

Safeguarding guidance for parishes on non-parish groups wishing to minister with children and young people

This brief guidance has been developed to assist parishes who may be considering engaging with non-parish groups that minister to children or young people or who are approached by a group who wish to conduct such ministry in their parish.

The general guidance contained in the *Dublin Diocesan Child Safeguarding Policy (2023)* is that:

- 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.
- It is not the responsibility of the parish to evaluate the safeguarding policies of external groups. It is sufficient to ask them to sign to confirm that the policy exists.

Groups who wish to minister with children and young people, that is, involve them in faith development activities in the parish should be required to complete the form that accompanies this guidance document and send it to the Parish Priest/ Priest in charge. Parishes are requested to send copies of the completed form to the diocesan Child Safeguarding and Protection Service so that a central list of all such groups can be maintained.

The parish team, having considered the group's application, has three options:

1. To permit the group to minister on behalf of the parish. If this happens the group becomes the responsibility of the parish and diocesan safeguarding policy applies. Those engaging with minors must be vetted by the parish and attend safeguarding training delivered by diocesan trainers;
2. To treat such groups as external groups on the basis that they have their own child safeguarding policy and insurance;
3. Not to engage with the group.

Parishes should also seek reassurance that the groups in question operate in accordance with the ethos of the Catholic Church. Parishes are strongly advised to seek the advice of the Office of Mission and Ministry on this matter. The advice of the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service should be sought in relation to safeguarding matters.

Where missionary activity is to be carried out by volunteers placed/ living-in in the parish clarity is required in relation to who is taking responsibility for the welfare and support of the volunteers (parish or missionary group) and reassurance sought as to the adequacy of these arrangements. The particular needs of young people from overseas should be considered and the contingency arrangements for situations where their placements break down or they need to return to their country of origin at short notice. The Child Safeguarding and Protection Service is available to offer advice on these matters.

Form for groups proposing to engage in ministry with children and young people

Name of Group _____

Purpose of proposed activities _____

User group, e.g. children, adolescents

Date of commencement of ministry _____

Date of completion of ministry _____

Names and addresses of persons in charge:

1. _____

Phone number _____ Email: _____

2. _____

Phone number _____ Email: _____

Do you have a Tusla approved Child Safeguarding Statement, as required under the Children First Act 2015?

Yes No

Do you have appropriate insurance cover for this activity (public liability and/or employer's liability and professional indemnity, as appropriate)?

Yes No

Name of insurance company _____

Policy number _____

Period of cover _____

Limit of indemnity _____

To be signed by official/coordinator of the Group.

Signed _____

Print name _____

Position _____

Date _____