

Chapter 16: Glossary of terms

The policies and procedures for safeguarding in the Joymount Presbyterian Church are written so that they are accessible to as many as possible.

They are written in 'layman's terms' as much as we are able to ensure that all can engage as closely as possible with the ethos and values of our approach

The policy and procedures are written in line with, and under the spirit of, the regional legislation of NI, human rights approaches and other good practice guidance.

Safeguarding refers to all activity that relates to the development and well-being of children, including raising awareness activity, promotion of safe practices and preventative measures to ensure that children never come to any harm. It is wider than the term **child protection**, which refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm (*Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, October 2024*)

A child: the Children (NI) Order 1995 defines a 'child' as a person under the age of 18.

Harm is defined in the Children (NI) Order 1995 as ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development. The Order states that 'ill-treatment' includes sexual abuse, forms of ill-treatment that are physical and forms of ill-treatment that are not physical; 'health' means physical and/or mental health; and 'development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

Significant harm is defined in Article 50(3) of the Children (NI) Order 1995, which states that 'where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health or development, his health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child'.

Harm from abuse is not always straightforward to identify and a child or young person may experience more than one type of harm or significant harm. Harm can be caused by physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, exploitation, ill-treatment of another, or abusive behaviour directed at another (*Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, October 2024*)

Prevention is the importance of preventing problems occurring or worsening through the introduction of timely supportive measures.

Designated Person refers to the individual appointed by Joymount Kirk Session to oversee and administrate child safeguarding functions in each local church.

Statutory authorities in Northern Ireland refers to Trust or Gateway Teams, which are responsible for all child protection matters, and/or the PSNI, which is empowered under legislation to investigate possible criminal offences.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland ('the denomination') is part of the universal Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. As such, He is the King and Head of the Church. It consists of congregations of persons who are associated for the administration and observance of ordinances according to the Bible, under a common government. It was established in 1840 with the coming together at that time of different strands of Presbyterianism, and has congregations across the island of Ireland.

The Minister, also known as teaching Elder, exercises oversight of the church in conjunction with the ruling Elders. The special calling of the Minister is the ministry of the Word, in public and in private, the conduct of public worship, the administration of the sacraments, the instruction of the young and the pastoral care of souls. The Minister's calling is exercised in the service of others. The Minister is not an employee, but a remunerated, called office-holder in the Church.

The Presbytery is primarily responsible for corporate oversight of the congregations and causes assigned to it by the General Assembly, and of the Ministers and Elders connected with it, and the advancement of Christ's kingdom generally within the geographical area for which it is responsible. The Presbytery shall observe the laws and directions of the Assembly and, so far as lies within its powers, ensure that those subject to its jurisdiction and within its fellowship do likewise. There are 19 Presbyteries in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Elders, also known as ruling Elders, acting together as the Kirk Session, work together with the Minister (teaching Elder) in the oversight and government of the congregation, for the upbuilding of God's people in spiritual fruitfulness and holy concord, and for the extension of Christ's kingdom among all people.

The Clerk of Presbytery is appointed by the Presbytery from among the Ministers or ruling Elders under its jurisdiction, and is responsible for the administration of the Presbytery, especially the recording of minutes of the meetings of Presbytery in a minute book kept by the Presbytery for that purpose and for the safe custody of the minute books of the Presbytery and its other records.

The Clerk of the General Assembly is appointed by the General Assembly as one of its officers. The Clerk of Assembly is responsible for the administration of the Assembly, especially the recording of minutes of the meetings of the Assembly. The Clerk of Assembly also acts as General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

The Moderator of Presbytery is a Minister who is a member of the Presbytery, and presides over the meetings of Presbytery as first among equals. The Moderator normally serves for one year.

The Kirk Session is the name given to the body of Elders [teaching and ruling] who together oversee and govern a congregation in its Christian calling. The Elders [teaching and ruling] are the charity trustees of the congregation. Each Kirk Session is under the immediate jurisdiction of the Presbytery.

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