



Child Safeguarding Statement of the Irish Province of the Order of Preachers (The Dominicans)

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. The policy of the Catholic Church in Ireland is based on standards of practice which contain indicators that assist in reaching these standards. These indicators can be used in assessing and managing risk.

Name and contact details of the service provider

Irish Province of the Order of Preachers (The Dominicans)
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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 Irish Dominican Province 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:

- Attendance by children, young people and vulnerable adults in Church services usually, but not always, accompanied by their parents/carers or guardians.
- Participation of children and young people in sacramental preparation often, but not always, done in conjunction with schools.
- Participation in the sacraments through serving at Mass, singing with choirs and acting as Ministers of the Word, catechists in youth programmes and children liturgy.
- Participation in youth groups, youth ministries and youth camp/residential programmes.
- Participation in school based religious and/or social activities.
- Participation in school retreats and pilgrimages.
- Participation in counselling services.

It is important to note that this list is not exhaustive.

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
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- 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.
 - Caring for the welfare of all children and the adults who work with them.
 - 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 Church personnel have a responsibility to report suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of child abuse that reach the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities. The Designated Liaison Person can assist with this process. These reports will be made irrespective of the status of the person (lay, cleric or religious) who is suspected of having been abusive to a child. If the allegation being reported 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 being reported relates to a cleric or religious, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must also be reported to the Church authority and anonymously to 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.

Risk Assessment

The table below sets out the identified risks to the safety of children and young people involved in Church activities in the Irish Dominican Province and the steps taken to minimise the risks of abuse. See the safeguarding section of the Dominican Website, (link to <https://www.dominicansafeguarding.com>) and see also “Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016” (link <https://www.safeguarding.ie/our-services/policy-and-guidance>)

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 Church personnel or visitors to Church premises.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All church personnel/clergy, including visiting clergy, staff, volunteers, and students involved in public ministry and/or pastoral activities with children, young people are subject to Garda vetting. ➤ A celebret will not be issued to any priest or deacon until Garda vetting is completed. ➤ Procedures for the recruitment and selection of Church personnel to ensure their suitability to work directly/indirectly with children. ➤ Code of behaviour for Church personnel ➤ Reporting Procedure ➤ Procedures for dealing with the complainant and the respondent when a concern/allegation is made against Church personnel, including a risk management plan. ➤ Training needs analysis and training strategy are in place to ensure that all Church personnel have received the appropriate level of training to their role, responsibilities and the level of contact they have with children. ➤ Procedure for internet and social media safety <p>See Section 1.1., 1.2., 1.3., 1.4., See Guidance 1, Recruitment and Selection Checklist See Guidance 3, Code of Behaviour for Adults See Guidance 16, Procedure for Reporting an allegation of Child Abuse See Standard 1, 2 and 5 of the Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</p>
<p>Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child through bullying by peers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Anti-bullying guidance and protocol in place ➤ For children’s activities a code of behaviour for children is in place and implemented. ➤ Code of behaviour for adults ➤ Procedures for internet and social media safety <p>See Section 1.9. Antibullying guidance See Guidance 3 and Guidance 4, Code of Behaviour for Adults and Code of Behaviour for Children Guidance 7 Guidance on the use of Technology/Media Policy of the Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</p>
<p>The environment in which work with children is facilitated fails to protect them from harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Procedures to create and maintain safe environments including localised hazard assessments. <p>See Guidance 5 Hazard Assessment of the Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</p>

<p>Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to children involved with external groups who use Church property and are unsafe to do so.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Procedures for external groups to use Dominican Church property. ➤ Reporting procedures <p><i>See Guidance 9 Procedures for Use of Dominican Property</i> <i>See Guidance 16, Procedure for Reporting an allegation of Child Abuse of the Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</i></p>
<p>Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to a child during outings or trips away, (Including overnight) from home from peers, Church personnel or strangers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Code of behaviour for adults ➤ Code of behaviour for children ➤ Risk assessment and communication with personnel in the activity venue/residential centre. ➤ Information provision/meeting for parents in advance of trip. ➤ Parental consent and emergency contact details obtained for all children. ➤ Specific reference to adult to child ratios and supervision levels. ➤ Implementation of procedures with children. <p><i>See Guidance 3, Code of Behaviour for Adults</i> <i>See Guidance 4 Code of Conduct for Children</i> <i>See Guidance 5, Hazard Assessment</i> <i>See Guidance 6, Supervision Ratios</i> <i>See Standard 1 of the Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</i></p>
<p>Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) through the use of digital media (photography, video and social media).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Procedures for the safe use of digital media <p><i>Guidance 7 Guidance on the use of Technology/Media Policy of the Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</i></p>
<p>Church personnel fail to report an allegation, suspicion, concern or knowledge appropriately.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Procedures for reporting child abuse allegations, suspicion concerns or knowledge ➤ Training needs analysis and training strategy are in place to ensure that all Church personnel have received the appropriate level of training to their role, responsibilities and the level of contact they have with children. <p><i>See Guidance 16, Procedure for Reporting an allegation of Child Abuse</i> <i>See Standard 2 and 5 of the Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</i></p>
<p>Church personnel fail to take action during and following any investigation into allegations of abuse against clerics and religious to ensure children are protected from harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reporting procedure ➤ Appointment of safeguarding personnel ➤ Procedures for dealing with the complainant and the respondent when a concern/allegation is made against Church personnel, including a risk management plan. ➤ Disciplinary Procedure <p><i>See Guidance 16, Procedure for Reporting an allegation of Child Abuse</i> <i>See Standard 2, 3 and 4 of the Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</i></p>

<p>Church personnel fail to support those who are victims of abuse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Procedures to support complainants ➤ Reporting procedures ➤ Appointment of safeguarding personnel ➤ Appropriate support and pastoral care is offered to the complainant. <p><i>Guidance 17 Information for Complainants and Survivors of Child Abuse</i> See Standard 1, 3 and 4 of the <i>Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</i></p>
<p>Church personnel fail to understand their responsibilities to safeguard children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Procedures for child safeguarding training and support ➤ Training needs analysis and training strategy are in place to ensure that all Church personnel have received the appropriate level of training to their role, responsibilities and the level of contact they have with children <p>Standard 5 of the <i>Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</i></p>
<p>Children and their parents do not understand the Church's policy, procedures and structure to safeguard children and protect them from harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Procedures to develop communications, training and support relating to child safeguarding <p>See Standard 5 and 6 of <i>Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</i></p>
<p>The procedures for safeguarding children from harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) fail to be implemented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Local Annual Safeguarding Audits are conducted ➤ Annual Safeguarding Report is completed ➤ A three-year child safeguarding strategy is in place. ➤ Procedures to ensure compliance and the implementation of the policy and procedures <p>See Standard 7 of <i>Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</i></p>
<p>The Church authority fails to ensure the appointment of a relevant person and maintain a list of mandated persons.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Procedure for appointment of a relevant person is in place ➤ Procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons is in place. ➤ Information leaflet, information sessions and training provided to all mandated persons. ➤ Training strategy ➤ Tusla child safeguarding statement in place. <p>See Standard 1, 5, 6 and 7 of <i>Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</i></p>
<p>Risk of harm of a child (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) being disclosed during the Sacrament of Reconciliation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reporting Procedures <p>See Standard 2 of <i>Dominican Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure Handbook, 2020.</i></p>

Risk Assessment (Risks identified for each parish/religious community)

Alongside the risks listed in the table above, the Dominican Province of Ireland individually risk assess their activities with children and put in place procedures to manage these risks.

Risk Identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
Local activity with children is risk assessed in each location in which the activity takes place as part of Indicator 1.8 of <i>Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016</i> .	For full details of localised risks and the procedures in place to manage these please refer to the hazard assessments stored at the location of the activity and the Safeguarding Office.

Procedures

All procedures outlined in the risk assessment above are available at www.dominicansafeguarding.com


The following procedures are specified procedures under the Children First Act 2015 and are also referenced above.

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.
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children.
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla.
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

Implementation

The Irish Province of the Order of Preachers 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  Date 12/04/2024
Prior Provincial

For any queries relating to this statement please contact the **relevant person** under the Children First Act 2015: **Ms. Mary Tallon, Coordinator of Safeguarding/Designated Liaison Person.**

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