



Presentation Brothers



West Africa Province:
Child Safeguarding and Protection
Policy and Procedures.

West Africa Province.

This policy document was approved by the 27th Congregation Chapter of the Presentation Brothers held in July 2011. Subsequently, the West African Province Leadership Team adapted, adopted and approved it, to be implemented in this Province.

The Presentation Brothers in this province (especially those who are teachers), have been faithful to the implementation of the rules of professional code for teachers in Ghana which includes the protection of children from any type of abuse: physical, emotional, sexual, psychological, etc. The GES Code of Conduct includes guidelines on the appropriate response to allegations by pupils/student... whether by teachers or fellow pupils/students including sections relating to the accessible school procedure by which pupils/students can make confidential complaints, the prompt and effective investigation of such complaints as well as prompt and appropriate procedure for reporting. The teaching and non-teaching staff of our schools, parents, students and other stakeholders ought to be made aware of this code. Our motivation for child safeguarding comes from our respect for the uniqueness and dignity of each child and young person.

Jesus Christ shows a special regard for children when he says 'see that you do not despise one of these little ones for I say to you that their angels in Heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly father' (Mt 18,10). When his disciples rebuked those bringing the children to him for a blessing he says, 'Let the children come to me... for the kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these'(Mt.18,14).

Our mission as Presentation Brothers is to form Christ in the young. This is the legacy left to us by our founder, Blessed Edmund Rice, who 'opened his heart to those oppressed by poverty and injustice'. He fed, clothed and educated the hungry, naked and ignorant children of his time. This spirit of loving care of children continues today among the Brothers in their various ministries. The implementation of this policy document is another indication of the Brothers' desire to continue to express this loving and caring spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice in our time. Every school and/or ministry should therefore, implement our document with due cognisance of the laws of Ghana and alongside the GES 'code of conduct' document.

Signed: Br. Agoah, Francis Xavier

Province Leader, West Africa Province

Date: 29/11/11

Introduction.

The mission of the Congregation of Presentation Brothers is Christian Formation, primarily of youth and in particular of the poor and disadvantaged. Our understanding of Christian Formation 'is holistic and integrated. It takes into account the development of the whole human person and seeks to promote the integration of the person into family, society and Church'. (Constitution 48)

From the beginning of our Congregation, the Brothers wished to show respect for the children they taught. Constitution #10 of our first Constitutions stated: 'When the Brothers enter the schools, they shall raise up their hearts to God and to the Queen of Heaven, and shall salute with all reverence the Guardian Angels of the children, recommending themselves and the dear little ones to their care and protection.'

The Headquarters of the Congregation is in Ireland since the Congregation was founded in 1802, and so we are guided by the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2009)* in drafting this document.

The Congregation has committed itself 'to providing a safe and caring environment for all those in our care and to safeguarding them from abuse of any kind.' (*General Chapter 2005*). This policy document outlines how this commitment will be implemented, monitored and evaluated.

It is the responsibility of all within the Province to prevent physical, emotional and sexual abuse of children and young people, and to protect them from neglect and exploitation. All who work within the Province have an important role in the identification and reporting of child abuse.

This policy document is formulated to guide the various units of the West Africa Province of the Presentation Brothers in their dealings with child safeguarding and protection issues.

The formation process that we employ to form men as members of the Congregation is to be guided by the principles enunciated in this policy document. The Congregation views the selection and screening of candidates who apply to join to be a matter of crucial importance. It will endeavour to ensure that only men who have a proper motivation, an adequate knowledge of their faith and a commitment to living Christian values are admitted.

Definitions of a child and vulnerable adult

A child is defined as any person under the age of eighteen years, unless a nation's laws recognise adulthood earlier.

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or older who by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness may be unable to take care of him or herself against 'significant harm' or 'exploitation'. The term vulnerable adult may include a person with: a learning disability; a physical disability; a sensory impairment; impaired mental health; dementia; acquired brain injury; a drug or alcohol problem; certain types of physical illness; or person who is frail due to age or other factors.

Definitions of abuse

The abuse of children generally involves one or more of four main forms of abuse:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect

It is essential that all personnel involved in our ministries recognise that the abuse of children is **not just about sexual abuse**. Many children experience harm through emotional or physical abuse and through neglect.

Some children may be particularly vulnerable to abuse. For example there is research which has found that disabled children are three times more likely to be abused than non-disabled children.

Some studies suggest children from minority ethnic groups may be at increased risk of abuse through factors such as stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination.

Other groups of children who might be particularly vulnerable include asylum-seeking children, children who are in care, children who are living with parents/ carers who misuse alcohol and/ or drugs.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child. Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between a care giver and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security is not met. The threshold of significant harm is

reached when abusive interaction dominates and becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/carer.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves using a child for one's own or others' sexual gratification. It involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts (oral sex). They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. People from all different walks of life are vulnerable to this type of abuse.

Neglect

Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and failure to access appropriate medical care or treatment. Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her wellbeing and/or development are severely restricted.

How to recognize Child Abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy, and **it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place.** You do however have a responsibility and duty to act in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child.

The following information should help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse.

Physical abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily life. Some children, however, will have bruising that can almost only have been caused non-accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury or when it appears on parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely. A delay in seeking medical treatment is also a cause of concern.

The following are the key physical signs of abuse:

- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)

- cigarette burns
- bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. The children may receive little or no love from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- a failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, e.g. while in hospital or when away from their parents care
- sudden speech disorders
- developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- self harm
- fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour

Sexual abuse

Adults, who use children to meet their own sexual needs, abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour which may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present.

In all cases, children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital area
- bruising or bleeding near genital area
- sexually transmitted disease

- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

Neglect

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- constantly dirty or 'smelly'
- loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/ or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised

Standard 1 – A written policy on keeping children safe

Safeguarding Children, Policy Statement.

Each child shall be cherished and affirmed as a gift from God with an inherent right to dignity of life and bodily integrity, which shall be respected, nurtured and protected by all.

It is the policy of the Presentation Brothers to safeguard the welfare of all children by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm.

Every member of our Province has an obligation to ensure that the fundamental rights of children are respected.

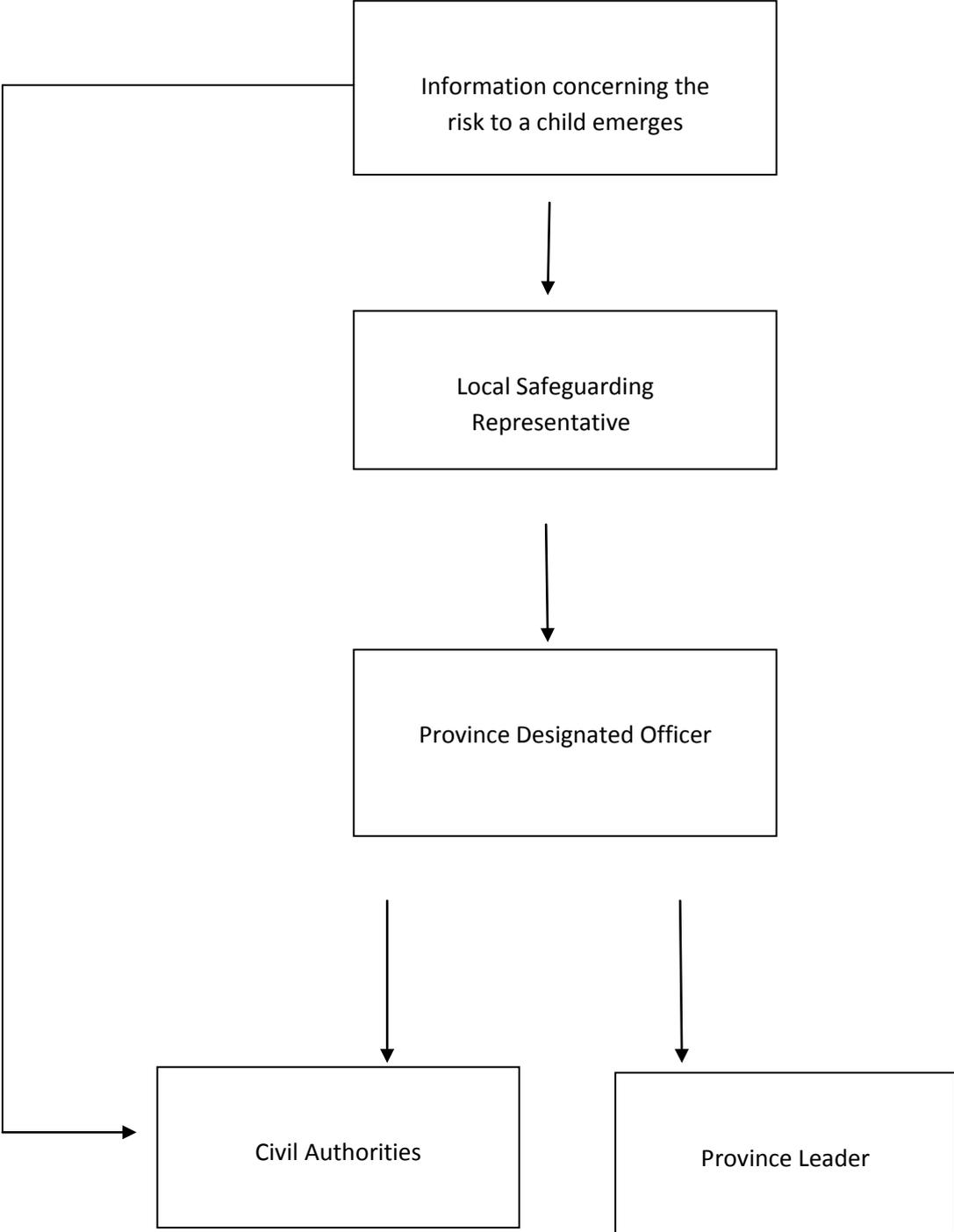
We aim to ensure that none of our Brothers, employees or volunteers engages in behaviour that could allow abuse to occur or actions that could be misinterpreted by children, their families or other adults as constituting, or leading to abuse.

A review will be conducted every year to monitor the implementation of the policy.

Changes will be made to the guidelines as a result of the annual evaluation and on developments and recommendations from external sources.

Standard 2 – Responding to child abuse allegations and suspicions.

If a Brother, employee or volunteer has grounds for concern about the welfare of a child/children, the reporting procedure outlined in this flow chart is to be followed.



The Province Designated Officer.

The Designated Officer is the person appointed by the Province Leader, to receive allegations of child abuse. He needs to have a thorough knowledge of the policy and of correct procedure. The Officer is responsible for managing the allegation/disclosure or concern, from start to finish. This province will have two designated officers: one for Ghana and the other for Nigeria.

The Role of the Designated Officer

1. To receive information about an allegation or suspicion of child abuse.
2. To ensure that the procedure on how to manage suspicions, allegations and disclosures of abuse involving Brothers, employees and volunteers is followed, and to ensure a referral is made to the statutory authority where appropriate. If in doubt, consult the statutory authority.
3. To create a child protection case file for every referral. This file will include a log of actions, events and information received using the dedicated form for this purpose. Entries should be made as soon as possible after an allegation has been made or a suspicion has arisen, but at the latest before the end of the day. Each entry must be timed, dated and signed by the author.
4. To take possession of any written records made by any person in connection with the case and place them on the Child Protection Case File.
5. To explain the procedures for addressing the allegation or disclosure to the person who has raised the concern and to keep that person informed about the progress of the inquiry.
6. To contact emergency or appropriate services where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk of harm. An immediate referral should be made to the Social Welfare Services. Where appropriate, if Social Welfare Services staff are not available, the police should be contacted to ensure that under no circumstances a child is left in a dangerous situation. Consideration should, in all cases, also be given to whether an immediate referral is necessary in order to preserve, and safeguard against the possibility of any loss, deterioration or destruction of potential evidence or forensic evidence.
7. To inform the Province Leader that a complaint has been made and make a recommendation to him about any immediate action(s) that may need to be taken in order to ensure the safety of children.

8. In conjunction with the Community Leader or Director, agree the process to meet with the respondent as soon as possible, unless the statutory authorities have requested that such a meeting be deferred. This meeting takes place after contacting the relevant authorities. The purpose of the meeting is to inform the respondent of the existence of a concern regarding child abuse and of the process being followed.

The respondent should be given information about his or her entitlement to seek legal advice (both civil and, where appropriate, canonical) and about the Safeguarding Children process.

The respondent should be informed that he or she is not obliged, in law, to respond or to furnish evidence, but that any statement provided will be taken into account in the statutory investigation.

As agreed above between the Designated Officer and the Director, the respondent should be informed of the nature and detail of the allegation or suspicion and the name of the person raising it.

Arrange for an Adviser to be offered to provide support for the respondent. Such an appointment will be made by the Designated Officer in consultation with the person concerned and with the Province Leader.

A written record of the meeting must be prepared, agreed with the respondent, signed and dated.

The Role of the Local Safeguarding Representative.

It is the responsibility of the Province Leader to ensure that a person is assigned to the role of Local Safeguarding Representative. This person promotes the safeguarding of children within each community or ministry site. The Safeguarding Representatives acts as the point of contact and liaises with the Designated Officer as necessary.

The Local Safeguarding Representatives should contact the Community Leader/Director and the Designated Officer if an allegation or suspicion is raised.

Local Safeguarding Representatives will be provided with induction, support and regular training.

The role of the Local Safeguarding Representative will be to promote the safeguarding of children by:

- Raising awareness of what safeguarding is through on-going suitable training.
- Disseminating information on the Province's Policy for Safeguarding Children
- Ensuring that any activities organised locally, operate in a manner which ensures the safety and well-being of the children involved. (That appropriate levels of supervision, insurance are provided).
- Ensuring that those responsible for running activities are aware of safe procedures.
- Ensuring that the contact details of the Designated Officer are widely publicised.
- Ensuring that each ministry keeps signed statements that all workers agree to comply with our policy procedures.

The Local Safeguarding Representative shall:

- Ensure that the Designated Officer is informed and is sent the relevant records as soon as possible.
- In an emergency, ensure that the relevant authorities are informed.
- Inform the Community Leader/ Director that an incident has occurred.
- Make a record of the information received and a log of actions taken. Entries should be made as soon as possible after the referral but at least before the end of the day on which it was received. Entries must be timed, dated and signed by the author.
- This record along with any notes taken to date and all relevant information should be passed to the Designated Person.
- **The overall responsibility for safeguarding children remains with the person in charge, such as the Community Leader/Director, Head teacher.**

Safeguarding Committee.

A safeguarding Committee will be located at the Province level. Its role is one of support and development. It is not related in any way to the management of individual cases or suspected or alleged abuse. The safeguarding Committee has responsibility for the provision of training, the safe recruitment of volunteers and staff, creating, maintaining and monitoring a safe environment for children, and advising on the human resources needed for implementing best safeguarding practice.

Receiving Allegations and Disclosures of Abuse.

Basic guidelines for receiving an allegation for any person in our organisation:

Listen: Follow the advice given in Standard 6

Record: Ensure the Child Protection Recording Form is completed

Refer: the matter to the Local Safeguarding Representative or the Designated Officer

The Province is committed to promoting the safety, welfare and protection of children and takes seriously all disclosures, allegations and suspicions of abuse.

This procedure sets out the action that must be taken where there has been a disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, whether current or historical. The procedure applies whether the information regarding child abuse relates to the Province's personnel (Brothers, employees and volunteers) or to a person not associated with our organisation.

Initial Contact Procedure.

It is often very difficult for people to talk about abuse so it is important to make sure that you are patient, listen carefully and actively, and create a safe environment in which the person feels able to speak openly.

This approach can help reassure the person who has made the difficult decision to come forward to make an allegation or voice a concern about abuse. It will also help ensure that relevant information is made available to those whose responsibility it is to investigate the alleged incident(s).

People may tell you about:

- abuse that is happening now;
- abuse that happened in the past;
- an allegation of abuse that has been made to them by a third party;
- having seen signs of abuse, such as an indication of physical injury;
- having witnessed something that has caused them to feel concerned that a child is being or has been abused.

Where information is given in person or by telephone:

- e. Stay calm, take seriously what the person is saying, and reassure them that they have done the right thing in coming forward.
- f. Listen carefully to what the person is saying; allow the person to continue at his or her own pace. Some facts are only ever told once. The information given must be fully and accurately recorded.
- g. If you find that the information disclosed shocks, distresses or disgusts you, do not allow these feelings to show. If you do, you may upset the person giving the information and inadvertently dissuade him or her from giving any further information.
- h. **Remember it is not your role to investigate**, so do not ask probing, intrusive or leading questions. It is the role of the civil authorities to do this.
- i. Check that you have an accurate understanding of what was actually said. If necessary, ask the person to clarify. Do not suggest words, but use theirs.
- j. Make no promises that cannot be kept. Do not promise 'not to tell anyone' or say 'you'll keep it a secret' but listen carefully to what is being sought. Information will be treated with all possible confidentiality.
- k. Do not make any comments on the incident(s) being reported, and do not make any statement about believing or not believing what the person has said. Do not make any comments about the person or persons against whom the allegation is being made.
- l. Be aware that a person's ability to recount his or her concern or allegation will depend on age, culture, nationality and upon any disability which may affect use of language and range of vocabulary.
- m. Explain to the person concerned what will happen next, including the procedures for referral to the civil authorities. Give the person the contact details of the Designated Officer on in case he or she wishes to make direct contact with the Designated Person.

Advisory Panel.

An Advisory Panel is normally appointed by the Province Leader in order to advise and assist him at all stages of the investigative process into the alleged abuse.

The Panel will provide a consistent and assessable source of guidance, through a process of risk assessment for leaders who are charged with specific responsibilities for decision-making in response to alleged or actual child abuse involving a religious.

The panel consists of not less than five members who collectively provide expertise and experience and impartiality necessary in this field of safeguarding.

The Panel will provide advice on:

- the complaint itself
- ensuring the safety and welfare of the child(ren) remains paramount
- the appropriateness of providing help to a child making an allegation and to the family of the child
- the appropriateness of the respondent continuing in his or her present pastoral assignment, having regard to the paramount need to protect children

- how the right of the respondent to a fair trial on any criminal charge may be preserved, and his or her good name and reputation may be appropriately safeguarded
- whether a specialist risk assessment of the respondent should be sought
- the needs of a parish or other community in which a respondent has served
- the needs of the wider community, including the appropriateness and timing of any public statement.

The Panel will create a record of its recommendations and should note the matters upon which it has been asked to advise and the documents which it has considered. These documents should include information on any previous allegations that have been made against the individual concerned.

The advice that is provided by an Advisory Panel shall be included in any inspection of an incident/allegation report file conducted by the National Office.

No member of an Advisory Panel shall act in a professional capacity to either the person making the allegation or the respondent.

Record Keeping.

1. Whenever possible and practical, take notes during the conversation. Always ask permission to do this and explain the importance of recording all information.
2. Where it is not appropriate to make notes at the time, make a written record as soon as possible afterwards and in any case before the end of the day.
3. Use the **Child Protection Recording Form** template to record. As you will see, the following data will be required:
 - The time, date and location of where and when the allegation or disclosure was made to you.
 - The time(s), date(s) and location(s) of alleged incidences.
 - Record whether the allegation was made or the suspicion raised in person or by telephone or in writing.
 - Where the report is made in person, record the names of those who were present.
4. Further information required for the Child Protection Recording Form:
 - a. accurate identifying information, as far as it is known. This should include the name, address, telephone number and date of birth the person who raised the concern or made an allegation.
 - b. if a child raised a concern or made an allegation, the names, addresses and telephone numbers of their parent(s) or guardian(s) should be obtained and recorded.
 - c. the name of the individual against whom an allegation has been made or a concern raised, as well as any other identifying information.
 - d. the statement of the person who has made an allegation or voiced a suspicion, recording as far as possible, everything they have said regarding the alleged or suspected abuse.
 - Do not select what is to be recorded – a detail which may seem irrelevant may be in fact significant.

- In so far as is possible, record the words the person themselves used in making the allegation or voicing their suspicion.
 - Record also any views or comments they expressed regarding the alleged or suspected abuse.
 - No assumptions or comments should be made regarding the intended meaning of the words used.
- e. in the case of a suspicion of abuse, record full details about the circumstances that led to the suspicion, including relevant date(s).
 - f. record if action has already been taken on this allegation
 - g. have any views been expressed by the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) about the matter?
5. The record should be signed and dated by the author. This initial record will form the first entry in a file of information about the case which will be forwarded to the Designated Person.
 6. All original records, including rough notes, must be passed immediately to the Designated Person.

Referral of Disclosures, Allegations and Suspicions.

1. All disclosures, allegations and suspicions of child abuse should be brought to the attention of the Local Safeguarding Representative without delay. The Representative will then liaise with the Designated Officer as soon as possible. The Designated Officer has responsibility for reporting disclosures, allegations and suspicions of abuse to the statutory authorities.
2. In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, a report should be made directly and without delay to the statutory authorities. The Designated Officer should be informed without any delay.



Child Protection Recording Form.

1. Details of person completing the form

Name

Tel _____ Mobile _____

Email

Current Position

Community or Ministry _____

2. About the disclosure

When was the disclosure made or concern expressed?

Date _____ Time _____

How was information received?

Telephone Letter Email In person

Attach any written information to this form.

3. Details of person making disclosure or raising concern:

Name _____

Address: _____

Tel _____ Mobile _____

Email

—

Relationship to alleged victim:

4. Details of alleged victim

Name _____

Address _____

Tel _____ Mobile _____

Ethnic origin

5. Details of alleged perpetrator

Name

Address

Tel _____ Mobile _____

Relationship to child/ victim (*parent/Priest/teacher etc*) _____

Position in Church/Order:

Address at time of incident(s)

Current contact with children if known (*sit on board of governors of school, runs youth Activities etc*)

Any additional

information _____

6. Details of concern, allegation or complaint

(Include dates / times and location the incident(s) occurred, witnesses, if known. Does the child /victim know this referral is being made?)

7. Action taken

Has the matter been referred to civil authorities?

Yes No

If yes Date _____

Time _____ If no explain why

Who was it referred to?

Name

Designation _____

Address _____

Tel _____

Email _____

Has the matter been referred to a member of the Church? Yes/No

If yes

Date _____

Time _____

Who was it referred to?

Name

Designation _____

Address _____

Tel _____

Email _____

8. Next Steps

What actions were agreed and by whom when the matter was referred onto civil/Church authority?

Are there any immediate child protection concerns? If so please record what they are and state what actions have been taken by whom to address them:

9. Designated Officer details:

Date form sent: _____

10. Details of person completing the form

Name:

Tel: _____

Mobile _____

Email _____

Position in Church

Parish/Order

Form completed

Date _____

Time _____

Signed

(A copy must be retained by the recipient and filed in a secure location, and a copy must be sent to the designed officer and civil / statutory authorities)

Standard 3 – Preventing harm to children.

As a Presentation Brothers, with a mission to children, we are committed to a culture of safety that minimises risk to children by following best practice in regard to:

- ✓ **Safe recruitment**
- ✓ **Codes of behaviour**
- ✓ **Safe activities**
- ✓ **Safe places**

Safe Recruitment

The person in charge of any Presentation Brothers ministry directly involved with children has the responsibility of ensuring that proper recruitment practices and provision for training, supervision, support of employees and volunteers, as well as review of practices are put in place.

The person in charge will ensure good recruitment procedures by:

1. **Defining the role** the individual is applying for with a clear job description
2. **Ensuring that applicants complete correct application forms** - prospective employees or volunteers applying for any posts of responsibility must complete application forms
3. **Obtaining two references in writing** – Applicants must submit the names of two referees (not family members), ideally who have first-hand knowledge of the applicant's experience of work/contact with children. Reference should be sought only for preferred applicants.
4. **Checking for vetting procedures** – obtaining the individual's signed permission to enable the Province to request a vetting procedure.
5. **Obtaining proof of identity:** with photo identification
6. **Interviews:** All interviews take place with at least two interviewers present.
An interview focuses on:
 - Assessing the individual's experience of working with children and knowledge of safeguarding children issues
 - Assessing their commitment to promoting good practice
 - Assessing their ability to communicate with children, young people and vulnerable adultsOne way of doing this is to ask questions to examine how a person would respond to a particular scenario e.g. are they authoritarian or too relaxed in their approach? This could be ascertained by asking:
 - Tell us about any experiences that have been difficult for you when working with children and young people and how you handled them?
 - Tell us how you respond to aggression or young people who are especially challenging?

- Tell us how you go about advising a young person about sexual matters?
 - How would you respond to a young person who tells you that they are being abused?
 - Tell us what you would do if a young person started sending you text messages unrelated to your work?
7. **Confidentiality** – information about the applicant is seen only by those involved in the recruitment process.
 8. **Setting a probationary period** (six months for staff and long-term volunteers).
 9. **Keeping correct Records:**
 - Up to date files on all personnel are to be kept at the ministry office.
 - It is required by law that the following records must be kept for one year after the selection process has been completed: Application Forms completed by all applicants; notes on the screening process; interview notes; and a record of the final selection decisions.
 10. **Knowing that young people under eighteen will not be employed** but may be accepted as volunteers, provided there is adequate supervision in place.
 11. **Initial training and periodic updates** for Safeguarding Children will be given to all personnel.
 12. **All personnel will be jointly responsible** for ensuring that Safeguarding Children Policies are upheld and adhered to in our communities and ministries.
 13. **A copy of the Safeguarding Children Policy** will be given to all personnel and partner organisations, and will be given the opportunity to look for clarity on any aspect of this.
 14. Each employee / volunteer is required to sign that he / she is willing to abide by our policy and procedures in all aspects.



**CONGREGATION of PRESENTATION BROTHERS,
Confidential Application Form for paid and/or voluntary staff.**

Ministry Centre:.....

Surname: First Name:.....

Address

.....

Tel. Email

Are you (please tick)

- Employed Unemployed Student
Homemaker Retired Other

Previous work/volunteer experience

Have you previously been involved in voluntary work: Yes No

If yes, please give details

Why do you want to get involved with this activity/ministry?

Have you previously received any training for working with children or young people?

Yes No

If yes, please give details

Any other relevant information?

Please provide the names and addresses of two people whom we could contact for a reference(not relatives)

Name	Name
Address	Address
Tel	Tel
E-Mail	E-Mail

I declare that the above information is true and that I am fit to serve as a volunteer with the Presentation Brothers, West Africa Province. I agree to abide by and accept the terms and conditions of participation.

Signed:.....

Date:

Character and Personal Reference.

Confidential

Dear

Your name has been given to us by _____

who has applied for the position of _____

I would appreciate you completing and signing the information required on the next page.

Thank you in anticipation of your help.

Yours Sincerely

.....

1) How long you have known the applicant? _____

2) In what capacity do you know the applicant?

3) Can you highlight some of the applicant's skills and qualities?

4) Do you, without reservation, recommend the applicant for the position for which they have applied? Please bear in mind that this position involves working with children

(please tick) Yes No

If NO, can you tell us why?

If YES, please specify why:

Any additional comments:

Signed _____ Date _____

Please Return Completed Form to: _____

Declaration form for all persons working as employees or volunteers with children and young people.

Confidential

Legislation in connection with the welfare of children in Ghana, have at its core, the principle that the welfare of children and young people must be the paramount consideration.

The Presentation Brothers, West Africa Province therefore, ask that everyone working or volunteering with us, who will come into contact with children or personal details of children, abide by good practice by completing and sign this declaration.

Do you have any prosecutions pending or have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound Over Order (please tick)

Yes

No

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

Date of offence: _____

Nature of offence: _____

Have you ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures or been asked to leave employment or voluntary activity due to inappropriate behaviour towards a child?

(Please tick)

Yes

No

If yes, please give details including date(s) below:

Full name (print):

Any surname previously known by:

Address:

Date of birth: _____ **Place of birth:** _____

Declaration:

I understand that, if it is found that I have withheld information or included any false or misleading information above, I may be removed from my post whether paid or voluntary, without notice. I understand that the information will be kept securely by the Presentation Brothers, West Africa Province.

I hereby declare the information I have provided is accurate.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Code of behaviour.

1. It is important that all Brothers, employees, volunteers and others in contact with children

- Treat all children with respect
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
- Operate within the Church principles and guidance and any specific procedures
- Be visible to others when working with children whenever possible
- Challenge and report potentially abusive behaviour
- Develop a culture where children can talk openly about their contacts with adults
- Respect each child's boundaries and help them to develop their own sense of their rights as well as helping them to know what they can do if there is a problem.

2. In general, it is inappropriate to

- Spend excessive time with children away from others
- Take children to your own home, especially where they will be alone with you

3. Brothers, employees, volunteers and others must never

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse a child
- Develop sexual relationships with children
- Develop relationships with children which could be in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse

4. Brothers, employees, volunteers and others must avoid actions or behaviour that could be construed as poor practice or potentially abusive. For example, they should never

- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Have a child / children to stay overnight unsupervised
- Sleep in the same room or bed with a child
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves
- Condone or participate in behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade a child
- Discriminate against, show different treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.

5. Best practice in relation to travel with children and young people should be observed

- Brothers, employees, volunteers should not undertake any car or minibus journey alone with a child or young person. If, in certain circumstances, only

one adult is available, there must be a minimum of two children or young people present for the entire journey.

**TEACHERS' CODE OF CONDUCT :
AN EXTRACT FROM RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT
FOR TEACHERS IN GHANA.**

1. Improper Use of Children's Labour

Labour is exploitative of a pupil/student if it deprives him/her of education, leisure or development. Therefore;

- I. No teacher shall subject a pupil/student to any form of exploitative labour.
- II. A teacher shall not use the labour of a pupil/student in any form whatsoever with or without the consent of the parent during contact hours.
- III. A teacher shall not send a child on errands for him/her during contact hours.
- IV. No teacher shall use the labour of school children/students for private or personal service with or without the consent of their parents or guardians and of the school head during school hours.
- V. The exploitative activities that teachers shall not engage pupils/students in shall include but not be limited to: selling or trading in items, weeding, farming, carrying of water, sand, stone, and blocks or doing household chores.

2. Protection of Children from Torture and Other Degrading Treatment

a. Physical Violence

Physical harm inflicted on pupils/students in any form constitutes a gross violation of the child's rights.

Consequently:

- I. Teachers shall not administer any act of corporal punishment, or any act that inflicts physical pain on the children or causes physical harm to their pupils/students such as pushing, pulling, hitting and/or flogging.
- II. No teacher shall subject his/her pupils/students to painful body posture such as frog jumping, standing in the sun, holding heavy loads on outstretched hands, etc.
- III. No teacher shall punish a child to do any work outside the classroom during contact hours.
- IV. No teacher shall intentionally or unintentionally cause harm to any pupil/student.
- V. A teacher shall not threaten any pupil/student with harm with intent to put that person in fear of harm.
- VI. No teacher shall assault any pupil/student.
- VII. A teacher shall not subject a pupil/student to or encourage other pupils/students to subject a pupil/student to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment including any cultural practice that dehumanizes or is injurious to the physical and mental well-being of the pupil/student.

- VIII. A teacher shall intervene to stop a pupil/student from perpetrating physical violence or abuse upon another pupil/student.
- IX. A teacher shall intervene to stop a fellow teacher from perpetrating physical violence or abuse upon another pupil/student.
- X. No correction of a pupil/student is justifiable that is unreasonable in kind or in degree according to the age, physical and mental condition of the pupil/student and if the child by reason of tender age or otherwise is incapable of understanding the purpose of the correction.

b. Psychological Violence

- I. No act of a teacher shall have a negative psychological effect on a school child. Therefore, no teacher in the course of duty shall intimidate, insult, tease, harass, threaten, snub or discriminate against any child.
- II. Teachers shall not use the physical challenges of children to intimidate or ridicule them.
- III. Teachers shall not use any acts or means to pester or coerce children into activities of which they do not have a clear understanding.
- IV. No teacher shall deliberately isolate or ignore any child.
- V. The teacher shall advise against early marriage and support children continuing their education.
- VI. No teacher shall emotionally manipulate a child to the teacher's advantage.
- VII. No teacher shall send a child out of class for absenteeism or lateness.
- VIII. Teachers shall show maximum consideration for feelings and circumstances of learners.
- IX. The teacher shall control his/her utterances in order not to threaten with cruel and degrading punishment or hurt the pupil/student.
- X. A teacher will intervene to stop a pupil/student from perpetrating psychological abuse upon another pupil/student.
- XI. A teacher shall intervene to stop a fellow teacher from perpetrating psychological abuse upon another pupil/student.

c. Sexual Violence

- I. No teacher shall directly or indirectly do anything that may constitute sexual harassment of a pupil/student.
- II. Any teacher who has carnal knowledge of any female or male pupil/student of any age, with or without his or her consent, shall be guilty of professional misconduct.
- III. No teacher shall compel any female or male pupil/student in his or her school or in any educational institution to marry him or her with or without the consent of the child's parents.
- IV. No teacher shall have any carnal knowledge of any pupil/student in his/her own school or in any educational institution with or without his/her consent.
- V. No teacher shall serve as a go-between or knowingly suffer any female or male pupil/student in his/her school or any other educational institution to resort to

or be in or upon a premise for the purposes of carnal knowledge by any person or by himself/herself.

- VI. No teacher shall cause or encourage the seduction, carnal knowledge or prostitution of or the commission of an indecent assault upon a pupil/student.
 - VII. No teacher shall detain any pupil/student for immoral purposes.
 - VIII. No teacher shall by false pretences or false representation procure any pupil/student to have any carnal knowledge with him/her.
 - IX. A teacher shall not apply or administer to or cause to be taken by any pupil/student any illegal drugs, matter or thing with intent to stupefy or overpower him/her so as thereby to enable the teacher or any person to have carnal knowledge with such pupil/student.
 - X. No teacher shall publicly or in secret wilfully commit any acts of indecency towards any pupil/student.
 - XI. It shall be the responsibility of any teacher who directly or indirectly gets to know of the occurrence of any of these acts to report it to his/her immediate superior.
 - XII. A teacher shall intervene to stop a pupil/student from perpetrating sexual abuse or violence upon another pupil/student.
 - XIII. No teacher shall directly or indirectly, instigate, aid, or in any manner facilitate, encourage or promote whether by his acts or presence or otherwise any

d. Non-Discrimination

No teacher shall discriminate against a pupil/student on the grounds of sex, race, age, religion, disability, health status, custom, ethnic origin, background, socio-economic status or misunderstanding with a parent or guardian.

e. Right to Social Activity

- I. No teacher shall detain a pupil/student after school as a form of punishment without supervision.
- II. ii. No teacher shall deprive a pupil/student the right to participate in sports or other leisure activities as a form of punishment.

f. Favouritism

No teacher shall do anything that shall suggest or create the impression that a pupil/student is more favoured than any other pupil/student.

g. Inordinate Affection

No teacher shall under any circumstance show any form of inordinate affection to any pupil/student. Inordinate affection implies the expression of love or likeness with ulterior motive.

h. Role Model

- I. Teachers shall serve as role models to learners showing high degree of decency in speech, mannerism, discipline, dressing and general performance of their roles.
- II. ii. Teachers shall in particular dress to portray the dignity of the profession.

14. Ideological Influence

Teachers shall not use their positions to spread their political, religious or other ideologies among pupils/students.

Policy on the use of computers

(Taken from: Scout Association of Ireland Child Protection Policy)

Use of computers, electronic communication and information technology:

Each Community or Ministry should review their Communications and Information Technology (I.T.) Policy to ensure it includes the following child protection considerations:

- Where a computer is used by more than one person, each person should be obliged to have a unique username and password, or where this is not possible, to maintain a signed record of the date, time and duration of their use of the computer.
- Where a computer can be accessed by children or young people, it should be accessible only through the use of a username and password unique to each child. Where this is not possible, the children or young people should be obliged to provide a signed record of the date, time and duration of their use of the computer.
- Computers which can be accessed by children or young people should always employ appropriate filtering software.
- All the computers in the offices of Presentation Brothers Communities/Organisations should be monitored regularly to ensure that they are being used in accordance with the stated policy. Where there is any suspicion or doubt, a person with specialist knowledge of computer hardware and software should be asked to assess the purposes for which the computer has been used.

Each Community or Organisation needs to assess the possible ways that children communicate with personnel, volunteers and each other, such as via the internet, mobile phones, email using digital and other electronic or information technology.

It is important to develop guidance to reduce the risks to children that may arise in the course of their use of technology.

Such risks include:

- being groomed online by paedophiles
- experiencing or perpetrating bullying
- accessing or being exposed to inappropriate or harmful material
- having their personal contact details accessed and circulated
- having personal images uploaded and used without consent.

Each Community / Organisation needs to consider how its personnel (Brothers, employees and volunteers) use images (such as photographs and film) of children in publications or on websites. Guidance needs to be developed to ensure that:

- the content of photographs and film material is appropriate;
- the consent of parents or guardians and of children to the use of an image is obtained and such consent is recorded
- there is an agreed approach as to how children may be identified in photographs and other images likely to be published in print media or on the Internet

- parents and children are aware of the way the image will be used to represent the organisation or activity
- any one-to-one photo sessions with children are supervised.

Parental consent form.

Activity permission form for persons under 18 years

1. Name of Church organisation _____

Venue/Activity/Group/Event _____

Date/Time _____

Name of Group Leader/Person responsible _____

2. Name of Child/Young Person _____

Address _____

Telephone No _____

Date of Birth _____

Give details of **any** medical condition of which the Organisers ought to be aware, please include details of any medication which has to be taken or any dietary requirements. (This information will be treated with confidence).

3. I have read all the information provided concerning the programme of the above activity.
I hereby give permission for my son/daughter/ward to participate in the above activity.

4. The _____ organisation only accepts liability or responsibility for an
incident or accident caused by the negligence or breach of statutory duty of the
organisation its servants or agents.

Signed _____ Date _____

(Parent/Guardian)

Address _____

(if different from above)

Contact telephone Number _____

Name and telephone numbers of available persons, during the period of the activity, in the
event of non availability of parent/guardian

Standard 4 – Training and education of staff and volunteers.

In order to maintain high standards and good practice, all personnel should be offered training in safeguarding children.

There are opportunities for all personnel to develop and maintain the necessary attitudes, skills and knowledge to keep children safe. Everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play in their protection. To carry out this role confidently and effectively they need to be aware of safeguarding children issues and to have the necessary knowledge and skills to keep children safe.

Criteria for maintaining standards and good practice:

- **Induction for all personnel** who work with children, covering the policy and procedures on child protection, when they begin to work with the Province and/or its associated organisations.
- **Training** is provided for keeping children safe.
Regular opportunities to update their skills and knowledge should be provided.
- **Training is provided to those with additional responsibilities** such as recruiting and selecting staff, dealing with complaints, disciplinary processes, managing risk or acting as a Local Safeguarding Representative.

Induction

An induction programme is in place to help the successful integration of a new employee or volunteer. Irrespective of whether a formal programme is attended, according to their role, each employee requires familiarisation with the ethos of the Congregation, introductions to Brothers and to colleagues, familiarisation with the way of proceeding in organisations and explanations of day-to-day processes and human resource policies including: grievance and disciplinary procedures, dignity at work and also the introduction of the Province's Safeguarding Children policy. Familiarity with lines of management and supervision are particularly important along with clarification of their role and expectations of them.

On appointment, each person will be given:

- The name of the Local Safeguarding Representative and advised of the role of the Local Representative in relation to child protection procedures.
- They should also be given an overview of the Safeguarding Children policy for working with children and young people. They will be asked to study it and sign that they are willing to comply with it.

Training

All those working in our ministries, whether as members of the Province, as staff or as volunteers, will be given training in child protection policies and procedures, including information about how to respond to suspicions and allegations of child abuse. To maintain high standards and good practice generally, training will be provided on an ongoing basis.

Ways of providing evidence of meeting an objective Training Standard

The following can be used to provide evidence that the Training Standard has been met:

- Copies of training plans or programmes with dates and times of implementation
- Records of course attendance for all attendees
- Induction programmes and attendance documentation

Training in child safeguarding will be provided, for all those who join the Congregation, in our novitiates and houses of formation A Brother in initial formation will not be allowed to minister in the name of the Congregation unless he been given clearance by the police and has given evidence that he understands and agrees with all aspects of our child safeguarding policies.

Standard 5 – Communicating the Church’s safeguarding message.

Policies and procedures are only effective if everyone, including children, understand their purpose and know when to use them.

To successfully implement the Church standards we must have effective communication systems, people who are able to listen to and communicate with children.

- Each of our communities and ministries is to do its part to promote good child safeguarding practices.
- We do our utmost to make children aware of their rights to be safe from abuse and who to speak to if they have concerns.
- The most important thing we can do is to give children the confidence to speak out, and know that they will be listened to by our staff members. We need to talk openly about our child safeguarding policy and codes of behaviour with them, and make sure that they know that their safety is our priority.

Procedure for dealing with allegations and/ or disclosures of child abuse:

- . **Accused person is informed about allegation against him/her.**
- . **He/she is immediately removed from ministry with young people. (If the presentation Brothers are not the direct employer of the accused, this action is done in consort with the relevant authorities.**
- . **The local ordinary of the diocese is informed.**
- . **The Civil authorities are informed.**
- . **Pastoral care is offered to both the accuser and the accused.**

Children may tell an adult they are being abused if they feel they can trust this person. In doing so, they hope that you will act to stop the abuse happening, even if they ask you not to do anything with the information.

If a child begins to tell you about abuse,

Do:

- stay calm
- listen carefully and take what is being said seriously
- ask questions only if you are unclear what the child is saying
- allow the child to continue at his or her own pace
- reassure the child that, in disclosing the abuse, they have done the right thing
- tell them they are not to blame for the abuse
- let them know you will do what you can to help
- report the child's disclosure to the Local Safeguarding Representative immediately. Should the Local Safeguarding Representative be absent, take action by:
 - seeking advice from the Designated Person.
 - Informing the Director / Community Leader of the allegation.
- as soon as possible, write down everything that you were told by the child, using their own words to describe the alleged abuse. Sign and date this record and pass it on to the Local Safeguarding Representative.
- if the disclosure involves the Local Safeguarding Representative seek advice from the Designated Person.
- Inform the Director / Community Leader of the allegation.

Do not:

- dismiss the concerns
- Panic
- probe for more information or ask questions other than for clarification
- promise 'not to tell anyone' or say that you 'will keep it a secret'
- make any comment about the accused person
- speculate or make assumptions
- disclose to **anyone** other than the Local Safeguarding Representative the fact that an allegation has been made

It is important to explain to the child that you cannot promise to keep secret the information you have been given. You should reassure the child that the information will be shared only with those who have responsibility for dealing with problems of this kind.

Remember it is not your role as the person who has received an allegation of abuse, or become suspicious that abuse may have occurred, to make any judgements or decisions in relation to the allegation or suspicion. That is a task for statutory Child Protection agencies following a referral to them, by the Designated Person, of the allegation or suspicion.

- Those who have suffered child abuse should receive a compassionate and just response and should be offered appropriate pastoral care to rebuild their lives.
- Those who have harmed others should be helped to face up to the reality of abuse, as well as being assisted in healing.

Support person: Each Province Leader should appoint a Support Person to be available to those who make an allegation / disclose abuse. The person (which can be a child or an adult) making the allegation will be offered a choice between a male or female Support Person.

The role of the Support person is to assist, where appropriate, with communication between the child or adult making the allegation / disclosure and the Designated Officer, to facilitate the child or adult in gaining access to information and help, and to represent their concerns during the enquiry process.

The Support Person needs to be clear about his/her role and should receive appropriate training.

The Support Person is not a counsellor to the child or adult, and must not act as a therapist.

Support Persons must be particularly attentive to the expressed needs and objectives of the child or adult, and the fact that some may be reluctant to seek help. Support Persons should, therefore, consider how any therapeutic or spiritual needs of a child or adult who has made an allegation/ disclosed abuse may be met and will be mindful of his/her ongoing vulnerability during this process.

In addition, the Support Person should:

- consider any wishes of the child or adult disclosing abuse, in regard to a pastoral response by the Church to his or her family
- be available to the child or adult throughout the course of the inquiry process, and thereafter as required
- ensure the child or adult is kept informed of developments in relation to them
- represent the wishes and any therapeutic needs of the child or adult to the Designated Officer, as required
- arrange, if considered helpful, a meeting between the child or adult and the Church authority, such as the priest, or Bishop.

Under no circumstances should the same Support Person be provided for the child or adult making the allegation / disclosure of abuse and for the respondent.

Adviser Each Province Leader should appoint an Adviser to be available to the respondent. Advisers shall represent the needs of the respondent to the Leadership Team and assist, where appropriate, with the care of the respondent and with communication between the respondent, the Designated Officer and the Church authority / Church organisation. The respondent's adviser shall not be the respondent's therapist or spiritual adviser.

Advisers should be particularly alert to the sense of isolation and vulnerability which a respondent may experience following an allegation of this nature. He or she will:

- accompany, if so requested, and be available after the respondent's meeting with the Leadership Team and the Designated Officer
- inform the respondent of his or her right to obtain advice in both in civil and Canon Law
- identify any therapeutic or other needs of the respondent and suggest how these may be met

- consider the wishes of the respondent in regard to a pastoral response by the Congregation to his or her family
- be available to the respondent throughout the inquiry process, and thereafter as required
- ensure that the respondent is kept informed of developments in regard to the inquiry
- represent the needs and wishes of the respondent to the Designated Officer, as required.

Advisers should receive appropriate training. Under no circumstances should the same Support Person be provided for the child or adult making the allegation/ disclosure of abuse and for the respondent.

Standard 7 – Implementing and monitoring the standards

We will

- Identify the ministry sites for which the guidelines are intended.
- Appoint a Safeguarding Representative for each of these.
- Display our Child Safeguarding Policy Statement in all our communities and ministry sites.
- Allot financial resources in our annual budget for implementing our child protection policy.
- Have our child protection policy and procedures monitored and reviewed during the annual visitation and in the event of changed circumstances or changes in legislation.
- We will have a general review every three years.

Contact details for child safeguarding services:

.Presentation Brothers' Designated Officers:

Br Bernard Gazire, FPM
Moble: +23470667825

Br. David Angsuura, FPM
Mobile: +233208890653

.Social Welfare Services

.Child Rights International

.Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVS)

The following statement is to be displayed publicly in all our communities and ministry sites:



**Children, don't suffer in silence!
Report abuse to Child Safeguarding Representative.**

Names and contact details of designated officers to be displayed publicly on all notice boards.

Names and contact details of local child protection services to be displayed publicly on all notice boards.



Presentation Brothers, West Africa Province

Box 2044, Tamale

Ghana.

www.presentationbrothers.org