

Jesuit Provincialate Safeguarding Strategic Plan



2025 -2029

Society of Jesus (Jesuits)

1.0 Vision statement

The Jesuits in Ireland are fully committed to providing safe spaces and ensuring safe relationships for the children and adults to whom we minister. We recognise failings of the past and seek to ensure that survivors are supported.

We are committed to ensuring that systems and procedures are in place to prevent abuse in the first instance while also ensuring that safe, accessible mechanisms are in place to support anyone with concerns to come forward. We encourage people to report safeguarding concerns to us and commit to ensuring that our responses are conducted in a manner that is fair and responsive to those who are harmed.

We will continually review our procedures in-line with best practice and set out our framework for development within a strategic plan covering a five year period.

2.0 Guiding Frameworks

- 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)

3.0 Our Safeguarding Structure

3.1 Leadership

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 of the Society of Jesus, the Holy See, and other Church bodies, as appropriate
- Ensuring compliance with canon and civil law

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 Province's safeguarding committee and the NCMC advisory panel (see description below)
- Reporting directly to the Provincial on all safeguarding issues

3.2 Safeguarding Office

The roles and functions contained in the Jesuit Safeguarding Office are Director of Safeguarding, Safeguarding Officer, Safeguarding Administrator. The functions of the Designated Liaison Person (as described in Children First National Guidance 2017) are the responsibility of the Safeguarding Director and Officer.

The Safeguarding Office promotes the safe care of children and adults involved in apostolic activities organised or managed by the Irish Jesuits or one of their works:

- Developing good practice in our ministry with children and other vulnerable groups;
- Providing safeguarding training for members, employees and volunteers;
- Ensuring that all members in active ministry and employees and volunteers working with children and/or "adults at risk of abuse" have undergone vetting and a safe recruitment process;
- Dealing with complaints and concerns about child protection matters, reporting to the civil authorities, and advising the Provincial on any protective measures necessary to protect children from abuse.

3.3 NCMC's Advisory Panel

The Jesuits are a member of the National Case Management Committee. This committee is an arm of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland. This committee offers independent, expert advice to the Provincial on all aspects of case management i.e. responding to complaints of child abuse.

3.4 Province Safeguarding Committee

This committee is made up of members with relevant expertise in nurturing cultures of safety and care. The committee offers advice on safeguarding policies and procedures and assists the safeguarding office in the oversight of safeguarding practice across the Irish Province.

3.5 Local Safeguarding Representative (LSR) Network

Each Jesuit Community and Work has an appointed local safeguarding representative (LSR) and these representatives form a network with the aim of enhancing competence for safeguarding at local level. The LSR is responsible for the promotion of best practice in their area and to assist with compliance with policies.



4.0 Priority Areas

Recognising and attending to a legacy of abuse

Commitment to meaningfully addressing harm caused in the past
Consolidating and acting on the learnings

Our Safeguarding Commitment

Continuing to ensure safeguarding is embedded in the structures and processes of the Jesuits
Clear committed leadership

Nurturing a culture of protection and care

Protocols and practices that create safe and caring environments for all, especially those most vulnerable
Training & awareness raising

Responding to safeguarding concerns

Accessible pathways to raise concerns
Procedures for responding that are in line with law and statutory policy and canon law
Compassionate and fair response to complainants

Quality assurance and accountability

Ongoing programme of self auditing and external evaluation

5.0 Our plans moving forward

Priority Areas	Some of what has already been done	Our priorities for 2025 -2030
Keeping victims and survivors at the centre of all decisions about how best to recognise and attend to a legacy of abuse.	Proactive public communications acknowledging abuse perpetrated by Jesuits including the naming of 18 Jesuits in connection with child sexual abuse [2021-2025] Offering and facilitating a range of supportive responses Redress Scheme [2022 – ongoing]	Continue to refresh our communications in the public domain to: a) Act transparently b) Enable people to seek support Review with complainants those responses that they have found most helpful and continue to offer these. Consolidate the information that has been learnt through new complaints and from archives. Analyse and use the learnings to influence practice. I.T.: Ensure the safekeeping of records for future examination and the planned Commission of Investigation. Hard copy files to be moved to a CRM system.
Reaffirming and communicating our Safeguarding Commitment	The Provincial's public communications about abuse [2021-2025] are intended to affirm the commitment to addressing abuse and also a commitment to safe practice in the present and future. Spaces have been created internally amongst staff and Jesuits to enhance this understanding and commitment.	Make good use of www.jesuit.ie to allow the public to access a range of documents and information related to safeguarding in the Jesuits. Communications from the Provincial into the public domain about safeguarding and responding to abuse. Internal communications from the Provincial making explicit the expectations to uphold safeguarding standards. This is accompanied by annual visits of safeguarding office staff to Jesuit communities and works. Continued provision of resources by the Province to ensure the sustainable delivery of services of the safeguarding office.

Nurturing a culture of protection and care	Safeguarding policies and procedures are published on www.jesuit.ie A safeguarding training and awareness raising programme for Jesuits, staff and volunteers is in place. Jesuits are Garda Vetted/police checked at least every 3 years.	Review and update safeguarding manual (2025, 2028) Keep training materials and rolling programme in line with new developments in practice and statutory updates. Develop competencies at local level through effective networking of local safeguarding representatives Consultation and production of a Code of Professional Standards in Ministry
Procedures for responding to safeguarding concerns	Detailed procedures for responding and reporting safeguarding concerns have been in place for many years. All Jesuits are aware of their role as a “mandated person” and have participated in an awareness session on same.	Continued monitoring of our compliance to mandated reporting obligations Formal appraisal of the ease of our complaint-making mechanisms Conduct a review of the experience of complainants when they contact the Jesuits
Quality assurance and accountability	A rolling programme of self-auditing has been in place since 2016 There is clear definition of safeguarding roles Training plan and attendance is available for view The Jesuit Child Safeguarding Statement is reviewed at least every two years and published on www.jesuit.ie	The membership of the safeguarding committee will be added to, to bring in more external experience. Committee members will serve a set term to facilitate regular refreshing of skills and perspectives. Annual self-audit process will continue and priority areas identified in this process will form part of the annual safeguarding plan. Formal review and seeking of feedback from stakeholders