



Child Safeguarding  
& Protection Service

PARISH SAFEGUARDING  
REPRESENTATIVE  
HANDBOOK

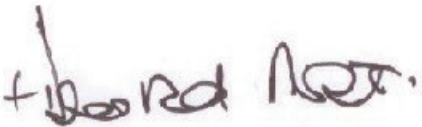
Archdiocese of Dublin

## FORWARD

I am pleased to be able to recommend this short guide to the work of the Parish Safeguarding Representative. It provides me with an opportunity to acknowledge the work that is being done by the Safeguarding Representatives throughout the Diocese to make sure that children and young people who are involved in Church activities in our parishes are being looked after properly and protected from all forms of ill treatment and abuse.

Bringing the message of Jesus into the lives of our children and young people is central to the Church's mission. Because of our recent troubled history responsible parents are understandably hesitant when it comes to allowing their children to become involved in activities in our parishes. It is our responsibility to ensure that they can do so with a clear conscience and peace of mind, knowing that we have done all that is possible to ensure the safety of their children.

I am very grateful to those you who have assumed this burden on behalf of the Church in the Archdiocese of Dublin.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Diarmuid Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

+ Diarmuid Martin  
Archbishop of Dublin  
March 2018

# INTRODUCTION

This guide is intended to help Parish Safeguarding Representatives to carry out their role within their respective parishes. It is designed to ensure that best practice is employed when it comes to creating a safe environment for all children and young people who engage in parish activities. The Parish Safeguarding Representative plays a crucial role in ensuring that all parish volunteers, clergy, staff, children and their parents/guardians are fully aware of Diocesan child safeguarding policies and procedures. They also act as a conduit between the parish and the Child Safeguarding & Protection Service.

## APPOINTMENT

The Parish Safeguarding Representative is nominated by the Parish Priest (or equivalent), preferably on the recommendation of the Parish Pastoral Council, and reports directly to the Parish Priest. The Parish Safeguarding Representative cannot operate effectively if working alone and in isolation from other members of the parish team. However, where collaboration between the Parish Priest, Parish Pastoral Council and the Safeguarding Representative is undertaken in a positive and constructive manner, the safeguarding of children flourishes and grows.

Every parish should have a minimum of two Safeguarding Representatives. Each Parish Safeguarding Representative serves a three year term which can be renewed once so that no one is asked to carry out the role for more than six years.

# REQUIREMENTS

Prior to taking up their new appointment, all new Parish Safeguarding Representatives must:

- Complete and submit a Garda vetting form
- Undertake a one day child safeguarding training course
- Submit their name and contact details to the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service (CSPS).

## **They also should**

- Have good communication skills
- Make themselves available to attend Parish Pastoral Council meetings, when required
- Attend such further meetings and training as recommended by CSPS during their term of office.

# ROLE

The Parish Safeguarding Representative is required to:

- 1 Raise awareness of what safeguarding entails at parish level;
- 2 Offer information and advice on safeguarding matters to individuals and groups involved with children in the parish;
- 3 Ensure that all those working in the parish understand their responsibilities in relation to child safeguarding;
- 4 Ensure that church activities are provided in a way that ensures that all children are looked after safely and are protected from abuse;
- 5 Ensure that the contact details of the relevant civil and diocesan safeguarding personnel are widely publicised.

## **Note:**

Confidentiality is a core principal of Safeguarding Children. All information whether verbal, written or electronic should only be shared on a “need to know” basis .Any documents which contain information about people, such as forms, must be stored in a secure place on parish property.

If ever in doubt, please contact the CSPS.

1

**Raising awareness of what safeguarding is includes:**

- Putting information about safeguarding in parish newsletters and websites;
- Alerting parish personnel to safeguarding training events;
- Attending Parish Pastoral Council meetings as required;
- Updating church notice boards with details of the relevant civil and diocesan safeguarding personnel;
- Reporting to the Diocesan Designated Person any concerns that may arise.

2

**Offering information and advice to individuals and groups involves:**

- Ensuring that such individuals and groups know how you can be contacted and
- Being available to them by phone or in person, as appropriate.

3

**Ensuring that all those working in the parish understand their responsibilities includes:**

- Ensuring that parish personnel understand what training they are required to undertake (information session or full day);
- Liaising with CSPS to ensure that adequate training opportunities are provided;
- Ensuring that parish personnel are informed of the training being provided;
- Keeping a record of those who have attended training and the type of training provided.

**4**

**Ensuring that church activities are provided in a way that ensures that all children are looked after safely and are protected from abuse includes;**

- Liaising with the leaders of the activity;
- Ensuring proper levels of supervision are in place at all times;
- Ensuring adequate records are maintained.
- Carry out Annual Reviews of groups involving children;
- Check sacristy register twice yearly.

**5**

**Ensuring that the contact details of the relevant civil and diocesan safeguarding personnel are widely publicised involves ensuring they are placed on:**

- Church notice boards
- Parish newsletter
- Parish website



# USEFUL INFORMATION

## **Parish Volunteer Recruitment: Child Safeguarding Requirements 2024**

### **Category 1: Existing volunteers who do not work with children**

- must complete the 2hr Safeguarding Training Information Session – refresher every 3 years
- must have their name, role and contact details entered into the Parish Volunteer Register

### **Category 2: New volunteers who do not work with children**

- the applicant will complete the Adult Volunteer Form
- the priest in charge will meet the individual for an interview
- the priest will consult with 3rd parties to confirm the applicant's suitability (references) and keep a written record of all verbal references

Once recruited:

- the applicant will be given a copy of the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy (2023), given time to read this and revert to the priest in charge with any questions. Once this is done the applicant will be asked to sign a declaration that they have read and understand the document and agree to abide by its contents.
- the applicant will complete the Safeguarding Training Information session-refresher every 3 years
- the parish will enter the applicant's name, role and contact details into the Parish Volunteer Register

**Category 3: Existing volunteers with a specific role with children (e.g. person in charge of altar servers, leader of children's choir etc)**

- must complete the Adult Volunteer form
- must complete the Garda Vetting process. This must be renewed every 3 years.
- must complete full day Safeguarding Training programme-refresher every 3 years
- must have their name, role and contact details entered into the Parish Volunteer Register

#### **Category 4: New volunteers with a specific role with children (e.g. person in charge of altar servers, leader of children's choir)**

- the applicant will complete the Adult Volunteer Form
- the priest in charge will meet the individual for an interview and induction (explaining role)
- the priest will consult with 3rd parties to confirm the applicant's suitability (references) and keep a written record of all verbal references
- the applicant will complete the Garda Vetting form the parish will submit the completed Garda Vetting form to CSPS. This must be renewed every 3 years.

#### **Once recruited:**

- the applicant will be given a copy of the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy (2023), given time to read this and revert to the priest in charge with any queries. Once this is done the applicant will be asked to sign a declaration that they have read and understand the document and agree to abide by its contents.
- the applicant will be given a written role description
- the parish will enter the applicant's name, role and contact details into the Parish Volunteer Register
- the applicant will complete the full day safeguarding training programme
- the applicant will complete an agreed probationary period

# DIOCESAN POLICY STATEMENT

The Archdiocese of Dublin and the Parish of:

.....  
value and encourage 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 recognize the dignity and rights of all children and are committed ensuring their protection from all forms of abuse.

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.

## Your Parish Safeguarding Representatives

.....  
and ..... are contactable through the parish office.

**If you have a concern about child abuse, please contact either:**

### Diocesan Child Safeguarding & Protection Service (CSPS)

- Designated Liaison Person  
Andrew Fagan, Director,  
Child Safeguarding and Protection Service,  
20-23 Arran Quay, Dublin 7, D07XK85. Tel. 01-8360314  
(Mon-Fri: 09:00 – 17:00)
  
- Deputy Designated Liaison Person  
Deirdre Donnelly, Safeguarding and Support Officer  
Child Safeguarding and Protection Service,  
20-23 Arran Quay, Dublin 7, D07XK85. Tel. 01-8360314  
(Mon-Fri: 09:00 – 17:00)

OR

Tusla Office: .....

OR YOUR

Local Garda Station: .....

# CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION SERVICE

Mr. Andrew Fagan, Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (DLP)  
Ph. 01 8360314

Ms. Deirdre Donnelly, Safeguarding and Support Officer  
(Deputy DLP) Ph. 01 8360314

Mr. Garry Kehoe, Training & Development Manager  
Ph. 01 8360314

Ms. Vivienne Knight, Garda Vetting Coordinator  
Ph. 01 8360314

**Email : [info.csps@dublindiocese.ie](mailto:info.csps@dublindiocese.ie)**

**Web: [www.csps.dublindiocese.ie](http://www.csps.dublindiocese.ie)**

## PRAYER

*We ask you God to strengthen and guide all who are  
in positions of trust and authority,*

*May they always make wise and informed decisions  
that will protect the defenceless and small.*

*We ask you God to guide all agencies who work  
towards safeguarding children,*

*May they never lose sight of the needs of children.*

*We ask you God to place your protection around our  
church communities,*

*May they be places of safety for children.*

*Amen.*



