

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Legionaries of Christ



Ireland

2011

This policy document of the Legion of Christ follows the outline of the seven standards offered in *Safeguarding Our Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*, published in September 2008.

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GLOSSARY

DEFINITION OF CHILD, MINOR AND YOUNG PERSON

For the purposes of this document all references to a child, young person or minor refers to a person under the age of eighteen years excluding a person who is or has been married.

PROGRAMMES UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE LEGION OF CHRIST

This refers to the works of apostolates directed by or supported by the Legion of Christ and Regnum Christi. The following apostolates are active in Ireland and are referred to as programmes throughout this document.

1. Catholic Kids Net
2. Challenge Youth Club (girls)
3. Conquest Youth Club (boys)
4. Clonlost Retreat Centre
5. Faith and Family Centre
6. Dreams Come True
7. Pilgrim Queen of the Family

INSTITUTIONS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE LEGION OF CHRIST

The following is a list of institutions directed by the Legion of Christ in Ireland that are referred to throughout this document.

1. Woodlands Academy
2. Dublin Oak Academy
3. Legion of Christ Novitiate
4. Faith and Family Centre
5. Clonlost Retreat Centre

TERRITORIAL DIRECTOR OF THE LEGIONARIES OF CHRIST

This refers to the Provincial of the order.

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY DOCUMENT

From time to time this document will be updated to reflect changes in legislation and standards guidance. A summary of changes will be available on request from Human Resources.

This policy was approved by the General Director of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ in Protocol SG 182-2011-1 issued from Rome, 9th February 2011.

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The Legionaries of Christ and the Regnum Christi Movement are called to “Love Christ, Serve People, Build the Church.” Our various programmes have attempted to provide guidance for youth, helping them to develop their relationship with Christ and to acquire an integral formation to serve as a solid foundation for their adult lives. The fundamental principle underlying this work has been the command of the Lord, “Let the children come to me, do not hinder them” (Lk 18:15).

To fulfill this mandate from our Lord, it is clear that the Church must be a protagonist in the fight to safeguard children from sexual and, indeed, all forms of abuse. As the Bishops of Ireland commented in June 2009, “Abuse represents a serious betrayal of the trust which was placed in the Church. For this we ask forgiveness. We are ashamed, humbled and repentant that our people strayed so far from their Christian ideals. That abuse has occurred within institutions of the Church is a tremendous burden for all of us and prompts us to more vigorous efforts to protect children.” As a religious congregation, we are utterly committed to supporting our Bishops.

Our Holy Father, Pope Benedict is also strongly encouraging this effort. Speaking at the ad limina visit of the Irish Bishops in October 2006 he said: “The wounds caused by such acts run deep, and it is an urgent task to rebuild confidence and trust where these have been damaged. In your continuing efforts to deal effectively with this problem, it is important to establish the truth of what happened in the past, to take whatever steps are necessary to prevent it from occurring again, to ensure that the principles of justice are fully respected and, above all, to bring healing to the victims and to all those affected by these egregious crimes. In this way, the Church in Ireland will grow stronger and be ever more capable of giving witness to the redemptive power of the Cross of Christ. I pray that by the grace of the Holy Spirit, this time of purification will enable all God’s people in Ireland to ‘maintain and perfect in their lives that holiness which they have received from God’ (*Lumen Gentium*, 40).”

Safeguarding children is an imperative for us all. Abuse of any form will not be tolerated in any way in any institution of the Legion of Christ in Ireland.

1.2. GOAL OF THIS DOCUMENT

The goal of this document is to present the policies and procedures of the institutions directed by the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ. It is directed to all those who participate in the spiritual, academic, disciplinary, athletic, or cultural formation of children or young people in our centres of education, and in the youth and family activities organised by members of the Congregation.

The contents of this document, having been approved for Ireland by the General Director of the Legionaries of Christ, are obligatory for the priests and religious of the Legion of Christ, the consecrated members of the Regnum Christi Movement, the directors, teaching and administrative

personnel of all our institutions in Ireland and by all volunteers. The superiors and directors of our institutions must make the contents of this Manual known to all our members, employees, volunteers and service providers and obtain their signed agreement to having been informed of them.

The policies contained herein will be reviewed at least every three years to ensure that they are up-to-date with best practices; as well they will be adapted whenever there is a significant change in our organisation or in the pertinent legislation.

Service providers (catering, cleaning, transportation, security, etc.) and external personnel (coaches, sports clinics, etc.) must also observe this document in all matters relating to their contracts with our institutions.

All will be referred to as “the members, volunteers and staff of our institutions”. When certain sections or norms are directed to a particular group, it will be specified in the text which one is being referred to, e.g., “Legionaries and consecrated members”.

1.3. LEGION OF CHRIST SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY STATEMENT

We believe that each child or young person is created in God's image to 'have life in its fullness' (John 10:10).

All children and young people have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured, cared for and safeguarded. This right is embedded in Gospel values, in international law and in domestic law.

We, in the Legion of Christ are committed to a practice which strives to protect children and young people from harm. Furthermore we are fully committed to provide a caring, supportive, safe and a truly Christian environment based on Gospel charity and the respect of the individuality of the person.

The institutions of the Legionaries of Christ collaborate with parents in the education of their children. The directors of the institutions will put in place such measures to create a safe environment conducive to the education and integral formation of the students.

All those affiliated with our institutions (members, staff and volunteers) will be properly trained in accordance with the contents of our Child Safeguarding policy and procedures and will adopt the code of conduct.

All knowledge or suspicion of abuse will reported without delay to the civil authorities.

1.4 GUIDING PRINCIPLES¹

This document of the Legionaries of Christ owes a great debt to the “Safeguarding Children, the Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland”. The policies and procedures outlined therein are guided by principles derived from both Gospel values and civil sources, including the principle that the welfare of the child is the first and paramount consideration. All children have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured, cared for and protected.

The rights of the child... exist because children are human beings with intrinsic dignity and irreducible worth. They do not ask to be born, and justice and freedom are therefore their birthright. For children ‘freedom’ includes the possibility to grow and develop free from neglect, harm, abuse and exploitation ... ‘Justice’ includes access to basic care and nurture in a safe, permanent, stable environment. This includes freedom from the injustices of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.²

1.4.1 PRINCIPLES FROM GOSPEL VALUES³

Children occupy a central place in the teachings of Jesus, who pointed to the child as the ultimate symbol of the Kingdom of God. ‘Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it’ (Lk 18:17). This places a sacred obligation on the Church, called to bear witness to the presence of the Kingdom in the world, to ensure that children are welcomed, cherished and protected in a manner consistent with their central place in the life of the Church. The fact that Jesus reserved some of his severest warnings for those who would knowingly undermine the faith of one

¹ These guiding principles are taken from Safeguarding Children, the Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland.

² Based on *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth), 1963, various, in Austin Flannery OP, general editor, *Vatican Council II: Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1998.

³ These principles are, for the most part, variously based upon and derived from the following documents of the Church: *Gaudium et Spes* (Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World) 1963; *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth), 1963; *Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People*, 1965; *Declaration on Christian Education*, 1965, all available in Austin Flannery OP, general editor, *Vatican Council II: Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1998; Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, Encyclical Letter, 1981; *Children: Springtime of the Family and Society*, Vatican, 11–13 October 2000; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Dublin: Veritas, 1994.

of these 'little ones' is a solemn reminder of the collective obligation of the Church to ensure the care and protection of children and young people.

- Each child shall be cherished and affirmed as a gift from God with an inherent right to dignity of life and bodily integrity which shall be respected, nurtured and protected by all.
- Everyone in the Church has an obligation to ensure that the fundamental rights of children are respected.
- A child's right to safety and care is inalienable.
- Children have a right to an environment free from abuse or neglect.
- Children have a right to good role models whom they can fully trust, who will respect them and nurture their spiritual, physical and emotional development.
- Children have a fundamental right to justice and freedom; they have a right to be listened to and to be heard.

1.4.2 PRINCIPLES FROM INTERNATIONAL LAW

The Preamble to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Ireland, the United Kingdom and the Holy See are signatories, states that the child is entitled to be brought up 'in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity'. The Preamble recalls that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed that 'childhood is entitled to special care and assistance'. In addition, the Convention states that the child has a right to be protected from all forms of exploitation and abuse.⁴

1.4.3 PRINCIPLES FROM DOMESTIC LEGISLATION

In both jurisdictions in Ireland, legislation on child welfare, and civil guidelines for child safeguarding,⁵ accord central importance to the principle that the welfare of the child should be the first and paramount consideration. This means that in all decisions made and actions taken in response to suspicions or allegations of child abuse, 'the child's welfare must always be paramount and this overrides all other considerations.'⁶

⁴ The text of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child can be found in *The National Children's Strategy, Our Children: Their Lives*, Dublin: Stationery Office, 2000, Appendix D, pp 112–129. (Available www.nco.ie)

⁵ Footnote 6 details the publications containing these guidelines.

⁶ *Co-operating to Safeguard Children*, p.11. The principle of the paramountcy of the welfare of the child is also reflected in various international and national legal instruments, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Child Care Act, 1991 (Republic of Ireland) and the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. For example, Section 3.2 (b) 1 of the Child Care Act, 1991

- All adults have a duty to report allegations or suspicions of child abuse, where reasonable grounds for concern exist, irrespective of the status of the person suspected or their relationship to them or to the child.
- The criminal dimension of any action must not be ignored.
- It is the statutory duty of the civil authorities, not individuals or organisations, to investigate reports of child abuse.
- A proper balance must be maintained between protecting children and respecting the needs and rights of caregivers and adults, but where there is a conflict, the welfare of the child must be paramount.
- Actions taken to protect a child should not in themselves be abusive or cause the child unnecessary distress. Every action and procedure should consider the overall needs of the child.
- Organisations have a corporate responsibility to operate effective systems to assure the protection of children, provide staff training, and ensure all personnel are aware of their responsibility both to prevent child abuse and to report concerns about child abuse.
- All agencies and disciplines concerned with the protection and welfare of children must work cooperatively in the best interests of children.
- All organisations working with children should ensure best practice in relation to recruitment and selection processes.

1.4.4 SUPPORT FOR THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY

Another principle that must be kept in mind is support for the role of the family. Parents have primary responsibility for ensuring the education, protection and development of their children. The family is the place where children learn to value themselves and others, to trust and to love.

A fundamental principle of *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* (cited hereafter as “*Safeguarding Children*”) is that all personnel working for the Church should act in support of parents and guardians in the exercise of their responsibility for the care and formation of their children. This includes providing parents and guardians with information about all aspects of their child’s engagement in the life of the Church.

states that those in positions of responsibility will ‘regard the welfare of the child as the first and paramount consideration.’

STANDARD TWO: RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS AND SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

Addressing American bishops and cardinals in April 2002, Pope John Paul II referred to sexual abuse of minors as a crime: *“The abuse which has caused this crisis is by every standard wrong and rightly considered a crime by society; it is also an appalling sin in the eyes of God. To the victims and their families, wherever they may be, I express my profound sense of solidarity and concern.”* Pope Benedict XVI, during his 2008 visit to Australia, concurred: *“Victims should receive compassion and care, and those responsible for these evils must be brought to justice.”*

Dealing with crimes and bringing those responsible to justice are the obligation of civil authorities who need the support of citizens to carry out their vital function of protecting society. To be able to fulfill this obligation, it is first necessary to understand different forms of abuse and their tell tale signs.

2.1. WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse occurs when the behaviour of someone in a position of greater power than a child or young person abuses that power and causes harm to that child or young person. The common denominator of all child abuse is that it makes children and young people feel diminished or threatened, and that it causes them harm. All forms of child abuse constitute a betrayal of trust and an abuse of power by an adult over a child or young person.

Child abuse is generally categorised into four broad groups: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. Consistent with civil guidelines in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland, all forms of child abuse are covered in this document.

Each form of child abuse must be treated seriously; there can be no suggestion that some forms are of less significance than others. Accounts from survivors and child care experts have pointed to the devastating and long-lasting effects that all forms of child abuse can have on children and young people and how these effects can continue long into adulthood.

It is accepted, however, that there is a distinction between sexual abuse and other ways in which children can be harmed in that the motivation and circumstances for the sexual abuse of children can be very different from those which are involved when people physically or emotionally abuse children, or cause them to be neglected.

2.2. FORMS OF CHILD ABUSE

Children may be abused in a range of settings, by those known to them, or, more rarely, by a stranger.⁷ . As already noted, there are four principal categories of child abuse – neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse – and a child may be subject to more than one form at any time during his or her childhood. The following definitions can be found in *Safeguarding Children*.

2.2.1. NEGLECT

Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and failure to access appropriate medical care or treatment.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. It is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/ or psychological needs, such as the neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may also occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Harm can be defined as the ill-treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is significant is determined by his/her health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child of a similar age.

The *threshold of significant harm* is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.

Examples of neglect include:

- Where a child suffers a series of minor injuries as a result of not being properly supervised or protected;
- The consistent failure of a child to gain weight or height may indicate that they are being deprived of adequate nutrition;
- Where a child consistently misses school, this may be due to bullying or deprivation of intellectual stimulation and support.⁸

2.2.2. EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to

⁷ Co-operating to Safeguard Children, p. 13.

⁸ *Children First*, p. 31, ss 3.2.3.

children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the *relationship* between a caregiver and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security is not met.

Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms.⁹

The *threshold of significant harm* is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become *typical* of the relationship between the child and the parent/caregiver.

2.2.3. PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or caregiver fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Examples of physical injury include the following:

- Shaking a child.
- Using excessive force in handling.
- Deliberate poisoning;
- Suffocation;
- Munchausen's syndrome by proxy;
- Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child.¹⁰

⁹ *Children First*, p. 31, ss 3.3.1.

¹⁰ *Children First*, p. 31, s 3.4.

2.2.4. SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others.¹¹ Any form of sexual behaviour initiated by an adult with a child or young person is sexual abuse, and is both immoral and criminal.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/ or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life (Definition taken from *Safeguarding Children*).

There may also be 'indirect abuse' of children, for instance, where children have been photographed, videotaped or filmed for pornographic purposes.¹² Indirect abuse also includes the subjecting of children to gross and obscene language or indecent images. The use or possession of child pornography in any form is illegal and there is an obligation to report information concerning anyone possessing such material to the police authorities.

2.3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO ABUSE

2.3.1. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL VULNERABILITIES

The civil guidelines pay particular attention to children with special vulnerabilities. These are children who, for one reason or another, may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. They could include children with disabilities, children who are separated from their parents or other family members and are reliant on others for their care and protection, either in foster care or residential settings, and homeless children. The same categories of abuse as described above are applicable but may take a slightly different form. For example, abuse may take the form of deprivation of basic rights, harsh disciplinary regimes or the inappropriate use of medications or physical restraints.¹³

2.3.2. PEER ABUSE

In some instances of child abuse, the alleged abuser may be another child or young person. In such situations, there are important child safeguarding issues in relation to both children, and the needs of each should be considered separately.¹⁴ The statutory authorities should be notified of such cases.

¹¹ *Children First*, p. 33, ss 3.5.1.

¹² *Children First*, p. 86, ss 9.4.4.

¹³ *Children First*, p. 33, ss 3.6.1.

¹⁴ For more detailed information on peer sexual abuse, see *Co-operating to Safeguard Children*, pp 68–72.

2.3.3. BULLYING

Bullying is unwanted and unwelcome behaviour, which is persistent and repeated, is offensive or threatening to the recipient, is demeaning and downgrading of a person or which leaves the recipient isolated or vulnerable. It is important to note that all forms of bullying and intimidation must be repeated sufficiently often so that it can be said to have formed a behaviour pattern and are not isolated instances which have occurred exceptionally.

Bullying creates an unpleasant and ineffective environment for proper development. It can destroy the self-esteem and health of individuals and it is in everyone's interests to prevent and combat this behaviour.

Examples of Bullying

(not an exhaustive list)

- **Verbal:** *personal insults, demeaning remarks, humiliation in front of others, offensive nicknames, ridicule, persistent identification of one person "as a joke", threats, abusive telephone calls.*
- **Non-verbal or indirect:** *exclusion, hostile attitude, spreading malicious rumours.*
- **Abuse of Power:** *excessive criticism; setting unrealistic deadlines.*
- **Physical:** *aggressive behaviour, physical intimidation, unwelcome physical contact up to and including assault.*

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, mobile phone text/photo messages, instant messaging (IM), defamatory personal Web sites, and social networking web sites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.

Cyberbullying includes the following:

- Sending offensive, cruel or threatening messages, emails, photos or film.
- Silent phone calls.
- Posting malicious comments or pictures on a bulletin board, website or chat room.
- Pretending to be someone else in a chat room or message board or text message and making malicious comments
- Accessing someone's accounts in order to scare them or cause trouble for them.

The most serious effects of bullying are fear, anxiety and depression, which can lead to other serious consequences. To these may be added severe loss of confidence and low self-esteem. Bullying has a detrimental effect particularly in educational environments due to the fact that students learning in a climate of fear and resentment do not reach their full potential.

2.3.4. DISCRIMINATION

It is evident that not all people are equal in their physical, intellectual, and moral capabilities.

Discrimination is defined as social behaviour that separates and considers people inferior based on their race, social class, sex, religion, language, culture, etc.

All discrimination against people for the motives previously stated is contrary to dignity of the human person and of the guiding principles laid out in this document on page five.

2.4. STEPS FOR REPORTING

The Legion of Christ is fully committed to maintaining a safe environment for children and young people in all of its institutions and activities. The Congregation will respond promptly and pastorally both to anyone bringing an allegation of abuse as well as to the accused person.

Allegations of abuse may come from a variety of sources, including alleged victims, family members, diocesan offices, Legionaries, employees, and other persons.

The Congregation takes all allegations of misconduct or abuse seriously and is committed to work in cooperation with civil authorities in any criminal investigation stemming from an allegation. When the civil authorities have concluded their investigation, the Congregation shall conduct its own internal inquiry.

The following are the basic steps that should be followed:

If a child or young person makes a disclosure to a member of our institutions (member, staff or volunteer) which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff / volunteer has concerns about a child, the member of staff /volunteer must act promptly.

- a) The member or complainant should report these concerns immediately to one of the Designated Persons of the Legionaries of Christ in Ireland. Alternatively, the member or complainant may report these concerns directly to the civil authorities. If they report directly to the civil authorities, they must also invoke the internal reporting procedure immediately by relaying these concerns to the one of the Designated Persons.
- b) The facts of the disclosure are recorded. The person receiving the disclosure should not carry out an investigation. In the case of an emergency, the civil authorities will be notified immediately.
- c) Within 24 hours, following the preliminary inquiry the Designated Person will refer the matter to An Garda Síochána and/or the Health Service Executive (HSE) in the Republic of Ireland or to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and/or the Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts in Northern Ireland.
- d) Unless there are concerns that a parent/guardian may be the possible abuser, they will be informed immediately. A decision not to inform a parent/guardian should be briefly

recorded together with reasons for not doing so.

- e) In the event that a member, staff or volunteer is the subject of the complaint, he or she will be requested to step aside from his or her duties as a precautionary measure pending investigation by statutory authorities and any internal investigation.
- f) If a complaint is made against the Principal or Child Safeguarding Representative, one of the Designated Persons must be informed immediately. If a complaint is made against one of the Designated Persons, the Territorial Director of the Legionaries of Christ should be informed immediately.

2.5 INVESTIGATING ALLEGATIONS

2.5.1 INITIAL RESPONSE

The Designated Person is to act promptly and without delay when he receives any allegation of abuse of a minor by a Member, staff or volunteer.

When an allegation of abuse is first received, the Designated Person should gather sufficient information to complete an initial report. The basic information in that initial report shall include to the extent possible the following:

- *Name of the alleged victim.*
- *Age of the alleged victim.*
- *Address and phone number of alleged victim.*
- *Name of the alleged perpetrator.*
- *Current location and contact information of the alleged perpetrator (if he is outside the community at the time the allegation is received).*
- *Approximate dates of the alleged abuse.*
- *Nature and location of alleged abuse.*
- *Any additional relevant details.*

The statutory authorities will be informed within 24 hours and the Legion of Christ will cooperate fully with any investigation by them. The Legion's internal investigation will not commence until the statutory inquiry has been completed.

The Designated Person should ensure that the alleged victim is offered all the necessary pastoral and counseling support.

After informing the statutory authorities, the Designated Person, with the consent of the Territorial Director, will inform the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church and the diocesan authorities that an allegation has been made and that it has been reported to the appropriate authorities.

STANDARD THREE: PREVENTING HARM TO CHILDREN

As the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church describes Standard 3: “Children should have access to good role models they can trust, who will respect and nurture their spiritual, physical and emotional development.” Safe recruiting and vetting practices as well as codes of behaviour help to achieve this.

3.1. SAFE RECRUITING PROCEDURES

‘Safe practice starts with safe recruitment procedures’.¹⁵ Most people who apply to work with children and young people in the Church are well-motivated and potentially suitable for the various tasks involved. It is most important, however, that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that this is, in fact, the case. As well as enhancing the prospects of identifying the best person for the post, rigorous recruitment procedures can act as a deterrent to unsuitable applicants.

Some of the principles which enhance the safety of recruitment include:

- Always applying thorough selection procedures regardless of who the applicant is and whether the position is full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary, paid or voluntary.
- Judging the suitability of applicants across a broad range of criteria, through interview.
- Ensuring that interviews are conducted by more than one person and that at least one of those interviewing has established competence in interviewing and selection for posts involving work with children.
- Taking all reasonable steps to exclude unsuitable candidates by insisting on and verifying references, qualifications and previous records of employment.
- The safety of recruitment processes can also be enhanced by ensuring that due attention is paid to the key issues outlined below.

3.1.1. WRITTEN APPLICATION

Applicants should be asked to supply information in writing. An application form should be used and be designed to collect all relevant information about the applicant, including past and current experience of working with children.

3.1.2. INTERVIEWS

Interviews should always be conducted by more than one representative of the group or organisation. The interview is a critical opportunity to explore with the candidates the information

¹⁵ Our Duty to Care, p. 8.

provided in their written application and to assess their attitudes and skills, in particular their commitment to the welfare and protection of children.

The information supplied by the applicant should be seen only by those directly involved in the recruitment process. The recommendation for appointment agreed by the interview panel should be submitted for ratification to the management committee of the organisation or group making the appointment.

3.1.3. DECLARATIONS

All applicants should be required to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children or young people and declaring any past criminal convictions or cases pending.

3.1.4. REFERENCES

An applicant shall be expected to supply the names of two referees, who are not family members, who will testify to their general character, their suitability for work with children and young people, and any other detail relevant to their ability to perform the tasks associated with the post. At least one referee should have first-hand knowledge of the applicant's previous work with children or young people.

An acceptable reference will indicate that the person is known to the referee and is considered by them to be suitable to work with children and young people. All references should be provided in writing and later verified by telephone, or in person.

References should be kept on file as part of the record of the recruitment process.

3.1.5. GARDA, PSNI OR POLICE CLEARANCE

Once a person has been selected, and before they take up their appointment, clearance from An Garda Síochána should be obtained, where there is provision for this. This applies whether the person is clerical, religious, full-time or part-time, a lay employee or a volunteer seeking to work with children and young people.

If a person has lived or travelled abroad from the Republic of Ireland for a period of six months or more, full details of their address, arrival and departure dates of time spent abroad should be supplied. Clearance certificates should be obtained from Police in countries where the person has lived, where there is provision for this.

In Northern Ireland, the vetting process for the six northern dioceses is centralised and carried out by the Child Safeguarding Office in the Down and Connor diocese. Personnel whose role meets the following criteria, regardless of whether they are paid or not, should, be vetted by Access Northern Ireland prior to taking up work with children or young people. The vetting process ensures that no

record of criminal convictions for offences against children or other criminal activities relating to the applicant are held by the Department of Education or the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

Only those individuals whose role provides any of the following require vetting under Northern Ireland legislation:-

1. Teaching, training or instruction of children or vulnerable adults or
2. Care for or supervision of children or vulnerable adults, or
3. Any form of advice or guidance to children or assistance to vulnerable adults.
4. Direct supervision and management of staff and volunteers working to 1, 2 and 3 above.

Details of the selection and induction processes should be recorded and placed in the personnel file of the person appointed along with notes made during any part of the selection process, the application form, references and any other associated documentation.

A written record must be kept of the assessments made for each applicant for at least one year after they have been sent a letter stating that their application was unsuccessful. This is necessary because an unsuccessful applicant may bring a claim alleging discrimination in the selection process. 'A person can bring a claim alleging discrimination for up to six months after the date of the alleged act of discrimination, and an extension of six months is allowed where a good cause for not referring the claim within six months is established.'¹⁶

3.2. GENERAL CODE OF BEHAVIOUR AND PRACTICES FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

NB: Appendix III offers the Code of Conduct specifically directed to Legionaries and consecrated members of Regnum Christi. This section is directed to lay staff and volunteers. It will be noted that there are points of overlap in these two codes. However, points found here that are not dealt with in Appendix III should be considered binding on Legionaries and consecrated members as well.

The task of educating and forming young people has as its final goal their human and social maturity, the upright formation of their moral conscience, their love of truth and the promotion of authentic human and Christian values.

The directors of our institutions, the members, volunteers and staff should keep in mind the importance and transcendence of their mission, since they cooperate in forging the future of families, of civil society, and of the Church. They are to act with responsibility, maturity and diligence in carrying out their work, aware that they are cooperating with parents in the education of their children and that their example and counsel exercise a determining influence over the young people and children entrusted to them.

¹⁶ J. Clarke, A Guide to Good Employment Practice in the Community and Voluntary Sector, Dublin: Combat Poverty Agency, 2002, p. 15, par. 1.12.

The guidelines that follow are a guide to good behaviour that indicate how to act in determined circumstances, avoiding occasions of danger or risk that could affect the well-being of children or young people.

The observance of these norms forms part of our educational and disciplinary pedagogy and must be observed by all the members, volunteers and staff of our institutions and programmes.

This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children and young people gain from positive interaction with our members, volunteers and staff within our institutions and programmes. It is intended to assist staff regarding best practice in safeguarding children, by drawing attention to the areas of risk and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

Behaviours that are considered to be inappropriate conduct are discrimination, sexual harassment, and abuse (in any of its forms: negligence, physical abuse, emotional abuse or sexual abuse). Any and all of these are strictly prohibited in all of the institutions and programmes of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ because they are contrary to the moral principles of the Church, and potentially criminal actions.

Therefore, all religious, consecrated members, educators, administrative employees and volunteers must take responsibility for implementing these guidelines.

3.2.1 GENERAL CONDUCT

The members, volunteers and staff of our institutions will always treat children and young people with respect. They should have a welcoming and friendly demeanor, but avoid anything too familiar that would encourage a blurring of the appropriate boundaries between themselves and those they serve. There is no place for sarcasm, derogatory remarks, offensive comments or any other inappropriate conduct that may result in emotional distress to a child.

The members, volunteers and staff of our institutions will always treat children and young people in a consistent manner without inappropriate familiarity or spending 'special time' with any particular individual or group of individuals.

The following examples of behaviour may suggest an individual is not being treated in a consistent manner:

- Giving gifts to a child, when it is not considered common practice with other children or young people.
- Leaving a child constantly out of activities.
- Showing special favours.
- Allowing an individual to overstep rules without a justified cause.
- Sharing secrets.
- Inconsistent concessions or privileges.

The members, volunteers and staff will always engage with children and young people in an open manner.

- They will not verbally abuse any individual.
- They will not engage in, or tolerate any behaviour - verbal, psychological or physical - that could be construed as bullying or abusive.

Behaviour that may cause psychological harm to a child or young person must never be engaged in:

- Targeted and sustained criticism, belittling or teasing.
- Excessive or unreasonable demands.
- Hostility, verbal abuse, personal rejection or scapegoating.
- Using inappropriate locations for social isolation as punishment

The members, volunteers and staff will avoid inappropriate language and/or sexually suggestive actions, gestures, comments, including telling jokes of a sexual nature, either towards these individuals or among themselves.

Inappropriate actions include:

- Obscene language of a sexual nature.
- Suggestive remarks or actions.
- Jokes of a sexual nature.
- Obscene gestures.
- Unwarranted and inappropriate touching.
- Sexual exhibitionism.
- Undressing in front of children or young people.
- Possession, distribution or display of pornography in any of the congregation's institutions.
- Electronic transmission of messages or files which are sexually explicit, offensive or contain inappropriate jokes.
- Sending text (sms) messages which are sexually explicit, offensive or contain inappropriate jokes.

The members, volunteers and staff will take great caution and care should it be necessary to have a conversation regarding sexual matters or personal relationships with a child or young person.

They will use age/appropriate language, media materials and activities.

In activities such as trips, club meetings, and pilgrimages, they will ensure a ratio of adults to children and young people consistent with the recommendation of *Safeguarding Children*:

3 to 7 years

Two members of staff to 8 children (6 children for outdoor activity).

8 years and over

Two members of staff to 20 children (15 children for outdoor activity).

There should be one additional staff member for every 10 children.

At events such as Family Days, where children and their parents attend the activity together, children are their parents' responsibility and remain under their supervision at all times. Organisers of events must ensure that parents are made aware of their responsibilities by posting signs to this effect. If however, particular activities are organised for children in a separate area then the policy guidelines and supervision ratios apply.

Children and young people should not be permitted to work or remain in schools, clubs or on any of our institution's property or buildings unless there are at least two adults present.

Best practice in relation to travel with children and young people should be observed. Personnel should not undertake any car or minibus journey alone with a child or young person. If, in certain circumstances, only one adult is available, there should be a minimum of two children or young people present for the entire journey. In the event of an emergency, where it is necessary to make a journey alone with a child, a record of this should be made and the child's parent or guardian should be informed as soon as possible.

The members, volunteers and staff will maintain adequate, gender-appropriate, supervision for males and females.

They will not give alcohol, tobacco, drugs or other illegal substances to children or young people under any circumstances.

They will give medication to children only with parental permission.

They will not smoke while having responsibility for, or in the presence of, those in their care. At formal meals in boarding schools, those who are directly supervising the students may not consume alcohol, even when other adults are doing so at the head table.

3.2.2 RESPECT FOR PHYSICAL INTEGRITY

The physical integrity of children and young people must be respected at all times. The members, volunteers and staff of our institutions will not use corporal punishment under any circumstances.

Corporal punishment involves the application of physical force to punish or correct an individual unless that physical contact is reasonable and necessary for the protection of any person.

The following are examples of forms of punishment and behaviour management which are unacceptable:

- Using an object (ruler, book, marker etc.) to gain a child or young person's attention in a hostile or an inappropriate manner.
- Restraining a child or young person for any purpose other than imminent risk of harm to self or others.
- Hitting or kicking.
- Pushing, pulling, shoving, grabbing, pinching, or harsh poking.
- Shaking or throwing.
- Intimidation.
- Swearing.
- Using sarcasm to humiliate.
- Locking in a confined space.
- Refusing biological needs as a means of punishment.
- Applying painful or noxious conditions.
- Criticising the individual instead of the individual's action.
- Practices which cause an individual to feel alienated.

The members, volunteers and staff of our institutions must not engage in inappropriate physical contact of any kind with the children and young people in their care – including rough physical play, physical reprimand and horseplay (tickling, wrestling).

3.2.3 RESPECT FOR PRIVACY

Particular care is to be taken regarding privacy in locations such as toilets, changing areas etc. Thus, tasks of a personal nature (for example, helping with toileting, washing or changing clothing) should not be carried out for children or young people if they can undertake these tasks themselves.

The members, volunteers and staff of our institutions will seek permission from parents/guardians for the taking / use of photographs, the generating of computer images and the making/showing of video recordings of events.

Photographs of children or young people must never be taken while they are in changing areas (for example, in a locker room or bathing facility) or in bathing suits.

They will not give a child's personal details to others. Only the named leader will hold personal details of the children.

They will only contact or reply to contact from children and young people (by phone, text or email) following receipt of the written consent of the child's parents/guardians. When using text or email they will copy the child's parent.

Should a young person make contact, request to become an adult's named friend on a social networking site or request that an adult become a friend on their site, this request should be declined unless you have written consent from the child's parents.

Members, volunteers and staff should be natural around others in a manner befitting their role. Therefore, during personal interactions, appropriate touching includes:

- Handshakes for greeting minors and adults
 - Hugs (only as an initial greeting or a goodbye)
 - Bending down to receive a hug as a greeting from small children in the presence of another adult
2. Kisses (only as an initial greeting or a goodbye)
 - Receiving a kiss on the cheek or forehead from small children in the presence of another adult
 3. High fives or a slap of hands minors or adults, in the context of sports celebration

When physical contact with a child or young person is a necessary part of the teaching/learning experience, caution must be exercised to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable for

the duty to be performed and should be performed in an open manner. Inappropriate touching in any form is unacceptable.

Some examples include but are not limited to:

- Touching another person’s genitals, buttocks or chest (excepting of course in a medical emergency)
- Any type of massage or rubbing of the shoulders
- Putting a hand on another’s knee or thigh

Assessing a child who is injured or ill may necessitate touching. He/she should be advised of what is happening. If possible, another adult should be present. In an emergency situation where this type of help is required, parents should be fully informed as soon as is reasonably possible.

Teaching sport, music or other activities may require the physical handling of an individual to demonstrate a particular action or skill.

Other forms of physical contact which may be considered appropriate (all touching should be age-appropriate):

- Comforting an upset child or young person.
- Guiding a child. Tapping a child on the shoulder to gain attention if necessary when verbal requests were unsuccessful.
- Protecting a child from imminent danger to himself/herself or to others.

3.2.4 MEETINGS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

If the pastoral care of a child or young person necessitates meeting alone with them, such meetings should not be held in an isolated environment. The times and designated locations for meetings should allow for transparency and accountability, such as in a room with a clear glass panel or window (or if these are lacking, with the door left open), in buildings where other people are present. When it is necessary to visit the home of a child or young person, professional boundaries must be observed at all times.

3.2.5 CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OR DISABILITY

Children with special needs or disability may depend on adults more than other children for their care and safety, and so sensitivity and clear communication are particularly important.

Where it is necessary to carry out tasks of a personal nature for a child with special needs, this should be done with the full understanding and consent of parents or guardians.

In carrying out such personal care tasks, sensitivity must be shown to the child and the tasks should be undertaken with the utmost discretion.

Any care task of a personal nature which a child or young person can do for themselves should not be undertaken by a worker.

3.2.6 VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Vulnerable children may depend on adults more than other children for their care and safety. Sensitivity and clear communication are of utmost importance.

Workers should be aware that vulnerable children may be more likely than other children to be bullied or subjected to other forms of abuse, and may also be less clear about physical and emotional boundaries. It is particularly important that vulnerable children should be carefully listened to, since they may have difficulty in expressing their concerns and in order that the importance of what they say is not underestimated.

3.2.7 PARENTAL CONSENT

Our Institutions must ensure that signed consent from parents or guardians is obtained prior to the participation of children and young people in events, activities and groups.

Parents or guardians should be asked to indicate if their children have any specific dietary requirements, medical needs or special needs.

3.2.8 DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Should a child or young person manifest severely disruptive behaviour, it should be dealt with by more than one member of staff or volunteer.

Use of physical restraint is only acceptable in situations where there is an immediate risk of harm to the young person requiring restraint or to others. In certain circumstances, restraining a young person to protect property may be appropriate as a last resort.

A staff member/ volunteer is not required to put himself or herself into a situation where his or her personal safety may be at risk in order to restrain a young person. If a staff member judges that he or she is not physically capable of intervening to restrain a student who is in imminent danger of harming himself, herself or another person, that staff member should seek help immediately.

A record should be made describing what happened, the circumstances of the incident, who was involved, whether any injury was sustained, or property damaged, and how the situation was resolved. The incident and record should be reviewed by the school director or senior person in charge.

In particular situations, further measures may need to be taken and parents or guardians may need to be involved.

3.2.9 HEALTH AND SAFETY

Adequate and appropriate supervision must be provided for all events and activities organised for children and young people.

Arrangements and procedures for leaving activities or centres should be explicit.

In places such as changing areas, toilets and showers, separate provision should be made for boys and girls.

There should be adequate and gender-appropriate supervision of boys and girls in such areas.

There should be regular health and safety reviews of facilities, procedures and practices.

3.2.10 TRIPS AWAY FROM HOME

All trips, including day trips, overnight stays and holidays, need careful advance planning, including adequate provision for safety in regard to transport, facilities, activities and emergencies. Adequate risk assessment on the venue and insurance should be in place.

Written consent by a parent or guardian specifically for each trip and related activities must be obtained well in advance.

A copy of the itinerary and contact telephone numbers should be made available to parents and guardians.

There must be adequate, gender-appropriate supervision for boys and girls.

Arrangements and procedures must be put in place to ensure that rules and appropriate boundaries are maintained in the relaxed environment of trips away.

The provision of appropriate and adequate sleeping arrangements should be ensured in advance of the trip.

Sleeping areas for boys and girls should be separate and supervised by two adults of the same sex as the group being supervised.

At least two adults should be present in the area of the dormitories in which children or young people are sleeping. Under no circumstances should an adult share a bedroom with a young person, except if he or she is the parent of the child.

If, in an exceptional emergency situation, an adult considers it necessary to be in a children's dormitory or bedroom without another adult being present they should (a) immediately inform another adult in a position of responsibility and (b) make a diary note of the circumstances.

3.2.11 COMPUTERS

Where a computer in our institutions can be accessed by children or young people, it should be accessible only through the use of a username and password unique to each child. Computers which can be accessed by children or young people should always employ appropriate filtering software.

However, some limited use of the Institution's information technology for "surfing" the Web, or for the sending of limited e-mails will be allowed, so long as those activities do not violate other policies or procedures, and do not interfere with the employee's job responsibilities.

Using the Institution's computers or information technology to send chain letter, spam or to send, receive, print, display, perform or otherwise disseminate material that, to a reasonable person may be abusive, obscene, pornographic, defamatory, harassing, grossly offensive, vulgar, threatening or malicious is strictly prohibited.

HOW TO DEAL WITH ALLEGED BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct outlines the minimum levels of behaviour required of members, volunteers and staff. A breach of the Code of Conduct may not constitute abuse in any form and may be a result of carelessness and poor practice

Examples of poor practice would include the following:

- Not treating a child equally and consistently
- Poor supervision
- Consistently shouting at children or young people

Where poor practice is a concern or has been observed, it should be reported to the Director of the institution or activity.

If a breach is deemed not to be of an extreme nature, i.e. poor practice rather than deliberate breach, the Director will inform the person against whom the breach is alleged how they have breached the Code of Conduct and that they must in the future adhere to all aspects of the Code.

If the breach is deemed to be of a more serious or re-occurring nature, advice from one of the Designated Persons may be sought on how to proceed.

For employees, all breaches in the Code of Conduct will invoke the disciplinary process.

STANDARD FOUR: TRAINING AND EDUCATION FOR KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

Following the recruitment of a new employee or volunteer, there are key elements of good practice which should be implemented to ensure the protection of children and young people.

4.1. INDUCTION

A well-planned induction programme can help the new employee or volunteer's successful integration into an organisation or group. This programme may include: introductions to colleagues; immediate training in the organisation's child safeguarding policy; explanations of day-to-day processes; expectations; conditions and procedures for dealing with discipline; procedures for dealing with grievances and allegations; familiarisation with the ethos of the organisation or group. Familiarity with lines of management and supervision are particularly important.

4.2. TRIAL OR PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Confirmation of appointment should be made subject to the successful completion of a trial or probationary period, the length of which should be decided at the outset (usually six months with a review at three months). This gives an opportunity to assess the suitability of the new member of staff and his or her commitment to the organisation's policies and practices in relation to the safety of children.

4.3. TRAINING

All Church personnel should be offered training in child safeguarding policies and procedures, including information about how to respond to suspicions and allegations of child abuse.

To maintain high standards and good practice generally, training should be provided on an ongoing basis. The nature of the training will depend on the range of services provided by the group or organisation and the needs of staff and volunteers.

4.4. SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT

Supervision of personnel is an essential part of ensuring the welfare of children and young people. Supervision will include the opportunity to provide feedback and support. This will involve arranging to observe those working with children and young people at regular intervals, on their own or in small groups, and giving members of staff the opportunity to raise any questions they may have, to highlight any problems they are experiencing, or present any suggestions for change that they may

wish to make. Supervision also allows managers to assess the need for change in policies or practice, or for additional training.

It is important that supervision procedures include the opportunity to identify and address sources of anxiety or stress for staff and for staff to raise any concerns they may have regarding a child or young person.

STANDARD FIVE: COMMUNICATING THE CHURCH'S SAFEGUARDING MESSAGE

The Legion's policies for safeguarding children will be more effective the more they are known. The Legion of Christ is committed to being transparent and open in the effort to safeguard children. Therefore:

- 5.1. The child protection policy must be openly displayed and available to everyone.
- 5.2. The Child Safeguarding Representative in each Legionary institution should ensure that the children served there are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse and who to speak to if they have concerns.
- 5.3. Everyone in the Legionary institutions should know who the Child Safeguarding Representative in their institution is as well as the Designated Persons and how to contact them.
- 5.4. The Child Safeguarding Representative in each Legionary institution should ensure that personnel are provided with contact details of local child protection services, such as Health and Social Care Trusts/ Health Service Executive, PSNI, An Garda Síochána, telephone help lines, the Designated Persons.
- 5.5. The Designated Persons will establish links with statutory child protection agencies and Church organisations to develop good working relationships in order to keep children safe.

STANDARD SIX: ACCESS TO ADVICE AND SUPPORT

6.1. SUPPORT FOR THE ALLEGED VICTIMS

As Pope Benedict said to American bishops in April 2008, “Rightly, you attach priority to showing compassion and care to the victims. It is your God-given responsibility as pastors to bind up the wounds caused by every breach of trust, to foster healing, to promote reconciliation and to reach out with loving concern to those so seriously wronged.” The experience of abuse is devastating, leaving emotional scars that can last a life time. It is particularly jarring when the perpetrator is a cleric or holds any form of Church authority—this can seriously affect one’s relationship with God and the Church.

If someone brings forward an allegation of abuse they will be treated with the utmost respect and compassion. Every allegation will be taken seriously and those reporting such instances should be given authentic pastoral support. Any one bringing forward such a complaint should be encouraged to report it as well to the civil authorities.

The Legion of Christ and Regnum Christi is committed to supporting victims on their road toward healing and will do everything in its power to help them regain their dignity and overcome the great burden that having been abused imposed upon their lives. Our policy of pastoral outreach, carried out with the guidance of the individual charged by the Legion of Christ with helping those who bring forward a complaint of this nature, will include providing resources for healing for anyone bringing forward an allegation of having suffered abuse as a minor by a Legionary or consecrated member or in one of our institutions. This will apply when the complaint is lodged. When the investigation is concluded, if the complaint was found to have merit, we will work with the victim to determine how to best support his or her process of healing and reconciliation.

6.2 SUPPORT FOR THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR

If an allegation of abuse is brought against a member of staff or volunteer, the Designated Person will make every effort to ensure that he/she will be offered the services of an Advisor who will provide pastoral care.

Please see Appendix IV for details regarding access and advice for Legionaries and consecrated members of Regnum Christi.

STANDARD SEVEN: IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

No policy is successful without consistent follow up. In this section the various officers in charge of its implementation are described and named (as of June 2011).

7.1. OFFICERS

7.1.1. DESIGNATED PERSONS

The role of Designated Person for the Legionaries of Christ in Ireland is carried out by Fr Raymund Cosgrave L.C. and Fr. Michael Mullan L.C. Fr. Cosgrave may be contacted at telephone number 001 914 450-7173 and his e-mail address is rcosgrave@legionaries.org. Fr. Mullan may be contacted at telephone number 086 8343126 and his email address is mmullan@legionaries.org. Their task is described in the national guidelines “*Safeguarding Children*” as follows:

- To hear concerns relating to safeguarding, including any disclosures or allegations of abuse, and take responsibility for managing the response to that concern or disclosure, from start to finish. This includes the preliminary internal inquiry and referral to the Health Services Executive and/or An Garda Síochána.
- To ensure that the person raising a concern, disclosing abuse, or making an allegation and anyone who is implicated by that are regularly informed about the progress of the inquiry process
- To record all steps undertaken as part of these procedures.

7.1.2. CHILD SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVE

The role of Child Safeguarding Representative will be to promote the safeguarding of children by:

- Setting up and overseeing the implementation of the Legion of Christ Child Safeguarding policy within each of its organisations;
- Raising awareness of what child safeguarding is and ensuring that any activities run within their organisation are provided in a manner which ensures the safety and well-being of the children involved (e.g. appropriate level of supervision is in place for the activity, or that insurance has been provided, and so on);
- Ensuring that the contact details of the Designated Person are widely publicised.

The Designated Person will call a meeting with the Child Safeguarding Representatives once each semester to review the policy and its implementation as well as to discuss any new or ongoing concerns regarding child protection.

7.1.3. REVIEW BOARD

Territorial Directors of the Legion of Christ in Ireland and the United States can count on the assistance of a Review Board. The members of the Board are a resource to provide input regarding the implementation of policy. The Territorial Director may also ask their assistance in analysing particular cases.

7.2. AUDITS

The Legion will undertake an internal audit on an annual basis to determine the strengths and weaknesses in our apostolates and ministries and thus ensure ongoing compliance with the policies for the safeguarding of children.

To foster objectivity, every three years, the Legion will seek the assistance of the National Board for Safeguarding Children to conduct this audit.

The National Office will also audit policy, procedures and practice every five years.

**LEGION OF CHRIST SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY STATEMENT
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

We believe that each child or young person is created in God's image to 'have life in its fullness' (John 10:10).

All children and young people have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured, cared for and safeguarded. This right is embedded in Gospel values, in international law and in domestic law.

We, in the Legion of Christ, Regnum Christi and affiliated institutions are committed to a practice which strives to protect children and young people from harm. Furthermore we are fully committed to provide a caring, supportive, safe and a truly Christian environment based on Gospel charity and the respect of the individuality of the person.

The institutions of the Legionaries of Christ and Regnum Christi collaborate with parents in the education of their children. The directors of the institutions will put in place such measures to create a safe environment conducive to the education and integral formation of the students.

All those affiliated with our institutions (members, staff and volunteers) will be properly trained in accordance with the contents of our Child Safeguarding policy and procedures and will adopt the code of conduct.

All knowledge or suspicion of abuse will be reported without delay to the civil authorities.

I have read and been duly informed of the policy and procedures of the Legion of Christ, Regnum Christi and their affiliated institutions and agree to abide by their procedures and codes of conduct.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____