



SAFEGUARDING

III

Procedure for Recognising, Recording, and Reporting Child Safeguarding Concerns

2023

Adopted by the Board of Saint Patrick's Cathedral

The Cathedral's Mission

As the National Cathedral of the Church of Ireland, we strive to follow the path of Saint Patrick to witness the love and power of God made known in Jesus Christ. We do this through a ministry of worship and welcome, holiness, and hospitality to all. Saint Patrick's Cathedral is the National Cathedral of the Church of Ireland, a member church of the Anglican/Episcopalian Communion, with services every day, which all are welcome to attend. The Cathedral choirs sing at one or more of these daily services, continuing an ancient tradition of prayer and music offered to glorify God, a pattern of worship with its roots in the thirteenth century.

Document Revisions

Revision	Date Adopted	Review Date	Description
0	23 rd October 2023	Before 31 st October 2025	New Procedure Document

Safeguarding Series & Related Documents

- Safeguarding I: Child Safeguarding Statement: with detailed risk assessment
- Safeguarding II: Code of Behaviour: for working with children and young people
- Safeguarding III: Procedure for Recognising, Recording, and Reporting Child Safeguarding Concerns
- Safeguarding IV: Procedure for Responding to Child Safeguarding Concerns in Respect of Saint Patrick's Cathedral Workers
- Safeguarding V: Mandated Persons Policy and Procedures
- Safeguarding VI: Procedure for the Appointment of Relevant Person
- Safeguarding VII: Child Safeguarding Information and Training Strategy
- Safeguarding VIII: Procedure for Implementation, Monitoring, and Review of Safeguarding Policies and Procedures
- Staff Handbook
- Volunteer Policy & Agreement
- The Constitution of The Church of Ireland
- Safeguarding Trust: The Church of Ireland Code of Good Practice for Ministry with Children

Acknowledgements

This policy was produced in consultation with Michael Lynch Safeguarding (michaellynchsafeguarding.com) by the Education & Safeguarding Officer, Clark Brydon (safeguarding@stpatrikscathedral.ie).

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1. Introduction

1.1. The Cathedral

Saint Patrick's Cathedral is the National Cathedral of the Church of Ireland, a member church of the Anglican Communion. We provide religious, educational, musical, and recreational activities and services to children on a daily basis through a range of local services.

Saint Patrick's Cathedral has a Common Law 'duty of care' to the children availing of its services. We must ensure that the standard of care provided meets reasonable expectations, bearing in mind the generally accepted good practice standards. Those standards include the implementing, monitoring, and regular review of our safeguarding policies and procedures.

Saint Patrick's Cathedral is a relevant service as defined in the Children First Act 2015 and, as required by Section 11 of that act, we have prepared a Child Safeguarding Statement. This document provides procedure, guidance, and instruction on identifying the occurrence or risk of harm to, or abuse of children availing of our services and the procedures for responding to, recording, and reporting such an occurrence or risk, as specified in our Child Safeguarding Statement.

1.2. Statement of Commitment

The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Saint Patrick's Cathedral is committed to safeguarding from harm all children and young people availing of its services. We are committed to promoting the rights of the child, including the participation of children and young people in matters that affect them. It is our policy that all children will be safeguarded from harm and abuse, and that any protection and welfare concerns coming to the attention of Saint Patrick's Cathedral or its workers will be reported to the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) and An Garda Síochána, as appropriate.

This commitment includes taking all appropriate and necessary steps to protect children availing of Saint Patrick's Cathedral's services and activities where a worker is the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of any act, omission, or circumstance in respect of a child.

Saint Patrick's Cathedral is committed to adherence to and implementation of the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017*, and the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

In accordance with Chapter xvi of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland, *Safeguarding Trust: The Church of Ireland Code of Good Practice for Ministry with Children*, approved by the Standing Committee of the General Synod, and reported to the General Synod, hereinafter referred to as *Safeguarding Trust*, shall be implemented and adhered to within Saint Patrick's Cathedral. The Board of Saint Patrick's Cathedral will ensure that *Safeguarding Trust* is implemented and adhered to within Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

1.3. Purpose of Procedure

The purpose of this document is to specify the procedures in place and to provide information to workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral, and to parents, carers, guardians, Tusla staff, and members of the public, in respect of:

- (a) the identification of the occurrence of harm to children through abuse, and/or

- (b) the reporting of child safeguarding concerns by Saint Patrick's Cathedral or a Saint Patrick's Cathedral worker (whether a 'mandated person' or otherwise) to the statutory authorities in accordance with legislation, government policy, and/or government guidance.

This document should be read, where appropriate, in conjunction with:

- Saint Patrick's Cathedral's Mandated Persons Policy and Procedure, and
- Safeguarding Trust: The Church of Ireland Child Safeguarding Policy.

The procedures outlined in this document have been developed to comply with the requirements outlined in paragraphs (d) and (e) of Section 11(3), of the Children First Act 2015 and in accordance with *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2017), issued by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs pursuant to Section 6 of the Children First Act 2015.

This procedure document is also designed to ensure that Saint Patrick's Cathedral and its workers comply with Section 2 of the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012: to disclose to An Garda Síochána information, which it is known or believed may be of material assistance in respect of the investigation or prosecution of certain offences committed against children. Those offences against children, outlined in Schedule 1 of the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 may be found in Appendix 2.

We also aim, through these procedures, to fulfil Saint Patrick's Cathedral's Common Law 'duty of care' to children availing of our services.

Our Child Safeguarding Statement and this procedure operate alongside *Safeguarding Trust*. These documents combined provide a framework for all working in Saint Patrick's Cathedral on how to recognise, record, and report child safeguarding concerns.

1.4. Scope of Procedure

This procedure applies to all workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral. Any reference to 'worker' in this procedure applies to the Board, the Dean, clergy, staff, and volunteers of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, and to persons contracted to do work on behalf of Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

The procedures outlined in this document relate to all child safeguarding concerns that come to the attention of workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral in the course of their voluntary or paid work within Saint Patrick's Cathedral. This includes child protection and welfare concerns coming to the attention of workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral that arise from acts or omissions by persons external to Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

1.5. Key Definitions

Below are some key definitions that apply to terms used throughout this document.

Child:

The Child Care Act 1991 defines a 'child' as a person under the age of 18 years, other than a person who is or has been married. However, since 1st January 2019, both persons in a marriage must have attained the age of 18 years for their marriage to be valid in the Republic of Ireland. Any reference to 'child' or 'children' in this document means a person under the age of 18 years.

Child Protection Concern:

The term 'child protection concern' is used when there are reasonable grounds for believing that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being neglected or physically, sexually, or emotionally abused.

Child Safeguarding Concern:

Safeguarding is more than intervening where there is a child protection or child welfare concern. Safeguarding begins with promotion and preventative activity, which enables children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and well-being are not adversely affected. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection. A child safeguarding concern relating to workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral includes a concern that a worker, through any act, omission, or circumstance in respect of a child, may have:

- harmed or abused a child, or may pose a risk of harm or abuse to a child,
- become the subject of any investigation (howsoever described) in respect of an act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child,
- committed a criminal offence in relation to a child,
- breached this Code of Behaviour and/or any other Saint Patrick's Cathedral child safeguarding policy or procedure, or
- behaved contrary to professional practice, policy, and procedures at Saint Patrick's Cathedral, with regard to working or interacting with children,

including concerns that arise outside of the worker's role at Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

A child safeguarding concern that constitutes a breach of our policy or procedures is not necessarily reportable to Tusla or An Garda Síochána, unless the breach is so serious that it constitutes a child protection concern.

Child Safeguarding Statement:

The 'Child Safeguarding Statement' is a statement, defined in the Children First Act 2015, specifying the service being provided by Saint Patrick's Cathedral, a written assessment of risk of harm to children, and the principles and procedures to be observed to ensure, as far as practicable, that children availing of the service are safe from harm.

Child Welfare Concern:

A 'child welfare concern' relates to a problem experienced directly by a child, or by the family of a child, that is seen to impact negatively on the child's health, development, or welfare, and that warrants assessment and support, but may or may not constitute a child protection concern.

Children First:

'Children First' is an overarching term that refers to the responsibilities of people and organisations as outlined in *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (DCYA 2017) and/or the Children First Act 2015.

Clergy (or Member of the Clergy):

'Clergy' or 'Member of the Clergy' shall, unless otherwise specifically provided, mean a deacon, priest, or bishop of the Church of Ireland or of a church in full communion with the Church of Ireland, serving in or retired from ministry in Saint Patrick's Cathedral, or a minister of any other religion holding or retired from an ecumenical office at Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

Complainant

The 'Complainant' in this document means the person who reported a child safeguarding concern to Saint Patrick's Cathedral, or the child about whom a report was made and/or the parent/guardian of the child (who is not the Respondent), as appropriate.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP):

The 'Designated Liaison Person' (DLP) is a senior manager appointed by the Board of Saint Patrick's Cathedral with responsibility for the reporting of child protection and welfare concerns to the statutory authorities, along with ensuring the development and implementation of Saint Patrick's Cathedral's safeguarding policies and procedures. The DLP is a resource for all Saint Patrick's Cathedral workers and the wider Cathedral community, who have any queries or concerns, or require advice or information in relation to our child safeguarding policies and procedures. All references to the Designated Liaison Person or DLP in this document include the Deputy Designated Liaison Person.

Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP):

The 'Deputy Designated Liaison Person' (Deputy DLP) performs the role of Designated Liaison Person as delegated by, or in the absence of, the DLP. All references to the Designated Liaison Person or DLP in this document include the Deputy Designated Liaison Person. Saint Patrick's Cathedral may appoint more than one Deputy DLP.

External Contractor

'External contractor' means any person or company engaged to supply personnel to work within the Cathedral environs. This includes, but is not limited to, cleaning support staff, master craftspeople, security personnel, retail consultants, and similar. In situations where activities take place off-site, external contractors may be engaged by Saint Patrick's Cathedral to provide a service in a location other than the Cathedral.

Harm:

'Harm,' in relation to a child, is defined by Section 2 of the Children First Act 2015 as:

- (a) 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
 - (b) 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.

Mandated Assistance:

'Mandated assistance' means assistance or information provided to Tusla by a mandated person, where Tusla make a request for assistance and specify that the request is being made pursuant to Section 16 of the Children First Act 2015.

Mandated Person:

A 'mandated person' is a person who, because of their employment or profession, as specified in Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015, has a statutory obligation to report to Tusla concerns that reach or exceed the threshold of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to a child. A mandated person must also comply with certain requests from Tusla for information and/or assistance when Tusla are assessing such a mandated report from that or any other mandated person.

Mandated Report:

A 'mandated report' is a report made to Tusla pursuant to Section 14 of the Children First Act 2015 by a mandated person.

Pastoral Care Worker:

Any reference to a 'pastoral care worker' in this document includes, unless otherwise stated, a person in one of the following roles:

- Education Officer,
- Schools Officer,
- Master of the Music,
- Organist and Assistant Master of the Music,
- Cathedral Manager,
- Community Officer,
- Members of the Safeguarding Trust Panel who are not members of the clergy.

Respondent:

The 'Respondent' in this document means a worker in Saint Patrick's Cathedral who is the subject of a child safeguarding concern. The Respondent may be referred to as the Person Subject to the Allegation of Abuse (PSAA) by Tusla or as the suspected offender by An Garda Síochána.

Saint Patrick's Cathedral:

Any reference to 'Saint Patrick's Cathedral' refers to the National Cathedral and Collegiate Church of Saint Patrick, located on Patrick Street, Dublin D08 H6X3. In the Constitution of the Church of Ireland (as amended in 2023), this church is referred to as 'Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin' (registered number 695957).

Staff:

'Staff' or staff member means anyone with a formal contract of employment who is employed and paid by Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

Statutory Authorities:

In this document 'statutory authorities' means An Garda Síochána and the Child & Family Agency (Tusla).

Volunteer:

'Volunteer' means any person engaged by Saint Patrick's Cathedral to carry out roles and responsibilities for which they are not paid.

Worker:

The term worker in this procedure applies to members of the Board, the Dean, clergy, staff, and volunteers of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, and to its external contractors.

2. Key Roles and Responsibilities in Safeguarding

All workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral have important roles in relation to child safeguarding concerns.

2.1. All Workers

The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral have a responsibility to report to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána, as appropriate, any child safeguarding concerns that come to their attention as part of their work within Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

Except in emergencies, it is the policy of Saint Patrick's Cathedral that all workers will first report any child safeguarding concerns to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP), who will then make a report when necessary and appropriate to the relevant statutory authorities on behalf of, or jointly with, the worker.

Each worker has a responsibility to keep safeguarding concerns **confidential**. Such concerns must be discussed only with the Designated Liaison Person and the appropriate statutory authorities. Workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral must provide all notes or records in their possession regarding any child safeguarding concerns coming to their attention to the Designated Liaison Person for secure and confidential storage

All workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral have a responsibility to keep themselves informed of Saint Patrick's Cathedral policy and procedures regarding child safeguarding. Each worker must attend safeguarding training before working with children, and every three years thereafter.

2.2. The Board

The Board of Saint Patrick's Cathedral must ensure that the structures and suitably trained people are in place to implement our procedures, including through the appointment of:

- a Designated Liaison Person (DLP),
- at least one Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP),
- a Safeguarding Trust Panel.

The Board is also responsible for:

- the adoption of all policies and procedures relating to child safeguarding,
- oversight and governance of the proper implementation of child safeguarding policies and procedures, and promoting a safeguarding culture at Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

2.3. The Dean

The Dean, as Chair of the Board, must:

- affirm annually, through the Church of Ireland's safeguarding returns procedure, that safeguarding policies are being properly implemented (this function may be devolved to the DLP and Safeguarding Trust Panel),
- adopt a Child Safeguarding Statement following the completion of an Assessment of Harm, reviewing the Child Safeguarding Statement every 24 months thereafter, or earlier where there is a material change to legislation or national policy, or an incident relating to matters covered in the statement,
- place child safeguarding as a standing item on the agenda of Board meetings,
- receive and review reports from the Safeguarding Trust Panel and DLP at Board meetings.

2.4. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy DLP

The main role of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is to take reports of safeguarding concerns from workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral and to report to, and liaise with, statutory agencies on behalf of Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

In performing the role effectively, the DLP will promote safeguarding by:

- being fully familiar with the duties of Saint Patrick's Cathedral in relation to the safeguarding and protection of children,
- operating within the guidelines set by the statutory authorities and the Church of Ireland,
- receiving all reports of child safeguarding concerns related in any way to Saint Patrick's Cathedral and considering whether reasonable grounds for concern exist for reporting those concerns to the statutory authorities,
- reporting child protection and welfare concerns to the statutory authorities,
- providing feedback to the reporting worker, as appropriate, including when a decision is made by the DLP not to make a report to the statutory authorities,
- informing the reporting worker in writing of the rationale for a decision not to report a safeguarding concern to the statutory authorities, and, in that event, advising workers that they may make a direct report to the statutory authorities,
- managing cases, including the secure and confidential retention of all reported concerns and any related documents and records,
- having excellent knowledge of Saint Patrick's Cathedral's guiding principles and child safeguarding policy and procedures,
- providing guidance to workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral regarding child safeguarding concerns,
- ensuring the development, implementation, and review of all safeguarding policies and procedures at Saint Patrick's Cathedral,
- undertaking any training required to perform the role of DLP,
- liaise as appropriate with:
 - the complainant and/or the complainant's parents, carers or guardians, and/or the support person for the complainant, as appropriate,
 - the advisor to the respondent,
 - the Dean and Administrator,
 - the Safeguarding Trust Panel,
 - the Church of Ireland Safeguarding Officer for the Republic of Ireland,
 - the statutory authorities.

The Safeguarding Officer of Saint Patrick's Cathedral is appointed as the Designated Liaison Person for the Cathedral. Another manager/supervisor will be appointed as the Deputy Designated Liaison Person.

The Deputy Designated Liaison Person performs the role of Designated Liaison Person as delegated by, or in the absence of, the Designated Liaison Person.

When a Deputy DLP receives a report of a safeguarding concern, all notes and records in the possession of the Deputy DLP must be provided to the DLP for secure and confidential storage, whether or not a report has been made to the statutory authorities.

Designated Liaison Persons' Contact Details:

Role	Name	Phone	Email
Designated Liaison Person (DLP)	Mr Clark Brydon	+353 861030931	safeguarding@stpatrickscathedral.ie
Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP)	Ms Laura Coyle	+353 14539472	supervisors@stpatrickscathedral.ie

All safeguarding concerns must be reported directly to a Saint Patrick's Cathedral DLP.

Each Saint Patrick's Cathedral DLP (including Deputy DLP) must, as soon as possible after being appointed, create an account on the secure Tusla Portal. The DLP will use the Tusla Portal to make all child protection and welfare reports to Tusla and to securely share any related information with Tusla.

The DLP and Deputy DLP are 'mandated persons' as provided for in the Children First Act 2015.

2.5. Mandated Persons within Saint Patrick's Cathedral

The Children First Act 2015 specifies certain persons as mandated persons, based on the nature of their employment or profession, for the reporting of certain child protection concerns and the provision of certain information and assistance to Tusla.

Mandated persons, as required by the Children First Act 2015 have two main responsibilities:

- the mandated reporting of certain child protection concerns, and,
- the provision of mandated assistance and information to Tusla, as lawfully requested by Tusla.

DLPs are employed by Saint Patrick's Cathedral for the purpose of performing the child welfare and protection function of Saint Patrick's Cathedral as part of their duties, and so they are mandated persons pursuant to paragraph 15(i), Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 (see Appendix 1).

Members of the clergy and pastoral care workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral are mandated persons pursuant to paragraph 15(g), Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 (see Appendix 1).

It is anticipated that other mandated persons will make reports to Tusla only in exceptional circumstances where there is an immediate and serious risk of harm to a child and a DLP is unavailable to make the report.

Please see Saint Patrick's Cathedral's Mandated Persons Policy and Procedures for further information.

2.6. Safeguarding Officer

The Safeguarding Officer performs the role of the Designated Liaison Person in Saint Patrick's Cathedral and has all the responsibilities of the DLP, as outlined above.

2.7. Safeguarding Trust Panel

The Safeguarding Trust Panel is a sub-committee of the Board and is chaired by the Dean. The panel is nominated by the Dean and appointed by the Board. The panel has a minimum membership of three people, ensures mixed-gender representation, and comprises both clergy and lay panel members.

The role of the Safeguarding Trust Panel, on behalf of the Board, is the oversight, evaluation, and support of the DLP, and the promotion of an effective safeguarding culture within Saint Patrick's Cathedral. The responsibilities of the panel with regard to this specific procedure document include:

- advising the Board on the most appropriate policy and operational framework for safeguarding within Saint Patrick's Cathedral,
- ensuring consistent implementation of policy and procedures across all departments and services,
- ensuring a professional and non-judgmental response to disclosures of abuse or other safeguarding concerns relating to Saint Patrick's Cathedral,
- assisting, supporting, and advising the DLP when a disclosure of abuse has been reported to Tusla or when another safeguarding concern arises, with a view to examining and evaluating what actions, if any, are required by Saint Patrick's Cathedral to improve systems and practice to reduce the risk of any further abuse occurring,
- appointing a Support Person for the Complainant,
- appointing an Advisor to the Respondent, where a worker is the Respondent,
- monitoring, with due regard to the necessary observation of confidentiality, the number of internal reports and external reports completed by the DLP to identify changes or patterns in reported concerns.

The full Safeguarding Trust Panel Terms of Reference may be found in Appendix 5.

2.8. Support Person for the Complainant

Every complainant is offered access to a suitable Support Person, who is appointed by the Safeguarding Trust Panel as part of the case management process. It is the prerogative of the complainant whether or not they wish to accept the assistance of a Support Person. Where the complainant declines the offer of a Support Person, the DLP should make every effort to perform the role, unless the complainant also declines such assistance.

The role of the Support Person is to ensure that the complainant is appropriately supported throughout the process of disclosure and thereafter. If the complainant is a child, then support will be offered to the child and to their parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Support Person's role includes:

- keeping the complainant informed of the progress of the case,
- helping the complainant to identify and access counselling and support,
- making a record of any meetings or contact with the complainant, and passing on relevant information to the DLP, as appropriate.

The Support Person must not:

- act in the role of counsellor to the complainant, or
- manage or have access to the case file (except in the event of the DLP performing the role).

2.9. Advisor to the Respondent

Every respondent, who is a worker in Saint Patrick's Cathedral, is offered access to a suitable Advisor, who is appointed by the Safeguarding Trust Panel as part of the case management process. The DLP, the Dean, the Administrator, and members of the Safeguarding Trust Panel should never be appointed as an Advisor to the respondent.

The role of the Advisor is to:

- keep the respondent informed of the progress of the case,
- help direct the respondent to counselling and support,
- make a record of any meetings or contact with the respondent, and report to the DLP as appropriate.

The Advisor must not:

- act in the role of counsellor to the complainant,
- advocate for the respondent,
- provide any character references for the respondent,
- manage or have access to the case file.

3. Recognising a Child Safeguarding Concern

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse, and sexual abuse.

A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community, or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child, or may be a stranger, and can be an adult or another child.

In a situation where abuse is reported to have been carried out by another child, you should consider it a child welfare and protection issue for both children and you should follow child protection procedures for both the Complainant and the Respondent.

The important factor in deciding whether or not the behaviour is abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the Respondent.

The definitions of neglect and abuse presented in this section are not legal definitions. They are intended to describe ways in which a child might experience abuse and how this abuse may be recognised.

3.1. Neglect

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse in the Republic of Ireland. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences.

Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development, or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation, supervision, or safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development, or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect.

Neglect is associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic abuse, and parental mental illness and disability.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent when you see the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.

The following are features of child neglect:

- Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision.
- Malnourishment, lack of food, unsuitable food, or erratic feeding.
- Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation.
- Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation.
- Inadequate living conditions – unhygienic conditions and environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture.
- Lack of adequate clothing and inattention to basic hygiene.

- Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age.
- Persistent failure to attend school.
- Abandonment or desertion.

3.2. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency, and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of or unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children's emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer.

Emotional abuse may be seen in some of the following ways:

- Rejection.
- Lack of comfort and love.
- Lack of attachment.
- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play).
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned).
- Continuous lack of praise and encouragement persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility, or blaming of the child.
- Bullying.
- Conditional parenting, in which care or affection of a child depends on his or her behaviours or actions.
- Extreme overprotectiveness.
- Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. locking child in the bedroom).
- Ongoing family conflicts and family violence.
- Seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to his/her age and stage of development.

There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk-taking, and aggressive behaviour.

It should be noted that no one indicator is conclusive evidence of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is more likely to impact negatively on a child where it is persistent over time and where there is a lack of other protective factors.

3.3. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse occurs when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health and/or development is, may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

Physical abuse can include the following:

- Physical punishment.
- Beating, slapping, hitting, or kicking.
- Pushing, shaking, or throwing.
- Pinching, biting, choking, or hair-pulling.
- Use of excessive force in handling.
- Deliberate poisoning.
- Suffocation.
- Fabricated/induced illness.
- Female genital mutilation.

The Children First Act 2015 includes a provision that abolishes the common law defence of reasonable chastisement in court proceedings. This defence could previously be invoked by a parent or other person in authority who physically disciplined a child. The change in the legislation now means that, in prosecutions relating to assault or physical cruelty, a person who administers such punishment to a child cannot rely on the defence of reasonable chastisement in the legal proceedings. The protections in law relating to assault now apply to a child in the same way as they do to an adult.

3.4. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral, or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography.

Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and, in some instances, occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members.

Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings/friends, from the suspicions of an adult, and/or by physical symptoms.

It should be remembered that sexual activity involving a young person may be sexual abuse even if the young person concerned does not themselves recognise it as abusive.

Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child.
- An invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of a child's body whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification.
- Masturbation in the presence of a child or the involvement of a child in an act of masturbation.
- Sexual intercourse with a child, whether oral, vaginal, or anal.
- Sexual exploitation of a child, which includes:
 - Inviting, inducing, or coercing a child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography [for example, exhibition, modelling, or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification, or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means].
 - Inviting, coercing, or inducing a child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent, or obscene act.
 - Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse.

- Exposing a child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology.
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person.

An Garda Síochána will deal with any criminal aspects of a sexual abuse case under the relevant criminal justice legislation. The prosecution of a sexual offence against a child will be considered within the wider objective of child welfare and protection. The safety of the child is paramount and at no stage should a child's safety be compromised because of concern for the integrity of a criminal investigation.

3.5. Age of Consent

The criminal law age of consent to engage in a sexual act within the Republic of Ireland is generally 17 years, regardless of gender. However, where a person engaging in a sexual act is a **'person in authority'**, **the age of consent to engage in a sexual act increases to 18 years**. A 'person in authority' includes a parent, grandparent, uncle, aunt; any current or former step-parent, foster parent, guardian, partner of a parent; or any person who is, or has been, in loco parentis to the child, or responsible for the education, supervision, training, care, or welfare of the child.

As workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral are involved in the supervision, care, and welfare of children, they meet the criteria for being a 'person in authority'.

Although a sexual relationship where either party (or both) is under the age of 17 years may be illegal, it may not necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse. Details on exemptions for mandated reporting of certain cases of underage consensual sexual activity can be found on page 23 of *Children First: National Guidance* (2017).

3.6. Circumstances which may Make a Child More Vulnerable to Harm

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. Also, there may be times or circumstances when a child may be more vulnerable to abuse in their lives. In particular, children with disabilities, children with communication difficulties, children in care or living away from home, or children with a parent or parents with problems in their own lives may be more susceptible to harm.

The following list is intended to help you identify the range of issues in a child's life that may place them at greater risk of abuse or neglect. It is important to note that the presence of any of these factors does not necessarily mean that a child in those circumstances or settings is being abused.

Parent/Carer Factors:

- Drug and alcohol misuse.
- Addiction, including gambling.
- Mental health issues.
- Parental disability issues, such as learning or intellectual disability.
- Conflictual relationships.
- Domestic violence.
- Adolescent parents.

Child Factors:

- Age.
- Gender.
- Sexuality.
- Disability.
- Mental health issues, including self-harm and suicide.
- Communication difficulties.
- Trafficked or exploited.
- Previous abuse.
- Young carer.

Community Factors:

Cultural, ethnic, religious, or faith-based norms in the family or community, which may not meet the standards of child welfare or protection required in this jurisdiction, including:

- Honour-based violence.
- Radicalisation.
- Female genital mutilation.
- Forced marriage.

Environmental Factors:

- Housing issues.
- Poverty or begging.
- Internet and social media-related concerns.
- Children who are out of home and not living with their parents, whether temporarily or permanently.
- Bullying.

Poor Motivation or Willingness of Parents/Guardians to Engage:

- Lack of insight or understanding of how the child is being affected.
- Lack of understanding about what needs to happen to bring about change.
- Avoidance of contact and reluctance to work with services.
- Inability or unwillingness to comply with agreed plans.

Workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral should consider these factors as part of being alert to the possibility that a child may be at risk of suffering abuse and in bringing reasonable concerns to the attention of Tusla.

3.7. Peer Abuse

In a situation where child abuse is reported to have been carried out by another child, child protection procedures must be adhered to for both the victim and the child respondent. The report will be treated as a child protection issue for both children involved.

3.8. Bullying

It is recognised that bullying affects the lives of an increasing number of children and can be the cause of genuine concerns about a child's welfare.

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression – whether it is verbal, psychological, or physical – that is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools or online. It includes behaviours such as physical aggression, cyber-bullying, damage to property, intimidation, isolation/exclusion, name calling, malicious gossip, and extortion. Bullying can also take the form of abuse based on gender identity, sexual preference, race, ethnicity, and religious factors. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying, via mobile phones, the internet, and other personal devices.

Although bullying can happen to any child, some may be more vulnerable. These include children with disabilities or special educational needs; those from ethnic minority and migrant groups; those from the Traveller community; lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) children and those perceived to be LGBT; and children of minority religious faiths.

There can be an increased vulnerability to bullying among children with special educational needs. This is particularly so among those who do not understand social cues and/or have difficulty communicating. Some children with complex needs may lack understanding of social situations and therefore trust everyone implicitly. Such children may be more vulnerable because they do not have the same social skills or capacity as others to recognise and defend themselves against bullying behaviour.

In cases of serious instances of bullying where the behaviour is regarded as possibly abusive or criminal, Saint Patrick's Cathedral will make a referral to the statutory authorities as outlined in Section 5 below.

For more information, please see our Anti-Bullying Policy (Children) in Appendix 6.

4. Responding to a Disclosure from a Child

Workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral must be alert to the possibility that a child welfare or protection concern may arise in relation to children availing of our activities or services.

Child abuse is usually perpetrated by a person who had the confidence and trust of the child. A child needs to have someone whom they can trust in order to feel comfortable disclosing abuse and will often disclose to a trusted adult whom they like. The child might also disclose to another child who may in turn inform the trusted adult. Children need to know that they will be believed and will get the help they need.

A worker in Saint Patrick's Cathedral receiving a disclosure of abuse must be careful not to damage the trust that the child has placed in the worker by failing to observe the procedures and guidelines in this document.

The following approach is recommended as best practice when responding to a disclosure from a child.

Do not conduct an investigation:

- Be as calm and natural as possible. Do not panic.
- You have been approached possibly because you are trusted and liked.
- Be aware that a disclosure can be very difficult for a child/young person.
- Remember, the child or young person may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Take the child seriously. Listen carefully and attentively, giving the child the time and opportunity to tell you as much as they are able and wish to.
- Do not pressurise the child/young person. Allow the child to disclose at his/her own pace and in his/her own language.
- Do not ask leading questions (questions that elicit yes/no answers).
- Ask questions for clarification only.
- Accept what the child has to say – false disclosures are rare.
- Reassure the child that they have taken the right action in talking to you.
- Do not promise to keep anything secret but advise the child that you may have to tell someone who really needs to know and can help.
- Check back with the child that what you have heard is correct and understood.
- Do not express any judgements or opinions about a reported abuser, who may be someone that the child loves.
- Conceal any negative feelings, such as disgust, anger, or disbelief.
- Ensure that the child understands the procedures that will follow.
- Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible, and in the child's own words.
- Treat the information confidentially, and discuss the matter only with someone who really needs to know (i.e. a Saint Patrick's Cathedral DLP and/or the statutory authorities).

When recording the disclosure, remember the DLP will need to provide as much information as possible when reporting to the statutory authorities. Make a written record of the following, where possible:

- the child's name, address, and age,
- names and addresses of parents or guardians,
- names, if known, of who is believed to be harming the child, or not caring for the child appropriately,
- a detailed account of your grounds for concern (e.g. details of the disclosure/concern, dates of incidents, and description of injuries),
- names of other children in the household where the abuse is reported to have occurred,
- name of the school the child attends,

- contact details of the person who raised the concern, as the statutory authorities may wish to contact the person who initially reported the matter.

Do not pressurise a child, question them needlessly, or ask leading questions to obtain information. Information being unavailable must not prevent a report from being made and can be obtained later by the statutory authorities.

5. Reporting Child Protection and Welfare Concerns

Workers should deal with any concern, disclosure, or suspicion of child abuse sensitively and carefully and must follow the reporting procedures outlined in this document. Otherwise, the child to whom the concern relates, and perhaps other children, may be vulnerable to ongoing harm or abuse.

The guiding principles for reporting child abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:

- The safety and well-being of the child must take priority over concerns about adults against whom a disclosure may be made.
- Reports of concerns should be made without delay to the statutory authorities.

The responsibility to report child protection or welfare concerns applies to everyone working with children, but also to all other workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

In Ireland, there are two thresholds for reporting child abuse or harm.

The first threshold, outlined in *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, is referred to as '**reasonable grounds for concern**': that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. The 'reasonable grounds for concern' threshold also applies to concerns about a child's welfare in circumstances where there may be no concern or suspicion in relation to abuse. Any person may make a report to Tusla based on reasonable grounds for concern, but this should normally be done through the DLP.

The second threshold, the '**threshold of harm**', is defined by the Children First Act 2015 and relates to knowing, believing, or having reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being harmed. Only mandated persons are required by the Children First Act 2015 to report based on the threshold of harm.

To be clear, where there are reasonable grounds for concern and the DLP and/or other mandated person do not believe, or are unsure whether, the concern reaches the threshold of harm for mandated reporting, a report will be made in any case to Tusla and An Garda Síochána, as appropriate.

It is the policy of Saint Patrick's Cathedral that workers must report any child safeguarding concerns they are aware of to the DLP, regardless of whether the concern relates to the threshold of harm or reasonable grounds for concern. Both thresholds are explained in more detail below.

5.1. Reasonable Grounds for Concern

It is Saint Patrick's Cathedral policy that our DLPs will inform Tusla and, when appropriate, An Garda Síochána, when there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected, or whose welfare is at risk.

Workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral must not ignore what may be symptoms of abuse, as failing to act could result in ongoing harm to a child. Any worker who has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected must report that concern to the DLP.

A child welfare concern, where there is no specific concern or suspicion of abuse, should also be reported, in order that Tusla may facilitate support for the child's family to address any child welfare issues.

The DLP will support reporting workers by making appropriate reports to Tusla and An Garda Síochána on their behalf.

It is not necessary to prove that abuse has occurred in order to report a concern. All that is required is that there are reasonable grounds for concern. It is the role of the statutory agencies to assess and/or investigate concerns that are reported to them. When Saint Patrick's Cathedral reports a concern, the relevant statutory authorities will consider the information along with any other information available to them. A social work assessment is conducted to establish the risk of harm to the child and, where appropriate, An Garda Síochána will conduct a criminal investigation.

Reasonable Grounds for a Child Protection or Welfare Concern include:

- evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way, and/or
- any concern about possible sexual abuse, and/or
- consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect, and/or
- a child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused, and/or
- admission or indication by an adult or a child of a reported abuse, and/or
- an account from a person who saw the child being abused.

The different categories and examples as to how each form of abuse or neglect might be identified are outlined in Section 3 above.

5.2. Threshold of Harm (Mandated Reporting)

The Children First Act 2015 requires, and it is Saint Patrick's Cathedral policy, that a DLP and/or other mandated persons at Saint Patrick's Cathedral will inform Tusla and An Garda Síochána, as appropriate, where:

- a mandated person knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being or is at risk of being harmed, or
- a child discloses a belief to a mandated person that he or she has been, is being, or is at risk of being harmed.

All mandated persons are required to make mandated reports to Tusla directly and may do so separately or jointly. Tusla has made arrangements on the Tusla Portal for joint reporting by mandated persons. It is the policy of Saint Patrick's Cathedral that mandated reports are made jointly by the DLP and a worker who is a mandated person who first became aware of the information or disclosure.

Where workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral believe that a safeguarding concern, disclosure or suspicion does not meet the threshold of harm as defined in the Children First Act 2015, and does not justify a mandated report, it is the policy of Saint Patrick's Cathedral that workers must report any child safeguarding concerns they are aware of to a Saint Patrick's Cathedral DLP, and that our DLP will report to Tusla and An Garda Síochána, when appropriate.

Please see Saint Patrick's Cathedral's Mandated Persons Policy and Procedure for further information.

5.3. Reporting to the DLP

It is the policy of Saint Patrick's Cathedral that workers must report any child safeguarding concerns they are aware of to a Saint Patrick's Cathedral DLP.

Designated Liaison Persons' Contact Details:

Role	Name	Phone	Email
Designated Liaison Person (DLP)	Mr Clark Brydon	+353 861030931	safeguarding@stpattrickscathedral.ie
Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP)	Ms Laura Coyle	+353 14539472	supervisors@stpattrickscathedral.ie

The DLP should provide as much information as possible about the child when making a report to the statutory agencies. Where possible, when making a report to the DLP, the worker should include the following information:

- the child's name, address, and age,
- names and addresses of parents or guardians,
- names, if known, of who is believed to be harming the child, or not caring for the child appropriately,
- a detailed account of your grounds for concern (e.g. details of the disclosure/concern, dates of incidents, and description of injuries),
- names of other children in the household where the abuse is reported to have occurred,
- name of the school the child attends,
- contact details of the person who raised the concern, as the statutory authorities may wish to contact the person who initially reported the matter.

Workers must not pressurise the child, question the child needlessly, or ask leading questions to obtain the above information. Information being unavailable must not prevent a report from being made and can be obtained later by the statutory authorities.

Workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral who are unsure as to whether or not a report should be made should contact the DLP, who will provide any required advice or support and will decide whether or not the concern meets the threshold to report to the statutory authorities. The DLP may in turn seek advice from the statutory authorities. See Appendix 3 – Contact Details for Statutory Authorities.

5.4. Reporting to Tusla and An Garda Síochána

The DLP will decide, by considering all of the available information, whether the matter:

- constitutes reasonable grounds for concern or a welfare concern as outlined in *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, or
- requires a mandated report, pursuant to Section 14 of the Children First Act 2015, or
- is not a concern reportable to Tusla.

A report will normally be made to Tusla through the Tusla Portal, except in exceptional circumstances when the paper-based Child Protection and Welfare Report Form will be completed and delivered by hand or registered post to the relevant Tusla Social Work Department in the area where the child resides

The DLP will also consider whether the matter should be reported to An Garda Síochána.

If the person reported to be responsible for any harm or abuse is also a child, the reporting procedures herein will be followed for both children (see Section 3.7).

Informal Consultation with Tusla:

The DLP may consult informally regarding any concern with the relevant Tusla social work department in the area where the child resides.

If the concern arises outside of normal office hours, mandated persons (only) may contact Tusla's **Out-of-Hours Social Work Service** on **0818 776315** between 6pm and 6am every night and between 9am and 5pm on Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays, where there is an **immediate and serious risk to the welfare of a child**.

Reporting Reasonable Grounds for Concern to Tusla:

Where a Saint Patrick's Cathedral DLP has reasonable grounds for concern that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused the DLP will make a report to Tusla and/or the Garda Síochána, as appropriate, on behalf of the reporting worker.

Mandated Reporting to Tusla:

Saint Patrick's Cathedral DLPs, members of the clergy, and pastoral care workers are mandated person as defined by the Children First Act 2015. Any reasonable grounds for concern may also constitute knowledge, belief, or reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being harmed, as defined by the Children First Act 2015. A child may also disclose a belief to the DLP or other mandated person that the child has been, is being, or is at risk of being harmed.

In those circumstances, the DLP and/or the other mandated person is obliged by law (Children First Act 2015) to make a mandated report to Tusla. Tusla have made provision on the Tusla Portal for multiple mandated persons to make a joint report. Please refer to Saint Patrick's Cathedral's Mandated Persons Policy and Procedure.

Making a Report on the Tusla Portal:

Any workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral making a report to Tusla will do so on the Tusla Portal, except in exceptional circumstances when the paper-based Child Protection and Welfare Report Form will be completed and delivered by hand or registered post to the relevant Tusla Social Work Department covering the area where the child resides.

When completing the report, the reporter must select the Type of Concern as either:

- neglect,
- emotional abuse,
- physical abuse,
- sexual abuse, or
- child welfare concern.

The reporter must not select 'Child Welfare Concern' when any of the four abuse/neglect categories is selected. Child Welfare Concern is only selected where it is believed a child and/or the child's family may require assistance from Tusla or one of Tusla's partner agencies, rather than a child protection response.

A mandated report is similar to a report based on reasonable grounds for concern, except that the threshold for reporting is higher than reasonable grounds for concern. On the Tusla Portal, the reporter will answer 'Yes' when required to state whether or not the report is a mandated report. The reporter should not select Child Welfare Concern as the Concern Type when making a mandated report, as Child Welfare Concern does not generally refer to a concern involving abuse or harm.

Recording Reports Made on the Tusla Portal:

After submitting the report on the Tusla Portal, the reporter will be provided with a unique tracking reference number which must be recorded on the file held by the DLP. The reporter will also receive an email within one day confirming that the report has been successfully submitted. This email should be forwarded to the DLP, who will record it on the file.

If a unique tracking number is not received immediately or the acknowledgement email is not received within 24 hours, the DLP should consider the report as not received by Tusla and contact the local Tusla office directly to clarify.

The DLP should retain a copy of the report. To do so on the Tusla Portal, the DLP must print or download the report as a PDF file within 48 hours of it being submitted.

Making Reports to An Garda Síochána:

Where a concern relates to harm or abuse, or a risk of harm or abuse to a child, the matter will normally be reported to the Garda Síochána. The details of any Gardaí dealing with the matter must be obtained upon contact and recorded by the DLP in the file. The Garda Síochána station local to Saint Patrick's Cathedral is **Kevin Street Garda Station, telephone (01) 6669400**.

See Appendix 3 – Contact Details for Statutory Authorities.

A report may be made by calling to the Garda Station or by telephone, and a Garda would normally call to Saint Patrick's Cathedral to take the report.

See Appendix 2 for the offences where there is a statutory requirement to report to An Garda Síochána.

5.5. Immediate and Serious Risk to the Welfare of a Child

Workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral who are concerned that there is an **immediate and serious risk to the welfare of a child**, should make contact directly and immediately with Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána, who have the necessary procedures and emergency powers to remove children to safety in such circumstances.

The relevant Tusla social work department covering the area where the child resides should be contacted during office hours.

Outside of normal office hours (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) mandated persons (only) may contact Tusla's **Out-of-Hours Social Work Service** on **0818 776315** between 6pm and 6am every night and between 9am and 5pm on Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays, where there is an **immediate and serious risk to the welfare of a child**.

An Garda Síochána should be contacted by telephoning your local Garda station, or by dialling 999/112.

Unless there will be an undue delay in reporting to the statutory authorities, workers should report such concerns to the DLP who will make the report by telephone to the statutory authorities. In urgent cases, where the DLP cannot be contacted, or contacting the DLP would result in undue delay, any available worker should make the report. **See Appendix 3 – Contact details for Statutory Authorities.**

Where urgent and exceptional circumstances require a direct report to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána by the worker who first became aware of the disclosure/information, the reporting worker must then follow up

with a written report to the Saint Patrick's Cathedral DLP, who will liaise with Tusla and An Garda Síochána, as appropriate.

Mandated persons should read this section in conjunction with Saint Patrick's Cathedral's Mandated Persons Policy and Procedure.

5.6. Further Information and Assistance to the Statutory Authorities

It is the policy of Saint Patrick's Cathedral to provide any information and assistance to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána as they may reasonably require, in respect of a child protection or welfare concern.

See Saint Patrick's Cathedral Mandated Persons Policy and Procedure regarding our statutory obligation to provide such information and assistance to Tusla.

5.7. Confidentiality

In order to maintain the confidentiality of the process, information must only be shared on a 'need-to-know' basis and must not be discussed amongst workers, unless specific workers need to know to properly care for the child.

Notifying Cathedral Workers:

The DLP will inform the Administrator, the Dean, and the Safeguarding Trust Panel of the decision to report a case to the statutory authorities, and will keep them updated, in non-specific terms ensuring confidentiality, on any developments during the process.

The DLP will inform the reporting worker, whilst ensuring confidentiality, when a report has been made to the statutory authorities.

Contacting Parents:

The DLP will decide as to how and when the child's parents or guardians will be contacted to check any issues when considering whether a concern exists, or to advise them that a report is being made by Saint Patrick's Cathedral to the statutory authorities.

The DLP must consider whether doing so, at any particular time, might place the child, the person making the report, or others at risk, or might impact upon any assessment or investigation being conducted by the statutory authorities. The DLP may consult with Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána, in making that decision.

5.8. Non-Reporting of Concerns

When the DLP decides not to report the concern to a statutory authority, a written record of the reason(s) for the decision not to report must be made. The DLP will also make a written record of all actions taken and any communication with the statutory authorities, including informal consultation and/or any advice received.

The DLP must inform the reporting worker, in writing, of the reasons for any decision not to report, and must advise the worker that they may make a report themselves directly to the statutory authorities. Any worker who is not satisfied with a decision by the DLP not to report to the statutory authorities may make a report directly to the statutory authorities.

Any worker who makes a direct report to the statutory authorities must inform the DLP that they have made a report and provide a copy of the report to the DLP. It is not appropriate for anyone other than the DLP to hold copies of this information. All information must be stored securely by the DLP, who is responsible for liaising with the relevant statutory authorities following such a report.

The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 protects from civil liability and from sanction by their employer, those who report child protection and child welfare concerns reasonably and in good faith to the statutory authorities. Contact details for initiating reports to the statutory authorities may be found in Appendix 3.

5.9. Dealing with a Retrospective Abuse Disclosure

Workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral must report to the DLP knowledge of any disclosure by another adult regarding any abuse they suffered as a child. The DLP will then notify the statutory authorities in line with the procedures outlined in this chapter. This may constitute a mandated report, where it is believed a child has suffered 'harm' in the past, even though that child is now an adult. It is essential to ensure that there is no current risk to children when a person who is the subject of a retrospective disclosure is still living.

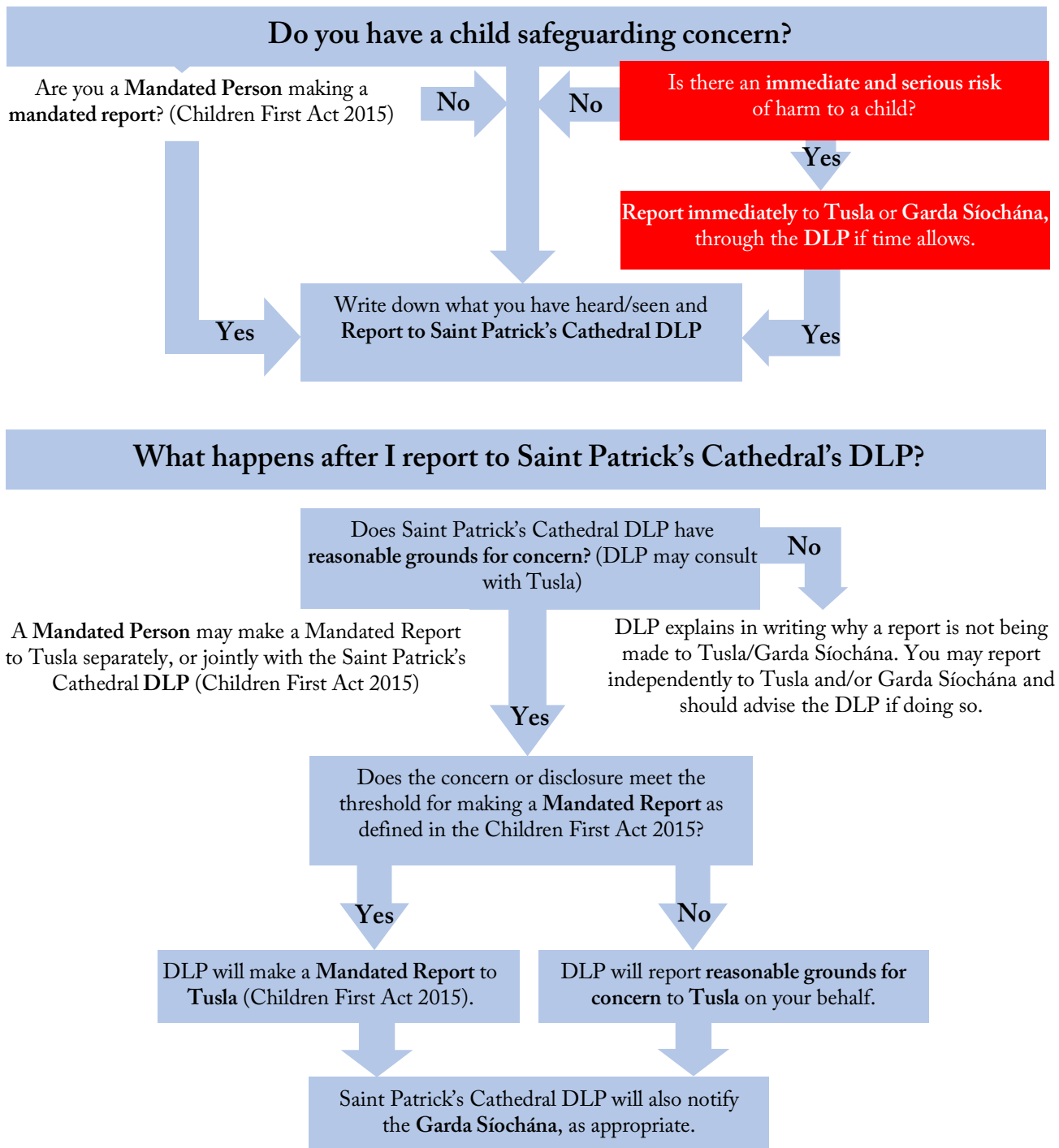
Please read Saint Patrick's Cathedral's Mandated Person Policy and Procedure.

5.10. Anonymous Reports

If the Saint Patrick's Cathedral DLP, or any worker in Saint Patrick's Cathedral, receives an anonymous report regarding a child safeguarding concern, the reporting procedure outlined in this chapter must be followed. However, it is often difficult to establish reasonable grounds for concern without having information directly from the reporter who has raised the concern. This may impede or even prevent appropriate assessment or investigation by the statutory authorities.

Under no circumstances may workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral make anonymous reports to Tusla, An Garda Síochána, or the DLP regarding child safeguarding concerns relating to Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

5.11. Reporting Procedure Diagram



Cherry Orchard Social Work Department: +353 87 3981713
 Out-of-Hours Social Work Service: +353 818 776315

Kevin Street Garda Station: +353 1 6669400
 In an emergency, dial 999/112.

6. Managing Information

All information relating to safeguarding concerns raised by workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral must be treated and managed with utmost confidentiality and retained by Saint Patrick's Cathedral in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018.

6.1. Confidentiality

Confidentiality is essential in safeguarding to protect the privacy and reputation of both Complainants and Respondents. Information must only be shared on a need-to-know basis and in the best interests of the child.

Workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral must report all safeguarding concerns directly to the Saint Patrick's Cathedral DLP.

Children disclosing abuse to workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral must be made aware that the disclosure cannot be kept secret, but that it will only be shared with people who are in a position to help them. Parents and children have a right to know if personal information is being shared, unless doing so may put the child at further risk or may impact on an assessment/investigation by the statutory authorities.

6.2. Managing Safeguarding Records

When a worker becomes aware of a safeguarding concern or disclosure, they should keep a written record of any information received or actions taken. All written records should be provided, as soon as possible, to the DLP, who will retain the notes securely in the relevant file. The DLP will issue a receipt in writing or by email to the person providing the written record.

Files are stored in a locked cabinet in the DLP's office, based in the Deanery Office on Upper Kevin Street, D08 AW65. The DLP holds the key, and a spare is also stored by the Office Manager in the safe.

All digital files are stored securely in a password-protected, firewall-protected partition on the Cathedral SharePoint. The password for access to the partition on the Cathedral SharePoint is the same as DLP's email login details. This is changed at least annually or when a DLP change in personnel takes place. The password is also stored by the Office Manager in the safe.

The DLP will review and check the file system at least twice a year.

The DLP will ensure that records are:

- factual and include details of contacts, consultations and any actions taken,
- retained confidentially, and safely in a secure location,
- used only for the purpose for which they are intended,
- shared with the Statutory Authorities where a child protection or welfare issue arises,
- otherwise shared only on a need-to-know basis in the best interests of children.

Workers in Saint Patrick's Cathedral must observe the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 at all times.

7. Employee Assistance Programme

Saint Patrick's Cathedral recognises that dealing with child protection and welfare concerns can be stressful for workers.

Any employee with any worries or concerns about any aspect of their current situation may avail of our Employee Assistance Programme provided by VHI. Employees in Saint Patrick's Cathedral have access to a confidential 24-hour telephone counselling service on 1800 995 955 or by accessing the VHI Employee Assistance Programme website at www.wellbeing-4life.com

8. Review and Audit

This Procedure for Recognising, Recording, and Reporting Child Safeguarding Concerns will be reviewed, along with Saint Patrick's Cathedral's Child Safeguarding Statement, no later than 24 months after its adoption, and no later than every 24 months thereafter. It will be reviewed earlier when there is a material change to legislation and policy, or if there is an incident relating to matters covered in this policy.

See also our Procedure for Implementation, Monitoring, and Review of Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Appendix 1: Children First Act 2015, Schedule 2

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/36/enacted/en/pdf>

Ap1.1. Mandated Persons

1. The following classes of persons are specified as mandated persons for the purposes of this Act:
2. Registered medical practitioner within the meaning of section 2 of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007.
3. Registered nurse or registered midwife within the meaning of section 2(1) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011.
4. Physiotherapist registered in the register of members of that profession.
5. Speech and language therapist registered in the register of members of that profession.
6. Occupational therapist registered in the register of members of that profession.
7. Registered dentist within the meaning of section 2 of the Dentists Act 1985.
8. Psychologist who practises as such and who is eligible for registration in the register (if any) of members of that profession.
9. Social care worker who practises as such and who is eligible for registration in accordance with Part 4 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 in the register of that profession.
10. Social worker who practises as such and who is eligible for registration in accordance with Part 4 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 in the register (if any) of that profession.
11. Emergency medical technician, paramedic and advanced paramedic registered with the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council under the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (Establishment) Order 2000 (S.I. No. 109 of 2000).
12. Probation officer within the meaning of section 1 of the Criminal Justice (Community Service) Act 1983.
13. Teacher registered with the Teaching Council.
14. Member of An Garda Síochána.
15. Guardian *ad litem* appointed in accordance with section 26 of the Child Care Act 1991
16. Person employed in any of the following capacities:
 - a. manager of domestic violence shelter;
 - b. manager of homeless provision or emergency accommodation facility;
 - c. manager of asylum seeker accommodation (direct provision) centre;
 - d. addiction counsellor employed by a body funded, wholly or partly, out of moneys provided by the Oireachtas;
 - e. psychotherapist or a person providing counselling who is registered with one of the voluntary professional bodies;
 - f. manager of a language school or other recreational school where children reside away from home;
 - g. member of the clergy (howsoever described) or pastoral care worker (howsoever described) of a church or other religious community;
 - h. director of any institution where a child is detained by an order of a court;
 - i. safeguarding officer, child protection officer or other person (howsoever described) who is employed for the purpose of performing the child welfare and protection function of religious, sporting, recreational, cultural, educational and other bodies and organisations offering services to children;
 - j. child care worker employed in a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991;
 - k. person responsible for the care or management of a youth work service within the meaning of section 2 of the Youth Work Act 2001.

17. Youth worker who –
 - a. holds a professional qualification that is recognised by the National Qualifications Authority in youth work within the meaning of section 3 of the Youth Work Act 2001 or a related discipline, and
 - b. is employed in a youth work service within the meaning of section 2 of the Youth Work Act 2001.
18. Foster carer registered with Tusla.
19. A person carrying on a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991.

Appendix 2: Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012, Schedule 1

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/24/enacted/en/pdf>

Ap2.1. Required Reporting to An Garda Síochána

Offences against children for purposes of an offence contrary to section 2 of the Act of 2012

1. Murder.
2. Manslaughter.
3. Common law offence of false imprisonment.
4. Rape.
5. Rape under section 4 of the Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act 1990.
6. Sexual assault.
7. Aggravated sexual assault within the meaning of section 3 of the Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act 1990.
8. An offence under section 1 of the Punishment of Incest Act 1908 (incest by males).
9. An offence under section 2 of the Punishment of Incest Act 1908 (incest by females of or over 17 years of age).
10. An offence under section 6(1) of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1993.
11. An offence under section 2 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2006 (defilement of child under 15 years of age).
12. An offence under section 3 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2006 (defilement of child under the age of 17 years).
 - 12A. An offence under section 3A of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2006 (offence by person in authority).
13. An offence under any of the following provisions of the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
 - a. section 3 (child trafficking and taking, etc., child for sexual exploitation),
 - b. section 4 (allowing child to be used for child pornography),
 - c. section 4A (organising etc. child prostitution or production of child pornography),
 - d. section 5A (participation of child in pornographic performance).
14. An offence under section 2 of the Sexual Offences (Jurisdiction) Act 1996 insofar as it relates to an offence specified in the Schedule to that Act that is also specified in this Schedule.
15. An offence under the following provisions of the Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act 2008—
 - a. section 2 (trafficking, etc., of children),
 - b. section 5 insofar as it relates to a child who has been trafficked for the purpose of his or her exploitation (soliciting or importuning for purposes of prostitution of trafficked person),
 - c. section 7 insofar as it relates to an offence under section 2 of that Act or section 3 (other than subsections (2A) and (2B)) of the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998.
16. An offence under section 249 of the Children Act 2001 (causing or encouraging sexual offence upon a child).
17. An offence under section 176 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006 (reckless endangerment of children).
18. An offence under the following provisions of the Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997
 - a. section 3 (assault causing harm),
 - b. section 4 (causing serious harm),
 - c. section 5 (threats to kill or cause serious harm),
 - d. section 13 (endangerment),
 - e. section 15 (false imprisonment),
 - f. section 16 (abduction of child by parent, etc.),

- g. section 17 (abduction of child by other persons).
- 19. An offence under section 246 of the Children Act 2001 (cruelty to children).
- 20. An offence under the following provisions of Criminal Justice (Female Genital Mutilation) Act 2012
 - a. section 2 (offences of female genital mutilation, etc.),
 - b. section 3 (offence of removal from State for purpose of female genital mutilation),
 - c. section 4 (acts, etc., done outside State).
- 21. An offence under any of the following provisions of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017 —
 - a. section 3 (obtaining, providing etc. a child for purpose of sexual exploitation),
 - b. section 4 (invitation etc. to sexual touching),
 - c. section 5 (sexual activity in presence of child),
 - d. section 6 (causing child to watch sexual activity),
 - e. section 7 (meeting child for purpose of sexual exploitation),
 - f. section 8 (use of ICT to facilitate sexual exploitation of child).

Appendix 3: Contact Details for Statutory Authorities

Ap3.1. Tusla



You may make a report via the Tusla Portal, having registered as a user of the portal: <https://portal.tusla.ie/Account/Login>

Where advice is required from Tusla regarding a safeguarding concern, or where there is an **immediate and serious risk to the welfare of a child**, contact the Tusla Social Work Department local to where the child resides. Local Tusla Social Work Department can be found at: <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/contact-a-social-worker3>

The Tusla Social Work Department local to Saint Patrick's Cathedral is located at Bridge House, Cherry orchard Hospital, Dublin 10. Tel: 087 3981713.

Where there is an **immediate and serious risk to the welfare of a child** outside of office hours, mandated persons (only) may contact Tusla's **Out-of-Hours Social Work Service** on 0818 776315 between 6pm and 6am every night and between 9am and 5pm on Saturdays, Sundays, and bank holidays. The details of any Tusla personnel dealing with the matter must be recorded for Saint Patrick's Cathedral records.

Ap3.2. An Garda Síochána



The Garda Síochána station local to Saint Patrick's Cathedral site is **Kevin Street Garda Station**. Tel: (01) 6669400.

You may make a report at any other Garda Station, which can be found at <https://www.garda.ie/en/contact-us/station-directory>

In an emergency you should dial 999/112.

Where there is an **immediate and serious risk to the welfare of a child**, the Garda Síochána may be contacted by telephoning 999/112, or **Kevin Street Garda Station** at (01) 6669400. The details of any Gardaí dealing with the matter must be recorded for Saint Patrick's Cathedral records.

Advise our DLP if you make a report directly to the Statutory Authorities.

Appendix 4: Relevant Legislation and Publications

There are several publications and pieces of legislation relevant to the safeguarding of children. The following indicative list is not intended to be comprehensive but rather to give a sense of the breadth and wide array of relevant legislation.

Ap4.1. Child and Family Agency Act 2013

<http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2013/a4013.pdf>

Ap4.2. Child Care Act 1991

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1991/act/17/enacted/en/print.html>

Ap4.3. Children Act 2001

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2001/act/24/enacted/en/pdf>

Ap4.4. Children First Act 2015

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/36/enacted/en/pdf>

Ap4.5. Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children

https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf

Ap4.6. Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/24/enacted/en/pdf>

Ap4.7. Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1988/act/25/enacted/en/html>

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2003/act/6/enacted/en/pdf>

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2018/act/7/enacted/en/pdf>

Ap4.8. Domestic Violence Act 2018

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2018/act/6/enacted/en/html>

Ap4.9. Freedom of Information Act 2014

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/30/enacted/en/pdf>

Ap4.10. National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/47/enacted/en/pdf>

Ap4.11. Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1997/act/26/enacted/en/pdf>

Ap4.12. Protected Disclosures Act 2014

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/14/enacted/en/pdf>

Ap4.13. Protected Disclosures (Amendment) Act 2022

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2022/act/27/enacted/en/html>

Ap4.14. Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/49/enacted/en/pdf>

Ap4.15. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/crc.pdf>

Appendix 5: Safeguarding Trust Panel Terms of References

Ap5.1. Introduction

Under the constitution of the Church of Ireland, each individual church and cathedral is required to have a Safeguarding Trust Panel (STP) chaired by the incumbent. In Saint Patrick's Cathedral, this Panel forms a subcommittee of the Board and is chaired by the Dean. The Cathedral has, in addition to the Panel, a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) who undertakes some of the duties, particularly the mandatory reporting duties, on behalf of the Panel. The Panel has a role in the oversight and support of the DLP and in supporting the DLP in ensuring implementation of the Cathedral's bespoke Child Protection Policy. Following each meeting, the representative of the Cathedral Board on the STP will present a written report to the next appropriate meeting of the Board, providing updates on the Panel's actions and detailing any recommendations.

Ap5.2. The Role of the Panel

The Panel's role is to:

- advise the Board on the most appropriate policy and operational framework for safeguarding within the Cathedral,
- ensure that the welfare of children and adults is embedded into the Cathedral's work,
- ensure consistency of approach across all departments and services,
- provide strategic oversight for all aspects of safeguarding work and ensure our policies and procedures are up to date and effective in protecting people who use Cathedral services from potential or actual harm,
- provide assurance that the agreed safeguarding policies and procedures are being adhered to by Cathedral workers,
- initiate improvements in working practices, systems, and procedures to support effective safeguarding practice in the Cathedral's statutory and regulatory roles to protect people from potential or actual harm,
- identify, respond, and escalate, as appropriate, organisational risk within Saint Patrick's Cathedral related to safeguarding,
- raise the profile of children and adults safeguarding in all Cathedral activities,
- promote communication and raise awareness across the organisation,
- monitor and evaluate the performance of the DLP (and Deputy DLPs, as required) and make recommendations to improve performance through oversight, support, and collaboration,
- initiate an annual review of the policies and related procedures in relation to child and adult safeguarding.

Ap5.3. The Responsibilities of the Panel

Safeguarding is a collective responsibility across all departments and each department's primary officer is accountable for their department's performance.

The responsibilities of the Panel are to:

- ensure implementation of the Cathedral's safeguarding policies and procedures, and monitor their effectiveness internally and externally, and to recommend improvements, as appropriate,
- use the Cathedral's governance structures to ensure that safeguarding issues are considered and addressed at the appropriate level,

- ensure that appropriate data is collected about safeguarding children's and adults' activities in a way that supports the Cathedral's statutory and regulatory roles,
- ensure that the training programmes are in place to enable the Cathedral workers to fulfil their duties and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding,
- ensure that the Cathedral's regulatory role within multi-agency children's and adults' safeguarding procedures is clearly understood internally and externally,
- ensure that the Cathedral responds appropriately to changes in relevant legislation,
- ensure that constructive links have been maintained with relevant stakeholders and external agencies, including An Garda Síochána, Tusla, Meitheal, and the Representative Church Body.

Ap5.4. The Powers of the Panel

The Panel's role is supervisory and advisory in nature. As a subcommittee of the Board, they must make recommendations to the Board as appropriate. The Board will authorise any actions required.

Ap5.5. Membership of the Panel

The Panel shall consist of no fewer than 5 members, including the Chair, of whom no fewer than 2 including the Chair, must be members of the Cathedral Board. The Administrator and DLP must sit in attendance at the Panel. The Deputy DLP is invited to attend. The Administrator may delegate minute-taking and administrative support to a staff member with the agreement of the Chair. The membership of the Panel will be decided at the Board meeting immediately following a triennial vestry meeting. The Panel membership shall not exceed 8 members, not including the Chair. The minimum number required to form a quorum is 3 Panel members, one of which should be the Chair or their nominated deputy.

The Panel may co-opt non-Board members to the committee as they see fit. Such co-opted members must step down in advance of the triennial vestry meeting that forms the Cathedral Board. They may be subsequently re-appointed by the Panel.

Ap5.6. Expertise of the Panel Members

In addition to the Chair, the Panel will endeavour to have amongst their members a majority who have experience in child and adult safeguarding from a church, educational, healthcare, or another appropriate setting, preferably at a strategic level.

Ap5.7. The Chair

The Dean is *ex officio* Chair of the Panel. The Dean may nominate another member of the Panel as deputy chair in their absence. This deputy chair must be a member of the Cathedral Board at the time they undertake this duty.

Ap5.8. Review and Assessment

An annual review of the Panel will be carried out to measure the Panel's impact and effectiveness together with a skills audit of the members. This will be done through an anonymised confidential survey of the members.

The criteria for the success of the Panel will be:

- a consistent approach within Saint Patrick's Cathedral to the identification, decision-making, recording, and management of safeguarding cases within relevant services,
- safeguarding policies and procedures are being implemented consistently internally and externally,
- evidence that the safeguarding of children and adults is embedded into Saint Patrick's Cathedral's work through the improved practice of Garda Vetting compliance, training of workers, internal audits, and regular monitoring recorded and reported to the Board,
- effective working relationships with key stakeholders,
- positive feedback from people who use the Cathedral services and/or their carers about Saint Patrick's Cathedral's role in safeguarding adults and children.

These terms of reference shall be reviewed following each triennial vestry meeting and the subsequent formation of a new Panel.

Appendix 6: Anti-Bullying Policy (Children)

Ap6.1. Introduction

Saint Patrick's Cathedral is committed to providing a caring, supportive, and friendly environment where children learn to value and respect each other and are challenged to reach their full potential through active participation. Saint Patrick's Cathedral will not tolerate bullying by anyone in any of its activities.

Ap6.2. What is bullying?

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression – whether it is verbal, psychological, or physical – that is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating, and it occurs mainly amongst children in social environments, such as schools. It includes behaviours such as physical aggression, cyberbullying, damage to property, intimidation, isolation/exclusion, name-calling, malicious gossip, and extortion. Bullying can also take the form of abuse based on gender identity, sexual preference, race, ethnicity, and religious factors. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying via mobile phones, the internet, and other personal devices.

It is recognised that bullying affects the lives of an increasing number of children and can be the cause of genuine concerns about a child's welfare.

Whilst bullying can happen to any child, some may be more vulnerable. These include children with disabilities or special educational needs; those from ethnic minority and migrant groups; from the Traveller community; lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) children, and those perceived to be LGBT; and children of minority religious faiths.

There can be an increased vulnerability to bullying amongst children with special educational needs. This is particularly so among those who do not understand social cues and/or have difficulty communicating. Some children with complex needs may lack understanding of social situations and therefore trust everyone implicitly. Such children may be more vulnerable because they do not have the same social skills or capacity as others to recognise and defend themselves against bullying behaviour.

Ap6.3. Preventative Strategies

Workers should promote a positive anti-bullying ethos in their activities and raise awareness amongst other workers and children that bullying will not be tolerated and that anyone who witnesses an incident of bullying has a responsibility to report it. By emphasising the Code of Behaviour (both for workers and for children participating in groups), workers should create an environment in which children are valued as individuals and are encouraged and affirmed.

Ap6.4. What can workers do if a child tells them they are being bullied?

- Listen calmly and accept what is said.
- Complete an incident form following the conversation and keep it on file because this forms the basis of the bullying report. Notes should include the nature of the incident, date, time, location, names of those involved, witnesses, relevant history, and child's response.

- Reassure them that help is available, action will be taken, the child was right to tell, it is not their fault and it could happen to anyone.
- Negotiate confidentiality – be clear you will only tell people who need to know but that you cannot guarantee secrecy.
- Ensure the child's safety. The worker should be aware that the safety of the child is paramount, and this can be maintained through appropriate supervision. Liaise with the parents/guardians in relation to a solution and possible actions.
- Tell the child that you will keep them informed and how you intend to proceed.
- Respond to the incident – all actions should be guided by the needs of the child. Decide what action to take and by whom.
- Make a record of facts rather than opinions. Include details from the bullying report, details recounted by others involved, any agreements made, an account of action taken, and suggestions for follow-up and monitoring. This should be retained by the DLP.

Ap6.5. Responding to Incidents of Bullying

There are a number of approaches which can be used, and workers should determine which action to take depending on the incident of bullying.

- A Code of Behaviour (for children) sets out the guidelines for children regarding boundaries and appropriate behaviour. Draw everyone's attention back to the Code of Behaviour and the consequences of not abiding by the Code.
- The 'no blame' approach does not concentrate on who did what to whom but, instead, focuses on the feelings of the target and what the group involved in the bullying and the target can do to make this situation better. The 'no blame' approach allows the group involved in the bullying behaviour to think about the action that has taken place and the effect it has had on the target. It promotes the perpetrator and the rest of the group involved in the bullying behaviour with an opportunity to redeem themselves.
- Time Out – by providing some space and time between the perpetrator and target and allowing both parties involved to think about the incident that has taken place. Time apart may aid the process of resolving the bullying, e.g. removal of the perpetrator from the target.
- Denial of privileges – loss of certain privileges by the perpetrator in the group. It is hoped that, by using this response, the perpetrator may realise the impact of their actions on the target and the consequences for themselves.
- Parental involvement – make parents/guardians of all children involved aware of the incident of bullying and ask them to intervene in the situation.
- Suspension or expulsion of the perpetrator may be used as a last resort in bullying when no other interventions have worked.
- Disciplinary procedures must be applied in relation to any sanctioning of the perpetrator and advice should be sought in relation to the adoption of such procedures, where appropriate.

Ap6.6. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is defined as 'any behaviour performed through electronic or digital media by individuals or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort on others.'

Cyberbullying, similar to more traditional forms of bullying, must meet three main criteria:

- intention to cause harm to the victim(s),

- repetition of abusive behaviour(s) over time (however, in some instances, one behavioural act can create an ongoing sense of intimidation for the victim [e.g. posting a humiliating photo/video which can be viewed by a large audience can have long-term effects]), and
- imbalance of power between victim(s) and bully/bullies (i.e. super technological skills, anonymity).

Cyberbullying differs from more traditional forms of bullying in a number of ways:

- The audience is larger.
- There are no time or location barriers.
- It can happen 24/7.
- The target's reaction is not often seen, leading to a reduction in feelings of empathy or guilt for the perpetrator.

What are the signs/symptoms that someone is being cyberbullied?

Some signs or symptoms that may present when a child is experiencing cyberbullying include:

- more frequent health problems: headaches, stomach aches, frequent absenteeism, sleep problems, depression, or suicidal thoughts,
- behavioural and emotional changes: distressed, anxious, frustrated, fearful, angry,
- school-related changes: inability to concentrate, drop in academic performance, reluctance to attend school,
- negative emotional expressions after use of social media: poor self-image, sadness, hopelessness, loneliness, suspicion of others,
- changes in online behaviour: more careful or cautious approaches to communicating online,
- being emotionally upset during or after using the internet or the phone,
- being very secretive or protective of their digital life,
- wanting to stop using the computer or mobile phone,
- being nervous or jumpy when getting an instant message, text, or email,
- avoiding discussions about computer or mobile phone activities,
- physical symptoms such as self-harm, eating disorders, and/or risky behaviours.

Actions workers should consider when a child is the target of cyberbullying:

- Confirm that you are dealing with bullying behaviour.
- Listen calmly and uncritically to the report the child is making.
- Remind the child that it is not their fault.
- Tell the child not to respond to the bully as this can exacerbate the issue.
- Ask the child if they have talked to their parents about the bullying; if they have not, the worker should offer to help the child to talk to their parents about the problem.
- The following advice should be given by the worker to the parents of the child experiencing the cyberbullying:
 - Keep a copy of all correspondence between the child and the bully.
 - Encourage the child to remove the cyberbully as a 'friend' online and block them from their phone.
 - Report the issue to the website and/or mobile phone company as appropriate.
 - Serious issues may require to be reported to An Garda Síochána – issues requiring investigation by An Garda Síochána may include the making of inappropriate sexual suggestions, racist remarks, or persistent bullying that is seriously damaging to the child's wellbeing. In such situations the worker should report their concerns to the DLP, who can assist them to inform parents that they should report the cyberbullying to the Gardaí by bringing the child's phone to the local Garda Station and making a report.