. <p>changes in behaviour- fear of parents being approached, temper outbursts, flinching when approached or touched, aggression, reluctance to get changed into sports gear etc., depression, withdrawn, running away.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ failure to thrive, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances e.g.when away from home ○ sudden speech disorders ○ developmental delay-physically or emotionally. <p>changes in behaviour - sulking, hair twisting, rocking, unable to play, fear of making mistakes, self-harm, fear of parents being approached regarding their behaviour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in the genital area ○ sexually transmitted diseases ○ vaginal discharge or infection ○ discomfort when walking or sitting down ○ stomach pains ○ pregnancy. <p>changes in behaviour - unexplained aggression, withdrawn, fear of being left with a specific person/people, nightmares, running away, sexual knowledge, drawings or language beyond age, bedwetting, eating problems, self harm sometimes leading to suicide attempts, secrets they cannot share, substance or drug abuse, unexplained sources of money, not allowed to have friends, sexually explicit actions towards adults.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ constant hunger - sometimes stealing food from other children ○ constantly 'dirty' or smelly ○ constant underweight or loss of weight ○ being left alone or unsupervised ○ inappropriate dress for conditions. <p>changes in behaviour - tiredness, not seeking medical assistance and/or failing to keep appointments, having few friends.</p>

APPENDIX 1.2

1.2 *Child Protection Recording Form*

1 The disclosure/concern

Date of disclosure/concern _____ Time of disclosure/concern _____

How was information received? (attach any written information to this form)

Telephone Letter Email In person

2 Details of person making disclosure/raising concern

Name _____

Address _____

Tel _____ Mobile _____

Email _____

Relationship to child or alleged victim _____

3 Details of child or alleged victim

Name _____ DOB _____

Address _____

Tel _____ Mobile _____

Ethnic origin _____ Language (is interpreter needed?) _____

Disability _____ Special needs _____

4 Parent / Care details (where appropriate)

Name _____

Address (if different from above) _____

Tel _____ Mobile _____

Are they aware of the allegation, suspicion or complaint?

Yes No

5 Details of alleged perpetrator

Name _____

Address _____

Tel _____ Mobile _____

Relationship to child _____ Position in organisation _____

Address at time of incident(s) _____

Current contact with children if known (Board member, runs youth activities etc.)

Any additional information _____

6 Details of concern, allegation or complaint

(Includes dates/times and location the incident occurred, witnesses, if known. Does the child/victim know this referral is being made?)

7 Action taken

Has the matter been referred to civil authorities?

Yes

No

If yes Date _____ Time _____

If no explain why _____

Who was it referred to?

Name _____

Designation _____

Address _____

Tel _____ Email _____

Has the matter been referred to the Designated Officer or Provincial? Yes No

If yes Date _____ Time _____

If no explain why _____

Who was it referred to?

Name _____

Designation _____

Address _____

Tel _____ Email _____

8 Next Steps

What actions were agreed and by whom when the matter was referred to the civil/Province authorities?

Are there any immediate child protection concerns? If so please record what they are and state what actions have been taken to address them and by whom?

9 Designated Officer details:

Date form sent _____

10 Details of person completing the form

Name: _____

Tel _____ Mobile _____ Email _____

Position in Province/ministry _____

Form completed: Signed _____ Date _____ Time _____

(A copy must be retained by the recipient and filed in a secure location and a copy must be sent to the designated officer and civil/statutory authorities.)

APPENDIX 1.3

DESIGNATED OFFICERS JOB DESCRIPTION

- 1) Receive information about a concern or allegation or suspicion of child abuse and inform the Provincial.
- 2) Ensure the procedure for management of suspicions, concerns, and allegations is followed and a referral made to statutory authority.
- 3) Create a child protection case file that includes a log of actions as indicated in the recording form for every referral. (Entries should be made as soon as possible and before the end of the day. Ensure time, date and signature are recorded.)
- 4) Collect all written records in relation to the case and place them on the Child Protection case file.
- 5) Explain procedures for addressing concern/allegation to the person who has raised the concern (including parent or guardian) and ask them to sign the data protection declaration of consent which relates to the data protection concerns process only - consent is not required for the making of a referral to the Health & Social Services/HSE/Police (or appropriate statutory authorities in your jurisdiction.)
- 6) Contact emergency or appropriate services where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk of harm. An immediate referral should be made to the statutory services to ensure that under no circumstance is a child left in a dangerous situation pending Health and Social Services intervention. Consideration should, in all cases, also be given to whether an immediate referral is necessary in order to preserve and safeguard against the possibility of any loss, deterioration or destruction of potential evidence or forensic evidence.
- 7) Make enquiries to identify the present and previous appointments of the respondent to establish whether there are any previous concerns about his/her practice, or any current grounds for concern about his/her practice.
- 8) Alert the adviser/ support person to be on standby, without identifying the respondent.

- 9) Conduct an initial interview with the respondent as soon as possible unless relevant statutory service has requested that such an interview is deferred. The purpose of the interview is to inform the respondent of the allegation and the process being followed. The respondent needs to be given enough detail about the allegation and the person raising it, to be able to offer a response. A written record of the interview must be prepared, agreed with the respondent, signed and dated.
- a) The respondent shall be given information about his or her entitlement to seek legal advice (both civil and, where appropriate, canonical) and about the child protection process.
 - b) The respondent should be informed that he/she is not obliged, in law, to respond or to furnish evidence, but that any statement provided will be taken into account in the investigation.
 - c) As agreed above (9) the respondent should be informed of the nature and detail of the allegation and the name of the person raising it. The respondent shall be offered the services of the Adviser.
- 10) Implement the referral policy as outlined in 2.2 - How to manage concerns, suspicions, allegations of abuse involving personnel in Mercy and in its ministries.
- 11) In cases where a Designated Officer has concerns about a child but is unsure whether to make a referral, she should seek appropriate advice on the appropriate steps to be taken (National Safeguarding Children Office, Health Service Executive/Health & Social Services, Police Service.)
- 12) The Designated Officer must keep a written record of the outcome of the consultation with any of the above services. Decisions not to refer a matter must always be in consultation with the National Office or appropriate authority in the country where you are domiciled.
- 13) Ensure the availability of the Advisory Panel, if required and convene the Advisory Panel at an appropriate time.
- 14) Follow the advice given by the statutory authorities where the protection concern has been referred to them. Allow the statutory authorities to make their enquiries unimpeded. Do not visit the family or contact members without prior discussion with investigators.

- 15) Maintain a dialogue with the Investigating Officer or Social Worker to monitor the progress of the case and act on any advice given. Record details of contacts made in the Protection case file.
- 16) Ask in writing for an update from the statutory authority about the outcome of their investigation.
- 17) Conduct an internal investigation at the conclusion of any external investigation or where no such investigation has taken place. Any internal investigation will be initiated in cases where child protection concerns remain or where disciplinary action needs to be considered.

Such an investigation will gather and assess available information from all sources and witnesses. Every effort should be made in consultation with the statutory authorities to avoid the necessity to interview a child for the purpose of disciplinary inquiries.

This investigation (which takes place after the statutory enquiries have been completed) should be conducted expeditiously, taking no longer than three months, wherever possible. In cases where there is a delay, and particularly where a person has been removed from active ministry, it is important to keep everyone informed of the progress of the investigation and to maintain records of such communications. There can be no excuse for a respondent being left uninformed and 'in limbo' indefinitely.

Where an investigation concerns a religious, the requirements of Canon Law will be observed and will be carried out by the Mercy province or someone delegated by it.
(Canon 1717)

APPENDIX 1.4

Parental consent form

Activity permission form for persons under 18 years

1 Name of organisation: _____

Venue/activity/group/event _____

Date/time _____

Name of group leader _____

2 Name of child/young person _____

Address _____

Telephone number _____ Date of birth _____

Give details of any medical condition of which the organisers need to be aware. Please include details of any medication which has to be taken or dietary requirements. (information will be kept confidential)

3 I have read all the information provided concerning the programmes of activity. I hereby request permission for my son/daughter/ward to participate in the above activity.

4 The _____ organisation only accepts liability or responsibility for an incident or accident caused by the negligence or breach of statutory duty of the organisation, its agents or servants.

Signed _____ Date _____

(parent/guardian)

Address (if different from above)

Any additional telephone number s during the period of the activity _____

APPENDIX 2.1

Best Practice Safe Recruitment, vetting and selection

<p>Contact with children</p> <p>What contact with children will be involved? Will the person have unsupervised contact with children or hold a position of trust? What other forms of contact will the person have with children e.g. email, phone, internet?</p>	
<p>Defining the Role</p> <p>Tasks & skills for the job are identified. The job description refers to working with & having responsibility for children.</p>	
<p>Key selection criteria</p> <p>A list of essential & desirable qualifications, skills & experience are made.</p>	
<p>Written application</p> <p>All applicants have been asked to supply details requested in our application form including personal details, past & current work/volunteering experience.</p>	
<p>Interview</p> <p>Two representatives from the Congregation meet with applicant to explore information contained in the application. Applicant and application forms have been carefully considered, highlighting points to raise at interview including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * the applicants attitudes towards working with children * areas that need more detail *vague statements or unsubstantiated qualifications *frequent changes of employment. 	

<p>Declaration</p> <p>Applicants should be asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children.</p> <p>Applicants should be asked to declare any past criminal convictions & pending cases against them.</p>	
<p>Identification</p> <p>Applicants should be asked for photographic documentation to confirm their identity e.g. birth certificate, passport.</p>	
<p>Qualifications</p> <p>Applicants should be asked for documentation to confirm qualifications.</p>	
<p>References</p> <p>Applicants should be asked to supply the names of 2 referees who are not family members & ideally who have first-hand knowledge of the applicant's experience of work/contact with children.</p> <p>Referees should be asked specifically to comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children.</p> <p>References should be provided in writing & followed up with a phone call if appropriate.</p> <p>Identity of referees should be established.</p>	
<p>Vetting procedures</p> <p>Vetting procedure for selected applicant have been considered. (Obtainable from Police or other statutory agency in your country.)</p>	
<p>Records</p> <p>Details are kept of the selection & induction process on the personnel file of the person appointed.</p> <p>References are kept on file as part of the record of the recruitment process.</p>	
<p>Confidentiality</p> <p>Information about the applicant is only seen by those directly involved in the recruitment process.</p> <p>Applicants are reassured that information about them, including information about convictions, will be treated in confidence & not used against them.</p>	

APPENDIX 2.2

SAMPLE APPLICATION FORM FOR THOSE WITH SUBSTANTIAL ACCESS TO CHILDREN/ VULNERABLE ADULTS

All information received in this form will be treated confidentially

Full Name: _____ Maiden Name: _____
(If applicable)

Address: _____ Previous Address over the last 5 years: _____

How long have you lived at this address? _____

Tel: _____ Mobile: _____ DOB: _____

PPS Number (R.O.I) _____

N. I Number (N.I): _____

Are you (Please tick):

Employed Unemployed Student
Homemaker Retired Other

Previous work experience & relevant qualifications:

Have you previously been involved in voluntary work? YES / NO

If yes, give details:

How much time can you commit? (Please tick)

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							

Do you have any spare time hobbies, interests or activities?

Do you agree to abide by the Mercy Congregation's Code of Conduct (copy included with this form?)

Yes No

Have you completed Child Protection Awareness Training?

Yes No

If yes, who was it organised by and when approximately: _____

Do you agree to undergo specific training on the role of the (*position being appointed*)?

Yes No

Have you ever been asked to leave an organisation in the past?

(if you have answered yes we will contact you in confidence)

Yes No

Any other relevant information:

Please supply the names of two responsible people whom we can contact and who from personal knowledge, are willing to endorse your application.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

Tel: _____

Designation: _____

Designation: _____

APPENDIX 2.3

2.3 Declaration Form for all persons working with children & young people **Confidential**

Legislation in both jurisdictions in Ireland, have at their core, the principle that the welfare of children and young people must be the paramount consideration. Legislation in other countries is likely to reflect the same principles. Everyone working within Mercy who will come in contact with children or personal details of children, abide by good practice by completing 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 of a Bound Over Order. (please tick)
Yes No

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

Date(s) of offence: _____

Nature of offence: _____

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

Please tick Yes No If yes please give details below:

Full Name: _____

Any surname previously known by: _____

Address: _____

Date of birth: _____ Place of birth: _____

Declaration. I understand that, if it is found out that I have withheld information or included any false or misleading information above, I may be removed from my post whether paid or voluntary, without notice. I understand that the information will be kept securely by the Mercy Congregation.

I hereby declare the information I have provided is accurate.

Signed: _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 2.4

Confidential Reference Check

The following person: _____

has expressed an interest in working in _____

If you are happy to complete this reference, any information will be treated with due confidentiality and in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance. Information will only be shared with the person conducting the assessment of the candidate's suitability for the post, if he/she is offered the position in question. We would appreciate you being extremely candid, open and honest in your evaluation of this person.

1. How long have you known this person? _____

2. In what capacity? _____

3. What attributes does this person have that would make him/her suited to this work? _____

4. Please rate this person on the following – please tick one box for each statement:

	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Maturity					
Self-motivation					
Can motivate others					
Energy					
Trustworthiness					
Reliability					

This post involves substantial access to children. As a Congregation committed the welfare and protection of children we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children. Yes No

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Position: _____ Organisation: _____

APPENDIX 3

Questionnaire re: Training Needs

Who needs to be trained?	What training do they need?	How to meet them	Priority High=4 Low=1	Resources/ costs?

APPENDIX 4.1

CHECKLIST FOR MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH STANDARDS

	Standard 1: A written policy on keeping children safe	In place	Proposed	Not in place	Date reviewed
1	A clear written child protection policy in place.				
2	All obliged to comply with it & it is signed by relevant leadership.				
3	Reviewed at least every 3 years and adapted when necessary.				
4	All aspects & contexts of child protection work addressed.				
5	Management of those who pose a risk to children is spelt out clearly.				
6	The Congregation's understanding & definitions of abuse.				
7	All current child protection concerns reported to civil authorities immediately.				
8	Policy created at Congregational level. Other policies must be consistent with Policy of Congregation and be approved.				

	Standard 2: Procedures – responding to allegations	In place	Proposed	Not in place	Date reviewed
1	Clear written step-by-step procedures on action to take (historic or current abuse).				
2	Procedures consistent with legislation on child welfare & civil guidance for child protection- clearly written.				
3	Designated person(s) with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.				
4	Process for recording incidents, allegations or suspicions & referrals. Details stored securely.				
5	Process for dealing with complaints (made by adults & children) with timescale for resolving them.				
6	Guidance on confidentiality which makes it clear that the protection of the child is paramount.				
7	Contact details for local child protection services In your jurisdiction.				

	Standard 3: Preventing harm to children	In place	Proposed	Not in place	Date reviewed
1	Policies & procedures in place for recruitment and assessment of personnel.				
2	Safe recruitment & vetting policy in line with				

	best practice guidance.				
3	All involved regularly with children or in positions of trust complete form 2.3 in appendix 2.				
4	Guidance provided on expected standards of adult behaviour towards children.				
5	Guidance on expected behaviour of children towards other children.				
6	Clear ways to raise allegations or suspicions, confidentially if necessary, about unacceptable behaviour towards children (whistle blowing).				
7	Processes in place for dealing appropriately with children's unacceptable behaviour.				
8	Discriminatory behaviour or language unacceptable re: race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political views.				
9	Guidelines on personal/intimate care of children with disabilities.				
10	Guidelines on risk assessment especially in activities away from base.				
11	Ensure children are adequately supervised at all times (including projects/activities).				
12	Guidelines re: use of IT (mobile phones, email, digital camera, website, internet).				

	Standard 4: Training and education	In place	Proposed	Not in place	Date reviewed
1	All personnel inducted into policy and procedures on child protection.				
2	Personnel trained and up-skilled regularly for keeping children safe.				
3	Extra training provided for Designated Officers and for those involved in recruiting, dealing with complaints, disciplinary processes, managing risk.				
4	Training in places of religious formation.				
5	Training programmes monitored by national Board for Safeguarding Children.				
	Standard 5: Communicating our Safeguarding Policy	In place	Proposed	Not in place	Date reviewed
1	The Child Protection Policy is openly displayed and available to everyone.				
2	Children know their right to be safe from abuse and how to raise concerns.				
3	Everyone knows who the Designated Person is and how to contact her/him.				
4	Personnel are provided with contact details of local child protection services such as the Police and Statutory Child Protection Agencies,				

	Designated Person & Telephone Help lines.				
5	Positive links with Statutory Child Protection Agencies.				

	Standard 6: Access to Advice & Support	In place	Proposed	Not in place	Date reviewed
1	Those with special responsibility have access to specialist advice, support and information on child protection.				
2	Contact with sources of support and information at local/national levels.				
3	Guidance on how to respond to a child suspected to have been abused.				
4	Information for those who have been abused on how to seek support.				
5	Support for those who have abused, in a manner which does not compromise children's safety.				

	Standard 7: Implementing & Monitoring Standards	In place	Proposed	Not in place	Date reviewed
1	Written action plan for keeping children safe (with details of by whom and when).				
2	The human and financial resources for implementation of plan.				
3	Details of monitoring compliance with Child Protection Policies and Procedures.				
4	Processes to get views of children and others re: policies for keeping children safe.				
5	All incidents, allegations/suspicions of abuse recorded and safely stored.				

APPENDIX 4.2

Ways of providing evidence re: implementation of Policy

The following documents will provide evidence of compliance:

Standard 1: A written policy on keeping children safe

- a copy of the policy
- minutes of the meeting where the policy was authorised
- written evidence of how abuse is dealt with and provision for review.

Standard 2: Procedures for responding to allegations

- copy of written procedures
- flow chart indicating steps in reporting process
- name and duties of those with special responsibility for child protection
- examples of forms for recording details.

Standard 3: Preventing Harm to children

- copy of recruitment process
- examples of application, reference and declaration forms
- evidence of registration with or access to agencies in any jurisdictions where we minister, who are authorised to vet people
- guidance for adult-to-child and child-to-child behaviours
- guidance on physical contact
- document explaining how those with child protection concerns can confidentially discuss them with senior staff.
- copy of child welfare plan re: transportation, overnights, use of IT, filming, along with evidence to show compliance with supervision ratios.

Standard 4: Training and Education

- copy of training plan
- record of course attendance
- induction documentation
- systemic ongoing formation programmes for safeguarding children.

Standard 5 Communicating our Safeguarding Message

- examples of resources used to communicate the message with reference to child protection policy and code of behaviour
- examples of ways the policy has been promoted, including with communities and children
- information including contact details for children when they have a concern.

Standard 6 Access to Advice and Support

- copies of information for children about sources of support
- information about training, advice and support for all
- copy of outreach programme for those abused and their families.

Standard 7 Implementing and Monitoring Standards

- action plan for implementing the Standards
- record of a date planned for review and who is responsible
- summary of the number of incidents of abuse and number of complaints.

APPENDIX 5

Recognised Children's Service Providers in your area

Name of Organisation	Tel:No	Contact person
Barnardo's Ireland	01 4530355	
Barnardo's N. Ireland	028 90233646	
ISPCC Ireland	01 6767960	
NSPCC N.Ireland	028 90351135	

APPENDIX 6

HSS TRUSTS

Statutory	Normal Working HOURS	Out of Hours
Belfast	028 9056 5707	028 9056 5444
Northern	028 2563 5558	028 9446 8833
South Eastern	028 9266 5181 Ex 4544	028 9056 5444
Southern	028 3083 2650	028 3083 5000
Western	028 7131 4090	028 7134 5171

PSNI

Emergency	999
Non-Emergency	0845 600 8000
General Enquiries	0845 600 8000

HSE (HEALTH SERVICE EXECUTIVE)

Statutory	Normal Working HOURS	Out of Hours
Co Donegal	East Team: 074 9320 420 West Team: 074 972 3540 East Central Team: 074 9123 672 West Central Team: 074 9123 770	No Out of Hours Service exists in the Republic of Ireland
Co Monaghan	Local Health Care Unit, Rooskey: 047 30 426 or 047 30 427	"
Co Cavan	Community Child & Family Services, Drumalea Cross: 049 4377 305 or 049 4377 306	"
Co Leitrim	Community Care Office, Leitrim Road, Carrick-on-Shannon 071 965 0324	"
Co Meath	Enterprise Centre, Navan: 046 9097 817 Child & Family Centre, Navan: 046 907 8830	"

	Dunshaughlin Health Care Unit, Dunshaughlin: 01 802 4102	
Co Offaly	Derry Suite, Castle Buildings, Tara Suite, Tullamore: 057 9370 700	
Co Westmeath	Athlone Health Centre, Coosan Road, Athlone: 090 6483 106 Child & Family Centre, Springfield, Mullingar 044 9344 877	
Co Louth	Local Health Care Unit, Wilton House, Stapleton Place, Dundalk: 042 9392 200 Ballsgrove Health Centre, Ballsgrove, Drogheda: 041 9838 574 or 041 9833 163	

GARDA SIOCHANA

DUBLIN (Central)	National Bureau of Criminal Investigation, Harcourt Square, Harcourt Street, DUBLIN 2	01 6634 74/75/45/38
All Other Areas	Phone your local Garda Station	
Emergencies Only	999 or 112	
Garda Crimestoppers	Confidential Freephone number to specially trained staff on all types of crime	1800 250 025

Specialist Services Alliance Victim Support: Men/Women 16+ and their families who experienced abuse in institutions during childhood. Access to counselling, family tracing, and legal services.

Age NI: Tel: (028) 9024 5729

NORTHERN IRELAND HELPLINE NUMBERS

NEST: Tel: (028) 7964 2983 Group Counselling for Adults surviving trauma. Faith based, open to all.

The Nexus Institute: Tel: (028) 9032 6803 (Belfast) Specialist counselling for male/female survivors of sexual abuse/violence, 16+

The Samaritans: 08457 909090

Barnardos: Counselling for Children (province-wide)
Tel: (028) 9067 2366
Website: www.barnardos.org.uk

Counselling Services: Tel: (028) 9087 1313
Please note that only services which you can contact yourself are included. GPs, community nurses or social workers may be able to refer you to other services such as clinical psychology which are not listed here.

NSPCC: (Northern Ireland) Helpline Tel: 0800 800 5000
Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

THRESHOLD Child and Adolescent Specialist Counselling for Young People
4-18 years of age Tel: 028 9087 1313

National Association for people abused in childhood
National Support Helpline: Tel: 0800 085 3330 Website: www.napac.org.uk

Towards Healing: Northern Ireland: 0800 973 272

Freephone: 0800 0963315
The operational hours of the helpline are: Monday and Wednesday (11.00a.m.–8.00p.m.) and Friday (11.00a.m.–4.00p.m.). An answering machine service is available at all other times.

Alliance Support Group: UK: 028 3887 1708

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

ISPC: (Ireland) Helpline Tel 01 676 7960

Barnardos Ireland (Republic of Ireland) 01 4530 355

The Samaritans 1850 609090

Towards Healing: 1800 331 234

Freephone: 1800 303416
The operational hours of the helpline are: Monday and Wednesday (11.00a.m.–8.00p.m.) and Friday (11.00a.m.–4.00p.m.). An answering machine service is available at all other times.

Alliance Support Group: Callers from Rep. of Ireland: 048 3887 1708 (ASG is based in Richill, Co Armagh, N Ireland)