

## WHEN CONCERNS ARISE

The Designated Person for our diocese, who can be contacted with regard to any concerns relating to the welfare of children or issues pertaining to child abuse involving Church personnel is:

**Msgr. Gerard Dolan,**  
St. Columba's, Rosses Point, Co. Sligo.  
Tel: 071 9162670 / 071 9177133.

He will respond promptly and liaise with the required civil authorities, i.e. the Health Services Executive and An Garda Síochána.

Concerns and complaints may also be passed on directly to the Health Services Executive and / or An Garda Síochána.

- ☞ H.S.E. West (Sligo) Tel: 071-9155133
- ☞ H.S.E. West (Boyle) Tel: 071-9662087
- ☞ H.S.E. West (Roscommon) Tel: 090-6637528/9
- ☞ H.S.E. West (Castlerea) Tel: 090-6637842/3/8
- ☞ H.S.E. West (Galway) Tel: 091-546366
  
- ☞ Contact your local Garda Station
- ☞ Garda Confidential Service Tel: 1800 666 111



## PASTORAL CARE

The diocese recognises the support needs of complainants and alleged perpetrators of abuse. The Designated Person can introduce these persons and their families to a panel of Support Persons. Support Persons have a pastoral role. Part of this can involve assisting and facilitating people access information and professional help. They are caring people as distinct from professionals in the Child Protection sector.

Persons seeking pastoral support with regard to issues of child abuse are also encouraged to do so through their local clergy, or make direct contact with:

The Elphin Diocesan Office,  
St. Mary's, Temple St., Sligo.  
Tel: 071 9162670.



## FURTHER ENQUIRIES

For more information please visit the Child Protection Section of the Elphin Diocesan web site: [www.elphindiocese.ie](http://www.elphindiocese.ie) or contact:

Justin Harkin  
Child Protection Co-ordinator  
Pastoral Development Office  
Church Grounds  
Strokestown  
Co. Roscommon.  
Tel/Fax: 071 9634960  
E-mail: [pdo@elphindiocese.ie](mailto:pdo@elphindiocese.ie)

Thank you.

# Working Together

## Child Protection Developments in the Diocese of Elphin



## BISHOP JONES' FOREWORD



My Dear People,

*At the heart of child protection is a deep-rooted desire to safeguard, respect and value the dignity and well-being of every child and young person and of every adult who facilitates their healthy development and participation in appropriate activities. This brochure outlines developments in relation to child protection vis-à-vis church-related activities and points interested readers to additional information. Please become familiar with its content and support the changes it advocates.*

*I also take this opportunity to express again my deep regret for the significant hurt caused by past failures and my commitment to healing as well as to the advancement of best practice.*

Sincerely,

*+ Christy*

+ Christy Jones  
1 February 2007

## THE ROAD TO OUR DIOCESAN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

During 2006 a lengthy consultation process took place in our diocese. Over 500 adults participated, representatives from every parish. It was greatly aided by three other developments:

- the Department of Health and Children's publication of *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (1999),
- the Irish Bishops' publication of *Our Children Our Church: Child Protection Policies and Procedures for the Catholic Church in Ireland* (2005),
- the development of diocesan policies in other Irish dioceses, e.g. Tuam.

This led to the development of the Elphin Diocese's Child Protection Policy. The detail of the policy can be downloaded from the child protection section of the Elphin diocesan web site [www.elphindiocese.ie](http://www.elphindiocese.ie). Launched by Bishop Jones on October 7th 2006 it commits every parish to introducing the following child protection measures:

- Codes of Conduct for children, young people and adults who work with them
- Procedures for recruiting, overseeing and supporting adult leaders
- Appropriate supervision
- Appropriate record keeping processes
- Accident and Emergency plans
- Procedures for reporting child protection concerns and / or complaints
- Code of Confidentiality.

Presented in this format they can seem a little daunting. Reflected upon, they illuminate a positive way of pro-actively caring for children and young people and adults who facilitate their engagement in Church-related activities.

## RAISING AWARENESS

In 2006 child protection awareness evenings were also hosted in the six major towns of the diocese, serving adjoining parishes. Similar evenings can be provided in any parish and we strongly encourage uptake in parishes where the mention of "child protection" gives rise to concern or fear. The measures that have been and are being introduced are in everyone's best interests and a true expression of Christian caring.

## PROVISION OF ACCREDITED TRAINING

During March 2007 accredited Child Protection training will be available to all adults involved with children in a Church context.

With the introduction of our diocesan policy it has also become mandatory for all adults who become involved through the Church with children and young people to come through an appropriate vetting procedure and to participate in accredited training.

The diocese acknowledges too the similar measures taken by sporting and cultural organisations, schools and pre-schools and strongly encourage similar support of their efforts.

## PERSONNEL AND STRUCTURES

The need for structures and personnel to support implementation is also recognised. Currently the following are in place:

- The Elphin Diocesan Advisory Child Protection Committee
- Designated Person
- Co-ordinator of Child Protection
- Two part-time Child Protection Workers
- Two Accredited Keeping Safe Child Protection Trainers

Collectively they seek to support parishes advance best practice and for a profile of each please visit the Child Protection Section of our diocesan web site: [www.elphindiocese.ie](http://www.elphindiocese.ie).

Secondly, and in line with a national Church initiative, nominations have been sought from every parish for adults to train as Parish Child Protection Representatives. The responsibilities of representatives are as follows:

- To promote awareness of the Church's Child Protection policies
- To ensure that the public has ready access to information on how to contact the Designated Person and relevant Health Service Executive Officials
- To facilitate anyone in the parish bringing an allegation of child abuse<sup>1</sup> to the attention of the Designated Person should they wish to have such support.

Parish Child Protection Representatives will not be involved in investigating or processing allegations and concerns. Their principal task is to encourage best practice in the parish now. In the event that a person wishes to express a concern or allegation, they will direct them to the appropriate authorities.

<sup>1</sup> Child abuse is abuse that occurs to a person under the age of eighteen years. There are four primary types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse.

