

Our Guiding Principles

Each child shall be cherished and affirmed as a gift from God with an inherent right to dignity of life and bodily integrity which shall be respected, nurtured and protected by all. Everyone in the Church has an obligation to ensure that the fundamental rights of children are respected.

The Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin values and encourages the participation of children and young people in parish liturgies and activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, social and intellectual development, and will work in a partnership way with parents at all times.

In keeping with this we in the Diocese undertake to do all in our power to create safe environments where the welfare of children and young people is paramount. This duty of care extends to all the many and varied ways that children share in the life of the Church in our diocese.

Partnership with Civil Authorities

The Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin is committed to working in partnership with statutory authorities to ensure that all aspects of child welfare are managed promptly, professionally and justly. We will adhere to statutory policy, notably **'Children First': National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (1999)**. **All child protection concerns must be reported to the civil authorities without delay.**

Those who are the subject of an investigation – civil or canonical – may be asked to step aside from their ministry and duties for the duration of the investigation. While the matter is pending the respondent enjoys the presumption of innocence and the right to his or her good name.

Procedures

Our diocese is committed to following best practice in the Irish Church as specified by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC).

Our diocesan child protection policy and procedures are set out in our publication - *'Kildare & Leighlin Diocese: Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures'* (AUG 2009). This publication is closely modelled on the Standards & Guidance Document produced by the NBSCCC in 2008. Our publication includes -

- Definition of child abuse
- Procedures for responding to child protection concerns
- Description of role of Designated Persons – Parish & Diocesan
- Complaints procedure
- Procedures for recording of incidents and accidents
- Code of behaviour for all staff and volunteers
- Recruitment and vetting procedures

At diocesan level, we have in place a Diocesan Designated Person (Delegate), a deputy Delegate, an 'Advisory Panel' to the Bishop, and a 'Safeguarding Committee'.

Parish Responsibilities

All parishes are required to issue and display a **Parish Safeguarding Children Statement** that confirms that the Parish will adhere to the latest edition of '*Kildare & Leighlin Diocese: Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures*'. Further to this, each parish should address the specific requirements arising from the nature of the varied activities being undertaken by the Parish. Each parish shall have in place at least one trained Parish Designated Person.

Prevention

The Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin is committed to providing clear codes of behaviour towards children for staff and volunteers. We will endeavour to have all employees and volunteers carefully recruited, vetted, selected, trained, supported and supervised.

Training

All Church personnel should be offered training in child protection to maintain high standards and good practice. '**Keeping Safe**' - the recognised Child Protection training model under '**Children First**' will be completed by all who are preparing to serve as a Parish Designated Person.

Communicating

Our diocese is committed to making its child protection procedures widely known and understood. '*Kildare & Leighlin Diocese: Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures*' will be circulated to all parishes and made available on our diocesan website – www.kandle.ie

The name and contact details of our child protection personnel and counselling services will be circulated by every means possible.

Access to Advice and Support

Those who have suffered child abuse should receive a compassionate and just response and should be offered appropriate pastoral care to rebuild their lives.

Those who harmed others should be helped to face up to the reality of abuse as well as to promote healing in a manner which does not compromise children's safety.

Implementing and Monitoring Diocesan Policy

All church personnel in this diocese are required to comply with our '*Kildare & Leighlin Diocese: Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures*' (AUG 2009). Implementation will be monitored and reviewed on an on-going basis. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Diocese.

James Moriarty
Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin
August 2009

All parishes are required to issue and display a **Parish Safeguarding Children Statement** that confirms the Parish will adhere to the diocesan policy and procedures as set out in the latest edition of *'Kildare & Leighlin Diocese: Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures'*. The following text can be downloaded from the diocesan website – www.kandle.ie

Safeguarding Children

The Parish of values and encourages the participation of children and young people in parish liturgies and activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, social and intellectual development, and will work in a partnership way with parents at all times.

The Gospel of Christ invites us to cherish and affirm each child as a gift from God with an inherent right to dignity of life and bodily integrity which shall be respected, nurtured and protected by all. Everyone in the Church has an obligation to ensure that the fundamental rights of children are respected.

In keeping with this we in this parish undertake to do all in our power to create safe environments where the welfare of children and young people is paramount. This duty of care extends to all the many and varied ways that children share in the life of the Church in our parish and diocese.

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Procedures

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As required of all church personnel in this diocese, we will adhere to *'Kildare & Leighlin Diocese: Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures' (AUG 2009)*.

Signed

Parish Priest