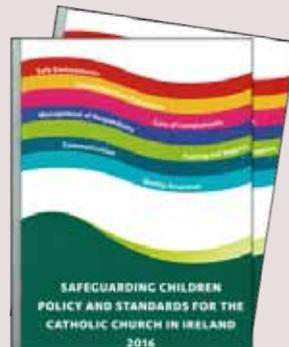


Diocese of Ossory Safeguarding Children NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our first Safeguarding Newsletter. We have previously published many Safeguarding pamphlets/leaflets over the years, however this is the first edition of our Newsletter and we, the Ossory Diocesan Safeguarding Committee, are pleased to share with you some aspects of our service in our diocese.



As a constitute member of the Catholic Church in Ireland, the Diocese of Ossory recognises, values and upholds the dignity and rights of all children, is committed to ensuring their safety and well-being and will work in partnership with parents/guardians to do this. We recognise that each child is a gift from God, and we value and encourage the participation of children in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

All Church personnel (including clergy, religious, staff and volunteers) have a responsibility to safeguard children through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment that supports their best interests and prevents abuse.

Parents/Guardians who consent to their children participating in Church activities must do so in the knowledge that their children are in a welcoming and safe environment. It is the duty and indeed the responsibility of each parish priest to ensure that the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy is being fully complied with in the parish in which he serves. The parish priest is supported by his Parish Safeguarding Representatives, the Diocesan Director for Safeguarding and by the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee, in ensuring its implementation.

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NSBCCCI) has recently launched a revised policy document "Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016" which sets out 'best practice' in all aspects of safeguarding children. The Diocese of Ossory fully complies with this Policy which is available at www.ossory.ie/safeguarding.

We welcome any suggestions/comments or observations you may have as we continue to do all that is necessary to ensure that the children who participate in Church activities in our diocese do so in a welcoming and safe environment. Please do not hesitate to contact Sr Ena Kennedy, Diocesan Director of Safeguarding at safeguarding@ossory.ie

Mary Mescal, Chairperson,
Ossory Diocesan Safeguarding Committee



We need to see each child as a gift to be welcomed, cherished and protected.



Why it is good to have young people involved in Church/local community activities?

FIND OUT INSIDE!



What does the E-Vetting process involve?

FIND OUT INSIDE!

To report Child protection concerns.....

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3 Good Reasons



3 Good Reasons to have young people involved in the Church and Parish

Role models

In a world that is becoming increasingly impersonal and driven by technology it is important to ensure that young people understand the value and importance of human interaction, friendship, compassion and humanity.

By getting involved with Church and community activities, young people can come into contact with like-minded peers and positive adult role models other than their parents. Interacting and cooperating with other adults encourages young people to see the world in different ways. It puts their own family experiences and values into a wider context.

Identity and connection

We all need to belong and feel connected outside of our immediate family. Being involved and committed to a group within the community enhances that feeling of belonging and connection.

Self-confidence, mental health and wellbeing

Community activities can boost young people's self-confidence. They can learn to deal with challenges, communicate with different people and build up life skills and abilities in a supportive environment. Young people who are confident and feel good about themselves are resilient and this is good for emotional and physical well-being.

3 Good Reasons for Adults to Volunteer to support young people to be involved in Church and parish activities.

Working with young people can be challenging, however is rewarding and a privilege as it gives each of us the opportunity to contribute to the personal development and support of each other.

It provides the opportunity to pass on our Catholic faith in a meaningful and practical way by sharing experiences, gifts and talents.

Volunteering is good for health and wellbeing: Studies have shown that volunteering helps people feel more socially connected, thus warding off loneliness and depression.

Competition time!

To enter our competition and win one of four €25 Vouchers from St Mary's Cathedral Book Shop you must be able to answer YES to the following questions.

Is the Safeguarding Policy displayed in the Church porch? YES NO

Are the names of the Safeguarding Parish Representatives displayed in the Church porch? YES NO

Is the name and contact details of the Safeguarding Designated Liaison Person on display in your Church porch? YES NO

From the information available in the Church porch am I aware who to contact if I have a safeguarding concern? YES NO

If you have answered YES to all four questions you can be confident that your parish is implementing the Church's Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards and you are eligible to enter our competition.

If you have answered NO to any of the above questions, please contact your Parish Priest, the Parish Safeguarding Rep or Sr Ena Kennedy safeguarding@ossory.ie.

PARISH:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

Completed entries should be emailed to safeguarding@ossory.ie or posted to Diocesan Safeguarding Office, Waterford Rd, Kilkenny.

Did You Know?

- The Diocese of Ossory includes most of County Kilkenny and portions of Counties Laois and Offaly with a Catholic population of 85,000?
- There are 42 Parishes in the Diocese of Ossory.
- 1,050 people are volunteering throughout the diocese.
- All Clergy and to date 944 volunteers have been Garda Vetted.
- 88 people have answered the call to minister as Parish Safeguarding Reps and have been trained in accordance with National Safeguarding Guidelines.
- Over 800 volunteers have attended Safeguarding Information Sessions
- The Diocesan Director of Safeguarding along with the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee oversees the implementation of the Church's Safeguarding Policy in all parishes throughout the Diocese.
- A Designated Liaison person is available to hear safeguarding concerns and to ensure all concerns are passed on to An Garda Síochána, TUSLA and The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church.
- Any person, whose work or ministry involves contact with children or vulnerable adults must be vetted.

What Questions should I ask before signing my child up to a Church activity?

Here are some sample questions for parents/guardians to ask when they are considering sending their children to a Church group or indeed any other group.

- Are there leaflets which give basic information about the group, its aims, leaders, nature of the activities, cost, meeting day(s) and times of meeting (start and finish) including holidays?
- Is it established practice that appropriate consent is sought to participate in the group and specific parental/guardian consent is sought for trips away?
- Does the group have clear guidelines for recruitment and vetting of staff and volunteers?
- Are there adequate numbers of leaders / adult helpers (volunteer/paid staff) and is there a clear policy on the number of leaders required to operate safely?
- Are parents/carers encouraged and welcomed to visit the group, to meet those in charge and to view activities? If not, you as a parent, should consider whether this gives cause for concern.
- Does the group have a policy to ensure the protection of children and young people and is the policy made available to parents/guardians?
- Does the group have a Health and Safety Policy?
- Is it insured?
- Does the group have a Code of Behaviour for members?
- Does the group provide you with a contact name address and phone number?
- Have you spoken to Parents / Guardians of other members?
- Does the group have established procedures to handle complaints?
- Is this complaints procedure made clear to group members? Parents / Guardians should encourage their children to tell them if there are any occurrences about which they are unhappy or uncomfortable.



Safeguarding Children

NEWSLETTER

E-VETTING

Time consuming, repetitive, but necessary

Garda Vetting is an essential legal requirement for all adults working with young people. Each person working or volunteering with a Church group or indeed any other group which involves working with young people or vulnerable adults is required by law to be Garda Vetted (E-Vetted).

What does the E-Vetting process involve?

- A Garda Vetting Invitation Form (NVB 1), an I.D. Verification Form and a Confidential Declaration Form must be completed.
- Photographic I.D. – i.e. current passport or driving licence, and proof of current address must be produced.
- For persons under 18 - a completed parental consent form must be completed.
- For Church groups the completed forms must be forwarded to the Diocesan Safeguarding office for processing.
- Once processed an email from the National Vetting Bureau requesting further information will be sent to the applicant. On replying to this email the Vetting process commences and takes about 5 working days.
- On completion of the vetting process the parish/school, club etc will receive the Garda Vetting report for the applicant.
- Confidentiality is guarded at every stage of the process.

Garda vetting is just one aspect of the recruitment process for persons whose work or ministry involves them working with children or vulnerable adults.
For more information - www.ossory.ie/safeguarding or email safeguarding@ossory.ie



Ossory Diocesan Safeguarding Committee

The role of the Committee is to co-ordinate the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy throughout the Diocese. This is done:

- by providing Training and Information for Priests, Staff and Volunteers throughout the Diocese
- establishing and maintaining safe and effective recruitment and vetting policies and procedures
- Overseeing and monitoring Parish Safeguarding Audits.



IF YOU HAVE A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

If you, or anyone you know, has a Safeguarding concern or wishes to report an allegation directly to the Statutory Authorities, please contact the Gardaí or TUSLA.

**An Garda Síochána - 24 hour service
1800-555-222**

**Tusla - Child and Family Agency
Kilkenny: 059 9136570 Laois: 057 8692567
Offaly: 057 9370700 Waterford: 051 842 827**

**If you wish to report an allegation directly to the Church Authorities please contact:
Diocesan Designated Liaison Person
087 100 0232**