

Diocese of Ossory - Parish Safeguarding Audit Oct/Nov 2018

The Parish Safeguarding Self Audit was conducted during October/November 2018.
42 Parishes completed and returned audits

The Audit comprised of 31 questions based on the Safeguarding Standards under the following headings:

1. Creating & maintaining safe environments
2. Use of Church Property
3. Recruitment of personnel to work with children
4. Communicating the Churches safeguarding message
5. Training needs

Response to Audit

	Question	YES	No	N/A	No Reply	Total
Creating and maintaining safe Environments	1. Activity/Media Consent forms signed?	32	8	1	1	42
	2. Adhering to guidelines on use of technology?	39	3			42
	3. Safeguarding Info provided for parents/guardians?	36	5	1		42
	4. All groups aware of correct supervision ratios?	38	3	1		42
	5. Have groups access to procedures for dealing with accidents/incidents?	38	3	1		42
	6. Sign in register in sacristies?	40	2			42
	7. Attendance register maintained for all groups involving persons under 18	26	12	3	1	42
	8. Facilities compliant with Diocesan Health and Safety Statement	40	1		1	42
	9. Visiting Clergy asked to present Celebrets?	40	2			42
	10. Safeguarding forms securely stored?	41	1			42
Use of Church Property	11. Record kept of non-church groups using Church property?	28	3	9	2	42
	12. Have non-parish groups signed form SG-07 Use of Church Property?	22	6	12	2	42
	13. Do non-parish groups indicate they have Safeguarding policy?	28	1	11	2	42
	14. Do all non-parish groups indicate they have insurance cover?	29	1	9	3	42
Staff/Volunteer Recruitment	15. Are clear job descriptions provided to staff and volunteers?	26	6	6	4	42
	16. Are applications forms completed by all staff and volunteers?	28	5	5	4	42
	17. Are references sought and checked?	24	8	5	5	42
	18. Has the Garda Vetting process been completed if appropriate? Renew 3year	33	2	4	3	42
	19. Are Declaration Forms completed and signed?	27	5	4	6	42
	20. Are staff/volunteers familiar with diocesan web page?	36	1	2	3	42
	21. Are employees/volunteers familiar with Whistle-blowing policy?	31	6	1	4	42
Communications	22. Are staff/volunteers made aware of Safeguarding Policy as part of induction?	41	0		1	42
	23. All Church Personnel signed Induction Agreement?	33	4		5	42
	24. All Safeguarding Rep been provided with Parish Safeguarding Handbook?	41	1			42
	25. Diocesan Safeguarding Policy prominently displayed in all Church property?	42				42
	26. Code of Conduct for Clergy/Staff/ Volunteers distributed to all and prominently displayed in all Churches	40			2	42
	27. Celebret poster displayed in all sacristies?	39	1		2	42
	28. DLP contact details prominently displayed?	42				42
	29. Non-English speaking groups in parishes? Numbers?	10	31		1	42
	30. Names of Parish Safeguarding Reps listed in Parish Newsletter?	37	5			42
	31. Contact details of DLP listed in Parish Newsletter?	38	4			42
Training Needs	Indicate any Child Safeguarding training needs you would like provided?	7			35	42

On 6th December a sub group of the Safeguarding Committee convened to review and analyse the audit. Our findings indicated a high level of compliance throughout the Diocese. However it is evident that a number of parishes do not have any engagement with young people – in some parishes this can be explained by the demographic profile of the area while in others there appears to be lack of any engagement.

Creating Safe Environments: While there were a considerable number of ‘NO’ responses - 36 and 7 ‘N/A’ responses to this section we did not consider this to be of major significance. It was obvious that where young people were involved in ministry in parishes compliance with this Standard was high. The committee believe however, that there should not be any ‘NO’s’ in this section and would see it as something that needs to be addressed in the coming year.

Use of Church Property: Where parish property is owned and run by the parish a high level compliance is evident. The ‘N/A’ response is indicative of parishes that do not own, or have but do not run these facilities. They are leased out to other management bodies.

Recruitment: From the replies received there was a certain level of ‘non-applicable’ and ‘no’ responses. It was felt this suggested that recruitment procedures were only implemented when young people were involved. It is important that proper recruitment procedures are followed for all volunteer positions within parishes and this will be addressed by the committee in 2019

Communication: It is evident from the audit that there is a high level of communication within the Diocese particularly with relation to Safeguarding issues. ‘No’ responses were provided by Parishes that do not have Parish Newsletters. The ‘NO’ response to Q 29 was an in answer to a question regarding the need or not for Safeguarding Information in a language other than English. While 8 parishes answered ‘YES’ to this question four indicated that English was the spoken language and while two parishes have Syrian Refugees in their local community these may not be part of the church community.

Training Needs: 6 Parishes requested training updates for Leaders, Parish Secretary, Drawing up of Child Code of Behaviour.

Note: Training updates were provided for all Clergy and Parish Safeguarding Representatives in June and September 2018. Information evenings were provided for all Parishes throughout the Diocese in September 2018.

In conclusion the committee appreciates the cooperation of Parish Clergy and Safeguarding Representatives in completing the audit and would hope that future audits would be seen as a supportive process rather than a burden. It is important that we recognise our present reality and the necessity for compliance at all times.

Signed: 
Mary Mescal
pp Ossory Diocesan Safeguarding Committee

Date: 6thth December 2018