



Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy (May 2021)

1. Name of service being provided:

Irish Association of Change Ringers (IACR) encompasses three geographical areas, the Northern, Eastern and Southern Districts. There are a total of 37 church towers which are divided into three districts which are in two jurisdictions (Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland).

The main purpose of bell ringing is to call people to worship God. The main aim of the IACR is to promote the art of full circle bell ringing through education, training and competitions. Each district typically meets monthly for a practice and there are usually 3 or 4 IACR Association events each year. The Association and each of the three Districts typically meets twice a year for a committee meeting and their AGM.

The IACR acknowledges its duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice.

The IACR recognises that the welfare and interests of children and vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances. The association officers and members are committed to ensuring that all children and vulnerable adults have a positive and enjoyable experience in a safe environment and are protected from abuse whilst participating in our activities.

2. Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

- The Association will appoint an Association Safeguarding Officer whose responsibility will be the oversight of our policy, organise training and ensure that our policy and procedures are implemented.
- Each district will appoint a Safeguarding Officer, whose responsibility is to ensure that the IACR policy is implemented for all District and Association IACR events held in their geographical area.
- The District Safeguarding Officers will act as Designated liaison persons (RoI) or Designated Officer (NI) whose responsibility is to interact with the civil authorities in the event of any allegation or disclosure.
- On a need to know basis, the IACR President, the IACR Association Safeguarding Officer and the appropriate church authority of the home tower where an incident is reported will be kept informed by the District Safeguarding Officer of any allegation or report that arises from activities that are organised by the IACR or brought to the attention of an IACR Safeguarding Officer.
- The IACR only hold a small number of events each year which may involve children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- The IACR is made up of members from 37 home towers which are based in local parishes and all have their own Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures in place for their weekly ringing, practices, events and meetings. Safeguarding for each tower takes place locally in accordance with their own parish policy and their policy and procedures without oversight by the IACR.

- When the IACR runs an event at Association or District level, any tower bringing children or vulnerable adults to the event do so as an outing from their own tower, always retaining the duty of care for their young people with their own local leaders according to their own Safeguarding procedures.
- Records of attendance will be retained by the District Safeguarding Officer for Association and District events held in their geographical area according to their district policy.
- The Association & District Safeguarding Officers and Ringing Masters and any other Mandated persons must undergo Garda or AccessNI Vetting and Safeguarding Training before taking up their roles.
- The Safeguarding Panel of the IACR will include the 3 District Safeguarding Officers and the IACR Association Safeguarding officer. They are responsible to implement this policy and keep it updated in line with legislation and current good practice. They are also responsible to make reports to the Association Executive and District Executives at every meeting as well as at all AGMs.
- Any IACR member who is involved in training / coaching children, young people and vulnerable adults at IACR District or IACR Association events, must be selected, vetted (Garda or AccessNI) and be provided with child protection training through the IACR Safeguarding Panel before commencing their role as a IACR coach/trainer.

3. Risk Assessment

All IACR Districts have conducted a specific written risk assessment of any potential for harm to a child through their involvement in Bell Ringing activities. The written risk assessment indicates the areas of potential harm, the likelihood of harm occurring, and lists the required policy, guidance, process and practice required to alleviate the risks. If there are site specific risks that local towers need to include in their Child Safeguarding Statement, this is done at local level.

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
1	Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child or vulnerable adult by the ringing master/other ringers / volunteer / peer / others.	Procedure in place for recruitment and vetting of ringing masters and coaches and training provided. Link to IACR Procedure #2 & 3.
2	Risk of harm (as defined in the CFA 2015) to a child on outings by the ringing master/other ringers / volunteer / peer / others.	Duty of care stay with their own leaders in addition to measures for risk 1 above.
3	Risk of harm of bullying of a child by the ringing master/other ringers / volunteer / peer / others;	Anti-bullying policy in place. Link to IACR Procedure #6
4	Risk of harm (as defined in the CFA 2015) of a child from unauthorised photography.	Photo and video policy in place. Link to IACR Procedure #7
5	Risk of harm (as defined in the CFA 2015) of a child from online abuse through social media or internet access.	Social Media policy in place. Link to IACR Procedure #8
6	Risk of persons who are not selected, vetted and trained acting as Ringing Master or Coaches for children and vulnerable adults.	Procedure in place for maintaining and circulating a list of those who have completed selection, vetting and training. Link to IACR Procedure #4
7	Allegations made against the ringing master/other ringers / volunteer / peer / others.	Procedure for the management of allegations in place. Link to IACR Procedure #1

4. Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*, and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

1. Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service and reporting to Tusla (RoI) or Social Services (NI).
2. Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children or vulnerable adults.
3. Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
4. Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons.
5. Procedure for appointing a relevant person (Designated Liaison Person (RoI) / Designated Officer (NI)).
6. Anti-Bullying Policy
7. Photo and video policy.
8. Social Media policy.

All procedures listed are available upon request or on our website at www.bellringingireland.org/

5. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in May 2023, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
IACR President

For queries, please contact the Relevant Persons:

IACR Association Safeguarding Officer :

To be appointed at the AGM on the 22nd May 2021.

Northern District Safeguarding Officer :

Eric Thompson, f.thompson674@gmail.com, +44 (0)28-92676641 or +44(0)75 80829956

Eastern District Safeguarding Officer :

To be appointed before the Association AGM.

Southern District Safeguarding Officer :

Di Pitcher, dianarpitcher@gmail.com, +353 (0)86-8518329 or +353 (0)28 38483