



Diocese of Elphin

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

RECORDING POLICY



In February 2009, the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland issued its document “Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church in Ireland”. This guidance was endorsed and adopted by all the members of the three sponsoring bodies namely, the Irish Episcopal Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland, and the Irish missionary Union. Standards were created against which the practice of all participating parts of the Church would be assessed.

Standard 2 of the Guidance relates to “Procedures – How to respond to child protection allegations and suspicions.”

- Criteria 2.4 of Standard 2 states the following: - “There is a process for recording incidents, allegations and suspicions, and referrals. These will be stored securely, so that confidential information is protected and complies with relevant legislation.”
- Criteria 2.6 of Standard 2 states the following: - “There is guidance on confidentiality and information sharing which makes clear that the protection of the child is the most important consideration. The Seal of Confession is absolute.”

The Diocese of Elphin undertakes to meet the requirements of Standard 2 through the adoption and implementation of this Recording Policy:

This Policy is to be understood and read in conjunction with the **Record Keeping Guidance Document** on the NBSCCCI Safeguarding Website <http://www.safeguarding.ie/recording-guidance-2010/> and can also be found on the diocesan website and in the appendix of this document.

Recording Policy

When an incident, allegation, suspicion or referral arises against any member of the clergy, staff, or volunteer, a case record will be created. It will record the information that has come to light, the actions taken, by whom and when. It will be accurate, fair, and kept up to date. The contents will be typed, where possible, to ensure legibility. The subject of the case file will be asked to agree to the creation of the file and to its content. Access to the content will be given on an agreed basis only unless there is a clear requirement to share the information with others to prevent harm coming to a child or young person.

The case file will adhere to the structure outlined in the Record Keeping Guidance Document in the appendix. When created, the case file will be stored

securely in a fireproof, locking cabinet in an agreed location. It will be held until ten years after the death of the subject of the file where upon it will be destroyed.

The principle of confidentiality that applies to the records created recognizes the right of subjects to have their privacy protected. Information gathered or stored on them will not be shared with others unless the following applies:-

1. Permission has been given by the subject to share the information with others
2. There is a clear need to share the information to protect a child or young person
3. A court order or legal obligation requires disclosure
4. There is an overwhelming public interest in disclosure

The National Office for Safeguarding Children has a mandate to review and monitor practice within the Church. To that end, access to case records will be given to ensure that Standards are being met and that the Recording Policy is being adhered to. When a file is created the National Office will be notified to enable them to record the fact on a central index. The information shared will comprise the name of the subject of the file, the date on which it was created and who completed the task. All other information will be held in the case file itself.