

**Safeguarding Children
Cork and Ross Diocese**

Safeguarding Strategy and Plan

**January 1st 2020
to
December 31st 2022**

Introduction.

The Diocese of Cork and Ross recognises that to keep children safe, policies, procedures and plans have to be implemented and their effectiveness monitored and evaluated. In order to do this the Diocese has outlined the following strategy. This strategy is in place and operational.

1.0 Establishment of Safeguarding Structures.

The Diocese of Cork and Ross under the Bishop has established the following structures in order to ensure its safeguarding policies, procedures and plans are fully implemented and monitored.

Safe-Environment Safeguarding Structure in the Diocese of Cork and Ross

- **Bishop** – Overall responsibility for Safeguarding Children in the Diocese.
- **Director of Safeguarding**– To Support the Bishop in the development, implementation and monitoring of best practice in Safeguarding Children throughout the parishes and agencies of the Diocese of Cork and Ross. (See expand role in appendix of this document)
- **Parish Priest** – Overall responsibility at parish level for Safeguarding Children.
- **Local Safeguarding Representative (LSR)** – Every Parish in the Diocese will appoint at least one lay person as Local Safeguarding Representative in order to promote safeguarding in conjunction with the Parish Priest by:
 - Raising Awareness of Diocesan Safeguarding Policies & Procedures.
 - Ensure contact details for Designated Persons are widely available.
 - Ensure church activities are in line with best practice.
- **Safeguarding Committee** – To support and advise the Bishop and Director of Safeguarding for the diocese on:
 - The provision of training.
 - The safe recruitment of volunteers and staff within their service area.
 - Creating, maintaining and monitoring a safe environment for children in all aspects of Church life and activity.
 - Advising on the human resources required for implementing best practice.
- **Safeguarding Trainers** – The diocese has three NBSCCCI Accredited Trainers who are responsible for the provision of all aspects of Safeguarding Children training to Clergy, Staff, Volunteers, Parents and Children/Young People throughout the Diocese. They liaise closely with the NBSCCCI to ensure training standards are aligned to Church standards and attend any updating training by the NBSCCCI

Case Management Structure in the Diocese of Cork and Ross.

- **Bishop** – Overall responsibility for Safeguarding Children in the Diocese.
- **Designated Liaison Persons (DLP)** – The Diocese has appointed two Designated Liaison Persons. (See Appendix for role description).
- **Statutory Authorities** – The Diocese has established collaborative and professional links with key child protection personnel in the Tusla and liaises closely with An Garda Síochána.
- **Support Person(s)** – The Diocese has appointed a Support Person who is available to those who make an allegation/disclosure of abuse. (See Appendix for expanded role).
- **Adviser** – The Diocese has appointed Advisers who will be available to the respondent. (See Appendix for expanded role)

2.0 Development and Review of Diocesan Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures Document.

The Diocese as a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland follows the Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2016). This Document is widely disseminated and made available to all Clergy, Staff, Volunteers, Diocesan Agencies, Committees, Parents & Children/Young People.

The Diocesan Policy and Procedures are operational and are made known to the whole church community including children/young people. All people, clergy, Staff & Volunteers, who through their ministry in the Catholic Church within the Diocese of Cork and Ross have direct contact with children/young people, are obliged to sign-up to this policy document and all that it contains.

3.0 Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation of Safeguarding Children Policies & Procedures.

The Diocese through its structures as outlined above will continually endeavour to implement, monitor & evaluate its Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures. This will be achieved in the following ways:

- **Parish Self Audits**– The Diocese through its Safeguarding Committee, led by the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding will conduct regular audits of all parishes in the Diocese to ensure all pertinent aspects of Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures are being implemented and monitored. The audit will include the completion of a written review questionnaire encompassing all aspects of Safeguarding Children Policies & Procedures. This will be completed by the Parish Priest & Local Safeguarding Representative and returned to the Director of Safeguarding in the Diocese.
- The Safeguarding office will facilitate Implementation and Monitoring Workshops for Priests and Local Safeguarding representatives.

- A yearly training plan will be in place to ensure that training is provided to all staff and volunteers who have ministry with children to ensure they are familiar and competent in all matters concerning Safeguarding.

- A 3 year communication plan is in place to ensure that the safeguarding message is communicated as clearly and as widely as possible. Communication methods will include:
 - Dissemination of Safeguarding Policy & Procedures Document in various formats to Clergy, Staff, Volunteers, Diocesan Agencies, Parent & Children/Young People.
 - Raising Awareness conferences for Parishes/Deaneries. ➤ Posters.
 - Website.
 - Brochures/Flyers
 - Newsletters.
 - Parish Newsletters/Bulletins.
 - Letters/Emails to Key Safeguarding Personnel.
 - Meetings/Briefing with Key Safeguarding Personnel.
 - Liaising with the Statutory Authorities and the NBSCCCI.

The Diocese recognises that all strategies and plans must be dynamic and so it will review its strategy and plan on an on-going basis.

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Standard	Specific Objective	Action	Responsibility	Implementation Date	Date of Review
1. Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments	Ensure that all new groups using Church Facilities have insurance and a Safeguarding Policy in place	LSR to complete checks on all new and existing groups using Church Property (identified through the local Safeguarding Audits	Local Safeguarding Representatives (LSR)	May 2020	Dec. 2020
	Ensure the Church personnel have been vetted in accordance with guidance on vetting	Those requiring vetting are identified through local Safeguarding Audits	LSR	May 2020	Dec. 2020
		Copies of vetting forms provided to identified personnel	LSR	May 2020	Ongoing
		Completed forms sent to vetting coordinator	Authorised signatory	May 2020	Ongoing
5. Support and Training	Ensure that all Church personnel receive appropriate training in safeguarding	Develop annual Training Plan Deliver annual Training Plan	Safeguarding Committee Safeguarding Committee	2020	Dec 2020 (Due to Covid 19 all 2020 training was suspended)

Standard	Specific Objective	Action	Responsibility	Implementation Date	Date of Review
6 Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message	Ensure that the Church's Safeguarding Message is communicated to identified audiences	Develop annual Communications Plan. Deliver annual Communications Plan Develop Anti-Bullying Policy Develop Confidentiality Policy	Safeguarding Committee Safeguarding Committee Safeguarding Committee Safeguarding Committee	January 2021	December 2020

What resources are needed to carry out the Safeguarding Plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued financial Support from the Diocese • All key personnel appointed • Training and support from the NBSCCCI
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Signed _____

Review date _____

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Appendix: Roles and Responsibilities

A summary of the roles and responsibilities within the Diocesan Safeguarding Structure are listed below.

Bishop of the Diocese.

- Ensuring that the appropriate child safeguarding structures and personnel are in place.
- Liaising with the Holy See, as appropriate. If the Church body is a religious order or congregation, this is done through the superior general.
- Ensuring compliance with canon and civil law.
- Upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

Diocesan Safeguarding Committee.

- Developing a three-year child safeguarding plan, including the establishment of the local child safeguarding policy and procedures
- Coordinating local safeguarding representatives (LSRs).
- Coordinating activities related to child safeguarding, e.g. training.
- Ensuring the annual audit, including the correlation of records for training-related activities.
- Ensuring the completion of training needs assessments across the various child safeguarding roles in the Church body.
- Ensuring, with the Church authority, that the appropriate child safeguarding personnel are in place.
- Upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

Director of Safeguarding.

- Directing and implementing the child safeguarding policy.
- Liaising with and supporting parishes and communities to ensure implementation of local policies and procedures.
- Liaising with the child safeguarding committee and the advisory panel.
- Ensuring that all child safeguarding personnel are kept up to date with practice, as communicated from the NBSCCCI.
- Reporting directly to the Church authority on all child safeguarding issues.

Designated Liaison Persons.

- Hearing child safeguarding concerns.
- Passing on child safeguarding concerns to the statutory authorities.
- Managing cases and all associated documents.
- Liaising with the support person, advisor and the Church authority.
- Passing on child safeguarding concerns to the NBSCCCI.
- Conducting internal inquiries.
- Contributing to upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.
- Completing an annual report regarding compliance with Standards 2, 3 and 4 for the Church Authority.
- Monitoring respondents or, with the Church authority, appointing a suitable person to carry out this role.

Support Person

- Keeping the complainant informed of the process of the case.
 - Helping direct the complainant to counselling and support.
 - Recording any meetings or contact they have with the complainant and reporting to the DLP as appropriate.
 - Upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.
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- Keeping the respondent informed of the process of the case.
 - Helping direct the respondent to counselling and support.
 - Recording any meetings or contact they have with the respondent and reporting to the DLP as appropriate.
 - Upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

Safeguarding Trainers

- Working with the safeguarding committee to identify training needs.
- Delivering full-day and information-session safeguarding training to those identified by the safeguarding committee in the Church body.
- Keeping records of all of those who have been trained.
- Contributing to upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

Local Safeguarding Representative (LSR)

- Raising awareness of what child safeguarding is.
- Disseminating information regarding the standards and guidance and circulating this information widely.
- Ensuring Church activities are provided in a way that ensures the safety and well-being of the children involved.
- Ensuring that the contact details of the DLP, Gardaí/PSNI and Tulsa/HSCT are widely publicised.
- Upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI)

- Assisting with the development of policy, procedures and practices across the Catholic Church in Ireland.
- Offering advice on best practice, including training, case management and implementation of national standards and guidance.
- Monitoring the practice of child safeguarding across the Catholic Church in Ireland.

National Case Management Committee (NCMC)

The National Case Management Committee (NCMC) is part of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church Ireland. Its role is to offer advice and support to the Diocese on all aspects of the investigative process into alleged abuse.

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- The NCMC exists as a function of NBSCCCI and is chaired and administered by its staff.
- The NCMC functions as an all-island group, offering advice to Church authorities on all aspects of the investigative process into alleged abuse (including the areas listed under the role of the advisory panel).
- Membership is agreed through the signing of a data processing deed, which allows the sharing of full information with the NCMC and is fully compliant with data protection legislation in both jurisdictions.

To find out more about the current composition of the group, please log on to:
<http://www.safeguarding.ie>.

Safeguarding Committee Members 2020

Fiona Meehan-Chairperson

Anne O'Donovan-Secretary

Sr. Kate O'Connor-Trainer

Mary Ryder-Trainer

Colin Daly

David Lane

Cleo Yates – Director of Safeguarding and DLP

Fr. Alan O'Leary-Deputy DLP

Fr. Michael Keohane-Diocesan Chancellor