

Diocese of Kilmore

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Safeguarding Newsletter June 2017

Message from Bishop Leo O'Reilly



Since June 2016 our diocesan policy and procedures for safeguarding children have been updated in accordance with the NBSCCC's new standards and guidance for safeguarding children 2016. Training events has taken place to inform and update parish and diocesan personnel of these changes. The NBSCCC has informed the diocese that they will not conduct diocesan reviews of practice in safeguarding children during 2017 to allow the new

standards and guidance to be fully embedded and implemented. They will begin their reviews again in 2018.

At present the diocesan policy for safeguarding adults, previously known as safeguarding vulnerable adults, is being updated in accordance with new legislation. It is hoped that the updated policy will be available in the coming months and information sessions will be run to inform personnel of these changes. Within this policy the term "safeguarding" is used in its widest sense to encompass both activity which prevents harm from occurring in the first place and activity which protects adults at risk where harm has occurred or is likely to occur without intervention. The language of adult safeguarding previously focused on protection and used the term "vulnerable adult". This was widely misinterpreted and often used out of context. For some the term implied weakness on the part of the adult, which many found unacceptable. The policy now moves away from the concept

of "vulnerability" and towards establishing the concept of 'risk of harm' in adulthood.

The annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) will take place on Thursday 15th June this year. Abuse can be financial, physical, sexual, or psychological (emotional), or can be caused by neglect. It affects about 500,000 people each year, causing enormous pain and suffering. WEAAD was created to educate people on how to prevent abuse and access help if being abused.

It is extremely important that parish and diocesan personnel are fully aware of the diocesan policy and procedures for safeguarding children and adults. Therefore, it is also extremely important that new personnel attend a full days training and existing personnel attend updating information sessions when required.

Once again, I want to pay tribute to the 200 plus volunteers working in the area of safeguarding in the diocese. This includes clergy, parish safeguarding representatives, parish recruitment committees, chairs of parish pastoral councils, pastoral assistants, candidates for the permanent diaconate, diocesan advisers, Lourdes pilgrimage leaders, support persons, trainers, diocesan committee for safeguarding, advisory panel for case management, designated liaison persons and the coordinator of safeguarding. Without everyone's work and commitment none of our safeguarding policies and procedures would be implemented. Thank you all so much.

Leo O'Reilly,
Bishop of Kilmore.



POLICY STATEMENT FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

As a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland we recognise and uphold the dignity and rights of all children and are committed to ensuring their safety and well-being, and will work in partnership with parents/guardians to do this. We recognise each child as a gift from God, and we value and encourage the participation of children in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

All Church personnel (including clergy, religious, staff, volunteers) have a responsibility to safeguard children through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment which supports their best interests and prevents abuse.



Training of Diocesan and Parish Personnel

Training took place between September 2016 and March 2017 to inform personnel about the new seven safeguarding standards. There have been four full days training at which seventy five personnel attended and nine update sessions at which one hundred and thirty

personnel attended. Each person who attended received a safeguarding pack which contained all the policies, procedures and forms that they require. Personnel are asked to check the diocesan website regularly for ongoing updates and changes.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY AND STANDARDS 2016

The Diocese of Kilmore has adopted the new Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards 2016 developed by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI). They apply to priests and all personnel involved in any form of ministry with children in the parish and the diocese.

The revised policy has seven standards as the diagram opposite shows.



NBSCCC Second National Conference 2016

The NBSCCC held its second National Conference in the Tullamore Court Hotel on 13th & 14th October 2016. Attended by child safeguarding delegates from dioceses and religious orders, the conference focused on some of the most complex areas of child safeguarding and was addressed by an individual who had experienced child abuse. The conference also addressed the needs of those against whom allegations have been made. Sessions looked at the challenges posed by the need to protect children while also upholding the principle that the accused is innocent unless proven guilty.

The conference also had an update on the work of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors from Teresa Kettlekamp. There was a presentation on 'communicating the Church's safeguarding message' from Ms Breda O'Brien, and a session on 'participating with young people to communicate the Church's safeguarding message' presented by young people nominated by the Sisters of Mercy Northern Province.

All presentations can be read in full on:
www.safeguarding.ie



SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN

Annual Parish Safeguarding Audit

Each Autumn the diocesan safeguarding committee asks each parish to undertake a safeguarding audit. This involves the parish priest and the parish safeguarding representative reviewing the safeguarding arrangements in the parish and jointly certifying that all the necessary arrangements are in place. All 34 parish audits are collated into a diocesan report and the diocesan safeguarding committee make

recommendations which are sent to Bishop Leo O'Reilly. He in turn reports to the NBSCCC at the end of each calendar year stating that each parish has completed its safeguarding audit and that he will implement the recommendations made to him by the safeguarding committee. To facilitate this time frame in the future the parish audit will take place during the month of September throughout the diocese.

Parish Safeguarding Representatives

In each parish one or two safeguarding representatives work alongside the parish priest, leaders and volunteers to raise awareness of safeguarding best practice, offering help and practical support where necessary. Voluntary safeguarding representatives have participated in a training programme developed specifically for the role by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church and delivered by diocesan trainers. Safeguarding representatives agree to hold the role for four years.

Their role is not to hear concerns, allegations or disclosures of abuse but rather to ensure that people have access to the contact details for Tusla, the Gardaí and the designated liaison persons, Suzie Duffy and Fr Sean Mawn. These contact details are displayed on a safeguarding poster at the main entrance of every church in the diocese.

Parish Safeguarding Representatives are responsible for promoting safeguarding by:

- 1 Raising awareness of safeguarding by holding an information session at least once a year to which anyone from the parish can attend but must be attended by leaders and volunteers of children's activities.
- 2 Disseminating information on safeguarding standards and circulating that information widely.
- 3 Ensuring Church activities are provided in a way that ensures the safety and well being of the children involved.
- 4 Ensuring that the contact details of the designated liaison persons, the Gardaí and Tusla are widely publicised.

Parish Leaders and Volunteers

A parish leader is the person who is in charge of running a children's activity and the people who help him or her run the activity are known as parish volunteers. All leaders and volunteers require Garda vetting and cannot begin to work with children until Garda clearance is obtained.

Prayer for those abused by members of the Church



Following the request of Pope Francis to the Irish bishops to hold a day of prayer for people who have been abused by members of the Church, the Diocese of Kilmore organized a prayer service dedicated to those who have been abused and their families. The service was held on Good Friday 14th April 2017 in the Cathedral of St Patrick and St Felim, Cavan. It took the form of 'Prayer Around the Cross'. The prayer was for those abused by members of the Church but all were welcome to attend to show support and solidarity. This was a diocesan event and each parish had a number of representatives in attendance. Each parish received a candle, a poster and prayer cards to be placed in a suitable prayer space in the parish Church. It is hoped that during the rest of the year, maybe the first Friday of each month, a special prayer and reference to the prayer space could be made during the liturgy for those who have been abused.

Guidelines on taking Photographs

- a) First Communion and Confirmation are first and foremost religious occasions and people should not do anything to undermine the sacredness of the occasion. For this reason, the most appropriate times for taking photographs will usually be before and after, but not during, the service. This is to ensure that all present, the children and the wider faith community, can participate fully and without distraction.
- b) People should not take photographs of other people's children without the consent of the children's parents.

Examples of good practice are where:

- a) parents of children who have made their Communion and Confirmation the previous day bring them back for Mass the following day and take the opportunity, when there are fewer people around, to take photographs then.
- b) groups of parents get together and organise for a professional photographer to be available on the day to take photographs on their behalf.

The full diocesan guidance for taking photographs is in the safeguarding section on www.kilmorediocese.ie

Feedback

The Diocese of Kilmore value feedback from members of the clergy, leaders, volunteers, parents, young people and children on the diocesan safeguarding policy and procedures. Each parish holds an annual safeguarding information session at which feedback on our safeguarding practices is sought from those who attend. Please give your feedback, thoughts and suggestions during these information sessions. The parish

safeguarding representatives will forward them to the diocesan safeguarding office. You can also give your feedback directly to the diocesan safeguarding office by contacting Suzie Duffy, Safeguarding Office, Kilmore Diocesan Pastoral Centre, Cullies, Cavan, Co. Cavan.

safeguarding@kilmorediocese.ie

049 4375004 ext 5

Annual Safeguarding Sunday

Our second annual Safeguarding Sunday will be held throughout the diocese on the weekend of the 3rd & 4th of June 2017. The purpose of Safeguarding Sunday is to create a greater awareness of safeguarding in our parishes and also to recognise the significant contribution of the faithful in ensuring

that our diocesan safeguarding children policy and our diocesan adult safeguarding policy are being adhered to. Each of us has a duty of care and responsibility to do all we can to ensure that children, adults at risk and adults in need of protection are protected and kept safe.

Garda Vetting Update

Garda Vetting in the Kilmore Diocese has now gone eVetting and the process is as follows:

- a) A decision is made to employ a staff member or a volunteer. The authorised liaison signatory (Fr Donal Kilduff) sends him / her (the applicant) a vetting invitation form.
- b) The applicant manually completes the vetting invitation form and sends it to the authorised liaison signatory along with proof of identity. The applicant's identity is checked by their employer (the parish priest).
- c) The applicant is sent an invitation to complete a vetting application form on line.
- d) The applicant completes the vetting application form and submits it to the authorised liaison signatory.
- e) The authorised liaison signatory reviews the vetting application form and submits it to the national vetting bureau.
- f) The national vetting bureau processes the vetting application form and sends a vetting disclosure to the authorised liaison signatory.
- g) The authorised liaison signatory reviews the vetting disclosure and as soon as practicable provides a copy of the disclosure to the applicant.
- h) The applicant informs their employer of the outcome and provides them with a copy of the vetting disclosure.

Diocesan Safeguarding Children Contacts

Diocesan Safeguarding Children Contacts Designated Liaison Persons:

Suzie Duffy,
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Tel. 049 4375004, ext 105
Email: safeguarding@kilmorediocese.ie
Website: www.kilmorediocese.ie

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For all other national and diocesan contacts visit www.kilmorediocese.ie

