

Safeguarding Children:

**Annual Report 2019
of the Diocese of Meath**

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Introduction

The annual report for 2019 has been generated to comply with Standard 7 (Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards) of the Safeguarding Children policy.

This requires that the Diocese:

- Puts in place arrangements to ensure and evaluate its compliance with the safeguarding standards at local level.
- Produces a report on the level of compliance established through this audit exercise.
- Notifies the NBSCCCI in writing of the completion of this annual audit report.

The parish Safeguarding Audit returns are scrutinised by the Safeguarding Committee and recommendations for further action and/or improvements are incorporated in a report for the Bishop. This process applies to Standards 1, 5, and 6.

A report is prepared for the Bishop by the DLP on Standards 2, 3, and 4.

Any recommendations for action and/or improvements are incorporated into the Safeguarding Plan (2018-2021).

The Bishop notifies the NBSCCCI in writing that these processes have been completed.

1. REPORT OF THE SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

MEETINGS:

Meetings of the committee were held in February, May, September, October and December.

Membership of the committee:

Bishop Tom Deenihan (Chair); Fr Paul Crosbie (Trim); Ms Pauline Clarke (resigned in August); Fr Derek Darby (Mullingar); Mr Alan Doran, (Dunderry); Fr Joseph Gallagher; (Tullamore); Mr David Gavin (Trainer) (Mullingar); Ms Margaret Kelly (Tullamore); Ms Marie O'Sullivan (Mullingar) (DLP); Ms Nuala McLoughlin (resigned in September) (Ratoath); Ms Antoinette Shaw (Trainer) (Mullingar); Ms Joan Walshe, (Acting Safeguarding Coordinator) (Navan); Ms Marie Willoughby, (Mullingar).

MAIN AREAS OF WORK ADDRESSED:

1. CREATING A CULTURE OF SAFETY

Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

Auditing and Review:

- The Annual Report for 2018 was completed and notified to the NBSCCCI by Bishop Deenihan.
- Bishop Deenihan viewed sacristy records on his parish visits. Parishes were informed of the requirement to maintain adequate attendance records; to ensure that the diocesan safeguarding statement was displayed in all churches; and requirement for visiting clergy to show their *celebret*.

- The diocesan safeguarding website - www.meathsafeguarding.ie - was revised and updated to allow for easier navigation through the main sections and to enhance access to all forms for download.
- Bishop Deenihan requested a review by the NBSCCCI which was conducted in October 2019. The safeguarding committee met with the audit team as part of this review and at the time of writing are awaiting receipt of the findings.
- The annual Safeguarding Audit for parishes in the Diocese of Meath was conducted in November/December 2019. A revised audit form was used containing more detail on the range of church activities involving children and seeking additional compliance with the safeguarding standards. A report on the audit is included in Section 2 of this annual report.

Policy Development:

- The diocesan trainers informed parishes at Deanery sessions about guidance from the NBSCCCI on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and requirements for record keeping.
- The Safeguarding Statement was revised, in line with guidance from Tusla, and circulated.

Development and/or revision of Procedures:

- The diocesan safeguarding statement and safeguarding statement leaflets were revised, printed and circulated to parishes.
- A leaflet for use in sacramental preparation programmes - *Learning with Jesus* - was developed and circulated.
- A checklist – *Building a Safe Environment: Group Safety Checklist* - has been developed and piloted across four parishes. The objective is to encourage

children to check how well their group respects the rights and responsibilities of everyone involved.

- Committee members conducted a number of local parish consultation/feedback meetings in 2019 to identify examples of good practice and to support parishes on adherence to safeguarding standards.
- Updates to guidance and other materials produced by the NBSCCCI were incorporated into the Operational Guidelines. Members were briefed on them at each meeting.
- The parish safeguarding audit form was revised, in line with feedback from the 2018 audit, to make it more user-friendly.

Standard 5: Training and support for keeping children safe

- The safeguarding trainers (Mr David Gavin and Ms Antoinette Shaw) provided an update on training and support activities at each meeting of the committee. Their report on training and support activities in 2019 follows in Section 3 of this report. The Training Plan for 2020 is included in the Safeguarding Action Plan in Section 4 of this report.

Standard 6: Communicating the Safeguarding message

- The diocese has a written communications plan for the Church's child safeguarding message. This plan was updated in 2019, incorporated in the Three-Year Safeguarding Plan (2018-2021) and will be reviewed annually as provided for in the plan. The plan is cited publicly as an appendix to the annual report. It references the target audiences, the safeguarding messages, method of communications, responsibility, when actions are to be taken and when they are to be reviewed.
- The diocese makes information on safeguarding children available to a range of audiences including parishioners; children and their parents involved in Church related activities; Church personnel; relevant agencies.

- The following means of communication are used:
 - Designated website (*www.meathsafeguarding.ie*) which includes the safeguarding policy and procedures.
 - Existing child friendly leaflets for altar servers, children in junior choirs, and teenagers in choirs.
 - An additional leaflet was published this year for children attending non-Catholic schools who prepare for First Holy Communion in parish catechetical classes; it is planned to have this leaflet translated into Polish and Lithuanian.
 - The Child Safeguarding Statement is posted in all Church properties, during Church-run youth activities, featuring the name and contact details of the designated liaison person (DLP).
 - Child Safety Statement is posted in all churches
 - Summary of Standards leaflet.
 - Newsletters published periodically and circulated both electronically and in printed form. Circa 2,500 hard copies of each edition are published.
 - Information posters are published in Irish and Polish; discussions have been held with representatives of the Syro-Malabar community who say that English materials are sufficient at present.
 - Annual Report (including Communications Plan in Appendix 1)
 - NBSCCI newsletters are circulated widely.
 - Consultation and Feedback sessions (6 annually – 18 for 2019-21)
 - Annual meetings with Statutory agencies.

- A key element of the communications strategy is the hosting of training sessions for clergy and parish safeguarding representatives (PSR) and well as information sessions for parents and volunteers. All information training sessions focus on the accessibility of online material and the availability of material in hard copy.

- The work of child safeguarding in the parishes across the diocese was highlighted on Safeguarding Sunday (12-13 October 2019). Bishop Deenihan acknowledged the children in parishes, especially those who assist as altar

servers, choir members, and all who take part in children's liturgies. The Bishop expressed his appreciation to priests, parish safeguarding representatives, volunteers and parents who support ministry with children and help to create a safe and caring environment in which children can grow in faith.

- The subject of digital media was addressed on Safeguarding Sunday. Parish staff and parish safeguarding representatives were asked to draw attention to the importance of ensuring safe practice when it comes to digital media (smart phones, social media etc) being used in ministry with children. An information leaflet with advice for clergy, group leaders and parents on the use of digital media was circulated to all parishes.
- The diocese, through the Safeguarding Children Committee members, has links with various local organisations, seeks to promote a safe and caring community for children and to share best child safeguarding practice
- The "*Building a Safe Environment: Group Safety Checklist*" was piloted in four parishes during the year; this checklist seeks feedback on how effectively the parish communicates with children and volunteers.
- There was an added emphasis in the latter part of the year on the need to communicate existing supports for complainants; the Winter 2019 newsletter featured descriptions and contact details for *Towards Healing* and *Towards Peace*.
- The announcement of the NBSCCCI review in October 2019 gave the Safeguarding Children Committee an opportunity to communicate this exercise in quality assurance to interested parties and the general public.
- The safeguarding trainers have a comprehensive database for the purpose of emailing messages and updates to clergy and parish safeguarding representatives; GDPR compliance should take this database into consideration.
- Guidance is also available on the following matters linked to communications: use of information and communication technology; use of photography; use of the internet; use of texting and e-mail; use of CCTV and webcams.

Standard 7: Quality Assuring compliance with the Standards

In relation to Standard 7 the Safeguarding Committee is responsible for:

- Ensuring that an annual Safeguarding report on Standards 1, 5 and 6 is made to the Bishop.
- Identifying areas where guidance and support on policy or practice is needed. A number of recommendations made in the audit report will be incorporated in the three-year safeguarding plan. The revised plan is appended to this report.
- Producing and reviewing the three-year Child Safeguarding Plan on implementing and maintaining the safeguarding standards across the Diocese. This plan, incorporating the Training Plan and the Communications Plan for 2020 is appended to this report.
- Committee members visited a number of parishes during 2019 to discuss safeguarding issues, including adherence to safeguarding standards. The SCC aims to visit six parishes per annum.
- Ensuring that records in relation to safeguarding matters are produced and stored securely. Records are securely stored in locked cabinets and access is in accordance with data protection policy.
- In order to assess compliance with the Church`s Child Safeguarding Standards, the Bishop invited the NBSCCCI to undertake a review of practice in the diocese. The review process seeks evidence to indicate that:
 - The public can be confident that the diocese is safe for children.
 - Child safeguarding personnel can receive affirmation that they are doing the right things well.
 - Confirmation can be provided to the Bishop that safeguarding work is being carried out appropriately.

The review concentrates on practice, through evaluating written records; interviews with Church personnel; communication with children and their leaders in Church related activities; discussions with statutory agencies and complainants and respondents. The fieldwork took place on three days in Oct. and one in Dec. Written material was evaluated for relevance and accuracy, as was the child safeguarding information on the safeguarding website.

It is expected that the final review report will be available by Easter.

2. REPORT ON AUDIT OF SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES IN PARISHES

The Safeguarding Children Committee (SCC) has overall responsibility for the implementation of Standards 1, 5 and 6, and aspects of Standard 7. In relation to Standard 1, this is delegated, in the main, to the diocesan safeguarding trainers and parish safeguarding representatives (PSR) and is reported on through the annual parish audit.

All parishes were requested to return their completed audit forms by November 30: 36 did so. At the time of writing, 65 parishes have returned their forms and members of the SCC are following up with those which have not done so.

The returns have been collated, analysed and are reported on here. An independent evaluator is also preparing a report on this audit for the Safeguarding Children Committee.

General Observations

- Generally, parishes are compliant in creating and maintaining safe environments.
- Training and information sessions continue to have very good take up. However, there is a significant number of clergy and PSR whose training was in excess of five years ago, although many of these have attended regularly at Deanery sessions.
- Most parishes indicated that they have support systems in place for those involved in safeguarding activities. It is notable that these are informal for the

most part and frequently incidental. The SCC will consider exploring options for more formal arrangements where necessary.

- Communication of the safeguarding message is reported as an important and well-resourced aspect of safeguarding activity. Updating of the safeguarding website has attracted a positive response.

In addition to the annual parish audit:

- SCC members reviewed all parish safeguarding websites in summer 2019. Thirty-seven had websites with 26 having correct, up to date, safeguarding information. In the case of those with out of date information, this was followed up with parishes. Parishes were advised to create a link to the diocesan safeguarding website and to display the name and contact details of the DLP and PSR.
- A spreadsheet was created with summary data from the 2018 parish audit.
- Records were reported to be stored securely, however, it is recommended that this table be reviewed to avoid ambiguity.

REVIEW OF RETURNS:

Standard 1: Church related activities involving children

Forty-seven parishes provided information on **activities involving children**. The most usual activities were altar servers (47) and choirs (32). A minority, mainly the larger towns, listed additional activities. These included: children`s liturgy (9); sacramental preparation programmes (9); Junior readers (6); youth groups (7).

All but 8, who responded N/A, indicated that they have up to date lists of all groups.

With regard to having necessary **forms or procedures** in place: 11 said they did not have a hazard assessment procedure; 3 that they did not have a procedure for dealing with accidents; 1 to not having a register in the sacristy. These will be followed up and these areas addressed in training/information sessions.

Twenty-one parishes indicated compliance with procedures for **non-Church groups using Church property**, while 26 indicated that this was N/A.

Thirty-four parishes indicated that they did not have any **recruitment** in the current year. Thirteen answered yes to all questions re adherence to recruitment procedures.

Standard 5: Training

In relation to **induction**, 11 parishes indicated that no agreement form was signed.

In the case of both priests (27) and PSR (33) many had taken the **full day training session** more than five years ago. It is possible, but not clear, that many of these attend Deanery information sessions regularly. The SCC will address this issue.

Role specific training needs: 42 returns did not identify any needs under this heading. Three parishes requested that training be run in their areas for clusters of local parishes. Other suggestions included: training for mandated persons; refresher courses for group leaders; alternative training dates for those who cannot attend at w/e or take time off work; guidance on filing.

Safeguarding awareness initiatives with parents: The main initiatives outlined were -thirty-one parishes mentioned sessions for parents of altar servers; 16 Safeguarding Sunday; 9 information sessions on Family Mass.

There was no response from 14 parishes.

Standard 6: Communicating the Church`s Safeguarding Message

There was a very positive response to this area with 50 parishes answering affirmatively to questions on **display of information**; 32 having sent details of mandated persons to the Bishop and 26 to appropriate CCTV signage (20 indicated this was N/A).

Recording: This was generally reported as undertaken in accordance with guidance. However, it is suggested that the structure of this table be reviewed in order to avoid ambiguity.

Follow up action to be taken

Thirteen parishes identified a need to complete the hazard assessment process; 10 to undertake vetting or further training; 2 to have agreement forms signed; and a small number of other actions. There were no actions identified by 25 parishes.

Suggestions on improving safeguarding procedures:

There was little feedback under this heading with no suggestions from 40 parishes.

The following suggestions were made by individual parishes:

- Put the audit form online with more space for the list of those compiling it
- Clarification on: hazard assessment; list of mandated persons to be sent to Bishop; whether consent form can be used for more than one activity.
- Bi-monthly communication from Resource Team (newsletter).
- Amalgamate application/declaration/reference forms?

Recommendations

- ✓ Review the audit form section on recording.
- ✓ Clarify issues re hazard assessment; mandated persons; whether consent form may be used for more than one activity.
- ✓ Update spreadsheet on data from parish audit.
- ✓ SCC to consider need for training updates for clergy and PSR.
- ✓ SCC to consider requests for training to be provided in eg Tullamore, Kingscourt for local clusters of parishes.
- ✓ The SCC will consider exploring options for more formal arrangements for supervision and support, where necessary.

3 Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe

Standard 5.1

Induction of Church personnel included training in the Church's child safeguarding policy and procedures.

All parish clergy and parish safeguarding representatives were invited to a series of deanery information sessions:

09/05/2019 Killyon

27/07/2019 Silverstream Priory, Stamullen

In addition, several information sessions were facilitated by the safeguarding trainers. Clergy, parish safeguarding representatives, sacristans, choir members and parish volunteers were invited to attend the information meetings. Among those meetings were the following:

10/10/2019 Trim

15/10/2019 Mullingar

16/10/2019 Ashbourne

22/10/2019 Navan

24/10/2019 Tullamore

Over 170 clergy and volunteers attended these sessions. Copies of a summary leaflet *Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland*, and posters for display were distributed. Posters were also available in both Irish and Polish. Participants were encouraged to display these leaflets and to make them available in parish churches.

The topics covered were:

- Safeguarding (Slide Presentation)
- Reformatted website
- Use of safeguarding material on parish websites

- Audit form revision including problem areas eg complaints procedure/whistleblower, risk assessment
- Diocesan Newsletter
- Sacristy requirements:
- Safeguarding Sunday: Parishes were encouraged to celebrate Safeguarding Sunday, to make congregations aware of the dedication of volunteers and all the procedures which are in place to support and promote the safety of children. It is also an opportunity to share the safeguarding message with parents and children.
- Addressing areas which trouble clergy and parish reps

Organisers of the Meath Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, as well as nurses and volunteers, were facilitated with three separate information sessions as follows:

14/08/2019 Navan

20/08/2019 Mullingar

30/08/2019 Trim.

Standard 5.2:

The safeguarding trainers conducted an annual training needs analysis that identified all Church personnel who required training. They developed a training plan based on this process which was approved by the SCC. The TNA conducted following the annual audit will inform the development of an annual training plan for 2020.

Standard 5.3

Basic training programmes identified and approved by the National Board, as outlined in the National Board's Training Strategy, and identified in the TNA ,were delivered at local level. The safeguarding trainers delivered two full-day training sessions to clergy, new parish safeguarding representatives, foreign clergy and choir directors as follows:

02/03/2019 Trim

09/11/2019 Trim

Records in relation to safeguarding matters were produced and stored securely. Records are securely stored in locked cabinets and access is in accordance with data protection policy.

Standard 5.4

Church personnel who have specific child safeguarding responsibilities had appropriate, role-specific training, as outlined in the National Board's Training Strategy.

The trainers attended the following training, hosted by NBSCCCI :

19/10/2019 Glenroyal Hotel, Maynooth.

A training session for members of the SCC was presented by the NBSCCCI Director of Training on

Standard 5.5

Children who access Church-related activities and their parents/guardians were provided with information, advice and support on keeping children safe, and involved them in Church child safeguarding training initiatives wherever possible and appropriate.

The safeguarding trainers have circulated thousands of child safeguarding newsletters, published in three editions in the past year, in order to raise awareness of child safeguarding with children and their parents/guardians in the Church.

Information specifically designed for a child-friendly readership was reproduced, aimed at mandated persons and PSR.

Various articles were included in the newsletters to assist clergy and Parish Safeguarding Representatives in fulfilling their roles.

The trainers avail of the newsletters to encourage parishes to share with each other examples of good practice in reaching out to children and their parents/guardians.

Standard 5.6

The Diocese of Meath facilitated the provision of an appropriate level of support to all personnel in relation to their responsibilities to safeguard children.

In addition to specific training sessions, the safeguarding trainers have readily and speedily responded to emails and phone calls. All clergy and parish safeguarding representatives have access to their personal mobile numbers. The safeguarding trainers received and logged all phone calls received during 2019 and promptly responded to queries and concerns.

Child Safeguarding Plan for the period 2018-21 for the Diocese of Meath.

(Revised January 2020)

This action plan has been developed in compliance with Standard 7 of the Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2016). It follows from and builds on the Action Plan 2013-15.

All actions will be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Safeguarding Children Policy and the procedures detailed in the Operational Guidelines, commencing January 2017, unless stated otherwise. The plan will be reviewed and updated annually, or as new regulatory or legislative provisions become available.

The Training Plan 2020 and Communications plan 2020 are attached as Appendices.

Standard	Objectives	Actions	Responsibility	Implementation Date	Review Date
Creating a Culture of Safety					
<i>Standard 1: Creating and maintaining safe environments</i>	Implement safe recruitment procedures	The following procedures, detailed in the Operational Guidelines, will be used as appropriate to the situation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form • Declaration form • Interviews • References • Vetting (S1.1 and S1.2; S4.1 -6 S4.11)	Overall responsibility rests with the SCC. Specific areas of responsibility noted below. PSR/PP Liaison person (L Duncan & I Carton)	From 01/01/2017	Parish annual audit in Nov./Dec. each year. SCC annual report Dec. each year.

	<p>Ensure code of behaviour is adopted by all adults and children involved in Church related activities.</p>	<p>Adults involved in Church related activities agree to observe and sign the COB at induction</p> <p>Parents and children sign consent form which includes code of behaviour.</p> <p>Anti-bullying policy agreed between leaders and children (S1.4-.7; S4.7-.10)</p>	<p>PSR</p> <p>Activity leaders</p>	<p>When position assumed.</p> <p>Start date of activity and each Sept.</p>	<p>Annual parish audit.</p> <p>Annual parish audit</p>
	<p>Implement effective practice in safe care for all children, including those with specific needs.</p>	<p>The following procedures, detailed in the Operational Guidelines, will be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advised supervision ratios - Dealing with accidents/incidents - Risk assessment of activities - One to one contact with children - Participation of children with specific needs - Procedures for visiting clergy - Use of ICT - External groups using Church property - Complaints procedures - Protected disclosures <p>(S1.8-1.22+S4.2-S4.23)</p>	<p>PSR and activity leaders.</p>	<p>01/01/17 fw</p>	<p>Annual parish audit</p>

<p>Standard 5: Training and Support for keeping children safe</p>	<p>Ensure that all Church personnel receive appropriate training in safeguarding.</p>	<p>Develop annual training plan based on a training needs analysis (TNA). Incorporate specific training needs identified by parishes, including information on formal and informal supports available to personnel.</p> <p>Deliver and evaluate training.</p> <p>Ratify training plan (S1.23-S1.26+S4.24-4.27)</p> <p>2020 Training plan delivered</p>	<p>SCC</p> <p>SSC</p> <p>See Appendix 2</p>	<p>Implementation on dates specified in annual training plan</p> <p>Spring meeting annually.</p> <p>On dates specified in plan.</p>	<p>TNA based on parish audit</p> <p>Each training event evaluated as delivered & reported on in annual report</p> <p>Report on training as part of annual report Dec. each year</p>
<p>Standard 6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message</p>	<p>Ensure that the Church's safeguarding message is communicated to identified audiences</p>	<p>Review the communications policy annually</p> <p>Revised safeguarding website regularly updated (www.meathsafeguarding.ie)</p> <p>Promote awareness of the website</p>	<p>SCC</p> <p>Fr R McCabe & SG coordinator</p> <p>Trainers +PSR</p>	<p>Monthly</p> <p>Training events/ Newsletters</p>	<p>Summer meeting each year</p> <p>Annual parish audit</p> <p>As part of policy review, SCC summer meeting.</p>
	<p>Produce and circulate printed material for specified audiences</p>	<p>Copies of the Policy Statement and the Child Safeguarding Statement will be displayed in churches and buildings where Church related activities take place</p> <p>Produce and circulate three Safeguarding Newsletters annually</p> <p>Children who act as altar servers; are involved in choirs; or in sacramental preparation programmes will be provided with safeguarding information leaflets</p>	<p>PSR/PP</p> <p>SCC/Fr P Crosbie</p> <p>PSR/Activity leaders</p>	<p>01/01/19 fw</p> <p>Spring/ Autumn/ Winter</p> <p>Sept. each year.</p>	<p>As part of annual parish audit.</p> <p>As part of policy review each summer.</p> <p>Winter meeting SCC Annual report</p>

		<p>Posters in Irish and in Polish have been produced and will be made available on request.</p> <p>Research will be carried out on whether posters/information in other languages/formats are needed.</p> <p>The 'Building a Safe Environment' checklist will be published and made available to parishes via the website.</p>	<p>SCC/Trainers</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>Coordinator & Fr R McCabe</p>	<p>Spring 2017 fw, on request.</p> <p>Review 2019</p> <p>Spring 2020</p>	<p>Annual review</p> <p>Annual Review</p> <p>Report to SCC & Annual report</p>
	Establish links with relevant organisations to promote safe environments and share best practice	<p>At diocesan level: annual meeting with CF Information Persons.</p> <p>At parish level: Contact established with local Social Workers and Garda Siochana</p>	Coordinator/DLP PSR	TBD	Outcomes reviewed at each SCC meeting & reported on in annual report.
	<p>Consultation and feedback meetings</p> <p><i>*See Appendix B</i></p>	<p>Six parish meetings to be held each year (working in alphabetical order...)</p> <p>2019: Coole; Delvin; Drogheda HF; Tullamore; Duleek</p> <p>2020: Ballivor; Bohermeen; Dunderry; Dysart; Eglisk; Enfield; Johnstown</p> <p>2021: Kell; Kilbeg; Kilbeggan; Kilcormac; Kildalkey; Killucan; Kilskyre; Kingscourt</p>	Safeguarding Committee members	Arranged in consultation with parishes	

Standard	Objectives	Actions	Responsibility	Implementation Date	Review Date
Recognising, Responding, Reporting					
Standard 2: Procedures for responding to CP suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations	Personnel are made aware of how to recognise and respond to child abuse.	Training is provided and the Operational Guidelines contain definitions. (S2.1)	All personnel	01/01/17 fw (using new guidelines)	Annual audit
	Reporting procedures are in place	CP referral form (S2.2; S4.34)	DLP	01/01/17 fw	DLP annual report
	Case management procedures are in place	Use NBSCCCI forms and procedures as required (S2.3-2.14; S2.25-2.34; S4.35-S4.43)	DLP	01/01/17 fw	DLP annual report
	A data protection policy is in place.	<i>New DP policy in preparation to comply with GDPR</i>	All personnel (Appendix 3 of Operational Guidelines)	TBD – training may be needed	TBD when procedures developed
	There is regular liaison with statutory authorities.	Annual meetings held (S2.14)	Between statutory authorities, Bishop & DLP & between CF Information Persons & Resource Team.	In consultation with statutory agencies. Meeting TBA	Report to SCC Annual report DLP annual report
	A complaints procedure is in place	Responding to a dissatisfied complainant-3 stage process. (S2.15; S4.13)	DLP/Bishop/NBSC	01/01/17 & fw	
	Protected disclosure procedure in place	Personnel made aware of procedures. (S2.16)	Information on website and in Newsletter.		Annual report

	A disciplinary procedure is in place.	Panel established from which a disciplinary committee may be formed. (S2.17) Supporting procedures and documentation available from the Diocesan Office.	PP/Coordinator Disciplinary panel	In place since 2014 – NBSC version since 2017	Annual report
Standard 3: Care and support for the complainant.	A pastoral response is available to complainants.	Procedures in place to ensure a pastoral response is provided. (S2.19)	The Bishop, DLP & Support Person	As necessary	As part of annual DLP report
	A Support Person is appointed.	Procedures and training are provided (S2.20+21)	DLP/NBSCCCI & Mr R Lowry - Support Person	Feb 2017 fw as needed	SCC Summer meeting
	Cooperation is sought with relevant agencies when needed.	When necessary, specialist advice is sought from NBSCCCI and statutory agencies. (S2,22)	DLP/NBSCCCI	01/01/17 & fw	DLP annual report
Standard 4: Care and management of the respondent.	A system for supporting respondents is provided.	An Advisor is appointed to represent the pastoral needs of a respondent. (S2.23;2.24)	Advisor appt. by Bishop as needed	Appointed as necessary	DLP annual report
	A process is in place for investigating and managing child safeguarding concerns.	Undertaking risk assessment. (S4.24; 25; 26; S4.39;40;)	Bishop/DLP	01/01/17 fw	DLP annual report
		Conducting a preliminary investigation following conclusion of any statutory investigation. (S2.29) Supporting and managing a respondent when it is found that there is a case to answer. (S28-34; S4.41-43)	Bishop/DLP/CDF	01/01/17	DLP annual report

Standard	Objectives	Actions	Responsibility	Implementation Date	Review Date
Quality Assurance					
Standard 7: Quality assuring compliance with the Standards	Appropriate structures are in place ** Roles of committees and individual personnel are as outlined in Operational Guidelines - Appendix 1	Safeguarding Children Committee (SCC).	Members appointed by Bishop	A nine person SCC is in place including Bishop & two Trainers. Four meetings per year	Winter meeting each year (Members serve a four-year term: Annual report
		Coordinator	To be appointed Acting in place		
		DLP	Ms Marie O'Sullivan & Ms Marie O'Sullivan	Appt. 2018 Appt. 2020	DLP annual report
		Support Person	Mr R Lowry	Appt. 2016	Annual report
		Advisor	Appt. by Bishop as needed	As needed	DLP annual report
		Disciplinary Panel	Panel of eight in place	Appt. 2013	As part of annual parish audit.
		Parish Safeguarding Representatives (PSR)	Each parish has at least two PSR in post	Current and continuing	Annual report
		Vetting Liaison Person	Ms L Duncan/Ms I Carton	Appt. 2016	Annual report
Mandated Persons	All clergy; DLP; safeguarding staff	In accordance with legislation 2018	Annual report		

	Ensure arrangements are in place to evaluate compliance with the Standards	Annual Parish audit; SCC report; DLP report (S3.3 & 4; S4.44; 4.45;4.46) Follow up with parishes which do not respond; NBSCCCI notified of completion by Bishop. Consultation with relevant stakeholders; informed by legislative and regulatory changes.	SCC/PSR/PP/DLP Trainers Bishop SCC/Trainers	Nov/Dec every year Dec/Jan Jan. Nov/Dec each year & deanery meetings	SCC Winter meeting each year and NBSCCCI notified. SCC Spring meeting
	Safeguarding plan produced on a three-year basis	Reviewed and updated annually following scrutiny of the parish audit returns.	SCC	Jan/Feb every year	Reviewed at Autumn SCC meeting annually
	Independent review by the NBSCCCI	NBSCCCI invited to conduct review of safeguarding practice at a frequency agreed with the Board.	Bishop	Oct 2020	Following review process Group set up to respond.

Resources for implementing the Child Safeguarding plan

The resources required are primarily the personnel involved in creating a culture of safety at all levels and in all Church activities involving children; and, should it prove necessary, in responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse; reporting these to the relevant statutory agencies; and providing support to complainants and respondents.

Providing the infrastructural supports to ensure that these processes are undertaken appropriately includes providing the training, information, communication strategies and ensuring quality assurance of all procedures and processes.

The Diocese of Meath strives to accomplish this through:

- Having appropriate structures in place (as detailed above).
- Contracting trainers to provide necessary training and supports.
- Developing and maintaining communication systems, specifically: safeguarding website; publishing regular newsletters; developing and disseminating information leaflets and posters.
- Establishing and maintaining contacts with relevant statutory agency personnel.

Most of those involved operate in a voluntary capacity, while the trainers, support person, and liaison person are funded by the Diocese on a contractual basis. Funding is also made available to produce print and web-based materials and for training provided by external agents, generally the NBSCCCI.

Signed



27 January 2020

Review date: January 2021

Appendix 1: Communications Plan 2020

Target audience	Safeguarding messages	Method	Responsibility	When	Review
Children and their parents and carers involved in Church based activities.	How to keep safe	Information leaflets for children Information leaflet for parents (summary of Policy and Standards)	Leaflets are distributed and discussed with children by activity leader. Trainers/PSR ensures supplies are available	Annually in Sept. On request; at information and sessions	Annual parish audit
	What to do if you, or someone you know, is being harmed.	Policy and Operational Guidelines available on safeguarding website. Poster with policy statement and contact details for DLP and statutory agencies displayed in churches and buildings where Church related activities take place.	PSR	Continuing basis	
	Sources of advice and support.	Safeguarding Safety Statement displayed and copies available.			

Church personnel (volunteers, staff and clergy)	Good practice and how to deliver it.	Safeguarding website www.meathsafeguarding.ie	Maintained by Resource Team. SCC responsible for policy	Updated monthly	At SCC Summer meeting
	Safe recruitment.	Safeguarding Newsletter	Newsletters circulated electronically and hard copy	Spring/Autumn/Winter	
	Dealing with allegations	Information on safeguarding policy and procedures provided via print and website editions of the Policy & Operational Guidelines.	SCC responsible for policy		As part of annual parish audit
	Accessing help & advice.				
	Contact details for relevant persons/agencies.	Posters with policy statement and contact details for DLP and statutory agencies & Child Safeguarding Statement on website (www.meathsafeguarding.ie) displayed in churches and buildings where Church related activities take place (Posters available in Irish and Polish as well as English)	Trainers responsible for ensuring supplies of printed material and website.		
Accessing training.	Support and training sessions. Information on Safeguarding Policy and Procedures provided via print and website editions of the Policy & Operational Guidelines.	Trainers SCC responsible for policy	Spring and Autumn		

Parishioners	<p>What do we mean by safeguarding?</p> <p>Contact details of those with safeguarding responsibilities.</p> <p>Information on safeguarding policy and procedures.</p>	<p>Poster with policy statement and contact details for DLP and statutory agencies displayed in churches and buildings where Church related activities take place.</p> <p>Safeguarding Safety Statement displayed.</p> <p>Safeguarding website www.meathsafeguarding.ie</p> <p>Occasional items on safeguarding included in parish bulletin.</p> <p>Annual Safeguarding Sunday.</p> <p>Consultation and feedback meetings.</p>	<p>Trainers responsible for ensuring supplies of printed material and website.</p> <p>PP/PSR</p> <p>SCC/PP/PSR</p> <p>PP/PSR</p> <p>Members of SCC</p>	<p>Continuing basis</p> <p>TBD locally</p> <p>Mid-Oct.</p> <p>c. Six meetings scheduled p.a.</p>	<p>Outcomes reviewed at each SCC meeting.</p>
NBSCCCI/ Tusla/ An GS/ other relevant agencies		<p>Policy and Operational Guidelines on safeguarding website.</p> <p>Annual Reports; Safeguarding Plan on website</p> <p>Newsletters</p> <p>Annual meetings with statutory agencies</p>	<p>SCC/Resource Team</p>	<p>Dec. each year</p> <p>Spring/Autumn/ Winter By arrangement with agencies.</p>	<p>SCC Winter meeting</p>

Appendix 2: Training Plan 2020						
<i>Target group</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Delivery by local personnel (yes/no)</i>	<i>Delivery by NBSCCCI (yes/no)</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Trainers <i>New trainer(s) to be appointed and undertake training during 2020</i>	Revision of Training Manual and A/V material	N/A	Yes		Maynooth	€
Safeguarding Children Committee	Role specific committee training	N/A	Yes		Mullingar	
New DLP	Role specific training	N/A	Yes	29/01/20	Maynooth	
Clusters of Church personnel (Parish clergy, Parish Safeguarding Representatives, Sacristans, choir directors etc)	Five Deanery based information sessions <i>To include training for Mandated Persons role</i>	Yes	No	<i>To be arranged when new trainers in role.</i>	Navan Ashbourne Tullamore Trim Mullingar	N/A,
Clusters of volunteers (Parish clergy, parish safeguarding representatives, choir directors etc)	Six information sessions	Yes		<i>To be arranged when new trainers in place and on request</i>		N/A
Parish clergy, parish safeguarding representatives	Two full day training Sessions p.a.	Yes	No	TBD		€30 pp
Lourdes volunteers	Three information sessions p.a.	Yes	No	August – Sept. annually	Navan Mullingar Trim	N/A