



# **COMMUNICATING THE CHURCH'S SAFEGUARDING MESSAGE**

## **COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR THE DIOCESE OF ELPHIN 2021-2024**

**Introduction:**

Communicating what child safeguarding policies, procedures and practice are in place is a core element of the Church's strategy to safeguard children. Policies and procedures are only effective if everyone, including children, understands their purpose and knows how to use them. To successfully implement the Church standards, effective communication systems must be in place.

Church personnel who are appropriately trained should be available to listen to and communicate with children, their parents/guardians and the lay faithful regarding the Church's safeguarding message.

### Communications Checklist:

The Diocese of Elphin:

- Have a written communications plan, stating what we wish to communicate, to whom, by whom, and how often.
- Name's and contact details of the designated liaison persons (DLP) are displayed.
- Information on our website about safeguarding children.
- Ensure that communications between the Church and parents/guardians/carers/children/ community leaders take account of language or communication difference.
- Ensure that parents/guardians, children, and relevant others know about your child safeguarding and child protection policies and reporting procedures.
  - Have a process for enabling people, including children, to make a complaint and ensure that this process is publicised so that everyone knows about it.
- Involve parents/guardians, as well as children, in developing codes of behaviour, e.g., about anti-bullying.
- Devise ways of obtaining feedback from parents/guardians/carers/children/the Church community to find out what you are doing well, and what is not working.

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	<i>WHAT</i>	<i>HOW</i>	<i>RESPONSIBILITY</i>	<i>WHEN</i>	<i>REVIEW</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>
<b>All Church Personnel: Clergy, Staff, Volunteers and Parish Safeguarding Representatives (LSR'S)</b>	NBSCCCI Policy and Standards. Child Safeguarding Statement.	Annual In-Service Training for Priests and Safeguarding Reps	Director of Safeguarding/Trainers	October/November 2023 and 2024	Annually			
	* Diocesan Safeguarding Parish Handbook.	Copy of Safeguarding Handbook given to all Clergy, staff, volunteers and LSR'S	Director of Safeguarding/Trainers	This was completed during 2017/2018 and handbooks are available for new staff/Volunteers and LSR'S	Every 3 years <i>*See note on revision of Handbook below</i>	✓		
	Contact Details for DLP's, Safeguarding Office and the Statutory Authorities (Tusla and Gardai).	Newsletter once a year	Director of Safeguarding	Summer /Autumn2018/2019/2020	Annually		✓Spring 2023 newsletter published recently	
	New developments /updates in Safeguarding.	Correspondence emails/letters	Director of Safeguarding	On-going	Annually	✓	✓	
		Correspondence through the Parish Priest	Director of Safeguarding	On-going	Annually	✓	✓	
	Annual Parish Audit form (LSR'S).	Parish Support Visits	Director of Safeguarding	Annually	Annually	✓	✓	
		Diocesan Website and NBSCCCI Website	Safeguarding Office NBSCCCI/ Trainers	On-going	On-going	✓	✓	

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<b>Lay Faithful and the general Public.</b>	NBSCCCI standards and guidance.	Parish Information Sessions	Trainers/ Director of Safeguarding /Parish Priest	On Request	Annually	✓	✓	
	Child Safeguarding Statements (TUSLA and NBSCCCI).	NBSCCCI Website.	NBSCCCI/Director of Safeguarding	When necessary	On-going. Updated regularly by the NBSCCCI.	✓		
		Director of Safeguarding in Safeguarding Office.	Director of Safeguarding	Available all the time	On-going	✓	✓	
	* Diocesan Safeguarding Parish Handbook available on request.	Safeguarding Notices in all Porches	Director of Safeguarding/Parish Priest and LSR's	Annually	On-going New notices issued in Jan 2023 with QR code for translation into different languages	✓	✓	
	Contact Details for DLP's, Safeguarding Office and the Statutory Authorities (Tusla and Gardai).	Diocesan Website and social media	Safeguarding Office /Diocesan Office	On-going	On-going	✓		
	Safeguarding Office can supply the Safeguarding policy in different languages on request.	Newsletters	Director of Safeguarding	Annually (Spring 2023 issue published in Jan 2023)	On-going		✓	

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<b>Children/ Parents or Guardians /Carers</b>	NBSCCCI standards and guidance.	Information Sessions /Training.	Director of Safeguarding /Trainers.	Annually	Annually	✓	✓		
	Child Safeguarding Statement.	Parish Information Sessions	Trainers/ Director of Safeguarding /Parish Priest	On Request	Annually	✓	✓		
	* Diocesan Safeguarding Parish Handbook.	Leaflets for Altar Servers and their Parents distributed to all Parishes.	Director of Safeguarding /Parish Priest /Volunteers	Annually	Annually	✓	✓		
	Contact Details for DLP's, Safeguarding Office and the Statutory Authorities (Tusla and Gardai).	Director of Safeguarding in Safeguarding Office	Director of Safeguarding	Available all the time	On-going	✓	✓		
	Changes or updates in the National Requirements.	Safeguarding Notices in all Porches	Director of Safeguarding/Parish Priest and LSR	Annually	On-going	✓	✓	UPDATED	
		Altar Servers induction Training.	Parish Priest /Volunteers, supported by the Director of Safeguarding	Annually	Annually	✓	✓		
		NBSCCCI Website	NBSCCCI/Director of Safeguarding	When necessary	On-going	✓			
		Diocesan Website and social media	Safeguarding Office /Diocesan Office	Annually	On-going	✓			

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		Newsletters	Director of Safeguarding	Annually	Annually		✓	
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<b>Priests</b>	NBSCCCI standards and guidance.  * Diocesan Safeguarding Parish Handbook.  Contact Details for DLP's. Safeguarding Office and the Statutory Authorities (Tusla and Gardai). Child Safeguarding Statement. Changes or updates in the National Requirements.	Full Day Training.	Director of Safeguarding /Trainers.	Every 3 years /Induction for overseas priests	Annually	✓	✓	
		Annual In-Service Training for Priests and LSR's	Trainers/ Director of Safeguarding	Annually	On-going			
		Parish Information Session	Trainers/ Director of Safeguarding /Parish Priest	On Request	Annually	✓	✓	
		Induction for Priests coming from other countries for short- or long-term supply.	Bishop/Director of Safeguarding	On-going	Annually	✓	✓	
		Director of Safeguarding in Safeguarding Office	Director of Safeguarding	Available all the time	On-going	✓	✓	
		Safeguarding Notices in all Porches	Director of Safeguarding /Parish Priest and LSR's	Annually	On-going	✓	✓	Updated recently
		Induction for new Priests working in the Diocese.	Director of Safeguarding	On-going	Annually	✓	✓	

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<b>PRIESTS CONTINUED</b>		NBSCCCI Website	NBSCCCI/Director of Safeguarding/Trainers	When necessary	On-going	✓	✓	
		<b>HOW</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>REVIEW</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
		Newsletters	Director of Safeguarding	Annually	Annually		✓ Spring 2023 newsletter published recently	
		Diocesan Website and social media	Safeguarding Office /Diocesan Office	Annually	On-going	✓	✓	
		Parish Audits and follow up Parish Visits	Director of Safeguarding	Once a year	Annually	✓		
		Correspondence by e-mail and Letters	Bishop/ Director of Safeguarding	On-going	Annually	✓	✓	



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<b>External Organisations including TUSLA, Gardai, Towards Healing, any other Outreach groups</b>	NBSCCCI standards and guidance.	Inter-Agency meetings with Tusla	Director of Safeguarding /Bishop	2 times a year	Annually	Not happening now		
	* Diocesan Safeguarding Parish Handbook.	Director of Safeguarding in Safeguarding Office	Director of Safeguarding	Available all the time	On-going	✓		
	Contact Details for DLP's and Safeguarding Office.	NBSCCCI Website	NBSCCCI/Director of Safeguarding	When relevant	Annually	✓	✓	
	Child Safeguarding Statement.	Diocesan Website and social media	Safeguarding Office /Diocesan Office	On-going	On-going	✓	✓	
	Mandated Persons List	Correspondence by Phone, emails, and letters	Bishop/ Director of Safeguarding	On-going	Annually	✓	✓	
		Attending information meetings/Trainings	Director of Safeguarding	On-going	Annually		✓	

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<b>Bishop</b>	Changes or updates in the National Requirements.	Meetings between the Bishop and the Director of Safeguarding on a bimonthly basis.	Bishop/ Director of Safeguarding	6 times a year or when necessary.	Annually	✓	✓	
	All relevant safeguarding developments both locally (Diocese) or nationally. Annual Report.	* Meeting of the Safeguarding Executive Committee four times a year or when necessary.	Director of Safeguarding	4 times a year.  Committee members have 3 year term with a get out clause. See note below	Annually	✓	✓	
	Notifications re. meetings and trainings	Review of practice and update of Diocesan Strategic Plan, Communications Plan and Training Plan where applicable.	Director of Safeguarding	Annually/When Necessary.	Annually	✓	✓	

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<b>NBSCCCI</b>	Annual Report. NBSCCCI Audit	Attending Trainings organised by the NBSCCCI.	Bishop/ Director of Safeguarding/DLP/Support Person and Advisors	On-going	Annually	✓		
		Correspondence by Phone, emails and through Letters	Bishop/ Director of Safeguarding	On-going	On-going	✓		

\*The Foreword of the Safeguarding Children Parish Handbook states the following:

*"The policy and standards of the NBSCCCI provide the framework for practice, through a one-Church approach to child safeguarding, ensuring that the same principles, procedures and practices for safeguarding children and for responding to allegations or suspicions of child abuse operate at every level and in every place throughout the Catholic Church in Ireland. In addition, the NBSCCCI has also produced extensive guidance on how to implement each of the seven standards.*

*This "Safeguarding Children Parish Handbook" is a subset of that guidance and contains the parts which are most pertinent to safeguarding children in a parish context. However, it is not designed to be a stand-alone document or sole reference source for safeguarding children. Rather it should be read in conjunction with the NBSCCCI's "Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland" and its guidance documents, the most up to date version of which will be available on the safeguarding section of our respective diocesan websites and the NBSCCCI website."*

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Notwithstanding the extract above the diocese of Elphin, as part of its Safeguarding Plan, and in conjunction with the dioceses of the Western Province, will undertake a review of the Safeguarding Children Parish Handbook every three years. All relevant updates, additions, and modifications will then be included, and a new release of the *Handbook* will be published. The next review is due to begin in May 2023.

\*Safeguarding Committee note: It has been agreed by the Safeguarding committee that we will review our membership because of the decision by Tusla to cease the interagency meetings which were held regularly with the Diocese. We now feel it would be wise to include on our committee the expertise that we had at the interagency meetings with Tusla. We will discuss this at our next safeguarding executive meeting.

For information on Communicating the Churches Safeguarding message or on the Communications Plan for 2021-2024, please contact:

Mary Nicholson,  
Director of Safeguarding,  
Diocese of Elphin,  
086-3750277.

REVIEWED AND UPDATED ON:

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BY: \_\_\_\_\_

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