



ANOINTING FIRE CATHOLIC MINISTRY

POLICY & PROCEDURES FOR THE PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN



ANOINTING FIRE CATHOLIC MINISTRY

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1. Context

Children, because of their dependency and immaturity, are vulnerable to abuse in various forms. Parents or guardians have primary responsibility for the care and protection of their children. However, the ANOINTING FIRE CATHOLIC MINISTRY (**Hereinafter AFCM**) has a responsibility to ensure that children and young people are kept safe from harm while they are availing of AFCM activities/services.

This Policy and Procedure has been developed in accordance with the Children First Act, 2015 and Children First: National Guidance 2017 for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline AFCM 's mandatory policy and procedures for the protection and safeguarding of children in accordance with the Children First Act, 2015 and Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017.

This policy and procedure is supported by AFCM 's Child Safeguarding Statements and Codes of Behaviour(s) for individual service areas.

3. Policy Statement

4.

AFCM is committed to a child-centered approach to our work with children in all our services and activities. AFCM has a responsibility to ensure the protection and safeguarding of children.

AFCM adheres to the Children First Act, 2015 and the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 by implementing procedures covering:

- Appropriate recruitment and selection of employees and volunteers;
- Appropriate vetting procedures (in accordance with National Vetting Bureau Act, 2012 to 2016) for all relevant employees and volunteers;
- Appropriate management, supervision and training of employees and volunteers
- Reporting and recording of concerns, incidents, accidents and complaints that come to the attention of AFCM ;
- Reporting and recording of concerns, incidents, accidents and complaints made against AFCM, employees/volunteers, any individuals undertaking work experience or internships within AFCM;
- The reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse confidentially;

- Circulation of information as considered necessary to employees, volunteers, parents/guardians and users of services.

5. **Scope**

This policy shall apply to:

- All employees and volunteers and any individuals undertaking work experience or internships within AFCM Ireland;
- All functions, services and activities that impact with children;
- All relevant and appropriate contractors and providers who are engaged and supported by the provision of resources

Objectives

The policy objective is to strengthen the safety and welfare of children in their various interactions with AFCM to provide specific safeguards and support to employees and volunteers in contact with children and create a culture of safety which promotes the welfare of children and young people availing of AFCM services

Relevant Legislation

There are a number of key pieces of legislation, codes of practice, standards and guidance that relate specifically to the reporting of child welfare and protection concerns:

- Child Care Act, 1991
- Occupiers Liability Act 1995
- Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998
- Equality Act, 2004
- Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act, 2012
- Criminal Justice Acts, 2006-2013
- Freedom of Information Acts 1997-2014
- Local Government Acts, 2001-2014
- Protected Disclosures Act, 2014
- Children First Act, 2015
- Safeguarding Guidance for Organizations. (Tusla 2015)
- National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts, 2012-2016
- Criminal law (Sexual Offences) Act, 2017
- Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2017
- Data Protection Acts 1988-2018

The following provides a brief overview of the legislation. It is not intended as legal opinion or advice and in the case of doubt the original legislation should be consulted.

Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

This Act protects the person making a report of suspected child abuse to designated officers of the Child and Family Agency (Tusla), the Health Service Executive (HSE) or to members of the Gardaí as long as the report is made in good faith and is not malicious. Designated officers also include persons authorised by the CEO of the Tusla to receive and acknowledge reports of mandated concerns about a child from mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015.

This legal protection applies to organisations as well as to individuals. This means that even if a report of suspected child abuse proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that the person who communicated the concern had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report. A person who makes a report in good faith and in the child's best interests may also be protected under common law by the defence of qualified privilege.

The full list of persons in Tusla and the HSE who are designated officers under the 1998 Act, can be found on the website of each agency (www.tusla.ie and www.hse.ie).

Criminal Justice Act 2006 – Reckless Endangerment

Section 176 of this Act creates an offence where a person, who has authority or control over a child or an abuser, intentionally or recklessly endangers the child by causing or permitting the child to be placed or left in a situation which creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse; or by failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation.

Criminal Justice (*Withholding of Information on Offences against Children & Vulnerable Persons*)

Act 2012

The Act creates a criminal offence of withholding information relating to the commission of a serious offence, including a sexual offence, against a person under 18 years or a vulnerable person. The offence arises where a person knows or believes that a specified offence has been committed against a child or vulnerable person and he or she has information which would be of material assistance in securing the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of another person for that offence and fails without reasonable excuse to disclose that information as soon as it is practicable to do so to a member of the Garda Síochána.

The Act requires that any person who has information regarding a serious offence against a child, which may result in charges or prosecution, must report this to An Garda Síochána. Failure to report under the Withholding Act is a criminal offence under that legislation. This obligation is in addition to any obligations under the Children First Act 2015.

The provisions of the withholding legislation are in addition to any reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015.

Children First Act 2015

The Children First Act 2015 was enacted on 11th December 2017. The Act provides for mandatory reporting of child welfare and protection concerns by key professionals and Organisations. One of the main objectives of the Children First Act 2015 and the Children First Guidance 2017 is to ensure that organisations working with children and young people keep them safe from harm while they are availing of that service. The legislation

and this guidance relate to the obligations of relevant services to prevent, as far as practicable, deliberate harm or abuse to the children availing of their services. While it

is not possible to eliminate all risk, organisations should put in place policies and procedures to manage and reduce risk to the greatest extent possible.

The Act places specific obligations on organisations that provide services to children and young people, including the requirement to:

- keep children safe from harm while they are using relevant services;
- carry out a risk assessment to identify whether there is any risk that a child or young person could be harmed while receiving its services;
- develop a Child Safeguarding Statement which outlines the policies and procedures which are in place to manage the risks which have been identified; and
- Appoint a relevant person to be the first point of contact in respect of the organisation's Child Safeguarding Statement.

National Vetting Bureau Acts, 2012 to 2016

National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 provides the statutory basis for the vetting of persons carrying out relevant work with children or vulnerable persons.

The Acts stipulates that a relevant organisation shall not permit any person to undertake relevant work or activities on behalf of the organisation, unless the organisation receives a vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau in respect of that person. AFCM deemed to be a relevant organisation for the purposes of the Acts and shall vet relevant employees and volunteers accordingly.

6. Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer

AFCM shall appoint at least one Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer to:

- receive and consider child welfare and protection concerns;
- carry out informal consultation with the Tusla;
- make formal child welfare and protection referrals to the Tusla;
- maintain confidential records and inform parents/carers, where appropriate, if a report is to be submitted to the Tusla/An Garda Síochána (note it is not necessary to inform the family if the person making the report is of the reasonable opinion that by doing so may place the person making the report at risk of harm from the family).

7. Mandated Persons

The Children First Act 2015 places a legal obligation on specific people to report to Tusla any incidences of harm against a child which meet or exceed a specified threshold. These people have been designated as "mandated persons" under the legislation.

AFCM, where relevant, will maintain a list of persons in the organisation who are mandated persons under the Act - Appendix IV.

8. Risk Assessment

Each relevant individual service area of AFCM must undertake a risk assessment of any potential for harm to a child, while availing of the services of AFCM and prepare a child safeguarding statement that shall include a written assessment of the risk and the procedures in place to manage and/or mitigate any risk identified.

9. **Child Safeguarding Statement**

In accordance with the Children First Act, 2015, AFCM will prepare a Corporate Child Safeguarding Statement.

The Corporate Child Safeguarding Statement should include a written assessment of the risks and specify the procedures that are in place to:

- manage corporate risks identified;
- provide information and training to employees and volunteers on child protection and safeguarding issues;
- enable employees/volunteers, whether a mandated person or otherwise, to make a report to Tusla in accordance with the Act or any guidelines issued by the Minister;
- Maintain a list of persons in the organization who are mandated persons under the Act,
- appoint a relevant person in the organization for the purposes of the Act.
- Each relevant individual service area will also prepare a Service Specific Child Safeguarding Statement, which is a written statement that specify the service being provided, and the principles and procedures to be observed to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child who is availing of the service is safe from harm.
- Make the statement available through circulation to all staff members and display the Child Safeguarding Statement publicly, making it available also to parents and guardians, Tusla and members of the public upon request.

The Specific Service Child Safeguarding Statement should provide an overview of the measures that the service has in place to ensure that children are protected from harm and may refer to more detailed policies which can be made available on request.

Upon completion, the specific service area Child Safeguarding Statement will be circulated to all relevant employees/volunteers and relevant services will display the Statement publicly and make it available to parents and guardians, Tusla and members of the public on request.

Each specific service Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed every 2 years, or sooner if there have been changes in any of the policies and procedures to which it relates.

10. **Disciplinary Policy and Procedure Policy**

Failure to comply with AFCM's Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment in the case of more serious breaches in line with AFCM's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Malicious or vexatious allegations of child abuse made by employees/volunteers may be considered to be a disciplinary matter and dealt with accordingly.

11. **Record Maintenance, Confidentiality and Data Protection**

The provision of information to the statutory agencies for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.

Records shall be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Acts, 1981-2018 within an agreed filing system and be available only to those directly involved and within the confines of the obligations and duties of the Data Protection Acts, 1981-2018.

12. **Recruitment and Training**

AFCM will ensure that appropriate employees and volunteers receive adequate and appropriate child welfare and protection information and training, in accordance with Children First National Guidance 2017. AFCM has a Recruitment Policy. All advertisements, screening and recruitment for vacant posts within the service will reflect our commitment to equality.

We will ensure that interviewers conduct interviews in a non-discriminatory way.

Interviews will be undertaken by a minimum of two representatives of AFCM using an agreed set of questions.

All applicants will be provided with • Details of AFCM • A Job Description and Person Specification Early Childhood Ireland 2020 • An Application Form.

A minimum of two references (one from the most recent employer) will be taken up followed by a telephone reference check prior to any staff member/volunteer commencing in AFCM.

References will only be accepted in writing and no references from family or relatives will be accepted.

Successful candidates will be offered a Contract of Employment in accordance with Employment legislation requirements and each contract will include a probationary period.

All employees' contracts will include signing up to AFCM Child Protection Policy.

Training in Child Protection and Children First will be sought for all employees. These guidelines will apply both to the recruitment of new employees and to the selection of internal candidates for promotion or job change.

AFCM will not employ, contract or involve as a volunteer, any person to work with children or young adults who has a criminal conviction for violent crime, sexual crime, drugs

related offences, or any other offences deemed inappropriate in relation to work with children.

All workers employed, contracted to work, or volunteering to work with children through AFCM will be required to sign a declaration form outlining any previous criminal convictions and granting permission for vetting from An Garda Síochána to be sought.

Garda Vetting will be undertaken for all managers, staff and volunteers. All references, qualifications, vetting, CVs and training information will be stored in a staff file, which will be retained as per AFCM Data Retention Policy

AFCM will ensure that any employees who are mandated persons under the Children First Act, 2015 receive training specifically in relation to the statutory responsibilities of mandated persons under the Act.

AFCM will ensure that Designated Child Protection Liaison Officers/Deputy Officers receive sufficient child protection and welfare information and training to enable them to undertake this role.

14 MAKING PROPER ARRANGEMENTS WHEN ORGANISING ACTIVITIES AND OUTINGS

Arrangements should be made with the parents or guardians of children and young people. It is not acceptable to make arrangements with children or young people without consulting and informing the parents or guardians. If the parents or guardians give their consent, messages concerning arrangements (for example, the time and venue of the next choir practice) can be sent to the mobile phones of 16 and 17 year old provided they are simultaneously sent to the phone of the parents or guardians. The physical environment in which an activity is due to take place should be assessed for possible hazards and the necessary steps taken to minimize the risk of accident or injury.

Trips away from Home

- All trips, including day trips, overnight stays and holidays, need careful advance planning, including adequate provision for safety in regard to supervision, transport, facilities, activities and emergencies. Adequate insurance should be in place.
- Consent should be sought, as described above.
- A copy of the itinerary and contact telephone numbers should be made available to parents/ guardians of the children.
- There should be adequate, age and gender-appropriate, supervision of children and young people.
- Particular attention should be given to ensuring that the privacy of children and young people is respected when they are away on trips.
- The provision of appropriate and adequate sleeping arrangements should be ensured in advance of the trip.
- There should be separate male and female sleeping areas and appropriate supervision of them.

- The tasks required of those taking part should be appropriate to their age. For example, a young person under 18 should not be asked to carry out personal care tasks for others unless this is discussed and agreed with a parent or guardian (for example, where siblings are travelling together).
- There should be a named person to whom all concerns and complaints are referred and all such concerns and complaints should be followed up in a timely and efficient manner

15 OBTAINING CONSENT

- A signed consent form from parents or guardians is to be obtained prior to the participation of children and young people in events, activities and groups.
- The consent of the child or young person should also be sought, in accordance with their age and understanding.
- The form should be accompanied by a description of the activity or outing, those organizing it, and the contact details for a responsible person the parent or guardian can contact.
- The form should contain an emergency contact number for the parent/s or guardian/s.
- Parents or guardians should be asked to indicate if the children have any specific dietary requirements, medical or other needs.
- The form should indicate whether there will be filming (use of web cams), photographs taken or video recordings made and specific permission sought from parent or guardians for their children's inclusion.
- The form should give (or be accompanied by) the name and contact details of the person in charge of the outing or activity.
- Parents or guardians cannot be asked to consent to anything that is not consistent

FOLLOWING GOOD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE WHEN WORKING WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- All AFCM personnel are obliged at all times and in all situations to work in accordance with di child safeguarding and protection policies whether operating within AFCM or on behalf of AFCM in an external organisation.
- In the event that a AFCM Staff is working for an external organisation that does not have a safeguarding policy in place or one that the cleric considers inadequate, the advice of CSPS should be sought.

ENSURING EXTERNAL GROUPS HAVE THEIR OWN SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

- Any group or individual who uses AFCM premises to run activities must be insured to do so and have their own safeguarding policy.

- It is not the responsibility of AFCM to evaluate the safeguarding policies of external groups. It is sufficient to ask them to sign to confirm that the policy exists.

KEEPING GOOD RECORDS

An organisation that must account for the manner in which it takes care of children and young people, it is very important that adequate records are kept, stored and retained in accordance with AFCM policy on storing and retention of records

- An accurate record should be kept for each child participating in activities, including the programme details.
- Consent forms should be retained.
- A written record of organisers, supervisors, employees and volunteers in attendance at events, such as meetings, choir rehearsals and sports activities, should be kept.
- An Incident/Accident Report Form should be completed in the event of an accident or incident relating to a child.
- All records should be dated and signed.

Code of Behaviour for Children and Young People

Where activities are being run specifically for children or young people, they should be involved in drawing up a code of behaviour for themselves. They will require assistance and guidance from adult staff and volunteers in doing so. Nonetheless they should contribute to the process in accordance with their age and understanding. They should be encouraged to avoid simply drawing up a list of prohibitions. The code should commit them to upholding values such as respect for self and others, valuing the contribution of each individual, and including those who are different by virtue of ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or social background. The code should also refer to the issue of bullying in its many forms and how it is to be addressed.

(Detailed guidance on tackling bullying is available from <http://www.youth.ie/sites/youth.ie/files/Let%27s%20Beat%20Bullying.pdf>)

SECTION 2: REPORTING PROCEDURES

Procedure for Employee/Volunteer Reporting Child Protection Concerns

Tusla should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. Ignoring what may be symptoms of abuse could result in ongoing harm to the child. It is not necessary to prove that abuse has occurred in order to report a concern to the Agency. All that is required is that there are reasonable grounds for concern. It is the role of Tusla to assess concerns that are reported

to them. People who report concerns can be assured that their information will be carefully considered with any other information available and a child protection assessment will proceed where sufficient risk is identified.

What constitutes reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern?

- Evidence (e.g. injury or behaviour) that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way.
- Any concern in relation to possible sexual abuse.
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused.
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed.
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused.
- The determining factor when considering concerns about abuse is the impact on the child rather than the intention of the abuser.

The four main types of abuse are described in Appendix I and this outlines how abuse and neglect can be recognised.

Steps to be taken by an employee/volunteer who knows about or suspects child abuse:

- (a) An employee/volunteer who has a concern that a child has been or is at risk of being harmed has a duty to convey this concern to the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer (or Deputy Officer) without delay. When conveying concerns to the Child Protection Liaison Officer, the employee/volunteer shall complete the TUSLA Standard Report Form at Appendix III and forward same to the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer without delay.
- (b) The Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer may report the information to Tusla, who in turn, may notify An Garda Síochána.
- (c) In an emergency, or where there is an immediate risk to a child or where the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer/ Deputy or Tusla cannot be contacted, a report should be made directly to An Garda Síochána.
- (d) If the suspected abuser is an employee/volunteer of AFCM, the matter shall be brought to the immediate attention of the National Coordinator or nominated deputy.
- (e) The person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for Tusla or An Garda Síochána.
- (f) Under no circumstances should any individual employee or volunteer attempt to intervene or deal with the problem of abuse alone.

If an employee/volunteer thinks a child is in immediate danger and cannot contact the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer/Deputy or Tusla, they should contact the Gardaí without delay. Following on, a report (**APPENDIX II: INCIDENT REPORT FORM – CONFIDENTIAL**) should still be made to the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer and submitted to Tusla, in accordance with AFCM's reporting procedure.

Talking to Parents/Carers about a Concern

The Children First Act 2015 does not require the person making the report to inform the family that a report under the legislation is being made to TUSLA. However, it is good practice to do

so and where possible the person making the report, or the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer should tell the family that a report is being made and the reasons for the decision.

It is not necessary to inform the family that a report is being made if by doing so the child will be placed at further risk or in cases where the family’s knowledge of the report could impair the Tusla’s ability to carry out a risk assessment. In addition, it is not necessary to inform the family if the person making the report is of the reasonable opinion that by doing so may place the person making the report at risk of harm from the family.

Standard Reporting Procedure for Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer

The guiding principles in relation to reporting child abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:

- (i) the safety and well-being of the child must take priority over concerns about adults against whom an allegation may be made;
- (ii) reports of concerns should be made without delay to Tusla;

Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer

The Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer/Deputy in AFCM is responsible for ensuring that reporting procedures within AFCM are followed so that child welfare and protection concerns are referred promptly to Tusla, in accordance with AFCM’s Reporting Procedure.

AFCM has appointed the following persons as the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer and Deputy Child Protection Liaison Officer in accordance with the Children First Act 2015. The contact details for the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer and Deputy Officer(s) are as follows:

Details for AFCM Ireland:

Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer: Anne Iurascu .

Mobile..... 0857340862
E-mail childrensministry@afcmireland.ie

Deputy Child Protection Liaison Officer: Deepa Joseph

Mobile.....0879402127
E-mail deepatom01@yahoo.com

The Designated Liaison Person/Deputy should record all concerns or allegations of child abuse brought to his/her attention, and all actions taken following receipt of a concern or allegation of child abuse.

Tusla should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. A report of a concern can be made in person, by telephone or in writing - including by email, to the local social work

duty service in the area where the child lives. Contact details for the Agency Social Work Team can be found on the Agency website (www.tusla.ie) and are outlined in Appendix IV.

If the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer is unsure whether a concern should be reported to the Agency, the Agency can be contacted informally to discuss the concern. This provides an opportunity to discuss the query in general and to decide whether a formal report of the concern to the Agency is warranted. If the concern is below the threshold for reporting, the Agency may be able to provide advice in terms of keeping an eye on the child and other services that may be more suitable to meeting the needs of the child and/or family.

If you think a child is in immediate danger and the Agency cannot be contacted, you should contact the Gardaí without delay.

What information to include:

To help Tusla/ Gardaí assess the concern they need as much information as possible. This would include, where known:

- the child's name, address and age;
- the names and addresses of parents or guardians
- names, if known of, who is allegedly harming the child or not caring for them appropriately
- a detailed account of the grounds for concern (e.g. details of the allegation, dates of incidents, and description of injuries).
- names of other children in the household;
- name of school the child attends;
- the name of the person making the report, contact details and relationship to the child

The more information available to social workers at an early stage the better able they will be to do a full check of their records, for instance to see if the child and/or a sibling was referred previously, or if an adult in the household had previous contact with the child protection services. It also assists social workers prioritise cases for attention, as they are not in a position to respond immediately to all cases but will always do so where a child is in immediate danger or at high risk of harm. It will also help the Agency to decide if another service would be more appropriate to help meet the needs of the child, i.e. a community or family support service rather than a social work service.

Summary Steps to be taken by the Child Protection Liaison Officer

When the designated Child Protection Liaison Officer receives a report about suspected or actual child abuse, they shall

- Consider whether there are reasonable grounds for reporting it to Tusla.
- Clarify or gain more information from the person reporting the concern about the matter.
- Record and treat the information as confidential

- Where there is any doubt or uncertainty, consult informally with Tusla
- Make a formal referral to Tusla;
- Report to An Garda Síochána if an emergency situation;

Where reasonable grounds exist for the reporting of suspected or actual child abuse a report shall be made to Tusla in person, by telephone or in writing by the Child Protection Liaison Officer. Reports may be made to Tusla Duty Social Worker Department or directly to the social worker.

A Standard Form for Reporting Child Protection and/or Welfare Concerns is available in Appendix III and from Tusla website (www.tusla.ie) and should be used for reporting suspected child abuse to Tusla or An Garda Síochána. If a report is made by phone or in person, this form should be completed and forwarded subsequently to Tusla.

Where decisions are made not to report a Concern

If the Designated Liaison Person decides not to report a concern to Tusla, the following steps should be taken:

- The reasons for not reporting are to be recorded.
- If any actions are taken as a result of the concern, these should be recorded.
- The employee or volunteer who raised the concern should be given a clear written explanation of the reasons why the concern is not being reported to Tusla.
- The employee or volunteer should be advised that if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to make a report to Tusla or An Garda Síochána.

Anonymous Reports

While it is possible to report a concern without giving a name, however it may make it difficult for Tusla to assess the concerns.

It should be noted that it is not possible for mandated persons to submit a report of a mandated concern anonymously as to do so does not discharge the statutory obligations for a mandated person under the Act.

Designated Child Protection Liaison Officers and Mandated Persons

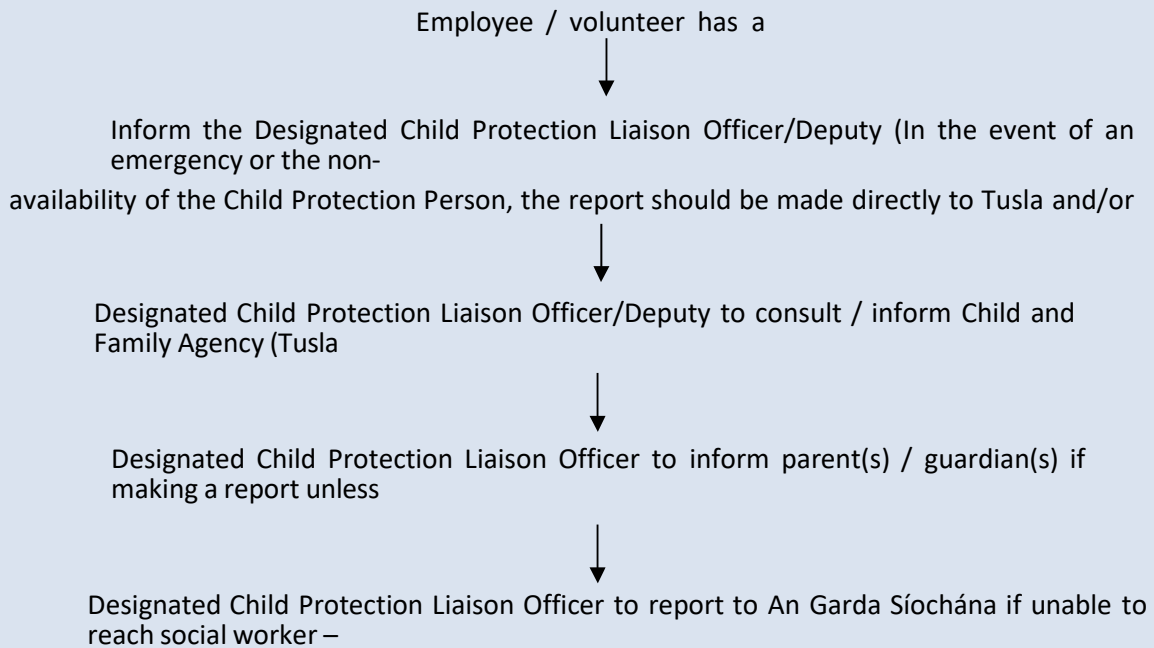
It is important to note that the statutory obligation of mandated persons to report under the Children First Act 2015 must be discharged by the individual who has the role of mandated person and cannot be discharged by the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer (DCPLO) on their behalf.

Some Designated Child Protection Liaison Officers (DCPLO) will themselves be mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015 and the statutory obligations of the mandated person under the Children First Act, 2015 will apply. In this case, if the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officers is made aware of a concern about a child that meets or exceeds the thresholds of harm for mandated reporting which have been set out in the Act, then they will have a statutory obligation to make a report to Tusla arising from their role as a mandated person.

While mandated persons have statutory obligations regarding reporting, they may make a report jointly with another person, whether the other person is a mandated person or not. In effect this means that a mandated person can make a joint report with a Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer.

The procedure for reporting a concern is as follows:

Reporting Procedures for Suspected / Disclosed Abuse



All concerns reported, actions taken, and outcomes should be recorded by the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer in line with Data Protection Act, 1988-2018

Who are Mandated Persons

Mandated persons are people who have ongoing contact with children and/or families who by virtue of their qualifications, training and experience are in a key position to help protect children from harm [see Appendix V for Schedule of Mandated Persons)

Details of the mandated person for AFCM under the Act can be found in Appendix V.

Legal Obligations of a mandated person

Mandated persons have two main legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015;

- (i) to report harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla, and
- (ii) to assist the Agency, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

Section 14 (1) of the Children First Act 2015 states:

"where a mandated person knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect, on the basis of information that he or she has received, acquired or becomes aware of in the course of his or her employment or profession as such a mandated person, that a child:

- (a) *has been harmed,*
- (b) *is being harmed, or*
- (c) *is at risk of being harmed,*

he or she shall, as soon as practicable, report that knowledge, belief or suspicion, as the case may be, to the Agency."

The Children First Act 2015 section 14 (2) also places obligations on mandated persons to report any disclosures made by a child:

"Where a child believes that he or she:

- *has been harmed,*
- *is being harmed, or*
- *is at risk of being harmed,*

and discloses this belief to a mandated person in the course of a mandated person's employment or profession as such a person, the mandated person shall, [...] as soon as practicable, report that disclosure to the Agency."

Reporting Mandated Concerns

Criteria for Reporting: Definitions & Thresholds

The legislation states that mandated persons are required to report any knowledge, belief or reasonable suspicion that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed. The Act defines harm as assault, ill-treatment, neglect or sexual abuse, and covers single and multiple instances. The four types of abuse are described in Appendix I. The threshold of harm for each category of abuse at which mandated persons have a legal obligation to report concerns is outlined below.

A mandated person who has a concern about a child should make a decision as to whether the concern meets the threshold for a mandated report under the Act. Where satisfied that this threshold is reached, the mandated person should clearly identify on the report that it is a mandated report made under the Children First Act 2015. Concerns that do not reach the threshold for mandated reporting should still be reported as a standard report under Children First National Guidance 2017 if they constitute a reasonable concern about the welfare or protection of a child.

If the mandated person is in doubt about whether the concern reaches the legal definition of harm for the purpose of making a mandated report Tusla can provide advice in this regard. Details of who to contact in this regard can be found on the Agency website.

Disclosures of abuse from a child or young person

Mandated persons who receive a disclosure of harm from a child, which is above the thresholds set out in the Children First National Guidance 2017 are required to make a mandated report of the concern to the Agency. Mandated persons are not required to judge the veracity of the claims or the credibility of the child.

The reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015 apply only to information that a mandated person has received or become aware of since the Act came into force, irrespective of whether the harm occurred before or after the commencement of the section on mandated reporting. However, reasonable concerns about past abuse where information came to the attention of the professional prior to the Act and there is a possible continuing risk to children can be reported to the Agency under the Children First National Guidance 2017.

Exemptions from Requirements to Report

The exceptions from requirements to report relate to:

1. Underage Consensual Sexual Activity, and
2. Concerns Developed Outside of Professional Duties.

Full details are outlined in the National Guidance Children First 2017 (*Chapter3, Page 23*).

Concerns Developed Outside of Professional Duties

The legal obligation to report under the Act applies to information that a mandated person acquires in the course of their profession or employment. It does not apply to information acquired outside their work, or information given to them in respect of a personal rather than a professional relationship. While the legal obligation to report only arises in relation to employment or professional duties, professionals should comply with the requirement of the National Children First Guidance 2017 to report all reasonable concerns to the Agency.

Making a Mandated Report

Section 14 of the Children First Act 2015 states that mandated persons are required to make a written report “as soon as practicable” to Tusla. A report of a concern should be submitted to the Agency using the required report form on which it should be indicated that the person making the report is a mandated person and that the report is in relation to a mandated concern. Mandated persons should include as much relevant information as possible in the report of the concern as to do so will facilitate effective and early intervention for the child and will reduce the likelihood of the Agency needing to contact the person making the report for further information. The report form can be found on the Agency’s website (www.tusla.ie) and is located in Appendix III.

The Children First Act 2015 requires Tusla to appoint authorised persons to receive mandated reports. The Report Form can be submitted to the Agency electronically by emailing the authorised persons using the contact details on the Agency website. All mandated reports received by an Agency authorised person on a completed Report Form will receive a formal acknowledgement of receipt by the Agency. Mandated persons should be aware that Tusla may not be able to provide feedback on the outcome of the case. However, the information which has been provided will be carefully considered with any other information available to Tusla, and a child protection assessment will proceed if sufficient risk is identified. Further detail on how the Agency deals with concerns they receive can be found in the Children First Guidance.

Mandated persons are not required to report the same concern on more than one occasion. However, if a mandated person becomes aware of any additional information a further report

should be made. In addition, a mandated person is not required to make a report where the sole basis for his or her knowledge, belief or suspicion of harm is as a result of becoming aware that another mandated person has made a report to Tusla in respect of the child concerned.

Reporting in an Emergency Situation

In an emergency situation, where a mandated person knows or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may be at risk of immediate harm and needs to be removed to a place of safety, Tusla should be contacted immediately. The details of how to contact the Agency can be found on the Agency’s website [**see Appendix IV**]. If the child needs immediate intervention and it is not possible to contact the Agency, you should contact the Gardaí. Where an

emergency report is made, the employee/volunteer must inform and submit the Incident Report to the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer/Deputy within three days.

Joint Reporting

Mandated persons may make a report jointly with any other person, whether that other person is mandated or not. For example, this could arise in situations where a child is admitted to A&E.

Informing the Family that a Report is Being Made

The Children First Act 2015 does not require mandated persons to inform the family that a report under the legislation is being made to the Agency. However, it is good practice to do so and a mandated person should tell the family that a report is being made and the reasons for the decision.

It is not necessary to inform the family that a report is being made if by doing so the child will be placed at further risk or in cases where the family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment. In addition, it is not necessary to inform the family if the person making the report is of the reasonable opinion that by doing so it may place the person making the report at risk of harm from the family.

Informing the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer

Designated Child Protection Liaison Officers are responsible for ensuring that reporting procedures are followed correctly and promptly, and they act as liaison person with other agencies. Any mandated person(s) is required to inform the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer or Deputy if a mandated report has been made and to provide a copy of the report. Mandated persons should be familiar with and adhere to any such requirements.

Mandated persons have a statutory obligation to report concerns of harm which meet or exceed the threshold set out in the Children First Act 2015 directly to Tusla. Mandated persons should be aware that the legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015 to report mandated concerns rest with them and not with the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer. However, there is nothing in the Act to prevent mandated persons from either making a mandated report jointly with a Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer or providing a copy of the mandated report they have submitted to the Agency for the information of the DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION LIAISON OFFICER.

Consequences of Non-Reporting for Mandated Persons

The Children First Act 2015 does not impose criminal sanctions on mandated persons who fail to make a report to Tusla. However mandated persons should be aware that there are potential consequences for a failure to report (as outlined in Children First National Guidance).

Sharing Information

The Data Protection Acts do not prevent the sharing of information on a reasonable and proportionate basis for the purposes of the protection of children. This is in compliance with the principles of data protection.

Section 17 of the Children First Act, 2015 provides that it is an offence for a mandated person to disclose information to a third party which has been shared by Tusla during the course of an assessment unless the Agency has given the mandated person written authorisation to do so. A person who fails to comply with this section is liable to a class A fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or both.

Protection from Civil Liability

Mandated persons who are required to share information with Tusla in order to assist in the assessment of risk are protected from civil liability. Section 16 (3) of the Act states:

"If a mandated person furnishes any information (including a report), document or thing to the Agency pursuant to a request made under subsection (1), the furnishing of that information, document or thing shall not give rise to any civil liability in contract, tort or otherwise and nor shall the information, document or thing be admissible as evidence against that person in any civil or criminal proceedings."

Training for Mandated Persons

Tusla provides information resources on Children First guidance and legislation, including an e-learning module. This e-learning module, which is called Introduction to Children First, covers recognising and reporting child abuse, the role of mandated persons, including mandated assisting, and the responsibilities of organisations working with children to safeguard children using their services. Information on how you can access the e-learning module can be found on the Tusla website (www.tusla.ie).

Information is also available on the Tusla website to assist in developing other specific Children First Training (Tusla Children First – Best Practice Principles for Organisations in Developing Children First Training Programmes). It is the responsibility of each organisation to ensure that its staff and volunteers receive adequate and appropriate child welfare and protection training to meet their child protection obligations under the Act.

Failure to Report a Concern

As stated above(**Procedure for Employee/Volunteer Reporting Child Protection Concerns**)the *Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012* makes it a criminal offence to fail to report to the Gardai information about a serious offence against a child. This requirement is additional to the requirement to make mandatory reports to Tusla.

There are no criminal sanctions under the *Children First Act 2015* on mandated persons who fail to make a report to Tusla. Tusla may however report the matter, if applicable, to the professional regulatory body to which the person belongs. The matter may also be reported to the National Vetting Bureau and could, therefore, be disclosed in the course of the person's next vetting application.

Reports should be sent to Tusla 'as soon as practicable' using the required form (available from <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms#SRP>). The form can be posted or sent electronically. If the matter is urgent Tusla can be contacted in advance of submitting the form but it must be submitted within three working days

AFCM requires all of those who minister or work for or on behalf of AFCM, its agencies and to comply with the requirements of this policy and to meet their obligations under both the *Children First Act 2015* and the *Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012*.

SECTION III

ADDRESSING COMPLAINTS /ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

AFCM proceeds on the basis that most of those who minister on its behalf are motivated by concern for their neighbor. There are procedures in place to deal with situations where this is not the case. Even when it is, things can and do go wrong and effective means are needed to put them right.

A simple way of understanding a complaint is as an expression of dissatisfaction. People complain when they are unhappy about something. Dealing with complaints is about trying to put things right, rather than allocating blame for something that has gone wrong. Most people respond positively when their complaints are heard, taken seriously and they are given an undertaking that steps will be taken to ensure that the thing that caused them unhappiness does not recur. A simple apology can go a long way to address a person's complaint and to establish or restore a positive relationship with the complainant.

A person may never use the term 'complaint' when expressing unhappiness about something that has happened. Indeed, many people find it difficult to make or to be seen to 'make a complaint'.

There is a responsibility on those who work in AFCM to be alert to expressions of unhappiness (which may be non-verbal) and to respond appropriately. Such a response could be as simple as asking the person if everything is okay with them. Ignoring signs of unhappiness is not good safeguarding practice.

Complaints are best addressed as close as possible to the source of the problem. For example, if a Staff/volunteer inadvertently does something to upset a Participant an immediate and unqualified apology is the most appropriate response.

Where a matter cannot be resolved in this simple and direct manner, another volunteer or Staff may be able to assist in bringing about resolution through negotiation and mediation. Such an intervention can be effective where a misunderstanding has arisen between the parties involved.

Sometimes complaints cannot be resolved immediately and it is good practice that within every activity or group there is a person designated to deal with complaints. A member of the choir will be reassured if he/she knows that there is someone in the choir who he/she can approach if he/she is unhappy about something. This person's role is to attempt to resolve the matter through negotiation and mediation between the parties involved. If resolution is not achieved, or if there is no designated person to deal with the matter within the group, responsibility for resolution is likely to fall on the Designated Child Protection Officer

At the point where a complaint is referred to the group's designated person a note should be made of the incident or situation giving rise to the complaint and the outstanding issues. The relevant person will then have to determine what steps need to be taken to resolve the matter. One option to be considered is to have the complaint investigated by a person from outside the organisation . This is likely to be expensive and time consuming and, in considering such a course of action should consider the following:

- the seriousness of the matter complained of;
- the integrity of the complaint, that is, whether it stands on its merits or relates to an underlying issue such as antipathy between individuals or groups;
- the impact of the process of investigation, which can sometimes encourage those in dispute to take up more entrenched positions as they seek to justify their own position or prove an opponent wrong,
- the likely outcome of the investigation and whether it will lead to a resolution of the issues that gave rise to it.

In many instances informal means of resolving complaints are to be preferred. This is not always possible and formal, independent investigations are required. When complaints relate to the behaviour of AFCM Staff/Volunteer other procedures may have to be invoked such as the disciplinary procedure or the child or adult protection procedure. Where such procedures are invoked they are additional to and not a substitute for attempts to resolve the unhappiness or dissatisfaction of the complainant.

Section IV

PROCEDURES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AGAINST EMPLOYEES /VOLUNTEERS

AFCM Staff and Volunteers are particularly vulnerable to accusations of abuse from Childrens or their parents. Such allegations may be false or misplaced or the allegations may be true. For this reason it is essential that everyone involved maintains an open mind in dealing with such allegations.

Where an allegation of child abuse, (as defined in section 2 of the Children First Act, 2015 and in The Children First National Guidance, 2017 - neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse) is made against a school employee in this context, employee also includes an unpaid volunteer.

The protection of children and their safety and well-being shall be the priority however, AFCM also have a duty of care to employees and volunteers. Any allegation/suspicion of child abuse made against a teacher or member of staff or volunteer in a school will be dealt with as quickly as possible, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Two procedures shall be followed when dealing with allegations/suspicions. These procedures need to be applied with common sense and judgement:

Reporting procedure to Tusla in respect of the allegation/suspicion; and

2. Procedure for dealing with the employee.

In general, the same person shall not have responsibility for dealing with (1) the reporting issue and (2) the employment issues.

- The designated liaison person (DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION LIAISON OFFICER) is responsible for reporting the matter to Tusla, and
- AFCM is responsible for the employment issue.

Where an allegation/suspicion relates to the DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION LIAISON OFFICER, then AFCM shall assume responsibility for seeking advice from and reporting the matter to Tusla.

The first priority is to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. AFCM shall as a matter of urgency ensure that any necessary protective measures are taken, including where there is an urgent child safeguarding requirement, invoking its Protocol Authorising Immediate Action. The overriding guiding principle that informs this protocol and its application is the protection and welfare of children.

It is important to note that actions under the protocol are intended to be precautionary and not disciplinary.

Tusla shall be informed as to whether the employee has been formally placed on administrative leave or where it has been decided not to place the employee on

administrative leave, Tusla shall be informed of the alternative child safeguarding actions that have been taken.

Any action taken by AFCM shall comply, as applicable, with the relevant provisions of employment legislation and relevant disciplinary procedures. The principles of natural justice and fair procedures shall be applied.

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Whistleblowing is a term used to describe the action of someone who reveals/discloses wrongdoing within an organisation to the public or to those in positions of authority. There is legal protection for whistleblowers. The Protected Disclosures Act 2014 provides legal safeguards to employees, contract and agency workers and people on work experience schemes (but not volunteers) to report illegal practices or other specified wrong doings such as abuse. This applies where the disclosure is made in good faith and on reasonable grounds and relates to any conduct or action which raises a significant danger to public health or safety.

AFCM is committed to accountability and transparency as described throughout this document. The purpose of this appendix is to encourage those who have concerns for the welfare or safety of those involved in AFCM activities to express their concerns without the fear that they will be victimised or harassed for so doing.

It may be difficult to raise concerns about the practice of colleagues. There can be a reluctance due to: fear of getting it wrong and damaging the reputation of a colleague; fear of disrupting working relationships; fear of not being believed;

fear that the information will be used inappropriately, precipitating a chain of events that spirals out of control. These considerations have to be considered in the light of the following: the responsibility of everyone working for or on behalf of AFCM for the protection and welfare of all, especially children and adults who are vulnerable or at risk; that raising a concern in a timely manner can prevent a bad situation from spiralling out of control;

that raising a concern about one situation can reduce the risk of a similar situation arising in another part of the organisation;

that raising a concern about poor or inappropriate practice will prevent the person raising the concern from becoming implicated in such practice.

AFCM is committed to ensuring that any person who raises a concern for the safety or welfare of any person arising from their involvement with AFCM will not be victimised, harassed or in any way disadvantaged provided that the person has reasonable grounds for concern.

There may be occasions where a member of staff, paid or voluntary, has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence.

That person has a responsibility to discuss such a situation with his/her group leader so that professional and personal support can be offered. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the protection and welfare of children or adults who are vulnerable or at risk.

Actions to be agreed:

- What further information is required?
- Whether any immediate action needs to be taken to protect students
- When and what should the parents be told
- What should be said to the adult facing the allegation?
- Whether putting the member of staff on administrative leave is required
 - o Administrative Leave should not be an automatic response

Possible outcomes of the initial discussion:

- Referral to Tusla
- Referral to Gardai for investigation
- No Referral to Tusla and/or Gardai.

After consulting the Tusla, the person who the allegation is made against should be told about the allegation. The amount of detail should be agreed with Tusla and will range from the minimum (where a Tusla assessment and/or Garda investigation) to the greatest amount of detail following a no referral decision. The person should be told about the likely courses of action. They should be advised to contact their union representative and be provided with EAP supports available.

2. AFCM Procedure for dealing with the employee

AFCM have a duty of care to its employees and will act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations process. Support for those involved is vital in fulfilling this duty.

- Employees shall be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless there is an objection by Tusla or the Gardaí.
- Employees should also be advised of services provided by AFCM Employee Assistance Programme.
- Employees should be advised of that they may be accompanied by their union representative or person of their choice to meetings

- Every effort will be made to resolve cases as quickly as possible. Individuals shall be treated fairly and will not be judged in advance of a full and fair process, in accordance with the relevant procedures.

AFCM will make every effort to maintain confidentiality at all times while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The identity of individuals shall not be disclosed, other than as required under the reporting procedures.

- 2.1 AFCM shall arrange to privately inform the employee that an allegation has been made against him/her, the nature of the allegation and whether or not the allegation has been reported to Tusla.
- 2.2 The employee shall be offered the opportunity to respond to the allegation in writing to AFCM within a specified time period.
- 2.3 AFCM will take legal advice as to whether disciplinary proceedings should proceed or be stayed pending the outcome of the Tusla assessment/An Garda Síochána investigation, if involved.
 - National Coordinator will make a decision on whether or not to proceed with disciplinary proceedings in light of that advice.
 - The decision to stay disciplinary proceedings pending the outcome of any Tusla assessment and the reasons for that decision shall be communicated to the employee.
 - In the communication, AFCM shall make clear that (a) it reserves the right to continue disciplinary proceedings at a later point or once the Tusla assessment/An Garda Síochána investigation is complete irrespective of the outcome of that assessment/investigation.
(b) AFCM may have regard to the outcome of any such assessment/investigation in deciding what, if any, disciplinary action to take.
- 2.4 Where a decision is made to stay disciplinary proceedings pending the outcome of a Tusla assessment and/or an An Garda Síochána investigation, insofar as is possible, the employee shall be kept up to date on progress.
- 2.5 Any action taken by AFCM, including disciplinary proceedings shall be handled in the strictest confidence. The principles of due process, fair procedures and natural justice shall be adhered to by AFCM.
- 2.6 Any disciplinary action shall accord with established disciplinary procedures and shall only be taken following consultation with Tusla and An Garda Síochána, if involved.
- 2.7 Whilst AFCM has the right to conduct its own disciplinary investigation independent of any Tusla assessment or An Garda Síochána investigation, AFCM shall take care to ensure actions do not undermine or frustrate any assessment/investigation being conducted by Tusla or An Garda Síochána.

SECTION V

PROCEDURE FOR A PROVIDER OF A 'RELEVANT SERVICE'/CONTRACTOR ENGAGED BY AFCM THROUGH THE PROVISION OF RESOURCES

1. It is the responsibility of each Provider of a 'Relevant Service'/Contractor supported by AFCM through the provision of resources to undertake an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while providing the service.
2. It is the responsibility of each Provider of a 'Relevant Service'/Contractor, engaged by AFCM for the provision of resources, to confirm they have a written Child Safeguarding Statement in place specifying the service being provided and outlining the procedures that are in place to;
 - manage any child safeguarding risk identified;
 - investigate an allegation against any staff member about any act, omission or circumstance in respect of a child availing of the service;
 - select and recruit staff who are suitable to work with children;
 - provide information and training to employees on child protection and safeguarding issues;
 - enable employees/ volunteers, whether a mandated person or otherwise, to make a report to Tusla in accordance with the Act or any guidelines issued by the Minister;
 - maintain a list of persons in the organization who are mandated persons under the Act;
 - appoint a relevant person in the organization for the purposes of the Act.
3. The Service Specific Child Safeguarding Statement should provide an overview of the measures that the service has in place to ensure that children are protected from harm.
4. The Provider of a 'Relevant Service'/Contractor supported by AFCM through the provision of resources should also have in place appropriate child protection policies and procedures.
5. AFCM shall seek a signed declaration (See Appendix VII) from the provider of a 'Relevant Service'/Contractor supported by AFCM through the provision of resources, that they have read and understand the particulars outlined in the Children First Act, 2015, Children First National Guidance 2017, TUSLA Guidance and AFCM Policy and Procedures for the Protection & Safeguarding of Children.
6. The signed declaration should confirm the undertaking of a risk assessment and preparation of a Child Safeguarding Statement, and that the Provider/Contractor agrees to follow the guidelines on procedures and practices contained within.

7. The signed declaration should confirm that a vetting disclosure has been received in accordance with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act, 2012 to 2016 for any employee and/or volunteer carrying out 'regular work or activities' i.e. any work or activity which is carried out by a person, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, children or vulnerable adults.

Section VI

POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON USE OF IT AND DIGITAL MEDIA

General Principles

Children and young people should be welcomed and encouraged to participate AFCM activities, to facilitate this, communication with children and young people should use the language and media with which they are familiar and comfortable. Using appropriate and safe digital media is a good way to involve children and young people in AFCM activities. Such communication should have at its core the best interests of children and young people. This is achieved by ensuring, at all times, the appropriate use of language, images, photography, and messaging.

Children and young people must be protected from all forms of online abuse and exploitation, including such activities as online bullying, grooming, and sexting. Complaints and/or allegations of inappropriate online communication with children and young people must be taken seriously. Any concern must immediately be reported to Civil Authorities. The Civil Authorities who hold statutory responsibility for child protection, are An Garda Síochána and Tusla Child & Family Agency.

Mobile Phones

Many children and young people have access to mobile phones. Given that mobile phone devices can perform a myriad of tasks, it is the responsibility of the event organiser to determine and explain the level of mobile phone usage deemed appropriate when working with children and young people.

When participating in groups with children ensure that you have their parent/guardian's telephone contact details and that all arrangements are made with parents/guardians.

Email and texting

Communication (via email or texting) with young people under 16 years of age is not permissible.

Communication (via email or texting) with young people aged 16 to 18 years old is only permissible with prior written consent from the young person and their parents/guardians using the Digital Media Consent Form. (See Appendix VII)

- Parents/guardians must be included in these emails and texts.
- Do not share your personal mobile phone number with children and young people.
- Email communication should be made using AFCM email account only.
- Do not communicate directly (via text or talk) with children under 16 years of age.
- Text communication should only be made using a AFCM device.

In emergency circumstances where this is unavoidable, follow this up with a telephone call to their parents/guardians to make them aware of the content.

A written record should be kept of any such contact. Text messages should never contain personal information about a child or young person.

Using bundled text and email messaging (that is, where the same message is sent to a group of young people aged 16 to 18 years) can minimise risks associated with this form of communication.

When setting up text or email bundles, the BCC function should be used both for young people and parents/guardians. The contact details for young people receiving such a message must not be visible to other recipients.

Texts or emails should be used for delivering information, a one-way communication channel. The exception to this is if a response is deemed essential. For example, a parent/guardian replying to inform a leader that a young person is unable to attend an event, or a young person replying to inform a leader they are running late to an event.

The parents/guardians and young people's contact details must be stored in a secure cabinet or a password-protected computer system.

The text or email messaging system should NEVER be used to send a text or email to an individual.

All texts or email messages must clearly identify who has sent the message.

The texts and emails sent from this service must never contain any offensive, abusive or inappropriate language, including emojis.

All of the text and email messages sent should include a sentence at the bottom that provides young people with the opportunity to unsubscribe from receiving further text and email messages.

Contact numbers and email addresses for young people should only be used for information sharing about church activities.

Photography and Digital Cameras

Taking photographs of children and young people is not permitted without prior signed parental/ guardian consent.

Children and young people must be fully clothed in images.

Avoid images that depict children and young people breaking rules or behaving in a dangerous fashion.

Children and young people's consent should also be sought, giving due consideration to their age and stage of development.

Photographs should only be taken by authorised personnel with a suitable reason with prearranged consent from parents/guardians and children and young people.

When using a photographer ensure that they have completed Garda Vetting.

Ensure the photographer wears identification at all times.

Do not allow the photographer unsupervised access to the children and young people.

Children and young people must not be identified in photographs.

Written permission must be sought from children or young people, and their parents/guardians if photographs are to be published in any forum (i.e. print or online).

Avoid photographing children and young people in vulnerable situations.

Any photography concerns must be reported to the event organiser and AFCM

Internet Usage and Websites

Avoid participating in using the internet with children and young people with whom you are working if it is not a direct requirement for the nominated activity.

If internet usage is available as part of an activity, seek prior expert consultation to ensure that safety requirements are met.

Have a plan for responding to circumstances where unsuitable material is accessed.

Seek expert advice when considering setting up a website.

Using a computer to access images of child abuse is a crime and will be reported to An Garda Síochána.

Any use of information technology to access sites that are pornographic or illegal when working with children and young people is strictly prohibited.

Social Media

Communication via social media platforms with young people under 16 years of age is not permissible.

The use of social media by AFCM groups should be for the purpose of broadcasting information about the specific AFCM activity involved. It should not be used as a form of social interaction between the leaders and the young people.

Any contact with young people (16 years upwards) via social media, must be done using a AFCM account. Leaders should never use their own personal accounts.

All AFCM social media accounts must have at least two administrators.

Never befriend young people with whom you are communicating on social media sites.

This includes Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok. (This list is not exhaustive).

If you use social media, remember to respect the privacy of others.

Consider the implications of any posts.

Report any inappropriate material that you come across to the to the Civil Authorities.

Where possible, turn off private messaging on whatever platform you are using.

Administrators of AFCM social media accounts should monitor these regularly for any traffic or comments which could be deemed offensive or inappropriate.

Written parental/guardian and child consent is required before engaging with young people (16 to 18) on social media.

Live Video Platforms

(Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Cisco etc.)

For the purpose of clarity, a teenager is a person aged thirteen years of age and older.

Live video platforms should not be used to engage with children under the age of thirteen unless a parent/guardian is visibly present throughout the meeting.

AFCM staff / volunteers should not use the free version of Zoom as it does not include the security measures that the subscription versions do.

Subscriptions to live video platforms, in general, should be taken out by AFCM, and not by individuals.

This should be managed by someone who understands the platform and who is appointed by the person in charge.

If for any reason a meeting is infiltrated from the outside, that is, if somebody not invited to the meeting appears, the meeting should be terminated immediately. The breach should be reported to the platform provider.

In the event that the organisers feel that such a breach poses a threat of harm or abuse of the teenagers taking part, this should be reported to the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service (CSPS) without delay. Parents/guardians should also be informed

so that they can decide if they want their child to continue using the platform going forward.

AFCM Staff/Volunteers should NOT use a private Zoom account to contact teenagers.

APPENDIX I: TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE & HOW THEY MAY BE RECOGNISED

Child abuse can be categorised into four main types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger and can be an adult or another child. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, it should be considered a child welfare and protection issue for both children and child protection procedures should be adhered to for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

The important factor in determining whether behaviour constitutes abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the parent/carer.

In the Children First: National Guidance 2017, 'a child' means a person under the age of 18 years, excluding a person who is or has been married.

The definitions of neglect and abuse presented in this section are not legal definitions. They are intended to describe ways in which a child might experience abuse and how this abuse may be recognised.

1. Neglect

Child neglect is the most frequent category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences.

Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life, as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect.

Neglect is associated with, but not necessarily caused by, poverty. It is strongly linked with parental substance misuse, domestic violence and parental mental illness and disability.

Neglect, including serious neglect, may be apparent immediately and on the basis of one engagement. An example is a child who is seriously underweight (without a medical condition)

and has persistent hair and skin infections from poor hygiene. This condition is not the result of a one-off lapse on the part of a parent.

Other forms of neglect may only emerge over time as a pattern emerges. For example, a child who suffers a series of ongoing minor injuries may not be having his or her needs met in terms of necessary supervision and safety. A child who consistently misses school may be being deprived of intellectual stimulation or adequate supervision.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. The

following are features of child neglect:

- children being left alone without adequate care and supervision;
- malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding;
- non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also to emotional deprivation;
- failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation;
- inadequate living conditions – unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of appropriate heating and furniture;
- lack of adequate clothing;
- inattention to basic hygiene;
- lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age;
- persistent failure to attend school;
- abandonment or desertion.

2. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children's emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer.

Emotional abuse may be seen in some of the following ways:

- rejection;
- lack of comfort and love;
- lack of attachment;
- lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play);
- lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned);
- continuous lack of praise and encouragement;

- persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child;
- bullying;
- conditional parenting in which care or affection of a child is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions;
- extreme over-protectiveness;
- inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. locking child in bedroom);
- ongoing family conflicts and family violence;
- seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to his/her age and stage of development.

There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour.

It should be noted that no one indicator is conclusive evidence of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is more likely to impact negatively on a child where it is persistent over time and where there is a lack of other protective factors.

3. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health and/or development is, may be or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

Physical abuse can include the following:

- physical punishment;
- beating, slapping, hitting or kicking;
- pushing, shaking or throwing;
- pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling;
- use of excessive force in handling;
- deliberate poisoning;
- suffocation;
- fabricated/induced illness;
- female genital mutilation.

The Children First Act 2015 includes a provision that abolishes the common law defence of reasonable chastisement in court proceedings. This defence could previously be invoked by a parent or other person in authority who physically disciplined a child. The change in legislation now means that in prosecutions relating to assault or physical cruelty, a person who administers such punishment to a child cannot rely on the defence of reasonable chastisement in the legal proceedings. The result of this is that the protections in law relating to assault now apply to a child in the same way as they do to an adult. There has been no change to the reporting requirements in relation to corporal punishment.

4. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation,

fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography.

Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and, in some instances, occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members.

Cases of sexual abuse principally come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings/friends; from the suspicions of an adult and/or by physical symptoms.

An Garda Síochána will deal with any criminal aspects of a sexual abuse case under the relevant criminal justice legislation and the prosecution of a sexual offence against a child will be considered within the wider objective of child welfare and protection. The safety of the child is paramount and at no stage should a child's safety be compromised because of concern for the integrity of a criminal investigation.

In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that, for the purposes of criminal law, the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal; however, it may not necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse.

Bullying affects the lives of an increasing number of children and can be the cause of genuine concerns about a child's welfare.

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression – whether it be verbal, psychological or physical – that is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools. It includes behaviours such as physical aggression, cyber bullying, damage to property, intimidation, isolation/exclusion, name calling, malicious gossip and extortion. Bullying can also take the form of abuse based on gender identity, sexual preference, race, ethnicity and religious factors. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non-contact bullying, via mobile phones, the Internet and other personal devices.

While bullying can happen to any child, some may be more vulnerable such as children with disabilities or special educational needs, those from ethnic minority and migrant groups, from the Traveller community, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) children and those perceived to be LGBT and children of minority religious faiths.

There can be an increased vulnerability to bullying amongst children with special educational needs and particularly those who do not understand social cues and/or have difficulty communicating. Some children with complex needs may lack understanding of social situations and therefore trust everyone implicitly. Such children may be more vulnerable because they do not have the same social skills or capacity as others to recognise and defend themselves against bullying behaviour.

Bullying in schools is a particular problem due to the fact that children spend a significant portion of their time there and are in large social groups. In the first instance, the school authorities are responsible for dealing with such bullying. School management boards are required to have a code of behaviour and an anti-bullying policy in place. School personnel should be aware of their school's anti-bullying policy and of the relevant procedural guidelines.

In cases of serious instances of bullying where the behaviour is regarded as possibly abusive, or poses a serious risk to the health, development or welfare of a child, a referral may need to be made to the Children and Family Agency and/or An Garda Síochána.

APPENDIX II: INCIDENT REPORT FORM - CONFIDENTIAL

ANOINTING FIRE CATHOLIC MINISTRY

Type of Incident: _____

Occurred On: Date: ___/___/_____ Time: _____

Reported On: Date: ___/___/_____ Time: _____

Location: _____

Event/Activity: _____

Particulars of Incident:

Relevant Child Details	Witness Details <i>[of appropriate]</i>
Name: _____ Address: _____	Name: _____ Address: _____
Tel: _____ DOB: ____/____/____	Tel: _____

Were Gardaí contacted? Yes No Date:

____/____/____

If Yes, provide brief details:

Was Security contacted? Yes No Date:

____/____/____

If Yes, provide brief details:

Were Medical Personnel contacted? Yes No ____/____/____
Date:

If Yes, provide brief details:

Was Parent/Guardian contacted? Yes No Date/____/____

If Yes, provide brief details:

Signed: _____


Position: _____ **ate:** _____

Please submit completed Incident Report Form to the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer/Deputy Child Protection Liaison Officer.

Any supporting evidence or other relevant documentation should be attached to this Form

NOTE: This form is to be used by employee/volunteer for reporting a concern to the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer/Deputy Child Protection Liaison Officer.

APPENDIX III: TUSLA STANDARD REPORT FORM (taken from *Children First National Guidance 2017*)



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Use block letters when filling out this form.
Fields marked with an * are mandatory.

1. Tusla Area (this is where the child resides)*			
2. Date of Report*			
3. Details of Child			
First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address*		Date of Birth*	
		Estimated Age*	
		School Name	
		School Address	
Eircode			
4. Details of Concerns*			
Please complete the following section with as much detail about the specific child protection or welfare concern or allegation as possible. Include dates, times, incident details and names of anyone who observed any incident. Please include the parents and child's view, if known. Please attach additional sheets, if necessary			
Please see ' <i>Tusla Children First – A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns</i> ' for additional assistance on the steps to consider in making a report to Tusla			
5. Type of Concern			
Child Welfare Concern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emotional Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>		
6. Details of Reporter			
First Name		Surname	
Address if reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

[A word version of this document may be downloaded from the Tusla website]

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Is this a Mandated Report made under Sec 14, Children First Act 2015?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mandated Person's Type				

7. Details of Other Persons Where a Joint Report is Being Made

First Name		Surname	
Address if reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

First Name		Surname	
Address if reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

8. Parents Aware of Report

Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to Tusla?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If the parent/carer does not know, please indicate reasons:				

9. Relationships

Details of Mother			
First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
Eircode			

Is the Mother a Legal Guardian?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------------------------	-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Details of Father			
First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
Eircode			

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Is the Father a Legal Guardian?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------------------------	-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

10. Household Composition

First Name	Surname	Relationship	Date of Birth	Estimated Age	Additional Information e.g. school, occupation, other

11. Details of Person(s) Allegedly Causing Harm

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leasúil agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

12. Name and Address of Other Organisations, Personnel or Agencies Known to be Involved Currently or Previously with the Family

Profession	First Name	Surname	Address	Contact Number	Recent Contact e.g. 3/6/9 months ago
Social Worker					
Public Health Nurse					
GP					
Hospital					
School					
Gardaí					
Pre-school/ crèche					
Other					

13. Any Other Relevant Information, Including any Previous Contact with the Child or Family

Please ensure you have indicated if this is a mandated report in section 6.

Thank you for completing the report form.

In completing this report form you are providing details on yourself and on others. Details such as name, address and date of birth fall under the definition of 'Personal Data' in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. Tusla has a responsibility under these Acts in its capacity as a Data Controller to, amongst other things, obtain and process this data fairly; keep it safe and secure; and to keep it for a specified lawful purpose. That purpose is to fulfil our statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act 1991 to promote the protection and welfare of children. Tusla may, during the course of the assessment of this report disclose such Personal Data to other agencies including An Garda Síochána. Further details about Tusla's responsibilities as a Data Controller and your rights as a Data Subject can be found on our website, www.tusla.ie. As you are providing Personal Data on others, you are a Data Processor. We ask that you only provide those details that are necessary for the report and that you keep this report and the Personal Data contained in it secure from unauthorised access, disclosure, destruction or accidental loss.

14. For Completion by Tusla Authorised Person on Receipt of Report

Report Received by			
First Name		Surname	
		Date	
Mandated Report Acknowledgement by			



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leasú agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)


First Name		Surname		Date Sent	
Authorised Person Signature*					
Date*					
Child Previously Known	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Allocated Case No					

NOTE: This form is to be used only by the Designated Child Protection Liaison Officer/Deputy Child Protection Liaison Officer for reporting an incident to TUSLA.

APPENDIX IV: CONTACT DETAILS FOR TUSLA SOCIAL WORK TEAM

Kilkenny Dedicated Contact Points

Kilkenny is located in a Tusla Area comprising of Carlow, Kilkenny and South Tipperary. The duty social work office covering Kilkenny is located in Clonmel, County Tipperary.

DISCUSS/ REPORT A CONCERN Contact details if you need to report a concern about a child or need to discuss a concern		CHILDREN FIRST INFORMATION AND ADVICE
	<p>Child and Family Agency</p> <p>Unit 9, Nutgrove Retail Park,</p> <p>Churchtown,</p> <p>Dublin 14</p> <p>01 9213400</p> <p>www.tusla.ie</p>	<p>Jan Perrin Children First Information and Advice Person, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Trinity Building, IDA Business Park, Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.</p> <p>www.tusla.ie</p>

APPENDIX V: SCHEDULE OF MANDATED PERSONS

Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 specifies the following classes of persons as Mandated Persons for the purposes of the Act:

1. Registered medical practitioner within the meaning of section 2 of the Medical Practitioners Act 2007.
2. Registered nurse or registered midwife within the meaning of section 2(1) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011.
3. Physiotherapist registered in the register of members of that profession.
4. Speech and language therapist registered in the register of members of that profession.
5. Occupational therapist registered in the register of members of that profession.
6. Registered dentist within the meaning of section 2 of the Dentists Act 1985.
7. Psychologist who practices as such and who is eligible for registration in the register (if any) of members of that profession.
8. Social care worker who practices as such and who is eligible for registration in accordance with Part 4 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 in the register of that profession.
9. **Social worker who practices as such and who is eligible for registration in accordance with Part 4 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 in the register (if any) of that profession.**
10. Emergency medical technician, paramedic and advanced paramedic registered with the Pre- Hospital Emergency Care (Establishment) Order 2000 (S.I. No. 109 of 2000).
11. Probation officer within the meaning of section 1 of the Criminal Justice (Community Service) Act 1983.
12. Teacher registered with the Teaching Council.
13. Member of An Garda Síochána.
14. Guardian ad litem appointed in accordance with section 26 of the Child Care Act 1991.
15. Person employed in any of the following capacities:
 - (a) Manager of domestic violence shelter;
 - (b) Manager of homeless provision or emergency accommodation facility;
 - (c) Manager of asylum seeker accommodation (direct provision) center;

- (d) Addiction counsellor employed by a body funded, wholly or partly, out of moneys provided by the Oireachtas;
- (e) Psychotherapist or a person providing counselling who is registered with one of the voluntary professional bodies;
- (f) Manager of a language school or other recreational school where children reside away from home;
- (g) Member of the clergy (howsoever described) or pastoral care worker (howsoever described) of a church or other religious community;
- (h) Director of any institution where a child is detained by an order of a court;
- (i) Safeguarding Officer, Child Protection Officer or other person (*howsoever described*) who is employed for the purpose of performing the child welfare and protection function of religious, sporting, recreational, cultural, educational and other bodies and organizations offering services to children;
- (j) Child care staff member employed in a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991;
- (k) Person responsible for the care or management of a youth work service within the meaning of section 2 of the Youth Work Act 2001.

Youth Worker who:

- (a) holds a professional qualification that is recognized by the National Qualifications Authority in youth work within the meaning of section 3 of the Youth Work Act 2001 or a related discipline, and
- (b) is employed in a youth work service within the meaning of section 2 of the Youth Work Act 2001.

17. Foster carer registered with the Agency.

18. A person carrying on a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991.

Details for AFCM:

Mandated Person..... Anne Iurascu. (Registered with

Mobile.....0857340862

E-mail

APPENDIX VI– RELEVANT SERVICES [SCHEDULE 1 OF THE CHILDREN FIRST ACT, 2015]

1. Any work or activity which is carried out by a person, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, children in:
 - (a) an establishment which provides early years' services within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991,
 - (b) a school or centre of education, both within the meaning of the Education Act 1998,
 - (c) any hospital, hospice, health care centre or other centre which receives, treats or otherwise provides physical or mental health services to children,
 - (d) a designated centre within the meaning of section 2 of the Health Act 2007, in so far as it relates to an institution at which residential services are provided in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991 or to children with disabilities in relation to their disabilities,
 - (e) a special care unit provided and maintained in accordance with section 23K of the Child Care Act 1991,
 - (f) a children detention school within the meaning of section 3 of the Children Act 2001,
 - (g) a reception or accommodation centre which provides residential accommodation services to applicants for asylum under contract to the Department of Justice and Equality where children may be accommodated, or
 - (h) a centre which provides residential accommodation services to victims of domestic violence where children may be accommodated.
2. Any work or activity which consists of the inspection of a service provided to a child under the Child Care Act 1991, the Education Act 1998, the Children Act 2001 or the Health Act 2007.
3. Any work or activity which consists of the inspection, examination or investigation by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children under the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002.
4. Any work or activity which consists of treatment (including assessment which may lead to treatment), therapy or counselling provided to a child.

5. Any work or activity which consists of the provision of:
 - (a) educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children,
 - (b) care or supervision of children, or
 - (c) formal consultation with, or formal participation by, a child in respect of matters that affect his or her life, whether or not for commercial or any other consideration.

6. Any work or activity which consists of the provision of services (including by means of electronic interactive necessary and regular part of which consists, mainly, of the person having access to, or contact with, children).

7. Any work or activity as a minister or priest or any other person engaged in the advancement of any religious beliefs which would or could bring that minister, priest or other person, as the case may be, into contact with a child.

8. Any work or activity as a driver of, or as an assistant to the driver, or as a conductor, or as a supervisor of children using a vehicle which is being hired or used only for the purpose of conveying children who are unaccompanied by a parent or guardian.

9. Any work or activity which is carried out by a member of An Garda Síochána, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, children.

APPENDIX VII Digital Media Consent Form



ANOINTING FIRE CATHOLIC MINISTRY

Digital Media Consent Form

ALL sections must be completed by the Parent/Guardian

AFCM , and its may communicate and engage with children and young people who are involved in AFCM activities using digital media, in line with its policy “*Working Safely with Children & Young People- Use of Information and Digital Technology*” (Jan, 2022) Parents should always be fully informed of any proposed contact via digital media, and must provide written parental consent.

SECTION A: The Organisation	
GROUP/ACTIVITY NAME	
ORGANISATION	ANOINTING FIRE CATHOLIC MINISTRY
AFCM	
LEADERS	
AUDIENCE	

SECTION B: The Young Person

NAME

ADDRESS

DATE OF BIRTH

SECTION C: Consent to Participate

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

circle) **YES** **NO**

SIGNED (PARENT/GUARDIAN)

DATE

Parent/Guardian Email Address
Parent/Guardian contact number

Insert name of Group or Activity: _____

This activity will involve contact with young people via (*tick as appropriate*):

- Text messaging
- WhatsApp
- Email
- Zoom
- Other _____(insert name)

Parents/guardians will be copied in on any contacts with the young person.

No leader will contact a young person outside what has been agreed for the purposes of the group/activity.

All members of the Youth Team have been Garda Vetted and have completed Safeguarding Training.

Teens and parents must read and agree to the Code of Conduct set out below.

Anyone who breaks the rules or acts inappropriately will be removed from the group/activity

Appendix VIII Webcams and CCTV

These guidelines for web broadcasting were developed by the Diocesan Communications Office in conjunction with AFCM Data Protection Co-ordinator.

Cameras should be installed with due care and respect to church buildings. They should not be permanent fixtures; they should be easily removable without any impact on the building.

Cameras should only be switched on for the duration of Religious Activities and switched off at the end. There should be no live streaming of Churches when there is no activity taking place.

There are a number of Data Protection issues that must be met in relation to broadcasting on the internet.

Recording people via a web camera and the subsequent displaying of such images over the internet is regarded as the processing of personal data and one of the key provisions regarding the processing of such data is that it must be done with the consent or knowledge of the individuals concerned.

Camera shots (images) of the congregation should be wide shots – minimising the possibility of easily identifying individuals with close-up images.

Signs should be placed at a range of entrances to the church and in other prominent locations informing people that web cameras are in operation.

AFCM workers and Volunteers should sign forms consenting to their image being used for web broadcasting in the course of their regular duties. Copies of consent forms should be kept on AFCM records

With regard to servers and others taking part in Liturgies (e.g. choirs, musicians, Ministers of the Word, and Eucharistic Ministers) it is advised that consent be also obtained. In the case of children, consent by parents/guardians is required.

APPENDIX IX:

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING DECLARATION FORM

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT:

AFCM is committed to a child-centred approach to our work with children in all our services and activities. We undertake to provide a safe environment where the welfare of the child is paramount.

AFCM adheres to the Children First Act, 2015 and the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 by implementing procedures covering:

- Appropriate recruitment and selection of employees and volunteers;
- Appropriate Vetting Procedures (in accordance with the National Vetting Bureau Acts, 2012 to 2016) for all relevant employees and volunteers;
- Appropriate management, supervision and training of employees, volunteers .
- Reporting and recording of concerns, incidents and accidents, complaints

that come to the attention of AFCM.

- Reporting and recording of concerns, incidents, accidents and complaints made against AFCM, employees/volunteers with AFCM.
- The confidential reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse.
- Circulation of information as considered necessary to employees, volunteers, parents/guardians and users of AFCM services.

A full copy of AFCM Policy & Procedures for the Protection & Safeguarding of Children is available on www.afcmireland.ie

I have read AFCM Policy & Procedures for the Protection & Safeguarding of Children and undertake to adhere to the contents in my work with/on behalf of AFCM .

Signed: _____

Position: _____

Organisation: _____

Date: _____

NOTE: This Declaration Form must be completed by a person or contractor engaged by AFCM for the delivery of a Relevant Service (*Appendix VI*)

APPENDIX X- DEFINITIONS

1. **Child:**
Person who has not attain 18 years of age, excluding a person who is or has been married (Child Care Act, 1991).

Child Safeguarding

A provider of a relevant service shall ensure, as far as practicable, that each child availing of the service from the provider is safe from harm while availing of that service.

2. **Employee**
Any person who works under a contract for employment. This contract maybe expressed or implied and be oral or in writing. An employee may be employed full time or part time or in a temporary capacity.

'Contract of Employment':

Contract of Employment is a contract of service or apprenticeship, or any other contract whereby an individual agrees with another person, who is carrying on the business of an employment agency within the meaning of the Employment Agency Act 1971, and is acting in the course of that business, to do or perform personally any work or service for a third person (whether or not the third person is a party to the contract), whether the contract is express or implied and, if express, whether it is oral or in writing.

3. **Mandated Person**
"Mandated Person" means a person who is a person specified in Schedule 2 of the Children First Act, 2015 [*Appendix IV*].

Relevant Employees of AFCM may include:

- (a) Social Worker who practises as such who is eligible for registration in accordance with Part 4 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 in the register (if any) of that profession.
- (b) Registered nurse or registered midwife within the meaning of section 2(1) of the Nurses and Midwives Act 2011
- (c) Teacher- registered with the Teaching Council
- (d) Youth Worker who:
 - (i) holds a professional qualification that is recognised by the National Qualifications Authority in Youth Work within the meaning of Section 3 of the Youth Work Act 2001 or related discipline, and

- (ii) is employed in a Youth Work Service within the meaning of Section 2 of the Youth Work Act 2001.

4. **Provider**

“Provider” means, in relation to a relevant service, a person:

- (a) who owns, controls or manages the service, or is otherwise responsible for the running of that service, and
- (b) who, in respect of the provision of such relevant service:
 - (i) employs (whether under contract of employment or otherwise) one or more than other person to undertake any work or activity that constitutes a relevant service,
 - (ii) enters into a contract for services with one or more than one other person for the provision by the person of a relevant service, or
 - (iii) permits one or more than one other person (whether or not for commercial or other consideration and whether or not as part of a course of education or training, including an internship scheme) to undertake any work or activity, on behalf of the person, that constitutes a relevant service.

‘Relevant Service’ as defined Children First Act, 2015

Any relevant work or activity which consists of the provision of – (a) educational, research, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to children [*Appendix VI*]

Contractor

“Contractor” means, a person(s) who is not a direct employee and provides a service on behalf of AFCM. The contractor can be an employer or a self-employed person. The service provided can be once off or provided on a long-term basis.

Concern

A “concern” within the context of this policy is defined as the knowledge or suspicion that a child is at risk of or has been subjected to abuse or neglect. Such concerns should be supported by evidence or indicators of abuse and/or neglect.”

6. **Volunteer**

Any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives. Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. This can include formal activity undertaken through public, private and voluntary organisations as well as informal community participation. (*Volunteering UK*).

