



Parish of Our Lady of Consolation

Child Protection Policy of Our Lady of Consolation Parish, Donnycarney

Policy Statement

Introduction:

Children are born with fundamental rights and everyone in the Church has an obligation to ensure that these fundamental rights are respected. Children have the right to grow and develop free from neglect, harm, abuse and exploitation.

Any exploitation of the vulnerability of children and young people is the gravest betrayal of trust.

The **Parish of Our Lady of Consolation** is adopting procedures to safeguard the welfare of our children and young people.

The Parish actively promotes and encourages the participation of children and young people in parish activities and liturgies. We acknowledge the energy and vitality that they alone can contribute to our Church.

We are therefore committed to fostering a nurturing and affirming environment in which:

They are listened to and respected as individuals.

They are involved in decision-making (where appropriate).

Their right to privacy and physical integrity is respected at all times.

Role of Parents/Guardians: (P/G)

P/G have the primary responsibility for ensuring the safety and welfare of their child/children. P/G written consent is essential before a child can be considered for any ministry in the Church (e.g. altar servers/ children's choir/ drama/ faith development

etc.). The consent form will include the child's name, address, any relevant medical information, P/G name and address, contact telephone numbers and signature. The leader of the group will hold this information in confidence. All P/G will be furnished with a copy of the **Child Protection Policy**. P/G are welcome and encouraged to attend any training, outings, functions and liturgies in which their children are involved.

Leaders/Volunteers

The parish community is very grateful for the time, energy and commitment shown by leaders/volunteers in helping our young people/children grow in faith, hope and love of Christ. In order to ensure the highest standards and maximize protection for leaders/volunteers and children the following policies are to be followed at all times:

- ◆ No adult should be alone with a child unless absolutely necessary. If such a situation should arise another responsible adult should be informed immediately (by telephone if necessary). A diary note that the meeting has taken place and the reason for it should be noted.
- ◆ Adults are expected to behave in a respectful manner towards all children at all times. The use of bad/inappropriate language/gestures/comments is not acceptable. The showing of inappropriate images/videos/DVD's is not acceptable.
- ◆ There shall be no inappropriate physical contact at any time between leaders and children. In particular rough play or any task of a personal nature is to be avoided except in the case of medical or physical necessity. If this situation arises an incident/report form will be completed.



Parish of Our Lady of Consolation Child Protection Policy of Our Lady of Consolation Parish, Donnycarney

- ◆ No alcohol or unprescribed drugs are to be consumed while responsible for children. Adults will not smoke in the presence of the children.
- ◆ Adults will not show favouritism to any one child or group of children.
- ◆ Adults will report any incidents of bullying to the group leader and complete an incident form.
- ◆ Mixed gender groups will ideally have mixed gender leadership.

Recruitment of Volunteers:

All prospective leaders/volunteers will complete an application form, which will include the names of two character referees. They will be required to undergo the standard Garda check and to sign the parish's ***Child Protection Policy***. The Parish Priest, in conjunction with the group leader, retains the right to refuse anyone who is deemed to be unsuitable.

Training:

Leaders of all parish groups working with children and young people will undergo training in best practice in relation to child protection organized by the diocese and will be familiar with the parish ***Child Protection Policy*** and '***Our Children, our Church***'.

All other volunteers working with children and young people will be familiarized with the parish ***Child Protection Policy*** and '***Our Children, our Church***'.

Parish Child Protection Representative: (Designated liaison person)

The Parish Child Protection Representative (PCPR) will be an established, competent and visible lay member of the parish, ideally with some experience in childcare/ welfare/ counselling. S/he will have completed the approved Child Protection Training provided by the diocese. The role of the PCPR will include:

- ◆ Promoting awareness of the parish and diocesan Child Protection Policies through notice board, newsletter, website and information sessions with volunteers.
- ◆ Ensure that parishioners have easy access to the Diocesan Child Protection Officer.
- ◆ Facilitate anyone in the parish who may wish to bring an allegation or suspicion of child abuse to the attention of the Diocesan Director of Child Protection, Mr Philip Garland, c/o Archbishop's House, Drumcondra, Dublin 9.
- ◆ Facilitate anyone in the parish who may wish to bring an allegation of child abuse to the Gardaí or Health Service Executive (HSE) by giving them the relevant contact details.
- ◆ Arrange for the complainant to complete an incident report form for submission to the Diocesan Director of Child Protection.
- ◆ Help arrange training for volunteers.