



## **The Child Safeguarding Statement of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in Ireland**

This statement has been prepared to comply with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015.

### **1. 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.

### **2. Nature of Service & Principles to Safeguard Children from Harm**

The Jesuits in Ireland is a Catholic Religious Order, and through its ministries and apostolates engages with children in the following ways:

- Celebrating the Eucharist and other Sacraments
- Attendance by children at Church services, usually accompanied by parents or guardians.
- Participation in retreats, which are usually school-led
- Providing advice and support services to families, where children may be present.

The Jesuit Principles to safeguard children from harm are:

1. The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Training, communication and quality assurance procedures are implemented in order to create safe environments for children and young people and those who work with them.
2. The best interests of the child remain paramount.
3. Children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously.
4. Parents/carers are consulted with in matters involving their child or family.
5. Those who will be working with children are chosen with care and caution.

6. 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.
7. Child protection is a multiagency, multidisciplinary activity. Agencies and professionals must work together in the interests of the children.

### 3. Risk Assessment of Potential Harm to Children while availing of our services

The Jesuit Safeguarding Committee has carried out an assessment of the potential for harm to children through their involvement in Jesuit activities.

The table below sets out the identified risks, and the procedures in place to manage that risk:

<b>Risk Identified</b>	<b>Procedure in place to manage identified risk</b> All to be found in <i>Jesuit Safeguarding Procedures 2020</i>
Children could be exposed to harm by the people that work with them.	Safe recruitment procedure, including vetting of all in public ministry and those who work with children.
Those that work with children could behave inappropriately towards them.	Code of behaviour Whistleblowing policy Complaint procedure Training policy
Those working with children could operate in unsafe environments eg. Inadequate supervision, activities not well planned, risky physical environment.	Procedures for creating safe environments -Supervision ratios -Hazard assessment -Guidance on trips away
Lack of clarity around who is responsible for what with regards to child safeguarding and protection.	Roles and responsibilities are clearly laid out in procedures document; Safeguarding poster with contact details is displayed prominently; Advice, support and training is provided by the Jesuit Safeguarding Office.
Concerns about a child at risk of abuse or of being neglected would go undetected and unreported.	This statement and the accompanying procedures are circulated to Jesuit communities and agencies; Safeguarding information and advice provided by the Jesuit Safeguarding Office; Reporting thresholds and procedures are set out clearly in procedures document and covered in training and information sessions.

Mandated persons may not be aware of their responsibilities under the Children First Act 2015.	Role of mandated persons is explained in the procedures document; Information has been sent to mandated persons in December 2017 and more recently via Superior and local safeguarding reps; Training and information sessions provided; A list of mandated persons is compiled and kept updated.
Those that would wish to exploit children through the use of digital media in our ministries would do so	Procedures on use of technology
The procedures for safeguarding children fail to be implemented	Policy on quality assurance

#### **4. Procedures**

All procedures outlined in the risk assessment above are available at Jesuit Safeguarding Procedures (2017) [www.jesuit.ie](http://www.jesuit.ie). The procedures are written to be in compliance with:

- Children First Act 2015
- Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017
- Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016

A copy of this child safeguarding statement is available on request and at [www.jesuit.ie](http://www.jesuit.ie) (safeguarding section).

#### **5. Implementation**

The Jesuits in 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.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in April 2022 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:

Fr Leonard Moloney, Provincial Superior

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020

For any queries relating to this statement please contact Saoirse Fox, Safeguarding Manager, Jesuit Provincialate, Milltown Park, Dublin 6, who is the Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015.

Contact details: [safeguarding@jesuitlink.ie](mailto:safeguarding@jesuitlink.ie) or 01-4987333/ 086-3441707