

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AS A PASTORAL MINISTRY

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES OF ST.PATRICK'S
MISSIONARY SOCIETY
DISTRICT OF EAST AFRICA**

MARCH 2019



St. Patrick's Missionary Society, East Africa

Child Safeguarding as a Parish Ministry

A template for a safeguarding children policy which can be implemented in our parishes or other places of ministry in the District of East Africa.



Foreword

In 2017, Pope Francis stated, “We have received a call, which we are sure comes directly from our Lord Jesus Christ; to embrace the mission of the Gospel for the protection of all vulnerable minors.”

We in St Patrick’s Missionary Society, District of East Africa, are committed to the safety of all the children in the parishes and institutions in which we work - as well as in the wider society.

This Policy Document is a revised version of the one we put in place in December 2013. We thank all those who have given us feedback as part of this revision - which has proved very useful - much of which has been incorporated into this revised document.

The aim of this booklet is to develop structures and procedures in our parishes and institutions which, when properly implemented, will enhance the lives of the children in our pastoral care and make a contribution towards creating an environment in which all our children can grow and flourish. Its aim is prevention. We hope to promote a culture of safety and joy for our children and for those working with them. We also want to co-operate with all others in the wider society who are working for the safety and protection of children. We recall the words of Jesus: Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. (Mark 10:14).

I commend the priests in our parishes and institutions who are overseeing the implementation of this Policy. In a special way I would like to thank God for those women and men in our parishes/institutions who are committed to this ministry of Child Safeguarding and who are giving their time and expertise voluntarily to implement the Policy, as members of the Safeguarding Committee, as Designated Persons or as Trainers. May God bless and reward you for this work of service to the Little Ones and to the Church. Finally, I express my gratitude to the staff in our Safeguarding Office who

provide expertise, guidance and encouragement to all involved in implementing the Policy in our parishes/institutions.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John C.', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Fr. Sean Cremin

District Leader, East Africa

Date: St. Patrick's Day, 17th March 2019

St. Patrick's, P.O Box 25084, Lavington 00603, Nairobi.

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Scope

This policy applies to parishes but it can also be applied, with appropriate adaptations, to church institutions such as schools, hospitals, projects etc which do not have their own Safeguarding Children Policy in place.

Acknowledgements.

In revising this policy document, we are indebted to: -

- Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors (2014)
- Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops *Safeguarding Children. Policy and Procedures (2014)*
- *Safeguarding Children. Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2016)*

Glossary

UNICEF:	United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
KCCB:	Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops
UNCRC:	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children
VAC:	Violence Against Children
CUEA:	Catholic University of Eastern Africa

Definitions

1. A **child** is any person under the age of eighteen years.
2. **Child abuse** is any form of maltreatment of a child caused by abuse or neglect of a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm, commercial or labour exploitation of a child.
3. **Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, kicking, suffocating, misusing of medication, giving addictive drugs, applying inappropriate sanctions or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It can also apply to one's failure to act to protect the child.
4. **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional ill-treatment or rejection of a child by conveying that he/she is unloved, inadequate or even worthless; or by overprotection and limiting exploration, learning and normal social interaction.
5. **Neglect** can be defined as an omission or the failure to protect a child. This is often evidenced in the child being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, safety, affection from adults, and failure to access appropriate medical care and failure to listen to a child.
6. **Child Protection** is the responsibilities, measures and activities that Society including the Church undertakes to safeguard children from both intentional and unintentional harm.
7. **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities - whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative sex (e.g. defilement) or non-penetrative sex. *See no.9 below*
8. **Sexual harassment** is uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature such as unsolicited sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, unwanted deliberate touching, unwanted sexual

looks or gestures, unwanted telephone calls, or materials of a sexual nature.

9. **Defilement** is having sexual intercourse with a person (this includes both boys and girls) under the age of 18 years (*c.f Sexual assault Sec.8 of the Kenya Sexual Offences Act 2006*)



Introduction

The Bible on Children

Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked them, but Jesus said 'let the children come to me and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.' After he placed his hands on them, he went away. **Matt 19:13-15.**

Children are a heritage from the Lord. Psalm 127:3

Taking a child, he placed it in their midst, and putting his arms around it he said to them, "Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the one who sent me." Mark 9:36-37

"All your children will be taught by the Lord and great will be their peace." Is 54:13

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father." Matt 18:10

Founding Principles of Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church

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 international and domestic laws.

In the light of the teachings of the Church, civil legislation and guidance, every part of the Church must be committed to taking the necessary steps to:

- Demonstrate that the right of the child to protection from harm is paramount
- Cherish and safeguard children and young people
- Foster best practice
- Demonstrate accountability through establishing effective structures
- Support Church organizations and personnel in safeguarding children
- Establish safe recruitment and vetting practices – aimed at preventing those who pose a risk to children from holding positions of trust
- Maintain codes of behaviour – having clear guidelines that set out what is and what is not acceptable behaviour as an essential part of keeping children safe
- Operate safe activities for children – helping ensure they can play and learn in a safe environment

Everyone within our Parish has an obligation to ensure that the fundamental rights of children are respected.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding means:

Creating safe environments for children, vulnerable adults and for those working with them

Whose responsibility is it?

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everybody.

- But especially those in authority, leadership and employment regarding children

Right to protection

- The Rights of a child to protection from harm are paramount.

(A statement common to all Safeguarding Children Policies)

- An adult is always held responsible for his/her behaviour even if a child has provoked him/her.

Safeguarding.....

- Seeks to take **preventative** action and is not limited to responding to existing harm.
- Is primarily **pro-active** but will respond to any concern.
- It **includes** recognising, responding to and reporting abuse.

CULTURE OF SAFETY IN SOCIETY AND THE CHURCH

a. Situation Analysis of Child Safeguarding in Kenya and South Sudan.

Kenya

There have been two significant surveys regarding abuse of children in Kenya in recent years.

Violence Against Children Survey 2010 (VAC)

The findings of the VAC Kenya 2010 survey “indicate that violence against children is a serious problem in Kenya. Levels of violence prior to age 18 as reported by 18-24-year olds (lifetime experienced) indicate that during childhood, 32% of females and 18% of males experience sexual violence. 66% of females and 73% of males experienced physical violence and 26% of females and 32% of males experience any violence as a child. 13% of females and 9% of males experienced all types of violence during childhood.” (Executive Summary).

KCCB ‘A Study of Child Abuse in Kenya’ October 2015

In 2015 a survey was commissioned by the Education Desk of the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops titled ‘A STUDY OF CHILD ABUSE IN KENYA’. ‘The findings of the survey show that child abuse is real, sexual abuse is rampant and current interventions are inadequate’, conclusion to the report.

The report made recommendations to the church ‘to prioritise, invest time and resources to mitigate abuse of children at all levels’.

Remarks made by Ms. Agusta Muthigani, Education Secretary KCCB when presenting the survey at a workshop in CUEA, 24th September 2015.

South Sudan

South Sudan has been identified as one of the hardest places to be a child. The 21 years of civil war in South Sudan and the recent conflict that began in 2013 have contributed enormously towards children violence. Since the violence erupted in December 2013, almost 750,000 children have been internally displaced and more than 320,000 are living as refugees. An estimated 400,000 children have been forced out of school and 12,000 are reported as being used by armed forces and groups in the conflict. With traditional social structures damaged, children are also increasingly vulnerable to violence and to sexual abuse and exploitation (www.unicef.org/SouthSudan/media - quoted in St. Patrick’s Strategic Plan 2017-2022 page 10).

“No child should ever experience the horrors and deprivations children face daily in South Sudan. They need support and protection, or they will become a lost generation, putting the very future of their fragile young country at risk”. Mahimbo Mdoe, UNICEF representative in South Sudan.

b. The Law

International Law

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) came into force in 1989 and has been almost universally ratified, making Child Abuse a crime in most/all countries in the world. Both Kenya and South Sudan are signatories to this Convention.

The African Charter on Children’s Rights (1990) supplemented UNCRC by highlighting issues of special importance to the African context such as prohibition of child marriages, recruitment and use of child soldiers in conflict and promotion of education for young mothers.

National law

Kenya

The Constitution (2010) under article 53(1) provides for the rights of children and their right to be protected from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, all forms of violence, inhuman treatment and punishment, and hazardous or exploitative labour. The Children’s Act (2001) defines a child as any human being under the age of eighteen (18) years and reiterates that children must be protected from abuse and harmful cultural rites and practices. Other laws protecting children are Sexual Offences Act (2006) The Basic Education Act (2011), Employment Act (2011), Marriage Act (2014), Prohibition Against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Act (2015), Protection Against Domestic Violence Act 2015, Cybercrimes and Computer Misuses Act (2018). Basic Education Act (2011) specifically outlaws corporal punishment.

South Sudan

The Transitional Constitution of South Sudan at Section 17 provides for the protection of children against exploitative practices or abuse, discrimination, corporal punishment or work which may be hazardous or harmful to their education, health or well-being. Other supplementing laws are The Child Act 2008 and General Education Act 2008.

NOTE: The law supersedes culture in all situations. When a country enacts a law, that law takes precedence over any existing cultural practices.

c. Culture of Safety in the Church

“There is need to create and sustain a ‘culture of safety’ for our children. They need to be cherished, nurtured and safeguarded by all’. *Introduction to KCCB Safeguarding Children. Policy and Procedures (2014)*

“If the safety of children is not at the very centre of the Catholic Church’s mission, then something has gone very, very wrong in the Church”. *Sheree Limbrick, CEO of the Australia Churches new independent watchdog, Catholic Professional Standards.*

Safeguarding Children as a Pastoral Ministry

“If this grave tragedy (sexual abuse of children) has involved some consecrated ministers, we can ask how deeply rooted it may be in our societies and in our families. Consequently, the church will not be limited to healing her own wounds but will seek to deal squarely with this evil that causes the slow death of so many persons at the moral, psychological and human levels.” Address of Pope Francis to the Roman Curia, 21st Dec 2018



Mission Statement.

THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN OUR PARISH / INSTITUTION UNDERTAKES TO DO ALL IN ITS POWER TO ENSURE THAT WHERE THE CHURCH IS, CHILDREN WILL BE SAFE.

Our Vision:

We envision a child-safe environment where care takers are competent and children empowered in Child Protection.

The safeguarding of children is the responsibility of everyone in the Church whether clergy, religious or lay faithful. However, parish leaders, and especially priests, have an added responsibility for making sure that children are safe in our Church compounds and in Church activities.

d. How to recognise Child Abuse

Abuse of a child may take the form of Physical Abuse, or Emotional Abuse or Sexual Abuse or Neglect.

Recognizing child abuse is not easy. Neither is it the responsibility for an individual to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, one does have the responsibility to alert the appropriate agencies, so that they can take the necessary actions to protect a child.

The following information should be helpful, so that one may become more alert to the signs of possible abuse:

Physical Abuse	Emotional Abuse	Sexual Abuse	Neglect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unexplained bruising or marks of injuries on any part of the body including hand or finger marks. - Cigarette burns - Broken bones - Scalds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Failure to thrive, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, e.g. when away from home. - Sudden speech disorders - Developmental delay: physically or emotionally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in the genital area - Sexually transmitted disease - Vaginal discharge or infection - Discomfort when walking or sitting down - Stomach pains - Pregnancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Constant hunger: sometimes stealing food from other children. - Constantly "dirty" or smelly - Constantly underweight or loss of weight - Being left alone or unsupervised - Inappropriate dress for conditions
Changes In Behaviour	Changes In Behaviour	Changes In Behaviour	Changes In Behaviour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fear of parents being approached. - Temper outbursts. - Flinching when approached or touched. - Aggression. - Reluctance to get changed into sports gear, etc. - Depression. - Withdrawn. - Running away. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sulking, hair twisting, rocking, unable to play - Fear of making mistakes - Self-harm - Fear of parents being approached regarding their behavior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unexplained aggression, withdrawn; - fear of being left with a specific person/people; - nightmares; - running away; - sexual knowledge, drawings or language beyond age; - bedwetting; - eating problems; - self-harm sometimes leading to suicide attempts; - secrets they cannot share; substance or drug abuse; - unexplained sources of money; - not allowed to have friends; - Sexually explicit actions towards adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tiredness - Not seeking medical assistance - Failing to keep appointments - Having few friends

Note: These definitions and indicators are not meant to be definitive. They serve only as a guide to assist in recognising possible child abuse

CHAPTER 1

OUR PARISH HAS A WRITTEN POLICY ON KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

This document is the Safeguarding Children Policy of our Parish.

It is approved by the Parish Priest and the Parish Pastoral Council and signed by the Parish Priest and the Chairperson of the Parish Pastoral Council.

All Church personnel, both paid employees and volunteers who are in contact with children on behalf of the parish, are required to comply with this policy. It will be explained to them and they will sign a Commitment Form indicating that they have been made aware of the Policy and that they will comply with it when working with children on behalf of the parish. Any new employee or volunteer will also have the Policy explained to them before they begin and they will also sign that they will comply with it. (Appendix 2).

This policy addresses child protection in the different aspects of Church work, that is, within the Church compound, schools, work in the community, pilgrimages, day-outings, overnight trips and holidays organised by the parish.

In the Introduction, this policy clearly describes the Church's understanding and definitions of abuse.

All current child protection concerns will be fully reported to the civil authorities, that is, the Police and the local Children's Office, without delay.

This policy will be reviewed at regular intervals no more than three years apart and will be adapted whenever there are significant changes in Civil or Church legislation

CHAPTER 2

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

1. Parish structures – Safeguarding Children Committee

Within the parish, a **Safeguarding Children Committee of the Parish Pastoral Council** will be established. The Chairperson of the Parish Pastoral Council will be an ex-officio member of the parish **Safeguarding Children Committee**. The committee will elect its own chairperson and secretary. The committee will normally consist of 5 persons. The term of office of this Committee will begin and end at the same time as that of the Parish Pastoral Council.

There will be one or more **Designated persons (each with an assistant)** appointed by the parish priest in consultation with the Committee within the parish whose role will be to receive any allegations of Child Abuse against any employee or volunteer of the parish. These will not be members of the Safeguarding Children Committee.

Each outstation will have its own Designated Person and Assistant.

2. Procedures relating to employees and volunteers of the parish

Allegations relating to sexual abuse

a. Defilement

Sexual abuse of minors (defilement) is a serious criminal offence. Thus, any allegation of defilement that is reported to the Parish Safeguarding Committee should always be forwarded to the police. The Committee should not attempt to

deal with such allegations as it is the mandate of the police to conduct investigations according to the law.

Where actual defilement is alleged to have taken place, the child should be taken first to the hospital before 72 hours so as to receive treatment and so that a Post-Rape Care (PRC) Form be completed. A report must also be filed at the nearest police station so that necessary documentation (P3 form) is issued to the child (by the police) for the medical personnel attending to him/her to record their findings as evidence in court proceedings.

b. Other sexual abuses:

- Sexual harassment which is defined as uninvited behavior of a sexual nature such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, unwanted deliberate touching, unwanted sexual looks or gestures, unwanted telephone calls, or materials of a sexual nature.
- Other forms may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or participating in, the production of pornographic material, in watching sexual acts or behaving in sexually inappropriate ways.

The process for dealing with allegations of this nature will be similar to the one spelt out below in section 3.

3. Other Abuses

Allegations of abuse that are not of defilement are to be reported to the Parish Designated Person and his or her Assistant. The two will formally meet with the person who makes an allegation (the complainant) and will immediately inform the chairperson of the Parish Pastoral Council (who is an ex-officio member of the Safeguarding

Children Committee) and the parish priest that an allegation has been received. They will assure the complainant that the allegation will be taken seriously by the parish. They will listen carefully and sympathetically to the details of the allegation and write a report of the meeting which they will check for accuracy with the complainant. This report will be signed by the Designated Person and the Complainant. The complainant need not necessarily be the alleged victim of the child abuse.

Anyone who knows that child abuse is taking place or has taken place by an employee or volunteer or in fact by any parishioner within the jurisdiction of the Church has an obligation to report it. It is advisable that the complainant is accompanied to this meeting. The Designated Person will, as soon as possible, give the written report to the Safeguarding Children Committee.

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Children Committee to inform the employee or volunteer that an accusation has been made against him/her. The chair of the PPC will be one of those who will inform the employee/volunteer. They will also remind him/her that the law may have been broken and that he/she may wish to remain silent. The Accused is invited in turn to meet with the Designated Person and Assistant who will give him/her details of the allegation and invite a response. The Accused may remain silent. He/she is advised to be accompanied to this meeting. The Designated Person will write a report of this meeting and will check the accuracy of the report with the Accused. It will be signed by all present. This report will then be given to the Committee.

If the Committee has any concern that there is basis to the allegation and that an abuse has taken place, they will report it to the Police and to the local Children's Office for further investigation (e.g. a serious physical injury). They will also withdraw the Accused from any contact with children in the parish until the resolution of the issue.

For cases which are deemed a breach of the code of behaviour and do not need to be referred to the police, some possible disciplinary actions could be requiring the person to attend a refresher course on safeguarding, personal counselling, warning letter. This list is not exhaustive and the committee can adopt other appropriate actions.

Absolute confidentiality is required of the Safeguarding Children Committee and of the Designated Persons and Assistants in dealing with any allegation as the good name of persons is involved.

4. Procedures relating to other allegations

Allegations of abuse originating from the community shall be referred to the local police or children's department as appropriate. The Committee will make available an updated Referral Directory with contact details of the local police station, chief, health centre/facility and NGOs working with children working in the area for purposes of easing the referral process.

The Committee will undertake all the procedures in 2, 3, and 4 above under the guidance of the parish priest.

CHAPTER 3

PREVENTING HARM TO CHILDREN

1. Safe Recruitment and Vetting.

The Parish/Institution will be careful when recruiting employees and volunteers. It will carefully assess their suitability. It will follow best practice during recruitment interviews in preventing those who pose a risk to children from holding positions of trust. (Those on Interview Boards in the Parish/Institution will receive training on best practice of interviewing in relation to Safeguarding Children issues.). It will follow up on all letters of recommendation. It will require of employees and volunteers to complete and sign a form declaring any previous disciplinary procedures regarding inappropriate behaviour towards children they may have incurred. (See Appendix 2).

All documents (or copies thereof) provided during recruitment by those who successfully attain employment or are accepted as volunteers will be kept in a secure place.

We are aware that paedophiles or those with paedophile tendencies are drawn towards working with children. Therefore, we are alert, through careful recruitment procedures, to prevent such people getting access to the children of the parish.

2. Codes of Behaviour.

Adequate and appropriate supervision of all children's activities in the parish will be provided. Only employees and volunteers who have had training and have signed up to this Safeguarding Children Policy will be allowed to supervise children's activities in the parish.

Behaviour of Adults towards Children.

It is important for all employees and volunteers and others in contact with children to:

- treat all children with respect
- use language that mentally and emotionally empowers a child
- provide an example of good conduct that others may follow
- be visible to others when working with children whenever possible
- challenge and report potentially abusive behaviour
- develop a culture where children can talk about their contacts with staff and others openly

In general, it is unacceptable to:

- spend excessive time alone with a child away from others
- take a child to one's own home or any other place where one will be alone with him/her

Employees, volunteers and others must never:

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- Develop sexual relationships with children
- Develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Have a child with whom they are working to stay overnight at their home unsupervised
- Sleep in the same room or bed with a child with whom they are working
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves

- Give monetary or material gifts to the children
- Insist on any interaction with a child if he/she says 'stop' or appears uncomfortable to continue.
- Act in ways that are intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade a child

An adult is always held responsible for his/her behaviour even if a child has provoked him/her.

3. Acceptable and Unacceptable Touch

We need to touch others in greetings, showing we care, to signal an agreement, to comfort someone, among other reasons.

Acceptable touch should make one feel respected and safe. This will vary from culture to culture and it is therefore important that one is acquainted with the local cultural practices.

Unacceptable touch – These will involve actions that can be deemed to be invading onto the personal space of another individual as well as unacceptable displays of affection in ministry to children. These include full frontal hugs, touching bottoms, chests or genital areas, lying down or sleeping beside children, massages, patting children on the thigh, knee or leg, tickling or wrestling, touching or hugging from behind, games involving inappropriate touching, kisses on the mouth, inappropriate compliments that relate to physique or body development

4. Care of children with special needs

Children with special needs are highly treasured persons in the Christian Community. Those who work with them are invited to walk with them in the spirit of the Beatitudes and to provide them with person-centred care.

However, children with special needs are also highly vulnerable precisely because they may not be able to defend themselves or make a complaint and because they may be totally dependent for their physical care on an adult who could abuse them. Children with special needs may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.

Care for children with special needs should promote their wellbeing by, for example, training them in life skills where appropriate in order that they can perform for themselves things of a personal nature such as bathing, using the toilet and dressing.



5. Operating safe activities for children

Time spent away from home or from the parish compound on a parish-based outing is a time of risk for children.

Parents/guardians will sign a consent form giving their child permission to be away from the parish on a parish-based activity for a designated time. This will apply whether the outing is for the duration of a day or involves overnight outings. This time shall be strictly adhered to by the parish organisation organising the outing. The parish will not engage children in activities that force them to go home late or put their personal safety at risk. (See Appendix 1 for Parental Consent Form).

There will be strict supervision and protection of the children by the leaders of the outing. For example, there will be at least one supervisor for every twenty children. When there is a mixed group of children there should be male and female supervisors. These supervisors – and the children - will be aware that their role is one of supervision and protection for the children in their care and nothing else on that outing. If the children are going on an outing that involves an overnight stay, great care will be taken by those planning the outing about appropriate accommodation, eating arrangements and recreational activities. They will ensure that boys and girls have separate sleeping accommodation as well as separate toilet and washing facilities.

Those organising any outing from the parish that involves vehicles will ensure that the vehicles are roadworthy and safe and that the drivers are qualified and will drive responsibly and under the direction of the supervisors of the outing.

All outings are to be approved in advance by the Safeguarding Children Committee who will ensure that the conditions laid out in this policy are adhered with.

6. Other concerns

a. Behaviour of Children towards other Children including bullying

There is an expected and acceptable kind of behaviour expected of children towards other children. In particular, all forms of bullying are to be explained and rejected.

Bullying may come from another child or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. There are three main types of bullying. It may be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, threats, abusive phone calls), emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g. uninvited physical contact or abusive comments). There is a new kind of bullying – that done online (cyberbullying) see **6.f** below.

We encourage any child who experiences bullying to report it to the parent/guardian/teacher/ or any trusted adult.

b. Processes for dealing with children’s unacceptable behaviour/alternative discipline

Employees and volunteers will be made aware that there are processes for dealing with children’s unacceptable behaviour that do not involve physical punishment or any other form of degrading or humiliating treatment. Physical punishment of children is illegal in Kenya and South Sudan. The following are suitable processes for dealing with such behaviour (the list is not exhaustive):

- Personal counselling
- Meeting with the child and his/her parents/guardians
- Giving extra homework
- Requiring the child to do extra jobs in the classroom, e.g. collect and empty the dustbins.

Love and discipline go together.

c. Discriminatory behaviour or language.

Discriminatory behaviour or language in relation to any of the following is not acceptable: race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, or political views, whether it is perpetrated by adults towards children or by children towards other children.

d. Child trafficking

Child trafficking occurs when children are taken away from home or their place of safety for purposes of exploitation. Child traffickers are usually people familiar to the children and sometimes involve family members. The children may be exploited sexually, used as cheap labour, sold for organ removal for rituals or transplants. The parish needs to be aware of the possibility of child traffickers taking advantage of easy access to children during church activities, advertisements of scholarships and similar offers being made around the church premises.



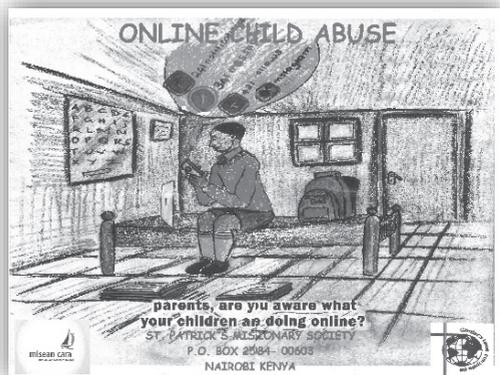
Effort should be put into creating awareness in the parish and the wider society of this problem to prevent cases of child trafficking from happening.

e. Information Technology.

Children can be put in danger and exposed to abuse and exploitation by some of the modern means of information technology. In the parish, employees and volunteers will not ask for or retain the mobile phone number or e-mail address of any child unless with the consent of the parents/guardians. Neither will they get in contact with children of the parish through any of the social networks. They will not assume that they can take photographs or videos of children without express permission of the parents of those children. In the parish we will ensure the privacy rights of children by not using the images of children in any publication without their parents' or guardians' expressly written permission. We will not use child images in situations that negatively portray the child or in circumstances that may compromise a child's physical or psychological wellbeing. We will not disclose the names or identities of children except in the case of client detail forms and court pleadings where information is kept strictly confidential.

f. The Internet and Children (Social Media)

“The internet has changed our world, mostly for the better. But there is also a dark side which is harming the most vulnerable members of society. Children as young as infants and toddlers are now the targets of abuse for sophisticated online communities. As children grow and inevitably encounter the digital world themselves, they confront challenges like



cyberbullying, harassment and sextortion. Child sexual abuse images, whose production has exploded with the advent of digital cameras in every mobile phone or tablet in the world, proliferate online. Internet pornography, unrestricted and pervasive in the digital world, bombards the developing brains of children and young people”

This statement is from the World Congress on ‘Child Dignity in the Digital World’ which was held in Rome in Oct 2017. The Congress brought together leaders from religion, technological companies, civil society and government. Pope Francis spoke of the Congress as ***“...raising awareness of the gravity of the problems... assisting educators and families, and finding creative ways of training young people in the proper use of the internet in ways healthy for themselves and for other minors.”***

Major threats to children online

- Cyber bullying and intimidation
- Political, violent radicalization
- Child sexual abuse material: videos, photos
- Computer/ digitally generated child sexual abuse/exploitation material
- Online grooming for sexual purposes
- Sexting
- Sextortion, revenge porn
- Live sexual abuse via webcam through live stream

CHAPTER 4

TRAINING AND EDUCATION FOR KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

All parish employees and volunteers who work with children are inducted into the parish's Policy and Procedures on Safeguarding Children when it is introduced in the parish. All new employees and volunteers who work with children will be inducted into the parish's Safeguarding Children Policy before they begin working within the parish organisation. Some employees and volunteers will be trained to present this policy to others in the parish. These will be known as Safeguarding Children Trainers.

Those with special tasks within the Child Protection Policy such as the **Safeguarding Children Committee**, the **Designated Officers and Assistants**, the **Recruitment Board**, **Trainers** will be provided with appropriate training for keeping children safe and with regular opportunities to update their skills and knowledge.



CHAPTER 6

ACCESS TO ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Those who have suffered child abuse in our parish shall receive a compassionate and just response and shall be offered appropriate pastoral care to rebuild their lives.

Those who have harmed children shall be helped to face up to the reality of abuse, as well as being assisted in healing.

Every effort shall be made to restore the reputation of a person wrongly accused of child abuse.

CHAPTER 7

IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THIS POLICY

The Parish Pastoral Council has the responsibility of implementing this Safeguarding Children Policy. It will carry out this function mainly through the Safeguarding Children Committee of the Parish Pastoral Council. As a practical tool for implementation of the policy a regular Risk Assessment will be carried out. (Appendix 3)

The parish will make available any human or financial resources necessary for implementing the policy such as cost of printing the Policy Document, cost of training programmes, any expense involved in giving a just response to victims of child abuse in our parish, cost of outside vetting of the implementation of the Policy. However, the Safeguarding Committee, Designated Persons and the Safeguarding Trainers will be expected to carry out their work on a voluntary basis as their chosen way of engaging in the life of the parish.

To ensure that the parish implements this Safeguarding Children Policy and continues to comply with it, an outside body competent in the field of Safeguarding Children and independent of the Catholic Church will be invited to evaluate the parish's compliance with all aspects of this Child Protection Policy.

This evaluation will take place immediately prior to the review of this policy document which will take place regularly, at least every three years. To prepare for this review the parish will consult the parishioners (especially parents/guardians of children and children themselves) about their views on policies and practices for keeping children safe in our parish.

All incidents, allegations/suspensions of abuse will be recorded and stored securely.



Appendix 1

Parental Consent Form.

Activity Consent Form for Parents/Guardians of persons under 18 years.

1. Name of Church Organization:.....

Venue/Activity/Group/
Event.....

Date.....Time Out.....

Date.....Time Return.....

Name of Group Leader/ Person Responsible.....

Phone Number of Group Leader.....

2. Name of Child/Young Person.....

Address.....

.....

Telephone Number.....

Date of Birth.....

Give details of any medical condition of which the Organisers ought to be aware. Please include details of any medication which has to be taken or any dietary requirements.

(This information will be treated with confidence).

.....

.....

3 **The Church organization**

..... only accepts liability or responsibility for an incident or accident caused by negligence or breach of statutory duty of the organization, its servants or agents.

4 **I, the parent/guardian of**

have read all the information provided concerning the programme of the above activity. I hereby give my permission for my son/daughter/ward to participate in the above activity.

Signed by Parent/Guardian:.....

Full Name:.....

Date.....

Address.....

Cell Phone Number and any additional telephone numbers during the period of the activity.....

Appendix 2

Commitment Form for those signing up to the Safeguarding Children Policy of Parish.

Have you ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures or been asked to leave employment or voluntary activity due to inappropriate behaviour towards a child?

Yes. No. (*Please, tick appropriate answer*).

If yes, please give details including dates below:

.....
.....

I,, confirm that the Parish of..... Safeguarding Children Policy has been explained to me.

The contents of the Policy have been disseminated to me and I have had the opportunity to ask questions and to seek clarifications on points that were not clear to me.

I am fully aware of my obligations to act in accordance with the requirements of this policy, including reporting instances of abuse or suspected abuse of children that have been or are actually taking place.

I understand the consequences if I fail to act on all matters contained in the policy document.

Name (*Block capitals*).....

Signature:.....

Date:

Witness (*Block capitals*)

Witness Signature.....**Date**.....

Appendix 3

RISK ASSESSMENT: CREATING AND MAINTAINING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

NAME OF PARISH/PROJECT

AREA OF RISK	RISK DESCRIPTION	MITIGATING ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY Name of Person	DATE to be completed	LIST PRIORITY
1. Physical Environment within which Children & Staff are safe	Identify risks such as a) Dark corners b) Closed rooms c) Open sewers/manholes/wells d) Damaged electrical connections/appliances	a) All areas are well-lit b) Glass panes on doors for rooms with no accessible windows; low windows in rooms used by children c) Proper covers for holes/wells d) Electrical connections in a state of good repair			
2. Harm to Children/Abuse of Children	Children are vulnerable and at risk of harm.	a) Safeguarding Policy/Poster b) Named Child Protection Person/Safeguarding Person c) Reporting Procedures d) Support services e) Awareness raising for Staff/Children/Parents/Guardians/ Community			
3. Staff & Volunteers - Recruitment - Training - Behaviour	What background knowledge do you have on these persons?	a) Screening and recruitment processes b) Staff have briefing and are aware of Child Safeguarding Policy and signed up to it c) Adequate supervision Ratios			

AREA OF RISK	RISK DESCRIPTION	MITIGATING ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY Name of Person	DATE to be completed	LIST PRIORITY
4. Service & Programmes - Supervision - Consent - Organised activities; trips away	a) Harm to children because of lack of adult supervision b) Parents/Guardians unaware of whereabouts of children. c) Children unaware of their rights and their right to protection d) Harm to Children as a result of traveling away from home	a) Adequate supervision of children during all activities (2 adults present) b) Consent from Parents/Guardians for child to attend services & activities. c) Information communicated d) Trips away: safe transport, insurance, appropriate sleeping arrangements			
5. Partners	Safety of Children	a) Understanding of Safeguarding Policy and Communication with Partners			
6. Personal information/ Information technology/Communication - Images of children - Social Media	a) Confidentiality Breaches b) Inappropriate images of children c) Misuse of images of children d) Misuse of Social Media	a) Adequate, protected storage of all personal data. b) Use of images with consent for the purpose specified c) Information for staff/volunteers on the use of images/information for personal social media			

Review:

When next review will take place

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Priority Level:*Priority 1. High - This needs to be in place/actioned within a week.**Priority 2. Medium - This needs to be in place/actioned within two weeks.**Priority 3. Low - This needs to be actioned within one month.*



Our Mascot



St. Patrick's Safeguarding Children Programme East Africa