



Child Safeguarding Statement of the Order of Carmelites (O.Carm.)

This statement has been prepared to comply with the requirements of the *Children First Act 2015* and is supported by *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016* and *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017*.

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, ordained and non ordained, staff and volunteers) have a responsibility to safeguard children and young people through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment that supports their best interests and prevents abuse.

Under the Child Care Act 1991, a child is someone under the age of 18 years who is not or has not been married.

Nature of service

The Order of Carmelites (O.Carm.) 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 and young people:

- Attendance by children and young people at Church services and in the preparation for Church services;
- Participation in sacramental preparation;
- Participation by children and young people in various roles within Churches and our Communities including altar servers, choirs, Ministers of the Word, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, catechists in youth programmes, children's liturgy;
- Participation in youth groups/youth ministries ;
- Participation in retreats and pilgrimages;

(Note this list is not exhaustive)

Principles to Safeguard Children from Harm

As outlined in the *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016* and *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017* we are committed to the following principles:

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility.
- We all have a role to play in safeguarding children, this includes creating safe environments for children, developing and maintaining a culture where children are heard, valued and protected, challenging poor practice and recognising and responding to child protection and welfare concerns.
- The welfare of the child is the first and paramount consideration. When making decisions and taking action the welfare of the child must be prioritised.
- Children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives

Risk Assessment

The table below sets out the identified risks to the safety of children and young people involved in Church activities in the Order of Carmelites (O.Carm.) and the steps taken to minimise the risks of abuse. See the ‘*Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*’ and the safeguarding section on the Carmelite website for detailed procedures. <http://www.carmelites.ie/safeguarding.html>

Harm as defined in the Children First Act 2015, means ‘*in relation to a child-*

- assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child’s health, development or welfare, or*
- sexual abuse of the child, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances, or otherwise.’*

Risk Identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
Risk of harm of a child by Church personnel	<p>Procedures for the recruitment and selection of Church personnel to ensure their suitability to work directly/indirectly with children.</p> <p>Code of behaviour for Church personnel</p> <p>Reporting Procedure</p> <p>Procedures for dealing with the complainant and the respondent when a concern/allegation is made against Church personnel, including a risk management plan.</p> <p>Training needs analysis and training strategy are</p>

	<p>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> <p>Procedure for internet and social media safety</p>
Risk of harm to children through peer abuse, including bullying.	<p>For children's activities a code of behaviour for children is in place and implemented.</p> <p>Code of behaviour for adults</p> <p>Procedures for internet and social media safety</p> <p>Complaints procedure</p> <p>Anti-bullying policy</p>
Children are not informed of the code of behaviour for adults and therefore not aware of appropriate boundaries	<p>Code of behaviour for adults</p> <p>Age appropriately, informing children and young people of safeguarding procedures and empowering them to report issues, concerns and worries.</p> <p>Communication and implementation procedure</p>
Allowing and/or maintaining an environment or culture that is harmful to children.	<p>Having a child centred ethos as the basis of the code of behaviour.</p> <p>Whistle blowing procedures</p> <p>Complaints procedure</p>
External groups who use Church property could be a risk of harm to children.	<p>Procedures for external groups to use Church property</p> <p>Reporting procedure</p>
Risk of harm to children from adults visiting and/or attending church/parish functions.	<p>Ensuring appropriate supervision ratios are in place, depending on the needs, age and activity of the children.</p> <p>Implementing the safeguarding procedures</p> <p>Ensuring appropriate codes of behaviour are in place for children.</p> <p>Recruitment and selection procedures</p>
Risk of harm to a child from Church personnel or other adults during activities or trips away	<p>Code of behaviour for adults specific to the trip is in place. Specific reference to adult to child</p>

<p>from home.</p>	<p>ratios and supervision levels.</p> <p>Risk assessment and communication with personnel in the activity venue/residential centre.</p> <p>Code of behaviour for children is in place.</p> <p>Information provision/meeting for parents in advance of trip.</p> <p>Consent and emergency contact details obtained for all children.</p> <p>Implementation of safeguarding procedures with children.</p>
<p>Risk of harm through the misuse of digital media (photography, video and social media)</p>	<p>Procedures for internet and social media safety</p>
<p>Church personnel fail to appropriately report an allegation, suspicion, concern or knowledge</p>	<p>Reporting Procedure</p> <p>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> <p>Disciplinary Procedure</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.</p>	<p>Reporting procedure</p> <p>Appointment of Safeguarding personnel</p> <p>Procedures for dealing with the complainant and the respondent when a concern/allegation is made against Church personnel, including a risk management plan.</p> <p>Disciplinary Procedure</p>
<p>Church personnel fail to support those who are victims of abuse.</p>	<p>Reporting procedure</p> <p>Appointment of Safeguarding personnel</p> <p>Recording and storage of information procedure</p> <p>Confidentiality statement</p> <p>Appropriate support and pastoral care is offered to the complainant</p>

Church personnel fail to understand their responsibilities to safeguard children	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.
Children and their parents do not understand the Church's policy, procedures and structure to safeguard children.	Information, advice and support are provided to children and their parents on keeping children safe. Communication procedure is in place to ensure that safeguarding procedures are implemented.
Safeguarding procedures fail to be implemented.	Local annual safeguarding audits are conducted. Annual safeguarding report is produced by the safeguarding office. A 3 year child safeguarding strategy is in place. The Order is audited by the National Board in relation to the seven safeguarding standards.
The Church authority fails to ensure the appointment of a relevant person and maintain a list of mandated persons.	Procedure for the appointment of a relevant person is in place. Procedure for maintaining a list of mandated persons is in place.
Mandated persons are not aware of their safeguarding role and responsibility.	Information leaflet, information sessions and training provided to all mandated persons. Training strategy

Community Specific Risk Assessment

Each individual religious community must document any additional safeguarding risks and the procedures in place to minimise these risks. A similar format as above should be used and personnel in the safeguarding office named below are available to support this process.

Procedures

All procedures outlined in the risk assessment above are available at www.carmelites.ie. The following procedures are specified procedures under the Children First Act 2015 and are also referenced above:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against Church personnel of a child availing of our service.
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of Church personnel 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 in the relevant service who are mandated persons.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

Implementation

The Order of Carmelites (O.Carm.) is committed to safeguarding children through the implementation of *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016 and Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017*. 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:

Michael Troy, O.Carm., Prior Provincial.

Date: 20th January 2020

For any queries relating to this statement please contact the **Relevant Person** under the Children First Act 2015: **Julie McCullough, Director of Safeguarding/DLP**.

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