

STANDARD 1

CREATING AND MAINTAINING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS GUIDANCE FOR INDICATOR 1.5

1.5A Guidance on External Groups who Use Church Property

It is a requirement that all groups working with children in the Church body and/or using facilities owned by the Church body are insured, and that they have a child safeguarding policy in place.

The general principle is that the obligation to comply with requirements relating to insurance and child safeguarding rests with the group using Church property, and not with the Church body.

1. It is the responsibility of any group using Church property to run activities involving children to ensure that they comply with all applicable child safeguarding and protection legislation and guidelines.
2. The group should have their own child safeguarding policy and procedures. The group is also responsible for liaising with Tusla/HSCT (Health and Social Care Trust) (as appropriate), to ensure that the policy and procedures meet the statutory requirements.
3. The group should have appropriate insurance for the activity they are running.
4. The Church body should at no stage assist any outside group in developing a child safeguarding policy.
5. The Church body should have confirmation in writing from the group that they have a child safeguarding policy in place. It is not the role of the Church body to validate the adequacy of the policy; that is the responsibility of Tusla/HSCT.
6. If the group does not have a child safeguarding policy then it is up to the Church authority to decide whether to let the group use the property. If the Church authority thinks it is appropriate they should issue a letter to the leader of the visiting group stating that while on their property full responsibility and liability for ensuring the safety of the children rests with the leader.
7. The Church body should have confirmation in writing from the group that they have appropriate insurance in place, which includes the following:
 - The name of their insurers;
 - The policy number;
 - The period of cover of the policy;
 - The limit of indemnity.

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External organisations that offer advice and support regarding child safeguarding policies

The following organisations may prove helpful in providing training and assisting external groups to create their own safeguarding policy.

Republic of Ireland

- Tusla Information and Advice Officers <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/roles-and-responsibilities/organisations/children-first-training>
- Barnardos <http://www.barnardos.ie/what-we-do/training/training-and-consultancy.html>
- National Youth Council of Ireland <http://www.nycitraining.org>
- Dublin Rape Crisis Centre <http://www.drcc.ie/training-and-development/>

Northern Ireland

- Children in Northern Ireland <http://www.ci-ni.org.uk/training-schedule>
- Youth Action Northern Ireland <http://www.youthaction.org/dynamic/programmemain.aspx?Author=TR&prog=101&ParCat=22&pid=5>
- NSPCC <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-expert-training/introduction-child-protection-training/>

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1.5A Template 1: Form for Use of Church Property by External Groups

As _____ (insert name of Church body), we welcome other organisations/groups/ individuals within the community using our facilities. While using the diocesan/order's facilities, we want to be assured that all reasonable steps have been taken to safeguard children⁷ and young people. The responsibility for complying with good safeguarding practice (including safe recruitment and vetting) rests with the group using Church property and not with the Church body.

The _____ (insert name of Church body) has its own policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding children. Any group operating under the name/auspice of the Church body will comply with these requirements.

As an outside body, the Church body requires detailed information in respect of your application to ensure that the safety and well-being of the children, young people and adults that work with them are maintained at all times.

Conditions of use of Church property by outside bodies:

1. It is the responsibility of any group using Church property to run activities involving children to ensure that they comply with all applicable child safeguarding and protection legislation and guidelines.
2. The group should have their own child safeguarding policy and procedures. The group is also responsible for liaising with Tusla/HSCT to ensure that the policy and procedures meet the statutory requirements. The Church body cannot assist any outside group in developing a child safeguarding policy.
3. The Church body should obtain confirmation in writing from the group that they have a child safeguarding policy and appropriate insurance.

We would ask that you complete the following questionnaire. If any response is not applicable (N/A), please provide details of why this does not apply to your organisation.

If you feel your application requires further information, please attach on an additional page. Please indicate when additional information is provided in support of your application.

⁷ The term 'child' refers to a person under the age of eighteen years.

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Name of group/organisation _____

Purpose or proposed activities _____

User group, e.g. children, adults _____

Facilities required _____

Date of commencement of use _____

Date of completion of use _____

Frequency of use _____

Hours of use:

(1) Commence at _____ (a.m./p.m.)

(2) Finish at _____ (a.m./p.m.)

Names and addresses of persons who will be in charge during use:

(1) _____

Telephone number _____

(2) _____

Telephone number _____

Do you have your own child safeguarding policy and procedures? Yes No

Do you have appropriate (public liability and/or employer's liability and professional indemnity if appropriate) insurance cover for the activity? Yes No

Name of insurance company _____

Policy number _____

Period of cover _____

Limit of indemnity _____

To be signed by official/coordinator of the organisation/group.

Signed _____

Print name _____

Position _____

Date _____

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1.5B Guidance on Church Property and Hire for Private Functions

Individual adults (parents/guardians/family members) approaching the parish priest/local superior to use Church property for a private function do not meet the requirement for vetting by the Church authority.

All parish/congregations are insured to cover one-off private events, and it is the sole responsibility of the parents/guardians to organise and supervise all children attending. As such, they are not required to confirm in writing that they have a safeguarding policy or appropriate insurance.

However, as a matter of good practice, each parish priest/local superior should ensure that key health and safety measures are covered prior to agreeing the property for use. For example, it would be good practice to draw up an agreement with a potential user (e.g. in the case of a child's private birthday party), highlighting the terms and conditions for the use of the Church property, which should include:

- That the Church body will ensure the property is safe to use, including how accidents resulting from the condition of the property should be reported;
- That the Church body is not responsible for the organisation, supervision or conduct of the children or adults involved in the event;
- That the safeguarding policy of the Church body does not apply to the private party, and, as such, all safeguards are the responsibility of the organiser of the event and not the Church body.

What is excluded as part of this guidance

This guidance is specifically for events that involve children, and is not designed for non-child-related events. Additionally, this guidance does not cover the following situations:

- Ministry with children that is organised by the Church body as part of sacramental celebrations (for example a Communion/Confirmation celebration involving a number of children). In these situations, the responsibility for safeguarding rests with the Church body;
- Use of Church property for other parish-related or community-related activities such as funeral receptions and other such activities, which fall outside the remit of safeguarding children;
- Schools using Church property for sacramental celebrations. In these situations it is advisable that the school and the Church body agree who is responsible for safeguarding using Guidance 2.1J.