

ARCHDIOCESE OF ARMAGH

Safeguarding

Information and Guidance

*Handbook for Parents and
Carers*



Message from Cardinal Seán Brady

*Diocesan Safeguarding Office
Cathedral Road
Armagh
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I welcome this booklet which has been prepared to inform parents and carers of some of the measures being taken within the Archdiocese of Armagh to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to be kept safe from harm or the risk of harm. This responsibility is especially acute when dealing with children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Diocesan safeguarding policy provides positive messages about how important these more vulnerable groups are in the life of the parish community and the Church.

Responsibility for the well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults rests with everyone and not just parents/carers. We are all members of a Church community and, as such, have a duty to protect the health and well-being of everyone, but especially those who are deemed to be more vulnerable. There is a network of values and relationships which we all need if everyone is to be happy, confident and safe.

Each person should feel valued, encouraged and affirmed. Together we are working to prevent abuse of any kind and will do all that we can to ensure that everyone can participate in the life of the Church in ways which enhance their physical, emotional and spiritual growth within the safe, secure and welcoming environment of their faith community.

+ Seán Brady

Archbishop of Armagh

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Introduction

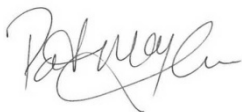
The purpose of this booklet is to inform parents and carers of the measures that have been introduced by the Archdiocese to strengthen safeguarding and to provide a safe environment for children, young people and other vulnerable individuals or groups.

The booklet highlights the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and other safeguarding material aimed at making Diocesan clergy, staff and volunteers aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and the steps they must take when allegations of abuse are suspected or come to light.

Information is also provided on recognising the various forms of abuse; on codes of conduct; and on bullying. A brief overview has also been included outlining the various safeguarding roles within the Archdiocese.

I hope that parents and carers will find the booklet helpful and that it will provide some detail as to the measures being implemented by the Archdiocese to reassure you that children, young people and vulnerable adults are valued and respected.

We want to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults realise their full potential and are encouraged to take their rightful place in society.



Pat McGlew
Diocesan Director of Safeguarding

National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland

The National Board is based in Maynooth and has developed standard safeguarding policies and guidance for use by the Catholic Church in Ireland. This material can be accessed on their website at www.safeguarding.ie. The National Board provides a central focus for the provision of safeguarding advice and guidance throughout the Catholic Church in Ireland. It supports Church authorities throughout Ireland and audits and monitors compliance with the agreed standards for safeguarding.

Safeguarding in the Archdiocese of Armagh

Based on the agreed safeguarding standards produced by the National Board, the Archdiocese has developed Safeguarding Policy and Procedures which incorporate measures that are designed to provide the highest standard of safeguarding throughout the Archdiocese. This provides guidance aimed at ensuring that all allegations are dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the law North or South.

Appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures have been put in place supported by codes of conduct. Those who have suffered abuse will receive a compassionate and just response and be offered pastoral care to help rebuild their lives.

Safeguarding at Parish Level

The Church's safeguarding message is displayed in all Churches and Church property within parishes along with contact details of Diocesan Designated Officers. Strong links have been established with safeguarding statutory agencies to ensure better support for personnel within the Church and to avail of expertise which is aimed at improving the effectiveness of policies and procedures. External groups wishing to use Church property are required to complete the necessary documentation and to provide evidence of having appropriate liability insurance.

Safeguarding Roles within Archdiocese of Armagh

The overall responsibility for safeguarding in any Church organisation within parishes remains with the Parish Priest.

Below are a number of other specific safeguarding roles within the Church:

- Parish Safeguarding Representative(s) (name(s) on church notice board): *Raises awareness and promotes best practice.*
- Diocesan Designated Officers (names below): *Manage response to allegations of abuse from start to finish.*
- Diocesan Support Person: *Provides support for alleged victim.*
- Diocesan Advice Person: *Provides support and advice for the alleged abuser.*
- Diocesan Safeguarding Committee: *Creates and maintains a safe environment, e.g. training.*
- Diocesan Advisory Panel: *Advises and assists at all stages of investigation of allegations.*
- National Board for Safeguarding Children (Maynooth): *Provides independent advisory, audit and inspection functions.*

Diocesan Designated Officers

The Archbishop has appointed two Diocesan Designated Officers who can be contacted with regard to any safeguarding concerns relating to children, young people or vulnerable adults

on the numbers below:

Mr Pat McGlew	Ms Eleanor Kelly
Tel: (028) 37525592 (NI)	Tel: (028) 37525592 (NI)
(048) 37525592 (ROI)	(048) 37525592 (ROI)
Mob: 07841101687 (NI)	Mob: 07584323138 (NI)
0044 7841101687 (ROI)	0044 7584323138 (ROI)

Keeping Your Child Safe

Talk To Your Child

It is important that children are taught from a young age about skills of self-protection. This begins at toddler stage when parents/carers begin to explain to their children about how to keep themselves safe from harm. Child abuse takes various forms and it is important that your child is able to talk to you or another trusted adult if they are worried. Parents/carers should also explain to their children about private parts of the body, good touch and bad touch and who to talk to if they are worried.

Parents/carers should tell their children that they have the right to say NO if anyone tries to persuade them to do something that makes them uncomfortable or is frightening. It is important to tell children that, if something bad happens it is not their fault and that they will not get into trouble for telling. All of this should be undertaken in a balanced way with children so that they have the skills and knowledge to safeguard themselves but also the confidence to grow and explore the wider world around them free from fear.

Know Who Your Child is Spending Time With

It is important that parents/carers know who their child is spending time with. This includes their friendship networks and the adults whom they come into contact with through activities outside the home. Parents/carers should show interest and ask questions to assure themselves that their child is safe from harm. The Church welcomes and encourages parental involvement at all levels.

Monitor the Use of Technology

It is important that parents/carers monitor their children's use of the internet. The internet can be an exciting place for children and young people where they can talk to friends, be creative and have fun. However, just like in the real world sometimes things can go wrong.

Parents/Carers: It is important that you listen to your child(ren) and if they have concerns or make a disclosure of inappropriate contact or behaviour, or if you have a concern about a safeguarding issue, please contact one of the Diocesan Designated Officers. Contact details included in this leaflet.

Safeguarding material available on the Diocesan website at www.armagharchdiocese.org/safeguarding

- *Safeguarding Policy and Procedures*
- *Safeguarding Information Booklet*
- *Information and Guidance for Altar Servers*
- *Making Contact with the Designated Officer*
- *Information and Guidance for Children, Young People and Parents*

- *Seven Standards of Best Practice in Safeguarding Children within the Catholic Church*
- *Handbook for Parents and Carers*
- *Leaflet for Parents and Carers*
- *Safeguarding Poster*

Diocesan Code of Conduct

Safeguarding is central to the wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults as they play their part in the life of the Catholic Church. ‘Best Practice’ promotes the Church’s ethos and provides a set of practical policies and procedures to support their development in ways which promote their security, confidence and independence. The following has been taken from the Diocesan Code of Conduct and should be applied as a *minimum* standard in order to strengthen and support safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Volunteers and church personnel will:

- treat individuals and each other with equal courtesy, dignity and respect, favouritism is not acceptable;
- always engage in an open manner and will not spend a disproportionate amount of time with any particular individual or group of individuals;
- not use physical punishment under any circumstances;
- not engage in, or tolerate any behaviour – verbal, psychological or physical - that could be construed as bullying or abusive;
- avoid inappropriate language and/or sexually suggestive comments, including telling jokes of a sexual nature, either towards individuals or among themselves;
- use age-appropriate language, media materials and activities and never use any sexually explicit or pornographic material;
- develop appropriate guidelines in relation to the use of computers, videos, Internet, cameras and camera phones in Church settings;
- ensure an appropriate and adequate ratio of adults to children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- avoid being alone with an individual e.g. in relation to travel, meetings, home visits, remaining in churches or parish property, where two adults should be present;
- maintain adequate, gender-appropriate, supervision for males and females;
- not give alcohol or tobacco to children or vulnerable individuals under any circumstances;
- not give drugs or other illegal substances to individuals under any circumstances;
- not consume alcohol or smoke while having responsibility for, or in the presence of, those in their care;
- not use drugs or other illegal substances under any circumstances;
- respect individuals’ physical integrity at all times;
- not engage in inappropriate physical contact of any kind - including tough physical play, physical reprimand and horseplay (tickling, wrestling);
- respect individuals’ privacy at all times, including privacy in locations such as toilets, changing areas etc;
- not perform tasks of a personal nature for individuals while they are in areas such as changing areas (e.g. in the locker room), except in cases of medical necessity or when the welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult depends on it;
- always seek permission from parents/guardians/carers for the taking/use of photographs, the generating of computer images and the making/showing of video recordings of events;
- not give their personal details to individuals and only the named leader will hold personal details of individuals;
- only contact children or vulnerable individuals via their parents/guardians/carers except in emergencies;

- respond promptly to all safeguarding concerns and liaise with the required civil and church authorities in accordance with established guidelines;
- follow through all concerns and/or complaints in a timely, efficient manner in accordance with guidelines.

Diocesan Code of Conduct for Children/Young People

A code of conduct specific to a group of children and young people must be drawn up in direct consultation with that group. It is important that each group of children and young people contributes directly to the formation of their own code of conduct. The following points should be used as a *minimum* standard. Children, young people and vulnerable adults should:

- be made aware that leaders also have a code of conduct;
- respect that leaders will not work alone with such groups;
- be mannerly and treat each other and their leaders with courtesy, respect and dignity;
- always take care of their own safety and do their best in any activity and always choose to do “the right thing”;
- never bully, exclude or engage in name calling against others. Remember that other people have feelings too, so do not hurt them. Never use violence against another person;
- not be permitted to engage in substance abuse or to consume alcohol or smoke, in keeping with civil law;
- not use inappropriate language or sexually suggestive comments;
- only engage in physical contact of an appropriate nature at all times;
- respect the property of others and not take things without asking. They should take care of equipment and the building and put litter in the bins;
- be made aware that if anyone is harming or trying to harm them, they should tell a trusted adult immediately.

Parental Consent Form

A parental consent form is available and may be distributed for each individual activity or for a number of activities at a time depending on the preference of the group. Parental consent forms should give parents sufficient notice of activities and inform of any changes to the programme.

External Agency Telephone Numbers

Below is contact information for some relevant agencies which are available to provide assistance, respond and give support to all children and/or vulnerable individuals. Parents and children can seek advice and support for a range of issues not just about abuse.

“Towards Healing” is a counselling and support service for survivors of institutional, clerical and religious abuse, funded by the Catholic Church in Ireland. The operational hours of the helpline are: Monday and Wednesday (11.00a.m.–8.00p.m.) and Friday (11.00a.m.–4.00p.m.). An answering machine service is available at all other times. It is a completely private and confidential organisation that can be contacted at: **Freephone: 0800 0963315 (NI) 1800 303416 (ROI)**

Northern Ireland

PSNI Tel: 0845 600 8000

This is a centralised number. Ask to be put through to the police station which serves the area where the incident/alleged incident took place.

Social Services

The Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland have Gateway services in all Trusts. Anyone reporting a concern or making an allegation of abuse should contact this service in the Trust which serves the area where the incident/alleged incident took place. Contact information for the Gateway service in each Trust is outlined below:

Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Tel: 0800 783 7745 (9.00am to 5.00pm)

Out of hours Emergency Service: **Tel: 028 38 33 44 44**

Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Tel: 03001234333 (9.00am to 5.00pm)

Out of hours emergency service: **Tel: 02894468833**

Western Health and Social Care Trust

Tel: 02871314090 (9.00am to 5.00pm)

Out of hours emergency service: **Tel: 02871345171**

NSPCC: CHILDLINE: Tel: 0800 11 11

STOP IT NOW: Tel:0808 1000 900

Barnardos: Tel: (028) 90672366

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre: www.thinkuknow.co.uk.

For information on Cyber Bullying: www.bullying.co.uk/schools/cyberbullying.

Republic of Ireland

An Garda Siochana Dundalk Tel: 042 93 35 577

Drogheda: Tel: 041 98 36 919

Ardee: Tel: 041 68 53 222

Social Services

Dundalk HSE: Tel: 042 93 92 200 (9.30am to 5.30pm)After hours contact Garda Station:
Dundalk Tel: 042 93 35 577

Drogheda HSE: Tel: 041 98 33 163After hours contact Garda Station: Drogheda: Tel: 041
98 36 919 orArdee: Tel: 041 68 53 222

ISPC: CHILDLINE Tel: 1800 66 66 66

Recognising the various types of Child Abuse and Adult Vulnerability

Safeguarding is everyone's business. However, recognising child or vulnerable adult abuse is never easy. *Responsibility for deciding whether or not abuse has taken place lies with statutory agencies that investigate concerns and take appropriate action.* Abuse is normally categorised under the following broad headings:

Physical Abuse

This can be where children are hurt by ill-treatment or deliberate or neglectful failure to prevent injury or harm. Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily lives, most likely in bony parts of their body, like elbows, knees and shins. Some children, however, will have bruising which can almost only have been caused non-accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury.

Emotional Abuse

This can be difficult to measure and often children who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children.

Sexual Abuse

This can be where children are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity ranging from exposure to pornographic literature, pornography on the Internet, to inappropriate touching for the purposes of arousal or gratification and sexual intercourse. Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs, can abuse both boys and girls of all ages.

Neglect

This can be where children's physical and/or psychological needs are persistently and/or severely neglected with a failure to protect the child from exposure to any kind of danger.

Children with a Disability

Children with a disability may be more vulnerable to abuse than non-disabled children. As well as neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse, this group of children may suffer more subtle forms of abuse, like being deprived of a way of communicating or being prevented from meeting people outside of their normal environment. In all cases where abuse is suspected, an assessment will need to be carried out by a range of Social and Health professionals in order to gain an understanding as to what may be happening to a child.

Vulnerability in Adulthood

An adult may be vulnerable to abuse due to a range of issues such as a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, or some other form of illness. It should be recognised that the best practice guidelines which are applicable to children must also be observed when there is contact with vulnerable adults.

Bullying

Everyone should be aware of the devastating effects and long-term damage that bullying can have on anyone but especially on young people or vulnerable individuals. It is important that we create a safe "bullying-free" environment throughout the Archdiocese. A child or vulnerable adult may indicate by signs of behaviour that he/she is being bullied. Parents/Carers should be aware of possible signs and should be aware of suspected incidents of bullying.

The above categories provide a general guide to the types of abuse which can be experienced by children and/or vulnerable adults. In all cases of abuse, an assessment will need to be carried out by a range of Social and Health professionals in order to gain an understanding as to what may be happening to a child or vulnerable adult.