

Camp Veritas CLG

Child Safeguarding Statement

Section 1: About the organisation

Name – Camp Veritas CLG

Location - As of 2022 Camp Veritas rent Clongowes Wood College in Kildare

Number of staff - Camp Veritas CLG is a volunteer-run organization

What relevant policies and procedures do you already have in place?

At present our key safeguarding documents are:

- Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy
- Comprehensive Insurance Policy
- Safeguarding Risk Assessment
- Volunteer Manual
- Safeguarding Awareness and Instructional Materials.
- Volunteer Application, Terms and Conditions

This list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive

Section 2: Nature of the service and principles to safeguard children from harm

Nature of our work

We are a youth organisation who seek to hold a residential retreat/summer camp for 6 days once a year in the Summer for youth in 1st-6th year in school. Typically, there are 150-250 campers, not including volunteers.

Safeguarding of children is essential to our mission as an organisation. We enforce strict child protection policies and have an established supervision system for the children attending to ensure their safety. We review our Safeguarding Policies and Procedures annually, by the 31st of March to enhance them and ensure that we are applying best practice. We ensure that all volunteers with Camp Veritas CLG are Garda Vetted and that all disclosures are made known to Camp Veritas CLG. All volunteers are provided with training literature including a role description, a code of conduct to follow, training literature on how to recognise abuse and bespoke training literature on what to do if they have a concern during the week. As well as this we insist that the volunteers in direct contact with children complete the Tulsa eTraining and provide their certificate of doing so. This training is a requirement for being accepted as a volunteer. Anyone attending who is a mandated reporter will be required to take an additional Tulsa eTraining.

We also have a visible, Designated Safeguarding Officer who is onsite at all times. We have 24 hour security at camp, 24 hour medical cover, a registration team (and an online registration system) to ensure that all people attending the camp have produced identification and are accounted for. This also allows us to assess medical requirements and dietary needs in advance. The campers are sorted into groups by age and gender, these groups are led by a number of trained volunteers who provide supervision throughout the majority of the day.

About the services provided:

List all of the activities you provide:

Camp Veritas CLG provides a 6-day retreat/camp (**throughout this document, 'camp' is to be understood as interchangeable with 'retreat'; as it is not a full-week and has activities that are religious in nature*)

Do you provide services in a single location?

Camp Veritas CLG rents Clongowes College in Kildare and Leighlin Diocese for 6 days each Summer.

What is the level of contact with children and families in the service(s) you provide?

The level of contact with children is with those aged 12-17. To attend Camp Veritas express and explicit parental permission must be obtained in writing. This is obtained through our camper application. Upon arrival campers are given separate sleeping quarters, divided into boys' and girls' areas. These areas are supervised by vetted volunteers, who operate in pairs.

This is enforced by regular security runs by our volunteers. In the day time hours, the campers take part in a full programme of activities and follow the rules of the camp. The areas they are in are supervised by vetted volunteers, they are with their group leader for the majority of the day. In the couple of hours when their group leaders have a break, they are supervised appropriately by other volunteers and check back in with their group leader formally at the end of that free time.

Under 18s are not permitted to leave the site unless Camp Veritas CLG has received express permission from their parents that they may do so.

If an under 18 camper is leaving camp early, they must be collected by a parents / guardian before the end of the camp. Their parent/guardian is required to inform the Camp Veritas parent liaison ahead of time.

Will children have access to the internet and/or the use of smartphones?

Our policy states that we are a phone-free camp. All the group leaders have phones and the youth can request time to call home if they wish on their leaders' phones.

Do you fund other organisations to provide services to children?

No

About your service users:

What is the age group you work with?

Camp is primarily for children aged 12-17, those 1st-6th year school.

What is the level of ability of your service users?

We endeavour to make camp suitable to all and accessible to people of all abilities. However, Camp Veritas specifically requests that any vulnerable person be accompanied by their own carer. We work with Clongowes College to reasonably endeavour to make them disabled- access friendly, but this is not always possible.

Are there any individual care needs?

We ask those attending our camps that if they have any individual needs that Camp Veritas CLG be informed in advance so that any and all reasonable accommodations can be made. However, as above, we require with specific needs requiring individual care bring their own carer. Camp Veritas CLG will assist as far as is reasonably practical.

What are the dynamics of your client group?

Our campers come from a diverse range of backgrounds seeking a time to have fun and pray, and to meet other young people who share their Catholic faith. We seek to maintain a group atmosphere that is friendly and welcoming to all.

Are there specific complicating factors which may make your service users particularly vulnerable to harm?

We seek to identify risks to our retreat campers and make every reasonable effort to mitigate against complicating factors. We use multiple layers of protection to ensure the safety of those in our care. See the risk assessment below for a full list of these factors. One of the key issues which we address is the number of people attending camp. These people come from all over the country, and occasionally from abroad. We endeavour to know the number of campers through an online booking system which we use to ensure we have adequate volunteer to camper ratios as well as suitable accommodations. This system also ensures that we have relevant contact details for all of our campers. We use identification to ensure that those attending are the age they say they are and are treated accordingly.

Are there particular challenges in terms of safeguarding these children from harm?

We believe that the policies and procedures we apply are excellent in the safeguarding of children, and we believe we have an excellent attitude to them as we are constantly seeking examples of best practice to make our policies and procedures better. These challenges are addressed individually in the risk assessments to follow and they are mitigated against individually. We seek to overcome all challenges by having robust policies, procedures and operating practices, as well as bespoke programmes at the beginning of each camp, before the campers arrive, so that the well-being of our young people remains the top priority.

Section 3: Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

Risk Assessment for Camp Veritas CLG

Risk of harm identified	Procedures in place to reduce risks.
<p>Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child by a member of staff/volunteer;</p>	<p>All of our volunteers are instructed by Camp Veritas. They are provided with a role description and required to sign the Volunteer Guide. All of our volunteers have two references provided and receive (i) online training before arrival and (ii) bespoke training upon arrival, both before the campers arrive.</p> <p>Further information is provided in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedures ● Safeguarding Risk Assessment ● Terms and Conditions (in Volunteer Application) ● Volunteer Guide
<p>Risk of harm (as defined in the CFA 2015) of a child by a visitor to the service;</p>	<p>All young people are provided with supervision throughout the camp through designated volunteers (including remote, general and direct supervision). We also have a registration system to ensure that we have the relevant information on all the campers at the camp.</p> <p>Further information is provided in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedures ● Safeguarding Risk Assessment
<p>Risk of harm (as defined in the CFA 2015) of a child on outings by a member of staff/volunteer/stranger/peer;</p>	<p>With the exception of an organized outing, all young people are required to remain on site for the duration of the retreat unless collected by a parent / guardian or Camp Veritas has express permission for them to do otherwise.</p> <p>Further information is provided in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedures ● Safeguarding Risk Assessment
<p>Risk of harm of bullying of a child by a member of staff/volunteer/peer;</p>	<p>Camp Veritas has a policy to address bullying outlined in our Safeguarding Policy. It is also covered in our volunteer manual. We provide all day supervision. All young people are assigned a group which has a number designated Camp Veritas volunteers as their group leaders to provide support and monitor group dynamics.</p> <p>Further information is provided in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedures ● Safeguarding Risk Assessment

<p>Risk of harm (as defined in the CFA 2015) of a child through the use of unauthorised photography;</p>	<p>Camp Veritas obtains permission from parents / guardians for the use of any photographs taken at the retreat. All photographs are taken by designated volunteers. Camp Veritas does not have control over pictures which may be taken by retreat campers, yet they have been told that having their phones is against the rules. Separate sleeping and shower areas are provided to the campers to mitigate this risk. Further information is provided in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedures ● Retreat Safeguarding Risk Assessment
<p>Risk of harm (as defined in the CFA 2015) of a child through social media/internet use.</p>	<p>Camp Veritas does not provide internet at the retreats and explicitly prohibits the use of mobile phones during camp. We do not provide internet access. However, a child may still bring their phone; in this case, we do not have much control over the young person’s mobile data, nor what they choose to do with their devices. Further information is provided in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedures ● Retreat Safeguarding Risk Assessment ● Retreat manual
<p>Miscellaneous risks relating to Under 18s at Camp Veritas retreats</p>	<p>Mitigation measure in place</p>
<p>risk of a child posing as an adult and so avoiding the safeguards implemented by Camp Veritas for their protection</p>	<p>We require parental confirmation of childrens; age during the registration process to mitigate against the risk of an camper falsifying their age.</p>
<p>risk of a child attending our retreat without parental consent by falsifying a consent form</p>	<p>We have a policy of contacting the parents of all under 18s attending the retreat to ensure that their parent / guardian is aware of their presence at our retreat.</p>
<p>Risk of a young person needing specialist medical attention at Camp Veritas.</p>	<p>Camp Veritas CLG will have 24 hour first aid / medical cover at camp. We have an online, electronic registration system where we request all relevant medical and dietary information. Both the medical staff and core staff have immediate access to all relevant information and relations in the case of an emergency.</p>
<p>A young person is placed in danger because they are not sure of the rules to follow at a Camp Veritas CLG camp</p>	<p>The rules are read to the people present at the start of the camp, reminders are given periodically through the camp, and their group leaders are trained in proper procedures for instructing someone not following the rules.</p>

<p>In the event of a medical emergency a young person may be transported to hospital in an ambulance.</p>	<p>In the event of such an emergency, the next of kin of the young person will be contacted and two volunteers will accompany them (possibly in the ambulance if allowed and/or deemed appropriate)</p>
<p>A young person is injured at Camp Veritas</p>	<p>Camp Veritas CLG has taken out full insurance to ensure that all aspects of the camp are covered and appropriately. Proper procedures are in place for our medical staff to respond appropriately. All medical volunteers must provide proof of current medical licenses.</p>
<p>Young person has a concern and they are not sure who to talk to.</p>	<p>Camp Veritas will inform the campers of the Safeguarding Officer on site in addition to the other capable leaders and there will be periodic reassurances of whom they can approach if there are any concerns. Each young person also has ready access to their group leaders whom they have regular contact with.</p>
<p>Young person places themselves, or others in danger through breaking the rules and misbehaving.</p>	<p>The Camp Veritas security team are active for the entire weekend to identify misbehaviour and provide a safe atmosphere for all campers. Camp Veritas CLG may (depending on the seriousness of the code of conduct breach) send that young person home. Camp Veritas CLG however require the parent / legal guardian, or a person designated by the parent / legal guardian to come and collect them. Until this is achieved, the young person will remain on site with and supervised by Camp Veritas CLG.</p>
<p>Young person leaves the programme or the site without permission.</p>	<p>The parent / guardian of the young person will be contacted immediately to tell them that their young person has breached the code of conduct. Camp Veritas will attempt to locate the young person themselves. If the young person cannot be located, Camp Veritas CLG will contact the Gardai or other relevant services.</p>
<p>A young person experiences bullying behaviours at a Camp Veritas CLG.</p>	<p>This will not be tolerated at a Camp Veritas camp. The young people involved will be separated, spoken to, parents will be contacted and, if appropriate, restorative justice measures will be put in place.</p>
<p>Young person made uncomfortable by a camper at Camp Veritas.</p>	<p>This will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will record the incident and act in compliance with the Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the incident the persons will be separated and the person may be asked to leave until this is investigated fully.</p>

<p>A young person attends Camp Veritas CLG and doesn't like it, and subsequently wants to leave</p>	<p>The parent / guardian of the young person will be contacted to come and collect them.</p>
<p>Young people are not sure where to go at Camp Veritas camps.</p>	<p>There are dedicated orientation, welcome and general supervision teams. Camp Veritas also assigns dedicated group leaders who are responsible for making sure each of their team is present at every activity on the programme.</p>
<p>Young person arrives at the camp without the correct permissions</p>	<p>Camp Veritas will endeavour to get the parent / legal guardian to either provide the required permissions or pick this young person up and take them home. In extenuating circumstances Camp Veritas may accept oral permission from the parent / legal guardian over the telephone once security questions have been successfully asked. Where this is not possible the Gardai or relevant services will be called.</p>
<p>Young people will not know anyone and may feel alone at a Camp Veritas CLG camp</p>	<p>Every camper is assigned to a group with a number of trained volunteers as group leaders. Each group leader 'check-in' with each of their youth regularly to ensure that they are partaking in the programme and to ensure that they are ok emotionally and socially. Numbers and ratios will be no more than 1:10.</p>
<p>Camp Veritas encounters an unforeseen circumstance that may affect young people</p>	<p>Camp Veritas reserves its right to provide a dynamic risk assessment and add to this existing one where they encounter a challenge that was unforeseen, and reserves the right to act accordingly.</p>
<p>If a young person is found to be in possession of or having consumed intoxicating substances</p>	<p>The disciplinary policy in the Camp Veritas Safeguarding policy will be applied. The incident will be reported to their parent / guardian and/or the Gardai</p>
<p>Young people have to change and remain hygienic at a residential camp</p>	<p>Separate toilet and washing facilities will be provided for males and females. Shower facilities will also be separated for volunteers and campers alike.</p>

<p>Young person attends camp and is not kitted out in the correct apparel or does not have the correct sleeping equipment</p>	<p>Camp Veritas CLG will reasonably endeavour to help this young person if there is spare sleeping equipment or apparel, however, the Safeguarding officer will be informed as this may be an indicator of neglect. The parent / legal guardian may be contacted to bring the necessary equipment as both the young person and the parent / legal guardian will have been made aware of the equipment they need to bring before the camp was due to take place.</p>
<p>Young person encounters volunteers not conducting themselves in a befitting manner</p>	<p>Camp Veritas CLG requests that these volunteers are reported in line with the concerns and complaints procedure. Camp Veritas will investigate and initiate disciplinary and retraining procedures inline with the Statutes of Camp Veritas and the Camp Veritas Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.</p>

Further information on all of the above is provided in the Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Retreat Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Retreat manual.

We can confirm that Camp Veritas CLG has policies and procedures in place for all above potential risks identified, and we have endeavoured to provide the policy names beside the associated risks in the above table format.

Section 4: Procedures:

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the *Children First: National Guidance*, and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*.

In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment as well as our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (extended) document and Statutes, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

Procedure	Relevant document
<p>Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service</p>	<p>Camp Veritas has a detailed procedure for the management of allegations of abuse, these are detailed in the Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. These are also the statutory requirements of the law of the land and these will be followed with rigour by the Designated Liaison Person and the Safeguarding Officer.</p>

<p>Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of volunteers to work with children</p>	<p>Camp Veritas also has a procedure for the recruitment of volunteers, outlined in the Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. Volunteers are Garda vetted, Tusla e-trained and required to provide two character references.</p>
<p>Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm</p>	<p>Camp Veritas provides its volunteers with bespoke literature for what to do if you suspect harm, as well as literature on how to recognise harm and its indicators. The volunteers are also provided with a role description and a code of conduct (Volunteer Guide). They are required to sign that they have familiarised themselves with all the relevant literature and that they agree to the code of conduct. These are detailed in the Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and the Volunteer Guide. As well as this, Camp Veritas CLG requires all of its volunteers to complete the national online Tusla training and provides Camp Veritas specific training upon arrival to camp, before the campers arrive. Camp Veritas ensures that relevant persons such as the Child Protection Officer, are provided with safeguarding training appropriate for their role.</p>
<p>Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla</p>	<p>These are detailed in the Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. The Designated Liaison Person and the Safeguarding Officer will follow all these processes in detail, including the law of the land, to record refer and reassure, as well as all other processes.</p>

<p>Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons</p>	<p>This procedure is detailed in the Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. A list of mandated persons will be held by the Designated Liaison Person and Safeguarding Officer. As well as this, Camp Veritas CLG expects all its campers and volunteers alike, to report all suspicions and concerns immediately to the Safeguarding Officer (visible by introduction) as well as to the relevant authorities.</p>
<p>Procedure for appointing a relevant person</p>	<p>All procedures are detailed in the Volunteer Guide and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. Relevant persons are appointed by the leadership of Camp Veritas.</p>
<p>Procedure for disciplinaries and complaints</p>	<p>All procedures for disciplinaries and complaints are outlined in the Camp Veritas CLG Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. All grievances, disciplinaries and complaints will be addressed in line with the law of the land</p>

Section 5: Implementation:

At a minimum, reviews must be carried out every 24 months however, Camp Veritas will update these annually in line with all our policies and procedures.

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing 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 each 31st of March, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Relevant Person

Below are the names and contact details of the Relevant Persons, who are the first point of contact regarding your Child Safeguarding Statement.

Signed: Philomena Prendergast Rahealy, Peterswell Co. Galway Republic of Ireland H91 V6X6 For queries, please contact - philodprender@yahoo.co.uk	Signed: Nathan Mannion 19 Lios Caisil Balybrit, Galway Republic of Ireland H91YFX7 For queries, please contact – mannionn6@gmail.com
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