



Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy of Justice and Peace Europe

Introduction

Justice and Peace Europe is a network of about thirty Justice and Peace Commissions in Europe; which organises several meetings throughout the year. Its role is the exchange of best practices and the promotion of Human Rights, Peace and Social Justice as well as the Care for Creation at the European level. It has engaged in a strategic partnership with the Commission of bishops' conferences in the EU member states (COMECE) and concluded a partnership agreement with the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM). It liaises with the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development in the Vatican.

As Justice and Peace Europe we believe in the intrinsic dignity of every person, celebrate difference and aim to create relationships of mutual respect wherein the rights and dignity of every person are respected. Our work is inspired and informed by Catholic Social Teaching, one of the fundamental principles of which is the dignity of each person. The right to freedom from all forms of exploitation and abuse is implicit in this principle.

As Justice and Peace Europe we do not have any direct contact with children families or vulnerable adults. However, the policies adopted and explained below are written to demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding and in the event of organised activities with episcopal conference delegates situations of safeguarding may arise.

Statement

As Justice and Peace Europe we recognize the right of children and vulnerable adults to protection, regardless of gender, race, culture and disability. We also recognize the unique needs of children and vulnerable adults and, therefore, commit ourselves to creating and maintaining a safe and protecting environment in our gatherings and activities. We invite national Justice and Peace Commissions to promote a culture of safeguarding. Furthermore, we commit ourselves to contribute in making the Church a safe place and safeguarding a shared responsibility.

Sexual Exploitation and abuse

Justice and Peace Europe has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation and all forms of abuse of any person, child or adult, involved in its activities, including:

- Any sexual activity with children under the age of 18, regardless of the age of consent locally (mistaken belief of age being no defence).
- Any physical or emotional harm or the engagement of humiliating, degrading or bullying behavior with or towards children and adults who are vulnerable as set out in the annex 1 (anti bullying and harassment)
- Any inappropriate use of technology and social media as set out in the annex 2. (Guidance on the use of the internet and social media)
- Any behavior which contravenes the acceptable codes of conduct and behavior set out in the annex 3(guidance on codes of behavior)

Any staff member, member of the Presidency, member of the Executive Committee or delegate from a member commission, who becomes aware of an incident or an allegation of exploitation or abuse, of a child or an adult in the context of a Justice and Peace Europe event, has a mandatory duty to report this immediately to a designated person. The management of a report of an incident or an allegation of exploitation or abuse will follow the lines set out in the reporting procedure annexed to this statement.

Status and scope of this statement

This position statement does not seek to replace existing policies in the Justice and Peace commissions who are member of the network but to provide an overarching statement of safeguarding intent when members of the commission and their delegates meet. It applies to the activities of Justice and Peace Europe. The statement will be reviewed at intervals of three years.

Bratislava, 14 October 2019

Annexe 1

Anti-Bullying and Harassment Guidance

It is the belief and practice of Justice and Peace Europe that all people should be treated with the utmost respect and dignity at all times. As an organisation we will not tolerate or ignore the harassment or bullying of any individual person without regard to whether a person is either part of our organisation or attending any of our organised events. Any allegation of bullying or harassment brought to our attention will be dealt with fairly and sensitively but in a robust and timely manner. It is the responsibility and practice of secretariat of Justice and Peace Europe to share as appropriate, concerns of bullying or harassment brought to its attention with the responsible Episcopal Conference.

BULLYING

What is Bullying / Harassment?

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression, be it verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others. Bullying can occur at any age, in any environment, and can be long or short term.

Bullying is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating and occurs mainly in social environments such as schools, clubs and other organisations working with children and vulnerable Adults. It includes teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting and extortion by one or more children, or an adult, against a victim. Bullying causes physical and/or emotional harm and can result in significant problems of low self-esteem, social isolation, anxiety and depression for the children and young people subjected to it.

Bullying occurs in a variety of settings and can take place off and online.

Cyberbullying is using the internet, email, online games or other digital technology to threaten, tease, upset or humiliate someone else.

Bullying can be:

Emotional/psychological: tormenting, excluding, extorting, intimidating, etc.

Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, intimidating, damaging/stealing property, or any use of violence, etc.;

Racist: racial taunts, i.e. insults about colour, nationality, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or Traveller background, or use of graffiti or gestures;

Sexual: unwanted physical harassment or contact, or sexually abusive comments. This may constitute actual sexual abuse, which should be reported;

Homophobic: taunting a person because of their sexual orientation;

Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, etc.;

Cyber: misuse/abuse of email, mobile phones, internet chat rooms, social media, text messaging, or camera and video facilities;

Subtle: such as an unwelcome expression or gesture that is repeated and focused on an individual;

Perpetrated by adults: this can include adults who are not related to the child. When perpetrated by adults, rather than children, bullying behaviour could be regarded as physical or emotional abuse.

ANTI-BULLYING CODE

Personal Safety Statement: In the secretariat of Justice and Peace Europe we provide a place and a code of practice

Where every member can feel secure

Where it is known that bullying is not acceptable behaviour

Where name-calling is not tolerated

Where no one suffers abuse of any nature

Where no one is victimised

Where each member is supported and listened to

Where it is each member's responsibility to ensure that all are treated equally

Where solutions to problems are the concern of all

Annex 2

Guidance on Use of Technology

It is important to assess the benefits of technology and how this can be used safely and effectively, in line with rules that respect the dignity and rights of all users, particularly children.

The majority of occasions when people use mobile phones, computers or take photographs of children do not provide any cause for concern. However, there are occasions when this is not the case. At the outset it is important to identify the risks associated with the use of technology, and then to minimise the risks by putting in place measures outlined below.

Consent

The consent of parents/guardians and children should always be sought prior to engaging in any activity that involves the use of IT equipment, such as those outlined above.

When seeking consent for the use of images or videos, the following should be considered:

- The issue of consent for photography/videoing for purposes of Justice and Peace Europe should be addressed with parents/guardians and children prior to the sacramental day, and the policy should be explained to all families who will be attending;
- In seeking consent for photography/videos, children and families should be reminded about the rights to privacy and data protection of other children, their families and the wider community;
- Those organising an event, and who are seeking consent for photography/video usage, should be sensitive to the fact that many parents/guardians are reluctant to allow the general viewing of their children, or of children in their care, on sites such as YouTube, Facebook, etc.

Purpose

Guidelines should be clear as to the reason and purpose of the use of the particular form of technology:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour and use of equipment;
- Provide guidance on acceptable language;
- Provide guidance on storage of information;
- Provide guidance on use of photography: if using an external photographer/videographer, seek confirmation about any publications that will be made by them after the event, and ensure that they have been vetted, have identification and do not have any unsupervised access to children or one-to-one photo sessions at events;

- Images of children should never be taken that capture them in what are commonly understood as 'non-public' activities. Children should be fully and appropriately dressed and related images should always be about the activity and not focused on any individual child;
- Images should not allow the identification of a child or their whereabouts. The full name of a child should not be used;
- Children in vulnerable circumstances (e.g. those in care or victims of any type of abuse) should not be photographed without the consent of those who hold parental responsibility;
- Provide guidance on the use of mobile phones, and especially on the use of mobile phone cameras, which can be easily used for offensive actions without the subject being aware of their use;
- Provide guidance on how to communicate this policy with parents/guardians and young people.

Annexe 3

Code of Behaviour for staff and volunteers of Justice and Peace Europe

Code of Behaviour for staff and volunteers

Justice and Peace Europe expects all staff and volunteers to conduct themselves in a way that ensures adults are protected and kept safe from harm while they are engaged in any activity associated with the organisation. Equally, Justice and Peace Europe expects those who avail of services/participate in activities to behave in a manner that is respectful towards others.

The following Code of Behaviour aims to provide guidance to minimise the opportunity for adults to suffer harm as well as reassuring staff/volunteers that their behaviour is appropriate.

Staff members/volunteers who breach any of the following may be subject to disciplinary/problem solving procedures.

Staff and volunteers must:

- Promote and protect the human rights of all adults in every aspect of their work;
- Treat all adults with dignity and respect;
- Be patient and listen;
- Communicate clearly, in whichever way best suits the individual and check their understanding;
- Adopt a person-centred approach;
- Treat all adults fairly and equally;
- Promote independence and choice;
- Encourage participation;
- Help all adults to fulfil their ability and potential;
- Involve all adults in decision making to the fullest extent;
- Ensure that physical contact is supportive, takes place in an open environment and is not secretive;
- Ensure that it is in response to the need of the adult and is appropriate to the task required;
- Ensure that physical contact is carried out carefully, sensitively and respectfully.

Staff and volunteers should never engage in any of the following behaviours with adults at risk:

- Abuse, neglect or harm an adult, or place them at risk of harm, whether by omission or commission;
- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with them;
- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay;
- Engage in sexually provocative games;
- Make sexually suggestive comments;
- Form inappropriate relationships;
- Gossip about personal and sensitive information; or
- Make/accept loans or gifts of money.