

Handbook introducing the Jesuit Safeguarding Policy and Procedures including the Provincial's Commitment to Safeguarding

The following guidance is associated with Standard: Leadership, Governance & Accountability in “A Safe And Welcoming Church: Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2024”

Provincial's commitment to safeguarding

As Provincial of The Society of Jesus in Ireland I am pleased to formally launch this revised version of our handbooks for child safeguarding. This version reflects the revision of the National Standards for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland by the National Board for Safeguarding Children (A Safe and Welcoming Church, 2024). Incorporated in this version of our procedures are updates in Civil and Canon law and practice developments. The Irish Province has also reiterated our commitment to working in a restorative manner with all of those who have been harmed in a Jesuit context.

“Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all ... whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.” (Mark 9:33-7)

As Provincial I reiterate my commitment to safeguarding and I acknowledge my responsibility to ensuring the Safeguarding Office is resourced with the necessary and relevant expertise so it can support all the activities of the province. I commit to availing of all relevant training offered for those in leadership roles to deepen my awareness of my responsibilities and the policies and procedures that should inform my response to safeguarding issues. The Safeguarding Office co-ordinates the training of all relevant personnel and collaborates accordingly to ensure roles and responsibilities throughout the Society are clearly defined.

I have introduced the practice of a safeguarding workshop, led by a safeguarding team member, during the annual Visitation to the communities of the province. This not only informs community members of any changes to policies and procedures but acts as a consistent reminder of our safeguarding commitments. These visits form part of the annual self-audit process.

The Jesuit Safeguarding Committee consists of experts from the fields of Safeguarding and works to underpin and support the work of the Safeguarding Office. The Committee's oversight ensures our practice and policies benefit from independent input in our comprehensive efforts to

ensure a zero tolerance of abuse. It is the responsibility of this Committee, in collaboration with the Safeguarding Office to develop our Strategic Safeguarding Plan and review this document annually.

As part of our restorative practices in working with those who have been harmed in a Jesuit context, I regularly meet with those who have spoken to our Safeguarding Office. These meetings serve as a constant reminder of the importance of learning from the mistakes of the past to ensure they are not repeated.

Should a complaint be made regarding a Jesuit, an employee of one of our works or communities, or a volunteer, it is my responsibility to ensure that the correct procedures are followed including those of risk mitigation. Central to those procedures is the reporting of all complaints to the relevant authorities in accordance with civil and canon law.

I have publicly spoken to the media regarding child abuse committed by Jesuits. The province is engaged in processes to publicly acknowledge harm committed by Jesuits in the past. I hope that openness and humility in the face of great harm caused will motivate us to ensure that our works and communities are places where children can flourish and the risk of harm minimised.

Shane Daly SJ
Provincial

11th July 2025



Part 1

Guide to the Handbooks, Safeguarding Poster & Jesuit Safeguarding Structure

Guide to this Document: Policy and Handbooks

This is a series of three handbooks:

- Handbook introducing the Jesuit Safeguarding Policy and Procedures including the Provincial's Commitment to Safeguarding
- Handbook of Procedures for Responding to Child Abuse
- Handbook of Procedures: Nurturing a Culture of Safeguarding
- To conclude, there is a section for **Forms** which contain forms and templates and other associated documents for the implementation the procedures.

The handbooks set out the child safeguarding procedures and protocols of the Jesuit Irish Province. It sits alongside the child safeguarding policy of the Irish Catholic Church of which the Jesuits are a signatory. 'A Safe and Welcoming Church Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland', 2024 is the National Policy of the Catholic Church in Ireland.

In our work with children, the Jesuit Irish Province recognises and promotes the fundamental right of every child to a safe environment in which she or he will be free from any form of abuse, neglect or harm. We acknowledge our obligation to provide children and young people with the highest possible standard of care, in order to promote their well-being and safeguard them from abuse. The procedures contained in this document provide clear guidance on how to achieve this.

The procedures take account of:

- The Children First Act 2015
- The updated Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children published in 2017
- Safeguarding Children Policy & Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2024 "A Safe and Welcoming Church"
- UNCRC: United Nations Convention on

the Rights of the Child, ratified by Ireland in 1992.

The procedures are to be followed by all **Jesuit personnel** and anyone who works with children on behalf of the Jesuits. "Jesuit personnel" is a term used throughout this document for conciseness, and it refers to Jesuits, staff and volunteers.

As shown in the infogram below, there are three core standards to the Church's Safeguarding Children Policy:

- Leadership, Governance and Accountability
- Nurturing a Culture of Safeguarding
- Responding Pastorally and Reporting According to Civil and Canon Law

This handbook outlines the Jesuit Irish Province's structures and procedures that are implemented to ensure that the three standards are met.

This current handbook addresses the Standard **Leadership, Governance & Accountability**.

Handbook of Procedures: **Nurturing a Culture of Safeguarding** outlines the procedures associated with that same Standard.

The final handbook of procedures for Responding to Child Abuse details the procedures associated with the Standard **Responding Pastorally and Reporting According to Civil and Canon Law**.



Table of Jesuit ministry with children and the policy which applies to that ministry

Generic description of ministry	Specific examples	Policy to be followed:
Pastoral activity with children organised and managed by the Jesuits Note: Very little Jesuit ministry falls within this category	Children's liturgy Jesuit Refugee Service (refers to activities solely run by JRS)	One-Church Safeguarding Policy Jesuit Safeguarding Procedures
Jesuit-facilitated activity on behalf of another organisation	Jesuit Refugee Service (refers to activities delivered by JRS in IPAS accommodation facilities) School retreats	Safeguarding Policy & Procedures of organisation within which you are working
Jesuit School Note: Jesuit schools are governed by their own Boards of Management and have their own safeguarding structures and the Jesuit Safeguarding Office does not have a remit over them.	Jesuits teaching or acting as Chaplain in a school	Department of Education and Skills policies and any local safeguarding procedures
Diocesan appointment	Parish setting	One-Church Safeguarding Policy Diocesan Safeguarding Procedures
Work for another organisation	Chaplaincy in hospital, prison or third-level education Social services NGO or Charity	Safeguarding Policy & Procedures of that organisation

Jesuits involved in work for other organisations, whether voluntary or paid, are accountable to the organisation concerned. That organisation, if providing services to children, is obliged to provide its own child safeguarding policies and procedures in accordance with Children First National Guidance (2017).

In the event that no such guidelines exist, any person involved in such work should immediately discuss the matter with their local Superior or the Safeguarding

Manager/DLP and seek further guidance in relation to their position.

All Jesuit members are expected to sign a document saying that they agree to adhere to the Jesuit safeguarding policy and procedures (In Forms). They also communicate their awareness of the policy and procedures of their employing organisation, where relevant. Employees and volunteers should sign a similar acceptance form (In Forms).

Child Safeguarding Policy Statement of the Constituent Members of the Catholic Church in Ireland

This Policy Statement is displayed in a prominent location at all Jesuit Property

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. The Jesuits pledge 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 religious, and by all lay staff and volunteers in The Jesuits.

CONTACT DETAILS if you are Concerned about the Welfare of a Child

DLP: Saoirse Fox safeguarding@jesuit.ie
Sinead Dwyer safeguardingofficer@jesuit.ie
083-0874254 01-4987333

POLICE: An Garda Siochana Freephone 1800 555 222
PSNI Public Protection Unit 028 90650222

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICE:

www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker

HSCT Gateway (N. Ireland)

Belfast 028 90565444 Southern Trust (for Portadown) 0800 7837745

Roles in the Safeguarding Structure

The Provincial is responsible for all safeguarding practices by:

- Ensuring that the appropriate child safeguarding structures and personnel are in place and providing adequate resources for same
- Liaising with the Superior General, the Holy See, and other

Director of Safeguarding, Safeguarding Officer, Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

The Director of Safeguarding coordinates all safeguarding practices by:

- Liaising with and supporting Jesuit apostolates and communities to ensure implementation of local policies and procedures
- Liaising with the safeguarding committee and the advisory panel
- Reporting directly to the Provincial on all child safeguarding issues

The DLP /Safeguarding Officer is responsible for:

- Hearing child safeguarding concerns
- Referring child safeguarding concerns to the statutory authorities
- Managing cases and all associated documents, including ensuring that internal inquiries are conducting and supporting complainants, and coordinating support.

Advisory Panel: The Jesuits are a member of the National Case Management Committee

This committee offers independent, expert advice to the Provincial on all aspects of case management i.e. responding to complaints of child abuse.

The Jesuit Safeguarding committee advises the Provincial on the creation and maintenance of safe environments for children. Its particular focus is to ensure that these Procedures are implemented across Jesuit ministries and Apostolates. It coordinates local safeguarding representatives (LSRs) and activities related to child safeguarding, e.g. training. The Director of Safeguarding works very closely with the Committee.

Local Safeguarding Representative (LSR) Network

Each Jesuit Community and Work is required to nominate a safeguarding rep. These reps come together twice a year coordinated by the Safeguarding Manager. The LSR is responsible for the promotion of best practice and compliance with safeguarding policy and procedures in their area.

Mandated Person

The Children First Act 2015 has placed legal obligations on a number of professions listed as “mandated persons”. Clergy, Religious and people employed as pastoral care workers are listed in the Act as “mandated persons”. There is a full description of the role of mandated person later in this manual.

Part 2

Leadership, Governance & Accountability

Leadership, Governance & Accountability

The Provincial of the Jesuits in Ireland is committed to the implementation of good safeguarding practices throughout the Society. He outlines his personal commitments in the Foreword of this document.

The following processes and procedures assist with the implementation of this Standard.

Safeguarding Strategic Plan

The safeguarding strategic plan sets out **what, how, who and in what time frame** key elements of safeguarding practices and procedures are going to be met. The Jesuit Strategic Plan 2025-2027 is available on www.jesuit.ie.

It addresses such areas as training and communication, revision of policies and procedures, and safeguarding personnel. The annual self-audit and the annual report provided to the Provincial feed into the safeguarding plan.

Resources

The achievement of this child safeguarding plan is fully dependent on the availability of sufficient resources. In order to successfully implement the strategy, it is important to set specific and realistic objectives linked to identified allocated resources. The Provincial has allocated adequate resources in terms of personnel, time and finance to this area.

Safeguarding Committee

The role of the safeguarding committee is to oversee the implementation of

1. The safeguarding strategy
2. The safeguarding procedures, particularly procedures relating to the creation and maintenance of safe environments;
3. The training plan;
4. The communication plan;
5. Self-auditing.

These functions are fulfilled by the safeguarding committee by offering support and oversight of safeguarding standards across the Province. It has an independent Chair and its membership is made up of independent experts and Jesuit personnel. The Safeguarding Manager works very closely with the committee, usually completing the tasks identified. The committee coordinates the local safeguarding rep (LSR) network. This group of LSRs identify areas where guidance or support on policy or practice is needed and communicate safeguarding information.

Seeking Advice on Case Management

The Provincial commits to not taking unilateral action in responding to cases of child abuse. The DLP holds delegated authority to manage cases of child abuse.

The Provincial and DLP bring cases for advice to the National Case Management Committee (NCMC).

Advice is sought from National Board staff on occasion outside of NCMC meetings and from other Church Authorities.

Communicating the Safeguarding Message

Having a child safeguarding policy and procedure document is a requirement, but in order for the document to be effective, it must be communicated to the relevant people in an appropriate way.

Each Jesuit place of ministry is required to display a Safeguarding Notice. This is a statement of the child safeguarding policy and it contains contact details for the Jesuit Designated Liaison Persons, and the Police and Child Protection Services.

The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and our Child Safeguarding Statement are published on www.jesuit.ie, alongside information on the Jesuit Safeguarding Office.

Safeguarding training and information sessions communicate important information and ensure that it is understood. In 2018, the local safeguarding representative (LSR) network was established. Each Jesuit community and apostolate nominated a person to act as the LSR. This person becomes a key player in communicating safeguarding information and assessing if additional materials and modes of communication are required for a specific target group.

Audit and Quality Assurance

Quality assurance procedures are a systematic method of assessing the extent to which the safeguarding policy and procedures are implemented at all levels within the Jesuits. We want to ensure that a process of continuous improvement takes place.

This is done by applying three methods:

1. Assessing compliance during systematic visits to Jesuit centres or community houses.
2. Annual self-audit scheme carried out locally and coordinated by the safeguarding committee (Self audit template can be found in Forms).
3. External audits by the NBSCCCI and statutory agencies eg. Tusla.
4. Commit to ongoing review of policy and procedures with a full review at a minimum of every three years.

Handover between Provincials

To ensure that all important content is passed from one Provincial to another, a comprehensive handover of safeguarding and case management takes place. The handover is also the method of conveying the values and principles that the Province has agreed to uphold in responding to their legacy of abuse.

The new Provincial attends the leadership Induction programme organised annually by the National Board. New Provincials also attend a two week induction at the Jesuit General Curia which includes safeguarding input.

