

Training:

Training is a very important opportunity for Priests, Safeguarding Representatives, Volunteers and Staff to update themselves on Safeguarding and to re-familiarise themselves with Safeguarding Standards and guidance.

Over 500 Priests, Staff and Volunteers have been trained in the Diocese of Elphin in the past year. The Diocese has a training plan which is revised annually to meet the needs of Parishes and the NBSCCCI requirements.

Training for Priests and Safeguarding Representatives:

Annual In-Service Training for Priests and Safeguarding Reps is in:

Roscommon: Tuesday 27th November
Abbey Hotel, Roscommon at 7.30 pm.

Sligo: Thursday, 29th of November
Clayton Hotel, Sligo at 7.30 pm

Please attend the venue which suits you best!

Training for Volunteers:

Training for new volunteers will be held in Sligo and Roscommon in March/April 2019. All Parishes will receive notification of this training nearer the time. If you are interested in the trainers coming to your Parish to do a training session, please contact the Safeguarding Office for information.

How we Review Safeguarding Practice in Diocese of Elphin:

- 3-year Strategic Safeguarding Plan
- Parish Support Visits
- Annual Parish Audit
- Annual report by the DLP's to Bishop Kevin
- Annual report by the Director of Safeguarding to Bishop Kevin regarding compliance with the 7 standards in Safeguarding
- Notification in writing to the NBSCCCI regarding case management and compliance with the standards

Safeguarding Support Visits 2018/2019:

Parish Support Visits are now a requirement of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland and will be done on a yearly basis. The purpose of the visit is to support Parishes to improve Safeguarding Practice. During these visits we review current practice in each Parish in the Diocese and offer practical support to ensure that each Parish reaches the required standards in Safeguarding.

Safeguarding Contact Details:

Designated Liaison Persons

- Mary Nicholson 086-3750277
- Helen Diskin 087-0516888

Parish Safeguarding Reviews 2018:

All Parishes have received their 2018 Parish Safeguarding review form which needs to be completed, signed and then returned no later than the 14th of December 2018. This Review document is an annual requirement of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland. Bishop Kevin is obliged to send a letter to the NBSCCCI in January 2019 stating that each Parish has completed their review of Safeguarding. Use the opportunity to review Safeguarding practice in your Parish and to identify any gaps in practice.

Publication of our Safeguarding Parish Checklist Brochure:

This publication is a practical checklist for Parishes/Children's ministry groups /Safeguarding Representatives to ensure compliance with the Safeguarding Standards. Checklist's are available from your Parish and from the Safeguarding Office.



Sacristy Registers/General Registers:

The 2019 Sacristy registers are available now for distribution. Please collect your registers at the in-service training night for Priests and Safeguarding Representatives at the end of November. General Register are available from the Safeguarding Office as required.



Safeguarding Children Parish Handbook:

All Clergy, Staff and Volunteers who have attended training have received a copy of the handbook. Copies of the handbook are available in all Parishes. Should you require a copy please contact the Safeguarding Office or download a copy from our website: www.elphindiocese.ie



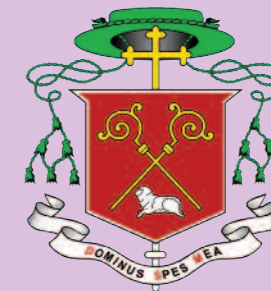
Feedback

We sincerely welcome any feedback you may have on Safeguarding in our Parishes and in our Diocese. Please can you contact either your local Safeguarding Representative (who will pass on all feedback to the Diocesan Safeguarding Office) or contact **Mary Nicholson directly at Diocesan Safeguarding Office:**
Email: mary@elphindiocese.ie or Tel: 086-3750277

Garda Siochána (Confidential Line)	1800-555222
Tusla • Sligo	071-9155133
• Roscommon/Galway	091-546235
Towards Healing	1800 303416
Towards Peace	01-5053028

Diocese of Elphin

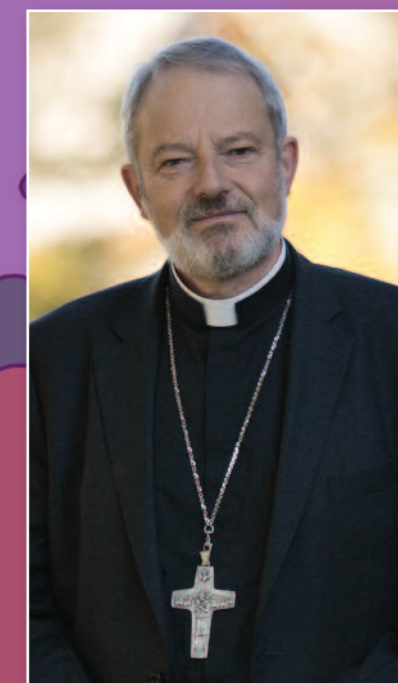
Safeguarding Newsletter 2018



Message from Bishop Kevin

In the light of the focus on safeguarding issues during the recent visit of Pope Francis, I want to offer the following basic information with a view to reassuring you that the Diocese of Elphin takes safeguarding very seriously:

- The Diocese has a full-time Director of Safeguarding, Ms. Mary Nicholson, whose task is to ensure that all clergy, staff and volunteers who may have involvement with children are fully aware of the current Standards and Procedures agreed by the Irish Bishops, under the guidance of the National Board for Safeguarding.
- Any person who has suffered abuse in this Diocese, or who has relevant information about abuse is invited to contact me directly, or to make contact with either of the two Designated Liaison Persons, Mary Nicholson and Helen Diskin, both of whom are highly experienced professionals. Alternatively, an allegation or an expression of concern may be made directly to Tusla or to the Garda Siochána (details on the back page).
- Any allegation of child abuse received by the Diocese is referred without delay to the appropriate civil authorities, to whom any information or documentation in the possession of the Diocese is made available. This reporting to the civil authorities has been standard practice in the Diocese for many years, thanks to the work of the late Bishop Christopher Jones and his advisors.
- While facing up to child abuse is always painful, any delay in doing so only places children at risk. The sooner a complaint is made, the easier it is to investigate it. There is, however, no "statute of limitations" in respect of child abuse in Ireland.
- The Diocese of Elphin, in partnership with all of the other Catholic Dioceses of Ireland and the Association of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland, offers an independent free counselling service (Towards Healing), and also a free service for those who seek spiritual assistance in the context of abuse (Towards Peace). Details are provided on the back page.
- Almost a year ago, as part of the implementation of the Children First Act 2015, all clergy and other key personnel working with children became what is known as "mandated persons". In other words, each one is individually legally responsible for reporting to Tusla "any knowledge, belief, or reasonable suspicion that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed".
- There is no priest or deacon currently in active ministry in our Diocese against whom an allegation of child abuse has been sustained, or who is currently under investigation as a result of any safeguarding concern.



Elphin

continued overleaf

- All priests and deacons, in common with other key staff and volunteers, are Garda Vetted in accordance with the law, every three years. All seminarians are Garda vetted before they are accepted into formation.
- All guest priests, coming from Dioceses overseas to minister in the Diocese of Elphin, are required to submit, in advance, a Testimonial Letter from their Bishop or religious superior which confirms that there are no concerns about the exercise of their ministry, specifically in respect to safeguarding. They are also required, in so far as local law allows, to produce a police certificate from their country of residence.
- Every parish in the Diocese has at least one trained volunteer Safeguarding Representative, whose task is to have an overview of safeguarding practices and procedures in the Parish and to support the Parish Priest in the area of safeguarding.

These are just some of the principal steps that have been taken by our Diocese to protect children by preventing abuse. I want to say a particular word of thanks to the clergy and religious, the lay volunteers and the staff of the Diocesan safeguarding service, through whose commitment and care, so much progress has been made over the past fifteen years. This is all part of the "One Church Approach" of the Catholic Church in Ireland which, together with a more robust legal framework, protects children every day and allows for their active and safe participation in the life of the Parish.

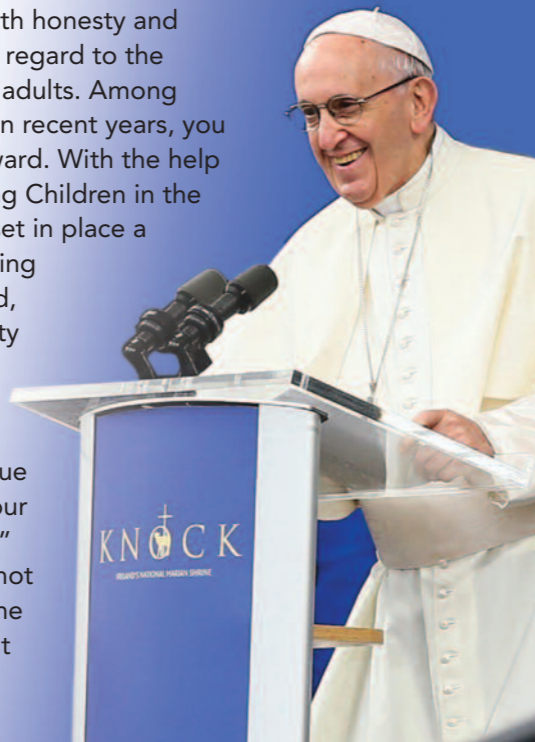
We, in the Church, can never say that there is no risk, any more than we can say it in our families. The best protection comes from ordinary people like you keeping your eyes and ears open and having the courage to speak if, in any situation, you know, believe or reasonably suspect that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed.



Kevin Doran
Bishop of Elphin.

Quote from Pope Francis in Ireland Address to the Irish Bishops, 26th August 2018

"A recurrent theme of my visit has been the Church's need to acknowledge and remedy, with honesty and courage, past failures, grave sins with regard to the protection of children and vulnerable adults. Among these, women who were mistreated. In recent years, you as a body have resolutely moved forward. With the help of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland, you have set in place a stringent set of norms aimed at ensuring the safety of young persons. In Ireland, as elsewhere, the honesty and integrity with which the Church chooses to confront this painful chapter of her history can offer an example and a warning to society as a whole. Continue on this path Whenever you and your people feel that you are a "little flock" facing challenges and difficulties, do not grow discouraged. As Saint John of the Cross teaches us, it is in the dark night that the light of faith shines purest in our hearts".



The Role of Mandated Persons:

From December 2017 under the Children First Act 2015 people holding certain positions (a mandated person) are required by law to report to Tusla where he or she "knows, believes or has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is being harmed, has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed". Mandated Persons (as defined under the Children First Act 2015) are people who have contact with children and /or their families and who, because of their qualifications, training and/or employment role, are in a key position to help protect children from harm. Included in the definition of mandated persons are Clergy, Deacons, Religious ministering in the Diocese, DLP's and Paid Pastoral Care workers. Parish Safeguarding Representatives and Volunteers are not Mandated Persons. The Diocese requires that all those who minister for or on behalf of the Diocese of Elphin, comply with the requirements of our Reporting Policy and meet their obligations under the Children First Act 2015.



Safeguarding Representatives Reflection on Safeguarding in the Parish of Kilbegnet/Glinsk

The participation of young people in our Liturgical services is essential for the present and future wellbeing of our Churches.

We have been fortunate that through the generosity of so many of our fine young people and the co-operation and support of their families we have a wonderful group of young people volunteering as altar servers, members of our Youth Choirs, reading groups and participants in our preparation programme for receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.

However, their participation in our Church Liturgy can only be made possible through the valuable ministry of volunteers such as Sacristy Supervisors, Youth Choir Directors, Youth Liturgy, other Youth groups or Facilitators of our Confirmation programme. We are very grateful for the role they play, and we thank them most sincerely for their time and efforts. We rely on their continued ministry to allow these young people continue in their service in our Parish.

Compliance with all the Child Safeguarding Guidelines and Protocols is essential. Compliance with all the structures and protocols of our Diocesan Safeguarding Guidelines and Protocols ensures a safe and secure environment for both the youth involved but also for the adults involved. It is for those reasons that we should be vigilant and compliant in these matters which are for the benefit of all.

We in the Parish of Kilbegnet/Glinsk, to ensure that we were fully compliant with the new requirements which require all volunteers to be trained in Child Safeguarding and be re-vetted every three years, took a very pro-active approach towards ensuring these structures were firmly in place. Through the generous co-operation of the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding Mary Nicholson, we arranged a training night for all volunteers in Kilbegnet Hall, on Tuesday April 17th 2018. In an effort to maximise our attendance we sent a personal letter to all our existing volunteers and also to other people in our parish who we thought may be willing to come on board.



We got a magnificent response and 34 volunteers turned up for the training night presented by Mary Nicholson and Helen Diskin, including those parents who had been vetted for the Confirmation programme 2018. We now have 40 people trained and vetted in our parish. We also created a secure text group to keep in constant contact with all involved.

The jewel in the crown of this course was that the participants were supplied with a pack which included vetting and volunteer documents. They were advised in advance to bring with them all the required documentation to apply for vetting and following the course Mary, Helen and Safeguarding Representatives Sheila Beirne and James Shevlin assisted so that all present had volunteer and Garda vetting invitation forms completed before they left the hall. We provided office stationery and a photocopier to ensure that everyone had their documents returned to them on the night. The vetting invitations were on their way to Western Province the next day. This is an excellent model, as sometimes a lot of time lapses in following up and getting the relevant forms completed and submitted. Our training night was completed with a social chat over a welcome cuppa provided and served by Sheila and members of Kilbegnet Parish Council.

Vetting is often the bane of many organisations, as so often the question arises as to why someone has to be vetted even if they were recently vetted for another organisation. The simple answer is that this requirement is totally out of any organisation's hands as it is enshrined in our Constitution under Data Protection where one organisation can not pass such information to another. Under the new GDPR this is even more stringent.

Through the co-operation of our Parish Priest Fr. Larry Ebuk, we ensured that all the relevant and up to date posters were displayed in a prominent place in our churches and also in our sacristies. We also ensure that the attendance books in the sacristies for all who are present at any church activity, and also the attendance register for our Youth Choirs are diligently completed. We are delighted with the response we received and with the great group of volunteers we now have. It creates confidence in a safe and healthy environment for all our youth participants and their adult supervisors.

Our Youth is the future of our Church. We, as adults, owe it to them and to our Church to make sure their involvement can continue to flourish.

Sheila Beirne & James Shevlin
Safeguarding Representatives,
Parish of Kilbegnet/Glinsk