



# Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding and Protection Policy and Procedures.

**Parish of St. Thomas the Apostle, Laurel  
Lodge, Dublin 15.**

September 2019

## Contents

### Reflection and Leadership Prayer

1. Terminology used in the document .....	1
2. Introduction .....	1
3. Standards for Safeguarding Children in our Parish .....	2
4. St Thomas the Apostle Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults guiding principles .....	3
5. Basic procedures to implement our Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy .....	4
6. Code of Conduct and Behaviour for the Parish of St. Thomas the Apostle .....	5
a. Aims of the Code .....	5
b. Code of Conduct Guidelines .....	5
c. Guidelines for managing disruptive behavior .....	6
d. Guidelines for dealing with misbehavior .....	6
e. Unacceptable behavior .....	7
7. Operational Guidelines .....	8
a. What is bullying? .....	8
b. What is Harassment? .....	8
c. St Thomas the Apostle Anti-Bullying Code .....	8
d. Steps that can be used to counter bullying or harassment .....	8
e. What is the “No Blame” Approach .....	8
f. Making proper arrangements when organizing activities and outings .....	9
g. Guidelines for Trips away from home involving children .....	9
h. Checklist for each trip must include (not exhaustive) .....	9 - 10
i. Guidelines for management of personal care for children with disabilities .....	11
j. Guidelines for all types of personal care the main points to consider are: .....	11
k. Guidelines for the use of photography at Parish based activities/events .....	11
l. Guidelines for the event manager or coordinator .....	11 - 12
8. Communicating with Children and young people .....	12
9. Dealing with a disclosure of abuse from a young person .....	13 - 14
10. Parish Safeguarding Representative .....	15
11. The role of the St Thomas the Apostle Safeguarding children team .....	15
12. The Safeguarding Team .....	15
a. Contact details for the Parish Safeguarding Children Team .....	15
b. Child Protection Contact Numbers .....	16
13. Safeguarding training .....	17
14. Garda Vetting .....	17
15. Visiting clergy .....	17
Appendix 1 - Child Protection procedures of the Archdiocese of Dublin .....	18
Appendix 2 – List of forms in use in the Parish of St Thomas the Apostle .....	18
Appendix 3 - The Health and Safety Policy Statement of the Parish of St Thomas the Apostle .....	19-20
Appendix 4 - Guidelines for the booking of the day chapel by Church based and Non Church based groups .....	21

## Reflection and Leadership prayer



*In our hands children see Eucharist "Take place..."  
On our faces they see the mystery of faith reflected...  
And from within our hearts they sense the summons of a greater love...*

*Adapted from Pope John Paul II, Holy Thursday Letter 2004*

### **Leadership Prayer**

*May our ministry within our parish community be an opportunity to support all those who work with children and vulnerable adults to help them deepen their faith and build their relationship with their faith community.*

*"Through our eyes may they see the mystery of faith revealed and from our hearts may they sense a summons to a greater love."*

*Corinthians 1:13*

## 1. Terminology used in this document

**A child** is a person under the age of eighteen

**Safeguarding** refers to those measures taken to create and maintain safe environments for children.

**Child Protection** consists of the work of recognizing, responding to and reporting concerns that a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected.

**Harm** refers to assault, ill-treatment, sexual abuse or neglect of a child.

The **civil authorities** referred to in this document are Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, and An Garda Síochana. These authorities have different responsibilities in relation to the protection of children. Tusla assesses current risk to children and advises on the implementation of appropriate protective measures. An Garda Síochana investigates alleged crimes and then refers cases to the Director of Public Prosecutions who decides on prosecutions.

## 2. Introduction

We want to make our parish the safest place possible for our children and vulnerable adults. This manual is intended to help you to implement the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policies for our Parish. It contains:

- procedures
- contact details,
- List of forms in use in the Parish of St Thomas the Apostle
- other information.

It is important for Ministry Co-ordinators to ensure that all adult members of their group are aware of the contents of the manual i.e. policies and procedures. All volunteers should be familiar with these from the Parish Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult Awareness information sessions. If any volunteer has not attended a Safeguarding Children Awareness information session within the last 3 years please forward their name to the Parish Office or Safeguarding Children Team at [safeguardingchildrenteam@laurellodgeparish.ie](mailto:safeguardingchildrenteam@laurellodgeparish.ie) and they will be invited along to the next planned session.

The Ministry Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that the following forms are completed and filed in the manual -

- Parental/Guardian Consent Forms
- Safeguarding Children Audit Form
- Accident/Incident Forms
- Parish Activity Attendance Sheets
- Volunteer Contact Details

Sample forms are included at the back of the document if required.

Note for Children's Ministries: All completed forms should be stored in the back of your Ministry folder. Please ensure that this Ministry folder is stored in a secure location. At the end of the year the Ministry folder and all relevant forms should be returned to the Parish Office.

### **3. Standards for Safeguarding Children in our Parish**

The child safeguarding policy of the Irish Catholic Church is set out in *Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016* and contains seven safeguarding standards, namely:

Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

Standard 2: Procedures for Responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or Allegations

Standard 3: Care and Support for the Complainant

Standard 4: Care and Management of the Respondent

Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe

Standard 6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

Standard 7: Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards

#### **Why use standards?**

The standards described in this guidance document represent the expected level of performance that all parts of the Church should reach.

#### **Meeting the standards will protect:**

- Children - by ensuring they are in a good safe environment and minimizing risk of abuse to them if allegations and suspicions of further abuse do arise
- Church personnel – by clarifying how they are expected to behave with children and what to do if there are allegations and suspicions about the safety of a child
- The integrity of the Church and its missions - by making clear its commitment to keeping children safe and by modelling best practice

The link below is the link to the Child Safeguarding Statement of the Dublin Archdiocese as required of 'relevant services' under the *Children First Act 2015* which the Parish of St Thomas the Apostle is required to follow.

<http://csps.dublindiocese.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2018/03/Diocesan-Safeguarding-Document-2018.pdf>

#### **4. St Thomas the Apostle Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults guiding principles**

We in the Parish of St Thomas the Apostle, Laurel Lodge, value and encourage the participation of children and vulnerable adults in all parish activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional and social development.

We recognise the dignity and rights of all children and vulnerable adults and are committed to ensuring their protection and support.

In keeping with this, we will work to do all in our power to create safe environments for children and vulnerable adults in order to secure their protection and enable their full participation in the life of the Church.

We do this by

- Adopting a child and vulnerable adult centred approach;
- Obtaining parental/ guardian permission for the involvement of children in Church activities;
- Choosing carefully those who work with children and vulnerable adults;
- Ensuring that parishworkers and volunteers behave appropriately towards children and vulnerable adults;
- Encouraging positive behavior in children and vulnerable adults and adopting strategies to prevent bullying;
- Making proper arrangements when organising activities and outings;
- Communicating appropriately with children and vulnerable adults;
- Keeping good records.

## 5. Basic procedures to implement our Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

The Parish of St. Thomas the Apostle, Laurel Lodge undertakes to have in place:

- Procedures for recruitment and overseeing adult leaders
  - ⇒ Completed Volunteer Application form including signed Declaration Form regarding the existence of any previous convictions
  - ⇒ Completed Vetting Invitation Forms from the National Vetting Bureau (NVB), (formerly the Garda Central Vetting Unit).

***All forms will be treated as being strictly private and confidential. The forms will be addressed to The Parish Secretary. The Volunteer Form will be retained securely in the Parish Office. A copy of the Vetting Invitation form will also be retained until the vetting process has been completed by the NVB and the result communicated to the Parish. The original Vetting Invitation form along with the copies of identity documents will be sent to the Archdiocese office where copies of them will be retained in electronic format. These will not be retained by the Parish. The result of the NVB Vetting process will be retained securely in the Parish office.***

- A general Code of Conduct for all adult leaders & children.
- A specific Code of Conduct for all away trips including pilgrimages, day trips and other events.
- A Code of Behaviour to deal with any disciplinary issues raised by children, vulnerable adults; adult leaders or parents/guardians.
- Appropriate supervision ratios of adults to children/vulnerable adults while maintaining the practice of ensuring that no child/vulnerable adult is left alone with an adult.
- A clearly communicated Accident/Emergency plan.
- An Awareness programme for all adult volunteers in the areas of “Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults”.
- Adequate record keeping processes including;
  - ⇒ Signed parental/guardian consent forms for each participating child.
  - ⇒ Contact information for parents/guardians.
  - ⇒ Medical information and treatment permission as appropriate for all children/vulnerable adults.
  - ⇒ Incident /Accident Report forms.
  - ⇒ Programme /attendance records.
  - ⇒ Administration records i.e. List of volunteers containing contact details, date of NVB Vetting and date of attendance at full day or Awareness Sessions
- A designated Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult Team assigned to assist with any “Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection” concerns and/or complaints raised by children, adult leaders or parents/guardians.

## **6. Code of Conduct and Behaviour of the Parish of St Thomas the Apostle**

### ***a. Aims of the code***

- To create an environment where all partners in the Parish (i.e. children, vulnerable adults, volunteers and parents) feel safe, respected and valued.
- To promote self-discipline.
- To create an environment where the children, vulnerable adults and volunteers can reach their creative and intellectual potential without disruption.
- To have a framework in place (i.e. the code of discipline) to help the group run smoothly.
- To establish effective means of communication between children, vulnerable adults, volunteers, parents/guardians and parish team.
- To help children and vulnerable adults to acquire and develop moral and ethical values and a respect for the belief and values of others.

### ***b. Code of Conduct Guidelines***

- Treat all people with courtesy, respect and dignity;
- Provide children with good role models;
- Operate within Church and State child safeguarding and protection principles and guidelines;
- Be visible to others when working with children and vulnerable adults and always maintain the practice of ensuring that no young person or vulnerable adult is left alone with an adult;
- Challenge and report abusive and potentially abusive behaviour;
- Develop a culture where children and vulnerable adults can talk openly, ask questions and express any worries or concerns they may have;
- Respect each child and vulnerable adult's boundaries;
- Parish and diocesan workers and volunteers work in partnership with parents and guardians and share information with them;
- Communications for child group member should be made to parents/guardians only and communication for vulnerable adults to their carer. See however Section 7(f) on page 9 for communications with teenagers.
- Have clearly appointed leaders within each group whom children and vulnerable adults can approach and with whom they can raise any concerns that they may have;
- Plan a duty roster of leaders to ensure adequate supervision of children and vulnerable adults at all times. Care will be taken to ensure that when working with mixed gender groups staff and adult volunteers of appropriate gender will work in pairs. The appropriate supervision ratio of adults to children and



vulnerable adults is **one adult to every eight children/ vulnerable adults plus another adult i.e. a minimum of two adults for any group.**

- Engage with children and vulnerable adults in an open manner and take care not to show favouritism;
- Bring any concerns and/or complaints to the immediate attention of the designated “Safeguarding” team in the Parish; The designated team will respond promptly to all concerns and liaise with the required civil and Church authorities;
- Pre-check all accommodation and transport arrangements for away trips where possible;
- Become familiar with our parish Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy, Basic Procedures to implement The Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult Policy, Code of Behaviour and Code of Conduct Guidelines for Adult Leaders and for young people.

**c. *Guidelines for managing disruptive behaviour***

- Be aware of your own responses and reactions.
- Remain calm and composed.
- Intervene immediately; do not allow things to escalate.
- Identify the specific nature of the problem.
- Identify, if possible, what gave rise to the problem.
- Try to deal with the situation sensitively for all concerned.
- Work with what is positive.
- Do not compete with obvious resistance.
- Identify who owns the problem.
- Involve the group, if appropriate, in the solution.
- Invoke agreed ground rules.
- Affirm progress.
- Seek help if necessary.
- If of a serious nature, record the incident.

**d. *Guidelines for dealing with misbehaviour.***

- Verbal reprimand to include reasoning and advising how to improve
- Temporary separation, within the group, from other children/vulnerable adults until calm and ready to resume work. This strategy is to be used at the discretion of the volunteer depending on the situation.
- A record should be kept of continuous challenging behaviour.
- The parents/guardians are informed depending on the seriousness of the challenging behaviour.

e. ***Unacceptable behaviour***

**It is never acceptable to:**

- Abuse a child or young person in any way;
  - Physically chastise a child, young person or vulnerable adult;
  - Develop a relationship with a particular child, young person or vulnerable adult that is exclusive of others;
  - Place a child, young person or vulnerable adult at risk of harm;
  - Speak to a child, young person or vulnerable adult or behave in a manner that is offensive; developmentally inappropriate or sexually provocative;
  - Condone unacceptable behaviour in a child, young person or vulnerable adult;
  - Discriminate against any individual or group;
  - Ask a child, young person or vulnerable adult to keep a secret.
- 
- Children or vulnerable adults will not be permitted to consume alcohol, smoke or abuse other substances while participating in activities in keeping with civil law in Ireland.
  - Leaders will not consume alcohol, smoke or abuse other substances in keeping with civil law in Ireland, while having responsibility for or in the presence of children and vulnerable adults.
  - Physical contact between children and vulnerable adults and leaders should only occur where appropriate for the safety and wellbeing of the child or vulnerable adult.
  - Leaders should not engage in rough play or undertake any task of a personal nature with/for children and vulnerable adults except in cases of medical necessity when the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult depends on it.
  - Except in the case of emergency, volunteers should not give lifts in their cars to individual children and/or vulnerable adults. At least two children or vulnerable adults should be in the car with the volunteer at all times.

## 7. Operational Guidelines

This section contains guidelines to support leaders of children's groups within the parish.

### **a) What is Bullying?**

Bullying may be characterized as a pattern of offensive, intimidating, non-inclusive, malicious, insulting or humiliating behaviour. It can also be a silent and subtle abuse of power or authority which tends to undermine an individual or a group of individuals, gradually eroding their confidence and capability, which may cause them to suffer stress and or a sense of isolation.

### **b) What is Harassment?**

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. This policy covers, but is not limited to, harassment on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, belief, disability or age.

### **c) St. Thomas the Apostle Anti-Bullying Code**

Our parish provides a place where

- Every member can feel secure.
- It is known that bullying is not acceptable behaviour.
- Name calling is not tolerated.
- No one suffers abuse of any nature.
- No one is victimised.
- Each member is supported and listened to.
- It is each member's responsibility to ensure that all are treated equally.
- Solutions to problems are the concern of all.

### **d) Steps that can be used to counter bullying or harassment**

- Use children as a positive resource in countering bullying and to change the culture of the group to a "permission to tell" culture rather than a "might is right" one.
- Teach children to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly new or different children.
- Offer victim immediate support and put the "No blame" approach into operation.
- Never tell a young person to ignore bullying, they can't ignore it, it hurts too much.
- Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game.
- Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault.

### **e) What is the "No Blame" approach?**

Step 1 – Interview the victim

Step 2 – Meet with all involved.

Step 3 – Explain the problem – *(Take note of what the issue is)*

Step 4 – Share the responsibility

Step 5 – Ask the group for their ideas – *(Take note of agreed course of action)*

Step 6 – Leave it to them.

Step 7 – Meet them again

**f) Making proper arrangements when organising activities and outings**

Arrangements should be made with the parents or guardians of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is not acceptable to make arrangements with children, young people or vulnerable adults without consulting and informing the parents or guardians. If the parents or guardians give their consent, messages concerning arrangements (for example, the time and venue of the next choir practice) can be sent to the mobile phones of teenagers provided they are simultaneously sent to the phone of the parents or guardians. The physical environment in which an activity is due to take place should be assessed for possible hazards and the necessary steps taken to minimise the risk of accident or injury.

**g) Guidelines for Trips Away From Home involving children**

Pilgrimages, retreats and social trips are an important part of the Church's pastoral and spiritual engagement with children. The objective is the full participation of everybody on the trip in a safe, enjoyable and fulfilling manner. Those involved in the planning and delivery of such trips should adhere to the same guidance as outlined for other activities with children within the Church. However, the following additional procedures should also be observed.

- All trips away involving children must be advised to and planned with the authorisation of the Parish Council.
- All trips must have adequate, appropriate adult supervision, ensuring that child/supervisor ratios are observed as regards both numbers and gender. 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 insurance should be in place.
- A copy of the itinerary and contact telephone numbers should be made available to parents/ guardians of the children.

**h) Checklist for each trip must include (not exhaustive):**

- Defined objective of the trip
- Full timetable
- Designated Group leader
- Adult supervisors with appropriate and specified children/adult ratios. Appropriate supervision ratio of adults to children is **one adult to every eight children plus another adult i.e. a minimum of two adults for any group.**
- Adequate insurance must be in place.
- Written consent must be obtained from each parent or guardian for each trip for each child. Such written consent must contain a contact number for the parent/guardian and relevant medical information relating to participating children. This information must be in the possession of the Group leader at all times.
- A detailed written consent from parent/guardian consenting to the administration of all necessary medication, to include dosages and times of administration.

- Well in advance of the trip, full details of the trip including its objective, itinerary, adult supervisors, contact numbers of group leaders, sleeping arrangements and an outline of the activities involved must be provided to each child's parent/guardian.
- Each participant (children and adults) must be made aware of and sign up to the Code of Conduct for parish based child based activities.
- An agreed disciplinary procedure must be advised to all participants and implemented in a fair and equitable manner.

#### **While on the trip**

- Participants must abide by the Code of Conduct.
- Adequate age and gender-appropriate supervision must be provided at all times for boys and girls.
- Particular attention should be given to ensuring that the privacy of children and young people is respected when they are away on trips.
- The provision of appropriate and adequate sleeping arrangements should be ensured in advance of the trip.
- There should be separate male and female sleeping areas and appropriate supervision of them.
- The tasks required of those taking part should be appropriate to their age. For example, a young person under 18 should not be asked to carry out personal care tasks for others unless this is discussed and agreed with a parent or guardian (for example, where siblings are travelling together).
- There must always be an adequate number of adults and/or trained instructors (as may be necessary) in attendance throughout the trip.
- Unless in an emergency, any one adult may not be alone with one child at any time. Group based activities should be the norm.
- In the event of an accident and a need to visit a medical facility, at least two adults should accompany the child and the parents must be immediately informed.
- In an emergency situation if an adult considers it necessary to be alone with a child they should:
  - a. Immediately inform another adult in a position of responsibility and
  - b. Make a diary note of the circumstances and
  - c. Advise the Group Leader of the circumstances.
- There should be a named person to whom all concerns and complaints are referred and all such concerns and complaints should be followed up in a timely and efficient manner and communicated to the Parish Safeguarding Children Team

#### **On completion of the trip**

- The Group leader must provide a full report to the Parish Council.
- Responsibility for all children must be handed over to the parent/guardian on return and any incidents or accidents fully conveyed to the parents/guardians in accordance with all child centred parish procedures.

**i) *Guidelines for management of personal care for children with disabilities.***

In the interest of the safety of the child parents/guardians are requested to make full disclosure of any disability/special needs of the child.

Personal care is defined as any procedure involving touching, or carrying out what could be described as a personal task. Apart from helping someone to eat and drink, the following list contains the major areas of assisting a child with a disability:

- Dressing or undressing.
- Assisting a disabled child to use toilet facilities.
- Cleaning up after soiling.
- Washing, bathing or showering.

**j) *Guidelines for all types of personal care the main points to consider are:***

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to carry out any personal care needs of children with disabilities involved in parish activities. In cases of medical necessity when the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult depends on it these are the guidelines to follow:

- 2 volunteers should undertake the tasks if possible.
- Treat the child/vulnerable adult with dignity and respect
- Ensure that the degree of privacy is appropriate
- Involve the child/vulnerable adult as far as possible in his/her own personal care
- If you are concerned about anything during personal care, follow procedures for raising a concern as per the Safeguarding Children manual.

**k) *Guidelines for the use of photography at Parish based Activities/Events***

- Ask for parental/guardian permission in writing to use the young person's image. This ensures that parents/guardian are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the Church.
- Ask for the young adult's consent in writing to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the church
- If the child is named i.e. name badges, **don't use their photograph.**
- If a photograph is used, **don't name the child.**
- To reduce the risk of inappropriate use, only use images of children in suitable dress. The content of the photograph should focus on the activity not on a particular child.
- The inappropriate use of images should be reported to the Safeguarding Team and Tusla/Social Services or the Gardaí.

**l) *Guidelines for the event manager or coordinator***

Those commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity or event should ensure the media representatives are clear about expectations of them in relation to child protection. Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an event or practice session should seek accreditation with the event manager or coordinator by producing their professional identification for the event.

**The event manager or coordinator should**

- Provide a clear brief to Professional photographers/film/video operators re: Guidelines for the use of photography at Parish based activities/events
- Ask the photographer to wear professional identification at all times
- Keep a record of photographer's accreditations.
- Ensure that participants and parents/guardians have been informed that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure that participants/parents/guardian have the option to withdraw consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs should they wish to do so.
- Not allow unsupervised access to children or one to one photo sessions at events.
- Ensure photo sessions are confined to the event only.

## **8. Communicating with children and young people**

Arrangements should be made with the parents or guardians of children, not with the children themselves. See however Section 7(f) on page 9 for communications with teenagers.

Those who minister and/or work for or on behalf of the Archdiocese of Dublin, its agencies and parishes must observe appropriate professional boundaries with the children and young people they encounter through their work and this requirement applies to their use of information technology, mobile phones and social media. They should not use any of these media to initiate or maintain personal relationships with the children. In particular, they should not:

- gather or retain a young person's mobile phone number except where this is done for a specific purpose related to their work;
- provide a young person with their own personal mobile phone number or email address;
- access the internet with a young person unless authorised to do so as part of their work;
- befriend a young person on a social media website such as Facebook;
- take photographs of young people without obtaining their permission and that of their parent or guardians;
- communicate with a young person by email except where this is done with the approval of the parish/ diocesan agency and then only from a parish/ agency email address;
- communicate with a young person by text except where this is done with the approval of the parish/ diocesan agency and then only from a parish/ agency mobile phone.

## 9. Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse

Where a child or young person discloses abuse to a person working in any capacity in the Diocese, it is important that the situation is handled sensitively and compassionately. It should be kept in mind that the child may feel he or she has taken a huge risk in disclosing the abuse. It is likely that he or she is doing so in the hope that something will be done to bring an end to the abuse, even if the child says he or she does not want anything done about it.

### ***The person hearing the disclosure of abuse should:***

- Remain calm,
- Listen carefully and in a manner that conveys that the child is being heard and taken seriously,
- Give the child the opportunity to tell their story in his or her own time,
- Ask questions only for the purposes of clarification, such as, 'can you tell me what you mean by that?'
- Reassure the child that he or she has done the right thing in disclosing the abuse,
- Tell the child that he or she is not responsible for the abuse,
- Explain the steps that are likely to be followed after the disclosure of the abuse, including referral to the civil authorities,
- Record the disclosure, using the child's own words and without comment or interpretation, and date and sign the record,
- Report the disclosure (see next section).

### ***The person hearing the disclosure should not:***

- Promise to keep the information secret. However, the child should be reassured that the information will be shared only with those who have a right to hear it,
- Express any judgments about the person against whom the allegation is being made,
- Offer to provide continuing support unless sure that this can be provided. It is better to make no commitment than to let the child down.

In the case of an adult disclosing child abuse, it is equally important that the initial response is characterised by compassion and sensitivity. The general guidance outlined above should be followed.

The parents or guardians of a child affected by suspected or disclosed abuse must be notified as soon as possible, unless doing so places the child at risk. CSPA should be consulted as to how best to manage informing the parents or guardians.



The CSPS is available to offer advice in such matters and should be informed of all such disclosures that relate to those working for or on behalf of the Diocese.

### ***Reporting abuse***

Tusla, the Child and Family Agency must be informed without delay when there are **reasonable grounds for concern** that a child has been abused, is being abused or is at risk of abuse.

The diocesan Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy DLP are available to offer advice on whether the reporting threshold has been reached. The DLP or Deputy DLP will report the matter to the civil authorities on behalf of the person concerned about the possible abuse of a child or make a joint report if the person is a mandated person making a mandated report and where the matter relates to Church personnel (see 4.5).

Any person is free to take their concern directly to the civil authorities. Where the concern relates to possible abuse within a Church context, for example, an allegation that a parish worker has harmed a child, the policy of the Diocese is that this information should be reported to the DLP or Deputy DLP, even if the person making the report also reports directly to the civil authorities. If the report goes directly to the civil authorities and is not shared with the DLP or deputy DLP, the Diocese is not in a position to take immediate protective action thus exposing children to the risk of harm.

Parish and diocesan personnel need to understand the limits of their child protection role. They can best help children by passing on information to those who can protect them, not by instigating their own investigation. The information should not be shared with anyone else. It is highly confidential information, to be shared only with those who need to know it for the purposes of protecting children.

**If there is an immediate concern for the protection of a child, the Gardaí should be contacted.** Such a concern could arise, for example, if the child states that he or she cannot go home for fear of being assaulted and Tusla and/or the DLP/ Deputy DLP cannot be contacted.

***Contact details for the Designated Liaison Person, for Tusla and for the Gardaí are on page 16 of this document.***

## 10. Parish Safeguarding Representatives

Each parish in the Diocese is required to appoint a Safeguarding Representative and it is recommended that there are two or more. The Safeguarding Representative is responsible for the promotion of best practice and compliance with diocesan safeguarding policy at parish level. Each of these Representatives is trained for the role. The Diocesan Child Safeguarding and Protection Service maintains regular contact with the Safeguarding Representatives.

## 11. The Role of the St Thomas the Apostle Parish Safeguarding Children Team

Our role is to promote the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults by:

- Raising awareness of what safeguarding is.
- Facilitating awareness training sessions for Parish Groups and booking one day training courses for those who require it.
- Ensuring that Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policy and procedures are put in place.
- Disseminating information from the *Child Safeguarding in the Archdiocese of Dublin: statement, reporting procedures and good practice guidelines 2018* document
- Ensuring Church activities are in line with best safeguarding practice.
- Ensuring Public has ready access to contact details for the Director of Child Protection, The Civil Authorities and the Parish Safeguarding Team.
- Circulating information widely by promoting awareness of:  
***The Standards for Safeguarding Children in our Parish (7 Standards).***  
***Parish Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy Guiding Principles.***  
***Basic Procedures required to implement our Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policy.***  
***Code of Conduct and Behaviour.***

## 12. The Safeguarding Children Team

- Fran Leahy                      Coordinator
- Bernie Sullivan
- Anna Healy
- Fr. Brendan Quinlan   Parish priest

### a) Contact Details for Parish Safeguarding Children Team:

Phone Number - 01 8208112 (Parish Office - hours Mon – Thurs 9.30am to 12.30pm))

Email Address - [safeguardingchildrenteam@laurellodgeparish.ie](mailto:safeguardingchildrenteam@laurellodgeparish.ie)

Web Address - [www.laurellodgeparish.ie](http://www.laurellodgeparish.ie)

**b) Child Protection Contact Numbers**

If you have concerns about Child Protection in our Parish, either as an adult or a child, please feel free to contact any of the following:

*Confidentiality is assured in conjunction with the Child Protection service, Dublin Archdiocese, TUSLA and An Garda Síochana.*

<p><u>Child Protection Service, Dublin Archdiocese</u> <b>Phone No:</b> 01 8360314 <b>Contact Name</b> Andrew Fagan (Designated Liaison Person) <b>Email address</b> <a href="mailto:andrew.fagan@dublindiocese.ie">andrew.fagan@dublindiocese.ie</a> <b>Web Address</b> <a href="http://www.cps.dublindiocese.ie">www.cps.dublindiocese.ie</a></p>	<p>Child and Family Agency (Tusla) 180-189 Lakeshore Drive Airside Business Park Swords Co. Dublin  <b>Phone No:</b> 01 8708000  <i>Outside office hours please contact An Garda Síochana, Blanchardstown.</i></p>	<p>An Garda Síochana Main Street, Blanchardstown <b>Phone No:</b> 01 666 7000</p>
<p><u>Laurel Lodge Parish Safeguarding Children Team can be contacted through the Parish Office</u> <b>Phone No:</b> 01-8208112 (office hours Mon – Thurs 9.30am to 12.30pm) Or by email <b>Email Address</b> <a href="mailto:safeguardingchildrenteam@laurellodgeparish.ie">safeguardingchildrenteam@laurellodgeparish.ie</a> <b>Web Address</b> <a href="http://www.laurellodgeparish.ie">www.laurellodgeparish.ie</a></p>	<p><b>Parish Priest (Mandated person)</b> Fr Brendan Quinlan  <b>Phone No:</b> 01-8208144 <b>Mobile No:</b> 087 2460033 <b>Email Address</b> <a href="mailto:quinlanbt@gmail.com">quinlanbt@gmail.com</a> <b>Web Address</b> <a href="http://www.laurellodgeparish.ie">www.laurellodgeparish.ie</a></p>	<p>ISPCC - Child line <b>Phone No:</b> 1800 666 666 <b>Email Address</b> <a href="mailto:ispcc@ispcc.ie">ispcc@ispcc.ie</a> <b>Web Address</b> <a href="http://www.ispcc.ie">www.ispcc.ie</a>  <u>Towards Healing</u> Phone No: Free access to a helpline staffed by experienced Telephone Counsellors. This operates on Mondays – Thursdays 11am – 8pm, and on Fridays from 11am to 6pm. The number is Freephone 1800 303416 (Rep. of Ireland). Mobile number for texting purposes for our hearing impaired service users <b>only</b>: 085-8022859 Child Protection – direct line 0858022859 Email Address: <a href="mailto:info@towardshealing.ie">info@towardshealing.ie</a> Web address: <a href="http://www.towardshealing.ie">www.towardshealing.ie</a></p>
<p><b>Any query or concern in relation to children out of hours should be reported immediately to An Garda Síochana.</b></p>		

### **13. Safeguarding Training**

All clerics, religious, parish pastoral workers and all those who work directly with children in parishes and diocesan agencies are required to attend a one day safeguarding training programme. Other people working in parishes and diocesan agencies attend a shorter safeguarding information session. Training is provided by the Diocesan Child Safeguarding and Protection Service (CSPS) and delivered by National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) accredited trainers. Information about forthcoming training events is available through the Parish Safeguarding team and requests for training should be made through the Safeguarding team.

### **14. Garda Vetting**

It is a requirement of the Archdiocese of Dublin that all who exercise public ministry and all those working with children in diocesan agencies and parishes undergo vetting through the National Vetting Bureau (formerly the Garda Central Vetting Unit).

Public ministry is defined in the legislation as “Any work or activity as a minister or priest or any other person engaged in the advancement of any religious beliefs unless such work or activity is merely incidental to the advancement of religious beliefs to persons who are not children”. Those who minister, for example as Eucharistic Ministers or Readers, minister to children and must, therefore, be vetted.

Those who help out in an activity with children on an occasional basis are not required to be vetted but they should only work alongside those who have been vetted and if the occasional helping out becomes a regular occurrence they must undergo vetting. The vetting must be repeated every three years. Vetting invitation forms for new volunteers and for those requiring to be re-vetted will be issued by the Parish.

Further Information on vetting is available online:

<http://csp.s.dublindiocese.ie/2016/06/16/garda-vetting-information/>

### **15. Visiting Clergy**

Visiting clerics or religious who wish to minister in the Diocese or any of its parishes are required to be vetted and to produce a valid celebret.

## **Appendix 1**

### CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES of the Archdiocese of Dublin

The Archdiocese of Dublin promptly reports all concerns that a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected and manages such concerns as they apply to diocesan personnel in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Children First Act 2015,
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017,
- Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice,
- Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

## **Appendix 2 - List of Forms**

Parental/Guardian Consent Form

Parish Activity Attendance Sheet

Accident /Incident Form

Volunteer Contact Details

Safeguarding Children Audit Form

Volunteer Application Form

Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1)

Guidelines for completing Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1)

### **Appendix 3**

#### **The Health & Safety Policy Statement of the Parish of St. Thomas the Apostle, Laurel Lodge, Dublin 15**

It is the policy of the Parish to protect, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of all its employees, voluntary workers, contractors, sub-contractors and users of the church or any other parochial property.

We are committed to your safety. We have completed Risk Assessments and will regularly review them and will consult with you through the Pastoral Council about Health and Safety issues. We will make sure that the building is safe by making regular checks and making sure that you are informed and trained as necessary.

You are asked to look after the equipment that we have provided for your safety and to help us by looking for safety issues. You are asked to report accidents and dangerous events as soon as possible and to make sure that you know of our emergency procedures, like for fire evacuation. You must also take care over the things you do, to make sure that you don't affect other people's safety along with your own.

***For more information, please contact: Fr. Brendan Quinlan P.P.***

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_  
***Parish Priest***

#### **This Safety Statement**

- Is aimed at protecting our congregation, employees and voluntary workers from accidents and ill health in the church.
- Shall be brought to the attention of our congregation, employees, voluntary workers and outside service providers
- Is available to inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority
- Will be updated as and when additional hazards are identified and assessed
- Will be reviewed at least annually.

#### **The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005**

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires both employers and employees to consider health and safety as a joint responsibility. The co-operation of all concerned is sought to ensure that the highest standards of health and safety are maintained in the church and other parochial property. There is a statutory obligation on all employees, volunteers and visitors to co-operate with the parish and to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

A copy of the safety statement may be downloaded from the parish website at **[www.laurellodgeparish.ie](http://www.laurellodgeparish.ie)**

### **Safety Sub-Group**

The Parish recognises its statutory obligations to consult with employees and voluntary workers on matters of safety and health and to pay due regard to any representations made by them. All appropriate information and training is afforded them on matters of safety and health. Any employee or voluntary worker engaged in such consultative process is not placed at any disadvantage. Consultation takes place in the ambit of the Parish Pastoral Council, as a Safety Subgroup, under the chairmanship of the Parish Priest. Meetings are held as an integral part of the Pastoral Council meetings, which take place monthly. Any matters directly affecting employees or voluntary workers are communicated to them by any means deemed appropriate.

### **Evacuation Procedures / Safety Equipment**

The Parish maintains suitable fire and emergency evacuation procedures for the church and all parochial properties. Responsibility for developing and maintaining these procedures rests with the Parish Priest. Signs, emergency lighting, notices and other aids are provided and maintained as deemed appropriate. Fire extinguishers are placed in appropriate prominent positions and are inspected, tested and maintained in accordance with the installer's recommendations.

### **Safety Inspections**

The church and all other parochial property will be inspected annually for the purpose of hazard identification and risk assessment. A report of each inspection is made to and retained by the Parish Priest. The report will be carried out by the Parish Priest and/or any other person experienced in the aspects of health and safety. The report will be retained by the Parish Priest for seven years from the date of the report.

The report contains details of:

- the premises inspected
- who carried out the inspection
- the date of inspection
- the hazards identified
- any remedial action taken
- any recommendations as to future remedial action.

[End of Safety Statement]

## Appendix 4

### Guidelines for the booking of the day chapel by Church based and Non Church based groups

1. The Parish Team reserves the right of admission at all times. Activities inconsistent with the ethos of the Church will not be permitted in the day chapel.
2. When booking the day chapel for the first time, groups (both parish based and non-parish based) must discuss the safety of persons and security of premises with the Parish Secretary.
3. Any group or individual who uses diocesan or parish premises to run activities must be insured to do so and have their own safeguarding policy.
4. It is not the responsibility of the agency or parish to evaluate the safeguarding policies of external groups. It is sufficient to ask them to sign to confirm that the policy exists.
5. All booking requests for the Day Chapel must be made through the Parish Secretary.
6. Non Church based groups using the day chapel should lodge a copy of the following documents with the Parish Office;
  - a. Copy of their own Insurance Certificate / Indemnity letter
  - b. Health & Safety Policy.
7. Non Church based Children's groups using the day chapel must also lodge a copy of the following documents with the Parish Office;
  - a. A copy of their Child Protection Policy & Procedures.
8. Groups are responsible for ensuring that adequate supervision is provided for users of the facilities.
9. All Groups should be aware of the parish's policies and procedures for child protection. They will be asked to confirm that they will implement these policies and procedures when using church facilities.
10. Groups permitted to use the day chapel must ensure that it is left in a satisfactory condition. Damage to the day chapel (either inside or outside), occasioned by its use must be paid for by the user(s).
11. No equipment or other goods may be stored in the day chapel, without the permission of the Parish Team. Groups must remove any rubbish they generate from the premises, e.g. papers, cartons, leftover foodstuff, etc.
12. At the discretion of the Parish Team, groups found to have breached article 6 or 7 above may have their booking reviewed for a period of time (to be fixed by the Parish Team).
13. No activity shall take place other than that for which the explicit use has been granted.
14. The Parish Team does not accept liability in respect of
  - a. injury or illness to users of the facility
  - b. loss of personal articles in the facility
  - c. Damage to personal belongings while using the facility.
  - d. Damage to vehicles and/or contents in the church car park.
15. Groups permitted to use the facilities must comply with additional guidelines or directions as may be issued from time to time by the Parish Team regarding use of the facilities.

***N.B. All bookings are made on the understanding that those using/hiring the facilities are aware that the Day Chapel may be unavailable from time to time to facilitate Church events.***