



**St John
Ambulance**



St John Ambulance Ireland
Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
Updated Fifth Edition – 2023

Contents

Foreword	7
Glossary	8
Acknowledgements	9
Introduction	10
Child Protection / Safeguarding Team	11
Safeguarding Guiding Principles	12
Key Roles	14
Appointment of Relevant Person.....	14
Designated Liaison Person.....	15
Mandated Person.....	15
Child Abuse: background information	17
Definitions of abuse.....	17
Neglect.....	17
Emotional abuse.....	18
Physical abuse.....	20
Sexual abuse.....	21
Child abuse—What is it? How do I recognise it? How do I report it?.....	21
Circumstances which may make children more vulnerable to harm.....	21
Bullying.....	23
Responding to a disclosure of child abuse	25
Ongoing support.....	26
Reasonable grounds for a Safeguarding or welfare concern.....	26
TUSLA national approach to practice—the Signs of Safety.....	28
Retrospective Disclosure.....	28
Steps to take when concerned about a child.....	28
Confidentiality	30
Limits of confidentiality	31
What to record?.....	31
Record keeping.....	32
Safe recruitment procedures for members	33
Application.....	33

Interview.....	33
Garda vetting	33
Induction	34
Safeguarding training.....	34
Supervision.....	34
Termination of membership	35
Transition from cadets to adult divisions.....	35
Procedures for allegations of abuse against a member	36
Code of behaviour	38
Creating a safe environment.....	38
Maintaining boundaries	39
Contact with children/young people	39
Adult/youth relationships	40
Youth–youth relationships.....	40
Substance misuse.....	41
Physical contact.....	41
Personal care	42
Curriculum	42
Competitions	42
House-to-house fundraising.....	43
Transport	43
Medications.....	43
Communication	44
Use of Technology.....	45
Mobile phones	45
Use of email and social networking sites	45
SJAI Division Facebook pages.....	46
Photography and videos and images of children	46
Phone usage during activities	47
Virtual training.....	47
Managing challenging behaviour	48
Responding to bullying	50
What is bullying?	50
The effects of bullying.....	50

SJAI Anti-bullying policy when working with children/young people	52
Procedure for dealing with bullying.....	52
Disciplinary action	53
Parental Contact	55
Initial contact	55
Provision of information	55
Consent forms	55
Parental involvement.....	55
Involving children	56
Policy review	57
Activity Safety	58
Activities risk management.....	58
Trips away.....	58
Accidents/incidents procedures.....	60
Complaints procedure for members, parents, and children (for issues/concerns that are not deemed Safeguarding)	61
Who may make a complaint?.....	61
How to make a complaint.....	61
How will the complaint be dealt with?.....	61
What if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome/response?.....	62
What if the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome/response?.....	62
Our policy.....	63
Aggressive or obsessive complaints.....	63
Appendix A: Safeguarding internal reporting form	64
Appendix B: Developing an anti-bullying environment	65
Appendix C: National contacts for TUSLA, Children and Family Services	73
Dublin South Dedicated Contact Point.....	73
Dublin North Dedicated Contact Point.....	73
Dublin South East Dedicated Contact Point.....	73
Dublin North Dedicated Contact Point.....	73
Dublin South West and Kildare Dedicated Contact Point	73
Cavan Dedicated Contact Point.....	73
Cork Dedicated Contact Point	73
Limerick Dedicated Contact Point	73

Mayo Dedicated Contact Point	73
Appendix D: Relevant legislation	74
Appendix E: Declaration from all staff and volunteers working with children and young people ..	80
Appendix F: Guidance sheet on medication	81
Appendix G: Cadets on duty policy.....	83
Appendix H: Event consent form.....	87
Appendix I: Mandated person schedule.....	89
Appendix J: Cadet division virtual classroom policy.....	91

Foreword

This is the revised fifth edition of the St John Ambulance Ireland (SJAI) Safeguarding Policy. It sets out in detail the commitment of SJAI to safeguarding all children who come into contact with us, either as members, especially Cadet members, or as patients. The Policy is a public document and is made available to all through our public website as well as our internal ICT communications tools.

The Policy details our commitments to both Cadet and Adult members as well as our commitments to the public. It sets out how we aim to meet the legal obligations we have under a variety of safeguarding-related legislation. In particular, it sets out our recruitment, vetting, training and upskilling policies as they relate to Safeguarding.

We aim to have a fully open and transparent process and have set out how we will respond to any safeguarding concerns that come to our attention howsoever.

Our overarching aim is to have a safe place where Cadets (members aged from 10 to 17 inclusive) and Adults (18 years upwards) can feel they have a safe place within which to serve our charitable objectives as a volunteer-based charity with a small full-time support structure.

I am grateful to all who have inputted to the refinement of this policy, especially our Safeguarding Team and TUSLA, and I restate our desire that all who interact with us have a safe and fulfilling experience and that we will ensure that all complaints regarding Safeguarding issues are dealt with in full compliance with our statutory obligations and our commitment to Safeguarding generally.

John Hughes
Commissioner
commissioner@stjohn.ie

10 June 2023

Glossary

Adult Member: this refers to any member who is over the age of 18 years of age.

Cadets: refers to members under the age of 18 years in SJAI.

Child: for the purpose of this policy, a child means anyone who is under 18 years of age and is not/has not been married.

Child Safeguarding: ensuring safe practice and appropriate responses by workers and volunteers to concerns about the safety or welfare of children, including online concerns, should these arise. Child safeguarding is about protecting the child from harm, promoting their welfare and in doing so creating an environment which enables children and young people to grow, develop, and achieve their full potential.

Child Safeguarding Statement: defined in the Children First Act 2015, this is a statement which includes a written assessment of risk of harm to children while availing of the service, and the measures that will be taken to manage any identified risks.

Children/Young People: these terms are used intermittently to refer to Cadets in SJAI/patients of SJAI/people aged less than 18 years of age.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP): a resource to any staff/volunteer member who has a child protection concern. DLPs are responsible for ensuring that reporting procedures are followed correctly and promptly and act as a liaison person with other agencies (see Children First: National Guidance). **In SJAI, our DLPs are our National and Regional Safeguarding Officers.**

Guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures: previously referred to as child protection and welfare policy and procedures, the procedures an organisation has in place to safeguard children from harm and reduce the risks to children of being harmed.

HSE: Health Service Executive

Mandated person: as defined in the Children First Act 2015, mandated persons have a statutory obligation to report concerns which meet or exceed the threshold of harm, as defined in the Act, to TUSLA and to cooperate with TUSLA in the assessment of mandated reports, where requested to do so. See Appendix I

National Guidelines: see relevant legislation, Appendix D.

Safeguarding Officers: Refers to the designated persons appointed in SJAI, in accordance with national guidelines, to respond to Safeguarding concerns raised in the organisation.

SJAI: St John Ambulance Ireland

TUSLA: The Child and Family Agency (for TUSLA Contacts — see Appendix C)

Acknowledgements

SJAI wishes to thank all those involved in the formulation of this document for their support, assistance, and expertise.

We have referenced the following TUSLA and Department of Children, Equality, Disability, INtegration and Youth documents while updating our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

[*A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns*](#)

[*Best Practice Principles for Organisations in Developing Children First Training Programmes*](#)

[*Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedures and Practice \(2nd Edition\)*](#)

[*Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children*](#)

Introduction

This, the revised and updated fifth edition of our Child Protection/Safeguarding Manual, looks at updating our policy and procedures considering all the changes enacted by recent legislation and best practices in relation to safeguarding of Children. It also reflects internal organisational changes. As an organisation we have over the years continually updated these policies as circumstances such as updated laws or policy changes have required.

Children First Act 2015 states that Safeguarding refers to protecting Children from harm as well as promoting their welfare and development whilst in our care. It requires organisations like ours to set out a “declaration of guiding principles”, which we aim to achieve through this document. It also requires us to formulate a risk assessment on our organisation and its activities and from which we produce a Child Safeguarding Statement. This is a written Statement that specifies the service being provided and the principles and procedures to be observed in order to ensure, as far as practicable, that a Child availing of our service or participating in our organisation is safe from harm.

Our members are also provided with appropriate safeguarding training within which these policies and procedures are covered. This training is repeated every three years.

The Children First Best Practice Guide for Developing and Implementing Organisations’ Guiding Principles and Safeguarding Procedures highlights six key areas:

1. Guiding Principles,
2. Key roles in Safeguarding
3. Responding to and reporting Child Protection or Welfare Concerns,
4. Working safely with Children and Young People,
5. Procedures for Sharing Guiding Principles and Safeguarding Procedures and involving parents/guardians, Families, and Children and Young People, and
6. Implementing, monitoring, and reviewing the Guiding Principles and Safeguarding procedures.

GDPR and Data Protection regulations 2018 entrust organisations such as ours with responsibilities surrounding members’/patients’ Data. In this regard, it is to be noted that the proportionat provision of information to the Statutory agencies necessary for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.

In the production of this document, we aim to outline our policies and procedures in relation to the above items. It is intended to inform our Members of our policies/procedures, their obligations and rights as a staff or volunteer with our organisation. While not possible to outline or document all relevant forms/policies in this document, they are all referenced and available to our members through the organisation’s ShareDrive.

Child Protection/Safeguarding Team

- National Safeguarding Lead — new full-time role with recruitment underway at the time of writing
- National Safeguarding Officer
- National Deputy Safeguarding Officer
- National Vetting Team
- CISM Team
- National Welfare Officer
- National Safeguarding Training Officer
- Regional Safeguarding Officers — new roles to be created as part of the development of the regional structure in 2023/2024
- Safeguarding Support Team

Safeguarding Guiding Principles

We in SJAI are committed to working in a child-centred way with all the children involved in our organisation. We undertake to provide a safe environment and experience for all children in contact with SJAI through membership or other means.

Our Youth Membership (Cadets) are aged 10 to 17. On their 18th birthday they cease to be a member of our Cadets and move to our Adult Divisions.

The Youth membership partake in first aid and care training to a suitable level, as well as undertaking other related courses such as radio communication, the use of AEDs through CFR-C courses which are age appropriate. They also partake on active Duty with our adult members (see Cadets on Duty Policy, Appendix G).

Children and young people are also recipients of our service if they present with injury at any of the events that we cover.

Our guiding principles are underpinned by:

- *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children,*
- *TUSLA's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice,*
- the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and
- current legislation such as the Children First Act 2015, Child Care Act 1991, Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998, and the National Vetting Bureau Act 2012.

These principles apply to all paid staff/volunteers/committee and Board members and all those who undertake any training on behalf of our Organisation.

We have developed policies and procedures in the following areas:

- Recruitment pathway of members
- Vetting and Safeguarding training
- A code of behaviour for members
- Management and supervision of members
- Participation of our Youth membership in Organisational Activities
- Responding to allegation of misconduct or abuse against members
- Limits of confidentiality
- Communications and Social Media Policy

- Reporting of suspected or disclosed abuse
- Involvement of parents
- Incidents and accidents

Children in SJAI have the right to be protected, treated with respect, listened to, and have their own views taken into consideration. SJAI actively seeks the participation of young people at all levels of the organisation.

Parents should be consulted about issues that concern their children. Parents are encouraged to become involved in SJAI wherever possible.

Staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained, and supervised in their work with the organisation.

SJAI provides all members with the information needed to help them recognise, respond, and report concerns about Safeguarding and welfare.

These Guiding Principles are applicable to all our staff and volunteers alike, and they are asked to familiarise themselves with the full contents of this document.

SJAI recognises that the welfare of children must always come first, regardless of all other considerations.

Key Roles

The ultimate responsibility for the development and implementation of *Safeguarding Policies and Procedures* lies with the Board, the Commissioner and executive of the Organisation.

SJAI is actively progressing the recruitment of a Safeguarding Lead on a fulltime basis and future iterations of this Policy will reflect that additional key resource and how it will enhance our Policies and Operations insofar as Safeguarding is concerned.

SJAI has appointed a Safeguarding Team that has continuously developed, monitored, updated and implemented these policies and procedures as well as training for dealing with and reporting of issues of concern to ensure compliance with current legislation.

The National and Deputy National Safeguarding Officers are the Designated and Deputy Designated Liaison Persons for the Organisation. It is their responsibility to liaise with and/or report to all relevant statutory agencies with regards to all matters related to safeguarding/Child Protection. They will be assisted in that role by the regional DLPs.

All members who are mandated by virtue of their profession and who operate in that capacity with St John Ambulance Ireland are deemed by law to be mandated persons. A full list of all those members is collected and stored by NHQ. This list is compiled when those individuals apply to NHQ for their Letter of Practice (LoP), to allow them to operate with that skill level while on Organisational activity/duties. Any member of An Garda and Clergy are also to be added to the list.

A Garda Vetting Team have also been appointed with the responsible for the processing of Garda Vetting throughout the organisation and the issuing of the members' Personal Identification Number, without which a person cannot be an active member.

The organisation has a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team who are available to assist members affected by issues arising from patient care or safeguarding issues such as being a victim of abuse or receiving a disclosure. The organisation also has an external counselling service contract in place should such support be required. A National Welfare Officer has been appointed who will work with the CISM team and will oversee policy development on vulnerable persons. They will operate as part of the wider Safeguarding Department.

A support team is in place to assist the Safeguarding team in carrying out their functions and to assist with the updating, review and auditing implementation of policy to ensure the Organisation is always operating under current National Policy. This Support team will include both internal members and external professional personnel.

The contact details for our National and Deputy National Safeguarding Officers and Designated Liaison Persons are listed on our website with a dedicated email address of child.protection.team@stjohn.ie.

Appointment of Relevant Person

The appointed relevant persons as outlined in Children First 2015 for SJAI will always be the National and Deputy National Safeguarding Officers.

Designated Liaison Person

In accordance with Children First 2011, SJAI has appointed both a National and Deputy National Safeguarding Officer. The Safeguarding Officers' responsibilities include the following:

- Ensuring that he/she is knowledgeable about Safeguarding and that he/she undertakes any training considered necessary to keep updated on new developments;
- Establishing contact with TUSLA in relation to Safeguarding policy and training opportunities;
- Providing advice and information on child protection within SJAI;
- Acting as a liaison with outside agencies and as a resource person to all members who have Safeguarding concerns;
- Ensuring that the standard reporting procedures are followed so that suspected cases of child neglect or abuse are referred promptly to TUSLA and/or An Garda Síochána;
- Keeping relevant people informed, particularly the Commissioner and the Board;
- Ensuring that an individual case record is maintained of the action taken by the organisation, the liaison with other agencies, and the outcome;
- Maintaining strict confidentiality in all aspects of the role.

Given the national nature of SJAI, Regional Safeguarding Officers are to be appointed to assist in the above.

Mandated Person

The Children First Act 2015 places a legal obligation on certain people, many of whom are professionals, to report Safeguarding 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 Safeguarding concerns about children who have been the subject of a mandated report.

Mandated persons are people who have contact with children and/or families and who, because of their qualifications, training and/or employment role, are in a key position to help protect children from harm. Mandated persons have two main legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015:

1. To report the harm of children above a defined threshold to TUSLA.
2. To assist TUSLA, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

All members who are mandated by virtue of their profession and who operate in that capacity with SJAI are deemed by law to be mandated persons with a legal responsibility to report safeguarding concerns which meet or exceed the threshold specified in the Act to TUSLA. Other concerns which only meet a "reasonable concern" under the guidance would be reported through the DLP/SO. A full list of all those mandated persons operating within or on behalf of SJAI, is held in NHQ. It is compiled and updated when these members apply for their Letter Of Practice with members of An Gardaí and the Clergy included also.

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.

All reports to TUSLA by Mandated Persons in relation to St John Ambulance Ireland (SJAI) or while on active service with SJAI should be done in conjunction with, or reported, as soon as possible afterwards, to the SJAI National or Deputy National Safeguarding Officers or, in their absence, the Commissioner. This allows us to track all cases reported to TUSLA or An Gardaí related to SJAI, our staff, volunteers or patients.

Child Abuse: background and information

TUSLA's *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* in Chapter 2, provides the following information on the four types of the Child Abuse

1. Neglect,
2. Emotional abuse,
3. Physical abuse, and
4. 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.

Definitions of abuse

In order to recognise and respond to child abuse, members of SJAI must first understand what constitutes abuse. As already mentioned, there are 4 primary categories of abuse:

- 1) Neglect
- 2) Emotional Abuse
- 3) Physical Abuse
- 4) Sexual Abuse

Remember, a child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time.

The definitions for each category of abuse have been taken directly from national guidelines.

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
- neglect being associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it
- neglect being 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

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their

parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children's emotional and developmental needs.

Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen. A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. Emotional abuse may be seen in some of the following ways:

- Rejection
- Lack of comfort and love
- Lack of attachment
- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play)
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned)
- Continuous lack of praise and encouragement
- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child
- Bullying
- Conditional parenting in which care or affection of a child 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 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.

Physical abuse

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

Physical abuse can include the following:

- Physical punishment
- Beating
- Slapping, hitting, or kicking
- Pushing, shaking, or throwing
- Pinching, biting, choking, or hair-pulling
- Use of excessive force in handling
- Deliberate poisoning
- Suffocation
- Fabricated/induced illness
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

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.

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.

Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- 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 purpose, 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

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

Child abuse—What is it? How do I recognise it? How do I report it?

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.

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 Chapter 3 of TUSLA's National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

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 encounter. A child needs to have someone they can trust 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.

The following list is intended to help you identify the range of issues in a child's life that may place them at greater risk of abuse or neglect. It is important for you to remember that the presence of any of these factors does not necessarily mean that a child in those circumstances or settings is being abused.

Parent or carer factors

- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Addiction, including gambling
- Mental health issues
- Parental disability issues, including learning or intellectual disability
- Conflictual relationships
- Domestic violence
- Adolescent parents

Child factors

- Age
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Disability
- Mental health issues, including self-harm and suicide
- Communication difficulties
- Trafficked/exploited
- Previous abuse
- Young Carer

Community factors

- Cultural, ethnic, religious or faith-based norms in the family or community which may not meet the standards of child welfare or protection required in this jurisdiction
- Culture-specific practices, including:
 - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
 - Forced marriage

- Honour-based violence
- Radicalisation

Environmental factors

- Housing issues
- Children who are out of home and not living with their parents, whether temporarily or permanently
- Poverty/begging
- Bullying
- Internet and social media-related concerns

Poor motivation or willingness of parents/guardians to engage

- Non-attendance at appointments
- Lack of insight or understanding of how the child is being affected
- Lack of understanding about what needs to happen to bring about change
- Avoidance of contact and reluctance to work with services
- Inability or unwillingness to comply with agreed plans

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.

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,
- cyberbullying,
- 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 due to the fact that children spend a significant portion of their time there and are in large social groups. In the first instance, the school authorities are responsible for dealing with such bullying. School management boards must have a code of behaviour and an antibullying policy in place. If you are a staff member of a school, you should also be aware of your school's anti-bullying policy and of the relevant guidelines on how it is handled. 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.

Responding to a disclosure of child abuse

A child or young person may disclose to a trusted worker or volunteer that they have been or are being harmed or abused. Children/young people will often have different ways of communicating that they are being abused. If a child or young person hints at or tells a worker or volunteer that he or she is being harmed by someone, be it a parent/carer, another adult or by another child/young person (peer abuse), it should be treated in a sensitive way. It is important that your workers/volunteers are aware and prepared for responding to a child/young person who may disclose abuse.

Key Practice Point Responding to a child/young person who discloses abuse:

- Be as calm and natural as possible.
- Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked.
- Do not panic.
- Do not promise to keep secrets.
- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for the child/young person.
- Remember, the child or young person may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Listen to what the child/young person has to say. Give them the time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to.
- Do not pressurise the child/young person. Allow him or her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language.
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger, or disbelief.
- Accept what the young person has to say —false disclosures are very rare.
- It is important to differentiate between the person who carried out the abuse and the act of abuse itself. The child/young person quite possibly may love or strongly like the alleged abuser while also disliking what was done to them. It is important therefore to avoid expressing any judgement of, or anger towards the alleged perpetrator while talking with the child/young person.
- It may be necessary to reassure the child/young person that your feelings towards him or her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what they have disclosed.
- Reassure the child/young person that they have taken the right action in talking to you. Questions should be supportive and for the purpose of clarification only. Do not ask leading questions.
- Explain to the child/young person that this information will only be shared with people who can help. By refusing to make a commitment to secrecy to the child/young person, you do run the risk that they may not tell you everything (or, indeed, anything) there and then. However, it is better to

do this than to tell a lie and ruin the child/young person's confidence in yet another adult. By being honest, it is more likely that the child/young person will return to you at another time.

At the earliest possible opportunity

- Record in writing, in a factual manner, what the child/young person has said, including, as far as possible, the exact words used by the child/young person.
- Inform the DLP immediately and agree measures to protect the child/young person, e.g. report the matter directly to Tusla.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.

Ongoing support

Following a disclosure by a child/young person, it is important that the worker/volunteer continues in a supportive relationship with the child/young person. Disclosure is a huge step for a child/young person. Workers/volunteers should continue to offer support, particularly by:

- Maintaining a positive relationship with the child/young person;
- Keeping lines of communication open by listening carefully to the child/young person;
- Continuing to include the child/young person in the usual activities.

Any further disclosure should be treated as a first disclosure and responded to as indicated above. Where necessary, immediate action should be taken to ensure the child/young person's safety.

Tip: Some useful phrases when responding to a disclosure
Things to say
Wait until I get my manager so you can tell him/her too?
I am going to do my best to help you
I can't do anything
You did the right thing by telling me, this is what I am going to do next...
I can't believe it, I'm shocked
You are not to blame
This is your fault
Is there anything else you want to share?
Don't tell me any more

Reasonable grounds for a Safeguarding or welfare concern

Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, section 3.2 states: Reasonable grounds for a Safeguarding or welfare concern a child or young person may disclose to a trusted worker or volunteer that they have been or are being harmed or abused. Children/young people will often have different ways of communicating that they are being abused. If a child or young person hints at or tells a worker or volunteer that he or she is being harmed by someone, be it a parent/carer, another adult or by another child/young person (peer abuse), it should be treated in a sensitive way. It is important that SJAI workers/volunteers are aware and prepared for responding to a child/young person who may disclose abuse

If you are concerned about a child, you may need to report it to TUSLA. The four steps that guide SJAI through the process of making the decision are set out below. Please note that in an emergency situation where you believe the child is at risk of immediate harm, SJAI should contact TUSLA without delay without making a written report. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or risk of harm, while waiting for TUSLA to intervene. If SJAI thinks the child is in immediate danger and cannot contact TUSLA, SJAI should contact An Garda Síochána. In such an emergency situation, if you are a mandated person, you must follow up with a mandated report to TUSLA

within three days. (Note: In these emergency situations, you do not need to follow the four steps outlined below, once the child is safe then you contact the safeguarding team. Please note that confidentiality should never be used as a reason not to report child abuse.

Step 1: Member receives disclosure or has concern about a particular situation/person

Step 2: Member contacts the safeguarding team directly with the concern/disclosure

Step 3: Safeguarding team will advise on next steps and a disclosure has been made and member informs person who made disclosure of those next steps

Step 4: Member completes the internal report form and returns it directly to Safeguarding officer

Note that there is no intermediary steps/persons when making a safeguarding complaint, it goes directly from member to safeguarding officer. All mandated persons' reports by SJAI members should be made in conjunction with Safeguarding Officers.

TUSLA national approach to practice — the Signs of Safety

TUSLA has adopted the Signs of Safety approach as a way of working with children and their families. The Signs of Safety approach is helpful, as it gives a clear and effective way to assess risk and find solutions. In TUSLA's *Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns* it uses four simple questions to ask when thinking about and working with a family:

1. What are we worried about?
2. What's working well?
3. What needs to happen?
4. How worried are we on a scale of 1 to 10?

These questions provide a sound and well-structured focus for the conversations that take place when we believe children's needs are not being met and something else is needed to improve outcomes for children. The questions below in Step 1 have been developed using the Signs of Safety approach. They provide a focus for our consideration before SJAI contacts TUSLA. The information SJAI provides can help TUSLA to ensure children and families get a timely and appropriate response.

Direct disclosure is one way child abuse may come to light. In your role in SJAI, you may work with children and young people in a variety of other ways, either directly in your Division, briefly at competitions or through patient contact. Members may come across actual or suspected child abuse in different contexts. This may 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.

Retrospective disclosure

There are an increasing number of adults disclosing abuse that took place during their childhood. Often such disclosures come to light when people attend counselling. They also sometimes arise in adult services and services which work with parents/guardians and families. Where such a disclosure is made it is essential to establish whether there may be current risk to any child or young person who may be in contact with the person subject to an abuse allegation (PSAA) revealed in the disclosure. This is important even where the children/young people about whom there may be a concern are still to be identified. If any risk is deemed to exist to a child/young person who may be in contact with a Person Subject to an Allegation of Abuse, follow our organisation's child protection and welfare reporting procedure; without delay. In case of Emergency contact An Gardaí.

In cases of retrospective abuse, a report needs to be made where there is a current or potential future risk to children from the person against whom there is an allegation. The term retrospective abuse refers to abuse that an adult discloses that took place during their childhood.

This is because the person against whom there is an allegation may pose a current risk to children. You may wish to seek guidance from our Safeguarding Officers. While TUSLA will make every effort to examine these cases, it is a very complex area. It involves the accused's rights to their good name, privacy and the right to earn a living, as well as the requirements of natural justice. When the alleged victim can cooperate with TUSLA, it can greatly help TUSLA to examine the potential future risk to children. In cases of retrospective abuse, where there are no identified children, SJAÍ will complete a Retrospective Abuse Form and send it to TUSLA. This form can be found on the TUSLA website: www.TUSLA.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms/.

The guiding principles in regard to reporting child abuse are summarised as follows:

- The safety and well-being of the child or young person must take priority
- Reports should be made without delay by SJAÍ to TUSLA and/or Gardaí if necessary
- While the basis for concern must be established as comprehensively as possible, children should not be interviewed in detail about the suspected abuse.

Steps to take when concerned about a child

Anyone who has received a disclosure of child abuse or who has concerns of abuse should bring it to the attention of the Safeguarding Officer immediately by direct phone contact and completion of the internal Safeguarding Reporting Form (See Appendix A). The Safeguarding Officer will assess and review the information that has been provided. The Safeguarding Officer may contact TUSLA for informal advice relating to the allegation, concern, or disclosure. After consultation with TUSLA officials, the Safeguarding Officer will then take one of two options:

- Report the allegation, concern, or disclosure to TUSLA
- Not make a formal report to TUSLA but keep a record of the concerns on file.

The reasons for not reporting the allegation, concern or disclosure will be clearly recorded. The member who made the initial report will be informed if a formal report is not being made to TUSLA and it is open to him/her to make a formal report themselves, directly to the relevant authority if they feel this is necessary (See Appendix C for details of TUSLA offices).

Where a formal report is made, then TUSLA will then liaise with An Garda Síochána. It is likely that TUSLA will want to speak to the person who first made the report to clarify facts and the circumstances of the report.

In the event of an emergency where you think a child is in immediate/severe danger and you cannot get in touch with the Safeguarding Officer or TUSLA, a report should be made directly to An Garda Síochána. Remember, the first priority is always for the safety and welfare of the young person and under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm.

The Safeguarding Officer has received training in recognising and responding to child abuse. Discussing a concern with the Safeguarding Officer is not regarded as making an accusation against another person. It is best practice to keep parents and guardians informed of all matters relating to their children also if a report is being made to TUSLA about their Child. The Safeguarding Officer will ensure that the most appropriate person informs the parents/guardian of the child about the report, unless doing so might place the child at greater risk. The Children First 2015 Act does not require you to inform the Family if by doing so the child is placed further at risk, or the families knowledge of the report could impair TUSLA in carrying out a risk assessment or you reasonably believe that by doing so it may place you at risk of harm from the family. Responses from parents/ guardians should be noted and included in official report. A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable should also be communicated to the Safeguarding Officer.

The Safeguarding Officer will follow up with Child and Family Services in such cases.

Remember the Safeguarding Officer will be a support to you throughout the reporting process and any subsequent investigation.

Confidentiality

As an organisation SJA1 collects and stores very sensitive information. This is stored in a secure manner.

Where child protection and welfare concerns arise, information must be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the best interest of the child/young person with the relevant statutory authorities and with parents/guardians.

No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. Those working with children/young people and families and in adult services should make this clear to parents/guardians and to the child/young person.

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

Parents/guardians and children/young people have a right to know if personal information is being shared, unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk or may put the reporter at risk.

Limits of confidentiality

At the earliest opportunity, tell the child that you understand that they have come to you because they trust you. Advise the young person that you need to share this information with some people who understand this area and who can help. Advise that these secrets are not helpful and should not be kept as they make matters worse. Such secrets hide things that need to be known if people are to be helped and protected from further ongoing hurt. By refusing to make a commitment to secrecy to the child, you do run the risk that they may not tell you everything (or, indeed, anything) there and then. However, it is better to do this than to tell a lie and ruin the child's confidence in yet another adult. By being honest, it is more likely that the child will return to you at another time. You may be tempted to reassure the child about certain things, however, think before you promise anything — do not make promises you cannot keep.

What to record?

The Internal Safeguarding Reporting Form (see Appendix A) must contain as much of the following as possible:

- Accurate identifying information — including all known full names and surnames, addresses, date of birth, age, disability
- If applicable, ethnicity, first language (need for interpreter, if known) of the child and all the known members of his or her family and any other adults living in the household
- In cases of suspected abuse or neglect, family members should not be used as interpreters
- Details of the concern allegation, or incident — outline the exact nature of the concern and include dates, times, and names of persons present.
- It is important to describe any observed injuries or behaviours that may be linked to the incident. In cases where neglect or abuse is indicated over time, the reporter should be encouraged to provide a chronology of the evidence or symptoms in the child that give rise to the concern.
- **Views of the parent/carer and views of the child (where age appropriate):** the report must provide any accounts of the parent's or child's views about the concern that are known to them.

SJAI members should be aware that the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 makes provision for the protection from civil liability of persons who have communicated child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of TUSLA or to any member of An Garda Síochána. This protection applies to organisations as well as to individuals.

It is essential that confidentiality applies when reporting concerns. This means that only those who need to know about the concerns should be told of a suspicion, allegation, or disclosure of abuse.

As previously stated, all concerns are reported directly to the Safeguarding Officer. An Internal Report Form should accompany any raised concern. The Safeguarding Officer(s) will decide whether or not to report the concern to TUSLA. Should they decide not to report then they will inform the member /person

who raised the concern as to their reason not to report. The member/person can then make a report directly if they so choose, this can be done without fear of Penalty.

Record keeping

The National Safeguarding Officer and National Deputy Safeguarding Officers are responsible for keeping the following records related to Safeguarding in a secure manner. The National Safeguarding Officer, the National Deputy Safeguarding Officer, the Regional Safeguarding Officers and the Commissioner are the only officers who have access to these records. The records include:

- Any complaints about the safety and welfare of children/young people while working with SJAI
- Any record of suspicions raised by members about possible abuse, which were not supported by any objective indication of abuse or neglect
- Any disclosures, concerns, or allegations of child abuse
- The follow up to any complaints, disclosure, concerns, or allegations, including informal advice from TUSLA, reports to the TUSLA and informing parents/guardians
- Any serious bullying or misconduct complaints related to the SJAI work with children/young people and the follow up action
- Signed acceptance forms of the SJAI Safeguarding Policy by all members.

The Garda Vetting Team are responsible for keeping all Garda Vetting documents in a locked filing cabinet in Headquarters.

The Cadet Divisional Manager/Member in Charge in each Cadet Division is responsible for keeping all membership forms, records and parental consent forms in a locked filing cabinet/box at divisional level. It is the responsibility of the Director of Cadets & Youth Department to regularly check that these forms are completed and filed appropriately.

The Organisation collects personal member information locally which is updated regularly and is then stored locally in a secure manner. It is the responsibility of the Member-in-Charge of each Division to collect this information and to ensure that it is securely stored as directed by the Commissioner and National Policy. It is also their responsibility to share that information in a secure manner as directed by the Commissioner and/or the Safeguarding Officer(s).

GDPR and Data Protection Regulations 2018, entrusts organisations such as ours with responsibilities surrounding members'/patients' Data. It is to be noted that the proportionate provision of information to the Statutory agencies necessary for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.

Safe recruitment procedures for members

SJAI takes all reasonable steps to ensure that all people recruited are suitable to work with children. SJAI advertises volunteer and paid positions as widely as possible, including advertising online, at events etc. SJAI operates a strict recruitment procedure in line with Children First National Guidelines for Safeguarding and Welfare. Our recruitment pathway includes all prospective applicants be Garda-Vetted, have references (supplied on application form) checked and undergo core training in Safeguarding. This refers to the recruitment of persons from 18 years of age.

Application

An application form with a clear job description and information about SJAI will be provided to all prospective members upon their expression of interest in joining the organisation. The job description identifies the role and responsibility of the post and also outlines the minimum personal qualities and skills required to fill the post. This form includes all relevant information about the applicant including past experience of working with children. All applicants are required to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be unsuitable to work with young people and declaring any past criminal convictions or cases pending against them. (Appendix E).

Interview

All applicants are interviewed by a panel comprising of at least two adult representatives of SJAI. Divisional Managers should ensure that the interviewers have the appropriate skills and maturity to interview candidates. Interviewers will explore the information stated on the application form and assess the applicant's suitability for the post. The information supplied by the applicant will only be available to the persons directly involved in the recruitment process. Each applicant is expected to supply the names of two referees (not family members) who will testify as to their character, their suitability to the role of the employee/volunteer or any other issues which may affect their ability to perform the tasks required of them, including working with children. Where possible, at least one referee should have first-hand knowledge of the applicant's previous work or contact with children. All references should be received in writing and later confirmed by telephone, letter, or personal visit. Any further information gathered through further contact with referees should be attached to the application form.

Identification: SJAI will ensure that the identity of the applicant is confirmed against some documentation (ID card, driving licence, age card or passport) which gives his or her full name, address together with a signature or photograph. This should be compared with the written application.

Garda vetting

Garda vetting will be sought from all potential applicants at the time of initial application. If issues arise during the garda vetting process, the final decision regarding recruitment is made by the Commissioner following a review of all relevant information. Garda Vetting is carried out routinely in line with National Guidelines which since Jan 2021 is every three years. New members will only be issued their SJ Pin number when they are safeguarding Compliant, likewise all re-vetting of members and issuing of Letters of Practice will only be sanctioned when members have completed Garda Vetting, TUSLA Children First e-learning certificate and SJAI safeguarding training. (Holders of LOP's must also have met the

PHECC requirements). Note all three must be completed in the one year and will be linked to validating a Member's ID Badge. Members are automatically stood down from active service if any of the three safeguarding certificates goes out of date until such time as the certificate(s) is/are renewed.

Induction

Induction takes place over a six-month period. This timeframe also serves as a probation period. During this period, suitability and commitment to St John Ambulance policies and safe practices are assessed by the Divisional Manager at divisional level. Following successful completion of the probation period, the member's appointment is approved. The induction process is carried out at divisional level and covers the following:

- Knowledge of organisation and Division
- Introduction to colleagues
- SJA rules and regulations
- Member's role and responsibilities
- Health and safety guidelines
- Safeguarding Policy, including support available through Safeguarding Officer
- Code of Behaviour including Anti Bullying Policy
- Supervision, support, and review system explained

Safeguarding training

All members are required to undergo Safeguarding Training. This comprises undergoing the TUSLA Children First e-learning Safeguarding training and achieving its certification together with participation in SJA Safeguarding training also. This training will be repeated every three years in line with updated Organisational policies.

This training will be reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Committee.

All members shall sign off to agree that they have read and will always work in accordance with this Safeguarding policy.

Feedback and questions from members are welcome at all times in relation to all aspects of the policy.

Details of interview and induction training will be recorded by the Divisional Manager (or by an officer nominated to do so by the Divisional Manager), along with notes on any matters arising during any part of the process. These records are securely maintained by the Divisional Manager/Officer nominated by him/her.

Supervision

Supervision is a planned process which gives members an opportunity to raise any questions they may have, discuss any problems they are experiencing or suggestions for any changes they may wish to make.

It also allows the supervisor to assess the need for change, address any competency issues or provide increased support/training to an individual member. A member's understanding of Safeguarding will be specifically addressed in supervision.

Supervision should take place three times per year, though this may be increased at the members/supervisor's request. A brief record is kept of each supervision session and maintained securely by the Superintendent in a locked filing cabinet/box.

SJAI recognises that members should be supported through supervision. Supervision will be provided by the Superintendent/Officer nominated by the Superintendent in each Division to all members and will occur in planned way. District Officers will supervise Superintendents and ensure that supervision is occurring in their respective Divisions.

Initial Review: In addition to supervision, an initial review will be conducted halfway through the probation period. This review will assess progress to do and will include a review of the member's understanding and use of the Safeguarding policy.

End of Probation Review: This review will confirm whether or not an appointment as member of SJAI has been confirmed. If a satisfactory standard of performance has not been reached, the probation period may be extended, if considered appropriate by the member and supervisor. Should it be deemed that an extension of the probationary period is not deemed appropriate then membership will be rescinded.

Termination of membership

All members serve in a voluntary capacity and do so by agreeing to abide by the rules of the Organisation. Failure to comply with these or other such situations that would render someone unsuitable for membership then that member can have their membership terminated by order of the Commissioner. Short-term suspension of membership can also be imposed in some circumstances.

Transition from cadets to adult divisions

Our youth Members are called Cadets. These are aged between 10 and 17 years of age. A Cadet ceases to be a member of a youth Division automatically on their 18th birthday and at the same time automatically becomes a member of their Adult Division. These members must then upskill and participate in Induction training, Safeguarding Training and undergo Garda vetting before achieving active adult membership status and receiving their SJ Pin number.

Procedures for allegations of abuse against a member

Where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of SJAI, there are two procedures that SJAI will activate:

1. The reporting procedure in respect of the child
2. The procedure for dealing with the member

In the case of the allegation being against a member of SJAI, the Safeguarding Officer will follow the normal reporting procedure in SJAI.

The Safeguarding Officer will then report the allegation to the Commissioner of SJAI. It will be the responsibility of the Commissioner to engage and inform the staff member/volunteer against whom an allegation has been made of the outcome of the recommendation of the Safeguarding Officer and ensure that all formal processes are undertaken. In all instances the member will be asked to step back from active service and where a member refuses to voluntarily step aside then they will be stood down from active service until such time as the matter is concluded, when they will either return to service or be permanently removed from the organisation as determined by the Commissioner.

While the investigation process is underway the organisation will appoint a support officer to liaise with the member concerned while the Safeguarding Officer will liaise with the young person/people and their family.

If there is an allegation or suspicion in relation to the Safeguarding Officer, the Commissioner will deal with all aspects of the case, including the reporting procedure.

If there is an allegation or suspicion in relation to the Commissioner, the Chairman of the Board of Directors will appoint an independent person external to SJAI to investigate the complaint.

If an allegation is made against a member of SJAI the following steps will be taken:

- The allegation will be assessed promptly and carefully.
- The Commissioner of SJAI will be regularly updated on all aspects of the case by the Safeguarding Officer.
- The allegation will be assessed by the Safeguarding Officer to establish if there are reasonable grounds for concern and whether a formal report will be made to the statutory authorities, at this point. The Safeguarding Officer may wish to contact TUSLA for advice on the issue.
- The safety of the child is the priority of SJAI and all necessary measures will be taken to ensure that the child is safe.
- SJAI will ensure that no other children/young people are at risk during this period and will inform other relevant agencies or parents/carers as appropriate.

- The measures which can be taken to ensure the safety of children and young people can include the following:
 - suspension of membership;
- The member will be notified that an allegation has been made and what the nature of the allegation is. The member has a right to respond to this and this response should be documented and retained. This response will be forwarded to investigating authorities if a formal report is made.
- SJAI will ensure that the principle of 'natural justice' will apply whereby a person is considered innocent until proven otherwise.
- SJAI will work in conjunction with An Garda Síochána and TUSLA and any decisions on action to be taken in regard to the member will be taken in conjunction with these agencies, if required.
- The person against whom the allegation is made will need support during this period and SJAI will provide advice on how to access the relevant support services. The Organisation will also appoint a support officer for the member.
- The Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 makes provision for the protection from civil liability of persons who have communicated child abuse reasonably and in good faith to designated officers within TUSLA or any member of An Garda Síochána. This protection applies to organisations as well as to individuals.

Code of behaviour

SJAI has developed this code of behaviour to guide adult members in their interactions with children. . It is not possible to provide guidance on every potential situation which may arise, however, adults, by their example, should be a positive influence on the behaviour of young people. This Code of Behaviour is based on a mutual respect between adult members and all children with whom they have contact. All members are expected to adhere to the Code of Behaviour.

SJAI expects all adult members to maintain a child-centred approach in their work. This includes:

- Respecting the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treating each young person equally regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural background, or religion
- Being positive during activities and interactions with young people so that they leave with a sense of achievement and increased self-esteem
- Recognising the development needs and capacity of all young people, regardless of their ability by emphasising participation for all, while avoiding excessive competition. Skill development and personal satisfaction should always take priority over competition.

Creating a safe environment

Members should ensure that their work with young people takes place in an open environment. This measure aims to ensure the safety of the young person and protects the adult member against any allegations of improper behaviour. If privacy is required, i.e. to manage a disciplinary issue/treatment of an injury, the adult should always have someone else with them. Alternatively, the adult should arrange to have someone within vision and preferably within earshot.

- **Do** ensure that two adults always attend a patient under the age of 18.
- **Do** ensure that there is always an adequate number of adult members present at all activities.

In an incident of a life-threatening emergency, adults who work alone must summon help at the earliest opportunity, in accordance with organisation regulations.

Ratios may vary depending on the age of the group, the level of ability, and the nature of the activity. Divisional Practices ratios of 1:12 +1 extra Adult and outdoor activity should never be less than a 1:8 +1 extra adult ratio. Adults should refer to and observe the relevant programme guidelines.

- **Do** ensure that mixed-gender Divisions have mixed-gender leadership. It is good practice to have mixed leadership to be able to cope with emergencies, accidents, or arguments. In some situations, young people may feel more comfortable with an adult member of the same gender.
- **Do** plan the arrival and departure of young people. Superintendents/members-in-charge must ensure that responsible adults are at the premises before children arrive and that adults do not leave until all children have left/been collected.
- **Don't** spend time alone with a young person if it can be avoided.

- **Don't** give car lifts on your own to youth members, unless it is absolutely unavoidable and, in such cases, obtain parental consent in advance, and advise the senior officer of your planned journey. Ensure that children travel in the back seat of the car in such circumstances.

Maintaining boundaries

All adult members are responsible for establishing and maintaining clear boundaries with the young people in SJAI. As an adult member, you are expected to understand that the nature of your workplaces you in a position of trust. All adult members are responsible for their own actions and behaviours and should avoid any conduct which could result in their intentions, motivations or personal boundaries being questioned. This includes all behaviour within the organisation, not simply in the presence of children. Boundaries aren't always easy to maintain, particularly if there are only a few years difference between an adult and the young people in their care. Yet a very real power balance exists that cannot be overlooked. This has implications for how you communicate and interact with a young person. Young people, parents and other adult members are entitled to raise any concerns about an individual member's behaviour with SJAI at any time.

- **Do** remember that you are not a friend or surrogate parent to young people in your care. You have a mentoring relationship which can provide invaluable support to young people, and which requires good personal boundaries.
- **Do** refer to the *Code of Behaviour*, the *Safeguarding Policy*, senior officers, and Safeguarding Officer if you are unclear about the expectations for behaviour in your role.
- **Do** remember that SJAI is an interest. It is important to maintain proper balances between your personal and work commitments and SJAI activities.
- **Do** consider the situation; this may be the most important point of all. While your intentions may be based on the most innocent of motives, if in doubt about how your actions might be interpreted always adopt the safest course of action. Always consider how an independent third party might view your behaviour in any given scenario.
- **Don't** tolerate favouritism, exclusion, or harsh disciplinary regimes.
- **Don't** behave in a way that may lead others to question your use of judgement.

Contact with children/young people

Parents and children will be advised that adults in SJAI will only contact children in relation to SJAI activities. All communications should be directly with a child's parents/guardian via phone call, group email/text etc about activities related to their children. WhatsApp groups are not allowed for Cadet Divisions' parents and/or Cadets.

As a rule, adult members are not permitted to contact children or young people through social networking, private email, online chat, etc. This is the technological equivalent of entering a room with a young person and closing the door. In addition, content on an adult social network site may not be age-appropriate for a young person. It is recognised that in a minority of cases, some members have pre-existing family or close family/friend relationships with a young person and their family, prior to the young person joining SJAI. In such cases, if social network relationships exist between the adult and

young person, SJAI asks that adult members consider their position regarding the general policy of SJAI and alert the Superintendent/member-in-charge as to the pre-existing relationship and online contact. The Superintendent will then discuss this with the young person and the child's parents to clarify their agreement to continued online contact, based on this pre-existing relationship and outside of the SJAI adult member/young person relationship. All parents will be informed of this policy in writing by the Safeguarding Officer.

Young people are also advised not to contact adult members through social networking, private email, chat, etc. If a child contacts an adult through such a mechanism (e.g. Facebook), the adult member should ignore the contact, and at the next opportunity in SJAI, remind the young person of SJAI policy.

Adult/youth relationship

It is a criminal offence in Ireland for anyone to engage in or attempt to engage in sexual activity with anyone under the legal age of consent (17 years of age) and any such relationship will be notified to the authorities. It is inappropriate for any adult member to form or seek to form a personal or intimate relationship with any Cadet, not simply those under the age of consent. Adult Members should be aware that if they break this trust their suitability to work in St John Ambulance Ireland will be called into question and their membership may be terminated.

Occasionally a young person may develop an infatuation for an adult who works with them. These adults should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. Adults should remain aware, however, that such infatuations carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and, therefore, should make an effort to ensure that their own behaviour is above reproach. An adult who becomes aware that a child or young person is developing an infatuation should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with the Safeguarding Officer and parent/carer so that appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment.

- Do report any concerns about a young person's behaviour toward you or another adult to your divisional officer and to the Safeguarding Officer
- Do avoid favouritism with your time/energy/attention toward any individual young person. On-going familiarity with any one child on the part of an adult member is questionable and requires immediate intervention
- Do remember on-going familiarity from a child toward an adult member is also cause for concern and should be discouraged by the adult concerned
- Don't ignore any feelings of unease about a relationship between a young person and an adult member. Discuss any concerns with the Safeguarding Officer

Youth–youth relationships

- In adolescence, young people become increasingly aware of their own bodies and sexuality, and emotional attachments can begin. It is important for adult members to help some young people understand the nature of public and private behaviour and the need to respect other people's privacy and personal space. Friendships form an important part of SJAI for young people, and it would not be uncommon that these friendships develop into more personal relationships. There may be occasions, however, when adult members will need to advise and explain to young people that how they conduct personal relationships in SJAI settings may be inappropriate. Should a difficulty persist

in this regard, parents may need to be informed and their support enlisted. When giving advice, adult members must uphold the law. For the purposes of criminal law, the age of consent to sexual activity in the Republic of Ireland is 17 years of age. The law of sexual activity applies to young people as well as to adults.

- **Do** set clear boundaries with young people about unacceptable and acceptable behaviour in SJAI settings, i.e., on duty, at discos etc
- **Don't** embarrass or tease young people about personal relationships

Substance misuse

Adult Members must set a positive example for young people, and this extends to use of or discussion about drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Adult Members must never smoke or vape around young people. At adult events where alcohol is available, it should be consumed in a way that shows respect for self and for others. Adult Members must always observe the laws which govern the sale and consumption of alcohol and tobacco. Adults must always be fit to supervise young people and must be free from any alcohol, drugs or medications which may impair their judgement.

The use of alcohol or tobacco by young people must never be tolerated and always addressed by adult members. Parents should be made aware of any concerns related to substance misuse.

- **Do** remember that young people are impressionable and may look up to you. Aim to use your influence in a positive way at all times
- **Don't** discuss personal use of alcohol or substances with or in the presence of young people
- **Don't** socialise with young people outside of SJAI. Local Divisions should ensure that young people never attend adult social events, i.e., in pubs etc.

Physical contact

Physical contact should only take place when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity. It should only ever take place in a safe and open environment, i.e., one which is easily observed by others. When a child is upset, try to seek ways to provide comfort and support without unnecessary or excessive physical contact. Members need to be aware that particular actions if taken out of context could be negatively interpreted and may allow unfounded accusations of impropriety to be raised against a member. Members need to be aware of the dangers of a too casual and unthinking familiarity with the young people in their charge and should ensure that their attitudes and actions are carefully considered at all times. Where physical contact is necessary (e.g., first aid demonstrations and practical exams), obtain consent from the Child, be sensitive and avoid touching the child yourself. Demonstrate on an adult member.

Adults must ensure that personal physical contact with other adults is always appropriate in the presence of children while involved in SJAI activities. This means that physical contact associated with personal relationships (i.e., kissing, holding hands, cuddling etc.), is not appropriate in front of young people.

- **Do** ask a child's permission before you touch them on the rare occasions where it is appropriate to so touch
- **Do** minimise physical contact with children as much as possible

- **Do** remain aware of cultural or religious views about touching and always be sensitive to issues of gender.
- **Do** encourage children to complete self-care tasks themselves in private (i.e., a child ill on a bus, provide fresh clothing and encourage them to change in private)
- **Do** ensure, for example in first aid training where physical contact is unavoidable that: (i) another adult is present; (ii) the child's permission is gained; (iii) the breast, buttocks and groin area are not touched.
- **Don't** initiate physical contact with a child
- **Don't** allow a child sit on your knee. If a child is upset, ensure that he or she sits beside you
- **Don't** engage in horseplay

Personal care

Young people are always entitled to respect and privacy and especially when in a state of undress, changing clothes, or undertaking any form of personal care.

- **Do** avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress
- **Do** avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- **Do** announce intention of entering changing rooms
- **Don't** change in the same place as children
- **Don't** shower, bathe, or use bathrooms at the same times as children
- **Don't** assist with any personal care task which a child or young person can undertake by themselves.

Curriculum

SJAI ensures that all material used in skill development, including information assessed at competitions is age-appropriate, i.e. presentation of patient affected by substances etc. Any concerns about curriculum content should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer.

Competitions

It is recognised that competitions can be stressful events for young people. While competitions are necessary to allow children to demonstrate their skill base and make progress, it is essential that Superintendents and competition organisers minimise stress for young people.

Superintendents will:

- Ensure young people bring adequate food with them on day of competition

- Make appropriate provisions for any stressed child (i.e. having them waiting for the shortest period of time/discuss same with competition organisers)
- Ensure that children are adequately supervised at all times, including waiting times during competitions.

House-to-house fundraising

These obligations are devised to ensure the safety of children in the care of SJAI during door-to-door style collection and should be read in conjunction with the SJAI rules and regulations and any other policies relating to House-to-house or fundraising policies. The following must be adhered to:

- In accordance with Garda permit procedures, only children over the age of fourteen years of age may participate in house collections
- Parents will be advised of the start and planned end of the house collections, the agreed meeting point, and the area to be visited.
- Children must be always under adult supervision and the supervising adult must be able to always see the children in his/her care
- A maximum ratio of one supervising adult to four children should be observed
- Children and/or supervising adults must never enter a house under any circumstances
- Children should hand over any envelopes containing money to the supervising adult immediately
- While children should be uniformed, no personal information (name badges etc) should be displayed and children should be instructed to only give their first name, if asked

Transport

Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. Anyone expected to use their own vehicles for transporting children should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded. Drivers must hold full driver's licence for the vehicle driven. It is a legal requirement that all passengers should wear seatbelts and it is the responsibility of the member to ensure that this requirement is met.

As a rule, the responsibility for getting children to and from SJAI activities lies with parents/guardians. However, at times the division may take responsibility for organising transport to events or activities. It is always preferable that a reputable bus company be engaged on these occasions.

In the case of transporting patients under the age of 18, two adults should travel in the back of the ambulance with them, whenever possible.

Medications

Parents/guardians have primary responsibility for the medical needs of their children. All children under the age of 18 years must have an Activities Consent Form completed for them by their parents/guardians who should be made aware of why the medical information requested on the form is needed and of the

importance of giving full and accurate medical details on their children. Most Divisions will have young people who will take medication on a long-term basis (e.g., with epilepsy) or have to take it for a defined period of time (course of antibiotics). Young people who have severe asthma may need daily inhalers but may also need additional dose in the event of an attack. Appendix F sets out guidance around the handling and administration of medication. These procedures should ideally be developed with parents, and they should take account of the comfort level of adult members taking on such a role as well as the level of training or expertise required for more complex interventions.

Communication

Adult Members should communicate in an age-appropriate way with children. Adults should be respectful in the way that they speak with everyone, especially young people. Aim to set a positive example in your communication with young people, individually and when speaking to children in a group setting.

- **Do** communicate appropriately, using respectful language, even when faced with challenging behaviour from young people
- **Do** ensure that you speak respectfully of other St John Ambulance adult and young members in all of your discussions with young people. It is wholly inappropriate to discuss adults/other cadets/adult SJAI issues with young people
- **Do** use age-appropriate language in front of young people, cursing and foul language are not acceptable especially around young people of any age
- **Do** remain mindful of sharing personal information with young people
- **Do** give feedback that relates to a child's performance, not to their personality or appearance
- **Do** remain aware of your own communication style and how it could be interpreted
- **Don't** use sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive remarks in your conversations with young people under any circumstance
- **Don't** have any form of communication with a child or young person that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative even in jest, i.e., verbal comments, letters, email, mail, phone call, texts, comments about someone's physical appearance
- **Don't** make inappropriate jokes to or about a child
- **Don't** discuss your own emotional difficulties/details of intimate relationships with or in presence of young people

Use of technology

Mobile phones

A mobile phone is a useful communication and safety tool for everyone, including children. However, there is always a potential for phone calls or text messages to be misinterpreted by the young person or by their parents. SJAI advises that other forms of communication are available.

- **Do remember** all communications re details of SJAI activities are to a parent's mobile phone via individual or group text
- **Do** ensure that any bullying behaviour associated with use of mobile phones (i.e., unpleasant texts, picture messages, etc.) detected within SJAI is treated in accordance with the anti-bullying policy (see Appendix B)
- **Do** ensure that if your mobile number is being used as a contact number on an activity, your phone is charged and in credit
- **Mobile Phones are not permitted to be used during divisional training sessions. No photos or recordings are allowed to be taken at cadet events unless permission has been sought and granted by Parents and cadets involved as well as by CP and Youth Director**
- **Don't use** your mobile phone to communicate with cadets

WhatsApp is not a method of communication to be used by Cadet Divisions for Parents or Cadets are not allowed to have a cadet's members WhatsApp group.

Use of email and social networking sites

Email and social networking sites have enormous benefits but can also be used for harmful or abusive purposes.

- **Do** use your SJAI email address for SJAI business (and SJAI business only)
- **Do** maintain protected privacy settings on your personal social network sites and encourage young people to do the same
- **Do** remember that emails and Facebook chat message history etc. are retrievable and effectively permanent, as by law, they are stored on the Internet Service Provider's servers for at least seven years, even if deleted by the original user.
- **Don't** contact young people through chatrooms or social network sites (e.g., Facebook, MSN, Twitter) and do not give young people access to your personal social network page/blog/email address
- **Don't** email young people as individuals when sharing information in relation to events but do so as part of a disclosed list, having received prior permission to disclose these details in a group email

SJAI Division Facebook pages

All Divisions operating Facebook accounts need to be particularly aware of the following safeguarding requirements of SJAI.

- Divisions should have a Facebook page with '**LIKES**' — not a profile with 'friends'
- There should be **NO FACILITY** for free posting of comments by others on a Division's Facebook page

For details on how to convert a profile to a page, comments settings, and more, see the SJAI Social Media Guidelines and set-up guide which is available on the St John Ambulance website.

Photography and videos and images of children

Under no circumstances should adult members take photographs/videos of young people on their personal phones. No adult member should ever upload photographs or images of a child to the internet without official SJAI approval and parent consent.

No member, child or adult should send a picture that is obscene, indecent, or menacing and pictures should always be sensitive about other people's gender, colour, religion or personal background. Children should be advised to avoid sending a picture or video to someone they don't know very well.

Photographs/Videos of children during SJAI events may only be taken with the knowledge and consent of the child's parents and the Superintendent/Officer in Charge.

At the time of initial application, all parents are asked to complete a Consent form, including a section which gives their permission for photography/video of their child.

Each Division will keep a record of this consent. Some parents may have concerns and will not want their child to be photographed or videoed. The Superintendent will keep a record of these children and will make all reasonable efforts to ensure these children are not photographed or videoed, while not singling out such children so as to identify this aspect of the child's membership. Exceptions may occur at times of group activities/events. Superintendents must ensure that this is explained to parents who can consider whether they wish their child to participate in such activities.

Images must never be taken if a child is vulnerable, upset or hurt. Children should never be photographed or filmed while changing clothes/in a state of undress. In general, photographs/video of group activities should be taken, rather than focusing on any individual child. Each Division must ensure that they store images securely and destroy images securely when no longer required. Care should be taken when using photographs/video in SJAI. If a young person is named, avoid using their photograph/video. If a photograph/video is used, avoid naming the young person. No image of a child should be used on a SJAI website without written consent from the child's parents.

At events, it is beyond the scope of SJAI to monitor camera and camera phone activity of members of the public present (i.e., parents). At events, the Officer in Charge will:

- Request that photographs are not taken without permission
- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour and

production afterwards Inform young people and parents that a SJAI photographer will attend the activity

- Pay due regard to image consent forms on record in SJAI
- Ensure that photographers will not have any unsupervised access/individual access to young people

Any concerns about photography taking place or the inappropriate use of images should be reported to the Officer in Charge and to the Safeguarding Officer.

Phone usage during activities

Parents and young people will be made aware that personal mobile phone usage may be limited to particular times during SJAI activities. This means that on activities, the Officer in Charge is the primary contact for parents, and he/she should be contacted in the event of an emergency. This policy ensures that mobile phone usage does not distract young people from the activity at hand or reduce their safe awareness of their environment. During camps or overnight activities, a preferred time period will be stated when parents may make contact on a young person's mobile phone if they wish. Parents should be advised that contact outside of this time may not be possible due to the nature of the activities.

Virtual training

The Organisation has an online training policy for Cadet Divisions for the holding of Virtual Classes. Special permission must be sought from the Director of Cadet and Youth and Safeguarding Team by the Superintendent/Member in Charge of our Youth (Cadet) Divisions to organise such virtual divisional training and this must be organised in conjunction with our **Virtual Training Policy 2020**.

Managing challenging behaviour

Young people in SJAI need to learn to become responsible and to accept themselves and others. Discipline should always be positive in focus, providing the structure that allows young people to learn to set their own goals and strive for them. Where possible the main form of discipline should be through praise for:

- Effort
- Social skills
- Traditional SJAI skills

Young people should be helped to understand the responsibilities and implications of the freedom to make choices and decisions. Expectations of behaviour should be positively stated, agreed, and communicated clearly to all involved in any activity.

Sanctions are an important element in maintaining discipline. However, adult members should have a clear understanding of where and when particular sanctions are appropriate. Sanctions should be used in a corrective way designed to help young people improve now and in the future.

Sanctions should not be used to retaliate or to make an adult member feel better. Sanctions should be fair, and in the case of persistent offences should be progressively applied. The following steps should be taken:

- Each Division must devise a code of conduct in conjunction with young people, one which the young people themselves agree to
- Refer to this code of conduct agreed with young people at divisional level
- Give warning or sanction (e.g. temporary exclusion from the activity) if the code of conduct is broken
- An interview if the code is broken again. Children are never interviewed on an individual basis and can request a parent, or another member be present, and should be told this prior to interview. It is essential that children do not feel intimidated through the process. Record the date, those in attendance, and outcome of the interview.
- Parents should be notified of the challenging behaviour and outcome of interview, if not present.
- Longer term exclusion for continued or serious breaking of the code and involvement of parents/guardians
- Formal suspension should be discussed with a senior officer and must be notified to the Commissioner within 24 hours in accordance with SJAI regulations

Sanctions should:

- Be used sparingly
- Be administered in a consistent way
- Not include any form of corporal punishment or physical force
- Not expose a young person to embarrassment or disparagement by use of negative remarks about the young person or his/her family
- Remain confidential where at all possible

Responding to bullying

Bullying has no place in SJAI. Adult Members should promote a positive anti-bullying ethos in their Division and raise awareness amongst other adult and youth members that bullying should not be tolerated.

What is bullying?

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression, be it verbal, psychological, or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. Bullying is intentional and it includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, exclusion, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures), threatening, spreading rumours, hitting and extortion by one or more persons against a victim.

Cyber-bullying is another example of bullying and can be challenging to address. Please see section in this appendix on cyber-bullying for specific guidelines. Bullying contains 7 key features (NYCI, 2006)

1. An intention to be hurtful
2. The intention is carried out
3. The behaviour harms the target
4. The bully overwhelms the target with his or her power
5. There is often no justification for the action
6. The behaviour repeats itself again and again
7. The bully derives a sense of satisfaction from hurting the target

The effects of bullying

The effects of bullying can last for some time and can significantly impact an individual's wellbeing, causing poor social development and depression. The outcomes of bullying can include:

- Physical injury, headaches, stomach aches
- Stress symptoms such as sleep or eating disorders and panic attacks
- Loss of confidence and self-esteem
- Lowered academic achievement
- Exclusion and isolation
- Consideration of suicide

It is important for adult members to take a pro-active role in investigating whether bullying is occurring because many children will not tell. However, a child may confide in anyone so everyone should be aware of how to handle such a confidence.

SJAI Anti-bullying policy when working with children/ young people

SJAI will not tolerate any bullying behaviour by children/young people or adults and will deal with any incidents immediately in accordance with this policy. The policy is as follows:

1. All children/young people and adults who participate in activities run by SJAI will be treated with dignity and respect by adults and by other children/young people and will not be subject to bullying.
2. All children/young people and adults who participate in activities run by SJAI have a responsibility to treat other children/young people and adults with dignity and respect and refrain from bullying behaviour.
3. All Divisions will develop, maintain, and regularly review an anti-bullying charter.
4. It will be made clear to all children/young people and adults participating in SJAI events/activities that bullying is not acceptable and that other children/young people and adults should be treated with dignity and respect.
5. There will be adequate supervision by adult members at all events/activities involving children and young people. This will help to prevent bullying.
6. If an adult member witnesses bullying or suspects that bullying is taking place, he/she will follow the procedure outlined below.
7. If a child/young person witnesses bullying or suspects that bullying is taking place he/she should report it to an adult member. The adult member will follow the procedure outlined below.
8. If a child/young person is the victim of bullying he/she should report it to a SJAI adult member who will follow the procedure outlined below.

Procedure for dealing with bullying

All reports of bullying will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with by the Superintendent of the Division. Reference will be made to the Anti-Bullying Charter agreed at divisional level from the outset (see **Appendix B**).

The Superintendent dealing with the complaint will keep a record of the alleged bullying incident/s and the investigation and action taken.

The Superintendent dealing with the complaint will speak separately to all involved in order to get all sides of the story. The Superintendent should also speak to others who may have witnessed the incident/s, if appropriate. The Superintendent will interview all involved in a calm manner and will seek answers to what, where, when, who and why.

If the victim of the alleged bullying is a child, their parent/guardian will be informed of the complaint and the outcome of the investigation.

If the perpetrator of the alleged bullying is a child, their parent/guardian will be informed of the complaint and the outcome of the investigation.

If the perpetrator of the alleged bullying is an adult, the Commissioner of St John Ambulance and Safeguarding Officer will be informed of the complaint and the outcome of the investigation. Bullying behaviours by adults towards children is normally considered as poor practice or abuse and is often managed through disciplinary procedures.

If a child is involved in the incident as alleged perpetrator or victim, parents are always informed.

If the adult member dealing with the complaint concludes that bullying has not taken place, the following action will be taken:

- The complainant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator/s will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and the reasons why it was concluded that bullying did not take place
- Support will be given to the complainant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator/s if necessary
- A meeting will be arranged between the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator to discuss the issues involved if both are agreeable and it is deemed appropriate
- Inform parents of any child involved

If the adult member dealing with the complaint concludes that bullying has taken place, the following action will be taken:

- The complainant, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator/s will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and the reasons why it was concluded that bullying took place
- Support will be given to the victim
- A meeting will be arranged between the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator to discuss the issues involved if both are agreeable and it is deemed appropriate
- A meeting will be held with the perpetrator to discuss the bullying behaviour
- They will be informed of the disciplinary action which will be taken because of this bullying behaviour
- Inform parents of any child involved.

Disciplinary action

When the inquiry into the alleged bullying has taken place and it has been concluded that bully the seriousness of the incident/s. If the perpetrator of the bullying is a child/young person, the parent/guardian of the child/young person and the child/young person will be informed of the disciplinary action which will be taken, preferably in person, otherwise by telephone.

If the perpetrator of the bullying is an adult, the following people will be informed of the disciplinary action which will be taken

- The Commissioner of SJA

- The perpetrator

The options for disciplinary action include:

- For serious incidents involving children/young people, sending the child/young person home and not allowing them to participate in any further SJAI events/activities. Care must be taken to ensure that the child gets home safely, i.e., contact parents to collect child for less serious incidents involving children/young people, allowing the child/young person to continue to participate in the event/activity once they have apologised to the victim and stated that they would not engage in any further bullying behaviour. Their behaviour would then be closely monitored.
- Providing support to the child/young person to get them to understand that their behaviour is not acceptable and monitoring their behaviour.
- For serious incidents involving an adult member of SJAI, consequences may include transferring a person to an area within SJAI where they will not have any dealings with children/young people up to terminating their membership.
- Transferring the person out of SJAI or transferring them to an area within the SJAI where they will not have any dealings with children/young people or terminating their membership

See **Appendix B** for good practice guidelines on responding to bullying incidents.

Parental contact

All members working with Cadets should be aware of and respect the trust placed in them by the parents of the children. Parents should be notified of issues concerning their own children, or general issues arising in the Division (i.e., incidents of cyberbullying etc). SJAI is committed to providing a transparent and open communication process between adult members and parents.

Initial contact

When a young person joins SJAI, efforts are made to establish guardianship of the child (i.e., general discussion, requesting identification if deemed appropriate) at the first point of contact. Parents will be made aware of how the Division operates and what they can expect in terms of communication from the Division in relation to their own child and to group activities. Parents will be made aware of the policies and procedures that operate in the Division, including the Safeguarding policy, the anti-bullying policy, procedures for dealing with disruptive behaviour etc). All parents and children are specifically referred to the online availability of the Safeguarding policy.

All young people will receive a course-joining-sheet with information relevant to their course and instructions on accessing the Safeguarding policy. On moving to Probationary Cadet Status, each child will receive a membership pack with relevant Divisional/SJAI information and a short Safeguarding information section and a reminder of the Safeguarding Policy location on the website. Parents will be asked to sign a joining application form and to acknowledge that they are aware of the key policies affecting their children.

Provision of information

Parents should be the first point of contact for information from SJAI and will receive regular letters/ email in relation to activities, trips and for the coming events. Parents will receive an annual information sheet/email giving details of the overall development of the Cadets within the Division and the successes within that year. Issues relating to an individual child concerning disciplinary issues or positive aspects of the child's work will be communicated to parents, preferably in person or by telephone.

Consent forms

All Cadet Divisions will utilise standard consent forms signed by parents for activities and trips planned by the Division. These forms will be available on the relevant section of the SJAI website. All consent forms and notification/permission forms will be maintained at the divisional level. Parents must be informed of all activities in advance, including Division activities taking place outside of the usual location.

Parental involvement

All parents are encouraged to involve themselves in support of the organisation and their child's participation in it. Care should be taken to ensure that this involvement pays due regard to the Safeguarding policy and that where necessary that appropriate Garda Vetting and insurance provisions are in place. Active two-way communication with parents will assist in the development of this involvement.

No unvetted persons should be working with our youth membership in any capacity.

- **Do** encourage parents to raise any concerns
- **Do** listen carefully to what parents say about their children
- **Do** inform parents of issues relating to their children (i.e., accidents, bullying incidents, cyberbullying, positive developments, use of sanctions, etc.)
- **Do** use respectful and supportive language when communicating with parents
- **Do** ensure that anything you distribute to parents in writing is accurate and clearly stated
- **Do** send your communication to parents far enough in advance so that they can consider it in advance and act if you expect a response
- **Do** keep a copy of written communications

- **Don't rely** on signed consent/written communication as primary means of communication with parents. It is useful to telephone parents, particularly regarding trips away, if they do not attend in person with a consent form. This is to ensure that the form was legitimately signed, and the parent understands the nature of the activity planned
- **Don't forget** that vetting and insurance procedures apply to parents who are involved in SJAI

Involving children

In so far as it is possible, a selection of Cadets from SJAI will be involved in an annual review of the policy. This involves working in an age-appropriate way with all young people in the Division to ensure that their feedback on the policy is sought and recorded.

All children within the organisation should be aware of the Safeguarding policy on joining SJAI, irrespective of age, gender, culture, or other factors. Consideration must be made of these individual factors when the policy is introduced to them as they may affect how children experience and understand the world. Each Division will set aside a minimum of one training night per calendar year for the purposes of refreshing young people on their rights to:

- Be protected from harm
- Be treated with respect
- Be listened to and have their views taken into consideration

within and outside SJAI.

This training may be split across junior and senior cadets, if required, due to the nature of the content. Cadet training should recap the broad spectrum of abuse and reiterate reporting procedures for complaints, accidents, and concerns as laid down in this policy. Training should also inform young people of the confidentiality issues around reporting. Role play and open discussion may form part of this. All

children should be aware of and able to access the Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Safeguarding Officer when required, should the need arise. This will be ensured through contact information initially being made available to all children and their parents upon initial recruitment. Contact details will be displayed on a poster at each divisional meeting and are available via the SJAI website.

Policy review

All SJAI policies that apply to Cadets, however obliquely, must be updated so as to be written in accessible language and then explained to young people to ensure that it is understood and subsequently adhered to. Children with communication difficulties of any nature will be accommodated as much as possible by SJAI. These accommodations may include enlargement of written and pictorial material, sign language interpreters and other communicative devices required by individual children.

Activity safety

The safety of each member of SJAI is paramount. Adult Members must ensure:

- That the activity being planned, or undertaken, is suitable for the age, experience and ability of the member(s) concerned (i.e., swimming only takes place with parental consent and with qualified lifeguard supervision)
- That all activities are led by suitable persons with the necessary skills
- That all guidelines governing activities are followed

Participation in games

- There is, and always has been, the situation where adult members join in games 'to make up the numbers' or to encourage greater participation in a game.
- While everyone is having fun and no harm is done, there is an element of risk associated
- All it takes is for a young person to be hurt or suggest that they had been inappropriately touched for the 'fun' to be taken as 'serious. So, the simple advice is – organise, supervise, or monitor and enjoy watching the fun!

All activities should be organised in accordance with the Youth Department *Out and about policies 2023* and the Organisation's Safeguarding Policy.

Activities risk management

The management of risk and safety should be a priority of all adult members involved in SJAI activities. Risk assessments should be carried out prior to activities in order to eliminate (or reduce to an acceptable level) the potential risks to young people. The assessment of risk involves a number of steps in the planning of an activity, some of which include:

- Looking for hazards
- Determining the level of risk involved
- Deciding who might be harmed and how
- Putting in place measures that can minimise any identified risks
- Reviewing and risk assessment on a continuing basis throughout the activity
- Adhere to "lost children" protocols at public duty events (e.g., notifying Event Control) to assist in successfully reuniting lost children with parents/guardians

Trips away

Where activities involve staying away from home overnight several additional concerns need to be taken

into account. In all cases of residential work with young people, SJAI follows the guidelines below:

- On all trips away a discussion should take place between the SJAI event coordinators and the event organiser/host venue pertaining to Safeguarding and safety issues. Before embarking on any trip assurance should be sought to ensure there is adequate insurance in place taking account of the type of trip, activities planned, numbers travelling, and any local hazards.
- Where practical, a pre-event visit should take place to assess any potential hazards and ensure the accommodation is suitable for the planned group travelling.
- A strict level of 1 adult (aged 18 years or over) per 8 children (or part thereof) **MUST** be adhered to on all trips. To aid with this, groups should plan to have at least 1 surplus adult. This includes supervision required while transporting young people to accommodation. All adults must have Garda vetting.
- When planning transport to, from, or during an event (and not using public transport) the group leader should retain a copy of the transport company's Large Public Service Vehicle Licence & Insurance. It should be noted that where private cars are being used, any payment (including the cost of fuel) may constitute the driver carrying passengers for hire and reward and possibly invalidate insurance.
- Safety risk assessment must be undertaken and documented for all trips involving children in the care of SJAI.
- Event Consent Forms (see Appendix H) must be used at all times. Consent forms will be filed by Divisions for inspection and must be sought for each individual trip. Consent forms will include the following information about the participant:
 - Contact details of parent/guardian and another person named by the parent/guardian in the event of the parent/guardian not being available in an emergency.
 - All relevant medical information for the participant and consent for medical intervention, if necessary.
 - Any special needs which the participant may have, including diet, medical needs, support needs, etc.
 - All relevant information including contact details, allergies, medicines, dietary needs etc. for the child or young person will be kept with a leader/staff member on the trip.
 - Parents/guardians will be fully informed of the programme or timetable for the event and will receive a copy of the programme.
 - Parents will be given full contact details of the centre/hotel/accommodation and of the staff member in charge of the event.
- SJAI will ensure that the physical surroundings are safe, comfortable, accessible, and appropriate for the work being undertaken.
- There will be appropriate gender-based supervision for the event.
- Accommodation will be provided in single sex rooms, and dormitories will not be shared with non-

group members. Adults and Cadets are accommodated separately.

- SJAI has a system in place for recording any accidents or incidents while in the care of SJAI. A plan must be in place and brought to the attention of all involved in the trip as to actions to be taken in the case of emergencies. A good emergency action plan will also contain details of local Gardaí, Doctor, Health Centre, and Hospital. There should be an on-site emergency contact person and an off-site emergency contact person identified.
- One adult member will be designated as the 'key contact person' for the event and parents and participants will be given contact details of this person. All complaints, concerns, etc. should be directed to this person (with the exception of complaints in relation to the safety and welfare of the children/young people—see next point).
- Parents will also be given the contact details of the SJAI Safeguarding Officer. Complaints in relation to the safety and welfare of the children/young people should be made to the Child Protection Officer in SJAI.
- A list of 'ground rules' will be drawn up for each event, with the participation of the children/young people and these will be distributed to all participants and will be signed up to, prior to the event. The ground rules will be displayed in the meeting rooms during the event.
- The privacy of the participants will be always respected and particularly in dormitories, changing rooms, showers, and toilets.
- Participants should be encouraged to report to a staff member any cases of bullying and the staff member in charge must be made aware of this.
- Staff/leaders should avoid showing favouritism towards any one participant and should ensure that the relationship is constructive and aims to build the independence and autonomy of the participants.

Accidents/incidents procedures

Should an accident/incident occur, appropriate assistance should be sought by the Senior Officer present. Parents should be notified at the earliest opportunity and a full record of the details of the incident, contact details of all concerned and details of medical/other interventions (if such was necessary) should be accurately recorded.

The Divisional Manager/Member-in-Charge must maintain records of all accidents. Any serious accident reports must be forwarded to Headquarters. Adult Members should make contact with their Divisional Manager or Regional Manager if there is any doubt or advice needed on the procedures that are to be followed in reporting accidents or incidents. Members should refer to the ***SJAI Safety & Risk Management Guidelines*** for more comprehensive information on safety and risk management for programme activities.

SJAI ensures that adequate insurance is in place to cover all activities undertaken.

Complaints procedure for members, parents, and children (for issues/concerns that are not deemed safeguarding)

A complaint is a written or oral expression of dissatisfaction about the action or lack of action of SJAI or about the standard of a service, where the action taken, or the service was provided by a member acting on behalf of SJAI.

Who may make a complaint?

- Any child or adult involved in the service, either as a member or recipient of care
- A parent/caregiver
- Members of SJAI
- Any other person whom SJAI deems to have sufficient interest in a child's welfare to justify consideration of his/her complaint

How to make a complaint

A complaint can be made directly to any member of staff. It should be made in writing which can be done with the assistance of a member but must be signed by the complainant. This written complaint should clearly explain:

- What the problem/complaint refers to
- What is the history of the situation if any?
- What actions have been taken so far in the resolution of the complaint
- What would the complainant like to happen/what actions the complainant would like SJAI to take?
- If the complaint refers to a child, what is the complainant's relationship status to this child
- All the relevant contact details of the complainant so that we can make contact following receipt of the complaint

Remember to include the name of the child that is involved if relevant. The complainant should be provided with a record of the complaint e.g., a copy of the complaint form. A complainant will receive a response from the Organisation within 14 days of receipt by SJAI.

How will the complaint be dealt with?

At divisional level the Divisional Manager will be made aware of any complaints. The initial complaint will be dealt with by the Superintendent of the Division.

In the event the complaint is against a member, the Superintendent will notify the member and afford them the opportunity to respond.

The principles of natural justice will apply.

Both parties will have access to all correspondence.

The complaint may be redacted if it contains third party reports or hearsay.

- Where appropriate a full investigation will be carried out
- The complainant and relevant staff member will receive a response ideally within 14 days
- Should it be deemed more appropriate the matter will be dealt with through the SJA Safeguarding Policy and/or Disciplinary Procedures
- If this is the case, both the staff member and the complainant will be notified of this fact
- Once a decision is made, the complainant and parties involved will be notified of the outcome either verbally or in writing.

What if the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome/response?

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome/response then he/she will be afforded the opportunity to appeal the response to the Regional Manager.

- He/she must appeal directly to the Regional Manager (or persons nominated by him/her within 7 days of receiving a response from the Divisional Manager).
- The Regional Manager (or persons as nominated by him/her) will review all the details of the case and issue his/her findings within 14 days.

Should the matter need further investigation and a full response is not possible within 14 days, all parties will be notified of this fact. This may be the case for example, if the situation is very complicated or a key person is away.

What if the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome/response?

In the event that the complainant is still dissatisfied, he or she will have the right to appeal to the Commissioner (or persons nominated by him/her).

- He/she must appeal directly to the Commissioner (or persons as nominated by him/her) within 7 days of receiving a response from the Regional Manager (or persons nominated by him/her) clearly outlining the reasons for appeal.
- The Commissioner (or persons as nominated by him/her) will decide whether
 - a) an appeal is accepted,
 - b) whether further investigation is necessary, and
 - c) issue his/her findings/decision within 14 days.

Should the matter need further investigation and a full response is not possible within 14 days, all parties will be notified of this fact. This may be the case for example, if the situation is very complicated or a key person is away.

- Once a decision is made, the complainant and parties involved will be notified of the outcome either verbally or in writing. In some cases, it may be deemed more appropriate to provide a verbal update only.

The decision of the Commissioner (or persons as nominated by him/her) will be final..

Our policy

All complaints will be dealt with quickly, effectively, and in a fair and honest way.

All complaints will be treated with the utmost confidentiality in mind. The principles of natural justice will apply. In the event that the complaint is against a Superintendent, the complaint will be dealt with by the District Officer (or persons as nominated by him/her). In the event the complaint is against the District Officer, then the complaint will be dealt with by the Commissioner (or persons as nominated by him/her). At any stage during this process, SJAI reserves the right to appoint an independent person to investigate the complaint. All persons have the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a support person. The purpose of meeting, time of meeting, and who will attend will be known by all parties in advance. SJAI reserves the right to review and update this policy.

Aggressive or obsessive complaints

SJAI wants to deal fairly and honestly with complaints. SJAI will take vexatious complaints very seriously and notify such complainants that their behaviour is considered to be unacceptable.

Appendix A


Safeguarding and internal reporting form

St John Ambulance Ireland
Safeguarding Internal Reporting Form

Return form to:
Child Protection Officer, St John Ambulance Ireland, National Headquarters,
29 Upper Leeson Street, Dublin 4, D04 PX94.

Ref No: _____

Date	Time
Member making report	
Division	
Name of child	
Date of birth	
Address	
	Eircode
Name of parent/guardian	
Contact number for parent/guardian	
Name of person allegedly causing concern	
Address	
	Eircode
Contact number	
Relationship to child	



**St John
Ambulance**

Page 1

Commissioner: John Hughes
 National Headquarters: Lumsden House, 29 Upper Leeson Street, Dublin 4
 T: +353 (0) 1 668 8077 W: www.stjohn.ie CHY 2086

St John Ambulance Ireland
Safeguarding Internal Reporting Form page 2

Details of incident/concerns

Please provide factual account of incident or concerns, including the full names and contact details of any witnesses.

Any action taken

Please include if parents have been notified of incident concerns or if emergency action has been taken (i.e. contact with Tusla or An Garda Síochána).

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix B

Developing an anti-bullying environment

Practical steps: What can you do if a child tells you she/he is being bullied?

1. Listen calmly and accept what is said. If possible, there should be two adults present (but this should be determined by the needs of the child), if not leave the door open and ensure another adult is close.
2. Take notes following the conversation: keep these notes on file as these form the basis of the bullying report. Notes should include the nature of incident, date, time, location, names of those involved, witnesses, relevant history, and the adult's response.
3. Reassure: that help is available, that action will be taken, that the child was right to tell, that it is not his or her fault, and that it could happen to anyone.
4. Negotiate confidentiality. Be clear that you'll only tell people who need to know.
5. Ensure the Child's safety: the adult member should be aware that the safety of the young person is paramount, and this can be maintained through appropriate supervision. Liaise with the parents/guardians in relation to a solution and possible actions.
6. Tell the Child that you'll keep him/her informed and how you intend to proceed.
7. Make an intervention: All actions should be guided by the needs of the Child and in accordance with the anti-bullying policy of SJAI. Inform the Superintendent of your concerns.
Decide who to consult with: Cadet Leader, Officers, Safeguarding Officer, parents, etc.
Decide who to interview: witnesses, alleged bullies, and uninvolved children.
Find out: what, where, when, who, how why?
Act in a non-confrontational manner.
Resolve the problem: Make bullying the responsibility of the group—follow the 'No Blame' group approach (see section on No Blame approach in this policy).
8. Alternatively, approach the victim and the bully (explain why the bully's behaviour is wrong, how it makes the victim feel and request an apology); parents and bully (if sanctions linked to the behaviour are to be employed, request the parents to reinforce these). Refer on in difficult cases: if it remains unresolved at the Group level it should be referred to the Safeguarding Officer.
9. Make a record: of facts, rather than opinions. Include details from the bullying report (i.e., nature of incident, date, time, location, names of those involved, witnesses, relevant history, and adult's response), details recounted by others involved, any agreements made, an account of action taken and suggestions for follow up and monitoring.

Some helpful tips

- Agree and implement a procedure to counteract bullying and be approachable to receive reports of bullying

- Reinforce the principles of fair play
- Develop positive leadership skills among young people
- Ensure that roles and responsibilities are shared among as many young people as possible
- Allocate roles and responsibilities to match the physical and intellectual capabilities of the young people.

Record keeping

A report should be kept, including the date and time of the incident, the name of the adult member taking the report, names of those involved, details of the incident, action taken (warning, agreement, mediation, sanctions, referral, other), recommendations, agreed follow up, and signature.

Preventing bullying: a whole group approach

An anti-bullying charter and the division's responses to bullying incidents should be agreed with young people, adult members, and parents. A range of possible responses are outlined below. A whole group approach is recommended. This means working with the bully and with the group of young people to help everyone understand the hurt that the behaviour causes. This makes the problem a 'shared concern' of the group. A whole group approach, where the behaviour and its consequences are discussed by everyone in the group, helps to avoid driving the problem underground or escalating it, as might occur by solely taking a 'punishment of the bully' approach. This is called the 'No blame approach' (see below).

Developing an anti-bullying charter

An anti-bullying charter is a clear statement that bullying of any form is unacceptable in the group. The charter should be drawn up with the input of cadets and it should be framed in simple language.

Sample charter

Division is a place where every member can feel secure:

- The '.....' Division is a place where everyone is respected
- We do not tolerate physical violence
- We do not tolerate name calling or verbal abuse
- We do not tolerate threatening behaviour
- We do not tolerate nasty jokes, comments, or rumours
- We do not tolerate bullying by text or e-mail
- Tackling bullying is the responsibility of everyone in our division
- Every member of our division will be treated equally and fairly
- Every member of our division will be supported and listened to

Practical steps to prevent and counter bullying

- Consider children as a resource in countering bullying and to foster a 'permission to tell' culture in the group
- Let children know who they should tell if they are being bullied themselves or if someone else is being bullied
- Reassure children that they will be listened to and that an intervention will be made if they are being bullied
- Teach children to cooperate, negotiate and help others, particularly new or different children
- Include stories and role plays on how to deal with a bully in ordinary group activities
- Never tell a child to ignore the bullying or to take the law into their own hands by retaliating
- Make every child aware of how a bullying incident will be dealt with in the group. Parents and guardians should also be made aware of this. Apply these procedures fairly and consistently.

The following strategies can be used to respond to an incident of bullying.

The 'No Blame' approach

This approach focuses on the feelings of the bullying target rather than on blame and punishment. It allows the group to think about the effect of bullying on the target and to come up with a solution to the bullying to prevent it from happening again.

- Talk to the target and allow them to express their feelings
- Ask their permission to allow their feelings to be shared with the group and reassure that their name will not be revealed
- Meet with everyone involved: perpetrators and bystanders
- Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by everyone
- Share the feelings of the target with the group without identifying the target
- Ask them to express how they would feel if the bullying was happening to them
- Ask them for suggestions as to how the bullying can be overcome and prevented from happening again—note all positive responses
- Hand over responsibility to the group—give them a time frame to implement the solutions proposed and arrange a follow-up meeting
- Follow up with the group and with the target to ensure the plan has been implemented
- Continue to monitor the situation through ongoing dialogue with the whole group
- Additional strategies/interventions may be required depending on the seriousness of bullying

incidence, the outcome achieved with the no-blame approach, the involvement of parents, or other particular circumstances that may arise.

Separate the parties

If it is possible, the perpetrator might be removed to another section for a period while further action is taken. Separating the perpetrator and the target for a time allows for an opportunity to address the situation while ensuring the target is not at risk of continued bullying. This strategy might be used in the more serious incidents of bullying.

Denial of privileges (with the opportunity to redeem oneself)

Loss of privileges (e.g., withdrawal of permission to participate in a particular activity or trip) might be used to reinforce the message for the perpetrator that bullying is unacceptable behaviour and that it has consequences. The hope would also be that the perpetrator would as a result of loss of privilege, understand the impact of their actions or behaviour on the target.

Support Peer Bystanders

Bystanders are those who are not directly involved in bullying behaviour but are aware that it is taking place. Bystanders may do nothing about the bullying out of fear that they themselves may become a target.

Although not directly involved in the behaviour, bystanders may intentionally or unintentionally condone the bullying by providing positive reinforcement to the perpetrator by passively observing the bullying, making encouraging gestures, or laughing. Bystanders play a vital role in creating an anti-bullying environment, therefore everyone in the group should be encouraged to speak up if they observe bullying behaviour or are aware that it is taking place. Bystanders should also be encouraged to befriend the victim of bullying behaviour.

Parental Involvement

If a young person is being bullied or is bullying their parents/guardians should be made aware of the situation.

Dealing with the parents of a target of bullying

- 1) Invite the parents to meet to discuss what has happened based on the information available
- 2) Assure the parents that you are pleased that they have taken the time to see you
- 3) Allow the parents to express their feelings, uninterrupted
- 4) Accept their feelings on the bullying, even if these feelings may seem excessive to you. Use calm supportive language.
- 5) State categorically that bullying is not acceptable and that you intend to act positively. Assure the parents that you will keep in touch to update them on progress.
- 6) Keep a record of any meetings and action taken in response to the issue.

(Let's Beat Bullying, NYCI, 2007)

Dealing with the parents of a perpetrator of bullying

Consideration needs to be given around informing the parents of a perpetrator of bullying as this may make the situation worse or result in excessive parental discipline for the perpetrator. If in doubt advice should be sought from colleagues or support staff.

- 1) Invite the parents to meet to discuss what has happened based on the information available
- 2) Assure the parents that you are pleased that they have taken the time to see you
- 3) Inform the parents in a clear objective manner about their child's behaviour
- 4) Ask the parents if they know of any reason for this alleged behaviour e.g., a recent bereavement or home circumstances
- 5) Begin with a summary of the group's anti-bullying policy and emphasise the parent's agreement to it
- 6) Seek the parents' help in communicating the seriousness of the incident to their child and enlist their cooperation
- 7) Where necessary, and based on the seriousness of the bullying behaviour, inform the parents of the consequences that the group considers appropriate (e.g., verbal warning, loss of privileges) and enlist their cooperation
- 8) Keep a record of any meetings and action taken in response to the issue.

(Let's Beat Bullying, NYCI, 2007)

Note: Careful ongoing monitoring of the situation will be required whatever strategy is used.

Suspension or expulsion of the perpetrator

It should be made clear in an anti-bullying policy that, as a last resort only, suspension or expulsion may result for the perpetrator. If all other efforts made to combat and prevent the perpetrator from bullying others have failed, suspension or expulsion may be the only way to secure the welfare and safety of the target. This should be communicated clearly to everyone—adults, parents, and children.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying involves unwanted messages, images, audio, or video sent by electronic means to threaten, abuse, or harm someone. It's like physical bullying but uses technology instead. Examples of cyberbullying include, but are not limited to:

- Abusive messages or slagging on Facebook, Twitter, Ask.fm etc
- Offensive comments on videos or posts
- Spreading rumours online
- Hacking into your online accounts

- Posting offensive images or posting doctored images of victims

Why do bullies bully?

- They think it's fun
- They did it to get back at somebody they were mad at (common amongst friends after a 'trigger' event)
- They feel bad about themselves

Cyberbullying, according to some legal experts, is illegal under section 10 of the Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act, 1997. We are hoping the Minister for Justice can get clarity from the Attorney General on the current legal framework and how it is or can be applied. We welcome his decision to refer to the Law Reform Commission.

How to avoid it

- Never give out your passwords—always keep your passwords to yourself and make a habit of logging out of your email or social networks when you are finished. Passwords should be made up of mixed characters and not made up of pet names or dates-of-birth. You should also have a different password for each account or service.
- Restrict your privacy settings on Facebook to 'friends only', protect your tweets, hide your profile from the Facebook search engine, disable 'anonymous' questions in the settings on Ask.fm if you choose to use that particular website.
- Learn how to block and report other profiles on sites like Facebook and Twitter.
- Pick your friends carefully—remember whatever you post online can be seen by everyone who has got access to your page. If it's Facebook, only accept friend requests from people with whom you're comfortable sharing information and whom you know in real life.
- Be kind to other people online. Don't say anything hurtful to other users and ask yourself whether or not what you say online would be acceptable in a face-to-face discussion.
- Don't send a message to someone else when you're angry—wait until you've calmed down and had time to think. Once you've sent it, you can't take it back.

How to tackle it as a victim

- Don't reply to the messages, as much as you might want to. It will only make the problem worse. Bullies want to know that they've got you worried and upset. Letting them know they have been successful will only encourage them to continue.
- Save the evidence, take a screenshot as proof.
- Go offline. Logout or switch off your phone and talk to family or do something you enjoy.
- Tell a trusted adult, such as a close relative, a family friend, a teacher, health professional, or cadet leader.

- Change your passwords, number, and contact details and make sure your privacy settings are restricted on all websites. Block and report the bullying to the technology providers such as the mobile phone company, web host website owner.
- Block anonymous questions on Ask.fm in your privacy settings if you decide to use the website.
- In serious or persistent cases report the bullying to An Garda Síochána yourself or through your parents.

Online you can be anyone or anything you want

In chat rooms, email, and message boards you can pretend to be a man, woman, 12-yearold, world weary traveller or from a different country. Unfortunately, everyone else is doing the same thing. If you're the trusting type you need to be carefully of believing everything you read online, i.e., a health message board might have advice from a cheeky teen claiming to be a doctor. There's no need to panic and throw your computer out the window, just don't expect online friends or information to be exactly what they say.

Staying safe online

- Don't trust! Even if an online friend sounds more convincing than your own mother...
- Be very wary of people who seem desperate to meet you or ask you for your phone number
- Use a nickname or just your first name when chatting online.
- Never give out personal details online like your surname, phone number, or where you live.
- Don't tell people where you go to school, college, or work.
- If someone constantly asks for personal details, ignore them.
- Don't send photos of yourself, friends, or family.
- When someone asks where you're from, only tell them the region (saying the northwest instead of Donegal, or Northern Ireland instead of Derry).
- Try not to give out your email address too often. You can end up with lots of junk mail or people harassing you.
- If you want to talk to an online friend again, arrange to meet them at another time in the chat room.
- If you're sure you want to meet an online friend, then **BE CAREFUL**. Always tell someone where you're going, and arrange to meet them in a public place. Think about asking a friend to come with you for the first meeting.

Appendix C

National contacts for Tusla, Children and Family Services

To contact your local Tusla Social Worker please go to the Tusla website (see below link) for current contact details: <https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/contact-a-social-worker3/>.

Dublin South Central Dedicated Contact Point

Child and Family Agency,
Bridge House,
Cherry Orchard Hospital,
Dublin 10

087 398 1713

Dublin North City Dedicated Contact Point

Child and Family Agency,
Wellmount Health Centre,
Wellmount Park,
Finglas,
Dublin 11

01 856 7704

Dublin South East Dedicated Contact Point

Child and Family Agency,
Unit 9, Nutgrove Retail Park,
Churchtown,
Dublin 14

01 921 3400

Dublin North Dedicated Contact Point

Child and Family Agency,
180–189 Lakeshore Drive,
Airside Business Park,
Swords,
Co. Dublin

01 870 8000

Dublin South West and Kildare Dedicated Contact Point

Building 2, Vista Primary Care Centre,
Ballymore Road,
Naas,
Co. Kildare,
W91 HT2X

045 839 300

Cavan Dedicated Contact Point

*Cavan is located in a Tusla Area comprising
Cavan and Monaghan. The duty social work office
covering Cavan is located in Monaghan.*

Child and Family Agency,
Support Service Building,
Rooskey,
Monaghan

049 436 9801

Cork Dedicated Contact Point

Tusla Child & Family Agency,
Unit 4A,
Floor 3,
North Point House,
North Point Business Park,
Cork,
T23 AT2P

021 237 3774

Limerick Dedicated Contact Point

Child and Family Agency,
Unit 3,
St Camillus Hospital,
Shelbourne Road,
Limerick

061 588 688

Mayo Dedicated Contact Point

Child and Family Agency,
1st Floor, Mill Lane,
Bridge Street,
Castlebar,
Co. Mayo
F23 WP58

094 904 9137

Appendix D

Relevant legislation

Children First Act 2015

The Children First Act 2015 was fully commenced on 11 December 2017 and puts elements of *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)* on a statutory footing. The legislation is a key Programme for Government commitment and forms part of a suite of child safeguarding legislation. The Act provides for a number of key child safeguarding measures, as follows:

- A requirement on organisations providing relevant services to children to keep children safe and to produce a Child Safeguarding Statement.
- A requirement on defined categories of persons (mandated persons) to report Safeguarding concerns over a defined threshold to Tusla.
- A requirement on mandated persons to assist Tusla in the assessment of a Safeguarding risk, if so requested to do so by Tusla.
- The establishment of the Children First Intedepartmental Implementation Group on a statutory basis.

Child Care Act 1991

The Child Care Act 1991 is the key piece of legislation which regulates childcare policy in Ireland. Under this Act, Tusla has a statutory responsibility to promote the welfare of children who are not receiving adequate care and protection. If it is found that a child is not receiving adequate care and protection, Tusla has a duty to take appropriate action to promote the welfare of the child. This may include supporting families in need of assistance, and in exceptional circumstances, making alternative care arrangements for children. This Act defines a child as a person under the age of 18 years, other than a person who is or has been married.

Criminal Justice Act 2006

The Criminal Justice Act 2006 was commenced on 1 August 2006. Section 176 outlines that a person having authority or control over a child is guilty of an offence where they intentionally or recklessly endanger a child by:

- Causing or permitting that child to be placed or left in a situation which creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse, or
- Failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk.

Serious harm in the Act is defined as an “injury which creates a substantial risk of death, or which causes permanent disfigurement or loss or impairment of the mobility of the body as a whole or of the function of any particular member or organ”. The penalty, if convicted, is a fine (no upper limit) and/or a maximum of 10 years imprisonment.

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

This Act makes it an offence to withhold key information from An Garda Síochána on certain specified offences, detailed in Schedule 1 of the act, where that information could lead to a prosecution. Schedule 1 offences include sexual offences and offences causing harm, abduction, manslaughter, or murder of children. A Schedule 1 offence should be reported to An Garda Síochána where:

- A person knows or believes that a serious offence has been committed against a child; and Their information might be of material assistance in securing the apprehension, prosecution, or conviction of another person for that offence.

The offence of not reporting arises where a person fails without reasonable excuse to disclose this information as soon as practicable to An Garda Síochána. The offence does not apply to the child/adult to whom the information refers. Failure to report a Schedule 1 offence to An Garda Síochána under this Act is punishable on conviction by a fine or imprisonment, or both. The requirement to report a Schedule 1 offence to An Garda Síochána applies where:

- The offence took place before or after the Act,
- A person acquires information after the passing of the Act on 18 July 2012, Information gathered prior to the Act has become relevant in the present, or
- The victim is a child or was a child when the offence took place.

Section 4 of the Act allows for a number of defences that an accused person can rely on for not reporting an offence under this Act. Any decision in relation to this should be made in consultation with senior management, and due consideration given to seeking legal advice where necessary. A record should be kept of any decision not to report to An Garda Síochána under this Act. In situations where a decision is taken not to report to An Garda Síochána under this Act, a Safeguarding or welfare report to Tusla may still be required.

Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

This Act makes provision for the protection from civil liability, or penalisation by an employer, of persons who have communicated child abuse reports 'reasonably and in good faith' to Designated Officers of the HSE, Tusla or to any member of An Garda Síochána (see Table 2 in Section 4.5 for a full list of Designated Officers). This legal protection means that even if a report of suspected child abuse proves unfounded, a plaintiff who took an action would have to prove that the person who communicated the concern had not acted reasonably and in good faith in making the report. Section 4 of the Act also protects employees from penalisation by employers for having made a report of child abuse. If you make a report in good faith and in the child's best interests, you may also be protected under common law by the defence of qualified privilege. The Act also created an offence of false reporting in cases where a report was made knowing the statement to be false.

Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017

This Act addresses the sexual exploitation of children and targets those who engage in this criminal activity. It creates offences relating to the obtaining or providing of children for the purposes of sexual exploitation. It also creates offences of the types of activity which may occur during the early stages of the predatory process prior to the actual exploitation of a child, for example, using modern technology

to prey on children and making arrangements to meet with a child where the intention is to sexually exploit the child. The Act also recognises the existence of underage, consensual peer relationships where any sexual activity falls within strictly defined age limits and the relationship is not intimidatory or exploitative. The Criminal Law Sexual Offences Act 2017 amends the Children First Act 2015 by the deletion of the definition of 'sexual abuse' in section 2 of the Act. It also adds insertions into Schedule 3 to include child prostitution and the use of information and communication technology to facilitate sexual exploitation of a child.

Criminal Justice (Female Genital Mutilation) Act 2012

This Act creates an offence of removal from the state of a girl for the purpose of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) while the Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997 criminalises the practice of FGM within Ireland. Any concern in relation to the practice of female genital mutilation for any female less than 18 years of age, or where a female child is born to a family with a history of this practice should be reported to Tusla and An Garda Síochána. For further information on the topic of Female Genital Mutilation see *Female Genital Mutilation: Handbook for Health Care Professionals in Ireland 2013*.

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

Under these Acts, it is an offence for an organisation to employ someone to work with children or vulnerable persons without going through the vetting procedure set out in the Act. The Acts create offences and penalties for persons who fail to comply with their provisions.

Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020

Also known as Coco's Law, this Act created two new offences which criminalise the non-consensual distribution of intimate images. The first offence deals with the distribution or publication of intimate images without consent and with intent to cause harm.

Children Act 2001

The Children Act 2001 replaced provisions of the Children Act 1908 and associated legislation with a modern comprehensive statute. The 2001 Act covers three main areas of the law. Firstly, and predominantly, it provides a framework for the development of the juvenile justice system. Secondly, it re-enacts and updates provisions in the 1908 Act protecting children against persons who have the custody, charge, or care of them. Thirdly, it provides for family welfare conferences and other new provisions for dealing with children where there is a real and substantial risk to their life, health, safety, welfare, and development.

Child Care Act 1991

The purpose of the Child Care Act 1991 is to 'update the law in relation to the care of children who have been assaulted, ill-treated, neglected or sexually abused, or who are at risk'. The main provisions of the Act are:

- (i) The placing of a statutory duty on the HSE to promote the welfare of children who are not receiving adequate care and protection up to the age of 18

- (ii) the strengthening of the powers of the HSE to provide childcare and family support services
- (iii) The improvement of the procedures to facilitate immediate intervention by the HSE and An Garda Síochána where children are in danger
- (iv) the revision of provisions to enable the Courts to place children who have been assaulted, ill-treated, neglected, or sexually abused, or who are at risk, in the care of or under the supervision of the HSE
- (v) the introduction of arrangements for the supervision and inspection of pre-school services
- (vi) the revision of provisions in relation to the registration and inspection of residential centres for children

Domestic Violence Act 1996

The Domestic Violence Act 1996 introduced major changes in the legal remedies for domestic violence. There are two main types of remedies available:

- (i) **Safety Order:** This Order prohibits a person from further violence or threats of violence. It does not oblige that person to leave the family home. If the parties live apart, the Order prohibits the violent person from watching or being in the vicinity of the home.
- (ii) **Barring Order:** This Order requires the violent person to leave the family home. The legislation gives the HSE the power to intervene to protect individuals and their children from violence. Section 6 of the Act empowers the HSE to apply for Orders for which a person could apply on his or her own behalf but is deterred from doing so through fear or trauma. The consent of the victim is not a prerequisite for such an application, although he or she must be consulted. Under Section 7 of the Act, the Court may, where it considers it appropriate, adjourn proceedings and direct the HSE to undertake an investigation of the dependent person's circumstances with a view to:
 - (i) applying for a Care Order or a Supervision Order under the Child Care Act 1991;
 - (ii) providing services or assistance for the dependent person's family; or
 - (iii) taking any other action in respect of the dependent person.

Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998

This Act came into operation on 23 January 1999. The main provisions of the Act are:

- (i) the provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of the HSE or to any member of An Garda Síochána.
- (ii) the provision of significant protections for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to, and including, dismissal.
- (iii) the creation of a new offence of false reporting of child abuse, where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities 'knowing that statement to be false'. This is a new criminal

offence, designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports.

A wide range of nursing, medical, paramedical, and other staff has been appointed as designated officers for the purposes of this Act (see Appendix 10 of the Children First: National Guidance). Section 6 of the Act is a saving provision, which specifies that the statutory immunity provided under the Act for persons reporting child abuse is additional to any defences already available under any other enactment or rule of law in force immediately before the passing of the Act.

Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003

The Data Protection Act 1988 applies to the processing of personal data. It gives a right to every individual, irrespective of nationality or residence, to establish the existence of personal data, to have access to any such data relating to him or her, and to have inaccurate data rectified or erased. It requires data controllers to make sure that the data they keep are collected fairly, are accurate and up to date, are kept for lawful purposes and are not used or disclosed in any manner incompatible with those purposes. It also requires both data controllers and data processors to protect the data they keep and imposes on them a special duty of care in relation to the individuals about whom they keep such data.

Education Act 1998

The Education Act 1998 places an obligation on those concerned with its implementation to give practical effect to the constitutional rights of children as they relate to education and, as far as practicable and having regard to the resources available, to make available to pupils a level and quality of education appropriate to meeting their individual needs and abilities.

Education (Welfare) Act 2000

The Education (Welfare) Act 2000, which was fully commenced in July 2002, replaced previous school attendance legislation, and provided for the creation of a single national agency, the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB), which has statutory responsibility to ensure that every child either attends school or otherwise receives an education or participates in training. The NEWB also assists in the formulation and implementation of Government education policy.

Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997

The two relevant provisions of this Act are:

- (i) it abolishes the rule of law under which teachers were immune from criminal liability in respect of physical chastisement of pupils.
- (ii) it describes circumstances in which the use of reasonable force may be justifiable.

Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003

The Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 enable members of the public to obtain access, to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy, to information in the possession of public bodies. The specific provisions of the Acts include:

- (i) to provide for a right of access to records held by such public bodies, for necessary exceptions to that right and for assistance to persons to enable them to exercise it.

- (ii) to enable persons to have corrected any personal information relating to them in the possession of such bodies.
- (iii) to provide for independent review by an Information Commissioner both of decisions of such bodies relating to that right and of the operation of the Acts generally.
- (iv) to provide for the publication by public bodies of guides to their functions and national guidelines, such as these, for the public.

Under the Acts, a person about whom a public body holds personal information has:

- (i) right of access to this information, subject to certain conditions;
- (ii) the right to correct this information if it is inaccurate.

Where a public body makes a decision that affects an individual, that individual has a right to relevant reasons and findings on the part of the body reaching that decision.

The Acts are also designed to protect the privacy of individuals and, in general, requires the prior consent of an individual before releasing personal information about them. Where the release of social work or medical records contains information that would be harmful to a person's well-being, the release may be made to a health professional who acts on the person's behalf. Under the Acts, there are regulations and guidelines relating to access by parents to their children's records; these emphasize that the overriding concern is the best interests of the child.

The exemptions and exclusions that are relevant to child protection include the following:


- (i) protecting records covered by legal professional privilege.
- (ii) protecting records that would facilitate the commission of a crime.
- (iii) protecting records that would reveal a confidential source of information.

Appendix E

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

(Adapted from *Our Duty to Care*, Northern Ireland.)

St John Ambulance Ireland
Declaration from all staff and volunteers
working with children and young people



**St John
Ambulance**

Adapted from *Our Duty to Care*, Northern Ireland

Surname _____ Forename(s) _____

Date of birth _____ Place of birth _____

Any other name previously known as _____

Place of birth _____

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or
been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound Over Order? Yes No

If Yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s)

Nature of offence _____ Date of offence _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Commissioner: John Hughes
National Headquarters: Lumsden House, 29 Upper Lonsdale Street, Dublin 4
Tel: +353 (0) 1 668 8077 www.stjohn.ie © IY 2016

Appendix F

Guidance sheet on medication

When holding or administering medications for young people it is advised that:

- Procedures are agreed with parents around managing prescription medication for their children. These procedures will by necessity depend on the comfort level and or experience of the adult members involved and may vary from group to group. Key issues include:
 - Clarity around the role of adult members in relation to holding medications, administering medications, or supervising the self-administration of medications.
 - The agreed circumstances on children carrying and self-administering medication.
 - The necessity for prior written parental consent for any medicines to be given or self-administered.
- Adults should never give non-prescribed medicine to a young person unless there is prior parental permission, which should be recorded. Aspirin or medicines containing Ibuprofen or Paracetamol must never be administered to someone under the age of 16 unless prescribed by a doctor.
- Parents are required to check with their General Practitioner if unsure as to whether their child can self-medicate.
- If a young person refuses to take their medicine, adult members should not force them to do so, but should record the refusal and notify parents immediately. Procedures should be agreed in advance with parents for such a situation and these should be implemented.
- Appropriate arrangements should be made for the safe storage of medicines on camps/trips.

Parents should inform the adult members in charge of their child about:

- The type of medication their child is taking
- The amounts to be taken and at what intervals
- If the young person is managing/self-administering and the amounts of the medication that they have with them
- Any pre-administration requirements (e.g., the need to take food before the medication)
- Any known side effects of the medication
- What might constitute an emergency in relation to the medication
- What action to take in an emergency and who to contact.

When holding medicines adult members should ensure that the medicines are provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacy and include the instructions for the prescription. It is advisable

that adult members check the container to ensure that the details include:

- The name of the child
- The name of the medicine
- The method of administration
- The frequency of administration
- Potential side effects (e.g., drowsiness, rash, headaches)
- Expiry date

The management of medications on meetings, trips or camps should always form part of the risk assessment carried out by the group in advance of the activity.

These procedures should be reviewed and updated regularly, and before every away trip.

Appendix G

Cadets on duty policy

1. Definition of a Cadet: A Cadet is a member of SJAI, under the age of 18, who is a member of a registered cadet division.
2. A risk assessment should be completed by the Event Manager/Duty Officer before a duty is deemed suitable for cadets.
 - 2.1 The following situations will make a duty unsuitable for cadets:
 - If the event is likely to attract a crowd that will consume an excessive number of drugs or alcohol.
 - If cadets are expected to remain on duty after 23:00 hrs.
 - Where violence or anti-social behaviour can be reasonably expected.
3. The Member-in-Charge (MIC) of a cadet division must ensure that the duty is suitable before permitting members of his/her division to attend.
 - 3.1 They should consider the following:
 - The expected duration of the event.
 - The expected weather conditions (if the event will be staged outdoors).
 - If food and refreshments will be available for the cadets attending.
 - 3.2 Cadets should never be on duty on their own. There should always be at least two cadets from the division on duty together.
 - 3.3 Cadets should never be on duty without an adult from their division. There should be a maximum of two cadets for every one adult from their division on duty.
 - 3.4 For duties lasting longer than five hours, arrangements should be made for cadets to receive a substantial meal and refreshments.
4. If the MIC of the cadet division cannot attend the duty with their cadets, they should allocate another adult member of their division to attend and take responsibility for the care of their cadets.
 - 4.1 The adult member should:
 - be known to the cadets
 - have completed their probation period
 - have satisfactorily completed the Garda Vetting process
 - have read and understood the Safeguarding Policy

- be willing to take responsibility for the cadets on duty.
 - 4.2 The adult member responsible for taking care of cadets should ensure that the cadets are appropriately dressed and equipped for the duty before permitting them to attend the duty. Particular attention should be paid to the predicted weather conditions and the clothing available to the cadets.
 - 4.3 Any adult taking responsibility for cadets should ensure that the welfare of cadets in their care takes precedence over patient care and uniform standards.
- 5. The ideal role for cadets on duty is to form part of a team staffing a first aid post or medical centre.
 - 5.1 Cadets may be assigned to a response team (patrol) if required.
 - 5.2 Cadets should be assigned to the same team as the adult member responsible for their care but, where this is not possible, the adult member in charge of their team should be known to the cadet and meet all other requirements listed in section 4.1. Where possible, this should be agreed in advance with the MIC of the cadet division.
 - 5.3 Cadets should never be assigned to a team that does not contain an adult member.
 - 5.4 Cadets should never be assigned to an ambulance crew or similar roles.
 - 5.5 Cadets assigned to a response team (patrol) or a busy first aid post/medical centre should receive at least one 30-minute break every four hours. This can be taken as 15-minute breaks every two hours.
- 6. Where possible, cadets should be encouraged to treat patients or to take an active role in their care.
 - 6.1 Cadets may not prescribe any medication for a patient.
 - 6.2 Cadets should not have the sole responsibility for the deployment of an AED. This should not prevent them from being assigned to a team equipped with an AED.
 - 6.3 While treating a patient, cadets should be supervised and mentored by an adult member.
 - 6.4 Where a patient requires a treatment beyond the abilities of the cadet, an adult member should take the lead. The cadet may still assist with care.
 - 6.5 Cadets should be encouraged to care for and treat all patients provided that:
 - The patient is comfortable with a cadet caring for them.
 - The cadet is comfortable with providing the care required.
 - The cadet is aware that they can seek help from an adult member at any stage.
 - The cadet is aware that they can hand over to an adult member at any stage.
 - The supervising adult is confident that the injuries or illnesses involved will not be traumatising to the cadet.
 - 6.6 Suitable tasks for cadets to complete in relation to patient care include:

- Caring for paediatric patients.
 - Caring for lost children.
 - Treating minor wounds or illnesses.
 - Applying slings and other bandages.
 - Completing Ambulatory or Patient Care Reports.
 - Preparing equipment.
 - Resetting equipment after a patient has been treated/discharged.
7. When a patient with a traumatic injury or serious illness presents themselves, and the adult member believes that a cadet may be traumatised by the injury/illness, the cadets must be removed from the vicinity promptly.
- 7.1 Adult Members should:
- Ensure that the cadet does not go into shock.
 - Encourage the cadet to talk about the incident and their feelings.
 - Call the cadet's parents, if needed.
 - Stand the cadets down from duty and arrange for them to get home safely, if needed. This should be completed in consultation with the Duty Officer or Cadet Welfare Officer.
 - Inform the Duty Officer, Cadet Welfare Officer, and the MIC of the cadet division of the incident.
8. The Cadet Welfare Officer (CWO) is appointed to monitor the welfare of all cadets on a duty.
- 8.1 The following are the recommended attributes of a CWO:
- Ideally, they should be a Cadet Superintendent or Cadet Officer.
 - Should be actively attached to a cadet division for at least two years.
 - Must be familiar with the Cadets on Duty Policy and the Safeguarding Policy.
 - Must be willing and able to take on the role.
- 8.2 The CWO is responsible for the following:
- The implementation of procedures to protect the welfare and safety of all cadets on duty.
 - Taking appropriate actions when the welfare or safety of cadets on duty is compromised.
 - Being a point of contact for all adults responsible for cadets on duty.
 - Being aware of the details and assignments of all cadets on duty.

- Advising and liaising with the Duty Officer or Event manager regarding cadet matters.
 - Taking responsibility for cadets, if required.
- 8.3 The CWO can direct the remedial actions to be taken should cadet safety or welfare be compromised.
- 8.4 CWOs should be appointed for all major duties where cadets will be on duty. Examples include:
- Duties that are spread out over a large area.
 - Duties that take place in locations with unrestricted access, e.g., on public streets.
 - Duties that are scheduled to last longer than five hours.
 - Duties where a high volume of patients is reasonably expected.
- 8.5 For duties with cadets positioned at multiple locations spread out over a very large area, a single adult member at each location should take overall responsibility for the cadets at that location.
- 8.6 The adult member responsible for cadets at each location should contact the CWO to inform them of the number of cadets on duty and pass on their contact details.
- 8.7 When cadets are on duty outdoors, they should be appropriately attired or equipped for the weather expected. Cadets should be moved into a sheltered location, where possible, in the case of inclement weather.
- 8.8 In the case of crowd disturbances or widespread anti-social behaviour, cadet safety takes precedence and so they should be removed from the situation to a place of safety.


Should a large number of cadets need to be removed from an unsafe environment, the CWO should designate a Muster Point where all cadets should be brought. The CWO shall man the Muster Point and ensure that all cadets are accounted for. If necessary, the CWO can take responsibility for the cadets to allow adult members to return to duty.

Appendix H

Event consent form

St John Ambulance Ireland

Event Consent Form



St John Ambulance

Division details

Division name _____ Member in Charge _____

Personal details

Name of Cadet: _____

Date of birth: _____ Male Female

Parental details

Name _____ Relationship to child _____

Address _____

Phone contact 1 _____ Phone contact 2 _____

Email _____

Event information

Event: _____

Location: _____

When: _____

Meeting time _____ Where? _____

Collection time _____ Where? _____

Leaders

Name _____ Contact Number _____

Name _____ Contact Number _____

Commissioner: John Hughes
National Headquarters: Lumsden House, 29 Upper Lonsborough Street, Dublin 4
T: +353 (0) 668 6077 W: www.stjohn.ie © IY 2016



Special notes

Cadets will be supervised at all times

Parent/guardian's signature

Signed _____ Date _____

Appendix I

Mandated person schedule

Schedule of Mandated Person under the Children First Act 2015

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 (SI No. 109 of 2000).
11. Probation officer within the meaning of section 1 of the Criminal Justice (Community Service) Act 1983.
12. Teacher registered with the Teaching Council.
13. Member of An Garda Síochána.
14. Guardian ad litem appointed in accordance with section 26 of the Child Care Act 1991.
15. Person employed in any of the following capacities:
 - (a) manager of domestic violence shelter;
 - (b) manager of homeless provision or emergency accommodation facility;

- (c) manager of asylum seeker accommodation (direct provision) centre;
 - (d) addiction counsellor employed by a body funded, wholly or partly, out of moneys provided by the Oireachtus;
 - (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) childcare 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.
16. 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.
17. Foster carer registered with the Agency.
18. A person carrying on a pre-school service within the meaning of Part VIIA of the Child Care Act 1991.

Appendix J

Cadet division virtual classroom policy

Safeguarding virtual classroom policy and guidance policy statement

In response to a number of queries and requests to the SJAI Child Protection team (CP) on guidance for online activities with youth members in our current Health Emergencies situation, we need to assure that the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure are followed at all times in our engagements with Youth members. The Safeguarding team with the support of our Youth Department and under the full approval of the Commissioner have constructed this policy to provide guidance on interactions of virtual classrooms and online interactions with cadets. Some core guidance to note:

- All virtual classrooms are to be logged with both the CP and the Director of Cadets, in the first instance.
- Once you have confirmed compliance with Safeguarding actions, all future permissions will be granted through our Youth Department.
- Please confirm a calendar of session where possible to limit the amount of correspondence required.
- Virtual Classrooms are through the Organisational Microsoft Teams only and must be conducted through the divisional email.
- **No** adult emails are to be used in hosting sessions. Classrooms are to be hosted by Cadet divisional emails only but permitted adults can use the co-host function to deliver sessions, control of access remains with the divisional email.
- All adults partaking in these sessions can only do so with organisational SJAI email addresses.
- Only adults with in-date Garda Vetting and Safeguarding training are permitted to take part in the sessions.
- All cadet divisions **must** submit their up to date Excel Matrix in advance, to ensure that all relevant parental/guardian details are on file. Lectures are limited to agreed topics only as aligned to the cadet training programme, no guest lectures are permitted to partake.
- Please confirm your content with the Youth Department in advance.
- Please inform all parents that they are to log the cadet into the virtual room in advance of each session using their email addresses as submitted for cadet registration.
- No cadet emails are permitted, and parents must provide permission in advance for the cadet to attend.
- No form of chatrooms are to be engaged with for cadets, where you are taking questions from the cadets etc, chat functions are permitted, please set ground rules with the cadets in advance,

informing that these are only to be around the lecture for the session.

- Youth leaders should place themselves in a room that is not their bedroom.
- A neutral background is best, making sure that the light source in the room is not behind you.
- All adults using a webcam should dress appropriately, as you would if you were at a Cadet divisional meeting. (Updated 9th April 2020 Version 2.1)

The only difference with these sessions is that the Cadets and the Youth Leaders are not in the same room/hall. Otherwise, expectations regarding behaviours, practice etc., are expected as normal:

- A minimum of two Adult leaders is to log in at all times for each session.
- There is to be no recording of the session unless this has been agreed with the Youth Department and CP informed of the reason.
- We have constructed an attendance log for these sessions, and these must be completed for each session. Viewing of these may be requested by the CP team, but you should keep these in your divisional records for inspection at all times. Requests for these may also be made by the Director of Cadets.
- No virtual classroom is to be published to any social media site.
- The attached template is to be used to capture the attendance of both adults and cadets and held for both Youth Lead review and CP requests of compliance.

Please note, that the Safeguarding Policy has been updated to include risk management of these undertaken, all concerns regarding this are to be directed back to the CP team. Please note below our update risk matrix, in particular Risk 6 and the aligned control measures Risk identified Procedure in place to manage identified risk.

- 1) Risk of harm of sexual abuse (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child by a member of staff/volunteer.**
Child Safeguarding Policy. Garda Vetting of each volunteer, Relevant Safeguarding training completed. All Adults re-vetted and re-trained every 2 years.
- 2) Bullying of a child.**
Anti bullying policy.
- 3) Risk of harm of physical/psychological/emotional abuse (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child by a member of staff/volunteer.**
Safeguarding policy manual. District Support Officers and Trainers.
- 4) Risk of harm of abuse when away for overnight stays/excursions.**
Overnithg Policy. Induction of Adult Officers and Training Garda Vetting.
- 5) Risk of harm of online abuse through social media.**
Social media policy and monitoring (Updated 9th April 2020 Version 2.1)
- 6) Risk of harm of online abuse through youth member interactions of virtual classrooms, or any educational online tool/portal.**

Social Media Policy and Monitoring Updated Safeguarding policy Cadet Leader guidance on virtual classrooms.

Attendance template for records and verification Your support and adherence to these procedures will ensure we continue to provide effective safeguarding to all youth members of the organisation.

SJAI forms

All forms illustrated in this document may be found on the SJAI website and internal Membership Connect.

Typesetting and design

The document was typeset and designed by the SJAI Design Team design.team@stjohn.ie

