



SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE PERSONS AT RISK OF ABUSE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

**Safeguarding is
Everyone's
Responsibility**

THE IRISH PILGRIMAGE TRUST

CHARITY REVENUE NUMBER CHY5992
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER 20009953

Date	Version	Description	Author	Approved
16 Sep 2022	1.0	Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse Policy	B Connolly	16 September 2022

Objects of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust:

We bring people with additional needs on pilgrimage holidays to Lourdes and on holiday in Ireland and we fundraise to cover their costs

NOTES:



The Irish Pilgrimage Trust

Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse Policy and Procedures

Section 1 - Introduction

The Irish Pilgrimage Trust (the Trust) recognises and upholds the dignity and rights of vulnerable persons and is committed to safeguarding all our members. The guidance set out in this document provides a framework of how the Trust can best safeguard vulnerable adults.

These guidelines apply to all staff and volunteers of the Trust and adhere to current best practice and guidance in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. They should be read in conjunction with The Irish Pilgrimage Trust Safeguarding Policy which is available on our website www.irishpilgrimage.com.

The Trust is committed to the safeguarding of vulnerable persons from abuse. It acknowledges that all persons have the right to be safe and to live a life free from abuse. All persons have this right, regardless of their circumstances.

This policy will be reviewed and amended every 3 years or more often if required. All reviews will take account of any major changes including legislative or policy changes in safeguarding.

Section 2 – Definitions

Definition of a guest as defined in the Trust’s Code of Practice in relation to a guest who travels to Lourdes or attends Friendship Week with the Trust.

A guest is 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 Pilgrimage or other such event organised by the Trust.

Definition of a vulnerable adult as defined in the Trust’s Code of Practice in relation to guests travelling to Lourdes or attending Friendship Week with the Trust.

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”.

Section 3 – Safeguarding 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 and vulnerable adults with respect at all times.
- b. Ensuring that children and vulnerable adults will be listened to and heard.
- c. Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, vulnerable adults, parents, staff, carers and volunteers.
- d. Sharing information about concerns with the relevant agencies and involving parents, children and vulnerable adults appropriately.
- e. Carefully following the procedures for recruitment, training and management of staff, carers and volunteers as outlined in the Trust Safeguarding Policy.
- f. Being committed to reviewing and evaluating our policies and procedures on an ongoing basis.
- g. Adopting best practice in accordance with all relevant legislation.
- h. It is mandatory that all members of the Trust read and are familiar with the Trust Safeguarding Policy. See www.irishpilgrimagetrust.com or contact the Trust office for a copy.
- i. All group leaders will discuss the Trust Safeguarding Policy with carers and must ensure that all carers sign confirmation that they have read and understood the Trust Safeguarding Policy.

Section 4 – Risk Assessment

1. Vulnerable Adults Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a vulnerable adult while availing of our services including the area of online safety when accessing the internet. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage risk identified
1.	Risk of harm to a vulnerable adult while in the care of our service.	Vulnerable adults are supervised at all times while in our service and there must be a minimum of 2 volunteers with a vulnerable adult. An adult carer will never be alone with a vulnerable adult. All activities that take place are group activities. All staff and volunteers undergo safeguarding and other training prior to working with vulnerable adults in our service
2.	Those that work with vulnerable adults are unsafe to do so	All staff and volunteer carers are vetted and undergo safeguarding training prior to any involvement with vulnerable adults under the care of our service. Volunteer carers must supply names of two referees who can provide a character reference for them.
3.	Those that work with vulnerable adults behave inappropriately towards them.	All staff and volunteer carers are vetted and undergo safeguarding training prior to any involvement with vulnerable adults under the care of our service. Volunteer carers must supply names of two referees who can provide a character reference for them. All Trust volunteers involved with vulnerable adults sign the Trust Volunteer Code of Conduct.
4.	Vulnerable adults exhibit inappropriate sexual behaviour	Groups follow the Trust Room Sharing Policy as outlined in section 30 of the Trust Safeguarding Policy. If the vulnerable adult is sharing a room with another vulnerable adult, they are moved to a single room for the remainder of the holiday under the supervision of 2 volunteer carers. A report is made by the group leader to the Designated Liaison Person who will report to Tusla as per guidelines in section seven and ten of the Trust Safeguarding Policy.
5.	Vulnerable adults access inappropriate sites on the internet while in the care of our service.	Families and vulnerable adults are required to follow the Trust Social Media Policy as outlined in Section 27 of the Trust Safeguarding Policy which restricts the use of devices to access internet while in the care of our service.
6.	Vulnerable adults who use our service do not understand the roles and responsibilities in place to encourage positive behaviour.	Volunteer carers usually the group leader and the group nurse, visit the families prior to the holiday and our safeguarding guidelines are outlined to parents/guardians and to vulnerable adults before the holiday commences.
7.	Volunteers fail to understand the procedure to follow when reporting a disclosure made while in the care of our service or any other safeguarding concerns.	All volunteer carers are vetted and must undergo safeguarding training annually. Volunteers will also have read and understood our Trust Safeguarding Policy and are issued with a list of Safeguarding Guidelines to follow. Safeguarding is always on the agenda at board and national meetings.

Section 5 – Consent and Capacity

It is important that staff and volunteers of The Irish Pilgrimage Trust understand the issues of consent and capacity in order to establish an individual's ability to give meaningful consent.

Consent is a clear indication of a willingness to participate in an activity or to accept a service. The vulnerable person may signal consent verbally, by gesture or in writing. Decisions with more serious consequences will require more formal consideration of consent and appropriate steps should always be taken to ensure that consent is valid.

The consent of a vulnerable person is considered valid **ONLY** if:

1. **He/she has the capacity to consent, i.e. he/she can understand and weigh up the information needed to make the decision.**
2. **Enough information has been given to him/her, in an appropriate way, on which to base the decision.**
3. **Consent has been given on a voluntary basis that is free from coercion or negative influence. If any of these three factors is absent, consent cannot be valid.**

Staff and volunteers should remember that no one can give or withhold consent on behalf of another adult who lacks capacity to make the specific decision at the time it needs to be made, unless special provision has been made for this in law. In certain situations, consent or the refusal of consent may be overridden. This is generally done when it is in the interests of the public to do so, for example, the disclosure of information to prevent a crime or risk to health or life.

If staff or volunteers have any doubts or concerns about whether the consent of a vulnerable person is valid, or whether he/she has the capacity to consent, they should bring this to the attention of the Designated Liaison Person of the Irish Pilgrimage Trust who will consult with the relevant statutory authorities.

For further information, please refer to the HSE Consent Policy on [HSE.ie](https://www.hse.ie)

Section 6 - Recruitment

The Irish Pilgrimage Trust will ensure best practice in the recruitment of staff and volunteers. Those working within the Trust either in a paid or voluntary capacity must be recruited safely and must be suitable for their position/role within the Trust.

Recruitment of staff and volunteers and selection of guests is done following guidelines as outlined in the Trust Safeguarding Policy, the Trust Code of Practice and the Employee Recruitment Policy which are available on the Trust website www.irishpilgrimage.com.

Section 7 – Recognising and Reporting Abuse

What is abuse?

The HSE Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse National Policy and Procedures (Draft 2019) defines abuse as “A single or repeated act, or omission, which violates a person’s human rights or causes harm or distress to a person. For the purposes of this policy, abuse is understood to mean abuse by a third party”.

There are several forms of abuse, any or all of which may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or lack of insight and ignorance. A person may experience more than one form of abuse at any one time. Please refer to the Trust Safeguarding policy for more information on abuse categories and recognising abuse.

Everyone is entitled to have their civil and human rights upheld and to live a life free from abuse and neglect. All concerns, allegations and disclosures must be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately. For this reason, it is important for anyone raising a concern to follow the procedure for responding and reporting as laid out in the Trust Safeguarding Policy.

Particular care should be taken with regard to confidentiality and the sharing of information with appropriate people. The Trust has a responsibility to pass on safeguarding concerns about a guest whether they are a child or a vulnerable adult to civil authorities even when it does not concern Trust personnel directly.