

Safeguarding Children in Ireland

The British Province of the Society of the Divine Saviour
(Salvatorians) Registered Charity No.13673

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Foreword

We Salvatorians are called to follow Jesus Christ, the Divine Saviour, by living as community within the universal church for apostolic service. We trust in God's loving providence in discerning and courageously responding to the particular signs of the times in each place and age. Today, these signs urge us to be a prophetic voice for the renewal of the Church and the world by among other things, joining in challenging the contemporary evils which frustrate a fully human life, particularly social justice, poverty and violence in all forms. It is with that background in mind that I am delighted today to make available to you this document, entitled *Safeguarding Children in Ireland*, which gathers together current best practice for safeguarding in ministry.

When the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC) published their 'Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland' in September 2008, two key points were highlighted

- a. This document is now the 'definitive reference' for the Irish Church.
- b. Following its publication, everyone would need to review their policy and procedures in order to achieve a uniform standard of best practice based on this document.

The Society of the Divine Saviour (Salvatorians) fully endorse this 'one church' approach. The publication of 'The Society of the Divine Saviour: Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures' is the end result of the review process that was expected by the NBSCCC. The layout of this publication closely follows and adopts the structure, resources and language within the NBSCCC document.

We are committed to working in partnership with the civil authorities to ensure that all aspects of child welfare are managed promptly, professionally and justly. This means that all child protection concerns will be reported to the civil and diocesan authorities without delay.

On behalf of the Society of the Divine Saviour, I want to take this opportunity to thank all the people who are part of our safeguarding structures. At the same time, it is essential that we promote the principle that everyone has his or her part to play. We share the obligation to protect children. As a religious community we are called to create and sustain a culture of safety. This requires more than the publication of documents. To recall a phrase from Scripture, it must be something 'alive and active' in all our planning and practices.

The deep wrong of child abuse that has scandalised and shamed the Irish Church in our times must remain a caution to us. To honour the suffering and courage of survivors we must take, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, 'whatever steps are necessary to prevent it from happening again'. The publication of this 'policy and procedures' document is an important step. It is

a necessary and on-going reminder of a terrible truth and a signpost to a better future.

It is important to bear in mind that the policy and procedures document has been revised at a time of significant change in State and Church Guidance and future versions will have to reflect these changes in due course.

We are aware today that “safeguarding” is not an optional dimension of ministry but is absolutely central to effective ministry. That is my conviction as I make this document available to you and I do so, too, with the expectation that the practices outlined and the values underlying it will be vigorously embraced and implemented by all involved in Salvatorian ministries and particularly by those who have direct responsibility for those ministries. At the same time, given the speed with which legislation in this area develops today, it is important to treat the document as a “work in progress” rather than a definitive statement. Consequently, it will need to be updated regularly.

This replaces existing policies and procedures. The Safeguarding Commission approved it on 7th February 2012,

Father Alex McAllister SDS
Provincial Superior

1.POLICY

Each Child will 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.

Children occupy a special place in the heart of the teachings in the Gospel. Jesus throughout his life reflected the worth he placed on children. The fact that Jesus reserved his severest warnings for those who would knowingly undermine the faith of these 'little ones', is a solemn reminder of our individual and collective obligation to ensure that children and young people are protected.

Children have an inalienable right to safety and care, and a right to live in an environment free from abuse and neglect. The United Nations Charter on the rights of the Child emphasises the special place of children and their entitlement to special care and assistance. There is a powerful moral and civic duty to safeguard children and ensure that they develop in a peaceful and safe environment and are enabled to reach their full potential.

The Society of the Divine Saviour affirms the special place that children and young people hold in the life of society and is committed to making every effort to enhance and encourage their safe involvement with Church life in all its facets and in helping them to grow towards a mature, spiritual and reflective adulthood.

The purpose of this document is to provide a set of policies and procedures for those who have responsibility for the protection of children and young people in the life of the Church.

The document expresses the commitment of the Society of the Divine Saviour to best practice in this area, including the development of effective structures for safeguarding children, for responding to suspicions or allegations of child abuse, and for providing pastoral supports and training.

It is the responsibility of every member of the Society of the Divine Saviour to uphold the law and adhere to Gospel values by respecting the dignity and rights of all children and young people, and to work together so as to ensure their safety and well being.

Partnership with Civil Authorities

The Society of the Divine Saviour is committed to working in partnership with statutory authorities to ensure that all aspects of child welfare are managed promptly, professionally and justly. We will adhere to statutory policy, notably 'Children First': National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2009). All child protection concerns will be reported to the civil authorities without delay.

Those who are the subject of an investigation, civil or canonical, may be

asked to step aside from their ministry and duties for the duration of the investigation. While the matter is pending the accused person enjoys the presumption of innocence and the right to his or her good name.

CONTEXT OF THE POLICY

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the UN in 1989 and ratified by Ireland in 1992. We believe that all work with children and young people should, by its very nature, recognise, implement and promote the fundamental tenets of the Convention.

The Child Care Act, 1991 defines a child as someone under 18 years of age who is not married. The UN Convention defines a child as someone under 18 years of age and the National Children's Strategy in Ireland, similarly defines a child as someone less than 18 years of age, who is not married.

Children First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 1999/2009

The Children First Guidelines were issued by the Department of Health and Children in 1999 [and reviewed in 2009] and outline procedures, which all organisations dealing with children and young people should put in place. They state that all such organisations should put in place a child protection policy tailored to their specific needs. This policy should outline the procedures and arrangements in place to protect children in line with "Children First". Equally, the policy will provide protection for staff in the Society in their work with children.

Our Duty to Care

Our Duty to Care was published by the Department of Health and Children in October 2002. It offers a practical guide to staff and volunteers who work with children by outlining a number of fundamental principles of good practice.

National Children's Strategy

The work of the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs is centred around the implementation and monitoring of the National Children's Strategy. The overall vision of the strategy is; '*An Ireland where children are respected as young citizens with a valued contribution to make and a voice of their own; where all children are cherished and supported by family and the wider society; where they enjoy a fulfilling childhood and realise their potential.*'

2. PROCEDURES

Children have a right to be listened to and heard. The Society of the Divine Saviour will respond effectively and ensure that any allegations and suspicions of abuse are reported both within the Society and to the civil authorities.

Structures for the Society's Response

The Designated Person

The Designated Person is responsible for overseeing and implementing the Society's procedures and will have such additional responsibilities in relation to child abuse as may be required. The deputy Designated Person has the same duties and functions as the Designated Person and acts in the latter's absence or incapacity, or for any other sufficient reason.

The Designated Person and his deputy will have received sufficient training to ensure that they have the necessary skills, including an understanding of the dynamics of child abuse, of its impact on victims, and of clinical and public policy developments in the area. They will also have an understanding of the implications an allegation has for the person who is accused.

Every complaint of child abuse against a member of the Society of the Divine Saviour will be communicated to the Designated Person.

The General Functions of the Designated Person

The Designated Person will:

- Respond immediately whenever a complaint of child abuse against a member of the Society of the Divine Saviour is received.
- Ensure that the policies and procedures are implemented when a complaint of child abuse is made against a member of the Society of the Divine Saviour.
- Be responsible for ensuring that every complaint is recorded and carefully examined so that all pastoral, legal and canonical obligations may be identified and acted upon at the earliest time.
- Have responsibility for the co-ordination of the response of the Society of the Divine Saviour to the complaint.
- Be familiar with the working arrangements of the civil authorities of the local area in the investigation of complaints of child abuse. He will be known to and liaise with their personnel who have responsibility for different aspects of child abuse allegations. He will also be conversant with the treatment facilities available to victims of child abuse.

- Be familiar with the assessment and treatment facilities available to people accused of abuse.
- Promote awareness and understanding of child abuse among members of the Society of the Divine Saviour.

The Support Person

The Support Person is available to those who allege that they have suffered abuse and their families. The role of this person is to assist those wishing to make a complaint of child abuse, to facilitate them in gaining access to information and help, and to represent their concerns on an ongoing basis.

In some cases the complainant may decide not to avail of the services of the Support Person. In that case they will be supplied with information of where they may seek help e.g. counseling. The Support person will inform the complainant that they will be available if the complainant wishes to contact them. [For more detail on the role of the Support Person see Section 6].

The Priest Adviser

The Adviser is available to the accused member of the Society of the Divine Saviour. The adviser will have regard to all pastoral, legal and therapeutic issues arising for the accused member of the Society. [For more detail on the role of the Priest Adviser see Section 6]

The Legal Adviser

A solicitor who is independent of the solicitor representing the Society will legally represent the accused member of the Society of the Divine Saviour.

The Child Safeguarding Committee

The role of the committee is primarily focused on creating, maintaining and monitoring a safe environment for children in all aspects of church life and activity and for advising on the human resources required for implementing best Safeguarding Practice across services. The role is supportive and developmental. It is not related in any way to the management of individual cases of suspected or alleged abuse.

The Safeguarding Committee has responsibility for:

- the provision of training;
- the safe recruitment of volunteers and staff within the Society;
- regular review of the Society's Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Children as and when required;
- communication and promotion of all aspects and developments in relation to Safeguarding Children in the Society.

The members the Child Safeguarding Committee will be available to offer advice on a confidential basis, collectively and in their respective disciplines, when required. The Committee will include lay people with qualities and expertise relevant to the issue of child abuse. The members of the Committee will include a child care professional, a canon lawyer and a civil lawyer.

Advisory Panel

If an allegation of abuse is received the Provincial will convene an advisory panel in order to advise and assist him at all stages of the investigative process into alleged abuse.

The Panel will provide a consistent and accessible source of guidance, through a process of risk assessment, for the Provincial who is charged with specific responsibilities for decision-making in response to alleged or actual child abuse involving a priest or religious.

The Advisory Panel will provide advice on:

- the complaint itself;
- ensuring the safety and welfare of the child(ren) remains paramount;
- the appropriateness of providing help to a child making an allegation and to the family of the child;
- the appropriateness of the respondent continuing in his or her present pastoral assignment, having regard to the paramount need to protect children;
- how the right of the respondent to a fair trial, on any criminal charge, may be preserved and his or her good name and reputation may be appropriately safeguarded;
- whether a specialist Risk Assessment of the respondent should be sought;
- the needs of a parish or other community in which a respondent has served;
- the needs of the wider community, including the appropriateness and timing of any public statement.

The Panel will create a record of its recommendations and notes the matters upon which it has been asked to advise and the documents which it has considered.

The Media Relations Person

The Media Relations Person will be the only person to respond on behalf of the Society to media enquiries. The Society's media response will take fully into account:

- The protection of the right of victims to privacy;

- The protection of the right of the accused to a fair trial. The right to a fair trial is the right to a trial in which prospective jurors are not potentially prejudiced by pre-trial publicity.

PROCEDURE FOR RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS, SUSPICIONS and CONCERNS

Making an Allegation or raising a concern

A person who wishes to bring an allegation of child abuse against a member of the Society of the Divine Saviour should contact the Designated Person of the Society, who will be available to receive information about allegations or concerns without delay.

Receipt of a Complaint by a member of the Society of the Divine Saviour other than the Designated Person.

A member, other than the Designated Person, who is approached by an adult or a child who alleges child abuse or expresses a suspicion about a member of the Society of the Divine Saviour, will:

where the complainant is an adult

- listen carefully to that person;
- explain the procedure the Society has put in place for dealing with complaints against its members, including its policy on reporting to the civil authorities;
- offer to accompany the person in bringing the complaint to the Designated Person;
- make a careful written record of what the complainant has alleged.

where the complainant is a child

- take what the child says seriously;
- reassure the child;
- listen carefully and attentively but under no circumstances ask leading questions;
- check with the child to ensure that what has been heard and understood accords with what the child actually said;
- make no promises which cannot be kept;
- accompany the child to his or her parent or guardian;
- tell the parent or guardian exactly what the child has said;

- explain to the parent or guardian the procedure the Society has put in place for dealing with complaints about its members, including its policy on reporting to the civil authorities;
- inform the Designated Person of what has occurred and provide him with a precise written record of what the child has said, any views expressed by the child's parent or guardian about the matter, and of steps taken.

It is envisaged that the Designated Person, who will also implement the reporting policy, will thereafter coordinate the response of the Society to the complaint.

Receipt by Designated Person of Indirect Information about a Complaint

If a person other than a parent or guardian comes forward with an allegation that a third party has been sexually abused during childhood by a member of the Society of the Divine Saviour, the Designated Person will provide the person making the allegation with an explanation of Society's procedures in these circumstances. The following information will be sought.

- the relationship of that person to the suspected victim;
- the source, manner and time of acquiring such knowledge;
- the name and age of the suspected victim, and other relevant information;
- the name of the accused member of the Society of the Divine Saviour;
- the facts and circumstances of the allegation;
- whether the civil authorities have yet been made aware of the allegation.

Where the Designated Person otherwise learns indirectly of a complaint of child abuse against a member of the Society of the Divine Saviour, if, for example, it becomes known that a police investigation is under way, the Designated Person will endeavour to ascertain what is known of the accusation.

In all instances where indirect information is received, it will be the responsibility of the Designated Person to co-ordinate a response to the situation so that all appropriate measures are promptly taken in accordance with the protocol.

Receipt by the Designated Person of a Direct Complaint

The following assumes that the complainant is the parent or guardian of a child who alleges abuse, or an adult who alleges abuse during childhood.

It should at all times be remembered that the process of disclosure of child abuse is painful, requiring very considerable courage on the part of a victim or his or her family.

In so far as is practicable, the Support Person will be available from the beginning to provide assistance and information to the complainant and identify any therapeutic or other needs he or she might have.

The Designated Person, on meeting the complainant, will explain the procedure of the Society for responding to complaints of child abuse against its members and, in particular, point out that:

- The complainant should give consideration to reporting the complaint to An Garda Síochána and, as appropriate, to the Health Service Executive. The complainant will also be informed of the reporting policy of the Society.
- Every effort will be made to safeguard confidentiality so that only those people who need to know will receive information about the complaint. However, no guarantee of absolute confidentiality can be given.
- In the Church, the specific right and duties of priests or religious are such that where there is a complaint of child abuse against a priest, an enquiry into the complaint under canon law is required. The future co-operation of the complainant will be sought in so far as it may be necessary. Care will be taken that such an enquiry will not interfere with or be prejudicial to the administration of justice in any state criminal investigation or civil suit.

The Designated Person will ask the complainant to provide a detailed account of the wrongful acts alleged and their background and circumstances. The Designated Person will carefully record what is said, and check with the complainant the accuracy of what has been recorded. Ample time will be given to this.

In addition, the Designated Person will try to identify the wishes, intentions and expectations of the complainant, and will explain the role of the Society in regard to the complaint and the context within which it must operate.

The Response to a Complaint

Action by the Designated Person

Following receipt of the complaint, the Designated Person will:

- implement the reporting policy outlined;

- inform the Provincial Superior of the British Province of the complaint;
- identify the present and previous appointments of the accused Member of the Society of the Divine Saviour;
- liaise with the Support Person;
- alert the Adviser to be on standby, without identifying the accused priest;
- ensure the availability of the Advisory Panel if required, and convene a meeting at an appropriate time;
- conduct an interview with the accused member of the Salvatorian Society at an appropriate time.

Action by the Support Person

The Support Person will be particularly attentive to the fact that some victims and their families may be reluctant to seek help and will consider, therefore, how any therapeutic or spiritual needs of a person who has suffered abuse may be met.

In addition, the Support Person will:

- consider any wishes of the complainant in regard to a pastoral response by the Society to his or her family;
- be available to the complainant throughout any investigation which may ensue, and thereafter as required;
- ensure that the complainant is kept informed of developments in regard to the complaint;
- represent the wishes and any therapeutic needs of the complainant to the Designated Person as required;
- arrange, if considered helpful, a meeting between the complainant and the Provincial Superior.

Action by the Provincial Superior

On hearing of the complaint from the Designated Person, the Provincial will ensure that, where applicable, the requirements of Canon.1717 are fulfilled by appropriate decree.

The Preliminary Investigation

Can. 1717§1. Whenever an ordinary has knowledge, which at least seems true, he is to carefully inquire personally or through another suitable person about the facts, circumstances, and imputability, unless such an inquiry seems entirely superfluous.

§2. Care must be taken so that the good name of anyone is not endangered from this investigation.

§3. The person who conducts the investigation has the same powers and obligations as an auditor in the process; the same person cannot act as a judge in the matter if a judicial process is initiated later.

Can. 1718§1. When it seems that sufficient evidence has been collected, the ordinary is to decide:

1/ whether a process to inflict or declare a penalty can be initiated;

2/ whether, attentive to Can. 1341, this is expedient;

3/ whether a judicial process must be used or, unless the law forbids it, whether the matter must proceed by way of extrajudicial decree.

§2. The ordinary is to revoke or change the decree mentioned in §1 whenever new evidence indicates to him that another decision is necessary.

§3. In issuing the decree mentioned in §§1 and 2, the ordinary is to hear two judges or other experts of the law if he considers it prudent.

§4. Before he makes a decision according to the norm of §1 and in order to avoid useless trials, the ordinary is to examine carefully whether it is expedient for him or the investigator, with the consent of the parties, to resolve equitably the question of damages.

The stages hereafter of this procedure assume that, if a decree under Canon.1717 is made, the Designated Person has been appointed to carry out the enquiry. If a person other than the Designated Person is appointed, appropriate adjustment will be required to ensure that all of the objectives of the protocol are fulfilled.

The Provincial Superior will enquire into the nature of the duties and activities of the accused member of the Society of the Divine Saviour in his present and previous appointments. Other relevant background information will be sought and considered.

The Provincial Superior will consider the child welfare implications of the complaint, having regard to the appointment[s] held by the member of the Society of the Divine Saviour who has been accused.

The Provincial Superior will, without delay, meet and inform the accused member of the Society of the Divine Saviour that a complaint has been

received and that it is being dealt with in accordance with the procedure of the Society. He will request the accused person to meet the Designated Person.

The Provincial Superior will explain to the accused member of the Society the role of the Adviser who is available to him.

The Provincial Superior will assure the accused person of his availability and pastoral concern, which would also extend to members of the accused person's family.

The Role of the Adviser after the accused person's meeting with the Provincial

The Adviser will be particularly alert to the sense of isolation and vulnerability that an accused member of the Society may experience following an accusation of this nature. He will:

- be available after the accused person's meeting with the Provincial Superior, and accompany the accused person, if so requested, to the meeting with the Designated Person ;
- inform the accused member of the Society of his rights both in civil and canon law.

Meeting between the Designated Person and the accused member of the Society of the Divine Saviour

Having followed the reporting policy outlined above, and being at all times careful not to interfere with any investigation by the civil authorities, an interview will be conducted as soon as possible by the Designated Person with the accused member of the Society. The Adviser will normally be present at this interview. The Designated Person will inform the accused member of the Society of the nature and detail of the complaint and the name of the complainant. The Designated Person will point out that:

- the accused person is not obliged, in law, to respond or to furnish evidence;
- the accused person is entitled to the assistance of civil and canonical legal advisers.

If the accused person wishes to speak freely to the Designated Person, a careful contemporaneous note will be taken by the Designated Person of what the accused person says in response to the complaint. This will be checked with the accused person for accuracy.

Where an accused member of the Society of the Divine Saviour expresses the wish to consult with civil and canonical advisers before responding, arrangements will be made for a further meeting at which such advisers will be welcome to attend with the accused member of the Society.

It is important that the Designated Person discusses with the accused member of the Society and his Adviser the question of obtaining spiritual and therapeutic support as may be considered appropriate.

Ongoing Role of the Adviser

Following on the meeting with the Designated Person, it will be for the Adviser to:

- identify any therapeutic or other needs of the accused member of the Society and suggest how these may be met;
- consider the wishes to the accused member of the Society in regard to the pastoral response by the Society to his family;
- be available to the accused member of the Society throughout any investigation which may ensue, and thereafter as required;
- ensure the accused member of the Society is kept informed of developments in regard to the complaint;
- represent the needs and wishes of the accused member of the Society to the Designated Person , as required.

Report of the Designated Person and Subsequent Action

The Designated Person will, as soon as possible, make a report to the Provincial on the complaint made and the response of the accused member of the Society. In circumstances where a police investigation is under way, completion of a report may have to be deferred.

Response of the Provincial

The Provincial Superior will determine, on receipt of the report of the Designated Person whether further enquiries are necessary to establish the facts of the complaint.

The Provincial Superior will consult the Support Person and the Adviser in order to afford an opportunity for any representation on behalf of either the complainant or the accused member of the Society to be made.

The Provincial Superior will then consider carefully the following:

- the complaint itself;
- the appropriateness of the accused member of the Society continuing in his present pastoral assignment, having regard to the paramount need to protect children, care will be taken that a decision by a member

of the Society to take leave of absence from a ministry will not be construed as denoting guilt on his part;

- how the right of the accused member of the Society to a fair trial on any criminal charge may be presented
- whether a specialist professional evaluation of the accused member of the Society will be sought at this stage;
- the needs of a parish or other community where an accused member of the Society has served;
- the needs of the wider community including the appropriateness and timing of any public statement.

The Provincial Superior will consult with the Child Safeguarding Committee/Advisory Panel in relation to all of the above matters. However, having had the benefit of the advice of the Panel/Committee, the Provincial will make his own determinations.

If the Provincial Superior feels there is a case to answer, appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that the accused member of the Society does not remain in any pastoral appointment which affords access to children.

Where it is established by a civil trial that a member of the Society has offended, canon law indicates that before imposing ecclesiastical penalties, other means of correction or reproof will first be attempted. [Canon 1341].

Should these means prove ineffective, canon law provides the Provincial Superior with a range of options which may ultimately result in the penalty of dismissal from the Society and/or the clerical state.

Exchange of Information between the Society of the Divine Saviour and Dioceses

Where a complaint has been made against a member of the Society of the Divine Saviour, the Provincial Superior will inform the bishop of the diocese in which the member of the Salvatorian Society is living about the allegation - even if the person accused has no diocesan appointment in the diocese. The Provincial Superior will also inform the bishop of the diocese in which the alleged wrongdoing occurred, if this is other than the diocese in which the accused person lives. He will also inform the bishops of any diocese which the accused person has held appointments.

The Provincial Superior will keep the bishop[s] informed of developments in regard to any particular complaint and of its final outcome.

A system of formal referencing from the diocese and the Society will be implemented. This system of referencing will also form part of the procedure involved when a member of the Society requests diocesan faculties.

The Provincial Superior will also review procedures for accepting members of the Society coming from other countries to reside in an Irish community or to take up an appointment within the Society. Clearance such as is suggested above will be sought and obtained.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Disclosure in Confidence

The relationship of Church personnel with children and young people in their care is based on trust and confidentiality. There may be times, however, when a child or a young person - or indeed an adult - confides in a person who works for the Society information which indicates that child abuse may have occurred or that the safety of children or young people is at risk, and they may ask that the matter be treated as completely confidential. In this situation, the person working for the Society will carefully explain that although they respect the sensitive nature of the information, they are unable to give an assurance of complete confidentiality: they will need to inform the relevant authorities so that action may be taken to protect children and young people from potential harm.

Important points for the Society's personnel to note in this regard are:

- All information regarding concerns about child abuse will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the best interests of children.
- No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. This will be made clear to all parties involved.
- Giving information to others for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality.
- We cannot guarantee total confidentiality where the best interests of the child are at risk;
- Primary carers and children have a right to know if personal information is being shared and/or a report is being made to the Health Service Executive, unless doing so could put the child at further risk;
- Images of a child will not be used for any reason without the consent of the parent/carer (however, we cannot guarantee that cameras/videos will not be used at public liturgies/events);
- Procedures will be put in place in relation to the use of images of children;
- Procedures will also be put in place for the recording and storing of information in line with our confidentiality policy.
- Information obtained for one purpose must not be used for another without consulting the person who provided that information.

The Seal of Confession

The maintenance of trust in the Sacrament of Reconciliation requires the guarantee of absolute confidentiality, allowing for no exceptions. This is known as the Seal of Confession and guarantees to the penitent that anything revealed to the confessor will not be divulged to anyone else (Canon 983). It is not desirable for the confessor to undertake to divulge matters revealed in confession even when the penitent gives consent.

Pastoral wisdom would advise that in the event of a child or young person disclosing in confession that they have been abused, the confessor should sensitively reassure the child or young person that they are not at fault. The confessor should encourage the child or young person to disclose the abuse to an adult they trust (for example, a relative, teacher, friend) and to have that person report the abuse. The confessor must at no time act in any manner that might violate the seal or compromise the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the eyes of the faithful.

When an abuser confesses to a priest previously undisclosed child abuse, the priest should advise the penitent to seek the professional help they require immediately, for their own well-being and in order to prevent any recurrence of abuse. The confessor should urge the penitent to disclose the abuse to a competent authority.

Reporting Policy

The Society's response to child abuse by its members will be founded on an acknowledgment of the wrong that has been done to those who have suffered abuse. It will be informed by an understanding of the hurt which such abuse imposes and of the long-term harm it may cause. It will also be based on recognition of the need for the Society to do all that it can towards healing the hurt and repairing the harm.

All abuse, but particularly child abuse, is a betrayal of the trust given to those who have a responsibility to safeguard the well being of the children with whom they are in contact, however temporary that contact may be. This betrayal of trust is compounded when the person who abuses is expected to behave according to clearly defined moral standards.

Child abuse by members of the Society of the Divine Saviour is a betrayal of their calling to serve others; it is also a betrayal of the Christian community which has entrusted them with particular authority and responsibility.

In all instances where it is known or suspected that a child has been, or is being, abused by a member of the Society the matter will be reported to the civil authorities. Where the suspicion or knowledge results from the complaint of an adult of abuse during his or her childhood, this will also be reported to the civil authorities.

The report will be made without delay to the senior officer of An Garda Síochána for the area in which the abuse is alleged to have occurred. Where the suspected victim is a child, or where a complaint by an adult gives rise to child protection questions, the designated person within the appropriate health board/health and social services board will also be informed. A child protection question arises, in the case of a complaint by an adult, where an accused member of the Society holds or has held a position which has afforded him or her unsupervised access to children.

This reporting policy may cause difficulty in that some people who come to the Society with complaints of current or past child abuse by one of its members may seek undertakings of confidentiality. They are concerned to protect the privacy of that abuse of which even their immediate family members may not be aware. Their primary reason in coming forward may be to warn Society authorities of a member who is a risk to children.

The reporting policy may also deter such people from coming forward or may be perceived by those who do come forward as an insensitive and heavy-handed response by Society authorities. This is particularly so where the complaint relates to incidents of abuse many years earlier.

Nonetheless, undertakings of absolute confidentiality will not be given but rather the information will be expressly received within the terms of this reporting policy and on the basis that only those who need to know will be told.

Reporting Protocol:

- The safety and welfare of children will be the first and paramount consideration following an allegation of child abuse.
- A prompt response will be given to all allegations of child abuse.
- In all instances where it is known or suspected that a member of the Society has sexually abused a child, the matter will be reported to the civil authorities.
- Care will be given to the emotional and spiritual well being of those who have suffered abuse and their families.
- There will be immediate consideration, following a complaint, of all child protection issues which arise, including whether the accused member of the Society should continue in ministry during the investigation.
- The rights under natural justice, civil law and canon law of an accused member of the Society will be respected.
- An appropriate pastoral response to the parish and wider community will be provided, with due regard to the right of privacy of those directly involved, and to the administration of justice.

- Adequate positive steps will be taken to restore the good name and reputation of a member of the Society who has been wrongly accused of child abuse.

The uniqueness of each complaint demands that judgment and discretion be carefully exercised in the implementation of each phase of the protocol.

It is further incumbent upon those who perform functions under the protocol to carefully respect the privacy of all parties in an accusation, in order that the right of each individual to his good name and reputation is upheld.

The Provincial Superior will conduct a regular review of the manner in which the protocol is operating so that whatever needs to be changed may be promptly identified and the requisite amendments made. This review will be conducted in consultation with those who exercise functions under the protocol.

When a complaint of child abuse is made against a member of the Society, the Provincial Superior, in fulfilment of pastoral responsibilities and obligations under canon law, must have careful regard to the well-being of all those who are or may be affected. In particular, the Provincial Superior will consider the needs of those who may have suffered abuse and their families, of the accused member of the Society and his family, of the parish or other places of ministry in which the accused person has served, and of the wider Church community. The Provincial Superior will be available to meet pastorally those who have suffered abuse and their families.

If any person holding a position within the structure envisaged below is himself or herself accused of child abuse, steps will be taken to appoint a substitute or otherwise alter the procedures as appropriate.

Because of the obligations of the sacramental seal, no priest performing a function under the protocol will celebrate the Sacrament of Penance with an accused priest.

3. Preventing Harm to Children

Children will have access to good role models they can trust, who will respect and nurture their spiritual, physical and emotional development. They will also have a right to an environment free from abuse and neglect.

Selection of Applicants

Applicants to the Society of the Divine Saviour will, from a child safeguarding perspective, be asked to produce the following documentation:

- Letter of reference from their Parish Priest
- Letter of reference from the Principal of their secondary school
- Garda clearance certificate.

In addition, the applicant will be asked to undergo a psychological assessment.

Formation of Candidates

Candidates preparing for missionary priesthood/brotherhood in the Society of the Divine Saviour will be given comprehensive training in safe and best practice in working with children and young people, as well as advice about how to handle suspicions and allegations of child abuse. They will be aware of the Society's commitment to act in accordance with the principle that the welfare of children is always the paramount consideration. They will receive clear information about how to respond if they have any concerns about child safeguarding in the context of formation or outside it.

VISITING PRIESTS AND TEMPORARY SOLEMNISERS

Visiting priests

It is a diocesan regulation that before priests from outside the diocese can be allowed to minister in a diocese, it must be clearly established that they are in 'good standing' and that there are no child protection concerns.

Before a parish makes any arrangement with a visiting priest, the parish must confirm their 'good standing'. If there are any doubts, the parish is obliged to contact Bishop's House. The diocesan office will contact the priest's own Bishop or local Superior/Provincial directly to confirm the priest's 'good standing' and that there are no child protection concerns.

Parishes are required to inform Bishop's House if a non-incardinated priest takes up residence in the parish (excluding in a religious community).

Temporary Solemnisers

Under legislation effective since November 2007, in order to officiate at a marriage that will be civilly registered, priests must be on the 'List of Solemnisers' submitted by their local Bishop to the Registrar-General.

Priests from overseas can be added to this list as temporary Solemnisers - this covers the specific marriage(s) they are officiating at here in Ireland.

The local Bishop of the diocese where the marriage is taking place has the responsibility – once notified – of submitting the name, overseas address and date of birth of the visiting priest to the Registrar-General so that they can be listed as a temporary Solemniser

Before doing so, the Bishop's office will contact the priest's own Bishop or local Superior/Provincial directly to confirm the priest's 'good standing' and that there are no child protection concerns.

Youth Activities

It is important to encourage the participation of young people in the life and activities of the Church. We must listen to children and young people and value and respect them as individuals. We must observe transparent and best practice in all of our activities, particularly in the organisation of pilgrimages, receiving young people in our homes, retreats and trips away from home. Other adults must be involved in such events, including parents/guardians. We must always respect the privacy and physical integrity of children and young people at all times. If the pastoral care of a child or young person necessitates the arrangement of a meeting alone with them, care will be taken that this does not take place in an isolated environment. It is advisable to inform another adult that the meeting is taking place and its location.

Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers

The Society has adopted the Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers set out in Appendix C. The code will be read, understood and signed by every worker and volunteer before starting in their role.

Use of Computers

If a member is aware or reasonably suspects that a computer has been used by another member of the Society to view or send pornographic images of children or young people, this will be regarded as a child protection issue requiring immediate action and the member will inform the Designated Person or the relevant Superior. Where the Designated Person is in doubt about the nature of the images concerned, he will seek expert advice. (From the Child Safeguarding Committee).

If a member is aware or reasonably suspects that a computer which is the property of the Society or has been assigned for use by the Society has been used by an employee to view or send pornographic images of children or

young people, this will be regarded as a child protection issue and he will inform the Designated Person or the relevant Superior. Where the Designated Person is in doubt about the nature of the images concerned, he will seek expert advice.

Photographs and Video Recordings

Parental consent in writing is required for the taking of, distribution and publishing of any still images or video recordings of children or young people under the age of 18 years. Such material constitutes 'personal data' and is therefore subject to Data Protection legislation. Names should not be displayed with individual images, but a list placed beside the display or preferably, a simple label or heading with general, not specific, information should be used.

Internet and Mobile Phones

The Internet and mobile phones are now significant tools in the distribution of child pornography. They also allow instant access to predators on a worldwide scale to enter 'teen chat rooms' and 'groom' children and impressionable young people. "Grooming is a process whereby an adult uses opportunities to build up the trust and friendship of a child or young person to establish a sexual relationship with them."

While recognising the need to keep up with Internet developments, we should also be aware of the use as well as the abuse of the Internet and mobile phones. Any concerns about inappropriate use will be referred to the Society's Designated Person who will advise on the course of action to take.

Online abuse has become more prevalent. The increased number of home computers makes child abuse images a specific concern within the definition of abuse. Possession of child abusive images is a criminal offence.

4. Training and Education

All personnel associated with the Society of the Divine Saviour will be offered training in child protection to maintain high standards and good practice.

It is essential that all the Society's personnel that are involved in either providing or overseeing activities with children or have a designated child protection role must be provided with appropriate child protection training - along with regular opportunities to update their skills and knowledge.

Maintaining a high standard of training and education will protect:

- children by ensuring that they are in a good safe environment and minimising risk of abuse to them if allegations and suspicions of further abuse do arise;
- the Society's personnel by clarifying how they are expected to behave with children and what to do if there are any 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 modeling best practice.

The Society of the Divine Saviour will require that:-

- All personnel including lay people, religious and clergy will undertake a recognised programme of child protection training and will receive induction training into the society's policy and procedures and any specific requirements.
- All Training and Education procedures for priests, religious, staff and volunteers will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- 'Keeping Safe' - the recognised Child Protection training model under 'Children First': National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2009) will be completed by all who are preparing to serve as part of the safeguarding arrangements.
- Up-to-date files will be kept in respect of all personnel; these will include application forms, references and other relevant documentation.
- all personnel are properly supervised and supported in order that issues of concern are promptly dealt with as they arise.

Training personnel

The Society will ensure that we have access to trainers to deliver appropriate training to all personnel.

5. Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

Children are welcomed, cherished and protected in a manner consistent with their central place in the life of the church.

Policies and procedures are only effective if everyone, including children, understands their purpose and knows how to use them. The Society of the Divine Saviour is committed to making its child safeguarding procedures widely known and understood.

The name and contact details of our child safeguarding personnel and counselling services will be circulated by every means possible.

Our communication efforts will include making this latest edition of our Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures' available on the Society's website.

Giving children the confidence to speak out

We will

- Give details of how to contact the Designated Person should they have any concerns.
- Display posters or have information leaflets especially for new children who join activities about child safeguarding and children's helplines.
- Have a copy of the code of behaviour and complaints procedure on display and available as brochures available to all staff, volunteers, children and young people, families, visitors.
- Openly discuss child safeguarding principles, policy, codes of behaviour with them and make sure they know who to turn to if they have a worry or concern.
- Ask children what makes them feel safe and not safe. Really listen and take account of what they say – make sure it is not tokenistic – and make sure that they know you are listening.
- Conduct short questionnaires or run groups to check on how things are going.
- Consider how disabled children can communicate their complaints especially if they have verbal communication difficulties.
- Remember how vulnerable disabled children are to abuse.

6. Access to Advice and Support

Those who have suffered child abuse should receive a compassionate and just response and should be offered appropriate pastoral care to rebuild their lives.

Those who have harmed others should be helped to face up to the reality of abuse, as well as being assisted in healing.

Healing and Reconciliation

Throughout his ministry, Jesus reached out to those who were hurt or wounded in any way. We as a Society are called to continue this vital ministry. We must strive to ensure that those affected by child abuse are supported on the journey towards healing and reconciliation.

Care of those who are victims of abuse, their families and the Parish Community

Child abuse committed by a minister of the Gospel usually causes significant psychological harm. The damage done can also be spiritual, sometimes rupturing the victim's relationship with God. The Society will do its utmost to assist the abused person in finding the necessary help.

Child abuse by a minister can also have strong repercussions in the family, the parish, or other entities. The Society recognises that the grieving process is complex and that the process of healing can be a long one. The Society will collaborate with the appropriate authorities in the advancement of these processes.

In the event of litigation for financial compensation, every effort will be made to settle this in a fair and just way. In order not to cause further trauma to victims or their families, efforts will be made to settle out of court.

Support Person

A Support Person(s) will be appointed by the Provincial Superior to those who make an allegation/disclose abuse under these procedures. The person (who can be a child or adult) making the allegation will be offered a choice between a male or female Support Person.

The role of the Support Person(s) is to assist, where appropriate, with communication between the child or adult making an allegation/disclosure and the Diocesan Delegate.

- To facilitate the child or adult in gaining access to information and help.
- To represent their concerns during the inquiry process.
- The Society will provide appropriate training to the Support Person.

The Support Person(s) is not a counsellor to the child or adult, and will not be or act as their therapist. Support Persons will be particularly attentive to the expressed needs and objectives of the child or adult and the fact that some may be reluctant to seek help. Support Persons will, therefore, consider how any therapeutic or spiritual needs, of a child or adult who has made an allegation/ disclosed abuse, may be met and will be mindful of his/her ongoing vulnerability during this process.

In addition, the Support Person will:

- consider any wishes of the child or adult disclosing abuse, in regard to a pastoral response by the Province to his or her family;
- be available to the child or adult throughout the course of the inquiry process, and thereafter as required;
- ensure the child or adult is kept informed of developments in relation to them;
- represent the wishes and any therapeutic needs of the child or adult to the Delegate, as required;
- arrange, if considered helpful, a meeting between the child or adult and the Provincial Superior.

Under no circumstances will the same Support Person be provided for the child or accused adult.

The member accused and his family

The Society will provide the necessary therapy for a member who has engaged in child abuse. The Provincial Superior or The Designated Person in the Society will monitor the therapeutic process. The Society will provide to those involved any information it has which may be necessary or useful for the therapeutic process. The member who has engaged in child abuse will provide the Provincial Superior/Designated Person with authorisation for the release of necessary diagnostic information. The information released is limited to that which might be helpful for his healing. The authorisation is not a waiver of any statutory privilege of confidentiality.

The Provincial is responsible to see that sufficient disclosure of the member's past behaviour is made to the persons who need to know. Wherever the member is assigned in the future he must accept that the Society will have to provide a proper level of disclosure of his history on a need to know basis.

Families of those accused may feel isolated and stigmatised. They may feel concerned for the well being of the accused and unsure as to where to turn for help. The Society will endeavour to reach out to them and offer the necessary pastoral support.

The Provincial Superior will appoint an Adviser(s) to be available to the

accused. Advisers shall represent the needs of the accused to the church authority and assist, where appropriate, with the care of the accused and with communication between the accused, the Delegate and the church authority/church organisation. The accused person's Adviser will not be the accused person's therapist or spiritual adviser. Advisers will be particularly alert to the sense of isolation and vulnerability which an accused may experience following an allegation of this nature. He or she will:

- accompany, if so requested, and be available after the accused person's meeting with the church authority and the Delegate;
- inform the accused person of his or her right to obtain advice in civil and Canon Law;
- identify any therapeutic or other needs of the accused person and suggest how these may be met;
- consider the wishes of the accused person in regard to a pastoral response by the Church to his or her family;
- be available to the accused person throughout the inquiry process and thereafter as required;
- ensure that the accused person is kept informed of developments in regard to the inquiry;
- represent the needs and wishes of the accused person to the Delegate, as required.

Appropriate training is provided to the Adviser.

Under no circumstances will the same Support Person be provided for the child or adult making the allegation/disclosure of abuse and for the accused.

Restoring the Reputation of a Member Wrongly Accused

If the civil authorities decide not to prosecute and the Superior, in consultation with the Society's Advisory Panel, is satisfied after consideration of the facts and circumstances of the complaint that the member has been wrongly accused, appropriate steps to restore the good name of the member with those among whom it has been called into question, and to repair such harm and scandal as has been caused will be taken.

Assessment and Treatment of Members of the Society of the Divine Saviour accused of Child Abuse

Assessment

Assessment is a complex and specialised procedure that must be carried out by a multi-disciplinary team of clinicians, trained and experienced in assessing sexual deviancies, who work together to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the accused person. The validity and reliability of

assessment will depend on the clinicians having access to all available information.

The assessment clinicians must undertake to discuss their findings with the member of the Society assessed and present this person with a comprehensive report. The assessment will be conducted on the clear understanding that the report will be made available to the Provincial Superior of the member of the Society of the Divine Saviour assessed.

A comprehensive assessment of the person alleged to have abused requires considerable time, during which information can be gathered and cross-checked. Depending on the mental state of the person being assessed, the level of risk, the nature of the allegations, his location and the availability of services this may be carried out on an out-patient or an in-patient basis.

Treatment

Where, as a result of assessment, an accused member of the Society is deemed to require treatment, the opportunity for treatment will be offered to him.

While the effectiveness of treatment programmes must be regarded with some caution, certain offenders do appear to benefit from particular types of intervention. The most effective programmes combine individual and group methods which focus on the pattern of abusive behaviour and the cognitive distortions and deviant fantasies which support the abuse. The success of these programmes is dependent on the capacity of the abuser to empathise with victims, the development of the ability to establish and maintain appropriate interpersonal relationships, and compliance with a system of monitoring to prevent relapse.

In order to benefit from treatment, the offender must acknowledge that he has committed an offence and be prepared to accept responsibility for it. The offender must be brought to see the abuse as a grave problem not only for the victim(s) but also for himself, and must be willing to enter and participate actively in the treatment.

The treatment programme should provide a structured environment which allows for a detailed observation of the person sent for treatment as well as an opportunity to determine the ability of the person to begin a process of change in his life. One of the aims for such a programme should be to facilitate disclosure and to act against the denial and minimization which are characteristic of the abuser. The treatment programme should also strive to provide a supportive environment in which strategies designed to prevent relapse can be developed and practised and a change in lifestyle for the abuser can be consolidated.

Because the needs of offenders are complex, multi-disciplinary and multi-agency collaboration is essential if offenders are to be offered effective treatment and management. There is need to expand existing programmes for abusers and to develop new services, including residential services. The

Society will consider how it can co-operate with statutory and voluntary agencies towards the provision of such additional services.

Following Assessment and Treatment

Because the abuse of children is a grave breach of the sacred trust vested in a priest or brother the options for the future of those who offend in this way are gravely curtailed. Each situation will be different and will require a degree of flexibility and adaptation.

The Society may offer possibilities to a member of the Society who has offended for living a fruitful, if monitored, religious life focused on the internal life of the Society.

The Provincial Superior may determine, in a particular case, that the imposition of an ecclesiastical penalty is required, in accordance with canon law.

A member of the Society who has offended may decide to depart permanently from the Society.

In exceptional cases, it may be possible to assign a member of the Society who has offended to an appointment of limited ministry which would not involve unsupervised contact with children. A decision to make such an appointment could be taken only after careful consultation with professional clinicians, trained and experienced in assessing sexual deviancies, and when morally certain that this re-assignment would not present a danger to children. The protection and welfare of children must be always the paramount and overriding consideration in arriving at a decision.

Before arriving at a decision to appoint a member of the Society who has offended to any limited ministry, the Provincial will be satisfied that the following conditions are met:

- completion of a comprehensive assessment and treatment programme with a favourable opinion on the person's suitability for the proposed assignment;
- a positive recommendation from the Advisory Panel in regard to the proposed assignment;
- the elapse of a period of time after treatment during which his behaviour has been observed;
- the member of the Society permits disclosure of his past abusing to those who will be in authority in the proposed assignment and such others as they consider need to know;
- the member of the Society will avoid unsupervised contact with children, and the assignment does not afford such contact;
- a system of individual monitoring has been put in place which ensures supervision and accountability;

- an after-care programme involving individual and group therapy has been arranged to provide continuing support and guidance.

Having been satisfied that such a limited assignment to ministry is possible, the Provincial will make the assignment by way of a Precept. This would contain the following:

- the place of residence of the member of the Society and the terms of the limited assignment; the conditions of supervision;
- the requirement that the member of the Society participate in a recovery support group and therapy;
- the requirement that the member of the Society will avoid being alone with children;
- the acceptance of the disclosure of his condition to those in authority at the place of assignment and such others as they consider need to know;
- a condition that violation of the Precept would result in his removal from the assignment.

The terms of the Precept will be agreed to by the member of the Society and this would be recorded. The Provincial will review the assignment with all parties concerned on a regular basis.

Review of Cases

Where a member has been accused of child abuse and it has not been established that the accusation is false, the Provincial will review this case on a regular basis, to ensure that all necessary action is being taken by the Society.

Reports

If the allegation is substantiated a written report to that effect will be placed in the case file and in the personal file of the alleged offender. If the allegation is unsubstantiated, a written report to that effect will be placed in the case file and in the accused person's personal file

National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC or 'National Board')

The first National Board was established by the Irish Bishops' Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland and the Irish Missionary Union to provide independent advice and to monitor safeguarding practices in the Church.

The National Board is independent in order to allow it to undertake independent advisory, audit and inspection functions. The National Board will produce an annual report, which provides data and commentary on the practice of the Church organisations regarding the safeguarding of children. In particular, the annual report will contain summaries of the learning gained

from reviews and audits carried out during the year to which the annual report relates.

The National Office for Safeguarding Children (The National Office). was established by the National Board.

Its main purpose is to:

- implement the policies and decisions of the National Board
- undertake advisory and audit tasks
- act as a resource for Church organisations and will be accessible to all such bodies for advice, or guidance
- support the diocesan / congregational Designated Officers
- monitor practice within the Church organisations regarding adherence to the standards set down within this guidance, both through the self-audit process and through its auditors.

7. Implementing and Monitoring Agreed Policy

To keep children safe, policies and procedures and plans have to be implemented across all Church Organisations. Checks are needed to ensure this is happening consistently. The views of those involved inside and outside Church Organisations can help to improve effectiveness of any measures taken

The Society recognises the importance of a Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Children as a living document. As a result this document has been designed to guide and support those involved in ministry to children in the Society. In order to ensure its effectiveness and the ongoing implementation of the guidelines herein the Society commits to:

- provide the required financial resources for the implementation of the policy;
- support the needs of those with roles in safeguarding children through the Committee for Safeguarding Children;
- review the document every three years or more frequently if there are changes in legislation or ministry to children or there is a need to review it after an incident has taken place;
- develop the areas identified in the current action plan for the Committee for Safeguarding Children and reviewing this plan at the quarterly meetings;
- ensure accurate records are kept of any incidents, allegations or concerns that are reported to the Delegates.

It is the responsibility of the Designated Person and the Safeguarding Committee to ensure that the policies and procedures set out in this document are implemented.

They will ensure that the Society has a written plan showing:-

- What steps will be taken to keep children safe
- Who is responsible for implementing these measures
- When will these be completed

They will also ensure that all incidents, allegations or suspicions of abuse are dealt with appropriately, recorded and stored securely.

National Audits

The Society will co-operate fully with the audits being undertaken by the Health Service Executive and the planned audits by the National Office for Safeguarding Children

Appendix A

Recognising Child Abuse

Definition and Possible Physical and Behavioural Indicators of Child Abuse

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, medical care. Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point.

Possible indicators of this type of abuse are:

- Frequent minor or serious injuries;
- Untreated illness;
- Hunger, lack of nutrition;
- Tiredness;
- Inadequate or inappropriate clothing;
- Lack of supervision;
- Low self esteem;
- Lack of peer relationships.

Emotional

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship of the caregiver and a child rather than a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs and symptoms.

Possible indicators of this type of abuse are:

- Unreasonable mood and/or behavioural changes
- Aggression, withdrawal or an 'I don't care attitude'
- Lack of attachment
- Low self esteem
- Attention seeking
- Depression or suicide attempts
- Persistent nightmares, disturbed sleep, bedwetting, reluctance to go to bed;
- A fear of adults or particular individuals e.g. family member, baby-sitter or indeed excessive clinginess to parents or carers.
- Panic attacks.

Physical

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from willful neglect or neglectful failure to protect a child.

Possible indicators of this type of abuse are:

- Frequent bruising, fractures, cuts, burns and other injuries
- Torn clothing
- Bite marks, burns or welts
- Bruises in places difficult to mark e.g. behind the ears, groin
- Undue or unnecessary fear
- Aggressiveness or withdrawn
- Absconding frequently from home

Sexual

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.

Possible indicators of this type of abuse are:

- Over affectionate or inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Age inappropriate sexual knowledge given the child's age, which is often demonstrated in language, play or drawings
- Fondling or exposure of genital areas
- Hints about sexual activity
- Unusual reluctance to join in normal activities, which involve undressing, e.g. games/swimming

Indicators of Abuse are not Facts

It is important to stress that no one indicator of abuse should be seen as conclusive in itself of abuse; it may indeed indicate conditions other than child abuse. A cluster or pattern of signs is likely to be more indicative of abuse. Signs must be considered in the child's social and family context as child abuse is not restricted to any socioeconomic group, gender or culture. It is important to always be open to alternative explanations for possible physical or behavioural signs of abuse.

Reasonable Grounds for Concern

The statutory authorities should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been abused, or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse. A suspicion that is not supported by any objective indicator of abuse or neglect would not constitute reasonable grounds for concern.

The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

- specific indication from the child that s/he was abused;
- an account by the person who saw the child being abused;
- evidence such as injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in any other way.
- An injury or behaviour, which is consistent both with abuse

A suspicion not supported by any objective indication of abuse or neglect, does not constitute a reasonable suspicion or reasonable grounds for concern.

(Children First 2011).

APPENDIX B

Protection for Persons Reporting Abuse

The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides immunity from civil liability to persons who report child abuse “reasonably and in good faith” to the Health Service Executive or An Garda Síochána. This means that even if a reported suspicion of child abuse proves unfounded a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that the reporter had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report.

This protection applies to organisations and individuals. It is considered therefore that organisations should assume responsibility for reporting suspected child abuse to the appropriate authorities. Reports to the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána should be made by the Child Protection Officer, as per the organisation’s policy and guidelines.

Section 3(1) of the Act states:

“3.(1) A person who apart from this section, would be so liable shall not be liable in damages in respect of the communication, whether in writing or otherwise, by him or her to an appropriate person of his or her opinion that-

- (a) A child has been or is being assaulted, neglected or sexually abused,*
or
- (b) A child’s health, development or welfare has been or is being avoidably impaired or neglected,*

Unless it is proven that he or she has not acted reasonably and in good faith in forming that opinion and communicating it to an appropriate person”.

Appendix C

Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers

General Conduct

- Avoid spending time alone with a child or young person. Should circumstances arise where this is unavoidable, immediately inform another responsible adult, by telephone if necessary. Make a diary note that the meeting with the young person took place, including the reasons for it.
- Observe best practice in relation to travel with children and young people. Workers and volunteers 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, make a record of this and inform the child's parents or guardians as soon as possible. Inform a colleague at the time if the parents/guardians are not available.
- Unless there are at least two adults present avoid permitting children and young people to work or remain in churches or parish property.
- Treat all children and young people with equal respect; favoritism is not acceptable.
- Be cognizant of the imbalance in power inherent in adult-child relationships.
- Do not engage in or tolerate any behaviour verbal, psychological or physical – that could be construed as bullying.
- Do not spend a disproportionate amount of time with any particular child or group of children or young people.
- Under no circumstances give alcohol, tobacco or drugs to children or young people.
- Do not use alcohol, tobacco or drugs when supervising or working with children and young people.
- Use only age-appropriate language, media products and activities when working with children and young people. Sexually explicit or pornographic material is never appropriate.

Meetings with Children and Young people

- If the pastoral care of a young person necessitates the arrangement of a meeting alone with them, do not meet in isolated environments.
- Schedule meetings at times and at designated locations that allow for transparency and accountability (for example, rooms with a clear glass panel or window, an open door, and in buildings where there are other people present).
- Scheduling meeting by text messages is inappropriate.
- Limit both the length and number of meetings.

- Inform parents or guardians that the meeting(s) are taking place, except in circumstances where to do so might place a child in danger. In that case, inform a colleague.
- Do not encourage visits to, or conduct meetings in private homes or personal living quarters.
- When the need for a visit to the home of a child or young person arises, professional boundaries must be observed at all times.

Discipline

- Corporal punishment of children and young people is never permitted.
- Discipline problems should be handled in partnership with parents and guardians.

Respect for Physical Integrity

- Respect the physical integrity of children and young people at all times.
- Do not engage in inappropriate physical contact of any kind, including rough physical play, physical reprimand and horseplay (tickling, wrestling etc.)

This should not prevent appropriate contact with the permission of the child or young person in situations where it is necessary to ensure safety and wellbeing of a child, but where the child expresses discomfort or resistance then this contact should cease.

Respect for Privacy

- Respect the privacy of children and young people at all times.
- Particular care regarding privacy must be taken when young people are in locations such as changing areas, swimming pools, showers and toilets.
- Never take photographs of children or young people while they are in changing areas (for example, in a locker room or bathing facility).
- Never do things of a personal nature (for example, helping with toileting, washing or changing clothing) for children and young people that they can do for themselves.

Photography and Film

- Always ensure that the content of the photo/film is appropriate.
- One-to-one photo sessions with children are supervised.
- Parents and children consent to the use of an image and that this is recorded.
- Photographs/images likely to be published in press or Internet should avoid using children's full names (first and surname) and any details of addresses.

- Parents and children are aware of the way the image will be used to represent the Church organization or activity.

Parental Consent

- Signed consent must be obtained from parents or guardians of each child or young person prior to their participation in events, activities and groups.
- Establish from parents or guardians whether the child or young person has any specific dietary requirements or medical or special needs.

Trips Away from Home

Trips away from home include but are not limited to pilgrimages, day trips, overnight stays and holidays.

- All trips need careful advance planning including adequate provision in regard to transport, facilities, activities and emergencies. Adequate insurance should be in place. Leaders must be properly qualified and supervised for activities undertaken.
- Written parental consent specifically for each trip and related activities must be obtained well in advance. Contact details for the duration of the trip are necessary. Written permission for leader to make decisions of an emergency nature should be obtained in case of accidents. 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. Training must be provided to all leaders.
- Arrangements and procedures must be put in place to ensure that the rules and appropriate boundaries are maintained in the relaxed environment of trips away. These rule and boundaries must be clearly outlined to all leaders during preparation/training for the event.
- Particular attention should be given to ensuring that the privacy of young people is respected when they are away on trips.
- Sleeping areas for boys and girls should be separate and supervised by two adults of the same sex as the group being supervised.
- Under no circumstances should an adult leader share the same bedroom with a young person.
- If, in an emergency situation, an adult considers it necessary to be alone in a children's dormitory or bedroom without another adult they should (a) immediately inform another adult in a position of responsibility and (b) make a diary note of the circumstances.

Complaints Procedure

- Develop a clear and transparent complaints procedure and appeals process to be used by young people, staff, workers, volunteers or parents who are dissatisfied with any aspect of activities or services provided.

- Make sure that children and young people and their parents or guardians receive a copy of the complaints procedure.
- Fully inform all staff and volunteers about the complaints procedure.
- All complaints should be recorded.

Health and Safety

- Adequate and appropriate supervision must be provided in relation to all events and activities organized for children and young people (see below for recommended ratios).
- In places such as changing areas, toilets and showers, separate provision must be made for boys and girls.
- There must be adequate and gender-appropriate supervision of boys and girls in all such areas.
- Ensure that buildings and/or facilities used for events and activities are suitable, safe and secure.
- Make sure that fire precautions are in place and that fire extinguishers are checked regularly.
- Make sure that a first aid kit is readily available. This should be checked and replenished regularly. It is advisable that first aid training is provided for workers and volunteers.
- Be alert to the risk of injury involved in some contact sports, paying particular attention to the child's age and to medical condition or disability.
- Access to a telephone at all times is essential in case of an emergency.
- Adequate insurance must be obtained to cover all activities. In cases of uncertainty about the level of cover, check with the relevant insurance provider.
- Where transport is being provided by the parish or parish activity, make sure that drivers and vehicles meet legal requirements. Where transport is being hired, check with the service provider that drivers and vehicles conform to legal requirements. Always inform parents and guardians about transport being used.
- A clear policy should be agreed with parents and guardians regarding the taking of photographs and the making of video recordings of children and young people involved in parish related activities and events,
- There should be regular health and safety reviews of facilities, equipment, procedures and practices.

Recommended Supervision Ratios

0-2 years	1 member of staff to 3 children
2-3 years	1 member of staff to 4 children
3-7 years	1 member of staff to 8 children
8 years and over	2 members of staff (ideally 1 of each gender) for up to 20 children

There should be one additional staff member for every ten extra children and/or young people. The ratio of staff and volunteers to children with disabilities is dependent on the individual needs.

Record Keeping – Activities

- Each group will be responsible for storing in a confidential way an accurate record for each activity involving children or young people
- This record should include a copy of signed parental/guardian consent form with contact details of parent/guardians and should include any relevant medical information
- A written record of organisers and supervisors in attendance at all events should also be kept
- An attendance of all children in attendance at any event should be completed
- An incident/accident report form should be completed in the event of any accident or incident relating to a child or young person

APPENDIX D

Acceptance of the Society of the Divine Saviour Child Safeguarding Policy

Declaration from all members, staff and volunteers working with children and young people

Surname _____ Forename _____

Any previous surnames _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

Current Address _____

Contact Phone Number/s _____

I have read the Safeguarding Children Policy and Code of Behaviour of the Society of the Divine Saviour and agree to abide by its contents.

Signature _____

Date _____

There is no reason why I would be considered unsuitable to work with children or young people.

Signature : _____

Date: _____