

**Parish of Blessington  
Crosschapel and  
Manor Kilbride**



**Child Protection Policy  
and  
Guidelines**



## ***Preamble***

Blessington Parish Pastoral Council carries on its business on the basis of the following Mission Statement :

*A group of people working together, reaching out in Faith and Love to all parishoners to develop and enhance pastoral well-being in an ever changing reality.*

Accordingly, the aim of this Child Protection Policy is to safeguard and protect the well-being of children and young people involved in parish activities and those who work with them.

Children and young people are involved in many and varied ways in the Church community, including Parish liturgies, children's liturgies, sacramental preparation, choirs, altar serving, schools, youth groups, play groups, scouts, guides, and sports organisations, to name but some. We will give priority to ensuring a safe environment for them at all times.

The need for the Parish to formulate and implement its own Policy of Child Protection was raised at the Parish Pastoral Council meeting early in 2005. Since then a sub-group of the Parish Pastoral Council has met on a number of occasions to draft such a policy for Blessington Parish.

This document is based on *Working with Children and Young People in the Catholic Church Community in Ireland*, prepared by a Working Group set up by the Committee on Child Protection of the Irish Catholic Bishops Conference, and adapted for our Parish needs. Account was also taken of the provisions in *Children First : National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children*, published by the Department of Health and Children.

This document has been aligned with the provisions and recommendations in *Our Children, Our Church Child protection Policies and Procedures for the Catholic Church in Ireland*, published by The Irish Bishops' Conference, The Conference of Religious in Ireland, and The Irish Missionary Union, 2005. It has also been compiled with due regard to the relevant Conclusions and Recommendations of *the Ferns Report*.

### Note :

While the current thrust of these Guidelines is directed towards children and young people, the objective is to extend and apply the Guidelines and Procedures to embrace and protect all possible vulnerable groups in the Parish (e.g. elderly, minority groups, the marginalised etc).

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**A full copy of this Policy and associated Codes and Guidelines are available on the Parish website [www.blessington.info](http://www.blessington.info)**

## Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Parish of Blessington, Crosschapel, and Manor Kilbride to comply with Statutory (Children First, 2009) and Church Guidelines (Standards and Guidance Document 2008) relating to standards for the keeping safe of all children and young adults participating in its ministry and other church-related activities. This policy includes the adoption of Codes of Good Practice and the setting up of structures and processes to ensure that these are universally applied, having due regard to the application of common sense and reasonableness at all times.

In our behaviour, attitudes, and dealings with others, we have an obligation, not least by virtue of being a follower of Christ, to show that we respect, uphold, and defend the rights, dignity, and intrinsic worth of every human being, as we are all made in the image of God.

We strive to implement the teaching of Jesus to love our neighbour as ourselves. All our parish activities are to be guided by absolute and unconditional respect for others. We believe that this especially applies to children and young people as they place their trust in the adults assigned to the parish activities in which they participate.

It is also our view that this same respect, protection, and support must also extend and equally apply to any other vulnerable groups or individuals in the Parish, for example, the elderly and the marginalised.

We believe that people working with children and young people are well and properly motivated. Nevertheless, it is both necessary and prudent to have policies and procedures in place through which children and young people, and all vulnerable groups, can be safe and, if necessary, express their concerns, confident that these concerns will be properly addressed, expedited, and resolved through the proper channels, solely with their interests in mind.

It is also fundamentally important and implicit in the application of this policy that the rights of involved adults must also be safeguarded and upheld.

The application of this Policy will be applied in Blessington Parish through the adoption of the following Codes. Included in this document are :

- Part 1 Code of Good Practice
- Part 2 Code of Behaviour for Workers and Volunteers
- Part 3 Code of Behaviour and Discipline for Children
- Part 4 Responding to Concerns and Complaints regarding Child Abuse
- Part 5 Codes for Groups using Church premises on a hired basis.

By the implementation of these Codes we commit ourselves to the safest possible practices to minimise harm or accidents happening to children and all those committed to our care.

All staff and volunteers involved with children or young people in our Parish will undertake and complete a Child Protection Training Programme as provided by the Diocesan Child Protection Service. Additionally, all parish-run institutions must have their individual Child Protection Representative.

# Part 1 Code of Good Practice

## 1.1 Parental Consent

- ∞ Signed parental consent, with contact telephone numbers, will be obtained from parents or guardians prior to the participation of children and young people in events, activities, and groups (*Appendix 1 – Parental Consent Form*). This will be updated at least annually and always where the activity requires a trip away from home.
- ∞ Establish from parents or guardians whether the child or young person has any specific dietary, medical, or special needs.

## 1.2 Record Keeping

- ∞ Record keeping will be the responsibility of the Parish Child Protection Representative (or Group) whose task is to ensure that the records required by this Code are correctly and securely gathered and maintained.
- ∞ An accurate record will be kept for each child and young person participating in activities including, but not limited to, attendance, programme details, medical information etc. *This record should include a copy of the signed parental/guardian consent form or letter.*
- ∞ A written record of organisers and supervisors in attendance at events will also be kept.
- ∞ Ensure that an *Incident Report Form* (Appendix 2) is completed in the event of an accident or incident relating to a child.
- ∞ An Annual Audit will be carried out (by the Parish Child Protection Representative (or Group)) to ensure compliance with this Code of Good Practice.

## 1.3 Code of Behaviour and Discipline for Workers

- ∞ A Code of Behaviour for workers and volunteers in regard to their work with children and young people is set out in Part 2 of this document,
- ∞ This Code will be read, understood, and signed by every worker and volunteer.

## 1.4 Code of Behaviour and Discipline for Children

- ∞ A Code of Behaviour for children and young people participating in the Parish ministry or other Church-related activities will be drawn up in consultation with children and parents. Such a Code should follow the outline described in Part 3 below and it is recommended, for practical reasons, that variations to this outline should only be considered where local circumstances can be reasonably demonstrated to require it.
- ∞ This Code should respect the dignity and rights of the child. *See Appendix 7.*
- ∞ The issue or the appropriate response to breaches of discipline and to disruptive behaviour will be covered in the Code.
- ∞ Corporal punishment of children, or any other inappropriate or improper methods, is not permitted under any circumstances.
- ∞ Parents / Guardians should at all times be aware and formally approve of their child's involvement in any Church activity (family Mass, choir, altar server etc). Ideally, a parent/guardian should always be present to meet and accompany the child from the Church premises following the activity; it is at all times the responsibility of the parent/guardian to follow this recommendation

## 1.5 Complaints Procedure

- ∞ A complaints procedure is set out in Part 4 of this document.
- ∞ Everyone involved in the Parish and its activities (workers, volunteers, children and young people, parents and guardians) should be fully informed in regard to the complaints procedure.

## 1.6 Health and Safety

- ∞ A proper level of supervision will be provided in relation to all events and activities organised for children and people (see *Appendix 3 for recommended ratios*).
- ∞ In places such as changing areas, toilets, and showers, where possible separate provision will be made for boys and girls.
- ∞ There will be adequate and gender-appropriate supervision of boys and girls in such areas.
- ∞ All buildings and/or facilities used for events and activities will be suitable, safe, and secure.
- ∞ Fire precautions will be in place and extinguishers will be checked regularly.
- ∞ A first aid kit will be readily available. This will be regularly checked and replenished. Where possible, first aid training should be provided for workers and volunteers.
- ∞ Be alert to the risk of injury involved in some contact sports, paying particular attention to the child's age and to medical condition or disability.
- ∞ Access to a telephone at all times is essential in case of emergency.
- ∞ Sufficient insurance will be obtained to cover all activities being undertaken. In cases of uncertainty about the level of cover, check with the relevant insurance provider.
- ∞ Where transport is being provided by the agency or sponsoring body, drivers and vehicles will meet legal requirements. Where transport is being hired, check with the service provider that drivers and vehicles conform legal requirements.
- ∞ Regular health and safety reviews of facilities, procedures, and practices will be carried out.

## 1.7 Trips away from Home

Trips away from home include, but are not limited to, pilgrimages, retreats, day trips, overnight stays, and holidays.

- ∞ All trips need careful advance planning including the proper provision for safety in regard to transport, facilities, activities, and emergencies. Sufficient insurance will be in place.
- ∞ Written parental consent, specifically for each trip and related activities, will be obtained well in advance. This must also include contact numbers for parents or guardians in case an emergency arises.
- ∞ A copy of the itinerary and contact telephone numbers should be made available to parents and guardians.
- ∞ There will be proper and gender-appropriate supervision for boys and girls.
- ∞ Arrangements and procedures will be put in place to ensure that rules and appropriate boundaries are maintained in the relaxed environment of trips away.
- ∞ Particular attention should be given to ensuring that the privacy of young people is respected when they are away on trips.
- ∞ Sleeping areas for boys and girls should be separate and supervised by two adults of the same sex as the group being supervised.

- ∞ At least two adults should be present in dormitories in which children or young people are sleeping. Under no circumstances should an adult share a bed with a young person. ∞
- ∞ If, in an emergency situation, an adult considers it necessary to be in a children's dormitory or bedroom without another adult they should (a) immediately inform another adult in a position of responsibility and (b) make a diary note of the circumstances.

## **1.8 Recruiting, Training, and Managing Personnel**

- ∞ Clear job descriptions, skills descriptions, and person specifications for all posts will be developed.
- ∞ All vacancies will be openly advertised.
- ∞ Application forms will be used for recruitment to all posts, including those to be filled by volunteers. Application forms will include a Declaration Form which applicants will be required to sign stating that they do not have criminal charges, cautions, or convictions against them. (*A sample Application Form for Volunteers is provided in Appendix 4 and a sample Declaration Form is provided in Appendix 5*).
- ∞ Applicants will be required to provide the names of two referees who can attest to their suitability for working with children and young people.
- ∞ Suitable applicants will be interviewed by an interview panel of at least two people with relevant competence and authority.
- ∞ Written references will be obtained in respect of all candidates being considered for appointment. All written references will be followed up by verbal contact with referees.
- ∞ All personnel . lay people, religious, and clergy . will undertake a recognised programme of child protection training. This will include refresher courses every three years.
- ∞ Up-to-date files will be kept in respect of all personnel; these will include application forms, references, and other relevant documentation.
- ∞ All personnel will be properly supported and supervised in order that issues of concern are promptly dealt with as they arise.
- ∞ All personnel procedures for priests, religious, staff, and volunteers will be reviewed at least every two years.
- ∞ All Procedures and Codes, including updates and revisions, will be date-stamped with the date on which they entered into force and the date on which the next review should be completed.
- ∞ All Procedures and Codes will be signed off by the Parish Priest and the Parish Child Protection Representative.

## **Part 2. Code of Behaviour for Workers and Volunteers**

### **2.1 General Conduct**

- ~ Treat all children and young people with respect as brothers and sisters in Christ.
- ~ Every effort should be made as far as is reasonably practicable to avoid being alone with a child or young person and activities and events should be so organized to avoid this happening and to always have two adults present. Where such a situation does arise unexpectedly, then common sense relevant to the local circumstances should prevail, particularly if more than one child or young person is present. Reasonable measures should be put in place to avoid a re-occurrence.

If a Parish worker, volunteer, or clergy should find themselves alone with a child or young person, additional to the above policy, they should inform another responsible adult, by telephone if necessary, and make a diary note that the meeting with the young person took place, including the circumstances of it.

This policy is not to stifle normal parish activity, or to place unnecessary strain and anxiety on parish workers or volunteers, or to restrict the normal work of parish clergy in the Church building should a child or young person enter.
- ~ Observe best practice in relation to travel with children and young people. Workers and volunteers should not undertake any car or minibus journey alone with a child or young person. If in certain circumstances only one adult is available, there should be a minimum of two children or young people present for the entire journey. In the event of an emergency where it is necessary to make a journey alone with a child, make a record of this and inform the child's parents or guardians as soon as possible.
- ~ Children or young people should not be permitted to work or remain in churches or parish property unless there are at least two adults present.
- ~ Favouritism is not acceptable. Be cognisant of the imbalance in power inherent in adult . child relationships.
- ~ Do not engage in or tolerate any behaviour . verbal, psychological, or physical . that could be construed as bullying.
- ~ Do not spend an unnecessarily long periods of time with any particular child or group of children.
- ~ Under no circumstances give alcohol, tobacco, or drugs to children or young people. An exception to this would apply to prescribed medication where the written consent of the parent or guardian has been obtained in advance.
- ~ Do not use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs when supervising or working with children and young people.
- ~ Use only age-appropriate language, media products, and activities when working with children and young people.
- ~ Sexually explicit or pornographic material is never appropriate.

### **2.2 Respect for Physical Integrity**

- ∞ Respect the physical integrity of children and young people at all times.
- ∞ Do not engage in inappropriate physical contact of any kind . including rough physical play, physical reprimand, and horseplay (tickling, wrestling etc).
- ∞ This should not prevent appropriate contact in situations where it is necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of a child (for example, where a child is distressed).

### **2.3 Respect for Privacy**

- ∞ Respect the privacy of children and young people at all times.
- ∞ Particular care regarding privacy will be taken when young people are in locations such as changing areas, swimming pools, showers, and toilets.
- ∞ Do not take photographs of children or young people while they are in changing areas (for example, in a locker room or bathing facility). See also section 2.8 below.
- ∞ Never do things of a personal nature (for example, helping with toileting, washing or changing clothing) for children and young people that they can do for themselves.

## **2.4 Meetings with Children and Young People**

- ∞ Arrange meetings with children and young people in consultation with their parents or guardians.
- ∞ If the pastoral care of a young person necessitates the arrangement of meeting alone with them, do not meet in isolated environments. Schedule meetings at times and at designated locations that allow for transparency and accountability (for example, rooms with a clear glass panel or window, an open door, and in rooms or areas likely to be frequented by other people).
- ∞ Limit both the length and number of such meetings.
- ∞ Inform parents or guardians that such meeting(s) have taken place, except in circumstances where to do so might place the child in danger. In the latter case, the support and presence of a member of the Designated Core Group should be obtained prior to such a meeting taking place.
- ∞ Do not encourage visits to, or conduct meetings in, private homes or personal living quarters.
- ∞ When the need for a visit to the home of a child or young person arises, professional boundaries will be observed at all times.

## **2.5 Children and People with Special Needs or Disability**

- ∞ Children and people with special needs or disability may depend on adults more than other members of the community for their care and safety, and so sensitivity and clear communication are particularly important.
- ∞ Where it is necessary to carry out tasks of a personal nature for a child or person with special needs, this should be done with their full understanding and consent, including that of parents or guardians in the case of children.
- ∞ In carrying out such personal care tasks, sensitivity must be shown to the child or person in question and such tasks should be undertaken with the utmost discretion.
- ∞ Any care task of a personal nature which can be undertaken by the individual concerned should not be undertaken by a parish worker.
- ∞ In an emergency situation where this type of help is required and necessary for the safety of a child, parents should be fully informed as soon as possible of all the circumstances relative to the event in question.

## **2.6 Vulnerable Children and other Persons**

- ∞ There are occasions where some children and adults, because of their particular circumstances, may be particularly vulnerable to suffer inappropriate behaviour on the part of others. Such vulnerable individuals may depend on adults more than other children and the general community for their care and safety, and so sensitivity and clear communication are particularly important.
- ∞ Workers should be aware that such vulnerable individuals may be more likely than others to be bullied and suffer other forms of abuse.

- ∞ It is particularly important that such children and adults should be carefully listened to, especially as they may have difficulty in expressing their concerns, and in order to ensure that the importance of what they say is not underestimated.

## **2.7 Policy on Computer Usage by Children**

There should be a clear policy within each Church organisation within the Parish on the use of computers by children, with particular regard to electronic mail and access to some types of sites on the Internet.

- Where a computer is used by more than one child or young person, to the extent practicable, each should be provided with a unique account (login username and password); where this is not possible, a signed record of the date, time, and duration of their time on the PC must be maintained.
- ∞ All computers that can be accessed by children should additionally be provided with appropriate and up-to-date content and address filtering software.
- ∞ All computers that can be accessed by children should maintain appropriate audit trails within their systems to demonstrate and support compliance with these Guidelines.
- ∞ All such computers in Church organisations should be monitored regularly to ensure compliance with these Guidelines. Should any suspicion or doubt arise, a suitably-qualified independent expert should be consulted to determine the extent, if any, of the deviation from these Guidelines. Where deviation from these Guidelines is proven, disciplinary measures in accordance with the recommendations of these Guidelines should be applied.

## **2.8 Policy on Photographs and Other Electronic Images**

A clear policy will be agreed with parents and guardians regarding the taking of photographs and the making of video recordings of children and young people taking part in Church-related activities or events.

This should also cover the generation, storage, and manipulation of computer images derived from these photographs or video recordings.

In addition, the policy should clearly state where, for what purpose, and for how long photographs and images will be displayed, particularly on the parish website.

Individual children should not be identified by name in content prepared for publication on the parish website

## Part 3. Code of Behaviour and Discipline for Children

- ∞ Overall responsibility for discipline rests with the activity leader. Each adult has responsibility within his/her group and refers disruptive child to the leader in the case of serious disruption and continuous minor disruption.
- ∞ Corporal punishment of children is not permitted under any circumstances.
- ∞ Discipline problems will be handled in partnership with parents and guardians.
- ∞ Abusive and dangerous behaviour is challenged and not allowed. The following behaviours are unacceptable for either workers or young people :

*Verbal abuse :* name calling, sarcasm, criticism, making reference to some physical characteristic, derogatory remarks and gestures.

*Bullying :* bullying can be defined as repeated aggression, be it verbal, psychological, or physical, which is conducted by an individual or group against others. Examples of bullying could include teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, and extortion. A specific anti-bullying policy should be followed by the group.

*Unwelcome behaviour* this can include favouritism, exclusion, sexual harassment or sexual innuendo, humiliating and embarrassing others, deprivation of basic rights, and harsh punishments.

- ∞ The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour and should only be carried out with another adult present :
  - ✎ Reasoning with child
  - ✎ Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
  - ✎ Referral to activity leader
  - ✎ Communication with parents
  - ✎ Suspension from activities
- ∞ A copy of the code should be given to all children and young people participating in activities and to their parents or guardians.
- ∞ Ensure that all staff and volunteers are fully conversant with the code and its application.

## Part 4. Responding to Concerns and Complaints regarding Child Abuse

*A definition of Child Abuse is given in Appendix 6.*

### 4.1 The Diocesan Designated Person

- ∞ The **Designated Person** for the Archdiocese of Dublin is the Director of the Child Protection Service.
- ∞ All child protection concerns related to the Archdiocese are to be referred to the Designated Person.
- ∞ Full confidentiality will be maintained by the Designated Person at all times.
- ∞ The name and contact details of the Designated Person must be displayed at all relevant locations within the Parish, as well as being published in the Parish Newsletter and on the Parish website. See *Appendix 8* for contact details.

### 4.2 The Parish Child Protection Group

- ∞ The Parish shall appoint a **Child Protection Group** to oversee the implementation of these Child Protection Guidelines. This group will consist of appropriate parishioners who will work with the parish team, the Deanery, and diocesan personnel.
- ∞ The role of the Child Protection Core Group will be :
  - To refer concerns about child protection to the Designated Person;
  - To act as a resource for any parishoner (worker, volunteer, child or young person, parent or guardian) who has concerns about any aspect of child protection; and
  - To support the work of all those involved in activities with young people
- ∞ It will be the responsibility of the Child Protection Group :
  - To develop and maintain procedures for the review of all procedures, records, forms and other aspects of child protection in the Parish and to carry out audits of these on an annual basis to ensure compliance with these Procedures and Codes.
  - To maintain ongoing contact with all those involved in activities with young people;
  - To ensure that first-aid boxes are accessible and replenished on a regular basis; and
  - To attend relevant training courses offered by the Archdiocese of Dublin
- ∞ The names and contact details of the Child Protection Group will be available from the Parish Office and, at the option of the member, may be displayed at all relevant locations within the Parish, as well as being published on the Parish website.
- ∞ Full confidentiality will be maintained by the Child Protection Group at all times.

### 4.3 Responsibilities of Workers and Volunteers

- ∞ Where child abuse or inappropriate behaviour is observed, to intervene immediately and provide a safe environment for the child, and
- ∞ To record and report the misconduct immediately to the Designated Person.
- ∞ Where child abuse or inappropriate behaviour is suspected, concerns should immediately be brought to the attention of the Designated Person who will, if necessary, liaise appropriately with the relevant statutory authorities.
- ∞ If a child discloses abuse to a volunteer/worker, the latter should listen attentively to the child without interrupting. They should tell the child they will try to offer support but that they have to pass on the information to the Designated Person. The volunteer/worker should immediately record the facts as they have been told and give a signed and dated copy to the Designated Person.
- ∞ Allegations made by a child should always be taken seriously and recorded.
- ∞ Where child abuse is disclosed, either by the person directly affected or by a third party, the following general guidance is suggested as to an immediate response :
  - Keep calm
  - Listen carefully, with sensitivity and openness
  - Give a clear simple explanation as to what will happen next
  - Reassure the child or young person of your support
  - Reassure the child or young person that they will be kept informed of developments
  - Record, date, and sign an account of the meeting with the child or young person as soon as possible, including the date, time, and factual details of the conversation
  - Report to the person designated to receive complaints or concerns.

Do not -

- Panic
- Delay
- Ask leading questions
- Promise to keep the disclosure secret
- Ask the child or young person to repeat the story unnecessarily
- Make a judgement about the complaint or disclosure
- Start an investigation.

### 4.4 Action in regard to a Worker or Volunteer who is the Subject of a Complaint

- ∞ If an accusation of abuse is made against a volunteer (priest/religious or lay), the Designated Person will be informed in the normal way.
- ∞ The Parish Priest will be informed as soon as possible (if the complaint is against the Parish Priest, the Designated Person will inform the Health Board as above and also the Diocesan Delegate).
- ∞ The staff member/volunteer shall withdraw from their position while investigations are taking place.

**Where abuse is suspected or disclosed the one thing you must not do is NOTHING !**

## Part 5. Codes for Groups using Parish Premises on a Hired Basis

It is the responsibility of Groups using Parish premises to ensure that :

- ∞ They have an adequate Child Protection Policy of their own in place, or, failing that, agree to use that of the Parish.
- ∞ Their policy has been provided to the Child Protection Group who will ensure that it complies with the Codes and Procedures described in this Code of Good Practice.
- ∞ They have obtained sufficient insurance to cover all activities being undertaken.
- ∞ Each group will sign an annual agreement with the Parish detailing terms and conditions of use.
- ∞ Specifically, the following written commitments must be furnished :

### Where a Group has no Child Protection Policy of its own

- Please be aware that your booking agreement is conditional upon your working within the provisions of the Child Protection Policy of the Parish, a copy of which is provided.
- Any concerns or allegations concerning the children in your care which arise during the course of your activities should be immediately communicated to our Child Protection Group.
- I have received and agree to abide by the Child Protection Policy of the Parish and further agree to show evidence of this to the Child Protection Group if requested.
- It is understood that this booking agreement may be terminated immediately in the event of failure to comply with these procedures.

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone : \_\_\_\_\_

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation : \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

### Where a Group its own Child Protection Policy

- We \_\_\_\_ (organisation) follow our own child protection procedures based on \_\_\_\_ (insert source).
- We understand that this booking agreement is conditional on us keeping to these procedures and that the agreement can be terminated should we fail to comply with them.
- We will show evidence of our compliance to the Child Protection Group if requested.
- We will inform the Child Protection Group if there are any concerns or allegations concerning the children in our care which arise during the course of our activities

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone : \_\_\_\_\_

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation : \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 1 Parental Consent Form

A copy of this Form is available to view and download from [www.blessington.info](http://www.blessington.info).

Parental Consent Form			
Name of Child :		Date of Birth :	
Address :			
Name of Parent/Guardian			
Telephone :	Home :	Work :	
	Mobile :	Emergency No.	
Activity :			
Medical Information : <i>(Parent or Guardian must complete medical section)</i>			
Name of GP : _____			
Address : _____			
_____ Tel No.: _____			
Does your child suffer from any of the following <i>(please tick)</i> :			
Asthma	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Diabetes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Epilepsy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Allergies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Special Diets : _____			
Special Needs : _____			
Other (give details) : _____			
Is your child on any medication at present ?		Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If so, give details _____			
Has your child got a Tetanus cover ?		Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Date of Cover : _____			
I hereby give my consent to my child taking part in the above activity			
Signed : _____			
Dated : _____			
I hereby give my consent to photographs (and/or video recordings) of my child being taken solely in connection with the above activity. I further understand that my child will not be personally identified in these images.			
Signed : _____			
Dated : : _____			

## Appendix 2 Incident Report Form

A copy of this Form is available to view and download from [www.blessington.info](http://www.blessington.info).

Incident Report Form	
Date of Incident :	
Name of Individual involved :	
Address :	Contact No. :
Name of Child involved :	
Address :	
Contact No. of Parent/Guardian	
Location of Incident :	
Describe Incident and Injury, if any ( <i>Give brief Objective Description – factual information only</i> )	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
Was the child referred for medical treatment? ( <i>If so, please give details and medical findings, if any</i> ).	
_____	
_____	
_____	
Witnesses to Incident :	
Name :	Contact No.:
Name :	Contact No.:
Form Completed By : _____	
Name : _____	Title _____
Signed : _____	Dated.: _____

## Appendix 3 Supervision Ratios

∞ The required ratio of staff/volunteers/leaders to children should be at least as follows :

Age	0 . 2 years	1 leader for every 3 children (1:3)
Age	2 . 3 years	1 leader for every 4 children (1:4)
Age	3 . 8 years	1 leader for every 8 children (1:8)
Age	8+ years	1 leader for the first 8 children plus 1 leader per 12 children (1:12) remaining with at least one male and one female leader.

- ∞ The overall aim is to make arrangements for the proper and safe supervision of children and young people whilst participating in parish activities and events, and there may be variations to the above ratios in specific circumstances (for example, a parish choir with one choir leader/teacher).
- ∞ Generally, there should always be more than one leader per group, irrespective of the group size. Where sufficient competent volunteers/leaders do not come forward to safely lead the group, then it should not convene.
- ∞ Where the group includes children with special needs, the above ratios must be increased to a level commensurate with best practice in these circumstances.

## Appendix 4 Staff/Volunteer Application Form (Sample)

A copy of this Form is available to view and download from [www.blessington.info](http://www.blessington.info).

### Sample Staff or Volunteer Application Form

Surname : \_\_\_\_\_

Forename : \_\_\_\_\_

Address : \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth : \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Are you : *(please tick)* :

Employed  Unemployed  Student

Homemaker  Retired  Other

Previous Work Experience

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Have you previously been involved in voluntary work Yes  No

If yes, give details

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How much time can you commit to voluntary work ? *(please tick)* :

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							

Do you have any spare time hobbies, interests, or activities

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Any other relevant information

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Please provide names and addresses of two people whom we could contact for a reference (not relatives)

1. Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Address : \_\_\_\_\_

Tel : \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Address : \_\_\_\_\_

Tel : \_\_\_\_\_

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 5 Declaration Form

(Declaration from all staff and volunteers working with children and young people)

A copy of this Form is available to view and download from [www.blessington.info](http://www.blessington.info).

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Declaration Form	
Confidential	
Surname :	Forename :
Date of Birth :	Place of Birth :
Any other name previously known as :	
Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound Over Order :	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Nature of Offence	Date of Offence
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
Signed : _____	
Date : _____	

## Appendix 6      Definition of Child Abuse

Child abuse is abuse that occurs to a person under the age of eighteen excluding a person who is or has been married. However, in the case of a married person under the age of eighteen, reports of abuse should continue to be evaluated and investigated.

There are four primary types of child abuse . neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse, and sexual abuse. A child may be subject to one or more forms of abuse at a given time.

The following definitions of child abuse are taken from *Children First: National Guidelines for the protection and Welfare of Children*.

### 1. Definition of *Neglect*

- 1.1 *Neglect* can be defined in terms of an *omission*, where the child suffers *significant harm* or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care.
- 1.2 *Harm* can be defined as the ill-treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is significant is determined by his/her health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child of similar age.
- 1.3 Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways *over a period of time* rather than at one specific point. The *threshold of significant harm* is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.

### 2. Definition of *Emotional Abuse*

- 2.1 *Emotional abuse* is normally to be found the *relationship* between the care-giver and the child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security is not met.
- 2.2 The *threshold of significant harm* is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become *typical* of the relationship between the child and the parent/carer.

### 3. Definition of *Physical Abuse*

- 1.1 Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child.

### 4. Definition of *Sexual Abuse*

- 4.1 Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.

## Appendix 7 Rights of the Child

### Summary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

#### The Preamble to the Convention

- ∞ **recalls** the basic principles of the United Nations and specific provisions to certain human rights treaties and proclamations;
- ∞ **reaffirms** the fact that children, because of their vulnerability, need special care and protection;
- ∞ **places** special emphasis on the primary caring and protective responsibility of the family, the need for legal and other protection of the child before and after birth, the importance of respect for the cultural values of the child's community, and the vital role of international cooperation in achieving the realisation of children's rights.

#### Articles of the Constitution

##### **Article 1: Definition of a Child**

Children are defined as all persons under eighteen years of age.

##### **Article 2: Non-Discrimination**

All rights in the Convention apply to all children without exception, and the State has an obligation to protect children from any form of discrimination.

##### **Article 3: Best Interests of the Child**

All actions concerning a child should take full account of his or her best interests. The State is to provide adequate care when parents or others with responsibility fail to do so.

##### **Article 4: Implementation of Rights**

The State has an obligation to translate the rights of the Convention into reality.

##### **Article 5: Parental Guidance and the Child's Evolving Capacities**

The State has a duty to respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and the wider family to provide guidance appropriate to the child's evolving capacities.

#### Every child has a right to :

- ∞ Life, survival, and development
- ∞ A name and nationality
- ∞ Preservation of identity (name, nationality, and family relations)
- ∞ Separation from parents
- ∞ Family reunification
- ∞ Have State protection against illicit transfer and non-return
- ∞ Express and opinion
- ∞ Freedom of expression

- ∞ Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion
- ∞ Freedom of association
- ∞ Protection of privacy
- ∞ Access to appropriate information
- ∞ Upbringing and development by their parents
- ∞ Protection from abuse and neglect
- ∞ Appropriate alternative family care or institutional placement
- ∞ Adoption
- ∞ Special protection if refugee
- ∞ Special care, education, and training if disabled
- ∞ Health and health services
- ∞ Periodic review of placement if in care
- ∞ Social security
- ∞ An adequate standard of living
- ∞ Education
- ∞ Enjoy own culture and use own language
- ∞ Leisure, recreation, and cultural activities
- ∞ Protection from unjust and unhealthy child labour
- ∞ Protection from illicit drugs
- ∞ Protection from sexual exploitation
- ∞ Protection from sale, trafficking, and abduction
- ∞ Protection from other forms of exploitation
- ∞ Protection from torture and deprivation of liberty
- ∞ Protection in situations of armed conflict
- ∞ Rehabilitative care
- ∞ Administration of juvenile justice.

**Prepared by the Children's Rights Alliance**

## Appendix 8 Useful Telephone Numbers

<b>Contacts</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
Dublin Diocese Designated Person (Ms Sinead McDonnell)	01-8360314 directorcps@dublindioocese.ie
Dublin Diocese Child Protection Office <a href="mailto:cps@dublindioocese.ie">cps@dublindioocese.ie</a>	01-836 0314
Blessington Garda Station	045-865 202
Garda Confidential Line	1800 666 111
Childline	1800 666 666
Health Service Executive	01-648 6500
Naas Hospital	045-849 500
National Childrens Hospital, Tallaght	01-414 2000
<b>Emergency Number</b>	<b>999</b>
<b>Emergency Number from a Mobile Phone</b>	<b>112</b>