

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Persons



diocese
of limerick
our catholic community

Safeguarding Service, Diocesan Centre, St Munchin's, Corbally

AUTUMN 2019

Bishop Brendan Leahy - Introduction

Ensuring that Children and Vulnerable People Feel Safe and Respected

The Diocese of Limerick seeks to continuously improve our safeguarding practices. We aim to ensure that children and people who may be vulnerable feel safe and respected in all of their involvement with the Church and that all those involved in ministry are aware of their responsibilities and feel supported.

In the past year we have developed our new safeguarding website as a key aid to everyone involved in the life of the Diocese. Our training team has also been expanded.

Internationally this past year has seen the Synod in Rome on Safeguarding, which led to the issuing of new safeguarding norms by Pope Francis which relate to children and to vulnerable persons.



Audit of Safeguarding Arrangements in the Diocese of Limerick

In order to ensure that we meet the best possible safeguarding standards in the Diocese, I intend inviting the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCCI) to undertake an audit of the Diocesan safeguarding arrangements.

I envisage this taking place in early 2020. This will involve a team of independent auditors examining all aspects of Diocesan involvement with children and how we respond to safeguarding issues.

I would encourage all interested persons to provide feedback/ suggestions on our safeguarding services, our website, training etc. This feedback can be given to me directly or to the Safeguarding Service at Limerick Diocesan Centre, St Munchin's, Corbally, Limerick. With regard to the proposed audit of Diocesan safeguarding arrangements, people may also wish to communicate with the National Safeguarding Board, New House, St Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

Arrangements for the proposed audit will be posted on our website.



From darkness to light, Easter Vigil, St John's Cathedral 2019



Eamonn McCarthy, Carmel Ní Bhreacáin and Tony O'Sullivan, lighting Easter fire, St John's Cathedral 2019

A word of Appreciation

I want to repeat my appreciation to everyone who works in safeguarding throughout the Diocese. And indeed to everyone who is involved in accompanying children and teenagers in Church activities that are so important for their growth in the faith. I encourage anyone who has a concern now or in relation to the past to contact our Safeguarding Service or the Statutory Agencies.

+Brendan Leahy
Bishop of Limerick

Diocese of Limerick

New Church Safeguarding Norms:
Vos Estis Lux Mundi (You are the Light of the World)

Pope Francis in Ireland

Following his visit to Ireland last summer Pope Francis gave a commitment to take action on the issue of safeguarding in the Church. Pope Francis called a Major Synod in Rome on Safeguarding in February. In advance of the Synod, Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh, who was the Irish delegate at the Synod, spent a full day in Limerick meeting with people affected by clerical abuse, facilitated by the Diocese.

New Safeguarding Norms

Following the Synod, Pope Francis established new safeguarding norms for the whole Church. These are set out in the document, *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* and came into effect on 1 June 2019. With regard to complaints of child abuse, the norms are consistent with the arrangements already in place within the Diocese. In particular, the obligation to report, without delay, all allegations of abuse of a child to the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person is set out clearly. There is also an obligation to report these to the statutory authorities.



Bishop Leahy, Easter Vigil, St John's 2019



'You are the light of the world.
A city built on a hill cannot be hidden.
Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl.
Instead they put it on its stand,
and it gives light to everyone in the house.
In the same way, let your light shine before others,
that they may see your good deeds and glorify your
Father in heaven.'

Matthew 5:14-16

Brú na Gráige 2019

This year the Diocese of Limerick under the leadership of Muintearas Íosa hosted 150 young people at *Brú na Gráige* over two weeks in July. The young people aged mostly between 16-19 were lucky to have had the best of the weather this summer and they certainly made the most of it in the beautiful surroundings of the Dingle Peninsula. Each day began with prayer at one of the many local heritage sites (Gallarus Oratory; Killmakaedar; Blasket Centre; Dún Chaoin Church etc.) and ended with prayer in the big *Brú* house. None of this would have been possible without the commitment of our thirty leaders who led workshops and activities, ran games, oversaw dinner prep, did the shopping, supervised corridors, led hikes, posted social media updates, prepared prayer and generally kept everyone energised and enthusiastic. On a visit to the *Brú* Canon Micheál Liston was delighted to see that the *Fáilte*, *Foghlaim* and *Guí* of Muintearas Íosa was alive and well.



All images in this issue from *Brú na Gráige* 2019



Focus on Vulnerable Persons

Addressing the Safeguarding Needs of Vulnerable Persons

While most of the focus in recent years has been on safeguarding children there is an increasing need to focus on addressing the safeguarding needs of vulnerable persons.

A vulnerable person in Canon Law is 'any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want to otherwise resist the offence'.

People in parishes may be involved with vulnerable people in a variety of ways. These include for example, special schools, activity groups for the elderly or persons with special needs, parish outings or home visitation. In these situations people need to familiarise themselves with both their legal obligations and related reporting obligations which may arise in their place of employment or where they have some pastoral or related role.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Website is being revised to reflect the new norms and all relevant information will be available at <http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/>

If you have a particular concern and are unsure of what to do, contact the **Diocesan Director of Safeguarding:**
Tel. 087 3233564 / 061 350000 or
Email ger@limerickdiocese.org



Reporting Elder Abuse and Abuse of Vulnerable Persons

The HSE is the competent authority for the reporting of elder abuse and abuse of vulnerable adults.

The HSE Vulnerable Persons Team for the Mid-West can be contacted at **Tyone Health Centre, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary:**
Tel. (067) 46470.

You can also seek advice from the HSE Information Line:
Monday to Saturday, 8am-8pm, Call Save 1850 24 1850
or Email info@hse.ie

The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection will also act on any reports it receives of alleged abuse of its pension/benefit recipients, consulting or involving as appropriate other relevant agencies such as the HSE or An Garda Síochána.

Investigations of alleged abuse are coordinated by a nominated officer in the Department:

Martin Keville, Assistant Principal Officer, State Pension (non-contributory) Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection College Road, Sligo.
Tel. 00353-71-9193260 (direct) or
Email martin.keville@welfare.ie

Safeguarding in Limerick Diocese: the Work Continues... Céim ar Chéim

Safeguarding Committee: Oversight and Planning

Limerick Diocesan Safeguarding Committee is made up of a range of people from across the Diocese who have experience in youth ministry, teaching, child protection, family welfare, care of vulnerable persons and parish work.

The Committee has an oversight role in respect of key areas of safeguarding in the Diocese. It produces and oversees a three-year plan. This plan outlines how the Diocese will implement national standards in respect of safeguarding in keeping with the guidance of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI). This plan includes:

- Ongoing development of procedures and practice regarding the creation and maintenance of safe environments for children and vulnerable persons;
- Liaising with local safeguarding representatives to identify areas where guidance and support on policy or practice is needed;
- Ensuring the provision of necessary support and training;
- Communicating the church's safeguarding message as widely as possible;
- Ensuring that records for activities related to child safeguarding are produced and stored appropriately;
- Overseeing an annual internal audit for all parishes.

The committee is chaired by Ms Teresa Bulfin who is a retired HSE manager. As chair of the Safeguarding Committee Ms Bulfin plays a critical role in assuring Bishop Leahy that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place and available throughout the Diocese.



Limerick Diocesan Safeguarding Committee

Communicating the Message: Safeguarding Website

The safeguarding website has been in operation for over a year and has been well received, with almost 3,000 unique visitors to the site since it was launched. It is the key information resource for safeguarding in the Diocese. It seeks to present information in an easily accessible manner and to respond to information requirements of people throughout the Diocese. It addresses issues such as roles and responsibilities of individuals and provides practical guidance. The group overseeing the website would welcome feedback on the existing website and suggestions to improve it. If you have any ideas please contact Pat Brosnan at pat.brosnan@limerickdiocese.org

The Diocesan Safeguarding Website can be accessed at:

<http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/>

There is also substantial information on safe-guarding on the website of the National Board of National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church at: **<https://www.safeguarding.ie/>**

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Safeguarding in Limerick Diocese: the Work Continues... Céim ar Chéim (continued)

Safeguarding Training: An Ongoing Commitment

All priests and parish safeguarding representatives are required to undergo a one-day safeguarding training programme every three years. Leaders of all Youth Ministry activities are obliged to undergo the same training.

Other people involved with young people at parish level must attend a safeguarding information session.

If you wish to book a place on a forthcoming training event, please contact Finola:

Tel. 061 350000 or Email finola.downes@limerickdiocese.org

Important Reminders for Parishes: Children First, Vetting and Visiting Clergy

Children First Legislation:

Mandated Persons

In respect of children, certain people are specified in Irish law as mandated persons. This includes 'members of the clergy (howsoever described) or pastoral care workers (howsoever described) of a church or other religious community'. Mandated persons must, by law, report to Tusla any incidence of harm that meet or exceed a specified threshold. While the obligation to report is a personal one, it is possible to make a joint report with the Diocesan Liaison Person and this is Diocesan policy.

Children First:

Responsibilities of Organisations

Providing Services to Children

The Children First Act (2015) places legal responsibility on people and organisations involved in providing certain types of services to children.

The concept of 'relevant services', which this legislation deals with includes:

- Any work or activity which consist of the provision of cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities;

- Any work or activity as a minister or priest or any other person engaged in the advancement of religious beliefs which would or could bring that minister, priest or other person into contact with a child.

A provider of such relevant services is obliged to ensure that children are safe from harm while availing of that service. In planning any such activities, it is necessary to undertake a risk assessment, and set out arrangements to mitigate such risks.

Supports are available from **Terry Boyle** (Parish Safeguarding Support Worker): Tel. 086 1304775 or Email: terry.boyle@limerickdiocese.org



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Vetting Reminder

It is unlawful for anyone to enable or permit any person to be engaged in relevant activities with children or vulnerable persons without their being the subject of Garda Vetting.

It is critical not to assume that others have made the necessary arrangements. If in doubt contact the Diocesan Vetting Office, Limerick Diocesan Centre, St Munchin's, Corbally, Limerick: Tel. 061 350000 or Email: Vetting@limerickdiocese.org.

Visiting Clergy

The Diocese of Limerick is committed to complying with the safeguarding standards of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCCI). Anyone arranging or facilitating a visiting priest to be involved in public ministry in Limerick Diocese must ensure that the visiting priest:

- Has permission to be involved in such ministry from the Bishop of Limerick;
- Is Garda vetted;
- Has attended safeguarding training;
- Holds a valid Celebret
(A Celebret is a letter/card which a Roman Catholic bishop or major religious superior gives a priest so that the priest may obtain permission in another Diocese to say mass and for this purpose bears testimony that he is free from canonical censure);
- Signs the sacristy register.

All information on this can be obtained from chancellory@limerickdiocese.org



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

GARDA – PROTECTIVE SERVICES UNIT

Henry Street, Limerick
Tel. 061 212448
Email: limerick.PSU@garda.ie

TUSLA – THE CHILD AND FAMILY AGENCY Duty Intake and Social Work Service

Unit 3, St Camillus Hospital,
Shelbourne Road, Limerick
Duty Hours: 09.00 - 17.00
Tel. 061 588688
Email: limerickdutysocialwork@tusla.ie

Mid West Retrospective Child Abuse and Adult Assessment Team

Unit 3, St Camillus Hospital,
Shelbourne Road, Limerick
Tel. 061 483711/483728
Website: www.tusla.ie

HEALTH SERVICE EXECUTIVE The HSE Vulnerable Persons Team

Tyone Health Centre,
Nenagh,
Co. Tipperary.
Tel. 067/46470.

You can also seek advice from the HSE
Information Line:
Monday to Saturday, 8am-8pm
Call Save: 1850 24 1850 Email: info@hse.ie

LIMERICK DIOCESE Mr Ger Crowley Diocesan Director of Safeguarding

(Designated Liaison Person)
Limerick Diocesan Centre,
St Munchin's, Corbally,
Limerick
Tel. 087 3233564/ 061 350000
Email: ger@limerickdiocese.org



Diocese of Limerick

LIMERICK DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING SERVICE CONTACTS

ROLE	CONTACT DETAILS
Diocesan Safeguarding Service Designated Liaison Person (D.L.P.)	Ger Crowley T: 087 3233564 / 061 350000 E: ger.crowley@limerickdiocese.org
Assistant Designated Liaison Person	Fr Noel Kirwan T: 061 414624 E: nkirwan62@gmail.com
Parish Safeguarding Support Worker	Terry Boyle T: 086 1304775 E: terry.boyle@limerickdiocese.org
Limerick Diocesan Vetting Service	Diocesan Centre, St Munchin's, Corbally, Limerick T: 061 350000 E: vetting@limerickdiocese.org
Parish Safeguarding Representatives	Contact Parish Priest or Terry Boyle T: 086 1304775 E: terry.boyle@limerickdiocese.org
Safeguarding Trainers	Aoife Walsh; Fr Chris O'Donnell; Terry Boyle; Patrick Brosnan; Olivia Giltinane. T: 061 350000 E: finola.downes@limerickdiocese.org
Safeguarding Committee	Teresa Bulfin (Chair) T: 061 350000
Case Advisory Committee	Gerry Mahon (Chair) T: 061 350000
Vetting Committee	John Murphy T: 061 350000
Safeguarding Website	Pat Brosnan T: 061 350000 E: pat.brosnan@limerickdiocese.org

*Safeguarding
Policy &
Procedures*

<http://www.limerickdiocese.org>