



103 Child Protection Policy for Girls Friendly Society in Ireland

1. The Girls Friendly Society in Ireland (GFS) Child Protection Policy Statement is underpinned by the Church of Ireland Safeguarding Trust.
2. **Policy Statement**
“This policy sets the standards for the **welfare of all children** sharing in its ministry with a view to **protecting** them from physical, sexual and emotional harm”.
Extract taken from Safeguarding Trust which is approved by the Standing Committee of the Church of Ireland for use in the Republic of Ireland 2008.
3. **The Purpose of the code of good practice**
Safeguarding Trust: the Church of Ireland Code of Good Practice for Ministry with Children is designed to enable all parties within the Church of Ireland to fulfil their proper responsibilities within this ministry.
 - To create a safe environment which will promote healthy and fulfilling participation of children and young people in educational and recreational activities and minimise the possibility of harm, either deliberate or accidental.
 - To encourage safe practices for those who work with children
 - To set the appropriate responses and procedures in the event of abuse taking place
 - To safeguard those who work with children from the consequences of unfounded accusations.
4. **Definitions used in the Safeguarding Trust document**
The following are some definitions:
 - “Child” means a person under 18 years of age excluding a person who is or has been married. The term young person is used where the context is appropriate but still with reference to an individual under 18 years.
 - “Children First” refers to the National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children issued by the Department of Health & Children 1999.
 - “The Code” is used as a synonym for Safeguarding Trust: the Church of Ireland Code of Good Practice for Ministry with Children.
 - “Worker/s” means clergy, teachers, children’s and youth group leaders, uniformed organisation leaders – in fact all who, at times, share in the church’s ministry with children.
 - “The Panel” means the parish representatives appointed to oversee the implementation and use of Safeguarding Trust: the Church of Ireland Code of Good Practice for Ministry with Children in the parish or those appointed to discharge the same function at diocesan or central events.
 - “Parish” means a sole parish, group or union of parishes.
 - “The 1998 Act” refers to the Protection for Persons Reporting child abuse Act 1998.
 - “Statutory Authorities” refers to the Health Service Executive (HSE) which is the statutory body responsible for the safety and welfare of children (formerly the Health Boards) and to the Garda Siochana who are empowered under legislation to investigate these matters.



103 Child Protection Policy for Girls Friendly Society in Ireland

5. Principles of good practice

Clergy, staff and volunteers working within the Church of Ireland's ministry with children are committed to practice which promotes the welfare of children and protects them from harm. The policy procedures and practices will be reviewed at regular intervals, at least every three years.

In its ministry with children the Church of Ireland will endeavour to safeguard children by:

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

6. **If you require any additional information, please contact:**

Girls Friendly Society in Ireland
36 Upper Leeson Street
Dublin 4

Telephone/Fax : 00353 1 6603754
Email: office@girlsfriendlysociety.ie
www.girlsfriendlysociety.ie