



diocese  
of limerick  
our catholic community

## Safeguarding Children in the

## Diocese of Limerick

## Standard 6

### Communicating the Churches' Safeguarding Message

*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

| Table of Contents Standard 6   |  | Page |
|--|--|------|
| <b>Standard 6</b><br><b>Communicating the Churches' Safeguarding Message</b> | Responsibilities of Safeguarding Personnel – Standard 6  | 118  |
|  | Communication Plan   | 119  |
|  | Ensuring that Information Regarding the Churches' Child Safeguarding Message is Accessible                 | 122  |
|  | Communicating appropriately to those whose first language is not English; and to those with specific needs | 123  |
|  | Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement  | 124  |
|  | Child Safeguarding Statement – Diocese of Limerick   | 125  |

# Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

(Standard 6)

## Responsibilities of Safeguarding Personnel in Relation to Standard 6 are:

### The Bishop:

- Will ensure that practice and policy with regard to communication is compliant with civil and canon law.

### Safeguarding Committee:

- Producing a three-year child safeguarding plan. Part of this plan will include evidence that a communications plan is developed and implemented across the Church body. To do this, an annual child safeguarding communications plan needs to be developed;
- Coordinating local safeguarding representatives in the development of a communications plan. This coordination involves consultation with key stakeholders, including children and guardians, regarding the plan.

### Parish Safeguarding Representative:

- Working with the safeguarding committee to consult with key members of the community, including children, guardians and other personnel who have been identified by the safeguarding committee in the compilation of a communications plan;
- Checking that methods of communication are effective and in place. This information should be communicated to the safeguarding committee as part of the consultation and evaluation phases of developing and reviewing a communications plan.

# Communication Plan

## Step 1: Reviewing current policies, procedures and practice

As part of the Diocesan 'Safeguarding Children, 3 Year Strategic Plan', an effective communications plan is in place. This plan emphasises the central position of the Diocesan safeguarding standards, policy and procedures. These Procedures are essential to the implementation of Church standards, and it is critical that everybody, including children and young people, know and understand their purpose and know how to use them.

A range of communications methods will in place, the following checklist suggests some ideas for the safeguarding committee to consider.

Does the Diocese:

- Have a written communications plan, stating what you wish to communicate, to whom, by whom, and how often?
- Display the name and contact details of the designated liaison person (DLP) during Church run youth activities?
- Place information on the diocesan website about safeguarding children?
- Ensure that communications between the Church and parents/guardians/carers/children/community leaders take account of language or communication differences?
- Ensure that parents/guardians, children and relevant others know about your child safeguarding and child protection policies and reporting procedures?
- Have a process for enabling people, including children and young people, to make a complaint and ensure that this process is publicised so that everyone knows about it?
- Involve parents/guardians, as well as children, in developing codes of behaviour, e.g. about anti-bullying?
- Devise ways of obtaining feedback from parents/guardians/carers/children/the Church community to find out what you are doing well, and what is not working?

## Step 2: Gathering further information

Using the information in Step 1, the Church body should gather any further information necessary to develop a communications plan that reflects transparency, openness, accountability and responsibility. The aim of this plan is to make information available about all aspects of policy and practice, which keep children safe in Church and related activities.

To develop this plan, the safeguarding committee needs to develop information on the following:

**Who are the target groups?** The safeguarding committee should consult with relevant

Personnel to establish the target audiences for inclusion in the wider safeguarding plan. It is likely that the main target groups with whom a Church body needs to communicate regarding its child safeguarding policy and procedures are:

- Church personnel;
- Lay faithful;
- Children/parents/guardians/carers;
- Parish staff and volunteers;
- External organisations, e.g. Tusla, An Garda Síochána;
- Other relevant external agencies, the general public and the media.

**What are the safeguarding messages?** Although child safeguarding messages must be consistent, the information needed may change depending on your target audience. Child safeguarding messages may include:

- Information on what is meant by child safeguarding;
- Information on the child safeguarding policy;
- Information on the procedures for reporting allegations, suspicions and concerns;
- Contact details of the DLP;
- For children and parents/guardians: how to keep safe; what to do if you, or someone you know, is in danger of being harmed; sources of advice and support;
- roles of agencies involved in child safeguarding; how the referral process works;
- For Church personnel: how to deliver best practice; safe recruitment; dealing with allegations; accessing advice and support; availability of training; contact details for relevant child safeguarding personnel.

**How are you going to promote child safeguarding?** Before deciding how you will do this, it is important to consider the most effective methods for reaching out to key groups of people.

Methods could include:

- **Diocesan/provincial and parish/local congregation websites** that could host material such as the child safeguarding policy, any additional resources developed in relation to child safeguarding, the annual report on child safeguarding within the Church body, the annual training plan, a safeguarding children newsletter, or signposts to other websites such as the NBSCCCI or the civil authorities;
- **Diocesan/provincial newsletters** providing general information and updates on safeguarding;
- **Parish/local congregational bulletins** with information on child safeguarding events and key contact details;
- **Diocesan/provincial printed publications** such as copies of child safeguarding policies, handbooks and information pamphlets, posters for display in the Church, bookmarks for children with child safeguarding information and contacts, annual reports, a child-friendly version of the child safeguarding policy, etc.;

- **National/local press releases** announcing annual reports, updated resources, etc.;
- **Other innovative methods:** it is important to develop positive messages when promoting child safeguarding within the Church. Use the skills and expertise of key people in the Church body to develop creative ways to put forward the positive child safeguarding message of the Church. This could include suggestion boxes, 'Safeguarding Sundays', meetings of key child safeguarding personnel, questionnaires, and workshops with children and young people.

**Who is responsible?** Using the information outlined in Step 1 and Step 2, alongside the roles identified in Appendix 1, it is important to identify who is responsible for each method of delivery. Once identified and agreed, this should be written into the role description, in line with best practice in recruitment and selection. These roles could include, for example:

- The child safeguarding committee;
- The parish priest/local superior/community leader;
- The DLP and deputy DLP;
- The local safeguarding representative

It must be understood that within each parish or local congregation, the overall responsibility for implementing the child safeguarding policy remains with the parish priest/local superior/community leader. The overall responsibility for ensuring that each Church body implements effective child safeguarding practice lies with the Bishop.

**When will it be achieved?** It is important that each plan has clear, realistic and achievable time frames within which each target can be achieved.

### **Step 3: Writing the plan**

Using the information in Steps 1 and 2, it is the responsibility of the safeguarding committee to write the communication plan using a format which identifies, for each target group, what is communicated, how, responsible person/area, when delivered and when reviewed.

This plan will form part of the overall three-year safeguarding plan.

### **Step 4: Review**

It is important to remember that communication is a two-way process. Developing mechanisms for consultation and feedback to review the communication plan is critical to ensure that the child safeguarding message is effectively heard, understood and revised in order to meet the needs of the target groups.

## Ensuring that Information Regarding the Church's Child Safeguarding Message is Accessible

A key part of child safeguarding is ensuring that the methods used to communicate information on the Church's child safeguarding message are accessible and appropriate and may include:

- Public poster for adults, with information about what to do if there is a child safeguarding concern, including contact details for appropriate child safeguarding personnel (Page 5). ***This poster, signed by the Bishop, and forwarded to each parish should be displayed in areas with public access, including residences of priests and religious to which children have access.*** There is no requirement to put up this child safeguarding poster in private homes connected with the Church body if no public ministry with children takes place there;
- Child safeguarding leaflets for parents/guardians/adults about how the Church responds to child safeguarding concerns, the management of allegations and access to counselling and support;
- Posters/Leaflets for children about what to do if they have a child safeguarding concern, including contact details for appropriate child safeguarding personnel;
- The child safeguarding policy in concise/reader-friendly accessible formats;
- Relevant events such as 'Designated Safeguarding Sundays'
- The regular dissemination of safeguarding awareness in local church bulletins
- The dissemination of the Diocesan newsletter that detail child safeguarding practices

## Communicating appropriately to those whose First Language is not English, and to those who have specific needs

The Bishop is aware of the particular requirements of those whose first language is not English. It is important that informative material is translated into the appropriate language so that all children and their parents/guardians are made aware of the child safeguarding practices in their parish or religious congregation. The Diocesan Safeguarding Children Office will assist in this regard. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) provides additional child safeguarding resources in a range of formats. Their website is [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk).

Children who have specific needs because of disability or other vulnerabilities require extra care and attention. They may find it more difficult to access support and advice services because they may not have the communication skills needed to disclose what is happening to them. They may rely on adults to provide for their most intimate care, and so find it challenging to speak about any concerns they may have about such an adult.

A number of services are available in formats that are appropriate to young people with specific needs. These may include:

**Childline text support:** Childline run a free text service for children and young people. Children often find it easier to text rather than talk on the phone if they have a worry or concern. Information on a range of issues is available through text. **Text 'Talk' to 50101;**

It is important when communicating with young people with specific needs that the information on the services above is made accessible by being posted alongside appropriate codes of behaviour about the care of children with specific needs, and that it is also made known to parents and guardians.

Where written information is not appropriate, visual images should be developed to indicate to children how they can raise a concern.

## **Guidance on Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement**

(NBSCCCI 6.2D)

Church bodies who have ministry with children as outlined in *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016 Table 1*, are categorised as providing relevant services as defined in Schedule 1 of the Children First Act 2015.

As a relevant service provider each Church body that has ministry with children, must produce a Child Safeguarding Statement. This is a written statement that specifies the service being provided and the principles and procedures to be observed in order to ensure, as far as practicable, that a child availing of the service is safe from harm.

The definition of harm is outlined in Section 2 of the Children First Act as:

- (a) Assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare, or
- (b) Sexual abuse of the child

Whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances or otherwise

The Child Safeguarding Statement should provide an overview of the measures that the Church body has in place to ensure that children are protected from harm. It may also refer to more detailed procedures which can be made available on request.

The statutory requirement to have a Child Safeguarding Statement does not eradicate the need for the Church body's Child Safeguarding Policy and its associated procedures or guidance, but it should make reference to the Safeguarding Policy.

All relevant Church bodies must make the child safeguarding statement publically available by the 11th of March 2018, and circulate it to all Church personnel, make it available to parents/guardians, Tusla and any member of the public upon request.

The Children First Act 2015 requires that Tusla establishes and maintains a register of non-compliance of service providers who fail to provide a copy of the Child Safeguarding Statement to Tusla when requested.

To assist with this task a template Child Safeguarding Statement has been written for the Catholic Church (*NBSCCCI 6.2D Template 1*) which can be adapted by each Church body.

### **Relevant Person**

As part of the Children First Act 2015 each relevant organisation is required to appoint a relevant person which is defined in Part 2 Section 8 as 'the person who is appointed by a provider of a relevant service to be the first point of contact in respect of the provider's child safeguarding statement.'

Each Church body who is categorised as a relevant organisation should appoint a relevant person using the recruitment procedures outlined in *NBSCCCI Guidance 1.1A*.



# Child Safeguarding Statement of the Diocese of Limerick



*This statement has been prepared to comply with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015 and is derived from Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2016). The policy of the Catholic Church in Ireland is based on standards of practice which contain indicators that assist in reaching these standards. These indicators can be used in assessing and managing risk.*

## **Statement**

**As a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland, we recognise and uphold the dignity and rights of all children, are committed to ensuring their safety and well-being and will work in partnership with parents/guardians to do this. We recognise each child as a gift from God, and we value and encourage the participation of children in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.**

All Church personnel (including clergy, religious, staff and volunteers) have a responsibility to safeguard children through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment that supports their best interests and prevents abuse.

## ***Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm***

The Diocese of Limerick, as a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland, exists to promote the teachings of the Catholic Church. This includes the following ministry with children, as defined in Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016:

Undertaking Church Ministries, involving children, at Diocesan and Parish levels including; General worship, Sacramental preparation programmes, including Baptismal Teams, Do This in Memory of Me (Communion), You Shall Be My Witnesses (Confirmation).

Pastoral engagements including; Altar servers, Youth Choirs, Children's Liturgies, prayer and faith activities. Chaplaincy to hospital and disability sectors providing for the needs of children. John Paul II Awards, Pilgrimages at home and abroad involving children and young people.

The Diocese of Limerick actively promotes the welfare of children and encourages their participation in the life of the Church.

As outlined in the Safeguarding Children 2016 Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland we are committed to the following principles:

### **• Mandatory reporting**

Each of us has a duty to notify the statutory authorities of suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations that a child is being or has been abused:

- *physically*
- *emotionally*
- *sexually*
- *through neglect*

Suspensions, concerns, knowledge or allegations may relate to possible abuse by a member of Church personnel, but they can also relate to incidents in the child's family, or elsewhere in the community. Persons who are mandated persons, which include diocesan safeguarding officers, priests and pastoral care workers, have particular legal responsibilities to report abuse in accordance with the Children first Act 2015. This will be done jointly with the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person.

- **Caring for the welfare of all children and the adults who work with them.**

Measures to create and maintain environments that are safe for children, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children and the adults who work with them, will continue to be strengthened and reviewed. This will be done through training support, communications and quality assurance.

- **Responding appropriately to child protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations**

Anyone who brings any suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation of current or past abuse of a child to the notice of the Church will be responded to sensitively, respectfully, actively and in a timely manner, in line with statutory child protection procedures and Church requirements.

All suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations that reach the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities (apart from those received in the Sacrament of Reconciliation) will be reported to the appropriate statutory authorities. This will be done irrespective of the status of the person (lay, cleric or religious) who is suspected of having been abusive to a child. If the allegation relates to a lay member of Church personnel, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must be reported to the Church authority. If the allegation relates to a cleric or religious, in addition to notifying the statutory authorities, the allegation must also be reported to the Church authority and the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

All Church personnel will cooperate with the statutory authorities in all cases.

In responding to complaints of child sexual abuse relating to clergy and all those in forms of consecrated life, Church authorities will act in accordance with the requirements of civil law and canon law, and so will respect the rights and uphold the safeguards afforded in these, both to the complainant and respondent.

- **Caring pastorally for complainants and other affected persons**

Those who have suffered child abuse by Church personnel will receive a compassionate and just response, and will be offered appropriate pastoral care, counselling and support as they seek to rebuild their lives. An appropriate pastoral response to the family, parish, congregation or order and to the wider community will be provided, with due regard to the right of privacy of those directly involved, and to the administration of justice.

- **Caring pastorally for respondents and other affected persons**

This Church body in its response to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of child sexual abuse will respect the rights under civil law and canon law of an accused cleric or religious or other Church personnel. A legal presumption of innocence will be maintained during the statutory and Church inquiry processes. As the processes develop, additional assessment, therapy and support services may be offered to the respondent.

The Church authority will take responsibility for ensuring that any cleric or religious who is considered to constitute a danger to children is managed according to a risk management plan.

All requisite steps will be taken to restore the good name and reputation of anyone who has been wrongly accused of abusing a child.

Respondents belong to families and diocesan or religious communities. The Church authority will be mindful of the need to provide support to members of families and communities affected by the respondent's changed situation.

## ***Risk Assessment***

**The table below sets out the identified risks to the safety of children and young people involved in Church activities in Diocese of Limerick and the steps taken to minimise the risks of abuse.**

| <b><i>Risk Identified</i></b>   | <b><i>Procedure in place to manage risk identified</i></b>  |
|---|---|
| Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child by Church personnel   | Procedures to meet Indicator 1.1 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from: -<br><a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>  |
| Risk of harm through bullying (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child by Church personnel or peers                                   | Procedures to meet Indicator 1.2 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from: -<br><a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a><br>Procedures to meet Indicator 1.3 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from<br><a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a> |
| Children who use our service do not understand the roles and responsibilities in place to encourage positive behaviour                              | Procedures to meet Indicator 1.3 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from:-<br><a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>   |
| The environment in which work with children is facilitated fails to protect them from harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015)              | Procedures to meet Indicators 1.4 and 1.8 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from:-<br><a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>  |
| The environment in which work with children is facilitated fails to meet effective safeguarding practice  | Procedures to meet Indicators 1.4 and 1.8 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from:-<br><a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>  |
| External groups who use Church property are unsafe to do so   | Procedures to meet Indicator 1.5 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from:-<br><a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>   |
| Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to a child during activities or trips away from home from Church personnel or other adults | Procedures to meet Indicators 1.6 and 1.7 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from: -<br><a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>   |
| Risk of harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) through the use of digital media (photography, video and social media)                     | Procedures to meet Indicator 1.9 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from: -<br><a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>  |
| Church personnel fail to report an allegation, suspicion, concern or knowledge appropriately  | Procedures to meet Indicator 2.1 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from:-<br><a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">procedures/children/</a>  |
| Church personnel fail to take action during and following any investigation into allegations of abuse against clerics and religious to ensure children are protected from harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) | Procedures to meet Indicators 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from <a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>                             |
| Church personnel fail to support those who are victims of abuse  | Procedures to meet Indicators 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from <a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>                                  |
| Church personnel fail to understand their responsibilities to safeguard children   | Procedures to meet Indicators 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from:- <a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>                           |
| Children and their parents do not understand the Church's policy, procedures and structure to safeguard children and protect them from harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015)                                    | Procedures to meet Indicators 5.5, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from:- <a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>                      |
| The procedures for safeguarding children from harm (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) fail to be implemented  | Procedures to meet Indicators 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from <a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>                                  |
| The Church authority fails to ensure the appointment of a relevant person and maintain a list of mandated persons  | Procedures to meeting Indicators 1.1, 6.1 and 2.1 of the Child Safeguarding Policy available from <a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a>                               |
| Risk of harm of a child (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) being disclosed during the Sacrament of Reconciliation   | Procedures to meet indicator 2.1 of the Child Safeguarding Policy in relation to the Sacrament of Reconciliation available from <a href="http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/">http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/</a> |

## ***Procedures***

The procedures outlined in the risk assessment above are available at: -

<http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/>

The procedures of the Diocese of Limerick are derived from the Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2016) are available at: - <https://www.safeguarding.ie/index.php/guidance>

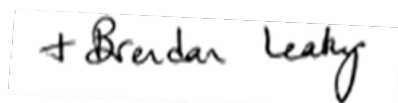
### The procedures listed above include the following:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/ volunteers of a child availing of our service. This is part of Indicator 2.1 which is available from:  
<http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/>
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children. This is part of Indicator 1.1 available from  
<http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/>
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm. This is part of Indicators 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 available from  
<http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/>
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla. This is part of Indicator 2.1 which is available from  
<http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/>
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons. This is part of Indicator 2.1 which is available from  
<http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/>
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person. This is part of Indicators 1.1 and 6.1 which is available from  
<http://www.limerickdiocesessafeguarding.com/policy-and-procedures/children/>

### **Implementation**

Diocese of Limerick is committed to safeguarding children through the implementation of *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*. This Child Safeguarding Statement and our practice support our desire to keep children safe from harm while in our ministries. As part of our annual audit against the relevant indicators of the child safeguarding standards, we will review the effectiveness of our practice as outlined in this statement and will revise, as appropriate

Signed



**Bishop of Limerick**

Date

10<sup>th</sup> December 2019

*For any queries relating to this statement please contact:*

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## **Localised Risk Assessment**

Along with the risks listed in the table above, parishes/religious communities of the Diocese of Limerick may conduct individual risk assessments of their activities with children and put in place procedures to manage these risks in line with guidance from the NBSCCCI in *Guidance 6.2D, Template 1*.



# Information to be displayed and available at Church locations



## Diocesan Safeguarding Children Policy Statement

### Safeguarding Children

**Diocese of Limerick**  
Safeguarding Children Policy Statement

As a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland, we recognise and uphold the dignity and rights of all children, are committed to ensuring their safety and wellbeing, and will work in partnership with parents/guardians to do this. We recognise each child as a gift from God, and we value and encourage the participation of children in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

All Church personnel (including clergy, religious, staff, volunteers and any other Church personnel) have a responsibility to safeguard children through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment that supports their best interests and prevents abuse.

For further information please visit the Diocesan Website [www.limerickdiocese.org](http://www.limerickdiocese.org)

**+ Brendan Leahy**  
Bishop of Limerick

If you are concerned about the welfare and safety of children or wish to raise a matter from the past you may contact any of the following:

**Diocesan Safeguarding Service**  
Ger Crowley,  
Director of Safeguarding (DLP)  
087 3233554 | 061 315856 | [ger@diola.ie](mailto:ger@diola.ie)

**An Garda Síochána**  
Divisional Headquarters,  
Henry St, Limerick  
061 212400

**Tusla - The Child and Family Agency**  
Area Managers Office, HSE Building, Ballycummin Avenue, Raheen Business Park  
061 482792 | [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie)

### Bezpieczeństwo Dzieci

**Oświadczenie w sprawie polityki bezpieczeństwa dzieci Kościoła w Irlandii**

Jako integralna część Kościoła Katolickiego w Irlandii uznajemy i wspieramy godność i prawa wszystkich dzieci oraz gwarantujemy ich bezpieczeństwo i pomyślność. Zamierzamy także współpracować z rodzicami/opiekunami dla osiągnięcia tego celu. Uznajemy, że każde dziecko jest darem od Boga oraz cenimy je i zachęcamy dzieci do aktywnego udziału we wszystkich zajęciach, które rozwijają ich duchowo, fizycznie, emocjonalnie, intelektualnie i społecznie.

Wszyscy pracujący w Kościele (włączając księży, osoby zakonne, pracowników oraz wolontariuszy) mają obowiązek troszczyć się o dzieci poprzez popieranie tego, co służy ich dobru, zdrowiu i rozwojowi w bezpiecznym i troskliwym otoczeniu zgodnie z ich najlepszym interesem i zapobiegać ich wykorzystaniu.

Więcej informacji na ten temat zamieszczamy na stronie diecezji [www.limerickdiocese.org](http://www.limerickdiocese.org)

**+ Brendan Leahy**  
Biskup Diecezji Limerick

Dane kontaktowe personelu jeżeli ma miejsce uzasadniona obawa o dobro i bezpieczeństwo dzieci

**Diocesańska Obsługa Bezpieczeństwa Dzieci**  
Ger Crowley,  
Dyrektor Bezpieczeństwa Dzieci (DLP)  
087 3233554 | 061 315856 | [ger@diola.ie](mailto:ger@diola.ie)

**Polícia**  
Siedziba Oddziału  
Henry St, Limerick  
061 212400

**Tusla - Agencja do spraw dziecka i rodziny**  
Area Managers Office, HSE Building, Ballycummin Avenue, Raheen Business Park  
061 482792 | [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie)

## Safeguarding Information: for Children and Young People; for Parents/Guardians

### Safeguarding Children

Information for  
**Young People**

**Diocese of Limerick**  
our catholic community

**Diocesan Safeguarding Policy says**

**Adults should...**

- Treat children with respect at all times
- Never hurt children
- Always keep children safe from anyone who could hurt or abuse them
- Make sure children treat each other with respect

**What is Abuse?**

**Abuse can be when a child is...**

- Told hurtful things that make them feel scared, unloved and unwanted
- Physically hurt, for example hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or scolding
- Made to do, or watch, something sexual that they don't want to do
- Not looked after properly, does not have enough food or clothes or is left alone
- Bullied, for example, being called names, being hit or pushed, having rumours spread about them or being threatened by someone online

**What should I do if someone hurts me?**

**If someone hurts you or makes you feel uncomfortable or upset you should always...**

- Tell them to stop - Say No
- Get away from them
- Tell an adult you trust.
- Remember... It is never your fault if someone hurts you and you should never keep secrets about it!

**How can I help to keep myself safe?**

**If an adult in the Church is hurting you or someone you know then you should tell an adult you trust or ring any of the following:**

**Safeguarding**  
Director Ger Crowley,  
087 3233554  
061 315856

**An Garda Síochána,**  
061 212400

**Tusla, 061 482792**

Other numbers that you can call for help are:  
Childline 1800 666 666  
Samaritans 116123  
Barnardos 1850 222 300

We believe that 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.

For further information (including on cyber bullying) visit the Tusla website [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie)

### Safeguarding Children

Information for  
**Parents/Guardians**

**Diocese of Limerick**  
our catholic community

What the Diocese of Limerick will do

- We will create a safe environment and treat children with respect
- We will listen if you or your child have any worries or concerns
- We will follow up on all concerns and complaints

**Youth Ministry in the Diocese of Limerick falls into two categories: Diocesan or Parish based initiatives**

**Diocesan initiatives** are for the most part run by the Youth Ministry Team. These youth ministry initiatives include school retreats, youth projects and one-off events as well as residential leadership programmes and pilgrimages.

**Parish initiatives** include Altar Servers, Youth Choirs, Children's Liturgies and Youth Groups. These Parish Groups are generally speaking the responsibility of the Parish Priest and leaders recruited by him.

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

**Diocesan Director of Safeguarding (DLP):** Ger Crowley, 087 3233554 | 061 315856 | [ger@diola.ie](mailto:ger@diola.ie)

**An Garda Síochána:** Divisional Headquarters, Henry St, Limerick, 061 212400

**Tusla - The Child and Family Agency:** Area Managers Office, HSE Building, Ballycummin Ave, Raheen Business Park, 061 482792 | [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie)

Any Parish has a Parish Safeguarding Representative. Enquiries to Terry Boyle, Parish Safeguarding Support Worker Tel: 086 1304775 | [terry@diola.ie](mailto:terry@diola.ie)

For further information please visit the Diocesan Website: [www.limerickdiocese.org](http://www.limerickdiocese.org)

## Poster - Sacristy Safeguarding Protocol

**Sacristy Safeguarding Protocol**

Children are welcome and encouraged to participate in the life of the Parish, and their welfare is promoted by observing the following protocol:

Priests, sacristans, altar servers and other persons involved in any form of ministry must sign the Sacristy Register

Visiting priests must show a valid celebrat or letter of good standing from their Diocese/Ordinary, to be recorded in the Sacristy Register

Other visiting religious or lay people involved in ministry will also show permission from the Diocesan Office to be involved in ministry within the Diocese

Visiting priests and any other persons involved in any form of ministry will show confirmation that they have been vetted by the Diocese of Limerick (except in once-off unregulated situations, for example funerals or weddings, where involvement with children/vulnerable persons is incidental)

Other persons should not be left alone with children/vulnerable persons in the Sacristy.

+ Brendan Leahy  
Bishop of Limerick

Parish Safeguarding Representative(s):

Everyone involved in ministry must comply with the Safeguarding Policy of the Diocese of Limerick

## Safeguarding Standards

### Complementary & Interlinked

#### Child Safeguarding Standards



#### What is a standard?

A standard is the level of practice required to ensure good child safeguarding. Each standard is self-contained and is supported by indicators. It is the standard that provides the framework for action. Audits of compliance will be undertaken against the seven standards and the relevant indicators that apply to the Church body.

## Accessible Child Safeguarding Information

**Diocese of Limerick**

**Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Persons**

**Parish Audit**

Every year the Diocese reviews the work of safeguarding through a parish audit. This is done through the circulation of a questionnaire and follow up visits to the parishes. Sixty questionnaires were issued and returned by parishes between November and December 2016.

Returns demonstrate a broad awareness of safeguarding throughout the Diocese with a strong commitment of over one hundred volunteers supporting the implementation of safeguarding practices within parishes. These volunteers are known as Parish Safeguarding Representatives.

Registering, vetting and training of volunteers who work directly with children is a priority.

Attendance records at all these activities are completed and stored.

Ensuring safe ratios of adults to children/young people in church activities is required and monitored.

Ensuring the continuing development of safeguarding across the parishes will be supported by follow up visits from the Bishop, the Director of Safeguarding and the Parish Safeguarding Support Volunteers.

**What needs to be in place in every parish?**

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

**Safeguarding Children**  
Information for Parents/Guardians

**Safeguarding Children**  
Information for Young People

**Safeguarding Policy & Procedures**  
<http://www.limerickdiocese.org>