



Child Safeguarding Statement of Presentation Sisters, South West Province, Ireland



This statement has been prepared to comply with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015 and is derived from Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016.

Statement

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

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

Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

The Presentation Sisters, South West Province, Ireland as a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland exists to promote the teachings of the Catholic Church. This includes the following ministry with children, as defined in Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016:

- Nano Nagle Birth place Spirituality Centre, Ballygriffin. Co Cork

As outlined in the Safeguarding Children 2016 Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland we are committed to the following principles:

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.

Measures to create and maintain environments

Measures to create and maintain environments that are safe for children that prevent abuse, and that 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, concerns, knowledge or allegations that reach the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities (apart from those received in the Sacrament of Reconciliation) will be reported to the appropriate statutory authorities. This will be done irrespective of the status of the person (lay, cleric or religious) who is suspected of having been abusive to a child. If the allegation relates to a lay member of Church personnel, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must be reported to the Church authority. If the allegation relates to a cleric or religious, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must also be reported to the Church authority and the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

Statutory Authority

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

Risk Assessment

The table below sets out the identified risks to the safety of children and young people involved in Church activities with the Presentation Sisters, South West Province, Ireland and the steps taken to minimise the risks of abuse

Risk Identified	Procedure in Place to Manage Risk Identified
<p>Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child by Presentation Sisters personnel. (Those who work with children are unsafe to do so and/or behave inappropriately towards them)</p>	<p>Procedures for Safe Recruitment and Selection, including: Vetting Code of Behaviour Guidance and training are in place for Sisters and staff on safe work with Children and Young People. Appropriate Procedures are in place for Visiting Clergy.</p>
<p>Risk of harm through bullying (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child by Presentation Sisters personnel or peers.</p>	<p>All sisters and staff in ministry with children receive information about anti-bullying procedures/policy Guidance on creating a Code of Behaviour with Children and a Code of Behaviour for Adults</p>
<p>Children who use our service may not understand the roles and responsibilities in place to encourage positive behaviour</p>	<p>Code of behaviour (for children) Guidance and training in place for Sisters and Presentation personnel employed on promoting positive behaviour</p>

<p>The environment in which work with children is facilitated may fail to protect them from harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015).</p>	<p>Procedures and training in place for Creating a Safe Environment for Children including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> safe adult: child ratios; preventing bullying; thorough registration and consent forms, dealing with accidents; maintaining adequate supervision ratios; exceptional 1 to 1 contact with Children; participation of Children with special needs; whistle blowing; complaints; risk /hazard assessment of activities; use of technology.
<p>The environment in which work with children is facilitated may fail to meet effective safeguarding practice.</p>	<p>Safe Care of Children Procedures are in place which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining Attendance Registers Dealing with Accidents and Incidents Maintaining Adequate Adult/Child Ratios; Inclusion of Children with Specific Needs Safe Trips Away from Home Parental Consent
<p>Harm may be caused by lack of vetting procedures for external groups who use Presentation Sisters property .</p>	<p>External groups who use Presentation Sisters property must confirm that they have a child safeguarding policy, procedures and appropriate insurance in place. This information is retained by the Province.</p>
<p>Risk of harm (as defined by the Children First Act 2015) to a child during activities or trips away from home from Presentation Sisters/Personnel or other adults.</p>	<p>The Presentation Sisters operate comprehensive procedures on Trips Away from home, including parental consent and adequate supervision; Whistle Blowing Procedures and Procedures for Dealing with Safeguarding and non-Safeguarding Complaints.</p>
<p>Risk of harm (as defined by the Children First Act 2015) through the use of digital media (photography, video and social media).</p>	<p>All Sisters in ministry with children provide media permission forms to children and parents in relation to the use of digital media, photography and social media. Guidance is in place for safe use of all digital media by sisters and staff.</p>

<p>Presentation Sisters/Personnel may fail to report an allegation, suspicion, concern or knowledge appropriately.</p>	<p>Robust procedures for recognising, responding and reporting abuse are in place. All members of the Presentation Sisters/Personnel are required to attend child protection awareness raising workshops and one day training for all those in direct ministry with Children.</p>
<p>Presentation Sisters/Personnel may fail to take action during and following any investigation into allegations of abuse to ensure that children are protected from harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015).</p>	<p>Presentation Sisters ensure that designated trained personnel are in place to ensure risk assessment and management procedures are in place during the course of investigations into allegations of abuse against religious and others</p>
<p>Presentation Sisters/Personnel may fail to support those who are victims of abuse.</p>	<p>Procedures are in place to provide for information and pastoral support for complainants. This includes information about the Presentation Sisters procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse, access to counselling and additional resource information.</p>
<p>Presentation Sisters/Personnel may fail to understand their responsibilities to Safeguard Children.</p>	<p>The Presentation Sisters conduct annual training needs analysis in order to review and update the 3-year Training Strategy to provide: induction and role specific training for all employees and those involved in direct ministry with Children on Child Safeguarding responsibilities.</p>
<p>Children and their parents may not understand the Church Policy, Procedures and Structure to safeguard Children from harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015).</p>	<p>Communications Policy: Procedures are in place to ensure that Children and parents who are involved in Presentation Sisters activities receive safeguarding information at the time of registration, policy leaflets and information on the website. A Safeguarding poster is available in English, Irish and Polish in and will be made available in other languages as required.</p>
<p>Children not aware of whom to speak to regarding child protection concerns</p>	<p>Communications Policy. Children advised of whom to speak to/information leaflet provided. Guidance provided to Presentation Sisters/Personnel on how to respond to a child reporting allegations of concern where necessary.</p>

Procedures

All procedures outlined in the risk assessment above are in the document *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for Catholic Church in Ireland 2016* available at <https://www.safeguarding.ie/images/Pdfs/Standards/Safeguarding%20Children%20Policy.pdf>



The procedures listed above include the following:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/ volunteers of a child availing of our service. This is part of Indicator 2.1 which is available On page 16 *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*

2.1	The Church body has clearly written child safeguarding procedures and access to the personnel to implement them if suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations are received about the abuse of a child. These procedures specify that all suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations that meet the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities (apart from those received in the Sacrament of Reconciliation) will be reported. In addition to reporting to the statutory authorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• if the allegation relates to a Church authority, the National Board must also be informed;• If the allegation relates to a cleric or religious, the National Board and the Church authority must also be informed;• if the allegation relates to a lay member of Church personnel, the Church authority must be informed.
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- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children. This is part of Indicator 1.1 available on page 16 *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*

1.1	The Church body follows effective practice guidelines and legislative requirements in the recruitment of all Church personnel and in assessing their suitability to work with children.
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- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm. This is part of Indicators 5.1 , 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 available on page 17 *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*

5.1	The Church authority takes responsibility to ensure that the induction of all personnel – lay, religious or clergy – includes training in the Church’s child safeguarding policy and procedures.
5.2	The Church body conducts an annual training-needs analysis that identifies all Church personnel who require training and develops a training plan based on this.
5.3	The Church body ensures delivery at a local level of basic training programmes that are identified and approved by the National Board, as outlined in the National Board’s Training Strategy, where this has been identified as necessary through the annual training-needs analysis.

5.4 The Church body ensures that Church personnel who have specific child safeguarding responsibilities have appropriate, role-specific training that is identified and approved by the National Board, as outlined in the National Board's Training Strategy.

- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla. This is part of Indicator 2.1 which is available on page 16 *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*

2.1 The Church body has clearly written child safeguarding procedures and access to the personnel to implement them if suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations are received about the abuse of a child.
These procedures specify that all suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations that meet the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities (apart from those received in the Sacrament of Reconciliation) will be reported. In addition to reporting to the statutory authorities:

- if the allegation relates to a Church authority, the National Board must also be informed;
- If the allegation relates to a cleric or religious, the National Board and the Church authority must also be informed;
- if the allegation relates to a lay member of Church personnel, the Church authority must be informed.

- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons. This is part of Indicator 2.1 which is available on page 16 *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*

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These procedures specify that all suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations that meet the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities (apart from those received in the Sacrament of Reconciliation) will be reported. In addition to reporting to the statutory authorities:

- if the allegation relates to a Church authority, the National Board must also be informed;
- If the allegation relates to a cleric or religious, the National Board and the Church authority must also be informed;
- if the allegation relates to a lay member of Church personnel, the Church authority must be informed.

- Procedure for appointing a relevant person. This is part of Indicators 1.1 and 6.1 which is available on page *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*

1.1 The Church body follows effective practice guidelines and legislative requirements in the recruitment of all Church personnel and in assessing their suitability to work with children.

6.1 The Church body has a written plan, which details how the Church's child safeguarding message will be communicated.

Implementation

Presentation Sisters South West Province (Ireland) is committed to safeguarding children through the implementation of *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*. This Child Safeguarding Statement and our practice supports our desire to keep children safe from harm while in our ministries. As part of our annual audit against the relevant indicators of the child safeguarding standards, we will review the effectiveness of our practice as outlined in this statement and will revise, as appropriate.

Signed: St. Grace McKenna
Presentation Sisters
South West Province (Ireland)