

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Persons



diocese
of limerick
our catholic community

Safeguarding Service, Limerick Diocesan Office, Henry Street, Limerick

SPRING 2016



Message from Bishop Leahy

The diocese of Limerick wishes to encourage the participation of children and vulnerable persons in the life of the church and to promote their welfare. I would like to acknowledge the work of the many people who promote safeguarding in the diocese through the implementation of diocesan policies and procedures.

However, policies are only effective if everyone understands their purpose and knows how to use them. This newsletter is a means of communicating our message about the importance of safeguarding and I encourage you to raise any concerns or suggestions with our safeguarding service.

We know that a small number of people in every society use and take advantage of their power and position to abuse children and vulnerable persons.

We must ensure that families can have confidence that all of their members are safe when involved in all church activities and that promoting their welfare is our paramount concern. We do this collectively by committing ourselves to good and safe practices as outlined in our diocesan policies and procedures. We must always act to prevent abuse and report any concerns or disclosures. Please see the diocesan website for further safeguarding information.

+Brendan Leahy
Bishop of Limerick



If you have a safeguarding concern or wish to raise a matter from the past, you may contact any of the following:

An Garda Síochána
Divisional Headquarters,
Henry Street,
Limerick.
061-212400

Tusla, Child and Family Agency
Mid West,
Ballycummin Ave,
Raheen Business Park,
Raheen, Limerick
061-482792

Mr Ger Crowley
Diocesan Director of Safeguarding
(Designated Liaison Person),
Diocesan Office,
Social Services Centre,
Henry Street, Limerick
087-3233564
ger@ldo.ie

*Safeguarding
Policy & Procedures*

<http://www.limerickdiocese.org>



Diocese of Limerick

Safeguarding
Service

Who we are?
What do we do?



Ger Crowley
Safeguarding
Director

Safeguarding Committee



Safeguarding Service

The service promotes the care of children and vulnerable persons involved in church activities throughout the diocese.

- Providing training for priests, parish workers and volunteers in safeguarding
- Working collaboratively with statutory agencies to ensure that all complaints and concerns are responded to appropriately
- Providing support and counselling to those who have experienced abuse

Since 1996 Limerick diocese has had a Designated Person to receive all child protection complaints. In 2011 Ger Crowley was appointed Director of Safeguarding incorporating the role of Designated Person, to oversee all aspects of safeguarding in church related activities.

Contact details

- **Director of Safeguarding** (*Designated Person*)
Ger Crowley 087-3233564 ger@ldo.ie
- **Assistant Designated Liaison Person**
Fr Paul Finnerty 061-315856 paul@ldo.ie
- **Parish Safeguarding Support Worker**
Terry Boyle 086-1304775 terry@ldo.ie
- **Vetting Administrator**
Stephanie Cleary 061-315856 stephanie@ldo.ie
Diocesan Office, Social Services Centre, Henry St., Limerick.
- **Safeguarding Trainers**
Fr Chris O'Donnell 061-400133 codonnell@ldpc.ie
Aoife Walsh 061-400133 awalsh@ldpc.ie
Diocesan Pastoral Centre, Denmark St., Limerick.
- **Safeguarding Committee** (*training & information*)
Chair: Catherine Kelly 061-315856 awalsh@ldpc.ie
- **Case Advisory Committee**
Chair: Gerry Mahon 061-315856 stephanie@ldo.ie
- **Vetting Committee**
Chair: John Murphy 061-315856 stephanie@ldo.ie
Diocesan Office, Social Services Centre, Henry St., Limerick.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding Children - Policy and Procedures

- The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Document is based on the Standards of the National Board (NBSCCCI) and is compliant with Children First, the National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.
- This document has been developed in consultation with many individuals and groups in the diocese including parents and young people.
- All priests and persons holding appointments or volunteering within diocesan and parish structures must adhere to this policy, acting at all times to create safe environments for children and ensuring that all concerns are responded to appropriately.
- All religious communities are expected to adhere to the policy or to have their own policies and procedures, consistent with the diocesan policy.
- The policy includes a Code of Behaviour for adult staff and volunteers outlining acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour; the code exists for the protection of both children and adults.

Vulnerable Persons - Policy and Procedures

- The diocese of Limerick is committed to creating environments where vulnerable persons are welcomed and are respected.
- Diocesan policies and practices promote the welfare of vulnerable persons and safeguarding them from harm.
- All priests and persons holding appointments or volunteering within diocesan and parish structures must adhere to this policy, acting at all times to create safe environments for vulnerable persons and ensuring that all concerns are responded to appropriately.
- All religious communities are expected to adhere to the policy or to have policies and procedures, consistent with the diocesan policy.
- The policy includes a Code of Behaviour for staff and volunteers.

Definitions -

A Child

Person under 18 years of age

A Vulnerable Person

Persons other than children who:

1. *Suffer from mental illness or dementia*
2. *Have an intellectual disability*
3. *Suffer from physical impairment resulting from injury, illness or age*
4. *Have a physical disability which is of such a degree as to restrict their capacity to guard himself or herself against harm by another person*



Diocese of Limerick

Parish Safeguarding Representatives

In each parish one or two Local Safeguarding Representatives work alongside the parish priest and other parish staff 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 three 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, An Garda Síochána and Diocesan Designated Person, Ger Crowley.

The name of the parish safeguarding representative is displayed on a safeguarding poster at the main entrance of every church in the diocese



Safeguarding information meeting, Oct. 2015

Parish Safeguarding Representatives are responsible for promoting Safeguarding by:

1. Raising awareness of safeguarding
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 Person, An Garda Síochána and TUSLA are widely publicised

A Word of Thanks

The diocese of Limerick is very grateful to parish safeguarding representatives in the sixty parishes of the diocese.

See www.safeguarding.ie

Garda Vetting - New Developments

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 is scheduled to commence in the near future. The act will provide a legislative basis for the mandatory vetting of persons who wish to undertake certain work or activities relating to children.

Limerick diocese is committed to the highest standards in its recruitment processes for all employees and volunteers.

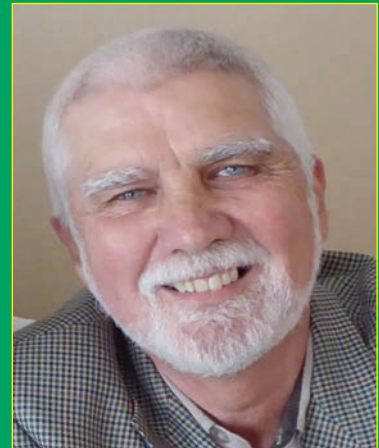
1. Any personnel who may have unsupervised access to children must be the subject of Garda vetting.
2. The diocese may also require Garda vetting in respect of other positions where appropriate.
3. A person who refuses to be vetted cannot be appointed or engaged in any capacity within the diocese including in a voluntary role.
4. The policy and procedures document for Garda vetting sets out arrangements for the vetting of all diocesan priests, staff and volunteers in
 - Diocesan offices, agencies and parishes
 - Primary schools under the patronage of the diocese
 - Users of diocesan facilities for activities involving children



Many thanks to John Canon O'Shea who recently retired from the Safeguarding Committee

Safeguarding Support Worker New Appointment

Limerick diocese has recently employed Mr Terry Boyle as the Parish Safeguarding Support Worker.



Terry retired last year as Regional Manager of the Probation Service for the southern region and lives in Our Lady of the Rosary parish.

The role of the Parish Support Worker is to ensure that all appropriate arrangements for programmes and activities are in place within parishes and to provide support to parishes and parish representatives.

Contact Terry Boyle

terry@ldo.ie

086-1304775 or

061-315856

Limerick Diocesan Office

Safeguarding in the Catholic Church

Towards Healing

is the counselling and support service funded by the Catholic Church to support the needs of survivors of Religious, Institutional and Clerical Abuse and their families. Towards Healing offers a range of support services including counselling, workshops, restorative justice and advocacy. The service is staffed by professional, lay people and the clinical team are all therapists with experience of working with survivors.



Towards Healing

Freephone: 1800 303416

Email: info@towardshealing.ie

www.towardshealing.ie

Towards Peace

Abuse by church personnel in particular, may have an especially traumatic impact on spirituality, shattering a person's sense of wholeness, and fracturing their relationship with God. This kind of abuse, which harms a person's core 'in the name of God', can create deep lifelong spiritual wounds. Towards Peace was set up to respond to the need some survivors experience for healing from spiritual wounds. Towards Peace aims to provide a safe supportive space, where people who have been affected by abuse in a church context can be accompanied as they seek spiritual peace, one step at a time.

Towards Peace,

Columba Centre, St Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

01-5053028

086-7710533

Monday-Thursday: 10am - 5pm

The National Board

for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCCI) offers advice on best practice in safeguarding; assists in the development of safeguarding policy, procedures and practice and monitors practice in relation to safeguarding. Since early 2014 the NBSCCCI has been reviewing its Standards and Guidance document on Safeguarding. The latest draft is available at www.safeguarding.ie The National Board carried out an audit of the diocese of Limerick in 2013 and its report is available on the diocesan website <http://www.limerickdiocese.org/>

National Office for Safeguarding Children

in the Catholic Church in Ireland,

New House, St Patrick's College,

Maynooth, Co. Kildare

01-5053124

Holy Spirit,
comforter of hearts,
heal
your people's wounds
and transform our
brokenness.
Grant us
courage and wisdom,
humility and grace,
so that we may
and find peace
in You.



What needs to be in place in every parish?

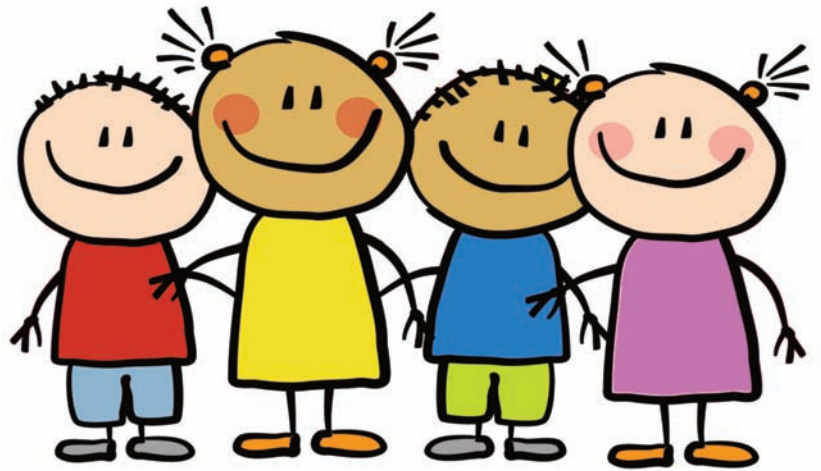
1. Safeguarding posters are displayed in every church with a sign-in book in every sacristy.
2. All young people involved in church activities complete membership forms requiring parental consent.
3. All young people have access to safeguarding information and their parents are informed about safeguarding policy.
4. All parishes are required to keep attendance records at youth events.
5. All volunteers are Garda vetted and complete an application form agreeing to abide by the diocesan code of behaviour for adults.
6. Safeguarding information and training is provided to all volunteers.



Children's Page

Every child is precious and has a right to be kept safe from harm or abuse.

Every adult in the church has to help keep children safe by following the Diocesan Policy for Safeguarding Children.



How can I help to keep myself and other children safe?

If an adult is hurting you or someone you know, then you should tell an adult you trust or ring;

An Garda Síochána	061-212400
Tusla	061-482792
Ger Crowley Safeguarding Director,	087-3233564
Childline	1800 666 666
Barnardos	1850 222 300





Children's Page



*“Children are not a distraction from more important work.
They are the most important work.”*

C.S.Lewis

Suggestions for future issues of this Safeguarding publication would be most welcome. Please contact david@ldo.ie