

CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Tullamore Union of Parishes

Tullamore Union of Parishes provides religious, educational and recreational activities and services to children under 18 years of age through a range of local services.

Tullamore Union of Parishes is committed to safeguarding children by working under the guidance of our national safeguarding policy Safeguarding Trust and its associated procedures.

We acknowledge our duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and we are committed to ensuring our safeguarding practices reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and comply with best practice.

Our clergy, volunteers and staff are committed to creating a safe environment for children and young people to grow and develop. The Safeguarding Trust policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or socio-economic background, all children have a positive and enjoyable experience in a safe and child centred environment and are protected from abuse whilst participating in church related activities.

Tullamore Union of Parishes will conduct a specific written risk assessment and child safeguarding statement in line with:

- Children First Act 2015
- Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
- National Vetting Bureau Act 2012 and 2016
- Children First Guidance 2017
- Túsla Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement.

The Mandated/Relevant Person for Tullamore Union of Parishes is Reverend Isaac Delamere.

The written risk assessment indicates the areas of potential harm, the likelihood of harm occurring, and lists the required policy, guidance, process and practice required to alleviate the risks.

In addition to this service/activity risk assessment the following procedures are in place throughout **Tullamore Union of Parishes** as part of our safeguarding policies and procedures:

- Procedures for managing allegations of abuse or misconduct by clergy, volunteers or employees against a child availing of our services.
- Procedures for the safe recruitment of volunteers or employees to work with children in our services.
- Procedures to access child safeguarding training, including the identification and reporting of harm.
- Procedures for reporting child protection and welfare concerns to Statutory Authorities.

Tullamore Union of Parishes recognises that implementation is an on-going process – we are committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm and the risk of harm.

The Relevant People for this Child Safeguarding Statement are:

Rev Isaac Delamere	Gloria Mollison Edge
Gill Duffy	Mat Field

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in: August 2019

Safe Guarding Trust - Panel Members

The Charleville Centre is committed to uphold good practice in their dealings with children and young people.

Should you have a concern, suspicion or allegation regarding child welfare in the Charleville Centre please report directly to an appropriate person* or contact a member of the Parish Panel listed below, who may also report directly to an appropriate person if the matter is within the Panel's remit.

The duty social worker or child care manager may be contacted at the local Túsla Child and Family Agency offices, Social Work Department, Tullamore Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co Offaly

The members of the Parish Panel are:

Rev. Isaac Delamere	Tel: 0579321731
Gillian Duffy	Tel: 0868630702
Mat Field	Tel: 0857156548
Gloria Mollison Edge	Tel: 0579137113

**appropriate person means an appropriate person as defined in the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 – a designated officer of the HSE (normally the duty social worker) or a member of An Garda Síochána. The duty social worker or the child care manager in the HSE Child and Family Services area are designated officers.*

Tullamore Union of Parishes and the Charleville Centre Promoting Awareness of the Child Safeguarding Statement

Tullamore Union of Parishes and the Charleville Centre accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm and to establish and maintain a safe environment for children.

As a Community we are committed to reviewing our policy, procedures and practice at regular intervals, at least every three years.

We will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- Following carefully the procedures laid down for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- Ensuring adherence to safety procedures
- Reporting concerns to the appropriate statutory authority

We will also safeguard our workers and volunteers by

- The provision of effective training
- The provision of appropriate resources
- The safeguarding of those who work with children from the consequences of unfounded allegations

Dated August 2018

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Child Protection Approval Form



Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

Tel. 057 93 49700

email: charlevillecentre@gmail.com

Name of Organisation:

Name of person in charge of Organisation:

Phone No. Email

Conditions

1. The organisation confirms that it has adopted and implements a child protection policy which accords with the standard of *Children First and Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector*. A copy of the organisation's policy must now be produced or written verification supplied that the policy is accepted by the Church of Ireland at central level.
2. The organisation shall supply annually (August/September) to the Parish Panel the names and contact details of all leaders or liaison people immediately following appointment.
3. The organisation shall confirm that all leaders and helpers (16 years and older) have been vetted prior to their appointment and that they have been found suitable to work with children and young people.
4. The organisation shall ensure that leaders/helpers in the organisation shall receive appropriate child protection training and are aware of the reporting procedures.
5. The organisation must display a copy of its child protection statement in a public place in the Charleville Centre while they are meeting. This can be taken down after the meeting.
6. If a report of a child protection concern is made by the organisation through its procedures, a member of the Parish Panel should be informed in confidence that a report has been made.
7. The organisation confirms that adequate insurance cover is in place for its activities (copy of policy attached), or written verification that the insurance policy is accepted by the church at central level.

8. The manager of The Charleville Centre shall supply to the organisation leader the names and contact details of the people responsible for child protection in the Tullamore Union of Parishes (known as the Parish Panel).
9. The Management Committee of the Charleville Centre is responsible for the premises and can be contacted at the Office of the Charleville Centre, contact details above.
10. The organisation shall seek to ensure that activities shall be carried out safely. Any safety concerns regarding the premises shall be notified by the organisation leader to a Member of the Management Committee of the Charleville Centre as soon as possible.

We confirm that the Centre and the Organisation agree to the above conditions.

Signed: (Organisation Leader)

Dated:

The Centre grants the above organisation use of the premises.

Signed:
On Behalf of the Charleville Centre

Dated:

THE CHARLEVILLE CENTRE - Anti-Bullying Code and Practices

ANTI-BULLYING CODE - PERSONAL SAFETY STATEMENT

- We provide a place where every member can feel secure
- We provide a place where it is known that bullying is not acceptable behaviour
- We provide a place where name calling is not tolerated
- We provide a place where no one suffers abuse of any nature
- We provide a place where no one is victimised
- We provide a place where each member is supported and listened to
- We provide a place where it is each member's responsibility to ensure that all are treated equal
- We provide a place where solutions to problems are the concern of all

What is bullying?

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression, be it verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. Bullying is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly in social environments such as schools, clubs and other organisations working with children. It includes teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting and extortion by one or more children or an adult against a victim.

Is bullying harmful?

Persistent bullying can have a devastating effect on a child's self-esteem. Children may feel the bullying is somehow their fault, or that there is something wrong with them. They may become withdrawn and insecure, more cautious and less willing to take any sort of risk. Being victimised in this way can cause days of mental anguish and leave lifelong

emotional scars. It has driven some young people to try to murder their tormentors and others to suicide. A child who has suffered bullying often needs professional counselling to let out his/her feelings and rebuild self-confidence. Bullying also affects any child who witnesses it.

What do children get bullied about?

Some of the factors involved in bullying include:

- puberty
- peer pressure
- gender differences
- stereotypes/prejudice
- structure of the group – hierarchy of dominance
- family background of victims and bullies.

Bullying can be distinguished from bossiness and boisterous play. A bossy child will boss whoever is around because of a lack of self-control or skills of negotiation or compromise. Boisterous play can be dangerous but it does not involve young people wilfully setting out to hurt or victimise. Young people often grow out of this kind of behaviour as they grow older. What distinguishes bullying from bossiness or boisterousness is that the bully always picks on someone less powerful and more vulnerable.

Persistent ‘slagging’ has the same devastating effects as bullying and should not be ignored.

How would you know if a child was being bullied?

All bullies operate using furtiveness, threats and fear. Bullying can therefore only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so.

The following indicators are warning signs that a young person might be getting bullied:

- reluctance to come to an event or take part in activities
- physical signs (unexplained bruises, scratches or damage to belongings)
- stress-caused illnesses – headaches and stomach aches which seem unexplained
- fearful behaviour (fear of walking to a youth meeting, asking to be driven)
- frequent loss of ‘subs’ or shortage of money with vague explanations
- having few friends
- changes in behaviour (becoming withdrawn, moody, irritable, upset, distressed, stammering)
- not eating
- attempting suicide or hinting at suicide
- anxiety (shown by nail-biting, fearfulness, tics)

Of course, there are other possible reasons for many of the above.

What makes a person bully others?

Bullies are often making a plea for help through their violent behaviour which may reflect a sense of insignificance. Bullies whose activities go unaddressed often fail socially and academically in later life. They need to be taught all important negotiation and cooperation skills, working with others rather than competing.

Who should deal with bullying?

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reportable to the health board or An Garda Síochána, dealing with bullying behaviour is normally the responsibility of the organisation where it is taking place.

How can bullying be prevented?

Modules on raising awareness and developing techniques for dealing with bullying should be included in training.

The Charleville Centre’s Prevention of Bullying and Harassment Policy sets out the procedures that are in place to deal with any incidents. While it is important to have rules about bullying, a whole group policy is the best solution. This means not ‘bullying the bully’ but working with bullies and the group of young people, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a ‘shared concern’ of the group. Group discussion methods have a big advantage over punishment in that they do not drive the problem underground or escalate it by making the bully more excluded or more of a social failure. This is known as the ‘*no blame*’ approach.

What practical steps can be used to counter bullying?

- Use young people as a positive resource in countering bullying and to change the culture of the group to a 'permission to tell' culture rather than a 'might is right' one.
- Teach young people to negotiate, cooperate and help others, particularly new or different children.
- It is a good idea to run poster campaigns and have stories and role plays on how to deal with a bully included in ordinary group activities.
- Offer a victim immediate support and put the 'no blame approach' into operation.
- Never tell young people to ignore bullying. They cannot ignore it - it hurts too much.
- Never encourage a young person to take the law into his/her own hands and beat the bully at their own game.
- Tell victims there is nothing wrong with them and the bullying is not their fault.

What is the 'no blame' approach?

Step 1 - Interview the victim

If you find out that there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim.

At this stage find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling. Try asking the following questions:

- Was it verbal or physical intimidation?
- How hurt is the victim?
- Was the bullying within his/her own peer group?

Assure the victim that his/her name will not come out in the investigation and actively listen.

Step 2 - Meet with all involved

Arrange to meet with all those involved, including some bystanders, those who may have colluded, those who joined in and those who initiated the bullying.

- Have maximum of six to eight in the group to keep the number controllable.
- Make a point of calling a 'special' meeting.
- Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by all.
- Speak only of the hurt caused in general terms with no reference to the victim.
- Play on the consciences of all by asking questions such as: How would you feel? Would you like this done to you?

Step 3 - Explain the problem

The distress being suffered as a result of the bullying incident must be explained. At this stage the details of the incident or the allocation of the blame/initiators is not discussed. Explain how it feels to be lonely, left out, rejected, laughed at. Try asking these questions:

- Would they like it if this happened to them?
- What can we do to see it does not happen again?

Listen, watch out for reactions and pick up on any without isolating anyone.

Step 4 - Share the responsibility

Explain what steps/controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how everyone will lose out as a result.

Step 5 - Ask the group for ideas

At this stage the group is encouraged to suggest ways which would make the victim feel happier. All positive responses are noted. Use phrases such as 'if it were you' to encourage a response. Listen to all suggestions and note them.

Step 6 - Leave it to the group

Now the problem has been identified and solutions suggested, the problem is handed over to the group to solve. Arrange to meet again in a week's time. Pass responsibility to the group and give a time frame within which something must be done.

Step 7 - Meet the group again

With each member of the group, including the bully, discuss how things are going, who is doing what and whether there have been other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and also keeps all involved in the process.

Again enforce the idea of the 'team' looking after one another to ensure it is known that bullying or intimidating behaviour will not be tolerated.

August 2018

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