



Child Safeguarding Statement

Dublin Oak Academy Child Safeguarding Statement

This statement has been prepared to comply with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015 and is derived from Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016.

Statement

As a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland, the Legion of Christ recognise and uphold the dignity and rights of all children and are committed to ensuring their safety and well-being and will work in partnership with parents/ guardians to do this. We recognise each child as a gift from God, and we value and encourage the participation of children in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

All personnel (including clergy, religious, staff and volunteers) have a responsibility to safeguard children through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment that supports their best interests and prevents abuse.

Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

The Legion of Christ as a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland exists to promote the teachings of the Catholic Church. This includes working with children, as defined in the Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016 at our Irish Institution **DUBLIN OAK ACADEMY**.

Dublin Oak Academy is an international, private, boarding school in Ireland that strives to provide the most appropriate environment, facilities, educational and sports programs, and personnel to achieve an Integral Formation of young men as Christian leaders.

Our education is rooted in the living Catholic tradition of academic excellence, personal integrity, high moral standards and a spirit of service to others. It aims to offer each student the key to his personal happiness and fulfilment in this life and the next step of his life.

There are currently 95 students residing at Dublin Oak Academy for the 18/19 Academic Year. Dublin Oak has a capacity for 110 students. There are 7 non-resident teachers at the Academy teaching the students the Secondary school Irish Curriculum. There are 6 Religious and 4 co-workers (age profile 18-20) who reside on site. The students study the Irish Curriculum during the school day, followed by sports/activities each day, with one outing per week on a Sunday, outside the Academy.

During the year, the students participate in two main trips as part of their Tuition and have the choice to participate in three other optional trips within Europe. All trips are authorised by parents/guardians. If students do not participate in the optional trips, they reside at the Academy and take part in organised activities and outings during this period.

As outlined in the Safeguarding Children 2016 Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland we are committed to the following principles:

- **Mandatory reporting**

Each of us has a duty to notify the statutory authorities of suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations that a child is being or has been abused:

- Physically
- Emotionally
- Sexually
- Through neglect

Suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations may relate to possible abuse by a member of Church personnel, but they can also relate to incidents in the child's family, or elsewhere in the community.

- **Caring for the welfare of all children and the adults who work with them**

Measures to create and maintain environments that are safe for children, that prevent abuse and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Legion of Christ Institutions in Ireland for children and the adults who work with them, will continue to be strengthened and reviewed. This will be done through training support, communications and quality assurance.

- **Responding appropriately to child protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations**

Anyone who brings any suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation of current or past abuse of a child to the notice of the Legion of Christ Institutions in Ireland will be responded to sensitively, respectfully, actively and in a timely manner, in line with statutory child protection procedures and Church requirements.

All suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations that reach the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities (apart from those received in the Sacrament of Reconciliation) will be reported to the appropriate statutory authorities. This will be done irrespective of the status of the person (lay, cleric or religious) who is suspected of having been abusive to a child. If the allegation relates to a lay member of Legion of Christ personnel, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must be reported to the Church authority.

If the allegation relates to a cleric or religious, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must also be reported to the Legion of Christ Authority and the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

All personnel will co-operate with the statutory authorities in all cases.

In responding to complaints of child sexual abuse relating to clergy and all those in forms of consecrated life, Church authorities will act in accordance with the requirements of civil law and canon law, and so will respect the rights and uphold the safeguards afforded in these, both to the complainant and respondent.

- **Caring pastorally for complainants and other affected persons**

Those who have suffered child abuse by Legion of Christ Personnel will receive a compassionate and just response, and will be offered appropriate pastoral care, counselling and support as they seek to rebuild their lives. An appropriate pastoral response to the family, parish, congregation or order and to the wider community will be provided, with due regard to the right of privacy of those directly involved, and to the administration of justice.

- **Caring pastorally for respondents and other affected persons**

The Legion of Christ in its response to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of child sexual abuse will respect the rights under civil law and canon law of an accused cleric or religious or other Legion of Christ personnel. A legal presumption of innocence will be maintained during the statutory and Church inquiry processes. As the processes develop, additional assessment, therapy and support services may be offered to the respondent.

The Legion of Christ will take responsibility for ensuring that any cleric or religious who is considered to constitute a danger to children is managed according to a risk management plan. All requisite steps will be taken to restore the good name and reputation of anyone who has been wrongly accused of abusing a child. Respondents belong to families and diocesan or religious communities. The Legion of Christ will be mindful of the need to provide support to members of families and communities affected by the respondent's changed situation.

Risk Assessment

The table below sets out the identified risks to the safety of children and young people involved in activities at Dublin Oak Academy and the steps taken to minimise the risks of abuse. There is a procedure in place for all potential risks outlined below.

Risk Identified	Practices and Procedures in place to manage identified risk
<p>Potential risk of abuse of harm (as defined by Children First Act of 2015) to the boarders by a member of staff, including sexual abuse, as they could be exposed through their involvement in group activities, outings or trips.</p>	<p>Safe selection and recruitment procedures for all personnel, including Garda vetting for all. Children and their parents are aware of the safety procedures in place before arrival to the Academy. Schedules in place ensure children are not alone as all activities/classes/trips are group based. If a child is on their own with an adult this would be for Dialogue (conversation//tutoring between a religious and child) – in this regard Dialogue is firstly authorised by parents in a consent form and also logged on sheets containing time, date, whereabouts and filed. All offices throughout the building have glass panels for child safety. Dialogue is always in an open place.</p>
<p>Those who work with children could engage in unsafe work practices or behave inappropriately towards them, including harming a child physically, psychologically, or emotionally.</p>	<p>Ongoing Child Safeguarding training provided for all personnel. All staff are made aware of the different types of abuse and how this is not tolerated at the Academy. Staff upon completion of the child safety training course sign a form acknowledging receipt of the Academy’s Child Safety policy and participation in the child safety training provided.</p> <p>Employee Handbook/policies in place.</p> <p>Appropriate communication with children (including use of social media).</p> <p>‘Who to tell’ signs are also posted around the Academy in prominent areas (also in Spanish) so that all children are aware they can talk to either their section leader or a member of the Child Safety team at the Academy if they have a concern.</p> <p>Dialogue (one to one meeting with a trained adult teacher for spiritual/personal formation) – logs kept of who, when, where and provided to CS Representative to file.</p> <p>Parental consent is required to be in touch with children under 18 through social media/email.</p>
<p>Children could be at risk of bullying by a member of staff/volunteer/another child</p>	<p>Ongoing child safeguarding training provided for all those working with the children at the Academy. Anti -Bullying policy in operation and all students aware, as well as parents and staff. Section team leaders also have bullying as a topic discussed frequently so that all are aware it is not tolerated. Rules and Regulations issued to parents and children before arrival to the school and families are asked to go through this with their children before arrival so it is clear that they understand the Academy have a zero tolerance bullying policy in operation.</p>

<p>Children could be at Risk of harm or abuse in the context of online safety</p>	<p>All students take part in an online safety training session at the Academy at the beginning of the year. This is provided by a professional speaker who specialises in Digital media/safety online. A particular assembly is held by the Director of Dublin Oak Academy at the beginning of the year. Parents are informed that they must take responsibility for monitoring their children’s social media/email accounts to ensure safety in this regard. Internet Safety filters/network firewalls are in use at the Academy to prevent unauthorized Internet use. Phones are kept in secured lockers at all times and only given out during scheduled phone calls/internet as per Academy schedules and all parents are aware.</p>
<p>Children could be at risk of harm of abuse while away on trips</p>	<p>All trips are planned with the safety of the children as priority This includes increased supervision, detailed planning with supervisors, rules set out and explained to staff step by step (hourly information) on the groups itinerary during this period, including an assembly for all children to explain to stay with their team leader at all times with the main group. No student is alone with an adult and students share a room with at least one/two fellow students. Safety rules are explained to students and parents, in particular if a child leaves their dormitory after lights out, they are expelled from the next scheduled trip as it is for their own safety. No supervisor is allowed to enter a child’s bedroom unless it is an emergency.</p>
<p>Those working with children could operate in unsafe environments.</p>	<p>Proper procedures in place when arranging outings, activities and trips. All personnel given copy of the Code of Conduct for Adults working with children, on commencement of specific role. Full risk assessment carried out before all outings and trips. Extra precautions/supervision put in place, in the case of high risk activities (e.g. rollercoaster park, ski, swimming etc.)</p>
<p>Lack of clarity as to who is responsible for what, when it comes to child safeguarding and protection in the Legion of Christ Institutions.</p>	<p>Roles and responsibilities are clearly laid out in this document. Ongoing child safety training sessions in place and Tusla online training sessions for classroom based personnel.</p>
<p>Children involved in group activities may not understand what is expected of them in terms of their contact with and behaviour towards each other.</p>	<p>Adults who work with children expected to be good role models for them. Child Safety assembly in place for all students at the beginning of the year. Visible ‘who to tell’ signs in place. Anti-bullying training and campaigns in place.</p>
<p>Concerns that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected may go undetected or unreported.</p>	<p>The Legion of Christ Child Safeguarding policy and procedures are circulated to all personnel. Safeguarding information and training provided to all personnel. Safeguarding message conveyed to the public/parents and guardians through email and website.</p>
<p>Personnel, whether mandated persons or others, may be unaware of their responsibility, or not supported, to report concerns that a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected.</p>	<p>Reporting thresholds and procedures are set out in Child Safeguarding policy document and covered in training sessions. Joint reports will be made by DLP and Mandated Persons, where appropriate, taking account of data protection requirements.</p>

Mandated persons may not be aware of their responsibilities under the Children's First Act 2015.	Role of mandated persons described in the Child Safeguarding policy document and during child safety training sessions provided in all three Legion of Christ institutions in Ireland.
Safeguarding practice in Legion of Christ Institutions/programmes may not be implemented.	Self-audits carried out once per year by DLP. External review by National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

Procedures

All procedures outlined in the risk assessment above are available in the Child Safeguarding Policy document, available at Dublin Oak Academy. Please contact the Designated Person at Dublin Oak Academy, Mark Doran (sports@dublinoakacademy.com) if you would like to obtain a copy. The Child Safeguarding policy document is also available to view on the Academy website in both Spanish and English.

The procedures listed above include the following:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/ volunteers of a child availing of our service. *Please refer to Chapter 4, 4.3* of the Child Safeguarding Policy document, available at each Legion of Christ Institution.
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children. *Please refer to Chapter 3, 3.3* of the Child Safeguarding Policy document, available at each Legion of Christ Institution.
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm. *Please refer to Chapter 3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9* of the Child Safeguarding Policy document, available at each Legion of Christ Institution.
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla. *Please refer to Chapter 4, 4.3* of the Child Safeguarding Policy document, available at each Legion of Christ Institution.
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons. *Please refer to Chapter 2 and Chapter 4, 4.5* of the Child Safeguarding Policy document, available at each Legion of Christ Institution.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person. *Please refer to Chapter 2* of the Child Safeguarding Policy document, available at each Legion of Christ Institution.

Implementation

Dublin Oak Academy is committed to safeguarding children through the implementation of *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*. This Child Safeguarding Statement and our practice, support our desire to keep children safe from harm while residing at our Academy in Ireland. As part of our annual audit against the relevant indicators of the child safeguarding standards, we will review the effectiveness of our practice as outlined in this statement and will revise, as appropriate.

This statement has been communicated to all staff and volunteers at Dublin Oak Academy, as well as all parents/guardians of the current Academic Year. It is available to the Agency and to members of the public on request.

This statement will be displayed clearly in the Administration office in the main building at Dublin Oak Academy and a separate one also in the adjacent building, in the Boarding area.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
Fr. Oscar Sanchez
Director
Dublin Oak Academy

For any queries relating to this statement, the relevant person with whom you can liaise is Ryan Clear, Child Safety Representative of Dublin Oak Academy. Email: rclear@dublinoakacademy.com /Mobile No: 0858048036