

Code of Practice

February 2015



THE IRISH PILGRIMAGE TRUST

CHARITY NUMBER 5992

[This document sets out The Irish Pilgrimage Trust's Vision and Mission Statements and Operational Structures, together with the Roles and Responsibilities of everyone involved with the Trust. It further sets out the standards, guidelines and policies to which every member of the Trust is committed.]

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1.0 VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

1.01 The Trust Vision Statement

- a. We are a Christian community and a pilgrim people journeying with Mary, the first disciple.
- b. We are called to act with justice always, to love tenderly those we meet, to serve one another in friendship, and to walk humbly with God.
- c. We value and cherish all people as they are, irrespective of race, gender, ability, religion, or social status.
- d. We strive to establish this spirituality of communion with the people with whom we work – staff, volunteers and pilgrims.

1.02 The Trust Mission Statement

This is our vision, the vision of The Trust, and we will affirm it as trustees, staff, officers, leaders and volunteers in the following ways:

- a. We affirm our special relationship with Lourdes through our pilgrimages;
- b. We will welcome people to share our pilgrim journey as volunteers, supporters, and benefactors;
- c. We will invite pilgrims to travel with The Trust on a spiritual journey with a loving family of friends, where all individuals are valued and cherished as they are. Whereas we cannot bring all people on pilgrimage, we will give preference to young people who are disadvantaged, ill, disabled or marginalised;
- d. We will work closely with the other members of the International Trust Family.
- e. We will encourage other groups and organisations to share our vision by welcoming them to “Kilcuan”, our home in Clarinbridge, Co Galway or “Cois Cuain” our home in Kilrane, Co Wexford;
- f. We will welcome volunteers on our biennial sponsored cycle to Lourdes and the biennial Camino de Santiago.
- g. We will be open to new ways to share our vision with others.

2.0 LEGAL AND ORGANISATION STRUCTURES

2.01 Legal Structure

- a.** The Irish Pilgrimage Trust is the legal name of “The Trust” and is a registered charity (charity number 5992) established in 1972.
- b.** The Trust was incorporated under the Charities Act (1973) in 1974.
- c.** The registered office of the Trust is at “Kilcuan”, Clarinbridge, Co Galway.
- d.** The Trust is under the patronage of the Irish Hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church.

2.02 Organisational Structure

- a.** Overall control of the Trust lies with the members of the Board of Trustees. They are drawn from all regions and meet regularly to determine policy and to progress the vision and mission of the Trust.
- b.** The Trust is an all-Ireland organisation and comprises seven regions:
 - i.** Each region elects regional officers.
 - ii.** The regional committee is responsible for the promotion of the Trust in the local area, the distribution of application forms, the selection of guests for the Trust’s activities and local fund-raising.
- c.** The core unit of the Trust is the group. Each group is led by a group leader and includes a nurse, a chaplain and volunteer carers.
- d.** The activities of the Trust comprise the Easter pilgrimage, the Hosanna House pilgrimage and friendship weeks to Kilcuan and Cois Cuain.
- e.** The administration of the Trust and the management of the Trust properties are co-ordinated from the registered office under the control of the Board of Trustees.

3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.01 The Trustees – Role and Responsibilities

- a. The overall control of the Trust is vested in a Board of Trustees, and its members are solely responsible in law for the management and administration of the charity.
- b. Each member of the Trust is eligible to be appointed as a Trustee. Appointment will be through co-option to the Board as a result of a vacancy as they arise or by election.
- c. The Trust will ensure to the best of its ability that all applications are treated equally and are in line with the Vision Statement.
- d. **Trustees are charged:**
 - To act with honesty and integrity, and to fulfill legal responsibilities imposed by the Companies Acts, other statutes, and common law;
 - To be familiar with and understand the terms, obligations and conditions of the Trust instruments (i.e.: deed, schemes and memoranda);
 - i. To manage prudently Trust funds and assets;
 - ii. To maintain proper records;
 - iii. To apply Trust funds and assets as specified by the Trust deed or instrument;
 - iv. Not to profit from holding a position on the board;
 - v. Not to delegate responsibilities that are properly those of the board;
 - vi. To represent collectively the vision of the Trust and to communicate this to the staff, the regions and group leaders using all appropriate means;
 - vii. Corporately, to employ staff and be responsible for the activities of the staff;
 - viii. To be responsible for the governance and direction of the Trust.
 - ix. To evaluate collectively the performance of the board, individual board members and staff;
 - x. To take all practicable steps to ensure appropriate standards of care to meet the needs of the young people are set, reviewed, and implemented, and that these standards and their review are documented;
 - xi. To be supportive of fellow trustees, regional officers, group leaders, carers, staff and other supporters by ensuring that they are well informed about the Trust and its development, by encouraging them to contribute to that process, and acknowledging and thanking them for their contribution;
 - xii. To ensure the Code of Practice is reviewed every three years and updated as required;

- xiii. To facilitate the full involvement of all board members in all decision-making.
- xiv. To complete the Trust's on-line Carer's Training Programme.
- xv. Subscribe to the ethos, rules, and procedures of the Trust as enshrined in this document.

3.02 The Regional Chairperson – Role and Responsibilities

- a. The Regional Chairperson is responsible to the board for all aspects of the management of the Region. He / she may serve as chairperson for a maximum of five consecutive years.
- b. To be appointed as a Regional Chairperson, a person must:**
 - i. Have at least two years' experience as a Regional Officer / Group Leader;
 - ii. Be nominated at a regional meeting and the nomination approved by the region and recorded in the Minutes of the Regional Meeting;
 - iii. Be interviewed by a trustee as to their experience, commitment and suitability;
 - iv. Be approved by the Board of Trustees on the recommendation of the regional committee and a record of this must be entered into the Minutes of the Board of Trustees next meeting;
 - v. Receive a letter of appointment from the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
- c. The Regional Chairperson, on accepting his/her appointment will commit to:**
 - i. Attend bi-annual national chairpersons/group leaders meetings
 - ii. Chair all regional meetings and encourage other group members to attend
 - iii. Ensure that the Region is represented at all national meetings;
 - iv. Participate in regional activities;
 - v. Fundraise and promote the Trust;
 - vi. Liaise with Trust HQ;
 - vii. Arrange Regional meetings, to include selection, seminars on appropriate topics for the development of the skills of all carers.
 - viii. Ensure continuity of Regional Officers; vice-chairperson, secretary, treasurer, chaplain, nurse and PRO.
 - ix. Complete the Trust's on-line Carer's Training Programme.
 - x. Subscribe to the ethos, rules, and procedures of the Trust as enshrined in this document.

3.03 The Group Leader – Role and Responsibilities

- a. The group leader is responsible to the board for all aspects of the management of the group in Ireland and on pilgrimage abroad. He / she may serve as leader of a particular group for a maximum of five consecutive years. The Group Leader must not also be the Group Nurse or participate in the biennial cycle to Lourdes.
- b. **To be appointed as a group leader, a person must:**
 - i. Have at least two years experience as a carer with the Trust;
 - ii. Be nominated at a regional meeting and the nomination approved by the region and recorded in the Minutes of the Regional Meeting;
 - iii. Be interviewed by the regional chair and a trustee as to their experience, commitment and suitability;
 - iv. Be approved by the Board of Trustees on the recommendation of the regional committee and the interview panel. A record of this must be entered into the Minutes of the Board of Trustees next meeting;
 - vii. Receive a letter of appointment from the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
- e. **The group leader, on accepting his/her appointment will:**
 - i. Attend new group leader training and bi-annual national group leaders meetings
 - ii. Endeavour to attend all regional meetings and encourage other group members to attend
 - iii. Ensure that the group is represented at all regional meetings;
 - iv. Participate in regional activities;
 - v. Fundraise and promote the Trust;
 - vi. Liaise with Trust HQ;
 - viii. Arrange group meetings, to include a pre-Lourdes meeting for carers, young people and their parents/guardians;
 - ix. Lead the planning of the group's programme of activities.
 - x. Complete the Trust's on-line Carer's Training Programme.
 - xi. Provide full support to the administrative function of the Trust by completing all forms as required by due dates.
 - xii. Participate fully with the vetting procedures as adopted by the Trust and as required by the relevant jurisdiction.
- f. **The group leader will ensure:**
 - i. The suitability of those invited and selected to be carers;
 - ii. There is full participation by all group members – carers and guests;
 - iii. That all young people in the group and their parents / guardians are visited before the pilgrimage by the group leader, group nurse and other carers as necessary;

- iv. That sufficient carers with manual handling training are recruited to cater adequately for the needs of the group;
- v. That the group nurse is familiar with any medical or nursing requirements of group members;
- vi. That all guests in the group are receiving proper care and that carers observe best practice at all times.
- vii. The group leader must subscribe to the ethos, rules, and procedures of the Trust as enshrined in this document.
- viii. The Group Leader must report all incidents or accidents, no matter how minor, by completing an incident form and returning it to the National Coordinator as soon as possible.

3.04 The Voluntary Carer – Role and Responsibilities

a. The primary concern of the Trust volunteer is the care, welfare and safety of the guests.

b. Volunteer carers undertake to:

Care at all times for the guests in their group;

- i. Respect the dignity, confidentiality and privacy of all group members;
- ii. Support and promote the ethos of the Trust in Lourdes, “Kilcuan”, “Cois Cuain” and in the region;
- iii. Visit the young people before the pilgrimage as arranged with the group leader;
- iv. Attend group and regional meetings and required training courses;
- v. Organise and participate in fund-raising activities to ensure that the group reaches the fundraising target set by the Board;
- vi. Accept the authority of the group leader;
- vii. Conduct himself/herself in an appropriate manner at all times.
- viii. Complete the Trust’s on-line Carer’s Training Programme.
- ix. Subscribe to the ethos, rules, and procedures of the Trust as enshrined in this document.
- x. Provide full support to the administrative function of the Trust by completing all forms as required by due dates.
- xi. Participate fully with the vetting procedures as adopted by the Trust and as required by the relevant jurisdiction.
- xii. Offer support to the group leader throughout the year. .
- xiii. The carer must report all incidents or accidents to the Group Leader or Group Nurse, no matter how minor.

3.05 Second level Student Carers – Role and Responsibilities

- a. The Trust values highly the involvement of second level students in its caring for its guests either during the week in Lourdes or Hosanna House or during Friendship weeks at “Kilcuan” or “Cois Cuain”.
- b. All second level students must operate within the following rules:**
 - i. Students must be at least 16 years old on the first of January of the year of the pilgrimage or friendship Week to facilitate vetting
 - ii. Students and their parent/guardian must sign and adhere to “Guidelines / Rules for 2nd Level Student” as outlined on the volunteer form.
 - iii. Students will be supernumerary to the group.
 - iv. Students will assist in caring for the guests in their group but will not have responsibility for the care of any particular guest.
 - v. Students must attend their group pre pilgrimage meeting and other meetings arranged by the student leaders and group leader
 - vi. The student must report all incidents or accidents to the Group Leader or Group Nurse, no matter how minor.
 - vii. Students must show respect at all times to all members of the group. Student carers must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times.
 - viii. Students are encouraged to fundraise for the Trust with all proceeds being lodged via the Regional Treasurer.
 - ix. Students can fundraise for their own fare within their schools.
 - x. Student carers must complete the Trust’s on-line Carer’s Training Programme.

3.06 The Group Chaplain – Role and Responsibilities

- a.** The chaplain is a carer who has particular responsibility for the spiritual and pastoral welfare of all members of the group.
- b.** Whereas the Trust endeavors to include ordained ministers as chaplain, the Trust may invite a suitable lay person to take on this role.
- c.** Group chaplains are primarily volunteer carers; they will subscribe to the ethos and procedures of the Trust as enshrined in this document.
- d.** A pilgrimage is a spiritual journey; the chaplain will encourage and assist all group members to derive the full benefits of this journey. It is a privileged spiritual and pastoral opportunity. The chaplain should work with the group leader and all group members to plan and prepare a spiritual programme for the week of pilgrimage. The programme should be tailored to meet the specific spiritual needs of the group members, especially those of the young people. The chaplain should delegate some of these functions to competent group members.
- e.** The group spiritual program includes group Masses, service of Reconciliation, Sacrament of the Sick and night prayers. The group will participate in all aspects of the traditional Lourdes programme such as; visits to the Grotto, the Candlelight and Blessed Sacrament processions, Trust masses, the Baths, the Stations.
- f.** The chaplain is expected to attend the group's pre-Lourdes meeting to meet with group members and their families.
- g.** The chaplain undertakes to complete the Trust's on-line Carer's Training Programme.

3.07 The Group Nurse – Role and Responsibilities

- a. It is the policy of The Trust that each group must have its own group nurse.
- b. Group Nurses who travel with The Trust are primarily volunteer carers, and they will subscribe to the ethos, rules, and procedures of the Trust as enshrined in this document. They will maintain the highest standards of professionalism and best practice. The Group Nurse must not also be the Group Leader or participate in the biennial cycle to Lourdes.
- c. **To be appointed as group nurse a person must::**
 - i. Complete an application form for group nurses;
 - ii. Certify that they are currently on the live register;
 - iii. Furnish a copy of their current Live Registration Certificate with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland or the Nursing and Midwifery Council. Advise the Trust Nurse / National Co-ordinator without delay if there is any change in their registration status by way of restrictions or conditions placed on their practice or through erasure from the register or any change to their status;
 - iv. Be qualified in at least one of the following disciplines: Registered General Nurse (RGN), Registered Midwife (RM), Registered Psychiatric Nurse (RPN), Registered Children’s Nurse (RCN) or Registered Nurse Intellectual Disability (RNID);
- d. **The group nurse will:**
 - i. Maintain the highest standards of professionalism and best practice;
 - ii. Visit all guests in their group before the pilgrimage and in discussion with the guest and his/her carers, will familiarise him /herself with the guest’s medical and nursing needs;
 - iii. Liaise with the group leader so as to be informed of any updated medical information concerning the guests in their care;
 - iv. Be familiar with the medications that will be used by group members;
 - v. Ensure that carers in their group are aware of the need to care for guests in a safe, appropriate and dignified manner;
 - vi. Be responsible for the safe storage and administration of all medication.
- e. **The group nurse will keep accurate records:**
 - i. Nurses Care Plan
 - ii. Medication Record Card – recording medication prescriptions and administration;
 - iii. Nurse’s Notes;
 - iv. Medical Notes;
 - v. Incident Forms – The Group Nurse must report all incidents or accidents, no matter how minor, by completing an incident form, counter signed by the Group Leader and returning it to the National Coordinator as soon as possible.

- f. As soon as possible after the pilgrimage, the original copies of the Nurses Care Plan, Medication Record Card, Nurse's Notes and Medical Notes should be returned to HQ for filing. A copy of the Medical Notes should be given to the parents / guardians of a guest to be forwarded to the family doctor.
- g. All medication must be prescribed by a doctor, but the group nurse may administer the following medication without prescription, and as per manufacturer's instructions:
 - i. A simple honey and lemon linctus for cough;
 - ii. Paracetamol, Calpol, Calpol 6+, Paralink (except to clients taking Carbamazepine / Tegretol) for fever or pain;
 - iii. Ibuprofen (Nurofen, Brufen) to patients taking Carbamazepine for fever or pain.
- h. The group nurse should take an emergency first aid kit whenever the group leaves their hotel / accommodation.
- i. All copies of the guests application forms should be shredded or returned to HQ after the pilgrimage.
- j. The group nurse undertakes to complete the Trust's on-line Carer's Training Programme.

3.08 The Group Doctor – Role and Responsibilities

- a. Several medical doctors accompany the pilgrimage, to provide suitable medical cover for all guests. A doctor will be on duty at all times.
- b. Doctors who travel with The Trust are primarily volunteer carers, and they will subscribe to the ethos, rules, and procedures of the Trust as enshrined in this document. They will maintain the highest standards of professionalism and best practice.
- c. **Group doctors must:**
 - i. Be currently registered with the Irish Medical Council, or the UK General Medical Council;
 - ii. Certify that they are currently registered and supply their registration number;
 - iii. Certify that they have professional Medical Indemnity Insurance which will cover their work with the Trust.
- d. The group doctor will be given access to the requisite medical information concerning the guest for whom they will care. Any changes to the prescribed medicines for a guest while in the care of the Trust must be approved by the Trust Doctor.

- e. The group doctor will:**
 - i.** Keep accurate records (Medical Notes Card);
 - ii.** Ensure where necessary, that carers are providing the appropriate care to the young people;
 - iii.** Continue to provide medical supervision for each guest who comes under their care until the problem is resolved, or the guest is transferred to the care of another doctor, or returns home.
- f.** The group doctor undertakes to complete the Trust's on-line Carer's Training Programme.

3.09 Designated Person for Safeguarding – Role and Responsibilities

- a.** Hearing concerns or allegations and passing them on to the relevant authorities.
- b.** Managing the case and all associated documents
- c.** Liaising with the Trust Chairperson and the National Co-ordinator
- d.** Directing and implementing the Safeguarding Policy as well as liaising with the Safeguarding Committee.
- e.** Ensuring that all safeguarding personnel are kept up to date with best practice as communicated from the relevant bodies.

3.10 Staff – Role and Responsibilities

- a. The Trust staff are employed to:**
 - i. Ensure the smooth and efficient administration of the organisation;
 - ii. Further develop the Trust by communicating, promoting, and marketing our Mission, services and facilities to the public;
 - iii. Promote the vision of the Trust.
- b. The Trust staff are required to:**
 - i. Be familiar with all policies, procedures and protocols of the Trust;
 - ii. Be familiar with the office equipment and its operation;
 - iii. Develop and maintain an efficient and clear method of record keeping;
 - iv. Answer queries, requests and complaints in a professional manner.
 - v. Complete the Trust's on-line Carer's Training Programme.
- c. Staff will deal with the public, other employees and volunteers at all times in a professional, warm, welcoming and friendly manner.**
- d. Staff will:**
 - i. Promote Trust policy as determined by the Board of Trustees;
 - ii. Support and assist members of the board in their work for the Trust;
 - iii. Report to the board as required;
 - iv. Establish a good working relationship with the regional officers and group
 - v. leaders so as to support and assist them in their work for the Trust;
 - vi. Establish and maintain a good working relationship with our sister organisations, their governors / trustees, staff and volunteers
- e. Staff members will ensure that all reasonable care is taken for the health and safety of themselves, other employees, visitors and other persons on the premises of the Trust.**
- f. Staff members will:**
 - i. Report and where possible, act on incidents of accident or damage, risk assessments
 - ii. Ensure that all materials and equipment are safely stored;
 - iii. Be familiar with the Health and Safety Statement for "Kilcuan" / "Cois Cuain" and the offices of the Trust.
 - iv. Subscribe to the ethos, rules, and procedures of the Trust as enshrined in this document.

4.0 GUIDELINES FOR CARERS

- a.** The dignity and right to privacy of the all guests must be respected at all times, especially while in the bathroom or bedroom area.
- b.** Offer choice, particularly with regard to food, drinks and clothing.
- c.** Respect individuality of everyone and allow their personality to shine through.
- d.** Maintain the high level of progress and training that has already been achieved through the work of family and care workers.
- e.** Identify the level of assistance a particular guest may require.
- f.** Permit the guest to do as much for himself / herself as possible, even if this takes time. It might have taken him/her a very long time to learn and acquire these life skills. You may in fact do the guest a disservice by ‘helping’.
- g.** Involve guests in decisions regarding their pilgrimage.
- h.** Involve guests in all conversations, taking time to listen to their points of view or response.
- i.** Be aware of non-verbal communication, body language and facial expressions.
- j.** Respect the integrity of each guest, especially their right to grow and develop.
- k.** Give positive reinforcement – praise every small step in the right direction.
- l.** Carers should be familiar with the guest’s preferences as regards diet, eating habits, special aids or apparatus.
- m.** Carers should be aware of any allergies or food intolerances.
- n.** Carers must understand to the best of their knowledge the ability of the guest and how this may affect them on pilgrimage.
- o.** Explain to the guest that posting any images of the pilgrimage on any social media site is only allowed with the permission of the National Co-ordinator.
- p.** It is recommended that you do not give your personal contact details to guests.
- q.** For additional information, please refer to the Volunteer Carer’s Handbook

5.0 SELECTION PROCEDURES

- a. The Trust invites young people to join our annual Easter pilgrimage to Lourdes, Hosanna House or one of our Friendship Weeks in “Kilcuan” / “Cois Cuain”. Each year the number of applications exceeds the number of places available. It is therefore necessary to have a selection process.
- b. The guiding principle in selection is that young people with the greatest need should be given priority.
- c. Preference will be given to young people with physical or intellectual disability, illness, social or emotional needs . The following definitions apply:
 1. **“Stand-by”**. A person is on “stand-by” when they are considered eligible to travel but at the time of selection there are no available places. In the event of a cancellation, those on the “stand-by” list will be offered a place on the pilgrimage. If not selected for the current year they are guaranteed a place the following year.
 2. **“Deferred”**. A person is “deferred” when they are considered eligible to travel but not until the following year. At the following years selection meeting those “deferred” from the previous year will be considered before new applications.
- d. **Applicants will be further prioritised in the following order:**
 - i. Those who have applied in previous years, were placed on “stand-by”, but did not travel;
 - ii. Those who applied in previous years, but were “deferred”;
 - iii. Those who have never been to Lourdes, Hosanna House or on Friendship week in “Kilcuan” / “Cois Cuain”;
 - iv. Those whose health is deteriorating such that a distant future visit might be unlikely;
 - v. Those who have a serious illness, disability or disadvantage;
 - vi. Those for whom a respite break would be beneficial for themselves or their family or carers.
- e. Applicants will not be excluded or discriminated against on the grounds of social or financial status, religion, nationality, racial or ethnic origin.

- f. The Easter pilgrimage to Lourdes invites applicants from the following age categories:
- i. **0-11 years** of age on the date of pilgrimage, accompanied by a parent in one of the Family groups;
 - ii. **11-18 years** old on the date of the pilgrimage for young people with either a medical condition or a physical disability or other additional needs.
 - iii. **11-21 years** old on the date of the pilgrimage for young people with an intellectual disability;
 - iv. **19-30 years** old on the date of the pilgrimage and with an illness or physical disability in one of the “Jet Set” groups.
 - v. **22-30 years** old on the date of the pilgrimage and with an intellectual disability in one of the “Jet Set” groups.
- g. All applicants must complete the relevant application form and return this to HQ on or before the indicated final date for receiving applications.
- h. The application form contains a Medical Section, which must be completed in full by the applicant’s doctor. If it is more than 12 months since the application form was completed by the doctor, a new form must be completed.
- i. Completion of an application form does not guarantee selection.
- j. Applicants who have been to Lourdes with The Trust in the previous four years will require special permission from the board of trustees to travel.
- k. Completed application forms returned to HQ will be acknowledged by receipt. They will be sent to the regional chairperson after the agreed closing date.
- l. For the Easter pilgrimage, each region will appoint a selection committee which will include the regional chairperson, the group leader of each of the groups in the region, the regional applications coordinator(s), a nurse, a doctor and such others as the region decides.
- m. Applicants will be assigned to one of five categories:
- **A1.** Selected for inclusion in next pilgrimage;
 - **A2.** Selected for inclusion in next pilgrimage subject to trustee approval;
 - **B. Stand-by** for inclusion in next pilgrimage (and guaranteed a place the following year if not included);
 - **C. Deferred** for consideration next year; the reason must be documented and all deferrals will require a new form prior to next year’s selection meeting if the form is more than 12 months old.
 - **D. Deleted** An applicant may be deleted in the following circumstances:
 - i. When the applicant does not meet the relevant criteria for selection
 - ii. When the Trust believes that they will not be in a position to adequately care for the applicant due to the severity of their condition.
 - iii. When the Trust is unable to accept the applicant due to an excessive demand on the services.

In such circumstances the deleted application must be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for review. A minimum of two Trustees must review the application before it is deleted. If the Board does not agree with the recommendation to delete they should look for a suitable group to accommodate the applicant. In the event that no suitable group can be found and the application is deleted the applicant may appeal to the board of Trustees for a reconsideration of their application.

- n. Applicants should not be deferred because of lack of background information. It is the responsibility of the selection committee to gather the information required to make a decision on selection. If this information cannot be made available for the current year, a definite plan should be drawn up to establish the required detail for the next selection meeting.
- o. The region will hold its selection meeting on or before, a date determined by the trustees. It will notify headquarters of its selections as soon as possible following the selection meeting.
- p. HQ will notify all applicants of their status as soon as possible following the regional selection meeting.
- q. It is the policy of the Trust that applicants are not accompanied by parents or their own carers with the exception of young children travelling in the Family groups. In special circumstances (e.g. terminal illness), an accompanying parent or family member may be considered, but permission must be obtained from the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees in consultation with the Trust doctor. Such persons must comply with the Trust regulations as indicated in this Code of Practice.

The permission of the Board of Trustees is required where:

- An applicant does not meet the age criteria;
 - An applicant has been to Lourdes with the Trust in the previous four years;
 - An applicant, other than a member of a Family group, wishes to have an accompanying parent or family member.
- r. Where the regional selection committee wishes to select a young person who does not meet the selection criteria, it should send a covering letter explaining the circumstances of its decision to HQ. The Chairperson of the board will make a decision on such applications expeditiously and notify the decision to HQ.
 - s. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to make final judgement on all matters pertaining to selection.
 - t. No individual, other than group carers and invited guests, may join in the Trust pilgrimage without the prior consent of the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. Such persons must comply with The Trust regulations as indicated in this Code of Practice.

6.0 SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

The Irish Pilgrimage Trust is committed to best practice, which protects children and vulnerable adults who participate in Trust activities. Staff, trustees, carers and volunteers in the Trust accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children/vulnerable adults harm. These responsibilities include:

- a. Treating children/vulnerable adults with respect at all times.
- b. Ensuring that children/vulnerable adults will be listened to and heard
- c. Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff, carers and volunteers.
- d. Sharing information about concerns with the relevant agencies and involving parents and children appropriately.
- e. Carefully following the procedures for recruitment, training and management of staff and volunteers.
- f. Being committed to reviewing and evaluating our policy and procedure on an ongoing basis.
- g. Adopting best practice in accordance with the standards named in the National Board for Safeguarding Children Standards and Guidance Document.
- h. It is mandatory that all members of the Trust read and are familiar with the Trust Safeguarding Policy.
See www.irishpilgrimage.com/TrustSafeguardingPolicy or contact the office for a copy.
- i. All group leaders must ensure that all carers sign confirmation that they have read and understood the Trust Safeguarding Policy.

7.0 ROOM SHARING POLICY

- a. It is The Irish Pilgrimage Trust's policy that guests and carers do not share rooms.
- b. Student carers aged under 18 years must not share with adults or guests.
- c. Guests aged under 18 years must not share with guests over 18 years.

Please see Appendix A

8.0 GUIDELINES FOR GUESTS

- a. Each person treats everybody with courtesy and respect.
- b. No one has permission to leave the group or hotel unless they have the permission of the group leader and are accompanied by two adult carers.
- c. All our guests are expected to participate fully in all the group activities organised by the group leader.
- d. Guests are not allowed enter the rooms of other guests.
- e. Guests are forbidden from purchasing any of the following: fireworks, knives or any such item which would present a risk at airport security.
- f. To ensure that we can properly look after the young people who travel with us parents/guardians or guests are obliged to inform the Trust if they or their children who are travelling with the Trust suffer from any physical or emotional difficulties which may affect them during the pilgrimage/friendship weeks. (All information received will be treated with the strictest confidence).
- g. It is essential that name badges are worn at all times.
- h. The use of mobile camera phones/I pads is forbidden at all times in the bedrooms. Please see **Appendix C** and discuss with the group leader .
- i. The taking of unauthorised substances is forbidden.
- j. The consumption of alcohol by anyone under 18 years is forbidden.

9.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

- a. The Trust is committed to keeping all information concerning members, volunteers, guests, staff and clients secure and using/sharing such information only as appropriate. We maintain sensitive information regarding applicants for our Lourdes pilgrimage, Hosanna House, Friendship weeks in “Kilcuan” / “Cois Cuain”. Trust is the foundation of our relationship with our guests and all guests /parents / guardians have the right to expect that we treat their information with the utmost respect, integrity and care.
- b. All applicants to the Trust must complete an application form and supply the required medical information.
- c. Medical and personal information is used to prepare adequately for the particular medical and nursing requirements of each individual.
- d. The records and forms used by the Trust are the property of the organisation and must not be shown or distributed without prior official approval of the board.
- e. We must safeguard, according to strict standards of security and confidentiality, any information that is acquired in the course of our work.
- f. We will permit only authorised Trust personnel to have access to information.

- g. We will not reveal the Trust information to any external organisation unless approved by the board of Trustees without the guest's, parent or guardian's consent or if required by law.
- h. When we hire or employ other organisations to provide support services, we will require them to conform to our privacy standards.
- i. We will endeavor to keep the organisation's files complete, secure and password protected. Any transfer of files electronically must be encrypted.

10.0 DATA PROTECTION

DATA PROTECTION --- IT'S EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

The Irish Pilgrimage Trust has a responsibility to ensure that personal data is:

- a. Obtained fairly
- b. Recorded correctly, kept accurate and up to date
- c. Used and shared both appropriately and legally
- d. Stored securely
- e. Not disclosed to unauthorised third parties
- f. Disposed of appropriately when no longer required.

Data protection rights apply whether the personal data is held in electronic format or in a manual or paper based form.

See Appendix B Practical Steps for Data Protection.

11.0 SOCIAL MEDIA / MOBILE DEVICES

The exponential growth in social media and the widespread availability of smart phones over the past few years has opened up significant new opportunities for people of all ages to communicate and to share information with one another. However, the benefits that this new form of communication brings must also be balanced with the significant risks that are attendant to it. While The Code of Practice describes the circumstances in which mobile devices and social media may be used (**see Appendix C**) it is within the remit of a group leader to further reduce (or prohibit) the use of mobile phones and social media by guests or carers in their groups should they so wish. At all times, the use of social media, the taking of photographs and the recording of video should respect the dignity and protection of the young people under our care.

See Appendix C

12.0 ALCOHOL POLICY

The primary duty of all carers is the care of the guests who travel with us. As the consumption of alcohol may impair one's ability to give full attention to the young people the following policy regarding the consumption of alcohol must be followed:

- a. No alcohol shall be consumed by anyone (guest or carer) under the age of 18 years.
- b. Alcohol consumption should be kept to a level at all times such that the carer remains capable of discharging their caring duties.
- c. Alcohol consumption should be sensitive to those in the company.
- d. No alcohol to be consumed by carers on night supervision.

13.0 HOSANNA HOUSE

- a. The Trust organises a pilgrimage to Hosanna House in Bartrès, near Lourdes each June. There are two groups of approximately forty five pilgrims each.
- b. Each group is led by a group leader and includes a nurse, and a number of carers. It may also include a doctor and a chaplain.
- c. Applications are welcomed from people of all ages, with or without a disability.
- d. Application forms are available from HQ. All copies of application forms must be destroyed on return from Lourdes.

14.0 FRIENDSHIP WEEKS

- a. The Trust organises Friendship weeks in "Kilcuan" and "Cois Cuain" each year.
- b. Each group is led by a group leader and includes a nurse and a number of carers.
- c. Applications are welcomed from people of all ages with physical or intellectual disability or other special needs who would benefit from a holiday. Application forms are available from HQ or the Trust website.
- d. A selection meeting will be held in accordance with the selection procedures outlined in this document.
- e. Each group are asked to raise enough money to cover the entire cost of the Friendship week for the group.
- f. Visitors to Friendship weeks must sign in/out on arrival and departure and not go to the bedroom areas or be alone with guests at any time during the week.

15.0 FINANCE

- a. The trustees are legally accountable for all monies raised in the name of the Trust.
- b. The financial year of The Trust runs from 1st June to 31st May the following year. The national treasurers produce annual accounts that are fully prepared in accordance with legislation. The financial statements shall be audited by a firm of independent auditors. The Trust shall publish extracts from the financial statements on its website.
- c. The Trust undertakes to pay for the fares, accommodation, and all other expenses of the young people it brings on pilgrimage. It obtains most of this money through fund-raising.
- d. Each region is expected to raise sufficient funds to cover all the young people coming from that region.
- e. The board will designate national bank accounts for the receipt of funds and regional officers and group leaders will be notified accordingly.
- f. Each region may have only one bank account unless otherwise approved by the Board of Trustees. **The region must implement the following procedures:**
 - i. Elect a suitable person as regional treasurer;
 - ii. Lodge immediately into the regional account all funds raised in the region;
 - iii. A suggested limit of €5,000 may be kept in the regional account at any particular time;
 - iv. Monies in excess of €5,000 will be “swept” periodically by the National Co-ordinator directly to the national account;
 - v. Regional Treasurers are to ensure that each group complies with cash procedure. (See **Appendix D** for General Guidelines on Income and Expenses). Regional treasurer must ensure that clear and timely information is available from their region to include all income and expenditure. This information to be submitted to National Treasurer frequently and as requested.
- g. Regional treasurers will keep an accurate up-to-date account of all transactions.
- h. Each October the national treasurers will meet with regional treasurer to review regional accounts, fund-raising and financial policy. At this meeting the national treasurer will provide details of the financial performance of the Trust, approved by the Board of Trustees, for the previous year-end.
- i. The Trust shall seek to adopt the Code of Governance.

See Appendix D

16.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

The Irish Pilgrimage Trust is committed to the spiritual and physical care and protection of all those in its care; young people, adults, carers and staff. In order to enhance safety within the group, each group leader must complete risk assessments for the group for all Trust activities. The purpose of which is to formally identify and document identifiable risks within the group, to assess those risks and to put procedures in place to mitigate the probability of the risk occurring.

The Trust has a legal duty to *“manage and conduct it’s undertaking in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that in the course of work being carried on, individuals” (not being his or her employee’s) “are not exposed to risks to their safety, health and welfare” (Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005)(Safety Health and Welfare at Work (General Applications) Regulations 2007).*

The Trust requires that each Group travelling to Lourdes, Hosanna House, Kilcuan or Cois Cuain prepare written risk assessments prior to the pilgrimage/friendship week for foreseeable activities that may take place. In many cases this is simply formalising what is already done during the planning of the pilgrimage / friendship week. To assist with the preparation of the assessments each Group is provided with the Safety Matters and Forms booklet containing a risk calculation matrix and a risk assessment format together with a number of generic risk assessments that cover many of these foreseeable activities.

In addition to carrying out the above assessments there will be a need to carry out ongoing risk assessments as the pilgrimage/ friendship week / event progresses, where unforeseeable events or circumstances arise. The significant findings of these assessments should be recorded

All Groups will have a nominated Risk Assessment advisor; this is an appointed volunteer who will be able to help you through the process of assessing risks and documenting the assessments.

The requirement to assess the risk of any activity is based not only in law, but there are also economic, moral and ethical considerations. The clearest motivation behind assessing risk is to ensure that no one suffers any harm as a result of a Trust activity.

17.0 INCIDENT RESPONSE PLAN

In the event of a serious incident involving personnel taking part in any activities of the Trust, the Trust has an Incident Response Plan outlining the procedures to be followed. A copy is available on our website or from HQ; www.irishpilgrimagestrust.com/incident response plan.

18.0 DEFINITIONS:

Board	The Board of Trustees of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust
Carer	Volunteers who care for guests in Lourdes and in Kilcuan and Cois Cuain.
Employee	Paid member of the Trust
Employer	The Irish Pilgrimage Trust
Group	Any of the Trust group's made up of Guests and Volunteers; each Group is individually identified by its own Group Number.
Group Leader	A volunteer who is appointed as the Leader of a Group by the Trust
Guest	A person who may have special needs who is invited by the Trust and avails of the opportunity to accompany one of the Trust groups on the annual Easter Lourdes Pilgrimage, Friendship Week short summer break, annual Hosanna House June Pilgrimage or other such event organised by the Trust.
Headquarters	Offices of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust located at Kilcuan, Clarinbridge, Co. Galway
HSE	Health Service Executive
Management	The Trust Chairperson, Trust Coordinator and The Board
NBSCCCI	National Board Safeguarding Children Catholic Church Ireland
Other Organisations	Other independent groups or organisations availing of the Trust residential facilities in Kilcuan and Cois Cuain.
Pilgrim	Trust guest, volunteer/carers on pilgrimage to Lourdes.
Public	Any person entering the facilities of the Trust or visiting
Trust	the Irish Pilgrimage Trust
Volunteer	Any person who volunteers their services to the Trust and completes the required application and vetting process, including Volunteer Trustee, Carer, Nurse, Doctor, Chaplain, Group Leader, Student Volunteers or regional office holders.
Vulnerable Adult	A "Vulnerable Adult" is a person aged 18 years or older who, by reason of their disability, age or illness is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against "significant harm" or "exploitation".

APPENDIX A

The Irish Pilgrimage Trust Room Sharing Policy

Version 4, January 2015

The following is a policy statement on room sharing arrangements for the guests and carers of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust. This policy applies for the annual pilgrimages to Lourdes/Hosanna House and friendship weeks to Kilcuan/Cois Cuain.

The Trust takes cognisance of the following when issuing this policy.

- a) The variety of accommodation available to various groups.
- b) It acknowledges the fact that groups are restricted in many cases by the accommodation available to them.
- c) It acknowledges the wishes of parents in relation to room arrangements.
- d) It acknowledges that the Trust has a duty to protect both our guests and our carers.

It is The Irish Pilgrimage Trust's policy that guests and carers do not share rooms.

General Principles

1. The overriding principle is to ensure that all pilgrims are safe at all times.
2. The Group Leader must use her/his best judgement, based on information received, when allocating carers and guests to their rooms.
3. The room sharing arrangements must be organised in such a way as to provide the best safety to both guests and carers given the accommodation layout available in that particular hotel.
4. A record must be kept of what room each guest and carer occupied during the week and this must be returned to HQ in the Safety Matters and Forms Booklet.
5. If a Group Leader is uncertain about how to implement these procedures for a given set of circumstances, they should contact either the Trust Protection Officer or the Trust Safety Officer and seek further guidance.
6. It is important that Group Leaders and Carers be aware and alert to the possibility of guests bullying or intimidating other guests. Any such instances should be reported to the Group Leader and recorded on an incident form.
7. When selecting the guests for the group, the Group Leader should bear in mind the layout of their particular hotel and the mix and skills of the carers. If the group is not expecting to have additional carers (doctor, cyclist, students) the Group Leader may have to change the carer/guest ratio to ensure the guests can be fully cared for at all times during their time away.
8. When making a pre-Lourdes home visit the room sharing arrangements should be explained to the parents/guardians.

Room Arrangements

1. It is Trust policy that no carer should share a room with a guest
2. Under no circumstances should a carer put themselves in a situation where they are alone with a guest but should the situation arise whereby a helper unintentionally finds himself/herself alone in a room with a guest, a record must be made as soon as practicable of the date, time, reasons and duration spent alone. The Group Leader must be informed and he/she must record this on an incident form.
3. If an extra bed is brought into a two or three-bedded room, the risk assessment should confirm that this has not compromised health and safety standards.
4. Group Leader should ensure suitable matching of age, physical and learning abilities.
5. There should be only one fulltime wheelchair user per room where practicable.
6. If considered necessary, the Group Leader, in conjunction with the carers, should establish appropriate night supervision that may involve carers being on duty for part or the whole night. The Group Leader should ensure that they have adequate carers to facilitate supervision and that all carers are fully aware of their involvement.
7. If night supervision is considered necessary, the following rules apply:
 - I. There should be four carers on night-duty operating a rota system whereby two carers are “on duty” and two carers are “on stand-by”.
 - II. The carers must comprise two female and two male.
 - III. Group Leader/carers should inform the guests who is on night duty each night.
 - IV. Detailed planning is required to ensure there are enough carers available during the day to cover for the four carers involved in night duty.
8. Room Occupancy forms must be completed and returned to HQ.
9. Student carers aged under 18 years must not share with adults or guests.
10. Guests aged under 18 years must not share with guests over 18.

APPENDIX B

DATA PROTECTION

PRACTICAL STEPS TO PROTECT DATA AND GUEST PRIVACY:

1. Personnel should operate a clear desk policy at the end of each working day and when away from the desk or office for long periods
2. Personal and sensitive records held on paper and /or on screens must be kept hidden from callers to the Head Office.
3. Rooms, cabinets or drawers in which personal records are stored should be locked when unattended. Record tracing system should be maintained of files removed and/or returned.
4. Personnel should only access service user information on a need to know basis and should only view or share data that is relevant or necessary for them to carry out their work.
5. Laptops /portable electronic devices and or files containing personal information should not be left unattended in cars.
6. In cases where files/records are brought to meetings/home visits etc. the records should always be contained in a suitable brief case /bag to avoid any inappropriate viewing and also to secure the records.
7. All files and portable equipment must be stored securely. If files containing personal information must be transported by car, they should be locked securely in the boot for the minimum period necessary.

Confidential and personal information stored and shared on The Irish Pilgrimage Trust's network servers which are situated in physically unsecure locations, for example remote file/print servers, must be protected by the use of strict access controls and encryption. All devices used for the storage and processing of personal data must be encrypted. It is the responsibility of each device owner to ensure that the device is appropriately secure.

APPENDIX C

SOCIAL MEDIA / MOBILE DEVICES

Mobile device and social media policy for guests

Many parents of the young people that we bring on pilgrimage to Lourdes value the ability to easily contact their child, and therefore the Trust does not prohibit our guests from bringing mobile devices with them on pilgrimage. However, the Trust has strict policies on the circumstances in which guests may use the mobile devices that they bring with them, and how such devices may be used.

Voice calls and instant messaging apps

Guests may only make and receive voice calls or send and receive text messages on their mobile devices if given permission by the group leader. In order to encourage group interaction, group leaders may restrict the times of day at which such voice calls or text messages may be made. Voice calls and instant messages should only be sent and received when the guest is with the rest of group, and such use is forbidden in hotel bedrooms.

Photography

Guests are forbidden from taking photographs of themselves or other guests or carers in hotel bedrooms. At any other time, photographs of any member of the group (or other groups) may be taken only with express permission of the group leader. The HSE prohibits the taking of photographs of guests who are in the care of HSE.

Social media

Guests are forbidden from using social media in hotel bedrooms, and may only be used in other circumstances if given express permission by the group leader. Guests are forbidden from sharing any photographs or videos taken while on the pilgrimage on social media unless given express permission by the group leader to do so.

Mobile device and social media policy for carers

Carers must respect the dignity of the young people under our care, and take into account the best interests of the Trust when using mobile devices or social media while on pilgrimage. Carers must follow the direction of the group leader on the use of social media and mobile devices, should the group leader in question wish to restrict further their use in their particular group. It is recommended that you do not give your personal contact details to guests.

APPENDIX D

GENERAL GUIDELINES ON INCOME AND EXPENSES

1. All income received must be acknowledged by either issuing a receipt to the donor or by writing a letter or preferably both. Each group should have a member responsible for ensuring the operation of this.
2. The regional treasurer and the office must be notified in advance of any fundraising event.
3. Cash received from Fund raising events such as Church Gate Collections must be counted by two people. A statement (Event Fundraising Record), signed by **two** people, must be submitted to the office in Kilcuan along with the lodgement slip and a copy to the Regional Treasurer detailing the amount received and the date counted/lodged. All cash must be lodged to the Regional Account **without delay**.
4. **Without exception** all revenue must be lodged without deduction and expenses paid from regional bank account. All expenses are to be pre approved by 2 officers of the Trust i.e. regional officers and trustees. Normal expenses of the region would be considered to be:
 - a. Regional meetings
 - b. Buses
 - c. Pocket money
 - d. Stationery and postage
 - e. Group clothing
 - f. No commitment for expenditure should be given without prior written approval by the Regional Chairperson and Treasurer.
 - g. If a group receives sponsorship in kind, both the regional treasurer and HQ need to be informed as soon as possible of the details. Acknowledgements need to follow point 1 above.
5. National co-ordinator should be informed annually after regional AGM's of bank account signatories for regional bank account.
6. Only the regional treasurer, chairperson, secretary or the National Co-ordinator may sign cheques drawn on the regional account. There must be two signatures on any cheque and blank cheques must not be signed in advance by one signatory.

7. There should be regular transfer of funds from the Regional Account to the National Account so that the Regional Account balance is kept to a minimum, this will be done by the office via internet banking
8. Regional Treasurers must keep proper books and records that clearly show all sources of income and details of all expenditure fully supported by invoices and/or paid receipts.
9. A region may incur reasonable costs to cover local administration. All payments for such costs are made from the regional account and must be supported by receipts.
10. Group Leaders must submit invoices and receipts when requesting a reclaim of expenses incurred on essential supplies for the Group. Travel and subsistence expenses must be submitted on expense sheet supplied. Travel expenses and exceptional overnight expenses will be paid at a rate as set down by the Board.
11. For Groups travelling to Lourdes, “pocket money” is advanced to cover Group expenses for the week. A record should be retained by the Group Leader in support of these expenses. This record shall be forwarded to the office after the pilgrimage
12. Please ensure that all events are notified to the National Co-ordinator in advance. This is not optional; it is a requirement of our insurance cover.
13. It is Trust policy that there should only be one account in each region, *any exceptions need to be approved by Board of Trustees in advance.*
14. Regional Treasurers must send in bank statements to the office as soon as they are received and must report regularly to the National Coordinator providing details of all transactions in the region. As noted above all Event Fundraising Records will have been send to HQ but originals of all other documents eg Cheque Books and invoices should maintained locally. It should be noted that the Trust’s external Auditors will from time to time examine these records. HQ under the direction of the National Treasurer maintains the Trust’s accounts and produces the Trust’s Annual Financial Statements for presentation to the Trust’s Auditors.



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