

Dealing with Complaints and Allegations

Dealing with complaints about our service or allegations against a staff member or volunteer

Complaints Procedure

At Christ City Church, Dublin, we strongly encourage everyone to feed back to us on how well we carry out our services, events and activities. Whether you are a parent, carer, child, church member or a visitor, we aim to facilitate this process even in cases where we have fallen short of our expected standard.

Responding to a Complaint

We undertake to ensure all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with fairly, impartially and confidentially. Our preference is that complaints be made in person (or, if necessary, in writing) so that we can address the complaint directly with the affected parties. However, should anyone feel it is necessary, they may do so anonymously by placing a written note in the post box, which is on our welcome table at a Sunday service.

We will endeavour to quickly and informally resolve complaints through discussion between the affected parties (and/or their advocate in the case of a child or vulnerable person) and appropriate members of staff or volunteers.

If we find that we have made a mistake or that something could have been done better, we will change the way we do things to avoid making the same mistake in future. Depending on the nature of the complaint, further steps may need to be taken and this will be agreed and actioned by the appropriate leadership team or line manager.

If the problem persists, re-occurs or the affected party is not satisfied with the response, the complaint should be put in writing which will be responded to in due course.

Addressing a Complaint

For comments, complaints and questions about our Children's Work, these should be addressed to the Children's Work Managers. For all other ministries, these should be addressed to that ministry team leader.

If the complaint represents a child or adult safeguarding issue (or if it is uncertain) then this should be addressed to the Designated Liaison Person (or deputy) who will follow the procedures outlined in the appropriate policy document.

If the complaint regards the Children's Work Managers, Senior Church Leaders or the Designated Liaison Person then this should be addressed to one of our Trustees.

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect Against a Staff Member or Volunteer

General Principles

The reporting of the allegation to Tusla or An Garda Síochána, where it meets the appropriate threshold, is the responsibility of the Designated Liaison Person (or deputy), and they will act as a point of contact for any resulting investigation by external agencies. The subject of the allegation will be assigned a point of contact within the organisation (other than the Designated Liaison Person) for the duration of the allegation and any subsequent investigation. This will normally be their line manager, but may be another senior leader within the church.

No action by Christ City Church may be taken which would undermine or otherwise jeopardise an investigation by an external statutory body, such as Tusla or An Garda Síochána. We will cooperate with any such investigation in full and maintain a close liaison with any such party through our Designated Liaison Person.

The normal procedure for Recognising, Responding and Reporting (see policy document) should be followed in the same manner as any other safeguarding concern.



At all times, strictest confidentiality must be maintained, especially regarding the identity of the staff member or volunteer. Information should only be disclosed where it is necessary to allow for the reporting procedures to be followed, to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, and facilitate a full investigation of the allegation.

The allegation may require that protective measures be taken; these are precautionary, not disciplinary, and done without prejudice and on the presumption of innocence. This may include suspension (on full pay, in the case of an employee) and temporary removal from the church congregation. Disciplinary action, as appropriate, will only be taken pending the conclusion of the investigation.

Where necessary, an external party may be called upon to assist with the investigation. Christ City Church may also seek independent legal advice.

All stages of the process should be recorded, and it is important that all disclosures, statements, actions taken and outcomes are documented in writing and kept securely. These will be compiled and stored by the Designated Liaison Person in line with our Record Keeping and Confidentiality Policy.

Reporting to Tusla or An Garda Síochána

In line with our Recognising, Reporting and Responding policies, if the concern meets the reasonable grounds for reporting then it should be referred without delay to Tusla or An Garda Síochána. Informal consultation may be used to determine whether this threshold has been met.

In the event of a serious concern and the unavailability of Tusla, An Garda Síochána may be contacted.

Any applicable information or records held will be made available to external agencies to allow them to investigate.

Informing the Employee or Volunteer

Where an employer becomes aware of an allegation of abuse by an employee or volunteer while executing their duties, an employer should privately inform the employee of the following:

- (i) The fact that an allegation has been made against him/her
- (ii) The nature of the allegation.

The subject of the allegation should be afforded the opportunity to respond, the response should be noted and passed onto the Designated Liaison Person, who will provide it to Tusla with the formal report. No identifying information about a complainant or alleged victim should be provided, and the employee or volunteer should be reminded that they are not to take any action which may prejudice the subsequent investigation, including approaching any involved party.

The subject of the allegation will be kept informed throughout the process.

Informing a Parent or Carer of an Allegation of Abuse or Neglect

Parents and carers have the right to contact Tusla or An Garda Síochána to report an allegation of abuse or neglect.

Parents and carers of children who are named in an allegation of abuse or neglect will be kept informed of actions planned and taken, having regard to the rights of others concerned.

If there is any concern that a child may have been harmed, their parents or carers will be informed immediately.

Document History

Version	Author(s)	Date Revised	Comments/Changes
1.0	Caroline Anderson	22/09/2015	Original draft
2.0	Stephen Sharpe	30/10/2017	Major redraft
2.1	Stephen Sharpe	14/01/2018	Corrections to section on reporting to Tusla/An Garda Síochána; no material change