



diocese
of limerick
our catholic community

Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Limerick Standard 3 Care and Support of the Complainant

In 2016, the National Board replaced the 2009 Standards and Guidance with Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland. This is a One Church Policy which the Diocese of Limerick adopted and agreed to implement.

In implementing this One Church policy, The Diocese of Limerick reviewed all its arrangements and this document is the outcome of that review.

This document of detailed procedures, developed in 2017, accompanies the National Board Policy Standards and Guidance and is updated on a regular basis

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Who to contact if you are concerned about the Welfare and Safety of Children

Diocesan Safeguarding Service

Ger Crowley

Director of Safeguarding

Designated Liaison Person (D.L.P.)

T: 087 3233564 / 061 350000

E: ger.crowley@limerickdiocese.org

Fr. Noel Kirwan

Deputy Designated Liaison Person

T: 061 414624

E: nkirwan62@gmail.com

Terry Boyle

Parish Safeguarding Support Worker

T: 086 1304775

E: terry.boyle@limerickdiocese.org

Vetting Service

*Diocesan Office, Social Services Centre,
Henry St., Limerick.*

Vetting Administrator

T: 061 350000

E: Vetting@limerickdiocese.org

**Aoife Walsh, Fr. Chris O'Donnell
Terry Boyle, Patrick Brosnan,
Olivia Giltinane**

Safeguarding Trainers

T: 061 350000

E: Finola.downes@limerickdiocese.org

Parish Safeguarding Representatives

Contact local Parish Priest or Terry Boyle

T: 086 1304775

E: terry.boyle@limerickdiocese.org

Safeguarding Committee
(Training & Information)

Chair: Teresa Bulfin

T: 061 350000

E: Finola.downes@limerickdiocese.org

Case Advisory Committee

Chair: Gerry Mahon

T: 061 350000

E: Stephanie@limerickdiocese.org

Vetting Committee

*Diocesan Office, Social Services Centre,
Henry St., Limerick.*

Chair: John Murphy

T: 061 350000

E: vetting@limerickdiocese.org

Statutory Organisations

An Garda Síochána	<u>National Garda Bureau of Criminal Investigation</u> Harcourt Square, Harcourt Street, Dublin 2. +353 1 6663445 <u>An Garda Síochána Protective Services Unit:</u> Garda Divisional Headquarters Henry Street, Limerick. Tel: 061 212448/437 Email: limerick.psu@garda.ie www.garda.ie
Tusla - Child and Family Agency	Area Manager, Child and Family Agency, Mid-West, Ballycummin Ave, Raheen Business Park, Raheen, Limerick. Tel 061-482792 Web: www.tusla.ie
Limerick Duty & Intake Social Work Service	Limerick Duty & Intake Social Work Service Health Centre, Roxtown Terrace, Old Clare Street, Limerick. Tel: 061 483097 / 061 483098 Email: limerickdutysocialwork@tusla.ie Duty Hours: 09.00 - 17.00

Counselling and Support Services

<p>Towards Healing</p> <p>Is an organisation that has expertise in providing a compassionate response to those who have experienced abuse. This service is funded by the Church, and offers direct services to survivors through a range of counselling, helpline and restorative justice approaches.</p>	<p>☎: 1800 303 416</p> <p>More information can be found at www.towardshealing.ie</p>
<p>Towards Peace</p> <p>Towards Peace offers spiritual support and guidance to survivors of abuse.</p>	<p>☎: 01 5053028</p> <p>For further information, visit www.towardspeace.ie</p>
<p>Limerick Social Service Counselling Service</p>	<p>☎: 061 314111</p> <p>Further information at http://www.lssc.ie</p>
<p>HSE National Adult Counselling Services</p>	<p>☎: 1800 234 115/ 061 411900</p> <p>Further Information at: http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/Mental_Health_Services/</p>
<p>Barnardos:</p>	<p>☎: 1850 222 300/ www.barnardos.ie</p>
<p>Childline:</p>	<p>☎: 1800 66666 - www.childline.ie</p>
<p>Childline - text support</p>	<p>Text 'Talk' to 50101.</p>
<p>Connect:</p>	<p>☎: 1800 666 666. www.connectcounselling.ie</p>
<p>Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Limerick - (ISPCC)</p>	<p>☎: 061 400077 Fax: 061 316789 Email: limerick@ispcc.ie www.ispcc.ie</p>
<p>In addition, the following counselling and support services can also be availed of by Church personnel, parents/guardians and children in relation to child safeguarding matters.</p>	<p>www.webwise.ie www.hotline.ie www.internetsafety.ie www.samaritans.org www.oneinfour.ie</p>

Care and Support for the Complainant (Standard 3)

Roles for Safeguarding Personnel - (Appendix 1).

Responsibilities of Safeguarding Personnel in Relation to Standard 3 are:

The Bishop

- Will ensure that a support person is offered, or that procedures are in place to share the services of a support person if required;
- That practice and policy on the care of the complainant is compliant with statutory and canonical law;
- That complainants are met and facilitated to disclose abuse in an environment that meets their individual needs;
- That complainants are heard in a spirit of acceptance and trust;
- That appropriate assistance is offered to complainants and, as required, to their families;
- That counselling, support and information is given to children and adults who wish to make a complaint of abuse;
- That pastoral care is given to those who have been abused by Church personnel, where this is deemed helpful by the complainant.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

- Attending the initial meeting with the complainant, if the complainant is agreeable to the meeting;
- Ensuring that all appropriate internal and external inquiries are instigated;
- Ensuring that relevant information regarding contact with the complainant is recorded and stored appropriately in the case file;
- Keeping the Bishop updated regarding the health and well-being of the complainant;
- Liaising with the support person to ensure that support, advice and pastoral care is offered to the complainant. If relevant safeguarding concerns are raised with the support person by the complainant, the DLP must ensure that these are passed on to the civil authorities and to the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI).

Support Person

- Attending the initial meeting of the complainant with the DLP (if agreed in advance with the complainant) in order to support the complainant; keeping them informed of the progress of their case; and helping them to identify and access support;
- Ensuring that support is provided to complainants and their families, as requested and mutually agreed upon;
- Ensuring the complainant is offered pastoral care that meets their individual needs;
- Offering to arrange a pastoral meeting with the Bishop at an appropriate time during the process, if the complainant wishes;
- Recording any dates of meetings and/or contact they have with the complainant, and passing on relevant information to the DLP, as appropriate. They will not be responsible for managing the file but will pass on written records to the DLP, as appropriate, during regular meetings with them.

Advisory Panel

- Providing advice to the Bishop, if required, with regard to the credibility of the complaint and the appropriateness of providing support to a complainant or their family;
- Creating a written record of its recommendation, and noting the matters upon which it has been asked to advise and the documents it has considered. These records should be passed to the DLP who will store them in the third-party information section of the case file.

NBSCCCI

- Will be advised of safeguarding suspicions, concerns or allegations by the DLP, and retain records of this information;
- Offer advice and support to the people in their various roles, and in relation to care and

Awareness of the impact of Abuse on a Complainant

People who have been abused want to be heard and to have their very real pain acknowledged.

Disclosing abuse takes enormous courage and calls for a high level of trust. Child abuse by its very nature can damage trust; it is therefore imperative that when a complainant is ready to tell their story, the listener responds with great sensitivity and compassion.

There will be a complex mix of feelings and emotions where abuse has been at the hands of someone the complainant has trusted, and even more so if the respondent holds a position of spiritual or moral responsibility. This may then include the challenging process of re-establishing relations with a faith community and with God.

Initial Contact

Once an allegation has been received by the DLP, in line with the reporting procedure outlined in Standard 2, the DLP will:

- Make contact with the complainant to arrange a meeting (unless this is against the wishes of the complainant).
- Offer a Support Person and, with the knowledge and agreement of the complainant, allow the support person to attend the initial meeting or to meet with the complainant immediately thereafter.
- In advance of this meeting it may be helpful to provide an overview of what the meeting will entail to ensure the complaint is fully informed.
- If a face-to-face meeting has been agreed, meet the complainant at a time and place that is convenient and acceptable, along with a family member or friend whom they may have asked to accompany them for emotional support. The support person may also attend this meeting, if agreed in advance with the complainant; •
- Give the complainant an opportunity to give a detailed account of the allegation(s) – the account should be recorded, signed and dated by both parties;
- Accept third-party accounts from family or friends of the complainant, if the complainant wishes;
- Explain to the complainant that the Church has a duty to provide appropriate support, counselling and pastoral care to all complainants of abuse.
- Details of the Towards Healing and Towards Peace services should be provided, as well as the offer of assistance in making an appointment. This step should be carried out by the support person, if they are present.
- In a situation where the complainant is still a child, particular sensitivity is required. A parent/guardian should always be present with their child, and the offer of care and support should be made to the child's parents/guardians;

- Every complainant is offered access to a support person. The role of the support person is to ensure that the complainant is appropriately supported throughout the process of disclosure and thereafter. It is the prerogative of the complainant whether or not they wish to accept the assistance of a support person;
- After the meeting, the DLP should review the allegation(s) in an effort to establish if the threshold for reporting has been reached. If it has, the DLP should, without delay, refer the allegation(s) to the statutory authorities and the NBSCCCI;
- The DLP shall assist the support person in drawing up an outline of a supportive response, appropriate to the individual and the circumstances;
- The DLP presents their findings and the recommended support response to the Bishop for approval;
- The support person presents their proposed response to the complainant;
- The DLP and/or the support person contacts the complainant and communicates the decision of the Bishop on how to proceed, and they discuss the next stages of the process.

None of the above actions should interfere with any criminal investigation.

Meeting with the Bishop

Once a process of pastoral care and support is in place, the DLP will offer to set up a meeting with the Bishop, if it is the wish of the complainant. It is important that the agenda, time and venue for any such meeting are negotiated by the support person, in consultation with the complainant, the DLP and the Bishop.

It is important that all parties are fully prepared for the meeting. It could be helpful in some instances to arrange to have a facilitator or mediator present, if this is deemed to be in the best interest of the complainant.

It must be understood by all that:

- The overall process of the meeting is to listen to the complainant;
- The meeting is about determining the outcome of the investigation that might ensue.
- Towards the end of this meeting ongoing support can be reviewed and any required changes can be agreed upon.

Ongoing Support

Contact with the support person should always be led by the needs of the complainant.

Meeting the pastoral and support needs of complainants can be best achieved when the Church authority is open to facilitating the needs of the complainant in relation to meeting times and locations and giving them the time to give a complete account of the allegation(s) they wish to bring.

Some complainants may also wish to remain engaged with their Church despite the effect that

the abuse may have had on their relationship with it, and, perhaps, with God. Complainants should be supported in making contact with counselling and support services if they so wish. The support person liaises with the DLP for information sharing and accountability purposes, and should provide them with a summary of dates on which they have met with the complainant.

Clarity about the role of Support Person

- The support person is not a counsellor for the complainant and should not act in that role.
- The support person should not act as spiritual guide for the complainant.
- The support person does not manage the case file and will not have access to it.
- If the complainant is a child, the support person should liaise with the parents/guardians of the child.

Financial Compensation

Some complainants may wish to claim financial compensation for the harm they have suffered. All complainants should be advised of their right to seek legal advice if they wish to pursue a civil case against their alleged abuser and/or the Bishop. Complainants need to be informed of the adversarial nature of litigation and the inevitable process of disclosure involved.

Appropriate Personnel

Those who have alleged child abuse should receive a compassionate response from Church personnel and be offered access to appropriate care, advice and support. The Bishop has access to a support person who is available to those who make an allegation/disclosure of abuse, if the complainant so wishes.