



## CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This document has been prepared to comply with the requirements  
of Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the  
Catholic Church in Ireland (2008)

# FOREWORD

Children occupy a central role in the teachings of Jesus, who pointed to the child as the ultimate symbol of the Kingdom of God. 'Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it' (Lk 18:17).

This places a sacred duty on everyone in our Diocese, called to bear witness to the presence of the kingdom of God in the world, to ensure that children are welcomed, cherished and protected in a manner consistent with their central place in the life of the Church.

The fact that Jesus reserved some of his severest warnings to those who would knowingly undermine the faith of one of these 'little ones' is a solemn reminder of the collective obligation of the Diocese to ensure the care and protection of children and young people.

I attach the utmost importance to ensuring the safety and welfare of children in our Diocese and I commit all of our priests and those who work for the Church in the Archdiocese of Dublin to the implementation of this policy.

**+ Diarmuid Martin**  
**Archbishop of Dublin**  
March 2011

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**Each child should be cherished and affirmed as a gift from God with an inherent right to dignity of life and bodily integrity which shall be respected, nurtured and protected by all.**

The Diocese has a child protection policy that is written in a clear and easily understandable way.

**Children have the right to be listened to and heard: Church organisations must respond effectively and ensure any allegations and suspicions of abuse are reported both within the Church and to civil authorities.**

All Church organisations must provide clear guidance on what to do when a concern arises.

**Children should have access to good role models they can trust, who will respect and nurture their spiritual, physical and emotional development. They also have a right to an environment free from abuse and neglect.**

Safe recruitment and vetting practices – codes of behaviour – operating safe activities for children.

**All Church personnel should be offered training in child protection to maintain high standards and good practice.**

Everyone in the Church who comes in contact with children has a role to play in their protection. To do so effectively they need to be aware of child safeguarding and protection issues and have the necessary knowledge and skills to keep children safe.

**Children are welcomed, cherished and protected in a manner consistent with their central place in the life of the Church.**

Policies and procedures put in place by Church organisations to protect children are only effective if Church personnel and parishioners, including children, understand them and know how to use them.

**Those who have suffered child abuse should receive a compassionate and just response and should be offered appropriate pastoral care to rebuild their lives. Those who have harmed others should be helped to face up to the reality of abuse, as well as being assisted in healing.**

Anyone who has been abused or who has perpetrated abuse should be assisted and supported in an appropriate manner.

**To keep children safe, policies, procedures and plans have to be implemented across all Church organisations. Checks are needed to ensure this is happening consistently. The views of those involved inside and outside of Church organisations can help to improve the effectiveness of any measures taken.**

A plan of action is needed to monitor the effectiveness of the steps the Church is taking to keep children safe.

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# AN INTRODUCTION

This document is designed to fulfil the requirements of Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2008) ('Safeguarding Children', hereafter). It sets out the commitment of the Archdiocese of Dublin to ensuring the safety of children involved in Church activities and the specific measures that are being taken to give effect to this. Section 1 details our policy. Section 2, 'Resources', contains summary information and lists the forms, available for download, that can be used in the implementation of this policy. For ease of use Section 1 is divided into seven chapters, reflecting each of the seven standards of Safeguarding Children.

In this document, the term 'safeguarding' is used to describe those measures we take to create safe environments for children. It includes, for example, careful selection of people to work with children in our parishes and Diocesan agencies. 'Child protection concerns' is the term used to describe both allegations that abuse has occurred and suspicions that it may have occurred.

The 'civil authorities' referred to in this document are the Health Service Executive (HSE) and An Garda Síochána. These authorities have different responsibilities in relation to child protection. The responsibility of the HSE's child protection service is to assess current risk to children and to take appropriate protective measures. An Garda Síochána investigates complaints of crimes committed against children and then refers a file to the Director of Public Prosecutions who will decide whether to bring a prosecution against the respondent.

For the purposes of this document a child is a person under the age of 18 years. This document does not deal with the issue of vulnerable adults. However, the same principles apply when dealing, for example, with an adult with an intellectual disability as apply when working with a child.

This document will be reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect changes in national or Church guidelines.

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# SECTION 1

## CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES



# POLICY

# CHAPTER 1



## A WRITTEN POLICY ON KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

The Archdiocese of Dublin values and encourages the participation of children and young people in parish liturgies and in Diocesan activities in order to enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development. We recognise the dignity and rights of all children and are committed to ensuring their protection from all forms of abuse (as defined in Appendix 1). This is a commitment binding on all priests and on those who work in our Diocesan offices and agencies, and in our parishes. It extends to all the many and varied ways

that children share in the life of the Church in our Diocese.

The Diocese complies with the requirements of *Safeguarding Children* and fulfils its obligations and responsibilities for the safeguarding and protection of children by:

- Working in partnership with the civil authorities (the HSE and An Garda Síochána) in all matters that pertain to the protection of children
- Adhering fully to *Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (1999).



The Archdiocese has established the following structures to ensure that this policy is implemented:

1. The Diocesan Advisory Panel on Child Protection
2. The Child Safeguarding and Protection Service (CSPS)
3. Parish Safeguarding Representatives
4. Safeguarding Committee

### **THE DIOCESAN ADVISORY PANEL ON CHILD PROTECTION**

The Panel was established in 1996 to provide independent, expert advice to the Archbishop on all aspects of the management of cases of alleged or confirmed child sexual abuse by priests. Its remit was later extended to deal with all forms of child abuse. It is composed of clerical and lay people with a range of expertise in areas relevant to the management of child protection concerns. A majority of Panel members and its Chairperson are required to be lay people. The Director and Child Protection Officer of the CSPS (see below) attend Advisory Panel meetings and CSPS supports the work of the Panel by providing it with reports and secretarial backup.

### **THE CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION SERVICE**

The Child Safeguarding and Protection Service (CSPS) of the Archdiocese of Dublin was formally established in 2003 following recommendations from the Advisory Panel

for a cohesive and effective support service for those who have experienced clerical child abuse and for their families, and for a proper system for the monitoring, supervision and support of those priests against whom allegations of child sexual abuse have been made and who are out of ministry as a consequence.

The primary objective of the CSPS is the safeguarding and protection from abuse of children and young people who are involved in the life and work of the Catholic Church in the Diocese.

Under the direction of, and reporting to, the Archbishop, the service is currently made up of a team of eight people.

The team consists of:

- Director
- Child Protection Officer
- Support Coordinator (coordinates the provision of support to victims of abuse and their families)
- Training and Development Coordinator (trains Church personnel in the Diocese and parishes, and provides advice and support on all aspects of safeguarding)
- Priest Delegate (coordinates the relationship between the Diocese and a priest against whom an allegation of abuse has been made)
- Priest Support Coordinator (supervises, supports and monitors priests out of ministry due to child protection concerns)
- Two administrators.



The service has three distinct functions.

These are:

- **Creating and maintaining safe environments for children who are involved in Church activities.** This is done through:
  - o providing training and advice to priests and Diocesan personnel in child safeguarding and protection
  - o developing materials to assist parishes and Diocesan agencies and organisations in creating safe environments for children
  - o carrying out audits of these agencies, organisations and parishes to ensure they are operating in compliance with the requirements set out in *Safeguarding Children*.
- **Providing pastoral outreach to those affected by abuse.** This is a service provided to those who have experienced abuse and to members of their families. The service provided consists of:
  - o facilitating people to make complaints about child abuse
  - o accessing counselling for those who need and want it
  - o informing them, at every stage, of the steps being taken to address their concerns.
- **Dealing with child protection concerns.**
  - o The management of child protection concerns relating to priests of the Diocese

- o The provision of advice and assistance to parishes and Diocesan agencies in their management of child protection concerns
- o Oversight of child protection practices in parishes and Diocesan agencies in order to ensure they are fully compliant with *Children First* and *Safeguarding Children*.

### PARISH SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVES

Each parish has at least one Safeguarding Representative, who is responsible for the promotion of best practice and compliance with the requirements of *Safeguarding Children* at parish level. Many of our parishes have more than one. Each of these Representatives has been trained for this role. The CSPS maintains contact with the Safeguarding Representatives.

### SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

The Safeguarding Committee will advise the Archbishop on further developments in, and approaches to, safeguarding and child protection and, in particular, on how to best convey to children and their parents information about the safeguards already in place.

## CHAPTER 2



### HOW TO RESPOND TO CHILD PROTECTION ALLEGATIONS AND SUSPICIONS

The paramount consideration for the Archdiocese of Dublin in all matters relating to children is their safety and protection from all forms of abuse.

The following steps are taken in relation to all child protection concerns that relate to Church personnel in the context of Church activities.

- All child protection concerns are reported to the HSE and An Garda Siochana as soon as possible
- Appropriate interim protective measures are taken, pending the outcome of any Garda investigation and HSE assessment. Such measures typically involve the person against whom an allegation of child abuse has been made having no contact with children
- Final determination of the person's future role within the Diocese is informed by the outcome of any Garda investigation, HSE assessment and internal disciplinary processes
- No person against whom an allegation of child sexual abuse has been substantiated is permitted to work with

children on behalf of the Diocese, its parishes or agencies and no priest against whom a substantiated allegation has been made can exercise priestly ministry in the Diocese.

The internal case management of child protection concerns involving priests and religious working for the Diocese is the responsibility of the CSPS, working in close cooperation with the HSE and An Garda Síochána. The role of the CSPS in situations regarding parish workers or employees of Diocesan agencies is to provide advice and assistance and to ensure that the parishes and Diocesan agencies act in compliance with national and Church guidelines.

The management of child protection concerns that arise in relation to activities that are not Church related and do not involve Church personnel is a matter for the civil authorities: the HSE and An Garda Síochána. The responsibility of the Diocese or parish in such situations is to make sure that any information it has on these matters is relayed to the relevant agency as quickly and as comprehensively as possible.

### **CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS IN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY**

Such a concern could arise through a child making a disclosure of abuse. Advice on dealing with a disclosure is given in Appendix 4. Experience suggests that it is not common for children to make such disclosures to Diocesan and parish

personnel. Diocesan and parish workers are more likely to encounter child protection concerns in other ways. Children may share information or worries about their friends and peers. Or, there may be signs and symptoms of abuse, for example, a child whose personal hygiene is particularly and consistently poor or who has unusual bruises or injuries. Sometimes abuse may be directly observed, as when a parish worker sees a child being assaulted.

All child protection concerns ought to be passed on to the civil authorities, in the first instance, the HSE and, in an emergency, An Garda Síochána. This can be done in one of two ways, either by going directly to the HSE or An Garda Síochána or by taking the concern to the Director or Child Protection Officer of the CSPS. The information should not be shared with anyone else. **It is highly confidential information, to be shared only with those who need to know it for the purposes of protecting children** (see Appendix 5).

The HSE child protection service operates through a network of local area-based social work teams. These teams operate a 'duty system', that is, there is a social worker 'on duty' each day during normal office hours. The contact details of the local office are available in the phone book, on [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie), through Lo Call: 1850 24 1850, and they are also on the Safeguarding Notice in the local Church.

Concerns about a child should be discussed with the social worker on duty in the local HSE office. The duty social worker will be used to dealing with such concerns and will assist in identifying the key issues. He or she should indicate how the HSE will deal with the concern. A record should be made of the contact with the social worker. This note should include the name of the social worker and of the local HSE office, the date of the contact and the information shared with the social worker. This record should then be shared with the CSPS.

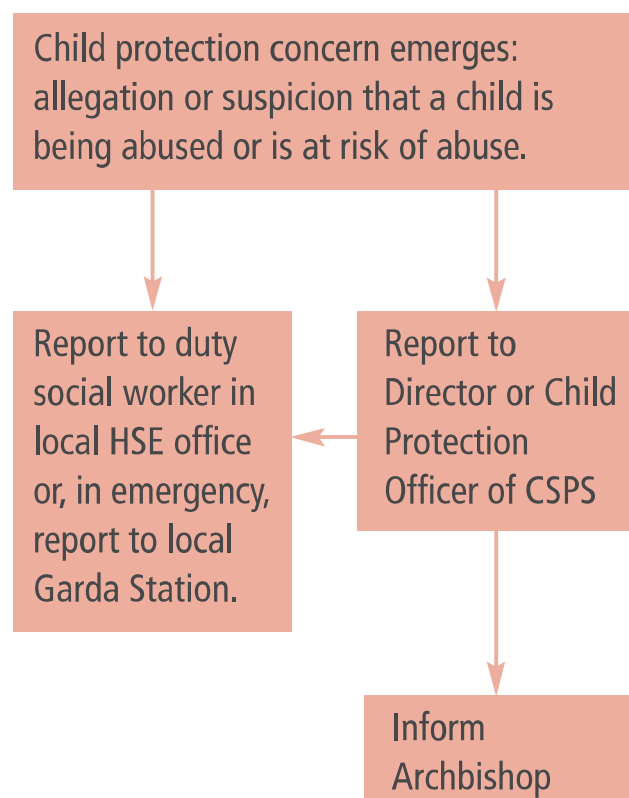
If the HSE cannot be contacted and the situation is urgent, the matter should be reported to the local Garda station. An urgent situation might be one where a child indicates that he or she is afraid to go home for fear of being abused. The number of the local Garda station is available in the phone book, on [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie) and it is on the Safeguarding Notice in the local Church.

Contact may also be made with the CSPS. The Director or Child Protection Officer will take down the details of the concern and pass them on to the relevant agency. The CSPS is available to offer advice and support to Diocesan and parish personnel who have concerns about a child.

It is very important that parish and Diocesan personnel understand the limits of their child protection role. They cannot intervene directly to protect children and

should not attempt to do so. Nor should they undertake to investigate a child protection concern. Those are matters for the HSE and An Garda Síochána. Equally, Diocesan and parish personnel should resist any temptation to offer children any false reassurance. Such personnel can best help children by passing on information to those who can protect them.

This procedure can be presented diagrammatically:



*This information is summarised in Appendix 3.*



# CHAPTER 3



## PREVENTING HARM TO CHILDREN

The Archdiocese of Dublin is working to ensure that the environment in which children participate in Diocesan and parish activities is the safest that it can be. There are a number of steps that we take in order to bring this about. They are:

1. Adopting a child centred approach
2. Ensuring that we obtain the permission of parents for the involvement of their children in Diocesan and parish activities
3. Choosing carefully those who work with children on behalf of the Archdiocese
4. Ensuring that Diocesan workers and volunteers behave appropriately in their dealings with children
5. Making proper arrangements when organising activities and outings
6. Keeping good records.

### A CHILD CENTRED APPROACH

This involves:

- Valuing children and demonstrating our respect for them
- Listening to them and taking their views seriously

- Involving them in decision making, in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Dealing with their complaints, and those of their parents, effectively and promptly
- Setting clear limits, appropriate to their age and stage of development, for their behaviour.

### **OBTAINING PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR INVOLVEMENT IN DIOCESAN AND PARISH ACTIVITIES**

- A signed consent form from parents or guardians is to be obtained prior to the participation of children and young people in events, activities and groups
- The form should be accompanied by a description of the activity or outing, those organising it, and the contact details for a responsible person the parent can contact
- The form should contain an emergency contact number for the parent/s or guardian/s
- Parents or guardians should be asked to indicate if the children have any specific dietary requirements, medical or other needs
- The form should indicate whether photographs or video recordings will be made and specific permission sought from parents for their children's inclusion
- The form should give (or be accompanied by) the name and contact

details of the person in charge of the outing or activity.

### **CHOOSING CAREFULLY THOSE WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN ON BEHALF OF THE ARCHDIOCESE**

Those parishes and Diocesan agencies who wish to employ staff should do so in accordance with the Diocese's HR policies and procedures. The recruitment of volunteers is a less formal process but it should include the following:

- People should be required to complete an application form and provide the names and contact details of at least two referees
- Candidates should be interviewed for the post in question
- Candidates should be required to fill up a Garda Vetting form
- Candidates should be asked to sign an undertaking to comply with the parish/ Diocesan agency/ group's code of practice.

#### **Garda Vetting**

The Archdiocese of Dublin supports the principle that Church personnel whose work with the Diocese, its agencies and parishes brings them into contact with children and vulnerable adults should undergo Garda vetting. Every role potentially involves some level of such contact. Irrespective of the degree of contact, the Diocese requires all who are employed, or who engage in volunteer



ministry or works of service for the Christian community in Diocesan offices, Diocesan agencies or parishes to undergo Garda Vetting as an expression of our common commitment to safeguarding children.

Garda Vetting is one among a range of safeguards and not necessarily the most important one. However, it acts as a deterrent to those who are a danger to children of using the Church to get access to them. It is good practice to require everyone to complete the form before they start work. If people have to commence work before their vetting form has been processed, they should, as an interim measure, be asked to sign a Declaration Form, and to sign their agreement to adhere to the parish or agency's child protection policy and their contact with children should be closely supervised.

A Diocesan Garda Vetting Service is provided by the Human Resources Department of the Archdiocese. Garda Vetting Forms are available from, and should be returned to:  
Garda Vetting Administrator  
Holy Cross Diocesan Centre  
Clonliffe College  
Dublin 3

Information and advice is available from this office, telephone: 01 8087550.

## ENSURING THAT DIOCESAN WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS BEHAVE APPROPRIATELY

This is best achieved by having codes of practice for employees and volunteers. The aim of a code of practice is to provide guidance to those working with children and to set out the expectations that the Diocese, its agencies and parishes, has of them. A code of practice contains some general guidance. It cannot cover every eventuality. Adults working with children have an overriding Duty of Care to children and this takes precedence over any specific requirement of a code of practice. For example, it is generally not advisable for a worker or volunteer to travel in a car alone with a child. However, if a child is in need of emergency medical treatment and there is no other way to get him or her to hospital than for an adult to travel alone with the child, it would be irresponsible not to do so. **Where it becomes necessary to depart from the code of practice, the reasons for this should be carefully recorded and steps taken to avoid such a situation recurring in the future.**

When considering what sorts of behaviour are appropriate in dealing with children, it is important to bear in mind that the intentions of the adults are less important than the impact of their behaviour on the children. For this reason, a key aspect of any code is the creation of an environment where it is safe for children to ask questions and express their concerns,

confident in the knowledge that what they say will be heard, taken seriously and acted on.

Codes of conduct drawn up by Diocesan agencies and parishes must contain the following:

- Positive statements, indicating what sorts of behaviours are appropriate, for example, listening to children
- Prohibitions, indicating behaviour that is never acceptable, such as, hitting children
- Good practice guidelines, indicating what is generally acceptable or unacceptable but that allow for exceptions, such as, being alone with a child.

A customised Code of Practice should be drawn up by all organisations or groups working with children in the Diocese. It should take particular account of the nature of the service or activity and the needs of the children involved. For example, particular considerations apply when dealing with children with disabilities.

Positive statements that should form part of any code of conduct:

- Treat all children with respect
- Provide them with good role models
- Operate within Church and State principles and guidelines
- Be visible to others when working with children
- Challenge and report abusive and

potentially abusive behaviour

- Develop a culture where children can talk openly, ask questions and express any worries or concerns they may have
- Respect each child's boundaries and help her/ him to develop an appreciation of her/his rights and responsibilities
- Parish and Diocesan workers and volunteers work in partnership with parents and share information with them.

The Code of Practice should make clear that it is never acceptable to:

- Abuse a child in any way
- Physically chastise a child
- Develop a relationship with a particular child that is exclusive of others
- Place a child at risk
- Speak to a child or behave in a manner that is offensive, developmentally inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Do things of a personal nature for a child that he or she can do for him/herself
- Condone or fail to challenge unacceptable behaviour in a child
- Discriminate against a child or group of children
- Ask a child to keep a secret.

### **Code of Behaviour for Children**

Children should be involved in drawing up a code of behaviour for themselves. The children will require assistance and guidance from adult staff and volunteers

but should retain an age appropriate level of responsibility for developing the code. They should be encouraged to avoid merely drawing up a list of prohibitions. The code should commit them to upholding values such as respect for self and others, valuing the contribution of each individual, and including those who are different by virtue of ethnicity, disability or social background. The code should also refer to the issue of bullying in its many forms and how it is to be addressed.

### **MAKING PROPER ARRANGEMENTS WHEN ORGANISING ACTIVITIES AND OUTINGS**

Arrangements should be made with the parents of children, rather than with the children themselves. It is not appropriate to contact a child directly, for example, on his or her mobile phone and/ or to make an arrangement of any sort without the prior knowledge and consent of the parent/s or guardian/s.

#### **A. TRIPS AWAY FROM HOME**

- All trips, including day trips, overnight stays and holidays, need careful advance planning, including adequate provision for safety in regard to transport, facilities, activities and emergencies. Adequate insurance should be in place
- Parental consent should be sought, as described above
- A copy of the itinerary and contact

telephone numbers should be made available to parents or guardians

- There must be adequate, gender-appropriate, supervision for boys and girls
- Particular attention should be given to ensuring that the privacy of young people is respected when they are away on trips
- The provision of appropriate and adequate sleeping arrangements should be ensured in advance of the trip
- Sleeping areas for boys and girls should be separate and supervised by at least two adults of the same sex as the group of children being supervised
- If, in an emergency situation, an adult considers it necessary to be in a children's dormitory or bedroom without another adult being present he/she should (a) immediately inform another adult in a position of responsibility and (b) make a diary note of the circumstances
- The roles and responsibilities of the young people and the rules and boundaries to be observed should be discussed and agreed prior to departure, and communicated to their parents
- The tasks required of young people should be appropriate to their age and capacity. Young people under 18 should not be asked to carry out personal care tasks for others unless this is discussed and agreed with parents (for example, where siblings are travelling together)

- There should be a named person to whom all concerns and complaints are referred and all such concerns and complaints should be followed up in a timely and efficient manner.

## B. PILGRIMAGES AND RETREATS

Pilgrimages and retreats are an important part of the Diocese's pastoral and spiritual engagement with children and young people. Those involved in the planning and organisation of pilgrimages and retreats should adhere to the same guidance as outlined for other activities with children and young people.

## C. USE OF COMPUTERS

- Parishes and Diocesan agencies should have an 'Acceptable Usage Policy' in place regarding the use of email and the internet and children should only be permitted to use email and the internet for defined purposes that are consistent with this policy
- Particular care should be taken to ensure that children do not expose themselves to the risk of harm through such activities as posting personal information or entering into extended communication with people they do not know
- Where a computer is used by more than one person, everyone should be obliged to have a unique username and password, or where this is not possible, to maintain a signed record of the date, time and duration of his/ her use of the computer
- Computers which can be accessed by children or young people should always have appropriate filtering software
- All computers in Diocesan organisations and parishes should be monitored regularly to ensure that they are being used in accordance with the stated policy. Where there is any suspicion or doubt, a person with specialist knowledge of computer hardware and software should be asked to assess the purposes for which the computer has been used.

## KEEPING GOOD RECORDS

Since the Diocese is, amongst other things, an organisation that must account for the manner in which it takes care of children, it is very important that adequate records are kept. Therefore:

- An accurate record should be kept for each child and young person participating in activities, including the programme details
- The parental consent forms should be retained
- A written record of organisers, supervisors, employees and volunteers in attendance at events, such as meetings, choir rehearsals and sports activities, should be kept
- An Incident/Accident Report Form should be completed in the event of an accident or incident relating to a child
- All records should be dated and signed.



# CHAPTER 4



## TRAINING AND EDUCATION FOR KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

Training in safeguarding and child protection is provided by the CSPS to:

- Priests and Religious
- Parish Safeguarding Representatives
- Employees of Diocesan agencies
- Others, on request.

The Training and Development Coordinator of the CSPS coordinates the delivery of training. Up to the end of 2010, the Diocese was part of a training initiative in association with the Volunteer Development Agency (VDA) in Northern Ireland. In 2011 a new suite of training

modules was developed by the National Board for the Safeguarding of Children in the Catholic Church (the 'National Office'). The training modules are similar to what had previously been provided but they relate more closely to the context of Church activities. The modules have been developed to ensure that each post holder (designated person, safeguarding representative etc) receives training appropriate to his/her role. This new training is being provided to priests, employees and volunteers in the Diocese, its agencies and parishes.

## CHAPTER 5



### COMMUNICATING THE DIOCESE'S SAFEGUARDING MESSAGE

Each Church in the Diocese is required to display a Safeguarding Notice in a prominent place. The Notice is a statement of the child safeguarding and protection policy and contains contact details for:

- The Director of the CSPS
- The HSE local social work office
- The local Garda station
- Support services, such as, Towards Healing (formerly Faoiseamh).

The CSPS has its own website: [www.cps.dublindiocese.ie](http://www.cps.dublindiocese.ie) which provides information on the service, the team, the

procedure for reporting child protection concerns and information on support services.

Many parishes have their own websites that provide similar information, along with the name/s and contact details of the parish's own safeguarding representative/s (many parishes have two or more). Information about child safeguarding and protection is regularly included in parish newsletters and, in some parishes, the safeguarding representative speaks about his/her work at Mass on an annual basis.



## CHAPTER 6



### ACCESS TO ADVICE AND SUPPORT

The CSPS provides advice and support to parishes and Diocesan agencies. The CSPS receives advice and support from the National Office and also through a network of professional contacts with other Diocesan child protection services, professional associations and international organisations. Each member of the team is supported to obtain external supervision and consultation.

The CSPS works in close cooperation with the HSE and An Garda Síochána.

Those who approach the CSPS with complaints are given information, advice and support. Our Support Coordinator maintains contact with them and ensures that those seeking counselling are put in

touch with Towards Healing (formerly 'Faoiseamh'). Towards Healing arranges access to, and payment for, counselling for those who have experienced abuse and their families.

There are arrangements in place for the supervision, monitoring and support of those priests against whom allegations of abuse are under investigation or have been substantiated. Depending on their needs and their willingness to engage, they are referred to specialist services for assessment, treatment and counselling. The Priest Support Coordinator monitors their activities in order to ensure that they do not pose a risk to the safety of children and that they are compliant with those restrictions that have been placed on them.

## CHAPTER 7



### IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE STANDARDS

The CSPS developed a plan during 2010 setting out targets for the implementation of the Standards, including the development of this policy document.

The Archdiocese of Dublin is committed to funding the CSPS on an ongoing basis and to contributing to support services, such as, Towards Healing.

An annual audit is conducted of safeguarding practices in the parishes of the Diocese. The work of the CSPS is reviewed and updated on a continuing basis.

There are secure systems in place in the CSPS and other relevant Diocesan offices for the recording and safe storage of all child protection concerns.

## SECTION 2

### CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES



## RESOURCES

# APPENDIX 1

## DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

(Taken from *Safeguarding Children, Resource 10*)

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in their family, in a faith based, institutional or community setting; by those known to them, or more rarely by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult/s, another child or children. It often involves people they trust and know well.

The abuse of children generally involves one or more of four main forms of abuse:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect.

It is essential that personnel in the Catholic Church recognise that the abuse of children is **not just about sexual abuse**. Many children experience harm through emotional, physical abuse and neglect. The Church must take responsibility to nurture, protect and take action for any child who is suffering harm, whatever the harm may be and whoever is causing it.

Some children may be particularly vulnerable to abuse. For example there is

research which has found that disabled children are three times more likely to be abused than non-disabled children.

Some studies suggest children from minority ethnic groups may be at increased risk of abuse through factors such as stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. There is also extensive evidence that these children and families often fail to receive an appropriate service when concerns are raised about a child's welfare. Over-reaction and inaction have both been shown to be based on misunderstandings and misinterpretations of different cultural patterns, which have led to failure to meet children's needs.

Other groups of children who might be particularly vulnerable include asylum-seeking children, children who are in care, children who are living with parents/ carers who misuse drugs and/ or alcohol.

## DEFINITIONS

### Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or

otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual

activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts (oral sex). They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

### **Neglect**

Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and failure to access appropriate medical care or treatment.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. It is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, such as the neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may also occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.



# APPENDIX 2

## THE DIOCESAN CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION POLICY

### A Summary

1. Our policy is based on Gospel values: children occupy a central place in the teachings of Jesus.
2. We are committed to protecting children who are involved in Church activities in accordance with Church (*Safeguarding Children*) and State (*Children First*) guidelines. All child protection concerns are reported to the civil authorities: the HSE and An Garda Síochana.
3. The Diocese has structures in place to ensure the safety and protection of children.

At Diocesan level there is the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service (CSPS), the Advisory Panel and the Safeguarding Committee.

The CSPS:

- helps to create safe environments for children in parishes and Diocesan agencies
- provides pastoral support to those effected by abuse
- deals with child protection concerns.

The Advisory Panel, which is also supported by CSPS advises the Archbishop on all aspects of the management of child protection concerns involving priests.

The Safeguarding Committee will assist in the development of good practice and in communicating the Diocese's safeguarding message.

Each parish has a Safeguarding Representative to ensure good practice at parish level.

4. The priests and everyone who works for the Diocese or in one of its parishes must comply with this policy.

Individuals and groups who use Diocesan or parish property or facilities to run activities for children must have their own child protection policy which complies with this one.

The Diocese will make sure that this policy is implemented. We will review and update the policy when required.



# APPENDIX 3

## DEALING WITH A CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN RELATING TO A CHILD IN THE CONTEXT OF HIS/HER LIFE IN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY

1. A child protection concern arises through:
- child making disclosure
  - information from a third party, e.g. a child shares a worry about a friend
  - child shows signs or symptoms of abuse e.g. consistent very poor personal hygiene, unusual injuries
  - direct observation e.g. parish worker observes assault or emotional abuse of child.

### **Report to civil authorities (2A) or to CSPS (2B)**

#### **2A Report to HSE:**

- ascertain contact details of local HSE social work team (phone book, [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie), Lo Call 1850 24 1850, Parish Safeguarding Notice)
- call office, ask for duty social worker
- discuss concern, ask what steps HSE likely to take
- record contact, name of social worker and office, information shared
- send record to CSPS.

#### **Report to An Garda Síochána (matter is urgent, HSE unavailable)**

- ascertain contact details of local Garda Station (phone book, [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie), Parish Safeguarding Notice)

- call station, ask for duty Sergeant
- discuss concern, ask what steps Garda are likely to take
- record contact, name of Garda and station, information shared
- send record to CSPS.

#### **2B Report to CSPS**

- phone 01 8360314
- ask for Director or Child Protection Officer
- Discuss your concern
- Send on any written records or other relevant information
- If Director or Child Protection Officer unavailable, explain concern to another team member who will pass on the information. Give contact details so Director or Child Protection Officer can call back
- If CSPS office is closed and matter is urgent, contact the Gardai (as above).

#### **Do:**

- report the concern as soon as possible, giving as much information as you have to hand.

#### **Do not:**

- conduct your own investigation
- share the information with anyone else. It is highly confidential.

# APPENDIX 4

## DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

Where a child or young person discloses child abuse to a person working in any capacity in the Diocese, it is important that the situation is handled sensitively and compassionately. It should be kept in mind that the child or young person may feel he or she has taken a huge risk in disclosing the abuse. It is likely that he or she is doing so in the hope that something will be done to bring an end to the abuse, even if the child says he or she does not want anything done about it.

The following general guidelines should be observed:

- Remain calm
- Listen to the child carefully and in a manner that conveys that he or she is being heard and taken seriously
- Give the child the opportunity to tell the story in his or her own time
- Ask questions only for the purposes of clarification, such as, 'can you tell me what you mean by that?'
- Reassure the child that he or she has done the right thing in disclosing the abuse
- Tell the child he or she is not responsible for the abuse
- Do not promise to keep the information secret. However, you can reassure the child/young person that the information

will be shared only with those who have a right to hear it

- Do not express any judgments about the person against whom the allegation is being made
- Explain the steps that are likely to be followed after the disclosure of the abuse, that is, that the matter will be referred to the HSE and a social worker will meet the child
- Tell the child that you are willing to give help and support but only if you are sure you can follow through on this. It is better to make no commitment than to let the child down.

In the case of an adult disclosing child abuse, it is equally important that the initial response is characterised by compassion and sensitivity. The general guidance outlined above should be followed.

**The person who receives a disclosure of current child abuse should immediately report the matter to the Social Work Department of the HSE in the area in which the child resides. Where there is a difficulty in making immediate contact and there is any suggestion that the child, or any child, may be in immediate danger, the Gardai should be contacted.**

Where the abuse disclosed occurred in the past and there is no current danger, it should still be reported to the HSE, though it need not be done as a matter of urgency.

The Child Safeguarding and Protection Service of the Archdiocese is available to offer advice in such matters and must be informed of all such disclosures.

Whether or not the person making the disclosure wishes to personally report it to the civil authorities, it must to be explained to her or him that the Archdiocese's Child Safeguarding and Protection procedures require that all disclosures be referred to the civil authorities (HSE and An Garda Síochána). Where necessary the CSPA will offer support in making the report.

If the disclosure is related to an allegation involving Diocesan personnel, then it should be explained that the matter will be reported both to the civil authorities and to the Director of the CSPA who has the responsibility for managing allegations against Diocesan personnel.

### **Recording the Disclosure**

As soon as possible after the disclosure it should be recorded accurately.

The record should be clear, factual and concise. That is, write down what you have been told. Avoid giving personal opinions or interpretations of the facts as they were presented to you.

Sign and date the report. Once completed the contents of the report should not be changed in any way. If the report needs amending it should be done as a separate addendum. Sign and date the addendum and attach it to the original report.

The parents or primary carers of a child or young person affected by suspected or disclosed abuse must be notified as soon as possible, unless doing so places the child/young person in danger. The HSE should be consulted as to how best to manage informing the parents/caregivers.

# APPENDIX 5

## CONFIDENTIALITY AND THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

The following are key principles which should guide practice on confidentiality and exchange of information in regard to child protection.

must not be used for another without consulting the person who provided the information.

- The principle that 'the welfare of the child/young person is paramount' means that considerations of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children/young people to be protected from harm.
- Information regarding a child protection concern should only be shared on 'a need to know' basis in the interests of the child/young person.
- Details of a disclosure, a suspicion, or an allegation should be disclosed only to those who have a right to such information, e.g. the Director of CSPA, the HSE, An Garda Síochána.
- Personal information concerning the family of a child who is the subject of an alleged or suspected incident should be kept confidential and should only be communicated to appropriate persons if this information has a bearing, directly or indirectly, on the alleged or suspected abuse.
- It should be clearly understood that information gathered for one purpose

# APPENDIX 6

The following forms are available to download from the website of CSPA, [www.cps.dublindiocese.ie](http://www.cps.dublindiocese.ie)

- Altar Server Application/ Consent Form
- Parental Consent Form
- Child Consent Form
- Sample Code of Conduct
- Incident/ Accident Report Form
- Adult Volunteer Application Form
- Adult Volunteer Declaration Form
- Character and Personal Reference Form
- Recruitment Checklist
- Garda Vetting Form

Other forms will be posted on the website as they become available.