



Child Safeguarding Statement of the Irish Province of Carmelites

This statement has been prepared to comply with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015 and is derived from *A Safe and Welcoming Church, Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2024*. 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 Carmelites
Gort Muire
Ballinteer
Dublin 16
D16 E167
01 298 4014/087 1947212

Statement

The Gospel teaches the importance of ensuring that the Catholic Church community is a warm, welcoming and safe place for children.

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."
(Mark 10:14-15)

Children are gifts from God, to be cherished and recognised for the joyful contribution they make as valued members of the Church.

Our challenge is to follow the example of Jesus in cherishing them.

Safeguarding is key to this important task and should be seen, not as a burden, but as an opportunity to embrace and encourage children's ministry, following the example of Jesus Christ.

This Church body pledges to safeguard children and young people from harm and to support them in their development as valued and integral members of the Catholic Church in Ireland. The Church's ministry will be inclusive and will uphold their rights.

Consistent with Gospel values, and with civil and criminal law, those who minister will do so with dignity and integrity, honouring their calling to ensure that children and young people are welcomed, cherished and protected, following the example set by Jesus.

This Safeguarding Children Policy will be honoured and complied with by all ordained clerics, by vowed female and male religious, and by all lay staff and volunteers in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

The Irish Province 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, as defined in *A Safe and Welcoming Church, Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2024*:

- Attendance by children and young people at Church services and in the preparation for Church services;
- Participation in sacramental preparation;
- Participation in youth groups/youth ministries;
- Participation in retreats and pilgrimages;
- 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; music groups

As outlined in the *A Safe and Welcoming Church, Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2024* we are committed to the following standards:

Leadership, Governance and Accountability.

As a leader, the Church authority embodies and imparts the Catholic Church's vision, principles and values, which are reflected and apparent in the child safeguarding culture, structures and practices at all levels and in all ministries with children and young people. This demonstrates, through words and actions, the Church authority's personal commitment to fulfil the safeguarding mission of the Church.

Nurturing a Culture of Safeguarding.

Ensuring the creation and maintenance of a culture of safety, including a safe Church environment that is welcoming of children. Keeping children safe from harm is an imperative but more than that, the Church will promote the well-being of children through their participation in the ministry of the Church. The Church will create and maintain environments that uphold children's rights and that create nurturing, caring conditions where children will flourish in faith and love. Through fostering a culture of care, children feel safe and looked after and, in turn, they will be supportive of and respectful to their peers.

Responding Pastorally and Reporting According to Civil and Canon Law.

Caring for complainants and ensuring a just process of inquiry. 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 (OLP) 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 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 Risk Assessment Table sets out the identified risks to the safety of children and young people involved in Church activities in the Irish Province of Carmelites and the steps taken to minimise the risks of abuse, (as defined in the Children First Act 2015)

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

Alongside the risks listed in the table above, all parishes/religious communities of the Irish Province of Carmelites 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 national policy <i>A Safe and Welcoming Church, Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2024.</i>	For full details of localised risks and the procedures in place to manage these please refer to the hazard assessments stored at Safeguarding Office. Gort Muire. Ballinteer. Dublin 16. D16 E167.

Procedures

All procedures outlined in the risk assessment above are available at carmelites.ie/safeguarding. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, and Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017). The procedures listed above include the following:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff/volunteers towards a child availing of our service. Available at carmelites.ie/safeguarding.
- Procedures for managing allegations against clerics, religious and all in formation for the priesthood and religious life. Available at carmelites.ie/safeguarding.
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers to work with children. Available at carmelites.ie/safeguarding.
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including on the identification of the occurrence of harm. Available at carmelites.ie/safeguarding.
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla and An Garda Síochána. Available at carmelites.ie/safeguarding.
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons. Available at carmelites.ie/safeguarding.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person. Available at carmelites.ie/safeguarding.

Implementation

The Irish Province of Carmelites is committed to safeguarding children through the implementation of: *A Safe and Welcoming Church, Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2024*. 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 criteria of the child safeguarding standards, we will review the effectiveness of our practice as outlined in this statement and will revise it as appropriate based on our those findings.

In addition, we will revise this statement at least every 24 months or as appropriate due to changes in ministries or legislation/guidance.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Simon Nolan, O. Carm.".

Simon Nolan, O.Carm., Prior Provincial.

Date: 22 July 2024

For any queries relating to this statement please contact the **Relevant Person** under the Children First Act 2015:

Julie McCullough, Director of Safeguarding/DLP.

Telephone: (01) 2984014/ 087 1947212

E-mail: DLP@gortmuire.com

Carmelite Order, Gort Muire, Ballinteer, Dublin 16, D16 E167

Review date: July 2024