

Process for dealing with non compliance with safeguarding policy and procedures

In some rare instances there is resistance to complying with, or refusal to comply with, safeguarding policy and procedures. These may be identified through the parish audit or through the visits to parishes made by the safeguarding trainer. A staged process will be adopted in addressing identified issues, as outlined below.

Stage 1: The safeguarding trainer has the primary role in identifying where difficulties arise and in offering support in addressing them. Where an issue is identified the trainer will determine whether training or support is needed to address the issue, ensure that this is provided and agree a timeframe for action. Experience has shown that difficulties are usually successfully dealt with at this stage.

Stage 2: If the issue is not resolved, the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee will become actively involved. A follow up visit will be arranged by the trainer and a Committee member (or by two committee members). The aim is both to support the trainer and to emphasise the serious nature of the issue. Ways of addressing the issue will be discussed; a plan of action will be agreed and implemented.

Stage 3: If this intervention is not successful, then the matter will be referred to the Committee for consideration. The Committee will then advise the Bishop on how to proceed.

At all stages the intention is to gain acceptance of, and compliance with, policy and procedures.

If you are interested in further reading on safeguarding, go to: www.dcy.gov.ie for papers on *"Improving Child Protection Practice: making the most of opportunities and overcoming challenges"*; www.safeguarding.ie for the latest NBSC Annual Report, Newsletters and related articles.

Safeguarding Newsletter

Autumn 2013



Child-friendly resources

The National Board for Safeguarding Children encourages dioceses to provide resources for children taking part in parish activities. These resources should be child-friendly and helpful to the activities. The Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee circulated its first such resource – a leaflet for altar servers. If you haven't received these leaflets in your parish, please contact the Diocesan Office (044 9348841).

Meeting of the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee 3 September 2013

As usual, the Committee meeting had a long agenda and a range of topics was discussed and agreed. In summary:

- ✓ An information leaflet for altar servers was approved (this has now been circulated);
- ✓ Reports were received on consultation and feedback meetings held in Dunshaughlin and Dunboyne parishes to hear the views of parishioners on the safeguarding policy and procedures; arrangements were made for the next series of consultation and feedback meetings;
- ✓ Arrangements for the first annual Safeguarding Awareness Day were agreed;
- ✓ A process for dealing with non-compliance with safeguarding policy and procedures was agreed and is published in this Newsletter;
- ✓ Bishop Smith will invite the NBSC to conduct an audit of safeguarding policy and practice in the Diocese of Meath;
- ✓ The appointment of the new Committee Secretary, Ms Joan Walshe was agreed, and the appointment of a lay Deputy Designated Liaison Person to assist Fr Seán Henry was discussed.

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for 26 November.

Safeguarding Awareness Day 6 October 2013

The aim of this initiative was to draw attention to the place of safeguarding in the life of the Church and the wider community. It provided an opportunity for information to be shared in the parish bulletin, while elsewhere the priests or parish representatives spoke about safeguarding ministry during the weekend Masses.

October deanery sessions and parish audit

Thanks to all the priests and parish representatives who attended the recent safeguarding update sessions. The meetings provided assistance on how to prepare the parish audit. The audit document can be found at www.meathsafeguarding.ie – search for “Resource S” in the section titled “Parish Resources”. Please use that updated version of the audit form and return it before 22 November.

Parish consultation and feedback meetings

A series of meetings will be held before Christmas in Longwood and Rochfortbridge parishes. These listening sessions are of great benefit to the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee because they provide feedback on safeguarding matters on the ground, which then informs our policy and practice. Any parish wishing to hold a consultation meeting should contact the Diocesan Office.

Diocesan audit

The National Board for Safeguarding Children has been invited by Bishop Smith to conduct an audit of the Diocese of Meath in December 2013. The audit will examine current policy and practice, as well as reviewing the management of complaints and allegations. The process involves a review of files and interviews with members of the Safeguarding Children Committee, Case Management Committee and other relevant personnel.

Review meeting with HSE, 24 September 2013

Diocesan and HSE personnel meet twice a year to share information on areas of mutual interest. This meeting was particularly helpful in getting feedback on our revised policy and procedures documentation. The Diocese appreciates its good working relationship with the HSE, while the HSE recognises that the training provided by the Church is beneficial to the advancement of safeguarding awareness in the wider community.