



DIOCESE OF ELPHIN
THREE YEAR SAFEGUARDING PLAN
2020-2023

Diocese of Elphin:3-year Strategic Safeguarding Plan

Standard	Specific Objective	Action	Responsibility	Implementation Date	Review Date	Comment
1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments	The Diocese of Elphin will follow effective practice guidelines and legislative requirements in the recruitment of all Church personnel and in assessing their suitability to work with children in the Diocese.	All staff, clergy, and volunteers i.e., those individuals identified through the audit as having regular ministry with children should go through the safe recruitment procedures as stated in sections 1.1 of NBSCCCI guidance.	* Safeguarding committee(See note below) Director of Safeguarding /Parish Priests /Co-ordinators of group activities.	September 2020	21/10/2020 08/01/2021 11/10/2022 21/02/2023	To Date all Diocesan, Clergy, staff have come through the safe recruitment process. All Clergy in Diocese were re- vetted in late 2021/ early 2022. All visiting Clergy / incoming clergy are vetted and come through the safe recruitment process before taking up a position in the Diocese. We follow NBSCCCI procedures for visiting Clergy .
	The Diocese of Elphin will implement effective practice on the expected standards of adults' behavior towards children in Diocese.	All adults working with children in Diocese should receive training in Code of Behaviour. See section 1.2 of NBSCCCI guidance.	Safeguarding Committee/ Director of Safeguarding / Trainers	September 2020	21/10/2020 08/01/2021 11/10/2022 21/02/2023	On-going. All staff, Clergy and volunteers receive training and are directed to the safeguarding.ie website and are given a copy of the * Parish handbook (see note below) at training. Dec'22.-all induction completed for overseas or visiting Priests.
	The Diocese of Elphin will implement effective practice in encouraging children's positive behavior.	All children taking part in ministry in the Diocese of Elphin should receive positive encouragement and children should be encouraged to take part in drawing up their own code of behaviour. See section	Director of Safeguarding/ Safeguarding Committee/ Volunteers	September 2020	21/10/2020 08/01/2021 11/10/2022 21/02/2023	On-going Communication, Safeguarding Newsletters Information Leaflets, Induction and information meetings and Training. Newsletter Spring 2023

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		1.3. of the NBSCCCI guidance				New Safeguarding Agreement for Children published for 2023
	The Church body implements effective practice in safe care for all children, including those with specific needs	The Diocese should provide opportunities for an inclusive environment for children and develop procedures for participation of children with Specific needs. See Section 1.4 of NBSCCCI guidance.	Director/ Safeguarding Committee	September 2020	21/10/2020 08/01/2021 11/10/2022 21/02/2023	On-going Supportive work at training and on-going support from the safeguarding office
	The Diocese of Elphin will ensure that the safe use of Church property by external groups complies with effective child safeguarding practice.	See guidance (Section 1.5. of NBSCCCI guidance) and form (SG-07) on use of Church property by external groups in Parish Handbook and available on the website. Included as part of Training.	Director/ Safeguarding Committee/ Trainers and Parishes.	September 2020	21/10/2020 08/01/2021 11/10/2022 21/02/2023	On-going. Supportive work at training and on support visits. Discussed and reviewed at Support visits in 2022-2023
	The Diocese of Elphin has in place clearly written whistle-blowing procedures which supports and assists Church personnel to raise concerns about possible dangerous or unethical conduct by others towards children involved in Church activities.	Whistle-blowing Policy Section 1.6 of NBSCCCI guidance. Included as part of Training delivered by Diocese of Elphin.	Director/ Safeguarding Committee/ Trainers.	September 2020	21/10/2020 08/01/2021 11/10/2022 21/02/2023	On-going Supportive work at training.

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	The Diocese of Elphin has a clearly written complaints procedure regarding safeguarding concerns that are not allegations of abuse.	Complaints Procedures Section 1.7. of NBSCCCI guidance. Included as part of Training delivered by Diocese of Elphin.	Director/ Safeguarding Committee/ Trainers.	September 2020	21/10/2020 08/01/2021 11/10/2022 21/02/2023	On-going Supportive work at training and the safeguarding office.
	The Diocese of Elphin will implement effective practice for Church personnel on assessment of hazards when working with children	Guidance on (see section 1.8. of NBSCCCI guidance) and form (SG-06) on hazards assessment of activities with children. Included as part of Training delivered by Diocese of Elphin.	Director of Safeguarding/ Safeguarding Committee/ Trainers/ Parishes / Parish and Diocesan groups.	September 2020	21/10/2020 08/01/2021 11/10/2022 21/02/2023	On-going Supportive work at training , support visits and from the safeguarding office.
	The Diocese of Elphin will implement effective practice for the appropriate use of information technology, including social media by Church personnel and by children.	Guidance on the use of technology. (See section 1.9 of NBSCCCI guidance)	Director of Safeguarding / Safeguarding committee.	September 2020	21/10/2020 08/01/2021 11/10/2022 21/02/2023	On-going Supportive work at training and from the safeguarding office. Spring Newsletter 2023
	The Diocese of Elphin has responsibility for ensuring that all clerics/religious, who are members of the Church body and are ministering with children in an external organisation /Church body, agree to follow effective safeguarding practice.	Safe Recruitment/ Vetting and Training. See section 1.1 of NBSCCCI guidance)	Bishop/ Director of Safeguarding / Safeguarding Committee	September 2020	21/10/2020 08/01/2021 11/10/2022 21/02/2023	On-going Work with Diocesan office to ensure compliance.

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2.Procedures for responding to child protection allegations, concerns, and suspicions	The Diocese of Elphin has clearly written Child Safeguarding procedures and access to the personnel to implement them, if suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations are received about an abuse of a child.	See Standard 2 of NBSCCCI guidance Training for key personnel is offered frequently.	Bishop, Director of Safeguarding/ Safeguarding Committee/ DLP'S, Advisor, Support Person.	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going Formal and in-formal Contact with TUSLA All personnel attend regular training.
	The Diocese of Elphin records all suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations and action taken which complies with Data Protection Legislation, statutory compliance on Confidentiality and storage of information.	See NBSCCCI guidance on retention and storage of records. and Data Protection Legislation 2018.	Bishop/DLP's, Director of Safeguarding/ Safeguarding Committee	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going
	The Diocese of Elphin shares information about child safeguarding concerns, suspicions, knowledge, or allegations with those who need to know, to keep children safe.	See Standard 2, of NBSCCCI guidance.	DLP'S	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On a need-to-know basis. On-going
3. Care and Support for the Complainant	The Diocese of Elphin offers appropriate pastoral care and support to the complainant, which recognises their unique needs.	See Standard 3 NBSCCCI guidance.	Bishop/DLP/Support Person	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going

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	The Diocese of Elphin has access to appropriately trained personnel –lay, religious or clergy-whose clearly defined roles are to listen to and represent the pastoral needs of the complainant	Support Person will continue to attend NBSCCCI Training to keep themselves up to date on their specific role.	Director of Safeguarding /Safeguarding Committee/Support Person.	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at meetings.	Support Person in place in the Diocese. NBSCCCI Support person Training recently cancelled On-going
	The Diocese of Elphin works in co-operation with relevant organisations and seeks specialist advice from the statutory child protection services when necessary.	The Diocese will continue to meet Tusla on a regular basis to build up a good working relationship with them. This includes our interagency meetings with the Area Manager, Principal Social Worker, and our correspondence with the Duty Social Work Team. The Diocese will continue to build up relationships with Towards Healing in support of Victims. The Diocese will continue to liaise with other DLP'S who have mutual clients/ crossover of clients in line with Data Protection. The diocese will participate in various groups/forums established for the purpose of updating ourselves on developments and shared advice.	Bishop/Director of Safeguarding /DLP's	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	We meet with TUSLA twice a year. On-going communication with Duty Social Work Team. Have built up a good relationship with the team in Sligo. Contact with Towards Healing on a case-by-case basis. Regular contact with other DLP'S at Training and DLP network group, September 2022-Tusla have stopped our regular meetings. We have informed the NBSCCCI of this development. On-going

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4. Care and Management of the Respondent	The Diocese of Elphin has access to appropriately trained personnel – lay, religious or clergy – who's clearly defined roles are to listen to and represent the pastoral needs of the respondent. This is done in consultation with the respondent.	The Advisor appointed by the Diocese will continue to attend NBSCCCI Training to keep themselves up to date on their specific role.	Bishop/Advisor/Director of Safeguarding/DLP'S	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	Advisor in place in the Diocese. On-going
	The Diocese of Elphin has arrangements in place to inform the respondent that an allegation has been received about them and has a procedure for deciding whether an interim management plan needs to be put in place for the respondent.	The Diocese of Elphin follows the NBSCCCI Guidance, Standard 4. for care support and management of Respondents.	Bishop/DLP'S/ Advisor/	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going.
	When statutory authority investigations and assessments have been completed, the Diocese of Elphin resumes the preliminary investigation/collecting the proofs as provided for in Canon 1717 (1)-(3) (cleric) and Canon 695 (non-ordained religious).	The Diocese of Elphin follows the NBSCCCI Guidance Standard 4 for care support and management of Respondents.	Bishop/DLP'S/ (NBSCCCI if required)	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going

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	The Diocese of Elphin has in place suitable arrangements for the monitoring of a respondent, where there is a case to answer, until (and if) the Church authority no longer has responsibility for monitoring the respondent.	The Diocese of Elphin follows the NBSCCCI Guidance for managing Respondents. The Diocese of Elphin ensure that monitoring /management plans are in place.	Bishop/DLP'S/	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going Monitoring in place for specific respondents. Regular visits in place in line with specific management plans and notes on each visit are added to their case file.
5: Training and Support	The Diocese of Elphin takes responsibility to ensure that the induction of all personnel – lay, religious or clergy – includes training in the Church's child safeguarding policy and procedures.	See Standard 5, of NBSCCCI guidance. See Elphin Diocese Training Plan for 2019-2020 and 2022-2023.	Director of Safeguarding/ Safeguarding Committee/ Registered Trainers.	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going 2 Trainers in the Diocese. Recent Accreditation
	The Diocese of Elphin conducts an annual training-needs analysis that identifies all Church personnel who require training and develops a training plan based on this.	Parish Self –Audits were sent out in November 2021 and when we collate the information on these forms, we will be able to compile lists of people who need to be trained. Training Plan for 2021-2022. This is repeated and updated every year.	Director of Safeguarding/ Safeguarding Committee/ Registered Trainers	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings and post annual Audits.	On-going Training Plan

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	The Diocese of Elphin ensures delivery at a local level of basic training programmes that are identified and approved by the National Board, as outlined in the National Board's Training Strategy, where this has been identified as necessary through the annual training-needs analysis.	Parish Self –Audits were sent out in November 2021 and when we collate the information on these forms, we will be able to compile lists of people who need to be trained. Training Plan for 2021-2022.	Director of Safeguarding/ Safeguarding Committee/ Registered Trainers	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going
	The Diocese of Elphin ensures that Church personnel who have specific child safeguarding responsibilities have appropriate, role-specific training that is identified and approved by the NBSCCCI, as outlined in the National Board's Training Strategy.	The Diocese of Elphin will attend Training provided by the NBSCCCI and any other training that is relevant to Safeguarding Roles and structures. These Training Programmes are covered in our Training plan for 2021-2022	Bishop/ Director of Safeguarding/ Safeguarding Committee/ Registered Trainers/DLP/ Advisor/ Support Person	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going. Diocese of Elphin attended most of trainings facilitated by the NBSCCCI in 2021 and 2022, both on-line and face to face.
	The Diocese of Elphin provides children who access Church-related activities and their parents/guardians with information, advice, and support on keeping children safe, and involves them in Church child safeguarding training initiatives wherever possible and appropriate.	The Diocese of Elphin have produced Information Leaflets for children and their parents. We produce a yearly Safeguarding Newsletter and refer all parents to the Diocesan website where they can access all relevant information. Induction Training happens at Parish level for children's activities in the Diocese.	Director of Safeguarding/ Safeguarding Committee/	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going Information Leaflets Spring Newsletter 2023 Safeguarding Agreement for children 2023 Website details Social Media

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	The Diocese of Elphin facilitates the provision of an appropriate level of support to all involved with the Church in relation to their responsibilities to safeguard children.	Link to the NBSCCCI guidance on our website, Safeguarding Children Parish Handbook, Diocesan Website, Annual In-Service Training for Priests and local safeguarding Representatives, Safeguarding Training, NBSCCCI Training, Diocesan Newsletters, Safeguarding Notices, information Leaflets and Publications. Diocese of Elphin Safeguarding Office, Staff have access to supervision if required.	Bishop/ Director of Safeguarding/ Safeguarding Committee	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going Support Visits Communications Letters Emails Publications Safeguarding Office
6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message	The Diocese of Elphin has a written plan, which details how the Church's child safeguarding message will be communicated	See Standard 6 of NBSCCCI guidance. Communications Plan for the Diocese of Elphin 2021-2024	Director of Safeguarding/ Safeguarding Committee	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going Completed

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	The Diocese of Elphin makes information regarding how to safeguard children available to all.	Diocesan Website, Social Media, Safeguarding Checklist for Parishes Brochure Information Leaflets, Safeguarding Notices Celebret Notices, Safeguarding Newsletters Feedback sought and contact encouraged from parents on website and on leaflets.	Director of Safeguarding / Safeguarding Committee	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going Change of notice when personnel change. Contact details on the website updated in line with personnel change.
	The Diocese of Elphin ensures that it communicates the Church's child safeguarding message to people whose first language is not English, as well as to people who have specific needs.	Resources to be developed.	Director of Safeguarding / Safeguarding Committee	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going. New Safeguarding Notices in different languages
	The Diocese of Elphin establishes links with other local organisations to promote a safe and caring community for children and to share best child safeguarding practice.	Diocese of Elphin attend many Community activities and participate in many relevant groups.	Bishop/ Director of Safeguarding / Safeguarding Committee	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going.

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7. Quality Assuring Compliance with the Seven Standards	The Diocese of Elphin will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • put in place arrangements to ensure and evaluate its compliance with the safeguarding standards at a local level. • produce a report on the level of compliance established through this audit exercise. • notify the National Board in writing of the completion of this annual audit report. 	Annual Self-Audit for Parishes and Report by Bishop Kevin to the NBSCCCI. Parish Support Visit once a year to each Parish in the Diocese by the Director of Safeguarding.	Bishop/ Director of Safeguarding / Safeguarding Committee	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	Parish Support Visits Annually. Hasn't happened for past 2 years due to Covid and the fact that there was no ministry with children in Parishes. Visits began again in late 2022 and to date 24 Parishes are completed.
	The Diocese of Elphin will produce a three-year child safeguarding plan that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outlines the actions that will be taken to keep children safe. • identifies who is responsible for implementing these actions. • specifies the time frame within which actions are completed. • identifies the resources to ensure that the plan's objectives are realised. 	3-year Strategic Safeguarding Plan	Bishop/ Director of Safeguarding/ Safeguarding Committee	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	On-going Reviewed twice a year and following annual audits.

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	The Diocese of Elphin will invite the National Board to carry out an independent review of its safeguarding practice in relation to the applicable indicators of the seven safeguarding standards, in accordance with standard terms of reference at a frequency agreed with the National Board.	Prepare for Audit by the NBSCCCI.	Bishop Kevin	September 2020	Reviewed regularly at safeguarding meetings.	<p style="color: red;">Audit cancelled in March 2020 due to Covid. Diocese have invited the NBSCCCI to Audit 2023.</p> <p style="color: red;">NBSCCCI arranged for 13th and 14th March 2023</p>

*Safeguarding Committee note: It has been agreed by the executive 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.

*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.

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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."

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.

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What resources are needed to carry out the child safeguarding plan?

Bishop
Director of Safeguarding
NBSCCCI
Safeguarding Committee
Parish Structures: Parish Priests/Priests/ Safeguarding Representatives/Volunteers
2 DLP'S
3 Trainers
Advisor
Support Person
Regular meetings with TUSLA (ON -HOLD)
NCMC
Safeguarding Budget
Safeguarding budget to meet the Training Plan
Safeguarding budget for Safeguarding Personnel (inclusive of DLP work and monitoring)
Safeguarding budget to meet communications Plan
W.P. Vetting Service (Inc. Employment of Staff, Services)
W.P. Bishops
W.P Directors of Safeguarding Group
NBSCCCI Website
Diocesan Website
Communication
Safeguarding Publications
Safeguarding Budget for Support Organisations e.g., Towards Healing, Towards Peace

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