

ROLE OF PARISH DESIGNATED PERSON

Every Parish should have in place at least one trained Parish Designated Person.

The role of the Parish Designated Person in the Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin is to

- Promote the safeguarding of children and to be a resource for any person involved in the parish (clergy, staff, volunteer, child or young person, parent or guardian) about any aspect of child protection.
- Be available to receive child protection concerns in relation to children involved in parish related events.
- Report all child protection concerns to the civil authorities (HSE / An Garda Síochána) without delay.
- Notify the Diocesan Designated Person (Delegate) of all reports made.

Reporting

In relation to children involved in parish related events, it will be the responsibility of the Parish Designated Person to -

- Report all child protection concerns to the civil authorities (HSE / An Garda Síochána) without delay.
- Contact emergency or appropriate services where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk of harm. An immediate referral should be made to the HSE. Where appropriate, if HSE staff are not available, An Garda Síochána should be contacted to ensure that **under no circumstances is a child left in a dangerous situation pending HSE intervention**. Consideration should, in all cases, also be given to whether an immediate referral is necessary in order to preserve, and safeguard against the possibility of any loss, deterioration or destruction of potential evidence or forensic evidence.
- Explain the diocesan referral procedures to the person who has raised the concern (see **SECTION 2.1**)
- Create a child protection case file for every referral that includes a log of actions, events and information received (see **FORM C1** in the appendix). Entries should be made as soon as possible after the event but before the end of the day. They must be timed, dated and signed by the author.

When making a referral to the HSE, the Parish Designated Person should use the HSE Standard Reporting Form (SRF), which is available from the local HSE Social Work Department. See **FORM C2** in the appendix for sample.

Support, Training and Monitoring

It will be the responsibility of the Parish Designated Person(s) to:

- Promote awareness of the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures.
- Ensure that contact details of the relevant civil authorities are clearly available in all public buildings of the parish.
- Organise with their Parish Parish/Curate(s)/Parish Staff/Parish Council and Diocesan Trainers to provide 'best practice' information for those working for and in the parish, with children and young people.
- Assist the Parish Priest, and others engaged in work with young people in the parish, to develop and establish best practices and procedures for parish activities.
- Complete an audit of all parish activities that involve children and young people, and forward copy of same to the 'Diocesan Safeguarding Committee' when complete. The audit should be updated annually.
- Meet with (*either in groups or individually*) all those listed on the audit form and brief them on best practice and procedures in regard to preventing harm to children. (See **SECTION 3**)