

# **CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES**



## **PARISH OF FRANCIS STREET**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

We in the Parish of Francis Street value and encourage the participation of children and young people in all parish activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional and social development. We recognise the dignity and rights of all children 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 our children and young people in order to ensure their protection and enable their full participation in the life of the Church.

### ***Our Policy Statement is based on the following guiding principles:***

- ♦ Children are people now and their childhood is valuable in its own right.
- ♦ Each child is to be affirmed as a gift of God and has an absolute right to dignity of life and bodily integrity, which must be respected, nurtured and protected.
- ♦ Children have a right to be heard and taken seriously, taking account of their age and level of understanding. They should be consulted and involved in relation to all matters and decisions that affect their lives.
- ♦ Children have a right to care and support and to be raised in environments free from abuse or neglect, with good role models whom they can fully trust, and who will care for and nurture their spiritual and physical maturity.
- ♦ The Church has a corporate responsibility to operate effective systems to assure the protection of children. This includes having a proper recruitment, formation and training strategy in place and working co-operatively with other agencies in the best interest of the child.
- ♦ All personnel must be aware of their duty both to prevent child abuse and to report concerns or suspicions.
- ♦ Every action and procedure must consider the overall needs of the child. Actions taken to protect the child should not in themselves be abusive or cause the child unnecessary distress.
- ♦ A proper balance must be struck between protecting the child and regard for the rights of carers and adults; but where there is a conflict, the children's welfare must come first.

## **BASIC PROCEDURES**

The Parish undertakes to have the following in place:

- ♦ Signed parental consent for each young person for each activity.
- ♦ Appropriate supervision ratios of adults to young people while maintaining the practice of ensuring that no young person is left alone with an adult.
- ♦ A duty roster of leaders to ensure adequate supervision of young people at all times.
- ♦ A code of conduct for all adult leaders and young people.
- ♦ Adequate record keeping processes including:
  - Participant forms
  - Incident/Accident Report Forms
  - Volunteer Application Forms
  - Declaration Forms for all adult leaders
  - Medical information and treatment permission as appropriate for all

- all young people
  - Programme/Attendance Records
  - Training records
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- ♦ Contact Information for parents/guardians.
  - ♦ Procedures for recruitment and overseeing adult leaders working with young people.
  - ♦ A clearly communicated Accident/Emergency Plan.
  - ♦ For away trips a pre-check on accommodation and transport arrangements.
  - ♦ Information session for all young people and their parents.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

- ♦ Young people will be treated with courtesy, respect and dignity.
- ♦ Young people will not be permitted to consume alcohol or smoke while participating in activities, **in keeping with civil law in Ireland.**
- ♦ There will be an adequate ratio of leaders to young people at all times. Leaders should not work alone with young people.
- ♦ Every effort will be made to ensure that when working with mixed gender groups staff and adult volunteers of appropriate gender will work in pairs.
- ♦ Leaders(18+) will not consume alcohol or smoke while having responsibility for or in the presence of young people.
- ♦ Inappropriate language or sexually suggestive comments by young people or leaders will not be permitted.
- ♦ Physical contact between young people and leaders will be appropriate at all times. Leaders will not engage in rough play or undertake any task of a personal nature with/for young people except in cases of medical necessity when the welfare of the child depends on it.
- ♦ Leaders will always engage with young people in an open manner and care will be taken not to show favouritism.
- ♦ There will be clearly designated leaders within each group with whom young people can speak about their experience and raise any concerns should they arise.
- ♦ The Parish will have a designated person assigned to whose immediate attention all concerns and/or complaints can be brought.
- ♦ The designated person will respond promptly to all concerns and liaise with the required civil and Church authorities.
- ♦ All concerns and/or complaints will be followed through in a timely and efficient manner.
- ♦ The Parish will have a specific code of conduct for all away trips including pilgrimages, day trips and incentive events. This code will be made known to the young people and leaders.

## BASIC POLICIES

The Policies laid out in this document are basic. They will be developed and adjusted as necessary. The Parish Pastoral Council will formally review these policies on the 1st June 2007.

Should you wish to make comments or ask questions about these policies please don't hesitate to get in contact:

**01-4542172**  
**01-4542109**  
**01-4544861**  
**086-4035318 (Parish Mobile)**  
**086-2295655 (Child Protection Representative)**  
**Email: franciss@francisstreetparish.ie**

#### **CHILD PROTECTION REPRESENTATIVE**

The Child Protection Representative, for Francis Street Parish can be contacted at this number:

**086-2295655**

The Parish CPR is a lay person who has been trained. If you need information, or wish to report a concern, or make a complaint, or seek advice, you can contact them on the above number. This mobile number is used only by the Parish CPR. You can leave messages in confidence as the code for the phone is known only to the Parish CPR.

Should you wish to discuss a matter with the Parish CPR it is possible to make an appointment and meet with them in complete privacy.

For more important numbers and contacts

***THIS DOCUMENT IS ALSO AVAILABLE ON THE PARISH WEBSITE:***

**<http://www.francisstreetparish.ie>**