



Margaret Aylward Centre for Faith and Dialogue

Child Safeguarding Statement

This statement has been prepared to comply with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015 and is derived from Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016.

Statement

As a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland, we recognise and uphold the dignity and rights of all children, are committed to ensuring their safety and well-being and will work in partnership with parents/guardians to do this. We recognise each child as a gift from God, and we value and encourage the participation of children in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

All Church personnel (including clergy, religious, staff and volunteers) have a responsibility to safeguard children through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment that supports their best interests and prevents abuse.

Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

The Holy Faith Sisters as a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland exists to promote the teachings of the Catholic Church. This includes the following ministry with children, as defined in Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016:

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As outlined in Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016 we are committed to the following principles:

- Mandatory reporting
Each of us has a duty to notify the statutory authorities of suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations that a child is being or has been abused:
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Sexually
- Through neglect
Suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations may relate to possible abuse by a member of Church personnel, but they can also relate to incidents in the child's family, or elsewhere in the community.

- Caring for the welfare of all children and the adults who work with them. Measures to create and maintain environments that are safe for children, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children and the adults who work with them, will continue to be strengthened and reviewed. This will be done through training support, communications and quality assurance.
- Responding appropriately to child protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations.
- Anyone who brings any suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation of current or past abuse of a child to the notice of the Church will be responded to sensitively, respectfully, actively and in a timely manner, in line with statutory child protection procedures and Church requirements.
- All suspicions concerns, knowledge or allegations that reach the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities (apart from those received in the Sacrament of Reconciliation) will be reported to the appropriate statutory authorities. This will be done irrespective of the status of the person (lay, cleric or religious) who is suspected of having been abusive to a child. If the allegation relates to a lay member of Church personnel, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must be reported to the Church authority. If the allegation relates to a cleric or religious, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must be reported to the Church authority and the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

All Church personnel will cooperate with the statutory authorities in all cases. In responding to complaints of child sexual abuse relating to clergy and all those in forms of consecrated life, Church authorities will act in accordance with the requirements of civil law and canon law, and so will respect the rights and uphold the safeguards afforded in these, both to the complainant and respondent.

- Caring pastorally for respondents and other affected persons.
- This Church body in its response to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of child sexual abuse will respect the rights under civil law and canon law of an accused cleric or religious or other Church personnel. A legal presumption of innocence will be maintained during the statutory and Church inquiry processes. As the processes develop, additional assessment, therapy and support services may be offered to the respondent.

The Church authority will take responsibility for ensuring that any cleric or religious who is considered to constitute a danger to children is managed according to a risk management plan.

All requisite steps will be taken to restore the good name and reputation of anyone who has been wrongly accused of abusing a child.

Respondents belong to families and diocesan or religious communities. The Church authority will be mindful of the need to provide support to members of families and communities affected by the respondent's changed situation.

For further information about the Margaret Aylward centre:
Please contact our Director, Noirin Lynch on 087 664 9862

Details of personnel to contact if you are concerned about the Welfare and Safety of children:

Please contact 01 857 2100:

Regional Designated Liaison Person: Sr. Barbara Perry

Regional Deputy Designated Liaison Person: Sr. Rosemary Duffy

An Garda Siochána (01 6663435)

Tusla: Blanchardstown (01 8976805) / Swords (01 8708000)