



**ORDER OF MALTA  
IRELAND**

# **Child Safeguarding Statement & Policy**

V5 – Updated April 2024

## Services we provide.

- Community Care,
- First Aid and Ambulance Services
- Nursing Services,
- Cadets - Youth programmes from 10 to 16 years. Cadet units provide first aid training, achievement programmes and fun activities through weekly meetings. We also provide days out and overnight trips away for our young people.
- Training in Pre-hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) approved courses,

## Principles to safeguard children from harm.

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- The best interests of the child should be paramount.
- Parents have a right to respect and should be involved in matters that concern their child.
- We are committed to upholding the rights of all children, including the right to be kept safe and protected from harm.
- We are committed to listening to the voice of the child and ensuring they are consulted in matters that may affect them.
- Ensure policies and procedures are in place to ensure children are safe when availing of our services.

## Risk Assessment

	Risks identified	Procedures in place to manage risk identified
1.	Risk of harm to a child from a volunteer / staff member	Recruitment procedure including National Vetting policy. Reporting procedures Mandatory training of all volunteers and staff – Child Protection Awareness Programme Codes of Behaviour
2.	Risk of harm of a child by a visitor/contractor in the service.	Supervision by vetted and trained youth leaders as per organisation's Safeguarding Policy Guidance re Cadets on Duty
3.	Risk of harm (as defined in the CFA 2015) of a child on outings by a member of staff/volunteer/peer.	Code of Behaviour Ratios of trained leaders providing supervision to children as per guidance Procedures on working safely with children Procedure for travelling with cadets

4.	Risk of harm of bullying of a child by a member of staff/volunteer/peer	Respect and Dignity Policy Anti-bullying training for youth leaders
5.	Risk of harm of a child from unauthorised photography	Social Media Policy Parental consent prior to publishing any photographs.
6.	Risk of harm of a child from online abuse through social media or internet access	Acceptable Usage Policy Social Media Policy Safeguarding policy
7.	Risk of harm to a child through an online service during Covid-19	Adherence to government guidelines Internal IT guidance Parental consent prior to any interactions via ICT for remote meetings etc.
8.	Risk of harm to child availing of our First Aid Services	Medications Policy Fitness to Practice Policy Privileging Policy National Vetting Policy

## Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the *Children First Guidance*, and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A guide for policy, Procedure and Practice* and also Children (NI) Order 1995 In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures are in place.

- Guidance for dealing with allegations of abuse or misconduct against volunteers/ workers, of a child availing of our service.
- Safe Recruitment Process
- Mandatory Safeguarding Training Programme
- Guidance on Reporting of child protection and welfare concerns to the Statutory Authorities as defined by current legislation.

## Mandated Persons

List of mandated persons can be made available on request from Brian Power at [brian.power@orderofmalta.ie](mailto:brian.power@orderofmalta.ie)

This includes all our Doctors, Nurses, Paramedics, Advanced Paramedics and EMTs on their respective registers, as well as paid employees in our Headquarters.

## Implementation

We recognise the implementation is an ongoing process. Order of Malta Ireland is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our services, both as members and users of its services. This statement will be displayed in all our premises and any locations where we provide a service, as well as being available on our website.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed by April 2026 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

If you have any questions in respect of this statement, please contact our Relevant Person

<b>Relevant Person</b> – Catherine Purcell – National Safeguarding Officer. Catherine.purcell@orderofmalta.ie
<b>Designated Liaison Persons / DLPs - 086 – 6212026</b>
Catherine Purcell / Jeanette Wright / Aine Mc Anulla

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## Contents

Contents .....	1
1. INTRODUCTION & IMPLEMENTATION .....	3
2. DECLARATION OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES .....	3
3. MISSION STATEMENT .....	4
4. RELEVANT PERSON .....	4
5. DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSONS (DLPs).....	5
6. MANDATED PERSONS – Ireland.....	6
7. CONFIDENTIALITY .....	6
8. RECORD KEEPING / INFORMATION SHARING.....	6
9. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE AND HOW TO RECOGNISE.....	7
9.1. Neglect .....	8
9.2. Emotional abuse .....	8
9.3. Physical abuse .....	9
9.4. Sexual abuse .....	10
9.5. Circumstances which may make children more vulnerable to harm: .....	11
10. PEER ABUSE .....	12
11. BULLYING .....	12
12. REASONABLE GROUNDS FOR CONCERN .....	13
13. REPORTING PROCEDURES .....	13
13.1. DEALING WITH DISCLOSURE FROM CHILD.....	13
13.2. REPORTING YOUR CONCERNS .....	14
13.3. REPORTING YOUR CONCERNS - Northern Ireland .....	15
13.4. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST A MEMBER – Both jurisdictions .....	15
13.5. MANDATED PERSON - REPORTING MANDATED CONCERNS – Ireland.....	16
13.6. Retrospective Disclosures.....	17
14. WORKING SAFELY WITH CHILDREN.....	17
14.1. CODE OF BEHAVIOUR .....	17
14.2. SAFE RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES FOR VOLUNTEERS AND YOUTH LEADERS. ....	18

14.3. Vetting Process .....	19
14.4 Communicating with Cadets and Young members online (including during Covid-19 or any other similar restrictions). .....	19
<b>Appendix 1 – Contact Details .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Appendix 2 – Relevant Legislation.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Appendix 3 – Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 specifies the following classes of persons as Mandated persons for the purposes of the Act. ....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Appendix 4 – Cadet Leader Application Form .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Appendix 5 – Youth Leadership Warrant Application.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Appendix 6 – Managing Cadet Trips Away - Guidance.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Appendix 7 – Communicating with Cadets - Guidance .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Appendix 8 – Guidance for mandated persons .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Appendix 9 – Useful Reference links.....</b>	<b>39</b>

## **1. INTRODUCTION & IMPLEMENTATION**

This document sets out the policies and procedures and guidelines which are adopted by Order of Malta Ireland to ensure protection of children and young people whether they are members of Order of Malta Ireland or not. The policy applies to all volunteer members of Order of Malta Ireland - Ambulance Corps, the Irish Association of the Order of Malta, and its associated projects, and staff at Order of Malta Ireland.

This policy will be reviewed at least bi-annually, sooner if there are any material changes to legislation or organisational changes which may affect the information contained herein. The next review is due no later than January 2024.

While legislation differs between the Ireland and Northern Ireland these guidelines are aimed to cover all 32 counties with differences in reporting procedures noted.

All procedures for Ireland are in line with Children First National Guidance 2017 and Children First Act 2015. As a 32 county organisation, all procedures in Northern Ireland are in line with the Safeguarding Board Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

A copy of this policy is available on our National Website, on Moodle and is to be made available to all parents of cadets on request.

## **2. DECLARATION OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Here at Order of Malta we provide the following services to children/young people:  
We provide the following services/activities.

1. Provider of Community Care,
2. First Aid and pre-hospital services
3. Nursing Services,
4. Youth development – through our Cadet programmes
5. Training in Pre-hospital Emergency Care Council approved courses.

We believe that:

1. Our priority to ensure the welfare and safety of every child and young person who attends our service is paramount.
2. Our guiding principles and procedures to safeguard children and young people reflect National policy and legislation and we will review our guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures every two years.
3. All children and young people have an equal right to attend a service that respects them as individuals and encourages them to reach their potential, regardless of their background.

4. We are committed to upholding the rights of every child and young person who attends our service, including the rights to be kept safe and protected from harm, listened to and heard.

5. Our guiding principles apply to everyone in our organisation.

6. Workers/volunteers must conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of our organisation.

We promote a partnership approach between our senior members and young people to support these young people in learning valuable skills, gaining external qualifications and making positive for the future with employment opportunities gained from courses taught.

Our organisation believes that the best interests of children and young people attending our services are paramount.

### **3. MISSION STATEMENT**

Inspired by a Christian ethos, to make a positive contribution to our communities by training and mobilising a network of dedicated volunteers who care for the vulnerable and disadvantaged: the sick and the poor and all who may benefit from our community care initiatives, first aid and youth services, and specialist professional training programmes.

We want the community and all our stakeholders to have the highest possible level of trust and confidence in the integrity, quality and efficiency of our operations and in our contribution to the provision of First Aid and Community Care, Training and Youth Services.

### **4. RELEVANT PERSON**

This person who is appointed by the Board of Order of Malta Ireland, is the first point of contact in relation to the Child Safeguarding Statement.

They are responsible, with the approval of the Board, for leading the development of guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures and for ensuring that policies and procedures are consistent with best practice as per relevant guidance and legislation. They shall liaise with all key workers and volunteers who have relevant roles and responsibilities. They may also assist with the review process.

**CONTACT DETAILS - Comdr. Catherine Purcell –**  
[catherine.purcell@orderofmalta.ie](mailto:catherine.purcell@orderofmalta.ie)



## **5. DESIGNATED LIAISON PERSONS (DLPs)**

These persons will liaise with statutory agencies responsible for Child Protection and Welfare and will be the resource person to any worker or volunteer who has child protection concerns.

The main responsibilities of our Designated Liaison Persons are as follows.

- Be fully familiar with our organisation's duties in relation to the safeguarding of children.
- Have good knowledge of our organisation's guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures.
- Ensure that Order of Malta reporting procedure is followed, so that child protection and welfare concerns are referred promptly to Tusla or Social Services in Northern Ireland.
- Receive child protection and welfare concerns from workers and volunteers and consider if reasonable grounds for reporting to Tusla/Social Services exist.
- Consult informally with a Tusla/Social Services Duty Social Worker if necessary.
- Where appropriate, make a formal report of a child protection or welfare concern to Tusla/Social Services on behalf of Order of Malta, using the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form.
- Provide guidance to members around informing the child's parents/guardians when a report is being submitted to Tusla or An Garda Síochána, or Social Service or PSNI in Northern Ireland
- Record all concerns or allegations of child abuse brought to your attention as well as any action/inaction taken in response to these concerns.
- Provide feedback to the referrer, as appropriate.
- In conjunction with CEO, ensure that a secure system is in place to manage confidential records.
- Act as a liaison with Tusla/Social Services and An Garda Síochána/PSNI, as appropriate.
- Where requested, jointly report with a mandated person.
- To undertake any training required of them in the role.
- To work with mandated persons in organisation to ensure copies of all reports to Tusla are sent to her and subsequently retained in central secure location in Headquarters.

**Name of DLPs** – Catherine Purcell / Jeanette Wright

**Contact Number** – 087-6212026

**DLP Northern Ireland** Áine Mc Anulla

**Northern Ireland Contact number** 073-79257308

**Contact email address** – [dlp@orderofmalta.ie](mailto:dlp@orderofmalta.ie)

## **6. MANDATED PERSONS – Ireland**

Under Children First Act 2015, mandated persons have a statutory obligation to report concerns which meet a particular threshold and to cooperate with Tusla in the assessment of mandated reports, where requested to do so. (See Appendix 3)

Order of Malta Ireland have taken the decision that mandated persons will make joint reports with the DLP. This does not mean that they can discharge their statutory responsibility to report by reporting to another person.

All paid employees are mandated persons in respect of Schedule 2 of the Act. Within Order of Malta, while our Doctors, Nurses, Paramedics, Advanced Paramedics and EMTs operate as volunteers, they operate according to their respective registers, and so therefore are also mandated persons.

The organisation's list of mandated persons is retained by the Assistant National Director for Clinical Governance, Brian Power. Email [brian.power@orderofmalta.ie](mailto:brian.power@orderofmalta.ie)

## **7. CONFIDENTIALITY**

When Child Protection and welfare concerns arise, information must only be shared on a need-to-know basis in the best interest of the child.

It is important that when a child discloses, they understand that it cannot be kept secret but will only be shared with people who can help them.

Parents and children have a right to know if personal information is being shared, or if a report is being made to Tusla, unless doing so puts the child at further risk.

## **8. RECORD KEEPING / INFORMATION SHARING**

- We will ensure records will be factual and include details of contacts, consultations and any attempted communications and actions taken.
- We will share records with Tusla/Social Services where a child protection or welfare issue arises.
- We will ensure that records on child protection concerns, allegations and disclosures are kept securely and safely within the organisation.
- We will ensure that records will only be used for the purpose for which they are intended.
- We will ensure that records will only be shared on a need-to-know basis in the best interests of the child/young person.
- Records will be held confidentially under the custody of the Chief Executive Officer at our National Headquarters. The CEO will be responsible for sharing with the relevant authorities (Tusla / Social Services / Gardaí /PSNI) as the need arises.

- All records will be held in line with our obligations under General Data Protection Regulation.
- If records of child protection or welfare concerns are stored separately to our 'master' file in Headquarters, the 'master' file must indicate that another file exists and where it can be accessed.
- Records will be held in accordance with our Data Protection Policy enforced at the time.
- Child protection records will be updated as appropriate and reviewed at least every two years by the Designated Liaison Person and Relevant person jointly.

ROI - As an organisation with a number of mandated persons, we are committed to sharing information as appropriate at formal child protection and welfare meetings as organised by Tusla.

## **9. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE AND HOW TO RECOGNISE**

In Ireland, the Childcare Act 1991 defines a child as: Any person under the age of 18 years, other than a person who is or who has been married.

However, from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019, the legal age requirement for marriage is 18 years. This is the case even if you marry outside of Ireland. It is no longer possible to get a Court Exemption Order allowing a marriage to proceed if one or both parties are under 18 years.

Accordingly, anyone under the age of eighteen is a child, with no exemptions anymore for marriage to take place.

Child abuse can be categorised into four different 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, you should consider it a child welfare and protection issue for both children, and you should follow child protection procedures for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

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

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. Please note that the list of features of abuse listed underneath are not exhaustive, and absence of these signs does not indicate that abuse has not occurred.

## 9.1. Neglect

Child neglect is the most frequently reported 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 or supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. 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.

Poverty does not equal to neglect, but can be associated with neglect, which is also strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental illness and disability.

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. This may become apparent where you see the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.

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., a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also 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 adequate 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

## 9.2. 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.

The following is a list of features of emotional abuse, which is not exhaustive, and absence of these signs does not indicate that abuse has not occurred

- 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 depends on his or her behaviours or actions.
- Extreme overprotectiveness
- 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.

### 9.3. 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.

The following is a list of features of physical abuse, which is not exhaustive, and absence of these signs does not indicate that abuse has not occurred.

- 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 the 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.

#### 9.4. 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 mainly 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.

It should be noted that the legal age of consent in Ireland is 17 years of age. (regardless of gender). It is 16 years in Northern Ireland. It is an offence for a person in a position of authority to engage or attempt to engage in a sexual act with a child under 18 years of age.

Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 in Ireland is illegal. However, in specific circumstances it may not necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse.

**\*\*It should be remembered that sexual activity involving a young person may be sexual abuse even if the young person concerned does not themselves recognise it as abusive\*\*.**

An Garda Síochána will deal with any criminal aspects of a sexual abuse case under the relevant criminal justice legislation. 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.

Within Ireland - In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in 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. Details on exemptions for mandated reporting of certain cases of underage consensual sexual activity can be found in page 23 of Children First: National Guidance 2017

- Note \*\* Age of consent in Northern Ireland is 16 years old.

The following lists the features of sexual abuse, which is not exhaustive, and absence of these signs does not indicate that abuse has not occurred.

- Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child.
- An invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of a child's body whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification.
- Masturbation in the presence of a child or the involvement of a child in an act of masturbation
- Sexual intercourse with a child, whether oral, vaginal, or anal
- Sexual exploitation of a child, which includes:
  - Inviting, inducing, or coercing a child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography [for example, exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification, or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means]
  - Inviting, coercing or inducing a child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent or obscene act.
  - Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse.
- Exposing a child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person.

#### 9.5. Circumstances which may make children more vulnerable to harm:

If you are dealing with children, you need to be alert to the possibility that a welfare or protection concern may arise in relation to children you come in contact with. A child needs to have someone they can trust in order to feel able to disclose abuse they may be experiencing. They need to know that they will be believed and will get the help they need. Without these things, they may be vulnerable to continuing abuse.

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. Also, there may be particular times or circumstances when a child may be more vulnerable to abuse in their lives. In particular, children with disabilities, children with communication difficulties, children in care or living away from home, or children with a parent or parents with problems in their own lives may be more susceptible to harm.

You should consider these factors as part of being alert to the possibility that a child may be at risk of suffering abuse and in bringing reasonable concerns to the attention of Tusla.

## **10. PEER ABUSE**

In a situation where child abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, the child protection procedures should be adhered to for both the victim and the alleged abuser; that is, it should be considered a child care and protection issue for both children.

If there is any conflict of interest between the welfare of the alleged abuser and the victim, the victim's welfare is of paramount importance.

Abusive behaviour which is perpetrated by children must be taken seriously and it is important that such cases are referred to Tusla. It is known that some adult abusers begin abusing during childhood and adolescence, that significant numbers will have suffered abuse themselves and that the abuse is likely to become progressively more serious. Early referral and intervention are therefore essential.

Children who are abusive towards other children require comprehensive assessment and therapeutic intervention by skilled childcare professionals. Treatment is more likely to be effective if begun early in the child's life.

## **11. BULLYING**

It is recognised that 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 is 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. These include 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 among children with special educational needs. This is particularly so among 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 since children spend a significant portion of their time there and are in large social groups. Sometimes this may expand into organisations such as us. In the first instance, the school authorities are responsible for dealing with such bullying. School management boards must have a code of behaviour and an anti-bullying policy in place. In cases of serious instances of bullying where the behaviour is regarded as possibly abusive, you may need to make a referral to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána.

## **12. REASONABLE GROUNDS FOR CONCERN**

Our organisation will always, through our Designated Liaison Person Team (DLP), inform Tusla/Social Services when there are **reasonable grounds for concern** that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. If you ignore what may be symptoms of abuse, and do not refer it to the DLP, it could result in ongoing harm to the child. It is not necessary for the organisation to prove that abuse has occurred to report a concern. All that is required is that we, as an organisation have reasonable grounds for concern. It is Tusla's / Social Services' role to assess concerns that are reported to them. If a report is made on the organisation's behalf by our DLP, we can be assured that the information provided will be carefully considered with any other information available and a child protection assessment will be carried out by Tusla /Social Services where sufficient risk is identified.

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way.
- Any concern about 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.

## **13. REPORTING PROCEDURES**

### **13.1. DEALING WITH DISCLOSURE FROM CHILD**

You should deal with disclosures of abuse sensitively and professionally. The following approach is suggested as best practice for dealing with these disclosures.

- React calmly.
- Listen carefully and attentively.
- Take the child seriously.
- Reassure the child that they have taken the right action in talking to you.
- Do not promise to keep anything secret.
- Ask questions for clarification only.

- Do not ask leading questions.
- Check back with the child that what you have heard is correct and understood.
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser.
- Ensure that the child understands the procedures that will follow.
- Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible.
- Treat the information confidentially, subject to the requirements of the National Guidance and legislation.

### 13.2. REPORTING YOUR CONCERNS

Within Order of Malta, we all have responsibility to report any concerns we may have in respect of Child Protection. Following on from **disclosure from a child** or **concerns from your observations** the following are the steps to be followed by all members, both mandated and non-mandated –

- Contact Designated Liaison Person without delay on **087 – 6212026**.
- If you are unsure if a formal report should be made
  - Contact DLP who can guide you further, or
  - Call your local Tusla Duty Social Worker who can provide some guidance. - <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/contact/>
  - In Northern Ireland contact local social services - <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/%5Bcurrent-domain%3Amachine-name%5D/gateway-service-teams-contact-details.pdf>
- If you cannot make contact with DLP, and you deem child is at immediate risk, make contact directly with your local Tusla Duty team or An Garda Siochana if Out of Office Hours
- DLP will then guide you through the process of completion of Child Protection and Welfare Report Form (CPWRF) and submission of same. The appropriate method of reporting allegations is via Tusla Web Portal. Further guidance on this can be found on Tusla website - <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/web-portal/>
- It is good practice that parents should be informed that a report is to be made to Tusla / Social Services, unless doing so would put the child, the investigation or yourself at further risk.
- DLP will liaise with authorities as well as the management of Ambulance Corps / Order of Malta Ireland as appropriate.
- In order to maintain the confidentiality of the process, it must only be shared on a “need to know” basis and not discussed among peers.
- If you are a mandated person, a joint report with the DLP is best practice to allow the DLP to follow up as required. If you are unable to make contact with a DLP, follow the procedure for mandated persons (Appendix 8) sending a copy of your report, marked Strictly Private & Confidential to the Designated Liaison Person c/o St John’s House, 32 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.
- The **Data Protection Act 2018** and the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR) do not prevent the sharing of information on a reasonable and proportionate basis for the purpose of child protection. While confidentiality is

a very important issue for all workers and volunteers working with children and families, the welfare of the child must come first. Fears about sharing information must **not** get in the way of promoting the welfare and protection of children.

### **13.3. REPORTING YOUR CONCERNS - Northern Ireland**

- Contact Designated Liaison Person without delay on **+353 87 6212026**.
- If you are unsure if a formal report should be made
  - Contact DLP who can guide you further, or
  - Contact local social services who can provide some guidance-  
<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/%5Bcurrent-domain%3Amachine-name%5D/gateway-service-teams-contact-details.pdf>
- If you cannot make contact with DLP, and you deem child is it immediate risk, make contact directly with your local Social Services team or PSNI if Out of Office Hours
- DLP will then guide you through the process of completion of Report form and submission of same.
- It is good practice that parents should be informed that a report is to be made to Social Services, unless doing so would put the child at further risk.
- DLP will liaise with authorities as well as the management of Ambulance Corps / Order of Malta Ireland as appropriate
- In order to maintain the confidentiality of the process, it must only be shared on a “need to know” basis and not discussed among peers.

### **13.4. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST A MEMBER – Both jurisdictions**

An allegation of abuse may relate to a person who works with children who,

- Behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child /young person.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence in relation to a child / young person.
- Behaved towards a child / young person in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child/young person.
- Behaved in a way that is contrary to our code of behaviour.
- Behaved in a way that is contrary to professional practice guidelines.

The priority for Order of Malta Ireland is to protect the child/young person while taking account of the volunteer / worker’s right to due process.

The Designated Liaison Person has responsibility for dealing with the child protection reporting procedure while the National Director / CEO will manage procedures relating to the alleged person’s membership / employment.

- When an allegation is made against a volunteer / employee, a quick resolution will be sought for the benefit of all concerned.
- It is Order of Malta Policy to suspend, pending investigation, any member where an allegation has been made to protect the child, the organisation and the person accused from further allegations.

- The member against whom the allegation is being made will be appointed a link person within the DLP team.
- All stages of the process will be recorded.
- Any actions or internal investigations will not prejudice or compromise the statutory investigations or assessment.
- Close liaison will be maintained between Order of Malta and Tusla/Social Services and An Garda Síochána / PSNI when appropriate

## **REPORTING PROCEDURE**

If any member is made aware of an **allegation against a member of Order of Malta**, the following steps are to be followed.

- Contact the DLP
  - DLP will inform National Director when appropriate.
- If you cannot make contact with the DLP, speak with Officer in Charge / Regional Director.
- If the behaviour is deemed to be behavioural and not a child protection issue, then complaint will follow the Order of Malta Complaints and Investigations Policy and Procedures.
- If it is deemed to be a Child protection issue DLP will liaise between complainant and/or reporter and the authorities.
- National Director/CEO will manage internal procedures in respect of person subject to allegation of abuse, namely volunteer / employee.

**NOTE** - If you have reasonable grounds for concern in respect of a colleague's practices in relation to children and young people, it is the responsibility of all workers and volunteers to advise the DLP of their concerns.

### **13.5. MANDATED PERSON - REPORTING MANDATED CONCERNS – Ireland**

Criteria for reporting: definitions and thresholds

Under the Children First Act 2017, as a mandated person, under the legislation you 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. Within Order of Malta this reporting will be done jointly with the DLP. If the matter is urgent, report and then forward a copy of report to the DLP.

For further guidance contact the DLP or Tusla who can guide you on it a matter reaches the threshold of harm for reporting.

#### **IMPORTANT -**

- In the event of emergency, where you think a child is in immediate danger and you cannot contact DLP or Tusla/Social Services, you should contact the Gardaí /PSNI without delay.
- All concerns and disclosures are recorded and held securely in headquarters.
- Potential risks to unidentifiable children should also be reported.

### **13.6. Retrospective Disclosures**

Some adults may disclose abuse that took place during their childhood. Such disclosures may come to light when an adult attends counselling or is being treated for a psychiatric or health problem. If you, while working with Order of Malta, receive a disclosure from a person that they were abused as a child, you should report this information to the DLP team. These concerns will be reported to Tusla/Social Services, as the alleged abuser may pose a current risk to children.

[Retrospective Abuse Report Form \(RARF\)](#) to be used in this instance. This is also available through [www.portal.tusla.ie](http://www.portal.tusla.ie)

## **14. WORKING SAFELY WITH CHILDREN**

### **14.1. CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

All Order of Malta members have a responsibility to protect and promote Young People's rights in the following ways:

- Treat them with dignity, sensitivity, and respect in a safe fun environment.
- Ensure all adult members complete the four-hour Child Protection Awareness Programme, and any updates as required.
- Ensure that Cadets and all Senior Members understand and sign the relevant Code of Conduct.
- Encourage young people to have an input into the running of the Organisation.
- Adhere to all policies and procedures which assist us in working safely with young people.
- Ratios – recommended ratios when working with cadets is 8 cadets per leader, ensuring male and female leaders present when caring for mixed group of children. (This may vary dependent on specific requirements for events/outings)
- Ratios of cadets to leaders/adults may vary according to potential risk.
- Day trips / Residential – ensure ratio requirement is met. More leaders may be required depending on facilities available. Special Requirements forms, and Parental Consent forms are to be completed by the parents and brought with the group.
- It is important to maintain an open line of communication with parents and guardians, sharing any relevant information with them in respect of their children and also ensure our Safeguarding procedures are shared with them.
- Know about the principles and practices of Child Protection including all members' legal duties. Safeguarding policy to be visited regularly.
- Never engage in sexually provocative games or make suggestive comments, even in fun.
- Respect young people's privacy at all times, especially in bathrooms or changing rooms.
- Always respond to complaints or allegations impartially and in accordance with our procedures.

- Help young people realise the difference between confidentiality and secrecy.
- When gathering and storing any personal information it must be in line with General Data Protection Regulations and our own internal policies and procedures.
- Communication – Outside of meetings and Order of Malta events the following will apply.
  - All communication with children and young people is to be appropriate.
  - Non-personal platforms, such as Order of Malta phones, Facebook profiles and emails are to be used when texting/messaging young members. Personal phones / emails should not be used.
  - Parents / guardians are to be aware of any such communications.
  - Leaders / senior members are not to use personal phones to contact cadets outside of meetings.
- Information gathered in respect of young people should only be shared on a need-to-know basis.
- While physical contact is a valid way of comforting, reassuring, and showing concern for children, it should only take place when it is acceptable and appropriate to all persons concerned. Adults should be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in contact sports or other activities.
- Seniors should never physically punish or be verbally abusive to a child in any way, nor should they tell jokes of a sexual nature in the presence of children.
- Children should be encouraged to report cases of bullying as per Anti-Bullying Policy
- Social Media Policy must be followed always particularly in respect of young people and children. Key points from policy include the following -
  - Senior members must not “friend” cadets and young members on social media platforms such as Facebook. There are exceptions where there is family connection or peers.
  - Personal profiles must not be used to contact cadets/young members.
  - Appropriate language and content to be used in all communication with cadets / young people.
- It is recommended that Senior members do not give lifts in their cars to Cadets (unless in exceptional circumstances).
- Should a Cadet from a small Unit (having only one Cadet Leader and Assistant Cadet Leader) have reason to feel afraid/intimidated/unfairly treated etc., the Cadet should be made aware that they can talk to the Officer in Charge.

#### **14.2. SAFE RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES FOR VOLUNTEERS AND YOUTH LEADERS.**

- Potential new members to meet with local Officer in Charge and provided with NVB1 – Invitation to Garda Vetting form.
- For Northern Ireland – Access NI process to be completed.
- Potential new members are requested to complete Tusla’s online training - Introduction to Children First – and furnish Officer in Charge with completion Certificate.
- Two references are required.

- Complete AC6 (enrolment) form - Ensure correct form used for your jurisdiction \*\*
- On successful completion of the Access NI / National Vetting Bureau process, training to commence according to membership matrix (See Appendix 7)
- Four-hour Child protection awareness training to be completed by the relevant sections (medics and youth workers) as soon as possible.
- Training courses provided for the relevant roles must be completed including Youth leadership weekend course for all potential leaders.
- This course is followed by a six-month probationary period, with mentoring in place as well as completion of youth related projects during that time.
- Following completion of this period the officer in Charge will apply for youth leadership warrant for the leader.

### **14.3. Vetting Process**

All new Members must be vetted by National Vetting Bureau/ Access NI as part of their application process.

Ireland: - NVB1 – Invitation to Garda Vetting, forms will be provided by the Officer in Charge to the new member for completion and then submitted to Headquarters marked for attention of The CEO (Authorised Signatory). Following processing potential member will receive a link which they must complete within 30 days.

Northern Ireland: - the completed NI vetting form should be passed to the Regional Child Protection Officer (CPO) before the new Member should be accepted into the Unit. Since November 2010, all Members in Northern Ireland are required to register with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Order, it will be an offence to employ any person who is not registered.

**NOTE:** All Members over 18 years must be vetted as they have access to children and young people whilst on duty, not just in the capacity of OMAC Youth Leadership.

### **14.4 Communicating with Cadets and Young members online (including during Covid-19 or any other similar restrictions).**

We have requirements (both legally and within Order of Malta) for all members working with young people. Moving any of this work online should not change this.

Online or offline, safeguarding requires a whole organisation approach, and an online space still needs to be a safe space.

Some particular points to note: -

**Garda Vetting** - As your role constitutes relevant work before Covid-19, this still applies if you are engaging in the same work online with young people.

**Ratios and Oversight** Communicating one-on-one online is the equivalent of meeting a young person in a room one-on-one. If the work required supervision or multiple volunteers before, then this applies online too.

**Permission and Consent** – As previously advised in Circular 07/IT/2010, the digital age of consent is 16 years. You will find guidance re conference facilities and how to implement safely for our cadets within this circular also.

**Record Keeping** - Please ensure to continue with record taking as normal. Particularly with child protection concerns, these will need to be recorded accurately and securely.

**Code of Conduct** - All members should note that Code of Conducts as signed up to by all members apply through all interactions whether in person, online or any digital format.

**Policies** – Please refer to our other supporting policies which are available on Moodle.

## 15. Revision History

Version	Revision date	Revision by	Purpose
1.0	February 2018	Catherine Purcell – Inspectorate	To comply with National Legislation
2.0	February 2020	Catherine Purcell – Standards & Governance	Review and update
3.0	February 2022	Catherine Purcell – Standards & Governance	Review and Update
4.0	January 2023	Catherine Purcell – National Safeguarding	Review and Update
5.0	April 2024	Catherine Purcell – National Safeguarding	Review and Update



## Appendix 1 – Contact Details

Title	Name	Contact details
Magistral Delegate / Co-chair of Executive Steering Group	FJ Mc Carthy KM	<a href="mailto:Fj.mccarthy@orderofmalta.int">Fj.mccarthy@orderofmalta.int</a>
Co-chair of Executive Steering Group	Patrick Downes KM	<a href="mailto:Patrick.downes@orderofmalta.ie">Patrick.downes@orderofmalta.ie</a>
Secretary General	Aidan O'Brien KM	<a href="mailto:secgen@orderofmalta.ie">secgen@orderofmalta.ie</a>
National Director	Brian Coote KM	<a href="mailto:director@orderofmalta.ie">director@orderofmalta.ie</a>
CEO	John Byrne	<a href="mailto:ceo@orderofmalta.ie">ceo@orderofmalta.ie</a>
National Safeguarding Officer – Ambulance Corps	Catherine Purcell	<a href="mailto:catherine.purcell@orderofmalta.ie">catherine.purcell@orderofmalta.ie</a>
Safeguarding Officer – Irish Association	Adrian Ahern KM	<a href="mailto:Adrian.ahern@orderofmalta.ie">Adrian.ahern@orderofmalta.ie</a>
National Cadet Officer	Gillian Kelly	<a href="mailto:cadets@orderofmalta.ie">cadets@orderofmalta.ie</a>
Relevant Person (safeguarding statement)	Catherine Purcell	<a href="mailto:catherine.purcell@orderofmalta.ie">catherine.purcell@orderofmalta.ie</a>
Designated Liaison Person (DLP)	Catherine Purcell (Limerick)	<a href="mailto:dlp@orderofmalta.ie">dlp@orderofmalta.ie</a>
Designated Liaison Person (DLP)	Jeanette Wright (Dublin)	<a href="mailto:dlp@orderofmalta.ie">dlp@orderofmalta.ie</a>
Designated Liaison Person (DLP) – NI	Aine Mc Anulla (Tyrone)	<a href="mailto:dlp@orderofmalta.ie">dlp@orderofmalta.ie</a>
Mandated persons list contact	Brian Power	<a href="mailto:brian.power@orderofmalta.ie">brian.power@orderofmalta.ie</a>

### Headquarters address

Order of Malta Ireland  
 St John's House  
 21 Clyde Road  
 Ballsbridge  
 Dublin 4  
 Phone - +353 (1) 6430000  
 Email – [info@orderofmalta.ie](mailto:info@orderofmalta.ie)  
 www. – [www.orderofmaltaireland.org](http://www.orderofmaltaireland.org)

## Appendix 2 – Relevant Legislation

There are several pieces of legislation relevant to the safeguarding of children. The following indicative list is not intended to be comprehensive but rather to give a sense of the breadth and wide array of relevant legislation.

### IRELAND

Child and Family Agency Act 2013

<http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2013/a4013.pdf>

Child Care Act 1991

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1991/act/17/enacted/en/print.html>

Children Act 2001

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2001/act/24/enacted/en/pdf>

Children First Act 2015

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/36/enacted/en/pdf>

Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/24/enacted/en/pdf>

Criminal Justice Act 2006, Section 176: Reckless Endangerment of Children

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2006/act/26/enacted/en/pdf>

Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 & GDPR

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1988/act/25/enacted/en/html>

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2003/act/6/enacted/en/pdf>

<https://www.dataprotection.ie/>

Domestic Violence Act 1996

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1996/act/1/enacted/en/pdf>

Education (Welfare) Act 2000

<https://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2000/a2200.pdf>

Education Act 1998

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/51/enacted/en/pdf>

National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/47/enacted/en/pdf>

Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1997/act/26/enacted/en/pdf>

Protected Disclosures Act 2014

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2014/act/14/enacted/en/pdf>

Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/49/enacted/en/pdf>

## NORTHERN IRELAND

Children Order (NI) 1995 -

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1995/755/contents/made>

Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People -

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland>

*Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008* -

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2008/1769/contents>

*Human Rights Act 1998* -

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>

*Public Interest Disclosures (NI) Order 1998* –

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/public-interest-disclosure-northern-ireland-order-1998>

*Criminal Law Act 1967* -

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/apni/1967/18/contents>

*United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* -

<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/crc.pdf>

### **Appendix 3 – 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 practises as such and who is eligible for registration in the register (if any) of members of that profession.
8. Social care worker who practises 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 practises 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 Council under the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (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.
14. 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) centre;
  - (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 organisations 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 recognised 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.
- 15. Foster carer registered with Tusla.
- 16. A person carrying on a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991.

## Appendix 4 – Cadet Leader Application Form



ORDER OF MALTA  
IRELAND

### Cadet Leader Application Form

**UNIT NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Former Names \_\_\_\_\_

3. Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No (Daytime) \_\_\_\_\_ (Evening)

—

4. Date of Birth \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

5. Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

6. Please give details of any previous involvement in youth work externally:

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you suffer from any illness/disability/medical condition, which may at times affect your ability to work with young people? If so, please give details.

8.1 Please supply the name, address, telephone numbers etc and position of two people (not-relatives), who know you well and can provide us with a reference. One of the referees, where relevant, should be your immediate supervisor. The Order of Malta reserves the right to make personal or other contact with one or both of your nominated referees.

**8.2** \_\_\_\_\_ **8.3** \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No.

Tel No

Email Address

Email Address

Position

Position

### **9 Declaration (confidential)**

9.1 I confirm that I have completed the Order of Malta Ireland Garda Vetting process.

9.2 I confirm that nothing within my personal or professional background deems me unsuitable for a post, which involves working with children.

9.3 I declare that the above information is true.

**9.4** I promise to uphold the standards of the Youth Warrant and to do everything in my power to ensure that each young person achieving a Youth Warrant or Cadet Achievement Award under my guidance will have earned that Warrant or Award.

I have read **the Order of Malta Safeguarding Statement and Policy** and I understand that by signing this form I am agreeing, accepting and subscribing to it.

I will take all reasonable steps to draw the guidelines to the attention of other adults that I involve in the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps Cadet activities.

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

Tel. (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. (Home) \_\_\_\_\_

-

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (for Correspondence):

-

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



## Appendix 5 – Youth Leadership Warrant Application



**Order of Malta Cadets  
Strictly Confidential**

### Youth Leadership Warrant Application Form

Unit Name					
Applicants Name					
Date of Birth					
Date and venue where applicant completed Youth Leadership Course					
Advanced Youth Leadership Course completed?	<b>YES / NO</b>				
Is the applicant suitable for appointment to the position of:-	<b>Asst. Cadet Leader</b>		<b>YES / NO</b>		
	<b>Cadet Leader</b>		<b>YES / NO</b>		
If NO when?					
What further training needs would you identify for the applicant?					
How would you describe applicant's personality?					
<b>Applicant's Personal Traits</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Responsibility					
Maturity					
Self Motivation					
Can motivate others					
Commitment					
Energy					
Trustworthiness					
Honesty					
Reliability					





What are Applicant's weaknesses, if any?	
Would you want this person as a cadet leader working with your child?	<b>YES / NO</b>
Has this person worked elsewhere with children in either a voluntary or paid capacity? If so, where and when?	<b>YES / NO</b>
Referee No 1 – Name and Address  Contact Phone no	
Referee No 2 – Name and Address  Contact Phone no	
Please add any further information which you feel would be of relevance to this person working with cadets and Young people in our organisation	
Garda Vetting Form attached	<b>YES / NO</b>
I have checked that this member has received and fully understands the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps policy in relation to allegation of Child Abuse	<b>YES / NO</b>

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Officer in Charge

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

## Appendix 6 – Managing Cadet Trips Away - Guidance

### Procedures to follow when Travelling with Cadets.

The following is to be considered when planning a Day Trip or overnight stay:

#### *General*

- Involve the young people and their parents in the planning of trip, as much as practicable.
- If for any reason the number of spaces is limited, the selection process for choosing the children/young people for the trip must be fair and transparent.
- All leaders / volunteers must have completed Garda Vetting / Access NI and have completed the mandatory 4-hour Child Protection Awareness Programme training. Leaders must also have completed the Youth Leadership Course.
- Ensure that all leaders/volunteers are aware of the organisation's guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures
- Parents must be given adequate notice of plans.
- All leaders/volunteers should be given clear roles and responsibilities for the trip.
- There should be one person appointed as the overall leader of the group who will have final decision-making authority during the trip. For foreign travel this person must be approved by the National Director.
- Ensure appropriate supervision ratio in line with Child Safeguarding Policy. 1:8 with minimum of 2 leaders. In mixed gender group both male and female leaders must be present. Please note that this ratio may vary depending on requirements in specific accommodation.
- Ensure safe methods of transport, including allowing for unscheduled return.
- Ensure adequate insurance cover (full details of any trip must be sent to Headquarters on official Insurance Application Form to arrange adequate cover).
- Ensure Parental Consent Form / Special Requirement Forms are received in respect of each Cadet. These forms are strictly confidential and must be retained in a secure confidential manner. If traveling abroad International Travel form must be included.
- Ensure that emergency contact phone numbers for parents/guardians are documented and available at all times. Two contact numbers should be available in case of emergencies for each young person travelling.
- Ensure adequate food is provided for all taking dietary requirements into consideration.
- Ensure that a risk assessment has been conducted in line with Order of Malta policy and that this has considered safety from harm in online activities. Ensure the venue is suitable for the intended purpose.



## **In the case of overnight trips –**

- ***ACCOMMODATION***

- In the planning stage check the proposed sleeping arrangements for participants, leaders/volunteers and other support personnel.
- Check health and safety issues relating to the accommodation such as emergency evacuation for upstairs rooms, accessibility of rooms and corridors for mobility of the participants.
- Ensure that single-gender dormitories/rooms are used for children/young people.
- Ensure that only children/young people of similar age share sleeping accommodation
- Ensure all workers/volunteers have a list of all the children/young people's accommodation allocation.
- Adults should never enter children's/young people's rooms without knocking first.
- Leaders must show respect for the privacy of Cadets in dormitories, tents, changing rooms, shower areas, toilets, etc.
- Ensure supervision and security of all in centre / hostel / hotel
- Emergency plans must be put in place in case of sickness or emergency, (ensure availability of driver if necessary)

- ***Preparing participants and programme***

- Prepare an information pack for participants including the programme of activities, emergency information if necessary and a 'help me' card, particularly for foreign trips.
- It is essential that the children/young people are involved in every aspect of the process. This is an ideal opportunity for them to share the responsibility for the trip/activities that take place.
- Ensure that the Code of Behaviour for the children/young people has been signed by the parents/guardian.
- Ensure one leader/volunteer is appointed group leader; they will have various responsibilities including making a report following the trip.
- There should be a plan for communication with parents/guardians and participants to inform them of travel and accommodation details, activities, special requirements, medical requirements, special dietary needs and any other necessary details. This can take the form of meetings or written correspondence.

## ***Travelling Abroad***

**A Visit Abroad is defined as:** 'Any visit outside Ireland and Northern Ireland on a recognised and approved Order of Malta activity or travelling in the name of Order of Malta. This applies to all Members.

A Visit Abroad must be led by an adult holding the relevant approval from the National Director.

- Ensure appropriate paperwork is in place – e.g. passports, visas, EHIC
- Parental Consent Form / Special Requirement Forms for each Cadet. These forms are strictly confidential and must be retained in a secure confidential manner. When traveling abroad International Travel form must be included.
- Ensure copies of documents and passport numbers are with leaders at home and away
- Ensure detailed travel itinerary is provided to leaders, young people and their parents.
- Ensure all leaders and young people have contact details for leaders locally.
- Ensure there are regular check in and briefing sessions with leaders and young people
- Consider legal differences e.g. drinking, age of consent, drugs etc.

### **After the trip –**

Following any trip away a debrief meeting should be held to discuss what worked well, what didn't work so well and what needs to be changed before next trip away.

## Appendix 7 – Communicating with Cadets - Guidance

### Communicating with Cadets

Communication is an especially important part of all organisations. Within Order of Malta this is particularly important when dealing with patients as well as our own members.

It is important that all relevant information is shared with all our members. This is mainly done during weekly cadet meetings but there are times when leaders need to get important messages to our young people.

Some points to remember when communicating with our cadets and young people

- All communication with children and young people is to be appropriate.
- If for any reason meeting cannot be held, parents and children are to be contacted in a timely manner.
- Non-personal platforms, such as Order of Malta phones, Facebook profiles and emails are to be used when texting/messaging young members. Personal phones / emails should not be used.
- Parents / guardians are to be aware of any such communications.
- Leaders / senior members are not to use personal phones to contact cadets outside of meetings.
- Seniors should never be verbally abusive to a child in any way, nor should they tell jokes of a sexual nature in the presence of children.
- Social Media Policy must be followed always particularly in respect of young people and children. Key points from policy include the following: -
  - Senior members must not “friend” cadets and young members on social media platforms such as Facebook. There are exceptions where there is family connection or peers.
  - Personal profiles must not be used to contact cadets/young members.
  - Appropriate language and content to be used in all communication with cadets / young people.

## **Appendix 8 – Guidance for mandated persons**

The Children First Act 2015 places a legal obligation on certain people, many of whom are professionals, to report child protection concerns at or above a defined threshold to Tusla - Child and Family Agency. These mandated persons must also assist Tusla, on request, in its assessment of child protection concerns about children who have been the subject of a mandated report.

Mandated persons are people who have 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. Mandated persons include key professionals working with children in the education, health, justice, youth and childcare sectors. Certain professionals who may not work directly with children, such as those in adult counselling or psychiatry, are also mandated persons. The list also includes **registered foster carers** (with specific support available [here](#)) and members of the clergy or pastoral care workers of a church or other religious community. The Children First Act 2015, Schedule 2, provides a full list of people who are classified as mandated persons.

### **Am I a Mandated Person?**

As per Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015, several volunteers in Order of Malta are Mandated Persons by virtue of their professional qualifications and registration with specific bodies. This includes all our Doctors, Nurses, Paramedics, Advanced Paramedics and EMTs on their respective registers, as well as paid employees in our Headquarters.

For full details of Schedule please refer to Appendix 3 of Safeguarding Policy

[The list of mandated persons is held by the Assistant National Director for Clinical Governance.](#)

### **What are my legal obligations?**

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

- To report harm of children, above a defined threshold, to Tusla
- To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report

As a mandated person, under the legislation you 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 reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015 apply only to information that you as a mandated person, received or became aware of since the Act came into force. However, if you have reasonable concern about past abuse, where the information came to your attention before the Act and there is possible continuing risk to children, you should report it to Tusla under the Children First Guidance 2017.

### **What is the threshold for making a mandated report?**

As a mandated person, under the legislation you 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, to the Authorised Person within Tusla.

Definition of Harm - The threshold of harm for each category of abuse at which mandated persons have a legal obligation to report concerns is outlined below.

“Harm” means, in relation to a child

- (a) assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child’s health, development or welfare, or
- (b) sexual abuse of the child

### **How do I make a mandated report to Tusla?**

If you are a mandated person and have a concern about a child, it is your legal responsibility to make a decision as to whether the concern meets the [threshold](#) for a mandated report under the Children First Act 2015 or not. If you are satisfied that this threshold has been reached, you should clearly identify on the report that it is a mandated report made under the Children First Act.

***Within Order of Malta this report is done jointly with our Designated Liaison Person (DLP). If you are unable to make contact with the DLP it is important that you make the referral is made as soon as possible. Ensure the DLP is aware of any reports made on behalf of the organisation.***

If you are unsure whether your concern reaches the legal definition of harm for making a mandated report, you can discuss the concern with a [Tusla social worker](#). However, the

responsibility for making the decision rests with you as a mandated person under the Act.

If you are a mandated person, you cannot submit a mandated report anonymously.

The Children First Act 2015 requires mandated persons to report a mandated concern to Tusla “as soon as practicable”. The Children First Act requires Tusla to appoint authorised persons to receive mandated reports. Authorised persons are obliged to acknowledge in writing all mandated reports they receive.

If you feel urgent intervention may be required to make the child safe, you can alert Tusla of the concern in advance of submitting a written report. You must then submit a mandated report to Tusla on the report form or via the web portal within three days.

Tusla has two forms for reporting child protection and welfare concerns – the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form (CPWRF) and the Retrospective Abuse Report Form (RARF). The Child Protection and Welfare Report Form is to be completed and submitted to Tusla for concerns about children under the age of 18. As per Children First national guidance, Tusla has two Forms for reporting child protection and welfare concerns – the Child Protection and Welfare Report Form (CPWRF) and the Retrospective Abuse Report Form (RARF). The Child Protection and Welfare Report Form is to be completed and submitted to Tusla for concerns about children under the age of 18. The Retrospective Abuse Report Form is to be completed and submitted to Tusla for cases of adults disclosing childhood abuse, aka Retrospective Abuse. Both these Forms can be completed online using the [Tusla Portal](#).

**Joint reporting** - As a mandated person you can make a report jointly with another person, whether that person is also a mandated person or not. **This is the recommended method for Mandated Persons in Order of Malta**

There is nothing in the Act to prevent you from either making a mandated report jointly with a designated liaison person or providing a copy of the mandated report you have submitted to Tusla for the information of the designated liaison person.

As a mandated person, you should be aware that the legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015 to report mandated concerns rest with you and not with the designated liaison person.



Where mandated persons share the same concern or information, only one person is required to report, or they can report jointly.

What if my concern does not meet the threshold for a mandated report?

If your concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but you feel it is a reasonable concern about the welfare or protection of a child, you should report it to Tusla under Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

**Informing the family** - It is best practice to tell a family you are making a report. Families have a right to know what is being reported about them. It also helps them understand the reasons for reporting and what information is being reported. However, in exceptional circumstances you may be concerned that telling the family will put the child at further risk, could impact on Tusla's ability to carry out an assessment or could place you at risk of harm from the family. In these exceptional circumstances it is not necessary for you to tell the family you are making a report.

**Mandated persons who work with adults** - If you are a professional who works with or treats persons with mental health difficulties, intellectual disabilities, addiction or domestic violence issues, or if you work in probation services, you must consider the welfare and safety of any children in that person's family and/or children in regular contact with the person. You may find yourself working with people whose health and behaviour has harmed or may harm a child. If there are concerns which meet or exceed the thresholds outlined above, then you must report them to Tusla using Tusla's Child Protection and Welfare Report Form.

An adult you work with may also disclose that they were abused as a child. Tusla's Retrospective Abuse Report Form should be completed and submitted to Tusla for cases of adults disclosing childhood abuse.

**Other legal responsibilities** - Legal obligations to disclose information to the Gardaí must be adhered to.

Making a mandated report under the Children First Act 2015 does not discharge the duty a person may have to report to An Garda Síochána under the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

What is mandated assisting?

It is usual practice for professionals who have on-going contact with a child, where there is concern about possible abuse, to continue to engage with Tusla's Social Work team to assist in the protection of a child. To support and reinforce this practice, the Children First Act 2015 provides that all mandated persons can be asked, by Tusla, to provide any necessary and proportionate assistance to aid the Tusla in assessing the risk to a child from a mandated report. Assistance includes verbal or written information or attendance at meetings.

- A mandated person must comply with this request regardless of who made the report.
- Information that Tusla shares with mandated persons if they are assisting them to carry out an assessment, must not be shared with a third party, unless Tusla considers it appropriate and authorises in writing that the information may be shared. Section 17 of the Children First Act 2015 makes it an offence for you to disclose information to a third party which has been shared by Tusla during the course of an assessment, unless Tusla has given you written authorisation to do so.
- Any information furnished by mandated person shall not give rise to civil liability or be admissible in evidence against that person in any civil or criminal proceedings.

## **Appendix 9 – Useful Reference links**

How to report a concern in Ireland - <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/individuals-working-with-children-and-young-people/>

Access to Tusla Portal for reporting -  
<https://portal.tusla.ie/Account/Login?ReturnUrl=%2f>

Children First National Guidance -  
[https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children\\_First\\_National\\_Guidance\\_2017.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf)

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form (CPWR) –  
[https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Child\\_Protection\\_and\\_Welfare\\_Report\\_Form\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Child_Protection_and_Welfare_Report_Form_FINAL.pdf)

CPWR guidance Notes -  
[https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/CPWRF\\_Guidance\\_Note\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/CPWRF_Guidance_Note_FINAL.pdf)

Retrospective Abuse Report Form (RARF) -  
[https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Retrospective\\_Abuse\\_Report\\_Form\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Retrospective_Abuse_Report_Form_FINAL.pdf)

RARF Guidance Notes -  
[https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/RARF\\_Guidance\\_Note\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/RARF_Guidance_Note_FINAL.pdf)