

Safeguarding Children Newsletter

Diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh & Kilfenora

Summer edition, 2015

Address from Bishop Martin Drennan

One of the lessons we have learned over the last twenty years is that the need for child safeguarding will always be with us. Even with all our safeguarding policies in place there are still two or three new allegations being reported each year.

It's a sobering thought and a reminder, if we did need one, that we cannot ever become complacent in the area of child safeguarding. The work you as parish reps do is invaluable and I want to thank and commend you for your continuing commitment to this work that is so vital for the credibility of the Church. The key to keeping our children safe in the Church is constant vigilance and a thorough knowledge of safeguarding best practice.

To sharpen our skills in this area I invite you to attend our annual conference which will be held this year on Saturday, November 7th. We hope that some of the team from the National Office will attend and bring us up to date on the new Safeguarding Standards.

Bishop Martin Drennan

Message from Pope Francis

The Holy Father wrote to Episcopal Conferences throughout the world, urging them to ensure the safety of children in Church activities:

• • •

“Families need to know that the Church is making every effort to protect their children. They should also know that they have every right to turn to the Church with full confidence, for it is safe and secure. Priority must not be given to any other kind of concern, whatever its nature, such as the desire to avoid scandal, since there is absolutely no place in ministry for those who abuse minors.”



TUSLA Child & Family Agency

•••

The Child and Family Agency was established on the 1st January 2014 and is now the dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children. It represents the most comprehensive reform of child protection, early intervention and family support services ever undertaken in Ireland. It is an ambitious move which brings together some 4,000 staff and an operational budget of over €600m.



Useful Websites

www.galwaydiocese.ie

www.safeguarding.ie

www.info@tusla.ie

www.towardshealing.ie

REVISION OF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN STANDARDS & GUIDANCE FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND

The NBSCCCI are currently revising “Safeguarding Children – Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church in Ireland”. To assist them in this work the Board has appointed a Project Manager – Grace Kelly who took up her position on the 1st of June 2014. Eight working groups were established and have convened and as a consequence the following documents have been produced in draft form:

- ⊗ Overarching Child Safeguarding Policy for the Catholic Church in Ireland
- ⊗ Standard 1- Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments
- ⊗ Standard 2- Responding and Reporting Allegations of Abuse
- ⊗ Standard 3- Care of the Complainant
- ⊗ Standard 4- Care and Management of the Respondent
- ⊗ Standard 5- Training
- ⊗ Standard 6- Communicating the Church’s Safeguarding Message
- ⊗ Standard 7- Implementation and Monitoring

All of these documents are available for review by contacting grace.kelly@safeguarding.ie

A series of consultation meetings are taking place with TUSLA; Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland; An Garda Síochána; PSNI; Survivors of abuse; One in Four; Towards Healing; Accused priests and religious; parents and children. Final draft editing and printing is planned for January 2016.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

The NBSCCCI held its first Conference in Athlone on 27-28 February 2015. Archbishop Eamon Martin presided at the opening Eucharist. John Morgan, Chairperson of NBSCCI welcomed participants and outlined the role of the National Board as to oversee the provision of advice and the facilitation of practice and policy development, and to monitor current practice. Teresa Devlin, CEO, presented the new format of standards, incorporating the care and support of complainants, and the management and support of respondents. After a period of consultation and editing, it is expected that the new standards will be adopted by January 2016.

Mons Steve Rosetti (author, educator, licensed psychologist, retreat master and expert on psychological and spiritual wellness) gave the keynote speech, drawing on his learnings in this ministry over the past twenty years. Niall Moore and two students challenged us to be more inclusive in engaging young people in creating safe environments. They focused on using simple language and remembering the fun element of children's activities. Marie Collins and Fr. Bob Oliver represented the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors explained the commitment of Pope Francis to safeguarding through the establishment and working of this commission. The members represent and reflect diversity of expertise and experience worldwide.

In the afternoon, participants were invited to select one of the following workshops: 'Working with Survivors' Dr. Melissa Darmody, Towards Healing; Understanding and Dealing with those who Molest Minors' Mons. Steve Rosetti; Young People and Safeguarding' Niall Moore and Sr. Colette Stevenson; and 'Safeguarding Reviews' Dr. Anne Marie Nolan.

All presentations can be read in full at www.safeguarding.ie

GARDA VETTING GOING ON-LINE



The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 has been passed. The purpose of the Act is to provide a legislative basis for vetting. The Act will make vetting mandatory for all persons working in a "relevant work or activity" relating to children or vulnerable persons. Under the new legislation the diocese/parish cannot employ or permit any person to undertake relevant work or activities with children or vulnerable adults until they have been vetted. An Garda Síochána have developed a new on-line vetting application process to cut down on delays. The new system will allow for applications to be submitted electronically through a secure web service. The service is due to go live in the next few months

Launch of "Towards Peace" by the Irish Episcopal Conference

Feedback from survivors has highlighted the profoundly negative impact that abuse has had on their faith and on their relationship with God. Towards Peace is a whole Church response to this concern. It is one of three services that form a pastoral response to abuse by the Church in Ireland. The other two services are: Towards Healing, the free and confidential counselling referral service and The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

Towards Peace offers spiritual support for survivors of abuse by Church personnel. The service is for those whose faith has been damaged by abuse and who wish to continue their search for meaning and for God. There is no pre-determined road map. Each person travels her/his own spiritual journey at a different pace. All additional information on Towards Peace is available at <http://towardspeace.ie>



SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

On November 7th 2014, 19 people from across the diocese attended the NBSCCI Accredited Safeguarding Training in the Pastoral Centre facilitated by our trainers, Sr. Aileen Murphy and Fr. Michael Brennan. Our next training will be held on **November 21st 2015 in the Pastoral Centre**. Please contact Ita at 091-575051 or galwaydiocesecpo@eircom.net to reserve a place.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE CONFERENCE

We are pleased to announce our 6th annual conference will be held on **November 7th 2015 in the Menlo Park Hotel**. A team from the National Office for Safeguarding Children will present on the New Standards. All priests and local safeguarding reps are invited to attend. Registration begins at 9.30am. Lunch will be provided at 1.30pm. Any queries and questions regarding our Safeguarding Children Practices should be sent in advance of the conference to the office of Child Safeguarding. Contact Ita at the diocesan office for Safeguarding Children on 091-575051 before October 30th to reserve your place.

From the Director of Safeguarding –Kevin Duffy

As Director of Safeguarding for the Diocese I am privileged to oversee the safeguarding practices and to witness the commitment of so many volunteers. I have visited a number of parishes this year and met with both the priests and safeguarding personnel, and the feedback has been very positive. If any Parish wish to meet with me, or if I can help in any way, please feel free to contact me.

On a practical note the Diocesan Policy for Safeguarding Children is currently due for revision. At present the six Dioceses in the Western Province are working together to develop a common Policy Template with the approval of their Bishops. The initial draft of this is now complete. We are currently awaiting the publication of the New Safeguarding Children Standards and Guidance Document by the NBSCCCI in order to update our own policy draft if required. Following this, the new Safeguarding Children Policy will be published, subject to approval from NBSCCCI.

The Diocese is also drafting a Policy on safeguarding vulnerable adults within our parishes. This policy will complement the Safeguarding Children policy already in use in the Diocese and will provide guidelines for all parishes.

Diocesan Liaison Persons

If you have a child safeguarding concern or wish to report an allegation of child abuse please contact one of our Diocesan Liaison Persons who are responsible for receiving/managing concerns and complaints relating to safeguarding children that involve church personnel. Their names and contact details are as follows:

Mrs. Eileen Kelly – Galway Diocesan Pastoral Centre. Phone: 085-1112660

Mr. Kevin Duffy (Deputy) - Galway Diocesan Pastoral Centre. Phone: 087-6141736

If you wish to report directly to the statutory authorities please contact either your local Tusla Child and Family Agency Duty Social Worker at

Galway: 091-546366: Clare: 065-6863935 Mayo: 094 90 42283

or **An Garda Síochána at 1800 666111** or through the emergency no. **999**

Feedback

The Diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora value feedback from members of the clergy, staff, volunteers, parents, young people and children on the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures. Please contact:

Mr. Kevin Duffy, Director of Safeguarding

Address: Galway Diocesan Pastoral Centre, Arus De Brun, Newtownsmith, Galway (H91XKF4)

Phone: 087-6141736 Email: duffykf57@gmail.com