

Safeguarding Children Policy of St. Patrick's Society

St. Patrick's Missionary Society recognises and upholds the dignity and rights of all children and is committed to ensuring their safety and well-being. Members, students, staff and volunteers are obliged to ensure that the fundamental rights of children are respected.

All children have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured, cared for and protected. This right is embedded in Gospel values, best practice guidelines, and domestic and international laws.

The Society undertakes to do everything possible to create a safe and welcoming environment for children where their welfare is paramount.

The Society encourages and values the involvement of children and young people in liturgies and activities that enhance their spiritual, social, emotional and intellectual development. Valuing children means valuing Society personnel as, insisting on safe practices, eliminating the necessity for people to take risks and providing them with support will make for a healthier and safer environment.

This Safeguarding Children Policy adheres to the principles and guidelines set out by the Episcopal Conferences as well as the civil laws and guidelines of the jurisdictions where our members live and work.

In the light of the teaching of the Church, and of civil legislation and guidance the Society is committed to:

- Best practice to ensure that children are listened to and treated with respect, have their rights protected and their welfare promoted;
- Minimising risks in order to safeguard the interests of children;
- Ensuring that all members, students, staff and volunteers are carefully recruited, selected, trained, supported and supervised;
- Providing appropriate pastoral support for survivors of child abuse;
- Providing appropriate training for members, students, staff and volunteers.
- Working in partnership with statutory authorities for the prompt, just and professional management of complaints;
- Making this Safeguarding Children Policy widely known, accessible and understood, and implementing procedures and protocols that contribute to keeping safe the children who participate in its services.
- Collaborating with Diocesan authorities where members serve or supply in parishes.
- Having written procedures in each region for the implementation of the Society's Policy.

Living out this policy is the responsibility of every member of the Society. Each Region/District of the Society will develop its own safeguarding guidelines and procedures in line with this policy and taking into consideration the policy and guidelines of the Region/District in which they are situated.

Society Members contracted by dioceses, hospitals, colleges or other institutes are governed and regulated by the safeguarding policies, procedures and code of practice of the institutes and organisations that contracted them. Members so contracted must familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures of these institutes.

Scope of the Policy:

The policy covers all Church-related activities and circumstances involving people under the age of eighteen who are not, or have not been, married.

All Society members, students, staff and volunteers are required to comply with the policy, procedures and practices set out in the safeguarding guidelines and procedures of their Region/District in which they are situated.

This policy and the Child Safeguarding documents of each Region/District will be reviewed every 2 years.