

# Diocese of Ardagh & Clonmacnois



# Safeguarding Children

**Policies & Procedures**



# *Foreword*

The publication of the Standards and Guidance for Ardagh and Clonmacnois will assist individuals and parish communities in ensuring that the safeguarding of children will continue to be of paramount importance to the Church.

I acknowledge the assistance and advice that the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church has given and continues to give to the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois.

I thank Mr Paddy Gannon and Ms Edel Burke for this publication. They have brought to their work the experience in child safeguarding gained over many years while working for the HSE.



Many people contribute to making our diocese a safer place for children. I wish to acknowledge the work carried out by the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee and those who have trained parish representatives and clergy in safeguarding. I acknowledge the vital role of the Designated Officers and how they fulfil that function with diligence and sensitivity. Our parish representatives have a central position in the implementation of our safeguarding policies and make them part and parcel of everyday parish life; I thank them for their generosity of time and for their enthusiasm.

The present level of awareness and action in ensuring that our Church is a safe place for children is the result of the bravery of those who called attention to our failures of the past. Their suffering and their stories have borne fruit in a robust system of safeguarding. This publication is not an isolated event; it brings together and builds on previous initiatives and learns from the past to ensure that the Church in Ardagh and Clonmacnois is a safe place for children.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James Duffy". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

+ Francis Duffy  
Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnois.  
*1st February 2014*

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# *Introduction*

This document contains the Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures for the diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois. It succeeds the policies and procedures presented earlier in booklet form. These policies and procedures take into account information, advice and support from a variety of sources which include: Children First: the National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (HSE 2011), the Guidance of The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church, HSE Audits, Church Audits, Parish Self-Audits and feedback from diocesan personnel working in the Child Safeguarding field.

Diocesan policies and procedures are built around the 7 standards recommended by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church. These are 1) Safeguarding Children Policy 2) Responding to Allegations and Suspicions of Abuse 3) Preventing Harm to Children 4) Training and Education for keeping Children Safe 5) Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message 6) Access to Advice and Support and 7) Implementing and Monitoring the Seven standards.

The document also contains templates of various forms designed to assist safeguarding personnel when putting the policies and procedures into practice.

Ministry to children has always been and will remain central to the Church's mission to spread the good news of Christ. Our safeguarding policies and procedures express our commitment to ensuring that children's participation in the activities of the church are actively encouraged and promoted and that their safety and wellbeing is our primary consideration.

Safeguarding is not the responsibility of any one individual or group. Everyone has a part to play. These policies and procedures therefore apply to all church personnel, bishop, priests, religious, staff and volunteers.

The diocese is committed to reviewing and updating its policies and procedures regularly. This document is therefore in loose leaf form to help accommodate ongoing changes.

A copy of this document is available in every Parochial House/Office and on our website [www.ardaghdiocese.org](http://www.ardaghdiocese.org)

This document will assist in taking our child safeguarding responsibilities seriously and ensure that the physical, emotional and spiritual growth of children will be actively promoted through safe participation in church activities.

# **Safeguarding Children**

# **Policies & Procedures**

## **Diocese of Ardagh & Clonmacnois**

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## *List of Forms*

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# Part 1

# Safeguarding Children

## **1.1 Child Safeguarding within the Catholic Church**

‘Safeguarding Children, Standards and Guidance document for the Catholic Church in Ireland’, 2008, sets out a clear framework for Church organisations to ensure that the children with whom we are in contact are kept safe from harm. The document identified the need for Church organisations to develop a common understanding of how to safeguard children, develop good practice across the diverse and complex areas in which we operate and increase accountability in this crucial aspect of our work. In order to achieve this, the document identified both founding principles and seven key standards from which to develop safe systems and practices.

### **1.1.1 Founding Principles:**

All children have a fundamental right to be respected, nurtured, cared for and protected. This right is embedded in Gospel values, best practice guidelines and international and domestic laws. In the light of the teaching of the church, civil legislation and guidance, every part of the church must be committed to taking the necessary steps to:

- Demonstrate that the right of the child to protection from harm is paramount.
- Cherish and safeguard children and young people.
- Foster best practice.
- Demonstrate accountability through establishing effective structures.
- Support church organisations and personnel in safeguarding children.
- Establish safe recruitment and vetting practices aimed at preventing those who pose a risk to children from holding positions of trust.
- Maintain codes of behaviour having clear guidelines that set out what is and is not acceptable behaviour as an essential part of keeping children safe.
- Operate safe activities for children helping to ensure that they can play and learn in a safe environment.

### 1.1.2 Seven Standards:

The 'Safeguarding Children, Standards and Guidance' document states that the standards should be used by all Church organisations (e.g. diocese, parishes, religious, institutions, seminaries) and personnel (e.g. clergy, religious, lay employees or volunteers)

<b>Standard No.</b>	<b>Name of Standard</b>
<b>Standard 1</b>	A Written Policy on Safeguarding Children
<b>Standard 2</b>	Procedures – How to Respond to Allegations and Suspicions of Abuse in the Republic of Ireland.
<b>Standard 3</b>	Preventing Harm to Children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recruitment and Vetting</li><li>• Running Safe Activities for Children</li><li>• Codes of Conduct.</li></ul>
<b>Standard 4</b>	Training and Education
<b>Standard 5</b>	Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To children</li><li>• To parents and adults</li><li>• To other organisations</li></ul>
<b>Standard 6</b>	Access to Advice and Support
<b>Standard 7</b>	Implementing and Monitoring the Standards

Safeguarding Children, Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2008

## **2.0 Responsibilities as set out in ‘Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children’ 2011.**

All organisations involved with children have an obligation to provide them with the highest possible standard of care in order to promote their well-being and safeguard them from abuse. Organisations have an overall corporate duty and responsibility to safeguard children by the following means:

- (i) Promoting the general welfare, health, development and safety of children;
- (ii) Adopting and consistently applying a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers;
- (iii) Developing guidance and procedures for staff and volunteers who may have reasonable grounds for concern about the safety and welfare of children involved with the organisation. These procedures should not deviate from the current ‘Children First: National Guidance’, but could offer further elaboration to ensure local relevance and applicability. It is the responsibility of each organisation’s Board of Directors or Management to ensure that such policies and procedures are in place and are operating effectively.
- (iv) Identifying a Designated Liaison Person to act as a liaison with outside agencies and a resource person to any staff member or volunteer who has child protection and welfare concerns. The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for reporting allegations or concerns of child abuse to the Child and Family Agency and to An Garda Síochána;
- (v) Ensuring that the organisation has clear written procedures on the action to be taken if allegations of abuse against employees/volunteers are received;
- (vi) Raising awareness within the organisation about potential risks to children’s safety and welfare;
- (vii) Developing effective procedures for responding to accidents and complaints;
- (viii) Ensuring that clear procedures in relation to record-keeping of child protection and welfare concerns are in place and are operating effectively, taking appropriate account of the need to ensure that such records are kept securely. Organisations that administer services through a number of individual units should standardise recording procedures in cases of children at risk. All agencies dealing with children must have a policy of cooperating with the Child and Family Agency on the sharing of their records where a child welfare or protection issue arises.

### **2.1 Key practice points in dealing with Child Protection & Welfare concerns (Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook, HSE 2011)**

- **Do not assume** if other professionals are involved that they will make a report to the Social Work Department of Children and Family Services. If you have concerns, you must act by making a referral.
- **Do not assume** if Social Workers are already involved that they will know or are aware of everything. If you have concerns, contact the Social Work Service and discuss the issue with them. You may provide a vital piece of information.

### **3.0 Role of Designated Liaison Officer (p28 Handbook) (Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook, HSE 2011)**

In accordance with Children First, National Guidance (2011, section 3.3) every organisation, both public and private that is either providing services for children or that is in regular contact with children should:

- Identify a Designated Liaison Person to act as a liaison with outside agencies and a resource person to any staff member or volunteer who has child protection concerns.
- The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for ensuring that the standard reporting procedure is followed, so that suspected cases of child neglect or abuse are referred promptly to the Child and Family Agency's Duty Social Worker. In the event of an emergency where you think a child is in immediate danger and you cannot get in contact with the Child and Family Agency's Duty Social Worker, you should contact An Garda Síochána.
- The Designated Liaison Person should ensure that they are knowledgeable about child protection and undertake any training considered necessary to keep themselves up-to-date on new developments.

As a Designated Liaison Person, you may receive reports of suspected abuse or you may have concerns about a child's safety and welfare. It is your responsibility:

- To ensure that you are fully conversant with your organisation's duties regarding the protection and welfare of children.
- To ensure that you know your organisation's child protection and welfare policies and procedures and where to find the most up-to-date version.

If a person, including third parties, reports suspected child abuse to you, your responsibility in the first instance is:

- To establish in consultation with the individual who has raised the concern, if reasonable grounds exist.
- The information given to you should be forwarded to the Child and Family Agency's Duty Social Worker if reasonable grounds for concern exist, regardless of whether the source wishes to be identified or not. The source should be made aware that you will be reporting the information.
- If you are unsure whether the concern constitutes reasonable grounds for concern, you may consult informally with the Duty Social Worker.
- Where you decide not to pass on the concern brought to your attention, you must inform the person of this and also tell them that they may report directly to Children and Family Services and that the provisions of the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act would pertain.
- Any person who suspects child abuse or neglect should, where possible, inform the parents/carers if a report is to be submitted to the Child and Family Agency or to An Garda Síochána, unless doing so is likely to endanger the child.

**The role of the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person is:**

- To receive all concerns relating to the safeguarding of children, including any disclosures or allegations of abuse and to take responsibility for managing the response to that concern or disclosure, from start to finish. This may include referral to the Child and Family Agency and Gardaí.
- To ensure that the worker/volunteer raising a concern, disclosing abuse, or making an allegation is informed about the progress of the inquiry process.
- To liaise with the Child and Family Agency, Diocesan Authorities and the National Safeguarding Office, informally and formally as deemed necessary.
- To carefully record all steps undertaken as part of these procedures.
- To manage any internal church investigation in relation to church personnel/volunteers.



## Definition of a Child

- 1.1 Definition of a Child. (Child Care Act 1999). A 'Child' is defined as anyone under 18 years who is not married.

What is Child Abuse?

### 3.0 Definition of Child Abuse

3.1 In the *Children First: National Guidance*, 'a child' means a person under the age of 18 years, excluding a person who is or has been married.

3.2 Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time.

### 3.3 Definition of 'neglect'

3.3.1 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/or medical care.

3.3.2 Harm can be defined as the ill-treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is *significant* is determined by the child's health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child of similar age.

3.3.3 Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways *over a period of time* rather than at one specific point. For example, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries may not be having his or her needs met in terms of necessary supervision and safety. A child whose height or weight is significantly below average may be deprived of adequate nutrition. A child who consistently misses school may be deprived of intellectual stimulation.

4.3.4 The *threshold of significant harm* is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.

### 4.4 Definition of 'emotional abuse'

4.4.1 Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the *relationship* between a parent/carer and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms. Examples may include:

- (i) the imposition of negative attributes on a child, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;

- (ii) conditional parenting in which the level of care shown to a child is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions; emotional unavailability of the child's parent/carer;
- (iii) unresponsiveness of the parent/carer and/or inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child;
- (iv) premature imposition of responsibility on the child;
- (v) unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child's capacity to understand something or to behave and control himself or herself in a certain way;
- (vi) under-protection or over-protection of the child;
- (vii) failure to show interest in, or provide age-appropriate opportunities for the child's cognitive and emotional development;
- (viii) use of unreasonable or over-harsh disciplinary measures;
- (ix) exposure to domestic violence;
- (x) exposure to inappropriate or abusive material through new technology.

4.4.2 Emotional abuse can be manifested in terms of the child's behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning. Examples of these include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, and oppositional behaviour. The *threshold of significant harm* is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become *typical* of the relationship between the child and the parent/carer.

#### **4.5 Definition of 'physical abuse'**

Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction, or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.

Physical abuse can involve:

- (i) severe physical punishment;
- (ii) beating, slapping, hitting or kicking;
- (iii) pushing, shaking or throwing;
- (iv) pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling;
- (v) terrorising with threats;
- (vi) observing violence;
- (vii) use of excessive force in handling;
- (viii) deliberate poisoning;
- (ix) suffocation;
- (x) fabricated/induced illness
- (xi) allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child.

#### **4.6 Definition of 'sexual abuse'**

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others. Examples of child sexual abuse include:

- (i) exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child;
- (ii) intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;

- (iii) masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
- (iv) sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal;
- (v) sexual exploitation of a child, which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for, or to engage in, prostitution or other sexual acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in the exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the ‘grooming’ process by perpetrators of abuse;
- (vi) consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person. In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that, for the purposes of the criminal law, the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. An Garda Síochána will deal with the criminal aspects of the case under the relevant legislation.

4.6.1 It should be noted that the definition of child sexual abuse presented in this section is not a legal definition and is not intended to be a description of the criminal offence of sexual assault.

## **Special Considerations**

### **4.7 Definition of Peer Abuse**

In some cases of child abuse the alleged perpetrator will also be a child. In a situation where child abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another young person, the child protection procedures must be adhered to for both the victim and the alleged abuser, that is, it should be considered a child care and protection issue for both children.

4.7.1 Abusive behaviour that is perpetrated by a young person must be acted upon. If there is any conflict of interest between the welfare of an alleged abuser and the victim, the victim’s welfare is of paramount importance. It is known that some abusers begin abusing during childhood and adolescence, that significant numbers will have suffered abuse themselves and that the abuse is likely to become progressively more serious. Early referral and intervention is therefore essential.



# **Part 2**

# **Policies & Procedures**

## *List of Policies*

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31	SGP03:01	Record Keeping Policy
35	SGP04:02	Recruitment and Garda Vetting Procedure
41	SGP05:01	Anti-Bullying Policy
44	SGP06:01	Whistle Blowing Policy
47	SGP07:02	Complaints Policy
49	SGP08:01	Training and Education for Safeguarding Children
52	SGP09:01	Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message
56	SGP10:01	Access to Advice and Support
59	SGP11:01	Implementation and Monitoring of the Standards
62	SGP12:02	Confidentiality Statement



<b>Church Standard:</b>	<b>Standard 1</b>
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Policy Statement on Safeguarding Children</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP01:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Policy statement in Child Safeguarding booklet.
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years

## **1.0 Policy Statement**

**1.1 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.**

**1.2 The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois values and actively encourages the participation of children in its diocesan activities. We recognise that the welfare of children is paramount and endeavour to ensure that children are respected and safe in the course of their participation in all church activities.**

## **2.0 Aim of Policy**

- 2.1 To demonstrate in writing a clear commitment to keeping children safe during their involvement and participation in diocesan activities and contact with church personnel.
- 2.2 To establish the foundations of a culture of safety for children within the Diocese and set out best practice in terms of systems and actions.
- 2.3 To ensure a consistent approach to safeguarding children across the Diocese and in line with both church and state standards and guidance.
- 2.4 To ensure that all allegations are responded to in line with National Church and State Guidance.

## **3.0 Scope of Policy**

- 3.1 All church personnel and volunteers
- 3.2 All church related activities that involve children.

<b>Church Standard:</b>	<b>Standard 1</b>
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Policy Statement on Safeguarding Children</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP01:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Policy statement in Child Safeguarding booklet.
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years

#### **4.0 Definitions**

- 4.1 Definition of Child Abuse (as outlined in Part 1).
- 4.2 Definition of a Child. (Child Care Act 1991).
- 4.3 A 'Child' is defined as anyone under 18 years who is not married.

#### **5.0 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 All church personnel
- 5.2 All church volunteers

#### **6.0 Procedure**

- 6.1 All personnel and volunteers will be given a copy of the relevant Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures.
- 6.2 It is a requirement that each member of staff and volunteer sign an agreement to comply with the said policies and to attend organised training as relevant to their role. (**SGF02.02**, Safeguarding Policy Agreement Form)

#### **7.0 Appendix**

None

#### **8.0 Forms**

None

<b>Church Standard:</b>	<b>Standard 2</b>
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Procedure for Responding to and Reporting Child Protection allegations and suspicions of abuse.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP02:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Reporting Procedure in Child Safeguarding booklet.
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years

## **1.0 Standard Statement**

- 1.1 Children have a right to be listened to and heard. The Diocese of Ardagh & Clonmacnois will respond promptly and effectively to any allegations and suspicions of abuse and ensure they are reported to the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC), to the Child and Family Agency and to the Gardaí.**
- 1.2 The safety of the child is always the most important consideration.**
- 1.3 All church personnel and volunteers have a clear responsibility in respect of child safeguarding.**

## **2.0 Aim of Procedure**

- 2.1 To assist people in identifying and reporting child abuse allegations and concerns.
- 2.2 To provide clear guidance on the steps to be taken once concerns about a child have been raised.
- 2.3 To ensure consistency in how child abuse allegations and concerns are dealt with across the Diocese.

## **3.0 Scope of Procedure**

- 3.1 Any situation where there are reasonable grounds for concern for the welfare or protection of a child.

## **4.0 Definitions**

- 4.1 Definition of a Child (Child Care Act 1991).
- 4.2 A 'Child' is defined as anyone under 18 years who is not married.
- 4.3 Definitions of Child Abuse (as outlined in Part 1)
- 4.4 Reasonable grounds for concern (see **Appendix 2**)

<b>Church Standard:</b>	<b>Standard 2</b>
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Procedure for Responding to and Reporting Child Protection allegations and suspicions of abuse.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP02:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Reporting Procedure in Child Safeguarding booklet.
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years

## **5.0 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese.
- 5.2 The Designated Officers (see below and Part 1 for outline of role)
- 5.3 Child Safeguarding Committee
- 5.4 All Lay Personnel, paid and voluntary
- 5.5 All people involved in diocesan activities which involve children.

## **6.0 Procedure**

- 6.1 In accordance with Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011, section 1.3), every organisation, both public and private that is either providing services for children or that is in regular contact with children should develop guidance and procedures for staff and/or volunteers.
  - 6.1.2 Each organisation should identify a **Designated Liaison Person** to act as a liaison with outside agencies and as a resource person to any staff member or volunteer who has child protection concerns.
  - 6.1.3 The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois has appointed a **Designated Liaison Person** and a **Deputy Designated Liaison Person**

### **Designated Liaison Person**

**Mr. Sean Leydon**

**Diocesan Office**

**St. Michael's**

**Longford**

**087-7431649**

### **Deputy Designated Liaison Person**

**Ms. Roisin O'Doherty**

**Diocesan Office**

**St. Michael's**

**Longford**

**087-3327587**

<b>Church Standard:</b>	<b>Standard 2</b>
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Procedure for Responding to and Reporting Child Protection allegations and suspicions of abuse.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP02:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Reporting Procedure in Child Safeguarding booklet.
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years

6.1.4 The **Designated Liaison Persons** for the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois are responsible for:

- receiving all child abuse and welfare concerns
- ensuring that the ‘Procedure for Responding to and Reporting Child Protection allegations and suspicions of abuse’ is followed
- reporting concerns/allegations to and liaising with the HSE and where relevant to the Gardaí
- liaising with the Diocesan and Church Authorities, i.e. the Bishop and the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC)
- maintaining files and records of all cases and reports that become known and ensuring the safe storage of same

## **6.2 Responding to and reporting concerns/allegations**

6.2.1 All child welfare and protection concerns, allegations suspicions, and disclosures must be discussed with a Designated Liaison Person. Any person involved in Diocesan activities, who suspects that a child or young person may have been, are being or are at risk of being abused, should inform the Designated Liaison Person of those concerns without delay.

6.2.2 Where it is believed that the concern is urgent and that a child is at immediate risk, contact should be made directly with the Children and Family Services, Child and Family Agency or Gardaí and the Designated Liaison Person informed later. For contact details see **Appendix 3**

## **6.3 The Designated Liaison Person should:**

6.3.1 Write down as accurately as possible what is being told to them. Use the Child Safeguarding **Recording Form NBSCCC/SGF04.01** where possible.

6.3.2 Establish in consultation with the appropriate personnel if reasonable grounds for concern exist. See **Appendix 2**.

6.3.3 Where it is decided that reasonable grounds exist, the Designated Liaison Person informs the Child and Family Agency without delay. A **Standard Report Form (CC: 01: 01: 01)** should be completed and forwarded to the Child and Family Agency’s, Duty Social Worker. For contact details see **Appendix 3**.

<b>Church Standard:</b>	<b>Standard 2</b>
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6.3.4 Where the Designated Liaison Person is unsure whether the information constitutes reasonable grounds for concern, they may consult informally with the Duty Social Worker.

6.3.5 If the Designated Liaison Person decides not to complete a **Standard Report Form, (CC:01:01:01)** they must inform the person who brought forward the concerns in writing and explain that if they are dissatisfied with the decision they may report directly to Children and Family Services themselves. The provisions of the ‘Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act’ 1998 should be explained. The reasons for the decision should be recorded on file. See **Appendix 10**.

6.3.6 If a person is not satisfied with the way the Diocese is dealing with concerns, direct contact can be made with the **National Board for Safeguarding Children within the Catholic Church, St Patrick’s College, Maynooth, 01-5053124**.

6.3.7 Where a person making a report to the Designated Liaison Person indicates that they do not wish to be identified, the source should be made aware that if reasonable grounds exist, a report to the Child and Family Agency will be made.

6.3.8 The Designated Liaison Person should inform the Bishop of all aspects of the case as soon as is practicable.

6.3.9 Any person who suspects child abuse or neglect should inform the parents/carers if a report is to be submitted to the Child and Family Agency or to An Garda Síochána, unless doing so is likely to endanger the child.

## **6.4 Recording**

6.4.1 The person who is the recipient of the concern/allegation/suspicion should record as accurately as possible the concerns, observations and the details of the disclosure. Where possible write what you can at the time. Where it is not appropriate at the time, a written record should be completed as soon as possible afterwards.

6.4.2 Record the facts of what you know, be specific in terms of who, what, when. All records should be legible, signed and dated. Use the **Child Safeguarding Recording Form (NBSCCC/SGF04.01)** to assist in recording as much relevant detail as possible.



<b>Church Standard:</b>	<b>Standard 2</b>
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- 6.4.3 This initial recording will be the first entry in the file of information about the case which will be retained by the Designated Liaison Person. All original records should be passed to the Designated Liaison Person for retention on the file.
- 6.4.4. All information regarding possible child abuse should be discussed with the Designated Liaison Person even where a person does not wish to or is reluctant to go through the recording and reporting process.
- 6.4.5 It is the responsibility of the Designated Liaison Person to ensure that all confidential material relating to a case is retained in an individual case file and stored securely.
- 6.4.6 Case files should be retained for a period of 100 years. All other records pertaining to safeguarding should be stored for a period of 20 years. (See **SGP03:01**)
- 6.4.7 For good practice guidance on all aspects of recording and retention of records, see copy of **Recording Guidance, as approved by members of Coimirce** ([www.safeguarding.ie](http://www.safeguarding.ie)).

## **6.5 Dealing with Retrospective disclosures**

- 6.5.1 An increasing number of adults are disclosing abuse that took place during their childhood. In responding to such a disclosure support for the individual as well as any current risk to children needs to be addressed.
- 6.5.2 In the event that an adult discloses childhood abuse to clergy, staff or volunteers, it is essential that the information is passed on to the Designated Liaison Person who should report immediately to the Duty Social Worker.
- 6.5.3 The HSE National Counselling Service is in place to support those who have been abused in childhood. The service can be accessed free of charge, across all regions of the country through a healthcare professional or by self-referral.
- (Freephone 1800477477). (See **Appendix 3**). See [www.hse-ncs.ie](http://www.hse-ncs.ie)
- 6.5.4 Towards Healing is a free and confidential Helpline and Counselling Service funded by the Catholic Church for survivors of institutional, clerical and religious abuse.

(Freephone: 1800303416) [www.towardshealing.ie](http://www.towardshealing.ie)

<b>Church Standard:</b>	<b>Standard 2</b>
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Procedure for Responding to and Reporting Child Protection allegations and suspicions of abuse.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP02:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Reporting Procedure in Child Safeguarding booklet.
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years

## **6.6 Allegations against Clergy, staff, volunteers**

6.6.1 Where a person observes a situation where concerns about a child arise or where a complaint is received about the behaviour of church personnel or volunteers, the information should be passed to the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person without delay. The reporting procedures as set out above equally apply when reporting allegations of abuse against members of the clergy, church staff/personnel or volunteers.

## **6.7 Action following an allegation of child abuse**

6.7.1 It is the responsibility of the Bishop, in consultation with the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person, to deal with and manage all matters relating to the continuing employment and/or voluntary service of the person concerned.

6.7.2 The management of such matters should be based on the guidelines contained in ‘Children First’: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011). It should also take cognisance of employment legislation.

6.7.3 The management of issues relating to continuing employment/voluntary service will operate at the same time as and in parallel with the ‘Reporting Procedures’.

6.7.4 It is recommended that the same person should not have responsibility for dealing with both the reporting issues and the disciplinary issues. It is preferable to separate these issues and manage them independently.

6.7.5 There will be consultation with the Child and Family Agency and An Garda Síochána regarding protective measures for the child/children, always aware that the safety of children is paramount.

6.7.6 Those who are the subject of an investigation may be asked to step aside from their ministry and duties for the duration of the investigation. While the matter is pending, the respondent enjoys the presumption of innocence and the right to his or her good name.

6.7.7 Clergy/lay staff/volunteers may be subjected to erroneous or malicious allegations. Therefore any allegation of abuse should be dealt with sensitively and support provided for staff including counselling where necessary. The primary goal is to protect the child while taking care to treat the employee/volunteer fairly.

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<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Procedure for Responding to and Reporting Child Protection allegations and suspicions of abuse.</b>
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<b>Supersedes:</b>	Reporting Procedure in Child Safeguarding booklet.
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years

6.7.8 **Clergy:** Where an allegation is made against a member of the clergy, the Bishop should advise the National Office for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church of the following:

- that an allegation has been received
- that it has been referred to the statutory authorities
- that a Church enquiry will commence.

6.7.9 A Church enquiry is then initiated and immediately suspended, pending the outcome of the civil investigation. No church investigation should interfere with the civil enquiries which takes precedence at this stage.

6.7.10 At every stage whether under civil or canon law, the respondent enjoys the presumption of innocence, and all appropriate steps shall be taken to protect his reputation. The respondent will be offered an Adviser who will encourage him/her to obtain advice from both civil and canon lawyers.

6.7.11 The Bishop should also engage canonical advice. The Bishop possesses all the necessary powers to take measures to promote and ensure the safety and welfare of children. Among the actions necessary, during both a civil investigation and church enquiry, may be the requirement to restrict a respondent's exercise of his office and/or sacred ministry and apostolate. A respondent may be asked to withdraw from a particular office and from other forms of sacred ministry and apostolate, including public celebration of the Mass and other Sacraments during the course of any civil as well as church/canonical investigation. The respondent may also be required to cease from wearing clerical attire.

6.7.12 There are two factors which will determine the Bishop's action in this regard, 1) the credibility of the allegation and 2) the potential risk to children. Each case will have to be considered on its own merits.

6.7.13 Where there is a credible allegation the guidance in the document -'Leave from Sacred Ministry and Apostolate for Clergy and Religious', 2013, NBSCCC, should be followed in full.

<b>Church Standard:</b>	<b>Standard 2</b>
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Procedure for Responding to and Reporting Child Protection allegations and suspicions of abuse.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP02:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Reporting Procedure in Child Safeguarding booklet.
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years

6.7.14 **Paid Staff Members:** When an allegation is made against a paid member of staff the Bishop should advise the National Office for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church

- that an allegation has been received
- that it has been referred to the statutory authorities.

Guidelines in ‘Children First’ National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011) will be followed. Cognisance will be taken of employment legislation. Those who are the subject of an investigation may be requested to withdraw from their work.

6.7.15 **Volunteers:** When an allegation is made against a volunteer the Bishop should advise the National Office for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church

- that an allegation has been received
- that it has been referred to the statutory authorities.

There will be consultation with the statutory authorities regarding appropriate action. Those who are the subject of an investigation may be requested to withdraw from the voluntary work in which they have been involved.

## 7.0 Appendices

Appendix 1	How to respond if someone begins to tell you about abuse
Appendix 2	Reasonable grounds for concern
Appendix 3	List of contact addresses Child and Family Agency & Gardaí
Appendix 10	List of relevant legislation
NBSCCC	Guidance on Leave and Restriction from Sacred Ministry and Apostolate for Clergy and Religious, May 2013
NBSCCC	Recording Guidance, as approved by members of Coimirce

## 8.0 Related Forms

NBSCCC/SGF04.01	Recording Form
CC: 01:01:01	Standard Report Form

<b>Church Standard:</b>	2
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Record Keeping Policy</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	SGP03:01
<b>Supersedes:</b>	(New Policy)
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years

## **1.0 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois has a process for recording incidents, allegations and suspicions of abuse. These will be stored securely so that confidential information is protected and complies with relevant legislation. (Safeguarding Children, National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church).
- 1.2 The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois is required under the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 to ensure the security and confidentiality of all records and data it collects and processes on behalf of its volunteers and employees.

## **2.0 Aim of Policy**

- 2.1 To ensure consistency in recording practices across the diocese.
- 2.2 To ensure the safe management and storage of information
- 2.3 To have information available so as to assist in the management of decision making.
- 2.4 To ensure information is recorded in a factual manner.
- 2.5 To assure volunteers and employees that personal information is kept for a specific purpose and managed confidentially.
- 2.6 To ensure accountability and to assist in the tracking of information.

## **3.0 Scope of Policy**

- 3.1 All Child Safeguarding case files
- 3.2 All registers/sign-in books and consent forms
- 3.3 All personnel and volunteer records.

## **4.0 Definitions**

None relevant

<b>Church Standard:</b>	2
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Record Keeping Policy</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP03:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	<b>(New Policy)</b>
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years

## **5.0 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The Bishop
  
- 5.2 Parish Priests
  
- 5.3 Designated Liaison Persons
  
- 5.4 Parish Safeguarding Representatives

## **6.0 Procedures**

### **6.1 Set up and maintenance of Case files**

- 6.1.1 The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for ensuring that a file is opened in respect of all child protection reports received.
  
- 6.1.2 All records should be legible, signed and dated. Use the **Recording Form (SGF04.01/NBSCCC)** to assist in recording as much relevant detail as possible.
  
- 6.1.3 All original records should be passed to the Designated Liaison Person for retention on the file.

### **6.2 File records which contain personal information will be stored in a secured file in the Diocesan Office.**

- 6.2.1 The Bishop and the Designated Liaison Persons are the only persons approved to access files. Access to locked cabinets must be on a specific need to know basis only.
  
- 6.2.2 Keys to locked filing cabinets should be strictly controlled with access limited to the Bishop, Designated Liaison Person or a named nominee.

### **6.3 Set up and maintenance of other Safeguarding Records**

- 6.3.1 An attendance record should be kept for all church activities involving children.
  
- 6.3.2 In respect of ongoing and regular activities, i.e. Altar Servers and Youth Choirs, a sign-in book should be maintained.

<b>Church Standard:</b>	2
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Record Keeping Policy</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	SGP03:01
<b>Supersedes:</b>	(New Policy)
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years

6.3.3 This record should be maintained in a hard back copy that is bound and has numbered pages.

6.3.4 Attendances should be taken at the start of each activity and should be signed and dated by an activity leader. It is the responsibility of the activity leader to maintain the record.

6.3.5 It is recommended that a list of participants and their emergency contact details be retained and regularly up-dated in the back of the record book. Any special dietary or medical particulars should also be flagged. This will ensure easy access to key information in the event of an emergency.

6.3.6 The record should be stored securely and convenient to the location of the specific activity.

6.3.7 Application and consent forms are completed for every child involved in church activities where parents are not directly involved. It is the responsibility of activity leaders to ensure they are completed and stored securely in the Parish Office.

6.3.8 The Parish Safeguarding Representatives have responsibility in carrying out an annual review to ensure that this documentation is in place and kept up to date. (**Appendix 6**, Role of Parish Safeguarding Representative)

6.4 All computers/laptops used for the purposes of record keeping must be password protected and encrypted.

6.5 The use of standard forms and templates, when they are provided, is a requirement in order for consistency across the diocese. (See forms and resources associated with the policies and procedures).

6.6 **Access to records:** Persons wishing to access their own records should be provided with a copy of their own personal information only and such applications must be made in writing.

6.7 **Retention of records:** Case files should be retained for a period of 100 years. All other records pertaining to safeguarding should be stored for a period of 20 years.

**Church Standard:** 2  
**Name of Policy:** **Record Keeping Policy**  
**Policy No.:** SGP03:01  
**Supersedes:** (New Policy)  
**Created on:** 01.01.14  
**Review Date:** 01.06.16 and every subsequent two years

6.8 The principle of confidentiality that applies to the records created recognises the right of subjects to have their privacy protected. Information gathered and stored will not be shared with others except when there is a clear need to share the information in order to protect a child or young person.

6.9 The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church has a mandate to review and monitor practice within the church. To that end, access to case records and other relevant data will be given to ensure that standards are being met and the recording policy is being adhered to.

**7.0 NBSCCC** Recording Guidance, as approved by members of Coimirce  
([www.safeguarding.ie](http://www.safeguarding.ie))

## **8.0 Related Forms**

SGF04.01/NBSCCC Recording Form



<b>Church Standard:</b>	3
<b>Name of Procedure:</b>	<b>Recruitment and Garda Vetting Procedure.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP04:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Recruitment Policy, Child Safeguarding Booklet
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **1.0 Procedure Statement**

- 1.1 Children should have access to good role models they can trust, who will respect and nurture their spiritual, physical and emotional development. They also have a right to an environment free from abuse and neglect.
- 1.2 In order to ensure that church personnel are of the highest standard, the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois has introduced the following recruitment procedures.

## **2.0 Aim of Procedure**

- 2.1 To ensure best practice standards for the recruitment of diocesan personnel.
- 2.2 To develop a culture of safety that minimises risk to children.
- 2.3 To outline the recruitment and vetting procedures for personnel and volunteers throughout the diocese.

## **3.0 Scope of Procedure**

- 3.1 All clergy who work in the diocese.
- 3.2 All clergy transferring from another diocese.
- 3.3 All clergy and lay personnel who come to work in the diocese in a temporary capacity.
- 3.4 All lay personnel employed by the diocese.
- 3.5 All volunteers who work directly with children or who may come into contact with children/young people through their work in the diocese.

## **4.0 Definitions**

- 4.1 Definition of a child “A ‘child’ is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years who is not married” (Child Care Act 1991)

<b>Church Standard:</b>	3
<b>Name of Procedure:</b>	<b>Recruitment and Garda Vetting Procedure.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP04:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Recruitment Policy, Child Safeguarding Booklet
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **5.0 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The Bishop of the diocese
- 5.2 All Parish Priests
- 5.3 Diocesan Safeguarding Committee
- 5.3 Recruitment Committees
- 5.4 Any other individual or group to whom the Bishop or Parish Priest has delegated responsibility for the purposes of recruitment.

## **6.0 Recruitment Procedures.**

### **Recruitment Committees**

- 6.1 Every parish in the diocese will have access to a recruitment committee which will oversee the recruitment and selection process for staff and volunteers.
  - 6.1.1 The Recruitment Committee will provide the expertise to ensure that diocesan policy and procedures are adhered to when staff and volunteers are being recruited. **See Appendix 11** (Role and function of Recruitment Committee)
  - 6.1.2 This Recruitment Committee will consist of at least three people comprised of some or all of the following:
    - The Parish Priest or his nominee.
    - A member of a Parish Pastoral Council.
    - A Local Safeguarding Representative.
    - One other person, if necessary, to achieve gender balance.

<b>Church Standard:</b>	3
<b>Name of Procedure:</b>	<b>Recruitment and Garda Vetting Procedure.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP04:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Recruitment Policy, Child Safeguarding Booklet
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **Advertising & Applications**

6.2 All paid posts will be advertised.

6.2.1 The advertisement should outline the

- title of the post
- the qualifications, skills and experience required
- the duration of the contract
- where and how to apply
- closing date for applications.

6.2.2 An application form will be sent to all applicants and must be completed and returned with **Photo ID** in the form of a **Valid Passport** or **Driving Licence** and the names of two referees.

6.2.3 A written job description and specification will also be provided to applicants

6.2.4 All applicants must complete a '**Confidential Declaration Form**' **SGF05.02**

## **Interviews and Appointment Procedures**

6.3 Where formal interviews are required the interview board must include a member of the local recruitment committee, a chairperson and someone with particular expertise in the specific requirements of the post and/or a person where the gender balance of the interview board is indicated.

6.3.1 Short-listing criteria and an interview marking system should be decided by the interview board.

6.3.2 References will be sought from two independent referees when necessary and at least one of the referees will be consulted.

6.3.3 All applicants with convictions against children will be excluded from all positions, paid and voluntary.

6.3.4 All appointments carry a probationary period.

6.3.5 Unless exceptional circumstances prevail, applicants will be given ten working days notice of interview.

<b>Church Standard:</b>	3
<b>Name of Procedure:</b>	<b>Recruitment and Garda Vetting Procedure.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP04:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Recruitment Policy, Child Safeguarding Booklet
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

6.3.6 Unsuccessful applicants will be notified about the outcome of the interview using the **SGF08.02** (Letter of Acknowledgement).

6.3.7 Successful applicants will receive a letter of appointment and will be requested to complete and return the **Form SGF02.02** (Safeguarding Policy Agreement) and a Garda Vetting Application Form (see Appendix for copy of form).

6.3.8 For **Recruitment Checklist** please refer to **Form SGF06.02**

6.3.9 A Contract will be issued outlining the specific terms and conditions of employment, length of contract; salary scale; probationary period. Information regarding termination of contract and grievance and disciplinary procedures should also be attached.

6.3.10 A personnel file will be maintained on all staff and volunteers.

6.3.11 All personnel records will be treated as confidential documents and stored securely, in line with the **Record Keeping Policy SGP03:01**

### **Recruiting Volunteers**

6.4 The person with immediate responsibility for the volunteer post in association with the Recruitment Committee is responsible for these steps unless otherwise stated.

- Job descriptions developed and clearly defined for volunteers.
- Positions for volunteers will be advertised as appropriate.
- Names and addresses of prospective volunteer(s) submitted to Recruitment Committee

6.4.1 **Confidential Application Form, Adult Volunteer SGF07.02** with **Standard Cover Letter SGF10.01** is sent to prospective volunteer(s) and returned.

6.4.2 Formal Meeting with prospective volunteer by Recruitment Committee or representative where appropriate.

6.4.3 The Recruitment Committee seek written references from nominated referees, and make direct verbal contact with at least one.

<b>Church Standard:</b>	3
<b>Name of Procedure:</b>	<b>Recruitment and Garda Vetting Procedure.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP04:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Recruitment Policy, Child Safeguarding Booklet
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

- 6.4.4 On receipt of satisfactory references, the following should be sent to the Volunteer for completion and return to the Recruitment Committee:
- **Confidential Declaration Form SGF05.02**
  - **Garda Vetting Form** (see **Appendix 4**, Roles for which Garda Vetting is Mandatory)
  - Request for **Photo ID** in the form of a Valid Passport, Driving Licence.
- 6.4.5 The Garda Vetting Form is forwarded to the Diocesan Office to be forwarded to the National Vetting Office.
- 6.4.6 The Recruitment Committee through the Parish Priest receives confirmation of Volunteer's satisfactory/unsatisfactory Garda vetting and processes the information accordingly.
- 6.4.7 Once the Recruitment Committee is satisfied that all the above steps have been completed satisfactorily, the Recruitment Committee decide whether or not the volunteer can begin work in the parish. **A letter of Offer SGF09.01/Letter of Acknowledgement SGF08.02** will be sent to the applicant.
- 6.4.8 All aspects of Safeguarding Children should be addressed with the volunteer as part of his/her induction.
- 6.4.9 The new volunteer should be enrolled with the Diocesan Office of Safeguarding Children Trainers so that he/she may be provided with Keeping Safe Training as soon as feasible.

### **Garda Vetting**

- 6.5 Any Person whether Full-time, Part-time or Volunteer who through his/her ministry in the name of the Church has on-going, substantial, unsupervised access to or contact with children, has an inherent obligation to submit themselves for Garda Vetting and attend Safeguarding Training.
- 6.5.1 A list of those roles which typically require Garda Vetting is detailed in **Appendix 4**, (however it is not exhaustive). In the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois, Garda Vetting will be sought in all of the appointments as outlined on the list.
- 6.5.2 Staff and volunteers will be required to undergo Garda vetting every 5 years. A data base must be maintained to track applications for Garda vetting in the diocesan office.

**Church Standard:** 3  
**Name of Procedure:** **Recruitment and Garda Vetting Procedure.**  
**Policy No.:** **SGP04:02**  
**Supersedes:** Recruitment Policy, Child Safeguarding Booklet  
**Created on:** 01.01.14  
**Review Date:** 01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **7.0 Appendices**

Appendix 4	Church Roles for which Garda Vetting and Keeping Safe Training is Mandatory
Appendix 5	Codes of Behaviour for adults and children
Appendix 11	Role and Function of Parish Recruitment Committee

## **8.0 Forms**

SGF02.02	Safeguarding Policy Agreement
SGF05.02	Confidential Declaration Form
SGF06.02	Recruitment Checklist
SGF07.02	Adult Volunteer Confidential Application Form.
SGF08.01	Letter of Acknowledgement
SGF09.01	Letter of Offer Volunteer
SGF10.01	Cover Letter with Volunteer Application Form

<b>Church Standard:</b>	3
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Anti-Bullying Policy</b>
<b>Policy No:</b>	<b>SGP05:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	(New Policy)
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **1.0 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 The participation of children/young people in church activities to enable their spiritual, emotional, physical and social development is central to the church's mission. The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois is committed to ensuring that children feel safe and protected when participating in all church activities. The inappropriate use of power and control commonly known as "bullying" is not therefore acceptable.

## **2.0 Aim of Policy**

- 2.1 To ensure that children participating in church activities are not exposed to the inappropriate use of power.
- 2.2 To have safe practices in place across the diocese.

## **3.0 Scope of Policy**

- 3.1 This policy applies to all participants in church activities.

## **4.0 Definitions**

- 4.1 Bullying refers to the inappropriate use of power to coerce, browbeat, torment or intimidate others.

## **5.0 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 All leaders of activities involving children.
- 5.2 All participants involved in church activities

<b>Church Standard:</b>	3
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Anti-Bullying Policy</b>
<b>Policy No:</b>	<b>SGP05:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	(New Policy)
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## 6.0 Procedure

6.1 Bullying comes in various forms including:

- Physical: pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, wrestling
- Verbal: name calling, teasing, insulting
- Emotional: threats, false rumours, exclusion and isolation from individuals and groups.
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive remarks and comments.
- Non-verbal: intimidating looks and gestures.
- Cyber Misuse: upsetting text messages and abusive messages sent via the social media.
- Personal property: threats of damage to or theft of personal property
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti and gestures.
- Homophobic: focusing negatively on sexual orientation.

6.2 Children who are subjected to bullying are often afraid that telling someone will make their situation worse than it already is. Because of this it is important that leaders are sensitive to the signs and symptoms of bullying.

These signs include:

- A child not wanting to attend an activity anymore.
- A child finds it difficult to concentrate and seems “absent-minded”
- A child who steals may be doing so under duress.
- A child whose money or other goods “go missing” or are damaged.
- A child has torn clothes, broken glasses or missing books.
- A child becomes withdrawn, depressed, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- A child is easily annoyed and becomes aggressive and unreasonable.
- A child bullies other children.
- A child stops eating.
- A child is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone.
- A child develops a language disorder such as stammering.

6.3 In the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois, all leaders of activities involving children will lead by example and act as role models.

6.4 Training in respect of safeguarding children will include a section on bullying and how best to manage and respond to situations of bullying.

6.5 Where leaders sense there is a culture of bullying within a particular activity or group, they will discuss their concerns with the person in charge to put a plan together to deal with the situation. This may also require the advice of outside expertise.



**Church Standard:** 3  
**Name of Policy:** **Anti-Bullying Policy**  
**Policy No:** **SGP05:01**  
**Supersedes:** (New Policy)  
**Created on:** 01.01.14  
**Review Date:** 01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

6.6 Contact numbers of help-lines and counselling services will be published in churches and parish premises. They will also be included at regular intervals in diocesan newsletters and parish bulletins

**7.0 Appendix:**

None

**8.0 Related Forms**

None

<b>Church Standard:</b>	3
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Whistle blowing Policy</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP06:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	(New Policy)
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **1.0 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois encourages its Clergy, Staff and Volunteers to bring any concerns they may have in respect of safeguarding children to the attention of their supervisor/manager and to the Designated Liaison Person.
- 1.2 The Diocese understands the complexities and the difficulties people may have in coming forward with concerns and want to create a culture of openness and support for those who have the courage to do so.
- 1.3 Whistle blowers play an integral part in safeguarding children as they very often provide insights and information not captured elsewhere.
- 1.4 Every person must be aware of their individual responsibility to protect children and to prevent ongoing harm to them and therefore must have the confidence to report their child safeguarding concerns.

## **2.0 Aim of Policy**

- 2.1 To encourage the reporting of child safeguarding concerns/suspicions.
- 2.2 To create an open and transparent culture where concerns will be taken seriously and responded to constructively.

## **3.0 Scope of Policy**

- 3.1 Any situation where there are reasonable grounds for concern for the welfare or protection of a child.

## **4.0 Definitions**

- 4.1 A whistle blower is a person who exposes wrongdoing within an organisation in the hope of stopping it.

<b>Church Standard:</b>	3
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Whistle blowing Policy</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP06:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	(New Policy)
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **5.0 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese.
- 5.2 The Designated Officers.
- 5.3 Child Safeguarding Committee.
- 5.4 All Lay Personnel paid and voluntary.

## **6.0 Procedure:**

### **6.1 Reasons for whistle blowing**

- To meet each individual's responsibility to raise concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour.
- To prevent the problem becoming worse
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

### **6.2 Reasons why people may find whistle blowing difficult**

- Fear of being disloyal to a colleague
- Fear of being wrong
- Fear of not being listened to
- Fear of rejection
- Fear of harassment
- Fear of damaging someone's reputation or career
- Fear of starting a chain of events that might get out of control
- Fear of trusting your gut feeling/intuition

<b>Church Standard:</b>	3
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Whistle blowing Policy</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP06:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	(New Policy)
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **What to consider when you have concerns.**

- 6.3 Discuss your concerns with your immediate leader or superior.
- 6.4 For guidance and support contact the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person or The National Office for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (see **Appendix 3**, List of Contact details).
- 6.5 If your concern is about your leader, superior or manager, contact the Designated Liaison Persons or The National Office for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church.
- 6.6 You should put your concerns in writing outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and any other relevant details.
- 6.7 Persons reporting concerns should persist until they get a satisfactory response.
- 6.8 Those who report concerns will be kept informed on the nature and progress of any enquiries by the Designated Liaison Person.
- 6.9 Your supervisor has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation.
- 6.10 If a concern reported proves to be unfounded but was made in good faith no action will be taken against you. You are protected by law under ‘The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998’ (See **Appendix 10**, List of Relevant Legislation)
- 6.11 People who make malicious or knowingly false allegations will be reported to the authorities and may be subject to prosecution under the above act.

## **7.0 Appendices:**

- Appendix 3 List of Contacts.
- Appendix 11 List of relevant legislation

## **8.0 Forms:**

None

<b>Church Standard:</b>	2
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Complaints policy</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP07:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Complaints Policy Child Safeguarding Booklet
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **1.0 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois is committed to resolving conflict through open dialogue in a friendly atmosphere.
- 1.2 Both children and adults are encouraged to express any concerns or complaints they may have arising from their participation in church activities.
- 1.3 We are always seeking to improve our standards and know we can learn from feedback when members of the Diocese are dissatisfied with the way things are done. Learning from our mistakes is important to us

## **2.0 Aim of Policy**

- 2.1 To have a system in place to make sure that complaints are taken seriously and dealt with.

## **3.0 Scope of Policy**

- 3.1 All complaints
- 3.2 All diocesan staff, volunteers, parents and children.

## **4.0 Definitions**

- 4.1 A Complaint is considered to be a statement of some grievance or a cause of distress or dissatisfaction with any aspect of a church activity or individual.

## **5.0 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 All people involved in church activities.

## **6.0 Procedure**

- 6.1 The severity of the complaint will determine the appropriate response.
- 6.2 Where child safeguarding issues arise the guidance outlined in the Procedure for Responding to and Reporting Child Protection Allegations and Suspicions of Abuse, **SGP02:02** must be followed.

<b>Church Standard:</b>	2
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Complaints policy</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP07:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Complaints Policy Child Safeguarding Booklet
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

- 6.3 Complaints that are not of a child safeguarding nature may be dealt with directly by the person to whom the complaint is made or may be referred on to the person with overall responsibility for the particular activity.
- 6.4 Complaints may be made verbally or in writing.
- 6.5 Records of a complaint should provide evidence about:
- The nature of the complaint
  - How the complaint was responded to
  - Was the complaint resolved satisfactorily
  - If the complaint needed to be referred further to whom and when it was referred.
  - What follow up actions, if any, were undertaken.
- 6.6 A register of complaints should be retained by each parish. (See Complaints Register Template) **SGF11.01**
- 6.7 All written complaints will be acknowledged in writing.
- 6.8 Complaints will be dealt with fairly and promptly. A period of 21 days is a useful timeframe. However where necessary this can be extended by agreement and the reasons for extending should be noted and communicated to complainant.
- 6.9 A review of the complaints register will be carried out as part of the annual parish self-audit (see Parish Self-Audit Tool) **SGF15.02**

## 7.0 Appendices

None

## 8.0 Related Forms

SGF 11:01	Complaints Register
SGF 15:02	Parish Self-Audit Tool
SGP02.02	Procedure for Responding to and Reporting Child Protection Allegations and Suspicions of Abuse.

<b>Church Standard:</b>	4
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Training and Education for Safeguarding Children</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP08:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	(New Policy)
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **1.0 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 All Church personnel both paid and voluntary should be offered training in safeguarding children to maintain high standards and good practice.

## **2.0 Aim of Policy**

- 2.1 To ensure that all personnel both paid and voluntary in contact with children are aware of the role they play in safeguarding children.
- 2.2 To ensure that all personnel both paid and voluntary in contact with children are offered training in child safeguarding.
- 2.3 To ensure that training is delivered in a planned and systematic way to all parishes throughout the diocese.
- 2.4 To deliver training in line with the National Training Strategy as set out by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church, (NBSCCC).

## **3.0 Scope of Policy**

- 3.1 All child safeguarding and child protection training both local and national.

## **4.0 Definitions**

- 4.1 Definition of a Child: A 'Child' is defined as anyone under 18 years who is not married. (Child Care Act 1991)
- 4.2 Definitions of Child Abuse (Children First 2011 & see Part 1)

## **5.0 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The Bishop.
- 5.2 The Accredited Child Safeguarding Trainers
- 5.3 The Diocesan Child Safeguarding Committee

<b>Church Standard:</b>	4
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Training and Education for Safeguarding Children</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP08:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	(New Policy)
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

5.4 Parish Safeguarding Representatives

5.5 National Safeguarding Office Training and Support Service

5.6 Recruitment Committee Members

## **6.0 Procedure**

6.1 The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois has two **Child Safeguarding Trainers**.

6.2 The diocese supports the participation of its trainers in National Training Networks through the National Safeguarding Children Office. This ensures that the diocese is being continually up-dated on new legislation and new policy initiatives.

6.3 A safeguarding children information and training plan will be drawn up by the Safeguarding Trainers in consultation with the safeguarding committee.

6.4 The plan will outline the range and volume of information and training planned for the year ahead.

6.5 The plan will identify the volume and range of training required as outlined in the ‘National Training Strategy for the Development of Safeguarding Practice in the Catholic Church in Ireland’, National Board for safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC) and as identified locally. It should include:

- List of personnel identified as requiring training
- Levels and types of training.
- Specialist training for those personnel with particular responsibilities and roles.
- Programme of training events.
- Targets, timescales and frequency for the delivery of training.
- Resources required to deliver the training.

6.6 The Safeguarding Trainers will maintain records on training, part of which will include:

- Copy of training plan
- List of approved courses
- A list of those requiring training
- Records of training provided
- Attendance records
- Course evaluation and feedback documents (See Training Manual)



<b>Church Standard:</b>	4
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Training and Education for Safeguarding Children</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP08:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	(New Policy)
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

- 6.7 The plan will be reviewed annually and should include any relevant information from the completion of the Parish Self-Audit (**SGF15:02 Self-Audit Template**) and/or as indicated by new developments, legislation etc.
- 6.8 An annual report will be presented to the Child Safeguarding Committee
- 6.9 The diocese will only use training programmes that have been approved by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church and in line with the National Training Strategy. (NBSCCC).
- 6.10 All supporting forms and training documentation are contained in the training manual held by the training personnel.
- 6.11 Safeguarding Children should be a core part of the induction of any new member of staff or volunteer.
- 6.12 This should include a summary of the main elements of the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Policies Procedures and Guidance. (Full details accessible on the website).
- 6.13 Each leader or person in a position of responsibility should ensure that the new employee/volunteer fully understands their role and responsibilities in respect of children and the standards and codes of conduct to be maintained. (See **Appendix 5**, Codes of Behaviour for Adults and Children, **SGP12:02 Confidentiality Statement**)

## **7.0 Appendices**

- Appendix 4 Church roles for which Garda Vetting is Mandatory
- Appendix 5 Codes of Conduct,  
Adults and Children Confidentiality Statement SGP12:02  
National Strategy for the Development of Safeguarding Practice in the Catholic Church, National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC)

## **8.0 Forms**

- SGF15:02 Self-Audit Template

<b>Church Standard:</b>	5
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	SGP09:01
<b>Supersedes:</b>	New Policy
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.014
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **1.0 Policy Statement:**

- 1.1 Children are welcomed cherished and protected in a manner consistent with their central place in the life of the Church.
- 1.2 The diocese has put in place a clear system to communicate the church's safeguarding policies and procedures to staff, volunteers, parents and children.
- 1.3 Communicating the Safeguarding message is an ongoing process and the diocese will explore all means to ensure this is done on a continual basis.
- 1.4 The publication of the diocesan Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures is a demonstration of our ongoing commitment to the Church's journey of justice, truth, safeguarding and healing.

## **2.0 Aim of Policy**

- 2.1 To ensure that all staff, volunteers, personnel, parents and children are familiar with the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures.
- 2.2 To put processes in place for the dissemination of the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures in a format that is understandable and user friendly.
- 2.3 To create awareness of the available advice and support structures to promote children's safety and protection throughout the diocese.

## **3.0 Scope**

- 3.1 All diocesan staff, volunteers, parents/carers and children.

## **4.0 Definitions**

None

<b>Church Standard:</b>	5
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP09:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	New Policy
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.014
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## 5.0 Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Bishop & all Clergy
- 5.2 Safeguarding Committee
- 5.3 Designated Persons
- 5.4 Parish Safeguarding Representatives.

## 6.0 Procedures

- 6.1 Policies and procedures are updated in line with Church and State Guidance.
- 6.2 The Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures are available on the diocesan website [www.ardaghdiocese.org](http://www.ardaghdiocese.org) and parish websites.
- 6.3 The Safeguarding Children Policy Statement is prominently and permanently displayed in all churches and church premises and will contain local relevant information:
  - The Safeguarding Children Policy Statement
  - The names and contact details of the Designated Liaison Persons for the diocese
  - Parish Safeguarding Children representatives
  - Contact details for Garda Síochána
  - Contact details for Child and Family Agency Duty Services
  - Telephone help lines.

(See **Appendix 3**, List of Contact Details)
- 6.4 The role of the Parish Safeguarding Representative (see Appendix 6) is substantial in the context of the dissemination of the safeguarding message throughout the Diocese. A key function is to raise awareness of what safeguarding children is and includes the following:
  - Up-date church notice boards
  - Communicate Safeguarding News in parish newsletters
  - Alert parishes to training
  - Attend parish council meetings periodically
  - Report to Designated Liaison Persons any complaints/concerns received by the representative

<b>Church Standard:</b>	5
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP09:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	New Policy
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.014
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

- 6.5 Each parish will be notified through the diocesan office of any changes to the contact details of Designated Liaison Persons, or relevant Child and Family Agency details or help-lines.
- 6.6 The complete Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures Manual is kept in all parish offices and is available to parishioners on request.
- 6.7 All clergy, parish safeguarding representatives, recruitment committees (See **Appendix 6 & Appendix 11**) and other diocesan personnel have a working knowledge of the diocesan policies, procedures and codes of conduct. (See **Appendix 5**)
- 6.8 The names of the Designated Liaison Persons, their roles and their contact details are made available to everyone with responsibility for church activities.
- 6.9 The Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee will publish an annual safeguarding children newsletter outlining updates and developments from the diocese. The newsletter will be circulated to the general public through the parishes.
- 6.10 The cultural and language needs of some parishioners may need special consideration in the dissemination of information across the diocese. It is the responsibility of each parish to identify any specific needs they may have.
- 6.11 Information is included in parish bulletins and other notices from time to time as appropriate.
- 6.12 The diocese welcomes feedback from parents/carers and children. This will be sought as part of the annual self-audit process (see SGF15.02 Audit Template) and/or through any other opportunities for feedback as they arise.

<b>Church Standard:</b>	5
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message.</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	SGP09:01
<b>Supersedes:</b>	New Policy
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.014
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

- 6.13 The diocese recognises the importance of good communication between the key organisations responsible for keeping children safe. The diocese is committed to:
- Reporting procedure as outlined in SGP02:02 (Procedure for Responding to and Reporting Child Protection allegations and suspicions of abuse)
  - Ensuring contact details of relevant organisations are published in all churches and church premises (See **Appendix 3**)
  - That relevant agencies have church contact details
  - Attending meetings where relevant.
  - Maintaining links with Child and Family Agency Information and Training Officer
  - The Safeguarding Children Committee will forward up-dated contact details of relevant church safeguarding personnel to the local Child and Family Agency and Gardaí on an annual basis or as indicated.
  - The information will contain details on the following:
    - Designated Liaison Persons
    - Membership of the Safeguarding Committee
    - Safeguarding Trainers
    - Contact details for Diocesan Office.
- 6.14 The diocese is committed to ongoing liaison with the National Board for the Safeguarding of Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC) for advice and support on all child safeguarding matters. This will ensure best practice in its policies and procedures and training to ensure they are up to date and relevant.

## 7.0 Appendices

Appendix 3:	List of Contacts, Designated Persons, Child and Family Agency, Garda, Counselling services.
Appendix 5:	Codes of Conduct/Codes of Behaviour Adults and Children
Appendix 11:	Role of Recruitment Committee

## 8.0 Forms and other resources

SGF15:02	Parish Self-Audit Template
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<b>Church Standard:</b>	6
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Access to Advice and Support</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP10.01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	(New Policy)
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **1.0 Policy Statement:**

- 1.1 The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois acknowledges the impact abuse has on children and assures victims that they will receive a compassionate and just response. They will be offered appropriate pastoral care and professional support to rebuild their lives.
- 1.2 The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois will offer pastoral care and appropriate professional advice and support to members of the Clergy, staff and volunteers against whom allegations of abuse are made.

## **2.0 Aim of policy:**

- 2.1 To ensure that support is provided to those who have been the victims of abuse.
- 2.2 To ensure that those against whom allegations of abuse are made get appropriate help to respond to the allegations in an honest and constructive manner.
- 2.3 To encourage abusers to engage in professional assessment and therapy as recommended

## **3.0 Scope of Policy.**

- 3.1 Victims of abuse
- 3.2 Those against whom allegations of abuse have been made.

## **4.0 Definitions**

- 4.1 Definitions of child abuse (See Part 1)

## **5.0 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 All Clergy
- 5.2 All lay personnel with pastoral responsibilities

<b>Church Standard:</b>	6
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Access to Advice and Support</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP10.01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	(New Policy)
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **6.0 Procedures:**

### **Support for Victims**

- 6.1 All churches will publicise clear information about how and where to get advice and support. (See **APPENDIX 3**, List of Contacts).
- 6.1.1 All those taking part in church activities will be made aware of the support and advice available to victims of abuse.
- 6.1.2 All Designated Liaison Persons have resource information about how and where to get specific help and advice for victims, whether the abuse is current or historical.
- 6.1.3 All leaders will aim to create an environment where children feel cared for and supported. This will help give children an opportunity to experience healing in an informal way.
- 6.1.4 All complainants are offered a support person.

### **Support for Perpetrators of abuse**

- 6.2 The diocese strongly emphasises that work with perpetrators will be undertaken in a manner which does not compromise any child's safety.
- 6.2.1 The diocese is also committed to working closely with The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC) to ensure that best practice standards apply in the management of abuse cases.
- 6.2.2 Alleged perpetrators will be given pastoral support by an appointed person as they go through all stages of the reporting and investigative process. Pastoral support offered must not compromise any future enquiries and should not in any way put children at further risk.
- 6.2.3 The diocese strongly recommends that the alleged perpetrator of abuse seek appropriate professional therapeutic help to address the gravity of his/her offence and to reduce the risk of reoffending.

**Church Standard:** 6  
**Name of Policy:** Access to Advice and Support  
**Policy No.:** SGP10.01  
**Supersedes:** (New Policy)  
**Created on:** 01.01.14  
**Review Date:** 01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

6.2.4 Where indicated, members of the clergy against whom allegations of abuse have been made may be asked to undertake a professional risk assessment.

6.2.5 The Bishop will avail of the expertise of the National Case Management Reference Group for the management of difficult cases if and when difficult cases arise.

## **7.0 Appendices**

Appendix 3: List of Contacts

## **8.0 Forms and other Resource Material:**

Guidance on Leave and Restriction from Ministry and Apostolate for Clergy and Religious.  
May (2013) NBSCCC



<b>Church Standard:</b>	7
<b>Name of Procedure:</b>	<b>Implementing and Monitoring the Standards</b>
<b>Procedure No.:</b>	<b>SGP11.01</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP11:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	New Policy
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **1.0 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 In order to keep children safe, policies, procedures and plans have to be implemented across all Church organisations within the Diocese.
- 1.2 Checks and monitoring arrangements are put in place to ensure that this is happening consistently.
- 1.3 The views of those involved should be sought, as feedback can help to improve the effectiveness of any measures taken.

## **2.0 Aim of Policy**

- 2.1 To ensure that there is an implementation and monitoring plan in place in respect of Child Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Systems.

## **3.0 Scope of Policy**

- 3.1 All Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures
- 3.2 All parishes within the Diocese

## **4.0 Definitions**

none

## **5.0 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The Bishop and Clergy
- 5.2 The Diocesan Safeguarding Committee
- 5.3 Safeguarding Trainers
- 5.4 Parish Safeguarding Representatives

<b>Church Standard:</b>	7
<b>Name of Procedure:</b>	<b>Implementing and Monitoring the Standards</b>
<b>Procedure No.:</b>	<b>SGP11.01</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP11:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	New Policy
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## 6.0 Procedure

- 6.1 The Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee should draw up a Child Safeguarding Plan for the Diocese which ensures that:
- Safeguarding Children Policies & Procedures are developed and circulated across parishes in the Diocese.
  - Policies and Procedures are reviewed every two years.
  - A Safeguarding Children Plan is in place for the provision of training on the said policies and procedures for relevant personnel and volunteers.
  - Audit tools are developed and an internal audit schedule is in place. (See Parish Self-Audit Template) **SGF15.02**
  - There is provision for a consultation process for feedback from parents/carers and children on the measures set out to keep children protected.
  - An action plan for the implementation and review of the Safeguarding Children Plan.
- 6.2 The Bishop in consultation with the Child Safeguarding Committee will ensure that adequate financial and human resources are in place for the implementation of the plan.
- 6.3 A record of all training events and attendance sheets will be retained by the diocesan training personnel and retained at the Diocesan Office.
- 6.4 A review to be carried out on an annual basis. This should include information from:
- Parish Self-Audit Template (**SGF15.02**)
  - Recommendations from any previous internal and/or external audits.
  - Safeguarding Children Diocesan Plan and Review.
  - Information and data on child protection incidents, allegations, suspicions and reports made.
  - General Complaints Register
  - Parent/Carer/Child consultation process and feedback
  - Record keeping and storage of information

<b>Church Standard:</b>	7
<b>Name of Procedure:</b>	<b>Implementing and Monitoring the Standards</b>
<b>Procedure No.:</b>	<b>SGP11.01</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP11:01</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	New Policy
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

6.5 The Diocese acknowledges that consultation with and feedback from parents/carers and children is one of the best ways of ensuring that systems that are in place are effective for safeguarding children. This consultation and feedback should be conducted as a core part of the annual audit.

6.6 A register of all incidents, allegations and suspicions of abuse is maintained and stored securely by the Diocesan Office, in line with Data Protection Act 1988 & 2003. (See Appendix 10, List of relevant Legislation).

## **7.0 Appendices**

Appendix 10 List of relevant Legislation

## **8.0 Related Forms**

SGF15:02 Parish Self-Audit Tool

SGF11:01 Complaints Register

<b>Church Standard:</b>	<b>Standard 2</b>
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Confidentiality Statement</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP12:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Policy statement in Child Safeguarding Booklet.
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **1.0 Policy Statement: Confidentiality**

- 1.1 The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois recognises the importance of ensuring peoples' rights to confidentiality. People have a right to know what information is being held about them, by whom and for what purpose. This is outlined in the data protection legislation.
- 1.2 The diocese is committed to keeping confidential all information about children and families. The only exception is when child protection or child welfare concerns arise.
- 1.3 The effective protection of a child often depends on the willingness of church personnel involved with children to share and exchange relevant information. Giving information to appropriately designated persons and/or statutory authorities for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality.
- 1.4 All information regarding concerns or allegations of child abuse or neglect should be shared with the statutory agencies on a 'need to know basis', in the interests of the child.
- 1.5 No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. Those working with a child and family should make this clear to all parties involved although they can be assured that all information will be handled taking full account of legal requirements.
- 1.6 The issue of confidentiality will be part of the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Training.
- 1.7 **Guidance on the Seal of Confession**  
 Within the Sacrament of Penance, practices need to be considered that ensure the safety of all those involved, while providing the required privacy for the person receiving the sacrament. A priest must be clear about the status of any conversation relating to an allegation of abuse and ensure that there is no misunderstanding about whether or not the conversation is in the context of confession. Because of the obligations of the sacramental seal, a priest exercising a function under child safeguarding procedures should not celebrate the Sacrament of Penance with a person whom he knows is a respondent or a complainant in a child abuse case.

<b>Church Standard:</b>	<b>Standard 2</b>
<b>Name of Policy:</b>	<b>Confidentiality Statement</b>
<b>Policy No.:</b>	<b>SGP12:02</b>
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Policy statement in Child Safeguarding Booklet.
<b>Created on:</b>	01.01.14
<b>Review Date:</b>	01.06.16 and every subsequent two years.

## **2.0 Aim of Policy**

- 2.1 To ensure the confidential storage of records within the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois
  
- 2.2 To ensure the appropriate sharing of information with the relevant statutory agencies on child welfare and protection concerns as they arise.

## **3.0 Scope of Policy**

- 3.1 All church personnel and volunteers
  
- 3.2 All church records.

## **4.0 Definitions**

None

## **5.0 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 All church personnel
- 5.2 All church volunteers

## **6.0 Procedure**

Policy Statement

## **7.0 Appendix**

None

## **8.0 Forms and associated documentation**

Data Protection Act, 1988 & 2003



# Part 3

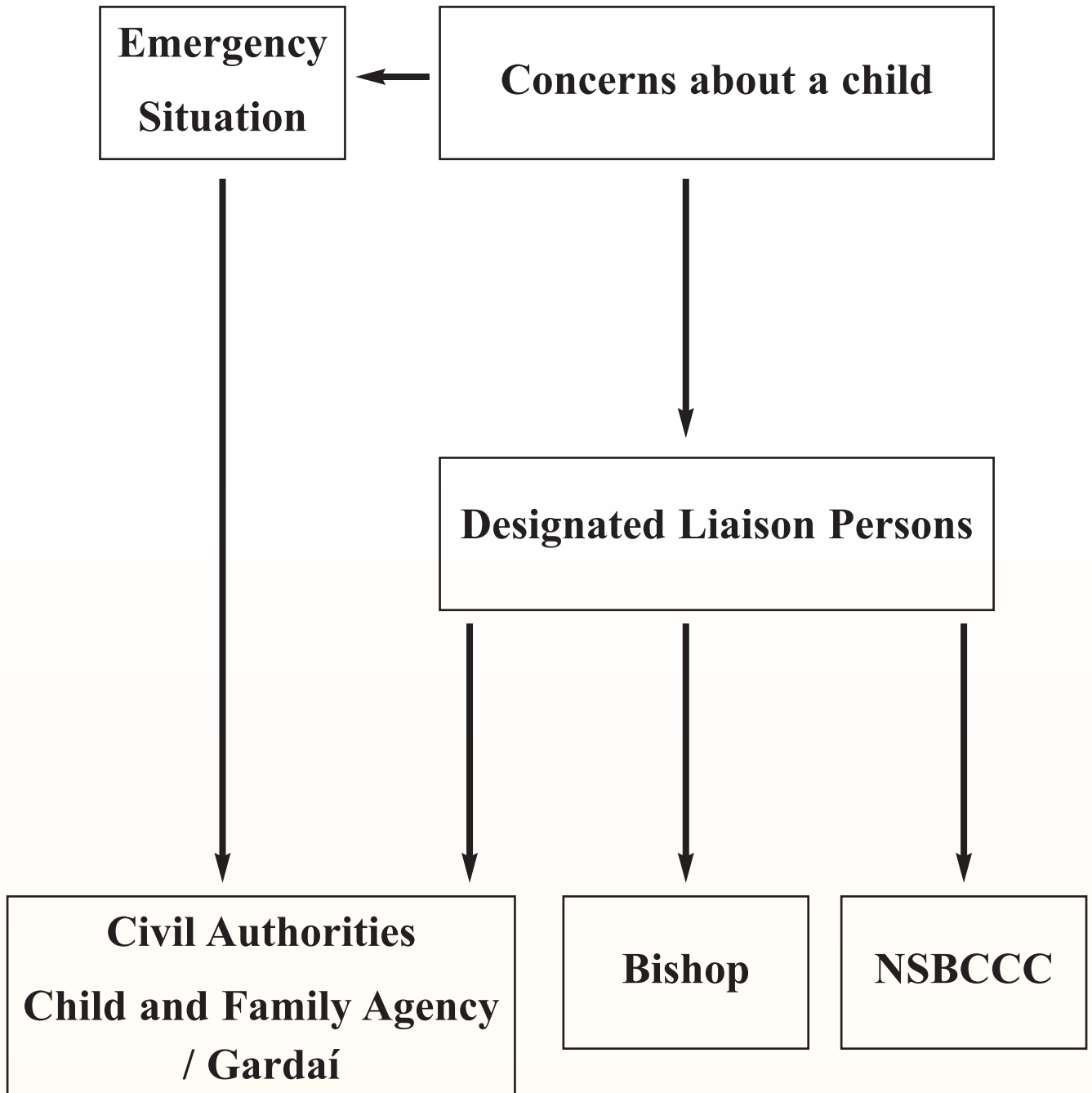
# Forms

## *List of Forms*

<b>Page No.</b>	<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Name</b>
67	SGF01.02	Reporting Procedure Flow Chart
68	SGF02.02	Safeguarding Policy Agreement
69	CC01:01:01	Standard Report Form
72	SGF03.02	Cover Letter for Standard Report Form
73	SGF04.01/NBSCCC	Recording Form Template
84	SGF05.02	Confidential Declaration Form
85	SGF06.02	Recruitment Checklist
87	SGF07.02	Confidential Application Form(Adult Volunteer)
90		Garda Vetting Form
92	SGF08.02	Letter of Acknowledgement (Volunteer)
93	SGF09.01	Letter of Offer (Volunteer)
94	SGF10.01	Cover Letter (Volunteer)
95	SGF11.01	Complaints Register (Template)
96	SGF12.02	Parental Consent Form
98	SGF13.02	Media Permission Form
99	SGF14.01	Use of Parish Properties by Non Parish groups
100	SGF15.02	Parish Self-Audit Template
102	SGF16.01	Accident/Incident Report Form
103	SGF 17.01	Confidential Reference Form
104	SGF18.01	Away Trips Parental Consent Form



## *Reporting Procedure Flow Chart*



# Safeguarding Policy Agreement

*I agree that I have read and understand the contents of the*  
**Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois**  
**Safeguarding Children, Policies and Procedures**

*I agree to abide by and adopt the policies, procedures and standards in all*  
*aspects of my work with the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois*

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# STANDARD REPORT FORM

(For reporting CP&W Concerns to the HSE)



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

**A. To Principal Social Worker/Designate:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Date of Report**

**2. Details of Child**

Name:		Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address:	DOB			Age	
	School				
Alias		Correspondence address (if different)			
Telephone		Telephone			

**3. Details of Persons Reporting Concern(s)**

Name:		Telephone No.	
Address:		Occupation	
		Relationship to client	
Reporter wishes to remain anonymous <input type="checkbox"/>		Reporter discussed with parents/guardians <input type="checkbox"/>	

**4. Parents Aware of Report**

	Yes	No	
Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to the HSE?	- Mother	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	- Father	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>		

**5. Details of Report**

*(Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) if known.)*

# STANDARD REPORT FORM

(For reporting CP&W Concerns to the HSE)

## 6. Relationships

Details of Mother		Details of Father	
Name:		Name:	
Address: (if different to child)		Address: (if different to child)	
Telephone No's:		Telephone No's:	

## 7. Household composition

Name	Relationship	DOB	Additional Information e.g. School/ Occupation/Other:

## 8. Name and Address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child

	Name	Address
Social Worker		
PHN		
GP		
Hospital		
School		
Gardaí		
Pre-School/Crèche/YG		
Other (specify):		

## 9. Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child

Relationship to child:		Age		Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name:			Occupation				
Address:							

# STANDARD REPORT FORM

*(For reporting CP&W Concerns to the HSE)*



**10. Details of person completing form**

Name:		Occupation:	
Address:		Telephone No's:	
Signed		Date:	

Headed Paper

**Strictly Private & Confidential**

Child and Family Agency Contact

Child and Family Agency

Address

Address

Address

Date:

**Re:** Referral

Dear (Name of Child and Family Agency Contact),

Please find enclosed a referral form (insert name of young person), (insert young person's address).

I wish to draw your attention to the following points. (Where there are issues to be raised).

Should you have any questions in relation to this referral please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please acknowledge receipt of this report,

Yours Sincerely,

---

Name

Designated Liaison Person

### **Case Recording**

Case records must provide a complete account of involvement in order to provide evidence of all allegations and actions taken to safeguard children, to assess and manage risk and to monitor practice.

All recorded information should be typed and be accurate, factual and concise. Where it is important to state opinion, assessment or judgement, these should be clearly differentiated. A case file is opened when an allegation is received, or a safeguarding concern emerges against a named person. The person who is the subject of the allegation has a file created in their name.

### **The file should include:**

1. A contents index sheet.
2. An initial case summary information sheet.
3. Case record narratives which detail all contacts made, including telephone, e-mail, by letter and in person.
4. Recording Form sent to Statutory Authorities.
5. Chronology of when allegations were made and responses.
6. Assessment Reports.
7. Minutes of Meetings.
8. Third Party information.
9. Correspondence in chronological order.

For access to a template file log onto [www.safeguarding.ie](http://www.safeguarding.ie)

The file should be sectioned as detailed above, with reference to all information logged in the contents sheet and referred to in the narrative account at point 3 above.

The chronology referenced above acts as an aid to assessing risk and reviewing action taken.

Third party and confidential information must be securely placed in a separate section which can easily be removed if access to the records is requested by anyone not authorised to see them.

All record keeping must be data protection compliant and stored securely in an agreed location.

**1. File Index Contents Sheet**

Date	Content



**2. Initial Case Summary Information Sheet**

Subject of Case Record	
Contact Details	
Parish / Congregation	
Diocese	
Date allegation received	
Brief Details	
Bishop / Congregational Leader  Contact Details	
Designated Officer Contact Details	
Advisor Contact Details	
Alleged Victim Contact Details	
Support Person Contact Details	

**3. Case Record Narrative**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Case Record</b>	<b>Author</b>

### 4. CHILD PROTECTION RECORDING FORM

#### 1. About the disclosure/concern

Date of disclosure/concern:

Time of disclosure/concern:

How was information received? *(attach any written information to this form)*

Telephone  Letter  Email  In person

#### 2. Details of person making disclosure/raising concern

Name

Address

Tel  Mobile

Email

Relationship to child or alleged victim

#### 3. Details of child or alleged victim

Name

Address

Tel  Mobile

Ethnic origin

Language *(is interpreter/signer needed?)*

Disability

Special needs

Parish / Order *(if applicable)*

**4. Parent / Carer details** *(where appropriate)*

Name

Address

Tel  Mobile

Are they aware of the allegation, suspicion or complaint? Yes  No

**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 *(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:  E-mail

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

**If yes:** Date  Time

**If no:** Explain why

Who was it referred to? Name

Designation:

Address:

Tel:  E-mail

**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

E-Mail

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)*

**5. Chronology of Allegations and Responses**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Allegations</b>	<b>Responses</b>

**Sample Recording Policy**

**A Recording Policy for the .....**  
(Diocese / Congregation / Missionary Society)

In February 2009, the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland issued its document “Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church in Ireland”. This guidance was endorsed and adopted by all the members of the three sponsoring bodies namely, the Irish Episcopal Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland, and the Irish missionary Union. Standards were created against which the practice of all participating parts of the Church would be assessed.

Standard 2 of the Guidance relates to “Procedures – How to respond to child protection allegations and suspicions.” Criteria 2.4 of Standard 2 states the following: - “There is a process for recording incidents, allegations and suspicions, and referrals. These will be stored securely, so that confidential information is protected and complies with relevant legislation.” Criteria 2.6 of Standard 2 states the following: - “There is guidance on confidentiality and information sharing which makes clear that the protection of the child is the most important consideration. The Seal of Confession is absolute.”

The.....undertakes to meet the requirements of  
Diocese / Congregation / Missionary Society

Standard 2 through the adoption and implementation of this Recording Policy.

**Recording Policy**

When an incident, allegation, suspicion or referral arises against any member of the clergy, staff, or volunteer, a case record will be created. It will record the information that has come to light, the actions taken, by whom and when. It will be accurate, fair, and kept up to date. The contents will be typed, where possible, to ensure legibility. The subject of the case file will be asked to agree to the creation of the file and to its content. Access to the content will be given on an agreed basis only unless there is a clear requirement to share the information with others to prevent harm coming to a child or young person.

The case file will adhere to the structure outlined in *SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN*. When created, the case file will be stored securely in a fireproof, locking cabinet in an agreed location. It will be held until ten years after the death of the subject of the file where upon it will be destroyed.



The principle of confidentiality that applies to the records created recognises the right of subjects to have their privacy protected. Information gathered or stored on them will not be shared with others unless the following applies:-

- Permission has been given by the subject to share the information with others
- There is a clear need to share the information to protect a child or young person
- A court order or legal obligation requires disclosure
- There is an overwhelming public interest in disclosure

The National Office for Safeguarding Children has a mandate to review and monitor practice within the Church. To that end, access to case records will be given to ensure that Standards are being met and that the Recording Policy is being adhered to. When a file is created the National Office will be notified to enable them to record the fact on a central index. The information shared will comprise the name of the subject of the file, the date on which it was created and who completed the task. All other information will be held in the case file itself.

## Confidential Declaration Form

For all persons working as employees or volunteers with children and young people

The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois uphold the principle that the welfare of children and young people is paramount in all aspects of their activities.

We therefore ask everyone who works with or volunteers for the Church, who will come into contact with children or the personal details of children, to complete and sign this declaration.

Do you have any prosecutions pending?                      Yes                       No

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence?                      Yes                       No

Been the subject of a Caution and/or a Bound Over Order                      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 Church organisation.**

**I hereby declare the information I have provided is accurate.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Recruitment Checklist

**Role/Post** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>TASK</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
Define the Role	
Create a job description	
Consider selection criteria	
Application Form or CV requested	
Photo ID requested	
Interview	
References sought	
Confidential Declaration Form	
Specify the type and level of contact the person will have with children	
Garda Vetting Form	
Contract	
Induction	
Records stored: Application Form, Declaration Form, References, Contract	

## CONFIDENTIAL APPLICATION FORM VOLUNTEER

**Diocese:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Parish:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Surname:** \_\_\_\_\_ **First Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tel:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Which ministry are you volunteering for?**

**Previous work 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 diocesan/parish activity/ministry?**

---

---

---

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

Yes       No

*If yes, please give details*

---

---

---

**Is there any medical information we need to be aware of?**

---

---

---

**Any other relevant information?**

---

---

---

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

1	2
<b>Name</b>	<b>Name</b>
<b>Address</b>	<b>Address</b>
<b>Tel</b>	<b>Tel</b>
<b>E-Mail</b>	<b>E-Mail</b>

*I declare that the above information is true and that I am fit to serve as a volunteer with this parish ministry/activity. I agree to abide by and accept the terms and conditions of participation. I have read “Safeguarding Children: Policy and Procedures for the Diocese of Ardagh & Clonmacnois” and agree to comply with the policies, procedures and practices set out in this document.*

*I give my consent for the information contained in this form to be processed and stored in accordance with policy for the purposes of recruitment and employment.*

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>FOR OFFICE USE</b>	
<b>Date Form Received:</b> _____	
<b>Date Reference Forms Sent:</b> _____	
<b>Date Reference 1 Returned:</b> _____	
<b>Date Reference 2 Returned:</b> _____	
<b>Invited to take up Position: Yes/No</b>	
<b>Signed:</b> _____	<b>Date:</b> _____



**An Garda Síochána**  
**GARDA VETTING APPLICATION FORM**  
 Diocese of Ardagh & Clonmacnois

An Garda Síochána Use Only Reference No:
---

**NOTE TO APPLICANT**

- The Enquiry Form must be completed in full using **BLOCK CAPITALS**  
 (Please state N/A if details are not applicable)
- Writing must be clear and legible
- Return the completed form to the Diocesan Secretary, Diocesan Office, St. Michael's, Longford.
- Do not send this form to The Garda Central Vetting Unit or to any Garda Station

**To be completed by the Applicant**

<b>SURNAME:</b>	<b>PREVIOUS NAME (if any):</b>
<b>FORENAME:</b>	<b>ALIAS:</b>
<b>DATE OF BIRTH:</b> (DD/MM/YY)	<b>PLACE/CITY OF ORIGIN:</b>
<b>HAVE YOU EVER CHANGED YOUR NAME?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>IF YES PLEASE STATE FORMER NAME:</b>	

Please state all addresses from year of birth to present date							
House No	Street	Town	County	Post Code	Country	Year From	Year To

**Please Continue Overleaf**



Have you ever been convicted of an offence in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere?

No  Yes  Please provide details

Date	Court	Offence	Court Outcome

**DECLARATION OF APPLICANT**

I, the undersigned, who have applied to work as a \_\_\_\_\_ hereby authorise An Garda Síochána to furnish to the **Diocese of Ardagh & Clonmacnois** a statement that there are no convictions recorded against me in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere or a statement of all convictions and /or prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, in the State or elsewhere as the case may be.

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT ALSO ( )

**To be completed by the Diocesan Office**

Authorised Signatory: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT ALSO ( )

Diocese: **Ardagh & Clonmacnois**

Registration No: \_\_\_\_\_

**To be completed by The Garda Central Vetting Unit**

According to Garda records there are no previous convictions recorded against the above named applicant:

**OR** the attached convictions appear on Garda Records:

**Or** the attached prosecutions are pending:

**NOTE:** Checks were carried out by this office based on the information supplied.

The convictions supplied may apply to the subject of your enquiry.

Please verify information disclosed with the applicant.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Member I/C

**C.V.U.**

----- (Name)  
----- (Address)  
----- (Volunteering role)

Dear

Thank you most sincerely for applying for the above position.

It is with regret that I inform you that you have been unsuccessful in your application to work as a volunteer in the parish on this occasion.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your interest and to wish you every success in the future.

Yours Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Recruitment Committee.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Letter of Offer for New Parish Volunteer** *(Template to be modified accordingly)*

Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois

Date

Parish of \_\_\_\_\_

### **Letter of Appointment**

RE: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of person and Volunteering Role)

Dear (Parish Volunteer),

I am writing to confirm that you are now in a position to take up your volunteering role and to thank you for your patience and co-operation.

Enclosed is **Form SGF02.02** - Safeguarding Policy Agreement. This should be completed and returned to the parish office once you have read and understood “Safeguarding Children: Policy and Procedures” for the Diocese of Ardagh & Clonmacnois (available on the diocesan website [www.ardaghdioocese.org](http://www.ardaghdioocese.org)).

If you have any further questions or wish to discuss a situation arising from your voluntary role, please contact either your group leader or your Parish Priest.

May I take this opportunity to welcome you and thank you for your commitment to the parish.

Yours sincerely:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name & Title

## **Cover Letter to Accompany Adult Application Form for *New Parish Volunteers*** *(Template to be modified accordingly)*

Dear (Parish Volunteer),

Thank you for your interest in volunteering within the parish.

As part of the Diocesan Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Children, it is a requirement that all new volunteers complete the attached **Confidential Application Form, Adult Volunteer, SGF07.02**. Once completed the application form should be returned to the Parish Office. The Recruitment Committee, or a delegate on its behalf, will then meet with you to discuss the role and make verbal contact with at least one of the referees named on your form.

Following the receipt of satisfactory references, you will be provided with other necessary forms as follows, which you should complete and return to the parish office:

**1. Garda Vetting Form**

**2. Adult Declaration Form**

You will also be required to submit a valid Photo ID in the form of a Valid Passport, or Driving Licence.

Following a satisfactory check you will be able to take up your volunteering position.

We are very aware of the confidential nature of the information shared and wish to assure you that it will be treated in the utmost confidence and handled strictly in accordance with the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Record Keeping Policy.

Thank you for your co-operation and interest in volunteering for the Parish.

Yours sincerely,

---

**Name**

**Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois**

SGF11.01

Effective from: 01.01.14

## Complaints Register

Date received	Nature of Complaint	Action Taken	Outcome	Date resolved

## Parental Consent Form for Church Activities

### Consent Form

#### 1. Name of Parish

Venue/Activity/Group/Event

Date/Time/Duration

Name of Group Leader/Person Responsible

#### 2. Name of Child

Address

Date of Birth

#### 3. Please give details of any medical condition of which the organisers ought to be aware, and include details of any medication which has to be taken.

(This information will be treated in confidence).

#### 4. Please give details of any specific dietary, medical or special needs of the child. (This information will be treated in confidence).

**5. Please give contact telephone numbers during the duration of this activity**

Name

Contact No.

Name

Contact No.

**6. Please give contact telephone numbers in the event of an emergency**

Name

Contact No.

Name

Contact No.

**7. Please indicate whether you give your permission for the child to receive treatment, if needed.**

Please tick:    Y             N

I have read all the information provided concerning the programme of the above activity, and have received a copy of the Code of Behaviour for children taking part in Church-related activities (attached).

- I hereby give permission for my son/daughter/ward to participate in the above activity.
- I also give permission for group leaders to make any necessary emergency decisions during this activity.
- I accept that my child may be included in photos/videos from Church-related events that might be published by the parish.

\_\_\_\_\_   
Parent / Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_   
Date

Address \_\_\_\_\_   
\_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Parental Consent for Altar Servers**

Altar servers make a commitment to assist at Sunday Masses, funerals and other liturgies as required. I/we agree to allow our child to serve at Masses and other liturgies, and to leave school, under conditions agreed with the school, for ceremonies when necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_   
Parent / Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_   
Child Signature

\_\_\_\_\_   
Date

Address \_\_\_\_\_   
(If different from above)

### *Media Permission Form*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, give permission for  
Photographs to be taken of me/my child and to be used if required (please tick):

In newspapers, magazines and other official parish publications

On the Parish Website (First Name/Photographs)

On the parish Twitter Feed/Facebook (Group Name/Photographs)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

Relationship to young person: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Child

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## *Use of Parish Properties by Non Parish Groups/Organisations*

*Requirements for Non Parish Groups/Organisations using Parish Properties*

**1. Name of Parish**

**2. Name of Individual/Group**

**3. Location of Activity**

**4. Duration/Frequency of Usage:**

**5. Do you have public liability insurance cover? (Please tick)**

Y

N

**6. Name of Company insured with:**

**7. Policy number:**

**Expiry date:**

**6. Do you have a Child Protection Policy? (Please tick)**

Y

N

**7. Are you familiar with health and safety requirements for working with children in this property? (Please tick)**

Y

N

Signed:

Date:

Title/Position

Contact No.

Address

**For Office Use**

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

## *Ardagh & Clonmacnois Parish Self Audit*

<b>Name of Parish</b>	
<b>Year of completion</b>	
<p><b>Please list all church based youth ministry</b>  <i>(e.g. Altar Servers, Young Ministers of the Word, Faith Friends, Youth Choir)</i></p> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/> <hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 5px 0;"/>	

<b>Promoting Safety</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Is the Safeguarding Children Policy adopted and advertised ?</li> <li>❖ Is there a Parish Safeguarding Representative ?</li> <li>❖ Is the Safeguarding Poster displayed in churches &amp; parish halls?</li> <li>❖ Is there a Code of Behaviour in place for adults and children?</li> <li>❖ Has this been signed by the relevant adult staff/volunteers and children?</li> <li>❖ Have parish groups involving children an appropriate number of adults to supervise?</li> <li>❖ Is there a sign-in/out book in the sacristy?</li> <li>❖ Are safe recruitment and vetting procedures in place for staff &amp; volunteers including use of Application Form, Declaration Form, References &amp; Vetting?</li> <li>❖ Have participants in parish youth activities and their parents been made aware of policies relating to child protection, good behaviour &amp; complaints procedure ?</li> <li>❖ In as far as you can establish, are parents and children happy with Safeguarding Procedures?</li> <li>❖ Is guidance on supervision of altar servers being followed?</li> <li>❖ Were altar servers given training during the year?</li> <li>❖ Are all facilities in use compliant with health and safety standards ?</li> </ul>		

	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Do all non-parish groups using parish facilities have Safeguarding Policies &amp; adequate insurance?</li> <li>❖ Have issues arisen relating to any of the following: inappropriate behaviour, photographs, internet, trips?</li> <li>❖ Are all records (attendance, consent, incident report) up to date?</li> <li>❖ Have visiting clergy provided evidence that they are in good standing?</li> </ul>		
<b>Responding to Concerns</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Have staff/volunteers had an opportunity to familiarise themselves with Safeguarding Policy &amp; Procedures including procedures for reporting allegations or disclosures of abuse?</li> <li>❖ Have all staff signed their agreement to observe procedures?</li> <li>❖ Have staff/volunteers reported any allegations or disclosures of abuse?</li> </ul>		
<b>Implementing Policy &amp; Procedures</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Have training/information sessions on Safeguarding Policy and Procedures been attended by Parish Safeguarding Representatives and Clergy?</li> <li>❖ Have information sessions on Safeguarding Policy and Procedures been attended by Staff and Volunteers?</li> <li>❖ Is there information available for children on where they can receive help if they have a concern?</li> <li>❖ Are the names and contact details of the Designated Person publicised? (e.g. in Parish Newsletter)</li> </ul> <p>Do the Parish Safeguarding Representatives provide support to leaders and volunteers on Safeguarding Children Procedures?</p>		

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ (*Parish Priest*)

\_\_\_\_\_ *Safeguarding Representative 1*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Safeguarding Representative 2*

## *Accident / Incident Report Form*

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Parish/Church Area: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of accident/incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Reported by: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Victim: \_\_\_\_\_

Details: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Location of Activity:**

Name of activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of incident/accident \_\_\_\_\_

Parties involved \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Carers informed (please tick)    Yes             No

Any Follow up \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**For Diocesan Use/Response**

**Date Received:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Action Taken:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_                      **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments** \_\_\_\_\_

## *Confidential Reference Form*

Applicant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ has applied for the  
position of \_\_\_\_\_ in the parish of \_\_\_\_\_ and has given your  
name as a referee.

The post may involve access to children. Is there any reason to be concerned about this applicant  
being in contact with children?    Yes     No

If you have answered yes we will contact you in confidence.

If you are happy to complete this reference all information contained on the form will remain  
confidential and will only be shared with our parish recruitment personnel.

How long do you know this person? \_\_\_\_\_

In what capacity? \_\_\_\_\_

What qualities and skills does this person have which you consider suitable for this position?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Parish Use Only**

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_ Received by: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Away Trips Parental Consent Form*

Name of Parish \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organisation/Event \_\_\_\_\_

All information is strictly confidential and should be provided as accurately and in as much detail as possible for the child/young person's benefit.

**PERSONAL DETAILS OF PARTICIPANT:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Names \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Number \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and return to \_\_\_\_\_

A signed consent form is a condition of participation in this activity for those under the age of 18.

I am willing for \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in \_\_\_\_\_ and confirm that he/she is willing to participate as fully as possible.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone No \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone No \_\_\_\_\_

**TRAVEL DETAILS:**

Furthermore, (please tick one of the following)

I permit \_\_\_\_\_ to only travel on transport that has been designated as official for the purposes of this event (e.g. minibus/coach) **or**

I permit \_\_\_\_\_ to travel in either private vehicles or any other transport that has been designated official

Does he/she suffer from any allergies? Yes ( ) No ( )

If yes, please state \_\_\_\_\_

Has he/she had an adverse reaction to an anaesthetic? Yes ( ) No ( )

If yes, please give details \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CURRENT MEDICATION

Is he/she taking any medication/treatment? Yes ( ) No ( )

(If this form is being used for a residential stay, please ensure that he/she has sufficient medication for the duration of the stay away). Please give detailed instructions below of medication, i.e. details of how much and how often to be taken. If necessary speak to the Leader in Charge.

---

---

MEDICAL CONDITION:

\_\_\_\_\_ has the following medical condition and requires the following medication (give details):

---

---

In the case of emergency, leaders will do everything possible to contact the parents so that they can make appropriate medical decisions for their child. In extreme circumstances where medical treatment is required without delay and it has been impossible to contact those names on the Health Form, I authorise the certified first aid person and /or the leader in charge to give consent for any medical treatment on my/our behalf.

Please Tick

The following are activities which I/we feel this young person should not participate in:

Swimming or Ice Skating or Other (*please state*)

---

I am willing to allow \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in \_\_\_\_\_ activity and confirm that s/he is willing to participate as fully as possible.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone No \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone No \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child/young person: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Specifically for Residential:**

If the child is unable to administer the medication themselves, I give permission to the Leader in Charge/First Aid Person to give \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ (state medication, dosage, and frequency). I enclose a letter from the GP stating that the Leader in Charge/First Aid Person can administer the medication.

Please Tick ( ) In the case of an emergency, the Leader will do everything possible to contact the parents so that they can make the appropriate medical decisions for their child. In extreme circumstances where medical treatment is required without delay and it has been impossible to contact those named above, I authorise the certified First Aid Person and/or the Leader in Charge to give consent for any medical treatment on my/our behalf.

Please Tick ( ) I/we give permission for the young person named above to take part in all activities not explicitly specified.

Please Tick ( ) Although supervision will be maintained at all times, I/we understand that there will be some sports or activities which are physically demanding (e.g. swimming ,relay, racing, rounders , volleyball, netball, football, hockey, hill walking).

Please Tick ( ) I/we are willing for the above named child/young person to attend this residential and will do my best/our best to encourage him/her to obey the rules and give the residential leadership their support.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child or young person: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_



# Part 4

# Appendices

## *List of Appendices*

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## How to respond to allegations and suspicions of child abuse in the Republic of Ireland

*Remember, a child may disclose abuse to you as a trusted adult at any time. It is important that you are aware and prepared for this.*

### People may tell you about:

- abuse that is happening to them now (current)
- abuse that happened to them some time ago (historical)
- something they've been told by someone else that they strongly believe
- seeing signs of abuse, such as physical injuries on a child
- some behaviour they have witnessed, (i.e. between an adult and child) that has made them feel uncomfortable

### Do:

- Stay calm and listen - give the child/adult time to say what he/she wants to say.
- Listen carefully and attentively; take the child/adult seriously.
- Reassure the child/adult that he/she is doing the right thing.
- Explain that you will need to discuss this with someone else.
- Record the disclosure as carefully as possible; outline what the child/adult said, in the language that he/she used.
- Report all disclosures to the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person immediately.

### Do Not:

- Panic.
- Ask leading questions or make suggestions.
- Stop the child/adult recalling significant events.
- Ask probing questions or make the child/adult repeat the story unnecessarily.
- Promise to keep it a secret.
- Express opinions about the child/adult or members of his/her family.

## Reasonable Grounds for Concern

- An injury or behaviour that is consistent both with abuse and an innocent explanation, but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse
- Consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- Admission or indication by someone of an alleged abuse
- A specific indication from a child that he or she was abused
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused.
- Evidence (e.g. injury or behaviour) that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to have been caused in any other way.

### What to do if reasonable grounds for concern exist

#### (Some examples of circumstances when you might make a referral to the Child and Family Agency)

It is recommended that a referral to the Child and Family Agency should always be made in the following circumstances;

- any concern about a child at risk of sexual abuse;
- physical injury caused by assault or neglect which may or may not require medical attention;
- incidents of physical abuse that alone are unlikely to constitute significant harm, but taken into consideration with other factors may do so;
- children who suffer from persistent neglect;
- children who live in an environment which is likely to have an adverse effect on their emotional development;
- where parents' own emotional impoverishment affects their ability to meet their child's emotional and/or physical needs, regardless of material/financial circumstances and assistance;
- where parents' circumstances are adversely affecting their capacity to meet the child's needs because of domestic violence, drug and/or alcohol misuse, mental health problems, intellectual disability;
- a child living in a household with, or having significant contact with, a person at risk of sexual offending or with previous convictions for offences against children;
- an abandoned child;
- children left home alone;
- bruising/injury to a pre-mobile baby;
- pregnancy where children have been previously removed;
- suspicion of fabricated or induced illness;
- where a child under one year is present in a home where domestic violence is a concern.

(Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook, HSE, 2011.)

### Diocesan Contact Details

If you or anyone you know has a child protection concern, or wishes to report an allegation of child abuse, please contact:

**Designated Person**

**Mr. Sean Leydon**

**Diocesan Office**

**St. Michael's**

**Longford**

**087 - 7431649**

**Deputy Designated Person**

**Ms. Roisin O'Doherty**

**Diocesan Office**

**St. Michael's**

**Longford**

**087 - 3327587**

**Diocesan contact for complaints outside of Safeguarding Children:**

**Mr. Liam Faughnan: 086 - 8237443**

Diocesan website: [www.ardaghdiocese.org](http://www.ardaghdiocese.org)

**National Office for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland,**

New House, Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co.Kildare. Phone: 01-5053124

[www.safeguarding.ie](http://www.safeguarding.ie)

### Child and Family Agency Contacts

**Area Manager Children and Family Services**

**Longford/Westmeath/Laois/Offaly - Mullingar Health Centre 044-9395019/20**

**Social Work Departments -**

**Tivoli House, Longford. 043 - 3350584**

**Athlone Health Centre 090 - 6483106**

**Child & Family Centre, Mullingar 044 - 9384450**

**Area Manager Children and Family Services - Roscommon/Galway 090 - 6626732**

**Social Work Department-**

**Lanesboro Rd. Roscommon 090 - 6637528**

**Area Manager Children and Family Services - Sligo/Leitrim/ West Cavan 071 - 9155133**

**Social Work Department -**

**Community Care Office, Leitrim Rd. Carrick-on-Shannon 071 - 9650324**

**Social Work Department, Tara Street Tullamore: 057 - 9370700**

**Child and Family Services, Drumalee, Cavan: 049 - 4377305 / 4377306**

### **Gardaí Síochána**

<b>Longford</b>	<b>043-3350570</b>	<b>Athlone</b>	<b>090-6498550</b>
<b>Carrick on Shannon</b>	<b>071-9650510</b>	<b>Mullingar</b>	<b>044-9384000</b>
<b>Birr</b>	<b>057-9169710</b>	<b>Cavan</b>	<b>049-4368800</b>
<b>Roscommon</b>	<b>090-6638300</b>	<b>Sligo</b>	<b>071-9157000</b>
<b>Tullamore</b>	<b>057-9327600</b>	<b>Boyle</b>	<b>071-9664620</b>

### **Helplines & Support Services**

#### **Towards Healing - Counselling & Support for Survivors of Abuse:**

Republic of Ireland      Freephone **1800 303416.**  
Northern Ireland      Freephone **0800 0963315.**  
E-mail:      **info@towardshealing.ie**  
Website:      **www.towardshealing.ie**  
**Faoiseamh:**      **1800 331234**  
**Samaritans:**      **1850 609090**  
**CARI:**      **1890 924567**

#### **National Association for people abused in childhood:**

National Support Helpline: **0800 085 3330**  
Website: [www.napac.org.uk](http://www.napac.org.uk)

#### **Childline:**

24 hour Helpline: **1800 666 666**  
Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

#### **ISPCC:**

Tel: **1800 666666 / 1850 504050.**  
Website: [www.ispcc.ie](http://www.ispcc.ie)

#### **Barnardos:**

Counselling for Children: **1850 222 300**  
Website: [www.barnardos.ie](http://www.barnardos.ie)

#### **One in Four:**

Appointment only Service: **01 6624070**  
Email: [info@oneinfour.org](mailto:info@oneinfour.org)

### **Church Roles for which Garda Vetting & Safeguarding Training are Mandatory**

Any person whether full-time, part-time or voluntary who through his/her ministry has *on-going, substantial and unsupervised contact with children* has an obligation to submit themselves for Garda Vetting and to attend Safeguarding Training.

The following chart provides a description of the typical roles performed by such people, however it is not exhaustive. It is the responsibility of the Parish Priest in each parish to contact the Diocesan Office for Garda Vetting and to contact the Safeguarding Children Trainers so that training can be made available as soon as possible.

#### **Clergy and Religious**

- Bishops and Congregation Leaders
- All Diocesan Clergy
- Religious who work on behalf of the Diocese and have contact with Children.
- Candidates for the priesthood and religious life

#### **The Safeguarding Children System**

- Members of Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee
- Diocesan Designated Liaison Persons
- Diocesan Safeguarding Trainers
- Parish Safeguarding Children Representatives

#### **Liturgical Preparation and Celebration**

- Children's Liturgy Leaders and Supervisors
- Sacramental Programme Workers - Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation Teams
- Altar Servers Supervisors and Trainers
- Adult Altar Servers
- Leaders of Music Ministry and adults with designated responsibility for children/young people in music groups. This also applies to Music Leaders who work with mixed groups of Adults and Children
- Eucharistic Ministers who take Holy Communion to people in their homes

### **Pastoral and Social Support**

- Home or hospital visitors who work on behalf of the Church
- Transport volunteers (excluding private arrangements)
- Workers in clubs for children/young people run by any organisation operating in the name of the Church
- Organisers of Diocesan/Religious Pilgrimages that include vulnerable adults or children
- Adults with roles of responsibility/sole access to children/young people on pilgrimages (appointed parish carers, nurses, doctors, handmaids and brancardiers)
- Identified Leaders on Youth Pilgrimages

### **Administrative Support Staff and Others**

- Parish Secretaries
- Housekeepers for Clergy } *who have on-going, substantial and unsupervised contact with children*
- All adults living in Parochial Houses and other Church Property
- Caretakers/Sacristans
- Counsellors/Rainbows Personnel /Family Life Centre Personnel





## Guidance on Vetting

### The Catholic Church's Standards and Expectations

#### 1.0 Standard 3

**“Children should have access to good role models they can trust, who will respect and nurture their spiritual, physical and emotional development. They also have a right to an environment free from abuse and neglect”**

**1.1** It is very important that those people who work in any capacity (ministry, paid, or as volunteers) with children<sup>1</sup> and young people are, as far as possible, assessed to ensure that they do not present a risk to children. Standard 3, and Resource 3 provides the expected standard of practice in relation to recruitment and selection, and gives a checklist for engaging proper processes when taking on staff and volunteers who will be working with children.

**1.2** One part of the recruitment process is to “screen” applicants against police criminal conviction and caution records. In Northern Ireland, this screening process includes a check against relevant police-held conviction and non-conviction information and against UK lists of individuals who have been barred from working with children and/or vulnerable adults and against Garda Síochána records. In the Republic of Ireland, checks are made against records of criminal convictions and pending prosecution cases only.

**1.3** This document seeks to set out the applicable legislation and provide guidance on who should be vetted and the processes in both the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland.

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<sup>1</sup> A child is defined as a person who has not attained the age of 18

## 2.0 Process in Republic of Ireland

2.1 In ROI, vetting is carried out through the Garda Central Vetting Unit in Thurles.

2.2 Currently there is no legislation which underpins vetting in ROI. However section 26 of the Sex Offenders Act 2001 means that it is a criminal offence for some people who fail to notify their employers they are guilty of certain criminal offences before taking a job or performing a service. It is a requirement under this legislation for a prospective employee or volunteer to inform the employer of offences committed in Ireland and abroad. Section 26 of the Sex Offenders Act 2001 makes it an offence for a sex offender to "apply for work or to perform a service (including State work or service<sup>2</sup>) which involves having unsupervised access to, or contact with children or mentally impaired people<sup>3</sup> without telling the prospective employer or contractor that they are a sex offender".

2.3 The Report by the Working Group on Garda Vetting, 2004<sup>4</sup>, provides some guidance on who should be vetted. In addition, consultation between the National Office for Safeguarding Children and the Garda superintendent responsible for vetting, in March 2011 has identified from that report that "**those who have substantial, unsupervised access to children**" should be vetted, prior to taking up post in a paid or voluntary capacity.

2.4 Substantial and Unsupervised is defined as follows:

"When seeking to decide if someone should be asked to undergo Garda vetting, you should be guided in this decision as to whether the person will have **substantial, unsupervised access** to children in their role or not. If the normal duties of the person involve contact with children, this may be viewed as substantial access. However, if that contact is always supervised, the criteria for vetting is not met. The contact must be of a

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<sup>2</sup> The terms State work or State service includes work done by civil servants, Gardaí, Defence Forces, local authority and Health Service Executive (HSE) staff.

<sup>3</sup> The term mentally impaired is used in the 2001 Act and is defined in Section 5 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1993. This refers to anyone suffering from a disorder of the mind, whether through mental disability or mental illness, which is of such a nature or degree as to render them incapable of living an independent life or of guarding against serious exploitation.

<sup>4</sup> See 3.2 Report of Working Group on Garda Vetting, 2004

## **Vetting Guidance- July, 2012**

nature to permit the opportunity to exploit access to children to harm them. It must be unsupervised. Therefore for vetting purposes, the role must possess the potential for substantial unsupervised access if someone is to be required to undergo Garda vetting”.

**2.5** Good childcare practice means that as far as possible, management and supervision arrangements are such that substantial, unsupervised access to children is limited.

**2.6** Within the Catholic Church in Ireland, it is Church Policy for those who have specific roles, where the contact with children is substantial (part of their normal duties) and where this may be unsupervised (in ministry; paid or voluntary) to be vetted. The Diocese/Congregation is required to register with the Garda Vetting unit and appoint an authorised signatory who will be trained by the Garda Vetting Unit. It is the responsibility of the authorised signatory to ensure that Garda vetting application forms are completed accurately and in full.

**2.7** The form which is completed by the applicant gives permission for a Garda check to be obtained and shared with the relevant personnel within the congregation/diocese in line with data protection legislation. The request to obtain Garda vetting must seek the permission of the applicant to share the information with named relevant people – i.e. – the employer and the authorised signatory. Personnel accessing Garda vetting checks must also observe confidentiality and must be made aware of the consequences of a breach of confidentiality.

**2.8** Garda vetting is one method of ensuring that those people against whom there are concerns of a relevant nature are not engaged to work with children. The vetting return must be assessed by the employing person (parish priest, chair of board of management etc) to ensure that risk is minimised.

**2.9** If the vetting check contains information which might mean an applicant is unsuitable for the post, the employer must discuss the vetting check with the applicant to establish firstly that the identity details are correct and secondly whether the information shared means that the application must not proceed.

**2.10** If the applicant wishes to appeal the decision the Diocese/Religious Order must set up a review panel meeting. (See section on Appeals below)

### **3.0 Northern Ireland Requirements**

**3.1** The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (Disclosure) is the legislation which allows for an enhanced criminal record check for those engaged in regulated activities<sup>5</sup> with children and vulnerable adults.

**3.2** A child is defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Order (hereafter "SVGO") as anyone who has not attained the age of 18.

**3.3** A vulnerable adult is defined by the SVGO as a person who is aged 18 years or over and who:

- is living in residential accommodation, such as a care home or a residential special school
- is living in sheltered housing
- is receiving domiciliary care in their own home
- is receiving any form of healthcare
- is detained in a prison, remand centre, young offender institution, secure training centre or attendance centre, or under the powers of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- is under the supervision of the probation services
- is receiving a specified welfare service, namely the provision of support, assistance or advice by any person, the purpose of which is to develop an individual's capacity to live independently in accommodation or support their capacity to do so
- is receiving a service or participating in an activity for people who have particular needs because of their age or who have any form of disability
- is an expectant or nursing mother living in residential care
- is receiving direct payments from a local authority or health and social care trust in lieu of social care services, and/or
- requires assistance in the conduct of their own affairs.

### **4.0 Vetting**

**4.1** Vetting is carried out in Northern Ireland through Access NI

**4.2** In relation to the Church, those who work (paid or unpaid) in a regulated activity will require to be vetted. In addition there are some roles who oversee those in regulated activities who must also be vetted including Bishops and Provincials/Religious Leaders.

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<sup>5</sup> For regulated activity see definition at point 6 below



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**4.3** The Northern Bishops have established a central vetting office whereby all vetting applications to Access NI are processed. The Vetting officer acts as the authorised signatory and makes decisions about fitness for role based on the returned disclosure.<sup>6</sup> An application is completed by the local safeguarding representative and forwarded to the Northern Vetting Office for processing.

**4.4** For Religious Orders, consultation should take place with the Northern Vetting Office around requirement to vet and processing of applications.

## 5.0 Barring

**5.1** In addition within Northern Ireland a Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS)<sup>7</sup> has been established under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order (SVGO) 2007<sup>8</sup>. Under the VBS, work with children and vulnerable adults is defined in terms of 'regulated activity' [see below for definitions of child, vulnerable adult, regulated activity]. Regulated activity extends to both paid and unpaid work and includes volunteering opportunities. A new Independent Safeguarding Authority<sup>9</sup> (ISA) has been established to manage the vetting and barring scheme. The ISA make decisions about who is included in barred lists, which will prevent the barred individual from obtaining work with children and vulnerable adults. The ISA holds two barred lists; a children's' barred list and an adults' barred list.

**5.2** From 12 October 2009, a barred individual, who seeks or obtains work in regulated activity, will be committing a criminal offence. Likewise an employer or volunteer manager who offers work in regulated activity to an individual they know to be barred will be committing a criminal offence. Also from 12 October 2009, if an individual is removed or dismissed from regulated activity; or if the person would have been dismissed but leaves as an alternative to dismissal, for causing harm or posing a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults, **the employer is legally obliged to refer this information to the ISA**. Failure to do so is an offence and will carry a significant penalty. ISA will review the information and consider the appropriateness of barring the individual from working with children and/or vulnerable adults.

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<sup>6</sup> For appeals see section xx below

<sup>7</sup> Following a change of Government in the UK, this scheme is being remodelled. Consequently this guidance will be updated in the future

<sup>8</sup> The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 can be found at:  
[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2007/pdf/uksi\\_20071351\\_en.pdf](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2007/pdf/uksi_20071351_en.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> ISA for details log onto [www.isa.gov.org](http://www.isa.gov.org)

## **Vetting Guidance- July, 2012**

**5.3** A referral must be made to the ISA when the Dioceses/religious Order, withdraws permission for an individual to engage in regulated activity, or would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred to a position which is not regulated. Within the Church setting, this may be as part of the processes involved in asking for or imposing Leave from Sacred Ministry because the Bishop/Provincial thinks that the individual has:

Engaged in relevant conduct;

Satisfied the harm test; or received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence.

Temporary removal from ministry may not require referral to ISA; however if both conditions have been met for those permanently excluded from ministry, then the information relating to and allegations against that individual must be referred to the ISA. Advice on referring to ISA can be obtained from the Northern Vetting Office.

## **6.0 Activity with Children, and Young People**

**6.1** The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) defines regulated activity as covering:

“Anyone working closely with children or vulnerable adults, paid or unpaid, not part of a family or personal arrangement on a frequent<sup>10</sup> or intensive or overnight basis. It can include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- Teaching, training or instruction, care or supervision of children or provided wholly or mainly to vulnerable adults.
- Providing advice or guidance for children.
- Providing advice, guidance or assistance wholly or mainly to vulnerable adults.
- Any form of healthcare treatment or therapy provided to children or vulnerable adults.
- Driving a vehicle that is being used for the specific purpose of conveying children or vulnerable adults.
- Working in a specified place [for example in a school, children's home, children's hospital, a nursing home or residential care home]

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<sup>10</sup> Frequent means once a week or more (except in health or personal care services where frequent means once a month or more; intensive means on four or more days in a single month)

**6.2 Controlled activity includes:**

- frequent or intensive activity that is ancillary to healthcare in hospitals or primary care
- frequent or intensive ancillary activity in adult social care settings and further education settings, and
- people working for specified organisations with access to health or social services records.

**From a Church perspective most staff will fall under the category of regulated activity.**

**6.3** Further guidance on how to make a referral to the ISA, and on the assessment for barring, can be found on the ISA website. To facilitate the process, Dioceses and Congregations in Northern Ireland will be supported by the Northern Vetting Office, based in Belfast ISA referrals should be submitted through that Office.

**7.0 ISA registration**

**As this process is currently under review by the UK government, there is currently no requirement to register. Further guidance will be issued once the review is completed.**

**8.0 Storage and Retention of Records**

**8.1** Application forms, references and the fact that the vetting checks has been carried out must be stored securely by the employer in a locked cabinet in the parish/diocesan/employer's office. In ROI, the full garda record must be retained for a period of 20<sup>11</sup> years after the end of the period of employment.

**8.2** In Northern Ireland the information contained in the vetting check should be stored for a period of 3 months and then destroyed, by the authorised signatory. The only exclusion is if the applicant appeals the decision of the authorised signatory. (See section on appeals below) and in this instance the record should be retained for 3 months following completion of the appeal process.

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<sup>11</sup> Classified under the data commissioners guidance on vetting as "exceptional circumstances"

## **Vetting Guidance- July, 2012**

**8.3** In Northern Ireland a reference to the check having been carried out should be retained for a period of 20 years after the end of the period of employment. (This also applies to volunteers)

## **9.0 Appeals**

**9.1** It must be noted that any appeal can only be made in relation to the Church decision not to employ the candidate (paid or voluntary). The Church has no role in reviewing the contents of the Disclosure by the Gardai or Access NI. If there is a disagreement about the Disclosure, the Applicant must appeal directly to An Garda Siochana or Access NI.

**9.2** The Authorized signatory and employer will, in keeping with 2.4, assess the information returned from Access NI or Garda Siochana, following which the employer will decide if there is any reason not to employ the applicant from a criminal information perspective. The applicant will be informed that their application cannot proceed based on the information returned through the vetting process.

**9.3** If the applicant wishes to appeal the Church decision, the applicant should be informed in writing, the process of an appeal.

**9.4** An appeals Panel will be established by the Church Authority to hear the appeal.

**9.5** The applicant will be told that the appeal process will require the information disclosed by An Garda Siochana or Access NI being shared with the panel members, and that any representations made by him/her may be shared with the statutory authorities. Any detail provided, for example to explain the background to a conviction, will be shared with the Garda Vetting Unit or Access NI to ensure it is a realistic representation of the facts.

**9.6** Representation from the applicant will be requested in writing, to offer the opportunity to explain any circumstances in relation to the information received, which might further inform the appeals panel. The panel may permit an oral hearing if that is seen as necessary for the fair and just disposition of the appeal.

**9.7** The role of the Appeals panel is to decide if the original decision was unreasonable or irrational. The panel will communicate its view to the Church Authority, in the first instance. The Church Authority should take cognizance of the views of the Appeals Panel. The applicant will then be informed in writing of the final decision following a review by the Church authority, based on the advice of the Appeals panel.

**Please note separate guidance for Appeals Panels is now approved**





## Guidance for Vetting Appeals Panel

### 1. Process

An appeal against the Church's decision not to employ in a paid or unpaid capacity, on the grounds of information shared in the vetting check, can be made by the Applicant within 28 days of receiving the notification that the application cannot proceed. It must be noted that the Church has no role in reviewing the contents of the disclosure by the Gardai or Access NI. If there is a disagreement about the disclosure, the Applicant must appeal directly to An Garda Síochána or Access NI.

The applicant will be informed in writing of the process of an appeal. The applicant will be advised to set out in writing his grounds for appeal.

Once a request has been received by the Church Authority appealing the Church's decision, an appeals Panel will be established by the Church Authority to hear the appeal.

The applicant will be told that the appeal process will require the information disclosed by An Garda Síochána or Access NI being shared with the panel members, and that any representations made by him/her may be shared with the statutory authorities. Any detail provided, for example to explain the background to a conviction, will be shared with the Garda Vetting Unit or Access NI to ensure it is a realistic representation of the facts.

The role of the Appeals panel is to decide if the original decision was unreasonable or irrational. The panel will communicate its view to the Church Authority, in the first instance. The Church Authority should take cognizance of the views of the Appeals Panel. The applicant will then be informed in writing of the final decision following a review by the Church authority, based on the advice of the Appeals panel.

## **2. Constitution of Panel**

An Appeals panel will be appointed by the Bishop or Provincial. The following people should be considered as appropriate membership of the panel .

- Chair of the Safeguarding Committee
- Priest or Religious
- Lay person with Child Protection Experience

Advice can be sought from:

Representative from HR (if the Diocese or Religious Order has one)

Civil Law/Canon Lawyer and Employment Lawyer

## **3. Role of Panel**

- To receive and hear requests for review of decision not to appoint on the basis of information received through the vetting process
  - To review the written information provided by the appellant, to receive oral evidence if deemed appropriate
  - To review information provided by the Church Authority
- To make a judgment regarding whether the decision not to employ was reasonable
  - Was the decision to refuse based on potential risk to children
  - Was the relevance of the specific role taken into consideration
- To report its views to the Church Authority for consideration

## **4. Timeframe**

An appeal must be lodged with the Employer within 28 days of being informed of the decision not to appoint.

The appellant will be asked to provide written representation within 14 days of receipt of correspondence requesting this. Failure to provide this information within the timeframe suggested – or failure to seek an

**Vetting Appeals Panel – July, 2012**

extension will result in the matter being closed and the original decision standing.

The appeals panel will aim to review all information within 14 days of receipt of the same and communicate in writing to the Church authority its views.

## ***Guidance on Leave and Restriction from Sacred Ministry and Apostolate for Clergy and Religious***

***This document represents guidance rather than direction for the Church. It does not diminish the authority of the Ordinary in anyway with regard to the management of these important issues. It has been produced to provide help to the decision making that has to be undertaken when matters of this nature arise.***

### **1. Introduction**

***Procedures for managing concerns, suspicions and allegations are set out in Resources 2<sup>1</sup> and 15 of the Standards and Guidance Document. For specific reference to canonical processes see page 87 of that document and also Appendix 1 below.***

The Bishop/Congregational Leaders should advise the National Office for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church

- that an allegation has been received
- that it has been referred to the statutory authorities
- that a Church enquiry will commence.

The Church inquiry is simply initiated and then suspended, pending the outcome of the civil investigation. No church investigation should interfere with the civil inquiries, which takes precedence at this stage.

In the absence of an admission, the respondent enjoys the presumption of innocence, and all appropriate steps shall be taken to protect his/her reputation.

The respondent will be offered an Adviser who will encourage him/her to obtain advice from both civil and canon lawyers. (See Appendix 2). The Bishop/Congregational Leader should also engage canonical advice (see Appendix 1)

The Bishop/Congregational Leaders possess all the necessary powers to take measures to promote and ensure the safety and welfare of children. Among the actions necessary, during both a civil investigation and church inquiry, may be the requirement to restrict a respondent's exercise of his/her office and/or sacred ministry and apostolate. A respondent may be asked to withdraw from a particular office and from other forms of sacred ministry and apostolate, including public celebration of the Mass and other Sacraments during the course of any civil as well as church/canonical investigation. The respondent may also be required to cease from wearing clerical attire.

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<sup>1</sup> Safeguarding Children : Standards and Guidance Document

There are two factors which will determine the Bishops/Congregational Leaders action in this regard:-

- The credibility of the allegation received
- An assessment of the potential risk to children.

Prior to deciding on how to respond, advice may be sought on either or both of these factors from the National Case Management Reference Group (NCMRG) of the National Board, or from an Advisory Panel supporting the relevant Church authority.

Each case will have to be considered on its own merits. The advice provided to the Bishop/Congregational Leader should specifically include an assessment of the credibility of the allegation and the potential risk arising as a consequence.

If a decision has been made by the Bishop/Congregation Leader that it is necessary and appropriate to ask that a period of leave from sacred ministry should be initiated, the following procedure should be employed.

## **2. Procedure**

*The following procedure outlines the processes to be engaged, when leave and restriction from sacred ministry and apostolate is required. It should be read in conjunction with Resource 2, which sets out in detail actions to be taken following receipt of an allegation. All actions should be confirmed in writing and a date of review of actions set.*

- 1) On receiving a complaint, the Designated person, on behalf of the Bishop/Congregational Leader must inform civil authorities, whose role it is to investigate the allegation, and assess the risk to children.
- 2) A preliminary enquiry, in accordance with canon law will be initiated, when required by canon law (CIC,c. 1717;CCEO, c.1468). The canonical inquiry will be suspended to allow any civil investigation to take place.
- 3) Prior to meeting the respondent or informing him/her that an allegation has been received, consultation with the statutory authorities should take place, so as not to jeopardise any criminal investigation carried out by the civil authorities.

- 4) The Bishop/Congregational Leader, who may be accompanied by the designated person, or another appropriate person, should meet with the respondent to put the allegation to him/her in person. The respondent should be informed that he/she may wish to be accompanied to this meeting, and/or any subsequent meetings by a friend, colleague, or civil/canonical adviser. The respondent should be informed of his/her rights to both canonical and civil legal advice. At the meeting the respondent should immediately be advised of the following: the respondent has the right to remain silent; he/she may admit, deny or decide not to respond at this stage. A note of the meeting should be taken and a copy forwarded to the respondent.
- 5) While the allegations are being investigated the presumption of innocence applies, therefore leave from sacred ministry is a precautionary measure. It does not impute guilt, nor should the action (of leave from ministry) per se prejudice any civil or canon law process.
- 6) If the respondent is in a role which involves contact with children and young people, and if it is in the interests of safeguarding children and young people, then the respondent should be invited to request leave from sacred ministry and apostolate, for the course of the civil and/or canonical investigations. Where this is agreed, there should be clarity regarding the restrictions on sacred ministry and apostolate.
- 7) Limitations to sacred ministry and apostolate are taken in accordance with canon law and should be considered by the [Bishop/Congregational Leader] Church Authority. If the respondent declines to request leave from ministry and if continuing sacred ministry or apostolate would constitute a risk to children, advice may be sought from the statutory authorities, the NCMRG, or an Advisory Panel. The Bishop/Congregational Leader may also take canonical advice on how to proceed in each case.
- 8) The Bishop/Congregational Leader by means of a decree or precept, gives reasons at least in summary form for his decision, outlines the respondent's restrictions on the exercise of the respondent's ministry or apostolate.<sup>2</sup>
- 9) Agreement should be reached, if possible, between the Bishop/Congregational Leader and the Respondent in relation to the following:
  - a) How to bring to completion the transfer of any unfinished tasks in relation to the respondent's ministry, which do not involve access to children and young people.

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<sup>2</sup> Right to the respondent's reputation, privacy, financial support, accommodation, adviser. Restrictions on public exercise of ministry – public celebration of Mass and other sacraments, restrictions on use of clerical dress, possible prohibition re: contact with children

- b) Residency of the respondent: Consideration may be given to allowing the respondent to continue to reside in his/her current accommodation, if it is perceived not to present any risk to children, and where alternative accommodation is available for any Administrator/replacement
  - c) Communicating with relevant individuals and groups (congregations, colleagues, parishioners etc.): When an allegation has been received and a priest is taking leave from sacred ministry and apostolate, the Bishop/Congregational Leader is responsible for what is communicated, to whom, and how this is communicated. The preferred approach is for this to be agreed with the respondent who will not be named in any public statement. The presumption of innocence should be emphasised. Great care needs to be taken not to prejudice the outcome of any civil, criminal, or canonical investigation. Consideration may also be given to the inclusion in any public statement, if one is to be made, of information regarding how to access any available pastoral support.
  - d) Financial support during the period of leave from sacred ministry and apostolate.
  - e) Selection of an Adviser<sup>3</sup> from those appointed to that role by the Bishop/Congregational Leader and canonical counsel, if this has not yet occurred.
  - f) Arrangements for finding alternative accommodation (where relevant: this includes members of Religious Congregations who reside on the same site as children). These should be agreed with the respondent together with a reasonable timeframe for vacating the current residence (if considered necessary). The Bishop/Congregational Leader should also ensure that reasonable costs incurred in obtaining suitable alternative accommodation are met.
- 10) If possible, the respondent should be supported to engage in other work/study, as long as it does not involve sacred ministry and apostolate or contact with children, during the period of leave from sacred ministry and apostolate.
- 11) If the respondent is engaged in ministry in Northern Ireland, there is a legal requirement to refer him/her to the Independent Safeguarding Authority if s/he has been invited to take administrative leave for causing harm and if it is judged that there is the risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 2 for role of Adviser

- 12) If the respondent is a priest, he must be required to submit his celebret to his Bishop/Congregational Leader prior to taking administrative leave.

### **3. Return to Sacred Ministry**

*See Appendix 1 below - Note on canonical procedures.*

In circumstances where an allegation is unsubstantiated within the civil forum, but, where there continue to be reasonable grounds for concern regarding a reserved delict<sup>4</sup> (notitia saltem verisimiliem de delicto reservato), the Bishop/General must refer the matter to the

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF). At this stage, it is for the CDF to determine what action if any is to be taken.

When an accusation is shown to be false (malicious/unfounded)<sup>5</sup>, the priest should be returned to ministry; every step possible will be taken to undo the damage to the reputation of the person falsely accused, not excluding communication with all relevant parties. Advice may be sought from the National Case Management Reference Group by the Bishop/Congregation Leader with regard to how this may be best approached.

### **4. Appeals**

Where restrictions to sacred ministry and apostolate have been decreed through a decree or precept, there is the possibility of an appeal in accordance with canon law.

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4 The more grave delicts against morals which are reserved to the CDF. See appendix 3

5 Words such as false, unfounded, unsubstantiated and malicious are often used in the same context when describing an allegation. The meanings are different. The term False can be broken down into two categories: Malicious: This implies a deliberate act to deceive; for an allegation to be malicious, it will be necessary to have evidence which proves this intention. Unfounded: this indicates that the complainant misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. For an allegation to be classified as unfounded, it will be necessary to have evidence to disprove the allegation. An unsubstantiated allegation is where there is insufficient identifiable evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term does not imply guilt or innocence.



## Appendix 1

### Note on canonical procedures

When an allegation or concern has been received, and a referral to An Garda Síochána/PSNI/HSC/HSE has been made, a preliminary investigation should be initiated when the Ordinary receives information which has at least the semblance of truth regarding an offence (canon 1717; canon 695).

The Church investigation will have to be suspended in order to allow the civil investigations to be completed.

If there is sufficient evidence that the allegation of a canonical delict is credible, in the case of clerics, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith<sup>6</sup> will be notified; in the case of clerics who are members of Religious Institutes, this referral should be done through the Generalate. In the case of Brothers and Sisters, the Generalate will be informed that an allegation of substance has been received; that the matter has been referred to the civil authorities and that an internal church investigation will be carried out.

No Church/canonical investigation shall be undertaken in such a manner as to interfere in any way with the civil authorities. At the conclusion of the statutory investigation<sup>7</sup>, or where no statutory investigation has taken place, the Preliminary Investigation, if already started in Canon Law, continues.

For the sake of canonical due process, the respondent should be encouraged to retain the assistance of canonical counsel.

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<sup>6</sup> Insert link for directions from CDF

<sup>7</sup> The statutory investigation concludes if the Police/DPP decide not to prosecute; or following a court case

## Appendix 2 - Roles

### Role of Adviser

The adviser's role is set out in Resource 1 of the Standards and Guidance document. As this can be a stressful time for the respondent, the Adviser, selected by the respondent from those appointed by the Bishop/Congregational Leader to fulfil this role, shall be available to the Respondent, represent his/her needs, assist with his/her care and with communication, (where appropriate) between the respondent, the Bishop/Congregational Leader, and/or Designated Officer. The Adviser should offer support, including advice on finding alternative accommodation, accessing counselling, if required, and responding to the pastoral needs of the respondent's family.

### Role of Designated Person

The role of the Designated Person is set out in Resource 15 of the Standards and Guidance. The Designated Person will be appointed by the Bishop/Congregational Leader as Case Manager. In relation to leave from sacred ministry and apostolate, the Designated Person has no formal role. His/her role is to forward the complaint to the civil authorities, and to assist the Bishop/Congregational Leader in assessing and managing risk. The designated person may be appointed by the Bishop/Congregational Leader to manage the church enquiry, once the civil authorities have completed their investigations.

## Appendix 3 - Grave Delicts

The more grave delicts against morals which are reserved to the CDF are:

- The delict against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue committed by a cleric with a minor below the age of eighteen years;
  - in this case, a person who habitually lacks the use of reason is to be considered equivalent to a minor.
- The acquisition, possession, or distribution by a cleric of pornographic images of minors under the age of fourteen, for purposes of sexual gratification, by whatever means or using whatever technology cf. *Normae de gravioribus delictis (Art 6) CDF May 2010*.
- If the sexual abuse of a minor occurs in the context of the sacrament of confession.

## Codes of Behaviour for Adults and Children

### Code of Behaviour for Adults

#### **All adults involved in church activities with children are expected to:**

- Treat all persons with respect and courtesy
- Be an example of good conduct which others will follow
- Act within church safeguarding policies and procedures
- Always work openly with children and in most situations to work in pairs
- Challenge and report potentially abusive behaviour and report safeguarding concerns to the Diocesan Designate Liaison Person or the statutory authorities
- Strive at all times to create an environment of welcome and warmth
- Be punctual with all necessary preparations for activities completed in advance
- Respect each child's boundaries and help them to develop a sense of their own rights as well as helping them to know what they can do if they feel that there is a problem
- Complete an Incident Report in the event of an accident occurring
- On pilgrimages and retreats to adhere to recommended guidelines in terms of parental consent, supervision ratios, insurance, contact details, health requirements and First Aid
- Use photographs and media images in accordance with Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures
- Put in place and inform children of the ground rules that apply to each activity

#### **All adults involved in church activities with children are required not to**

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- Develop sexual relationships with children
- Develop relationships with children which could be deemed exploitative or abusive
- Shout, display anger, react negatively or ridicule a child
- Show favouritism
- Discriminate against those of a different race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political view
- Leave children unattended
- Take children to their own home especially where they will be alone with you
- Undertake any journey alone with a child: in exceptional circumstances if only one adult is available, there should be a minimum of two children present
- Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- Condone or participate in behaviour with children which is illegal unsafe or abusive

### **Code of Behaviour for children taking part in Church related activities**

- Respect yourself
- Respect others
- Be mannerly
- Take care of your own safety
- Do not use cigarettes, alcohol or drugs
- Be kind
- Never bully, exclude or engage in name calling against others either directly or through texting or social media networks
- Avoid using foul or abusive language
- Do not hit, punch or kick others
- Respect the property of others
- Do not take things without asking
- Take care of equipment and buildings
- Be tidy and put litter in the bins
- If anyone is harming or trying to harm you in any way tell an adult immediately

### **I agree to abide by this Code of Behaviour**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Points to remember**

- Our parish expects that children will act respectfully towards themselves, their supervisors and fellow participants
- Participants must accept the ground rules of activities which supervisors will clearly explain to them.
- Children will not have access to the use of email or the internet when participating in our parish programmes.
- Breaches of discipline and disruptive behaviour, including bullying, will be dealt with in a manner that is fair and transparent by more than one member of church personnel; discipline issues will be handled in partnership with parents (or guardians) and recorded when appropriate.
- Children or their parents who are dissatisfied with any aspect of activities or services can follow a complaints procedure, namely to inform the leader of the programme or, when appropriate, to contact one of our Parish Safeguarding Representatives through the parish office.

### **Please note:**

- The parish only accepts liability or responsibility for an incident or accident caused by the negligence or breach of statutory duty of the parish, its staff and volunteers.
- It is the responsibility of the parents to be on time when dropping off or collecting children.
- All participants must keep to the code of behaviour for this activity, otherwise they may be asked not to continue their participation.
- Leaders are not allowed to give participants a lift to or from activities.
- Any concerns regarding the welfare and safety of children participating in parish activities should be brought immediately to the attention of the Parish Safeguarding Representative, the Designated Liaison Person or the statutory authorities.

### **Dealing with unacceptable behaviours**

Breaches of discipline and disruptive behaviour will be dealt with in a manner that is fair and transparent. Discipline issues will be dealt with in partnership with parents/carers. Only in exceptional circumstances will a child be suspended from an activity. These circumstances may arise when a child's behaviour poses a risk to himself/herself or others or when the behaviours seriously disrupt and undermine the activity.

### **Leaders dealing with unacceptable behaviour will**

- Stay calm
- Talk privately with the child
- Explain precisely what their unacceptable behaviour is
- Give reasons why good behaviour is important for the group to run effectively
- Give examples of when the child displayed good behaviours and give positive feedback and praise for the good behaviour
- Consider if the behaviour is attention seeking or a symptom of something else that is going on in the child's life
- Seek help and advice from a colleague, or leader if underlying causes for the behaviour are suspected

## **Role of Parish Safeguarding Representative**

1. To raise awareness of what safeguarding children is.
  - Up-date church notice boards
  - Put bulletins in parish newsletters
  - Alert parishes to training
  - Attend parish council meetings periodically
  - Report to the Designated Liaison Person any complaints/concerns received by the representative
  
2. To disseminate information about standards and guidance and circulate information widely to the public. Key information includes the following
  - Standards and Guidance Document
  - Relevant Diocesan Policy
  - Safeguarding Forms (Parental Consent etc.)
  - Training Information
  - Declaration Forms
  - Garda Vetting Forms
  
3. To ensure that church activities are delivered in a way that ensures the safety and wellbeing of the children involved. This will include:
  - Liaising with the leader of an activity
  - Ensuring appropriate levels of supervision are in place for all church activities
  - Ensuring insurance cover is in place
  - Ensuring adequate records are kept
  
4. To ensure that contact details of Designated Liaison Persons, local Gardaí, the Child and Family Agency, Counselling Services and Help-lines are widely publicised via:
  - Church Notice Boards
  - Parish/Diocesan Newsletters
  - Parish/Diocesan Websites
  - Local Media Publications
  
5. The Parish Safeguarding Representatives have responsibility to carry out checks to ensure that this documentation is in place and kept up to date.
  
6. To liaise with the Safeguarding Children Trainers in respect of any issues that come to their attention in the course of their work

## ***Guidance for the Intimate Care of Children with Disabilities***

The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois is committed to including children with disabilities in church activities. The following guidance should assist staff and volunteers to provide appropriate care and assistance to those with disabilities.

### **Definition of Intimate Care:**

Intimate care is defined as any action involving touch, or carrying out what could be described as invasive procedures. Apart from assisting someone to eat or drink the following list contains the major areas of intimate care:

- Dressing or undressing
- Assisting a child with a disability in their toileting
- Cleaning a child after they have soiled or wet themselves and who need assistance in undertaking these tasks
- Washing, bathing, showering or drying
- Invasive procedures involving colostomy bags or other medical procedures

### **Guidelines for intimate care:**

- Intimate care should be planned in consultation with parents/guardians and the child themselves
- The child's right to privacy must be respected
- The child must be actively engaged in the intimate care process and encouraged to be as independent as their capabilities allow
- The number of people involved in intimate care should be kept to a minimum to ensure consistency and sensitivity
- If you have any worries or concerns about intimate care share them with your line manager/leader or support person
- The dignity of the care receiver must be respected at all times

### **Staff/Leader issues**

- Only staff who have been vetted and trained should be assigned intimate care duties
- The child should be involved in deciding who should assist in intimate care where possible
- The carer should be of the same sex as the child
- Some specific training may be useful or necessary when working with children with conditions such as autism and epilepsy
- Risk assessments may be necessary to ensure the safety of some disabled children
- If more than one person is required to provide intimate care then the reasons why this is the case must be clearly documented
- All drug and other medical interventions must be under the direction and advice of a physician

### **Points to remember:**

- Involve parents/carers and the child in planning how the specific intimate care tasks will be carried out and by whom.
- Document key points outlining how the care is to be undertaken
- Be sensitive at all times to the child's reactions as they can provide good insights as to whether the child's wishes are being met or not
- Use only appropriate terminology when referring to private parts
- Where there are speech, language, hearing or cognitive difficulties advice from parents/guardians and or relevant professionals should be sought and implemented
- Any attempts by the child to carry out intimate tasks themselves should be actively encouraged and supported. Always avail of opportunities to support a child on its journey towards independence
- When involved in drugs administration or any other medical intervention be guided by the doctors directions and keep proper records

**The above is not an exhaustive guide but should assure that children in need of intimate care are treated with dignity, and respect and are kept safe and protected at all times. In addition, ensure that both the parents and the child are engaged in planning the arrangements for the care.**



## ***Guidance on the use of Information and Digital Technology and Photography in Church settings and activities involving Children***

### **Use of Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones and other modern technologies have revolutionised the manner and speed in which we communicate. An ever increasing number of phones can access internet and emails as well as messaging, cameras, video and sound recording. These capabilities are in the main very positive. However they are not **without risks**.

#### **Risks include using the mobile phone to:**

- Bully and intimidate others
- Access inappropriate web-sites
- Send inappropriate pictures or comments
- Use foul or abusive language when speaking on the phone
- Breach the confidentiality rights of others
- Record and share private conversations without the knowledge of those involved
- Increase the possibility of phones being stolen

While banning the use of mobile phones may seem like the best option, in reality this is very hard to police. Leaders however are advised to ask those involved in church activities to turn the phone off during the activity.

#### **For adults the following should apply:**

- Contacting children by phone, text or email should never be undertaken without parental knowledge and consent
- Leaders of activities should not contact children through chat rooms or social networking sites.
- Children should not be emailed individually. They can however be contacted as part of a disclosed list once permission has been given to disclose in group email. Individuals should be given the choice to have their contact details removed by including a statement such as “If you wish to be removed from this email list please contact the administrator”

### **Use of Computers**

- There is likely to be little need for children to have access to computers during church activities. However in the event that they are being used it should be done so in line with our parish policy on safeguarding children.
- The use of computers and internet facilities should be carefully monitored and managed by leaders at all times.
- They must be deemed appropriate for parish activities by adult leaders
- All computers used by children during church activities should have family friendly access to the internet controls in place.
- Computer use by children during parish activities should be supervised by a responsible adult at all times.
- Parental/carer permission should be obtained prior to the use of computers

Help and guidance about on-line safety is available from the following:

For **Adults** from the child exploitation and on-line protection centre (CEOP)

[www.ispai.ie](http://www.ispai.ie)

[www.copine.ie](http://www.copine.ie)

[www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)

For **Children** from child exploitation and on-line protection centre (CEOP)

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

### **Photography/Video Guidance**

The majority of photographs and videos taken of children do not pose a threat to them. However some risks exist and care must be taken when taking and using photographs or videos. Risks include:

- The collection and passing on of images may be misused
- The identification of individual children may be used to facilitate abuse
- The identification of children in vulnerable circumstances
- The use of photographs and videos in the social media to embarrass and bully children

The following considerations should be taken into account when addressing photograph and video concerns:

- The consent and permission of parents/carers should be sought before photographs are taken.
- When seeking overall consent for photographs/videos the church should give clear information on the reason, purpose and distribution of the photographs/videos
- Photographs/videos should be taken by an authorised person associated with the group activity.
- Individual photographs should not be posted on the internet or passed on to anyone not connected with the child
- The child's right to privacy must be respected at all times. Photographs/videos should not be taken of children getting dressed or toileting.
- Images of groups should be about the activity not the individual
- A photograph/video should not allow the identity of a child or their whereabouts. This is important in cases where children are vulnerable and their anonymity is vital for their protection from abuse or harm.
- In many instances photographs and videos are used to publicise activities in a positive and constructive manner. However care must be taken that the identities of vulnerable children are protected. Children in care or victims of domestic violence should not be photographed or recorded on video without the consent of carers.

## ***Guidance on Activity Planning and Supervision Ratios***

### **Activity Planning**

Good preparation is essential for the effective and safe running of all church activities. The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois encourages all its leaders to plan activities in a way that promotes good practice and reduces risk. The following should be taken on board when planning activities.

- Staff and volunteers are appointed in line with proper recruitment procedures
- Parents/Carers complete an application/consent form which includes any special needs of a child, contact details and emergency contact numbers
- Leaders are made aware of any special needs a child may have
- There is a clearly identified leader for all activities
- Diocesan incident and accident forms are kept on the premises where activities are being carried out and are always completed when an accident or incident occurs. The completed forms are to be stored securely
- Attendance records are kept
- All personal data on children is confidential and stored securely.
- Leaders are encouraged to check for potential hazards, cables, furniture, equipment or any other object which poses a potential risk.
- Adequate insurance cover is in place to cover the particular activity and all other occasional activities that may pose a greater risk.
- Supervision ratios as recommended by the National Board for the Safeguarding of Children in the Catholic Church will be complied with. (See page 143)

## **Supervision Ratios**

*Good supervision ratios protect everyone*

**Having good supervision arrangements in place is central to the safe care and protection of children. It also creates a safer environment for church personnel to work within. The diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois therefore recommends the following supervision ratios in line with NBSCCC recommendations:**

### **Children under 8 years:**

- 0 to 2 years: 1 adult supervisor for every 3 children
- 2 to 3 years: 1 adult supervisor for every 4 children
- 3 to 7 years: 1 adult supervisor for every 8 children
- for outdoor activities the ratio should be 1 adult to every 6 children
- for pilgrimages and residential activities the ratio should be 1 adult supervisor to every 4 children

### **Children 8 years and over**

- 2 adult supervisors for every 20 children (15 for outdoor activities)
- 1 additional adult supervisor for every extra 10 children
- For residential and pilgrimages this ratio is to be decreased to 1 adult for every 5 children

When deciding on adult child ratios consideration must also be given to ensuring a gender balance especially when working with mixed groups.

## *List of Legislation*

### **Child Care Act 1991**

The purpose of the Child Care Act 1991 is to ‘update the law in relation to the care of children who have been assaulted, ill-treated, neglected or sexually abused, or who are at risk’. The main provisions of the Act are:

- (i) The placing of a statutory duty on the HSE to promote the welfare of children who are not receiving adequate care and protection up to the age of 18
- (ii) The strengthening of the powers of the HSE to provide child care and family support services
- (iii) The improvement of the procedures to facilitate immediate intervention by the HSE and An Garda Síochána where children are in danger
- (iv) The revision of provisions to enable the Courts to place children who have been assaulted, ill-treated, neglected or sexually abused, or who are at risk, in the care of or under the supervision of the HSE
- (v) The introduction of arrangements for the supervision and inspection of pre-school services
- (vi) The revision of provisions in relation to the registration and inspection of residential centres for children

### **Children Act 2001**

The Children Act 2001 replaced provisions of the Children Act 1908 and associated legislation with a modern comprehensive statute. The 2001 Act covers three main areas of the law. Firstly, and predominantly, it provides a framework for the development of the juvenile justice system. Secondly, it re-enacts and updates provisions in the 1908 Act protecting children against persons who have the custody, charge or care of them. Thirdly, it provides for family welfare conferences and other new provisions for dealing with children where there is a real and substantial risk to their lives, health, safety, welfare and development.

### **Criminal Justice Act 2006**

Section 176 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006 introduced the criminal charge of ‘reckless endangerment of children’. It states:

‘A person, having authority or control over a child or abuser, who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by-

- (a) Causing or permitting any child to be placed or left in a situation which creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse, or
- (b) Failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk while knowing that child is in such a situation, is guilty of an offence’

The penalty for a person found guilty of this offence is a fine (no upper limit) and/or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years.

### **Domestic Violence Act 1996**

The Domestic Violence Act 1996 introduced major changes in the legal remedies for domestic violence. There are two main types of remedies available

- (i) **Safety Order:** This order prohibits a person from further violence or threats of violence. It does not oblige the person to leave the family home. If the parties live apart, the Order prohibits the violent person from watching or being in the vicinity of the home.
- (ii) **Barring Order** This Order requires the violent person to leave the family home.

The legislation gives the HSE the power to intervene to protect individuals and their children from violence. Section 6 of the Act empowers the HSE to apply for Orders for which a person could apply on his or her own behalf but is deterred from doing so through fear or trauma. The consent of the victim is not a prerequisite for such an application, although he or she must be consulted. Under Section 7 of the Act, the Court may, where it considers it appropriate, adjourn proceedings and direct the HSE to undertake an investigation of the dependent person's circumstances with view to:

- (i) Applying for a Care Order or a Supervision Order under the child Care Act 1991;
- (ii) Providing services or assistance for the dependent person's family or
- (iii) Taking any other action in respect of the dependent person.

### **Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998**

This act came into operation on 23rd January 1999. The main provisions of the Act are:

- (i) the provision of immunity from civil liability to any person who reports child abuse 'reasonably and in good faith' to designated officers of the HSE or to any member of An Garda Síochána;
- (ii) The provision of significant protections for employees who report child abuse. These protections cover all employees and all forms of discrimination up to, and including dismissal;
- (iii) the creation of a new offence of false reporting of child abuse, where a person makes a report of child abuse to the appropriate authorities 'knowing that statement to be false'. This is a new criminal offence, designed to protect innocent persons from malicious reports.

A wide range of nursing, medical, paramedical and other staff has been appointed as designated officers for the purpose of this Act (see Appendix 10 of the Children First; National Guidance). Section 6 of the Act is a saving provision, which specifies that the statutory immunity provided under the Act for persons reporting child abuse is additional to any defences already available under any other enactment or rule of law in force immediately before the passing of the Act.

### **Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003**

The Data Protection Act 1988 applies to the processing of personal data. It gives a right to every individual, irrespective of nationality or residence, to establish the existence of personal data, to have access to any such data relating to him, or her, and to have inaccurate data rectified or erased. It requires data controllers to make sure that the data they keep are collected fairly, are accurate and up to date, are kept for lawful purposes and are not used or disclosed in any manner incompatible with those purposes. It also requires both data controllers and data processors to protect the data they keep, and imposes on them a special duty of care in relation to the individuals about whom they keep such data.

### **Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003**

The Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 enable members of the public to obtain access, to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy, to information in the possession of public bodies. The specific provisions of the Act include:

- (i) To provide for a right of access to records held by such public bodies, for necessary exceptions to that right and for assistance to persons to enable them to exercise it
- (ii) To enable persons to have corrected any personal information relating to them in the possession of such bodies
- (iii) To provide for independent review by an Information Commissioner both of decisions of such bodies relating to that right and of the operation of the Acts generally
- (iv) To provide for the publication by public bodies of manuals outlining their functions, powers, services and guidelines used in implementing their programmes.

Under the Acts, a person about whom a public body holds personal information has:

- (i) Right of access to this information, subject to certain conditions:
- (ii) The right to correct this information if it is inaccurate.

Where a public body makes a decision that affects an individual, that individual has a right to relevant reasons and findings on the part of the body reaching that decision.

The Acts are also designed to protect the privacy of the individuals and, in general, require the prior consent of an individual before releasing personal information about them. Where the release of social work or medical records contains information that would be harmful to a person's well-being, the release may be made to a health professional who acts on the person's behalf. Under the Acts, there are regulations and guidelines relating to access by parents to their children's records; these emphasise that the overriding concern is the best interests of the child.

The exemptions and exclusions that are relevant to child protection include the following:

- (ii) Protecting records covered by legal professional privilege
- (ii) Protecting records that would facilitate the commission of a crime
- (ii) Protecting records that would reveal a confidential source of information

(From Children First- National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011)



## ***Role and Function of Recruitment Committee***

- To compile a list of Church personnel working or volunteering in a designated parish or parishes
- To compile a list of Church personnel who require Garda Vetting
- To ensure that all necessary forms pertaining to recruitment are completed and stored safely
- To ensure that all requirements regarding Garda Vetting are complied with
- To implement the recruitment procedure in relation to employment and to ensure employment is compliant with employment legislation
- To ensure that the functions are reviewed and updated as appropriate

## ***Parish Safeguarding Checklist***

Do you have a master copy of The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois ‘Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures’?

Is there a Parish Safeguarding Representative in place and is their role clearly defined and understood?

Is the name and contact details of Designated Person publicised?

Is the Child Safeguarding Policy Statement displayed?

Have you information on what to do if there are allegations/concerns about child abuse?

Are there posters in all church buildings with details of who to contact when Child Safeguarding concerns arise?

Do you have a code of behaviour for adults and children?

Are Parental Consent Forms completed?

Are there volunteer and staff recruitment policies and procedures in place?

Do you keep an attendance record of young people participating in church activities?

Do you provide good practice guidance in relation to activity planning and supervision ratios?

Is there an anti-bullying policy in place?

Do you have a complaints procedure?

Have all staff/volunteers in regular contact with children signed Safeguarding Policy agreement?

Do you keep a record of accidents/incidents?

Is all personal information kept in a safe place?

Do all staff/volunteers have access to appropriate Safeguarding training?

Is your parish newsletter used occasionally to raise awareness of child safeguarding e.g. website details for Safeguarding Policy, names and contact details of Safeguarding Reps. and Designated Persons etc.?

Is the wellbeing of children promoted through Parish Liturgies and Activities?