

**Kildare & Leighlin
Diocese**

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

**Policy &
Procedures**

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August 2009 Edition

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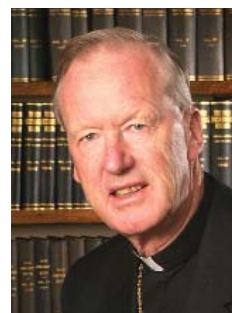
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INTRODUCTION

Bishop Jim Moriarty

When the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC) published their *'Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland'* in September 2008, two key points were highlighted –

1. This document is now the 'definitive reference' for the Irish Church.
2. Following its publication, everyone would need to review their policy and procedures in order to achieve a uniform standard of best practice based on this document.



In Kildare & Leighlin Diocese, we fully endorse this 'one church' approach. The publication of *'Kildare & Leighlin Diocese: Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures'* is the end result of the local review process which was expected by the NBSCCC.

The layout of this publication closely follows and adopts the structure, resources and language within the NBSCCC document. I would like to commend the NBSCCC for the leadership they have given and to thank them for their on-going support.

I would also like to acknowledge the very close working relationship our diocese has with the HSE and An Garda Síochána. We are committed to working in partnership with the civil authorities to ensure that all aspects of child welfare are managed promptly, professionally and justly. This means that all child protection concerns must be reported to the civil authorities without delay.

It is worth noting that we have published our revised 'policy and procedures' within a ring binder. This serves as an indication that we understand them always to be a 'work in progress'. The separate sections can be updated and extended as required. In particular any change in the statutory guidelines will be fully and quickly reflected in future revisions.

On behalf of the diocese, I want to take this opportunity to thank all the people who are part of our safeguarding structures either at diocesan or parish level. In particular I would like to commend those who have taken on the role of Parish Designated Person.

At the same time, it is essential that we promote the principle that everyone has their part to play. We share the obligation to protect children. As a diocesan community we are called to create and sustain a culture of safety. This requires more than the publication of documents. To recall a phrase from Scripture, it must be something 'alive and active' in all our planning and practices.

The deep wrong of child abuse which has scandalised and shamed the Irish Church in our times must remain a caution to us. To honour the suffering and courage of survivors we must take, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, 'whatever steps are necessary to prevent it from happening again'. The publication of this 'policy and procedures' document is an important step. It is a necessary and on-going reminder of a terrible truth and a signpost to a better future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Moriarty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jim Moriarty
Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin
August 2009

INTRODUCTION

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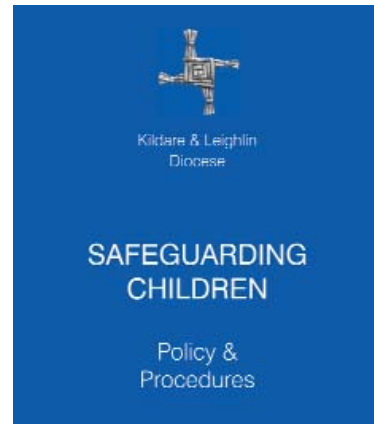
Kildare & Leighlin Diocese

'Kildare & Leighlin Diocese: Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures' (AUG 2009)

This document is available on-line on our diocesan website – www.kandle.ie – both as a complete document and also divided into the various sections.

All the forms included in this document are available for download. Apart from the GARDA VETTING FORM and the SAMPLE HSE REPORTING FORM, all the forms (in Word Docs) can be amended as required to enter the specific parish contact information etc.

For further information on availability of resources please contact one of the diocesan safeguarding co-ordinators – see **CONTACT DETAILS FOR CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES**



National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC)

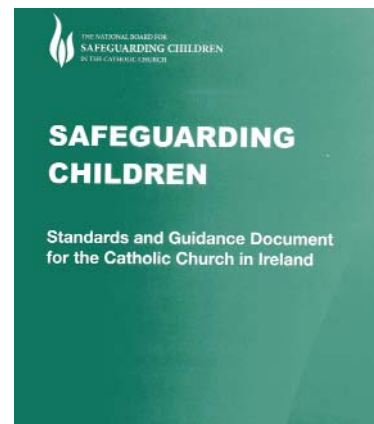
'Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland'

This 96 page document is available online - www.safeguarding.ie

For further information please contact -

National Office for Safeguarding Children
in the Catholic Church in Ireland
New House
Saint Patrick's College
Maynooth
Co.Kildare

Tel: 01 505 3124
Fax: 01 505 3026
Website: www.safeguarding.ie



CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

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KILDARE & LEIGHLIN DIOCESE

Diocesan Designated Person - DELEGATE

Msgr. John McDonald, PP,
Priests House,
The Curragh,
Co. Kildare
Tel: 045/441369

Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinators (Acting)

Fr. Mícheál Murphy,
Knockbeg College,
Carlow.
Tel: 059/9142127

Fr. John Stapleton,
Parochial House,
Killeigh, Co Offaly.
Tel: 057/9344161

Diocesan Safeguarding Trainers

Trish O'Neill & Robert Norton
Faith Development Services,
Cathedral Parish Centre,
College Street, Carlow
Tel: 059/9164084

National Office for Safeguarding Children

All Church organisations and personnel can access specialist advice about child protection issues through the National Office and contact the National Board.

National Office for Safeguarding Children
in the Catholic Church in Ireland
New House
Saint Patrick's College
Maynooth, Co.Kildare

Tel: 01 505 3124
Fax: 01 505 3026
Website: www.safeguarding.ie

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

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Local HSE Duty Social Worker Contacts:-

Duty Social worker can be contacted 9am-5pm

Carlow Area

059/9136587

Kilkenny Area

056/7784842 or 056/7784782

Kildare/ West Wicklow

045/882400

Laois Area

057/8678236

Offaly Area

057/9322488

Outside of these hours in cases of emergency please contact An Garda Síochána

HSE National information line

1850 24 1850 (callsave)

This information line can be contacted from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Saturday .

An Garda Síochána

Carlow Garda Station	Tel: 059 9136620
Clane Garda Station	Tel: 045 868262
Edenderry Garda Station	Tel: 046 9731290
Kilcock Garda Station	Tel: 01 6287202
Kildare Garda Station	Tel: 045 527730
Mountmellick Garda Station	Tel: 057 8624140
Naas Garda Station	Tel: 045 884300
Newbridge Garda Station	Tel: 045 431212
Portarlington Garda Station	Tel: 057 8623112
Portlaoise Garda Station	Tel: 057 8674100
Tullow Garda Station	Tel: 059 9151222

For further information on local Garda stations – www.garda.ie

COUNSELLING SERVICES

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Faiseamh Helpline

Faiseamh is an organisation which provides telephone counselling and a counselling and psychotherapy referral service for people who have been sexually, physically, or emotionally abused by priests or religious. Our aim is to ensure that the people who contact us receive the best possible help and support in dealing with the events of the past.

Free access to a helpline staffed by experienced Telephone Counsellors.
This operates on Mondays and Wednesdays from 11.00 am – 8.00 pm, and on Fridays from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm.

Freephone 1800 331234 (Rep. of Ireland) and Freephone 0800 973272 (NI and UK).
Website: www.faiseamh.com

Connect

Connect is a free phone counselling service for any adult who has experienced abuse, trauma or neglect in childhood. The service is also available to partners or relatives of people with these experiences. With Connect you can talk in confidence with a trained counsellor who can listen or help with questions you have.

Connect is an out of hours service available Wednesday to Sunday, from 6-10pm.
To speak to a counsellor call: Freephone 1800 235 235
Website: www.connectcounselling.ie

National Counselling Service (NCS)

The HSE National Counselling Service (NCS) is for adults who were abused in childhood and was established in September 2000 in response to the recognition that a large number of adults had been abused as children while in care in State institutions in Ireland. The NCS offers confidential face to face counselling, free of charge, to adults who experienced physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect during childhood. Counselling is available at 60 locations throughout Ireland.

For an appointment at a location of your choice Freephone: 1800 235 234
More information at: www.hse-ncs.ie

CHILDLINE

provides a 24 hour listening service for all children up to the age of 18.
Tel: 1800 66 66 66 / www.childline.ie

ISPCC

The Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
Tel: 01 6767 960 / www.ispcc.ie

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.

Partnership with Civil Authorities

Our Parish is committed to working in partnership with the civil 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 shall be reported to the civil authorities without delay.

Procedures

The Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin is committed to following best practice 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 document can be downloaded from the diocesan website – www.kandle.ie

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

The procedures in **SECTION 2** set out the action that must be taken by a member of the parish staff or as a parish volunteer if any concern, allegation, suspicion or disclosure is made, whether current or historical, that indicates a member of the Church staff or a volunteer (current or former) has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- committed a criminal offence against a child or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Key Principles

The safety of the child is always the most important consideration.

All child protection concerns must be reported to the civil authorities and within the Church without delay. (See reporting diagram overleaf).

It is important that everyone in the organisation is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. Investigation is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral to them of the concerns about the child.

Parish Designated Person

Every Parish should designate a person or persons to be responsible for dealing with complaints or concerns regarding child abuse and to promote the safeguarding of children within that Parish. See **SECTION 2.7** for more information

The name and contact details of the Parish Designated Person(s) and the Diocesan Designated Person (Delegate) should be made known to everyone involved in the organisation and its activities - e.g. workers, volunteers, children and young people, parents and guardians.

Required Action

- Where child abuse is **observed**, intervene immediately and provide a safe environment for the child. Remember, the safety and welfare of the child is of paramount importance. Report the misconduct to the Parish Designated Person
- Where child abuse is **suspected**, concerns should be immediately brought to the attention of the Parish Designated Person.
- Where child abuse is **disclosed**, either by the person directly affected or by a third party, read on in **SECTION 2** for general guidance as to an immediate response.
- Where abuse is observed, suspected or disclosed the one thing you must **not** do is nothing.

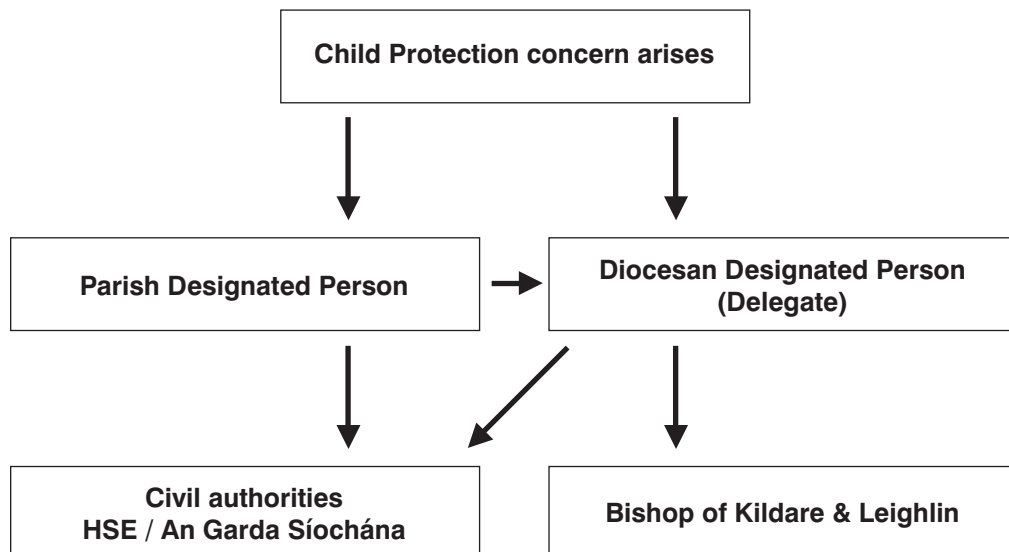
Use **FORM C1** (see appendix) to make a referral to your Parish Designated Person.

Reporting flow chart

A child protection concern arises about a child or a complaint is made about the behaviour of Church personnel or volunteer.

1. Child Protection concern arises and information is passed onto the Parish Designated Person (see **SECTION 2.7**) or to the Diocesan Designated Person (Delegate), (see **SECTION 2.9**)
2. In all cases the child protection concern must be reported to the civil authorities without delay (see **FORM C2** in the appendix)
3. The Parish Designated Person must inform the Delegate whenever they make a report to the civil authorities.
4. The Delegate must inform the Bishop of all reports.
5. A complete written record is kept in relation to the complaint or concern, including subsequent action and all communications with the civil authorities. (see **FORM C1** in the appendix)
6. Care must be taken to protect people’s rights to confidentiality. Information will be given to others on a ‘need to know’ basis in order to safeguard the child. See **SECTION 2.12** – Confidentiality Statement.

Remember: it is **not** your role to investigate



DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE

A child is defined as any person under the age of eighteen years excluding a person who is or has been married - in line with '**Children First**': *National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (1999)*.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in their family, in a faith based, institutional or community setting; by those known to them, or more rarely by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult/s, another child or children. It often involves people they trust and know well.

The abuse of children generally involves one or more of four main forms of abuse:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect

It is essential that any personnel in the Catholic Church recognise that the abuse of children is **not just about sexual abuse**. Many children experience harm through emotional, physical abuse and neglect. The Church must take responsibility to nurture, protect and take action for any child who is suffering harm, whatever the harm may be and whoever is causing it.

Some children may be particularly vulnerable to abuse. For example there is research which has found that disabled children are three times more likely to be abused than non-disabled children.

Some studies suggest children from minority ethnic groups may be at increased risk of abuse through factors such as stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination.

There is also extensive evidence that these children and families often fail to receive an appropriate service when concerns are raised about a child's welfare. Over-reaction and inaction have both been shown to be based on misunderstandings and misinterpretations of different cultural patterns, which have led to failure to meet children's needs.

Other groups of children who might be particularly vulnerable include asylum-seeking children, children who are in care, children who are living with parents/ carers who misuse drugs and/ or alcohol.

DEFINITIONS**Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child. Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts (oral sex). They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/ or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

Neglect

Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and failure to access appropriate medical care or treatment.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. It is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/ or psychological needs, such as the neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may also occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Recognising child abuse is not easy, and it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. You do however have a responsibility and duty to act in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child. The following information should help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse.

Physical abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily life. These are likely to be in places where there are 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 or when it appears on parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. on the cheeks or thighs. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Bruising may be more or less noticeable on children with different skin tones or from different racial groups and specialist advice may need to be taken.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- cigarette burns
- bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse 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.

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- a failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, e.g. in hospital or away from their parents care
- sudden speech disorders
- developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

HOW TO RECOGNISE CHILD ABUSE

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- sudden speech disorders
- self harm
- fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour

Sexual abuse

Adults, who use children to meet their own sexual needs, abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers. Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour which may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital area
- bruising or bleeding near genital area
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

Neglect

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- constantly dirty or 'smelly'
- loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/ or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised

These definitions and indicators are not meant to be definitive but only to serve as a guide to assist you. It is important too, to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and that the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as a death or the birth of a new baby in their family, relationship problems between their parents/carers etc.

RESPONDING TO CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS

If as a member of the parish staff or as a parish volunteer you have grounds for concern about the welfare of a child/children participating in a parish activity please note the following -

1. If you receive a concern, suspicion, disclosure or allegation of abuse, you must act immediately and refer the matter to your Parish Designated Person as soon as possible. See **SECTION 2.7** for more information.
2. Whenever possible and practical, without interrupting the flow of conversation, take notes during the conversation. Always ask permission to do this and explain the importance of recording all information. Where it is not appropriate to make notes at the time, make a written record as soon as possible afterwards and in any case before the end of the day.

Use **FORM C1** in appendix - Child Protection Recording Form.

3. Record the time, date, location (or if the matter has been communicated by letter or telephone), and persons present. The record should be signed and dated by the author.
4. Do not be selective. Include detail, which to you may seem irrelevant. It may prove invaluable at a later stage in an investigation.
5. This initial recording will form the first entry in a file of information about the case, which will be retained by your Parish Designated Person.
6. All original records, including rough notes, must be passed immediately to your Parish Designated Person. Any copies of records retained must be kept secure and confidential.
7. Not all persons raising a concern will wish to go through the recording and reporting process. Nonetheless, information about the existence of a potential allegation must always be communicated to your Parish Designated Person.
8. In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, an immediate report should be made to the HSE as well as to your Parish Designated Person.

See **FORM C2** in appendix – sample of HSE Standard Reporting Form (SRF)

Where the appropriate HSE staff are not available, An Garda Síochána should be contacted to ensure that **under no circumstances a child is 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.

9. Explain to the child/person raising the concern what will happen next. Indicate who will be made aware of the information given by them. Leave the contact details of the Parish Designated Person in case the referrer needs to ask questions later.
10. It is important not to discuss the incident/concern with anyone other than those detailed in these procedures.

NOTE: Parents/Guardians must be informed that a referral has been made, except when to do so would be dangerous for the child.

HOW TO RESPOND TO PEOPLE RAISING A CONCERN

It is often very difficult for people to talk about abuse so it is important to make sure that you are patient, listen carefully and actively, and create a safe environment in which they feel able to tell you as much as they can remember. This will help those people whose responsibility it is to investigate the incident(s) do so as thoroughly as possible.

People may tell you about:

- abuse that's happened to them now – current
- abuse that happened to them some time ago – historical
- something they've been told by someone else and that they strongly believe is true
- seeing signs of abuse, such as physical injuries on a child
- something that they have witnessed, such as the behaviour of an adult to a child that made them feel uncomfortable

Where information is given in person, consider the following:

- Listen carefully to that person, but do not ask intrusive or leading questions.
- Stay calm, take what the person raising the concern says seriously, and reassure them.
- Allow the person to continue at his/her own pace.
- Check with the person to make sure that you have understood what they actually said. Do not suggest words, but use theirs.
- Make no promises that cannot be kept, particularly in relation to secrecy, but listen carefully to what is being sought.
- Explain these procedures and the referral procedures to the person.
- Offer to accompany the person to the **Support Person**. (See **SECTION 2.8**)
- Do not make any comments about the respondent, make assumptions or speculate.
- Be aware that a person's ability to recount his or her concern or allegation will depend on age, culture, nationality and upon any disability which may affect use of language and range of vocabulary.
- Adopt a listening style which is compassionate, calm and reassuring. If the information given to you shocks, disgusts or distresses you, do not allow these feelings to show. If you do, you may inadvertently dissuade the person from giving any further information.
- Avoid statements about your belief or otherwise, of the information given.
- Do not question beyond checking what has been said. It is the job of the HSE / An Garda Síochána to investigate. There must be no probing for detail beyond that which has been freely given.

Listening does not mean telling a person to stop when they are freely recalling events; because some facts are only ever told once, the information given must be fully and accurately recorded. However, it is better that such detail is given directly to a professional from one of the HSE/ An Garda Síochána to allow proper procedures to be observed and to avoid the distress of having to repeat the account more than once.

A priest must be clear about the status of such a conversation. The priest should make sure there is no misunderstanding about whether the Seal of Confession applies.

IF A CHILD BEGINS TO TELL YOU ABOUT ABUSE

Children will occasionally tell an adult they are being abused if they feel they can trust this person. This happens for many reasons but the important thing to remember is if they do tell you they are doing so in the hope that you will act to stop it happening, even if they ask you not to do anything with the information.

If a child begins to tell you about abuse it is important that you:

DO:

- stay calm
- listen carefully and take them seriously
- ask questions for clarification only if you are unclear what the child is saying
- allow the child to continue at his/ her own pace
- reassure the child that in talking about what was worrying them, they have done the right thing
- tell them they are not to blame for the situation
- let them know you will do what you can to help
- report the child's disclosure to the Parish Designated Person immediately (see **SECTION 2.1**). Never leave a child in a dangerous situation - in emergency intervention can be sought from the HSE duty social worker for local area or from An Garda Síochána.

See **Contact Details for Child Protection Services** at beginning of this document.

- write down everything that the child told you as soon as possible, using his/her own words to describe the abuse. Do not start to investigate. Sign and date this record and pass it onto the designated person.

DO NOT:

- dismiss the concerns
- panic
- probe for more information/ ask other questions
- 'promise not to tell anyone' or say 'you'll keep it a secret'
- make negative comments about the accused person
- make assumptions or speculate
- disclose details of the allegation to anyone else – except on a 'need to know' basis to the Statutory and Diocesan Authorities. (See **SECTION 2.11** – Confidentiality Statement)

Find an opportunity to explain that it is likely that this information will need to be shared with those who need to know in order to safeguard the child/young person, and at the end of the discussion tell them what you plan to do next and with whom this information will be shared.

Remember: It is important that everyone in the organisation is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies following a referral to them of the concerns about the child.

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**)

See **Contact Details for Child Protection Services** at the beginning of this document for listing of current office holders.

Parish Designated Person

Every Parish should designate a person or persons to be responsible for dealing with complaints or concerns regarding child abuse and to promote the safeguarding of children within that Parish. More information **SECTION 2.7**

Diocesan Designated Officer or Delegate

Appointed by the Bishop, it is the Delegate's responsibility to receive information about a child protection concern involving a Priest of this diocese, to report all concerns to the civil authorities and to manage any subsequent internal investigations. The Delegate is required to inform the Bishop of all reports made to the civil authorities, either by the Delegate or a Parish Designated Person. The Bishop also appoints a **Deputy Delegate**, who can act in the event that the Delegate is not able to deal with the concern. The name and contact details of the Delegate (and Deputy) should be made widely known. More information **SECTION 2.9**

Safeguarding Committee

Their role of the Safeguarding Committee is supportive and developmental. It is not related in any way to the management of individual cases of suspected or alleged abuse. Their role is primarily focused on creating, maintaining and monitoring a safe environment for children in all aspects of Church life and activity and for advising on the human resources required for implementing best safeguarding practice across services.

Advisory Panel

The consultative Advisory Panel is appointed by the Bishop in order to advise and assist him at all stages of the investigative process into alleged abuse. The Panel will consist of not less than five members who collectively provide expertise, experience and impartiality necessary in this field of safeguarding. The Advisory Panel may provide advice whether specialist risk assessment should be sought in regard to a child protection concern. No member of an Advisory Panel shall act in a professional capacity to either the person making the allegation or the respondent.

Support Person

Appointed by the Bishop, the Support Person is to be available to those who make an allegation or disclose abuse under these procedures. The role of the Support Person is to assist, where appropriate, with communication with the Delegate to facilitate access to information and to represent their needs and concerns during the inquiry.

Adviser

Appointed by the Bishop, the Adviser is to be available to the person about whom a child protection concern, suspicion, disclosure or allegation has been made. The role of the Adviser is to represent their needs and assist, where appropriate, with communication with the Delegate and the Diocese.

THE ROLE OF THE DIOCESAN DESIGNATED PERSON (DELEGATE)

The role of the Diocesan Designated Person (**Delegate**) in the Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin is to

- Receive information about a child protection concern involving a Priest of this diocese.
- Report all child protection concerns received to the civil authorities (HSE / An Garda Síochána) without delay.
- Manage any subsequent internal investigations
- Receive and record notifications from our Parish Designated Persons of all reports made by them to the civil authorities.
- Advise Parish Priest /Parish Administrator on how to deal with and manage all disciplinary matters relating to the continuing employment and/or voluntary service of a member of staff or volunteer who is the subject of an allegation.

Procedures - child protection concerns involving Priests

1. Receive information about a child protection concern involving a Priest.
2. Report the concern received to the civil authorities (HSE / An Garda Síochána) without delay.

See **FORM C2** in appendix – sample of HSE Standard Reporting Form (SRF)

3. Create a child protection case file for every referral that includes a log of actions, events and information received using **FORM C1** (see 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.
4. Take possession of any written records made by any person in connection with the case and place them on the Child Protection Case File.
5. Explain the diocesan referral procedures to the person who has raised the concern (see **SECTION 2.1**)
6. To 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.
7. Inform the Bishop that a complaint has been made and make a recommendation to the Bishop about any immediate action(s) that may need to be taken in order to ensure the safety of children.
8. Make enquiries to identify the present and previous appointments of the respondent in order to establish whether there are any previous concerns about his practice, or any current grounds for concern in relation to the safety and well-being of children. (Again, in cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate or possible risk, an immediate referral should be made to the HSE. Where appropriate, if HSE staff are not available, An Garda Síochána should be contacted so as to ensure that under no circumstances is a child be left in a dangerous situation pending HSE intervention).
9. Alert the Adviser (see **SECTION 2.8**) to be on standby, without identifying the respondent.

THE ROLE OF THE DIOCESAN DESIGNATED PERSON (DELEGATE)

10. Conduct an initial interview with the respondent as soon as possible, unless (where an earlier referral has been made) the HSE / An Garda Síochána have requested that such an interview be deferred. The respondent shall be given information about his or her entitlement to seek legal advice (both civil and, where appropriate, canonical) and about the child protection process. The respondent should be informed that he is not obliged, in law, to respond or to furnish evidence, but that any statement provided will be taken into account in the investigation. The Delegate and the Bishop should then inform the respondent of the nature and detail of the allegation/concern and the name of the person raising it. The purpose of the interview is to inform the respondent of the existence of the allegation and of the process being followed. The respondent needs to be given enough detail about disclosure/allegation/concern and the person raising it, to be able to offer a response. The respondent shall be offered the services of an **Adviser**.
11. A written record of the interview must be prepared, agreed with the respondent, signed and dated.
12. In cases where a Delegate has a concern about a child but is not sure whether to make a referral, the Delegate should seek appropriate advice. The Delegate may consult the National Office, the HSE and/or An Garda Síochána on the appropriate steps to be taken. The Delegate must keep a written record of the outcome of the consultation with the HSE / An Garda Síochána on the Child Protection Case File. Decisions not to refer a matter must always be in consultation with the HSE and or the National Office.
13. Ensure the availability of the **Advisory Panel** (see **SECTION 2.8**), if required, and convene the Advisory Panel at an appropriate time.
14. Follow the advice given by HSE / An Garda Síochána where a child protection concern has been referred to them. Allow the HSE / An Garda Síochána to conduct their enquiries unimpeded. Do not visit the family or contact family members without prior discussion with investigators.
15. Maintain a dialogue with the Investigating Officer or Social Worker to monitor the progress of the case and act on any advice given. Details of contacts made should be recorded chronologically on the Child Protection Case File.
16. Ask for an update from the HSE / An Garda Síochána about the outcome of their investigations; this request should be made in writing.
17. Conduct an internal investigation at the conclusion any external investigation or where no such investigation takes place. Any internal investigation will be initiated in cases where child protection concerns remain or where disciplinary action needs to be considered. Such an investigation will gather and assess available information from all sources and witnesses. Every effort should be made, in consultation with the HSE / An Garda Síochána, to avoid the necessity to interview child witnesses for the purposes of disciplinary inquiries.

This investigation (which takes place after the statutory enquiries have been completed) should be conducted expeditiously, taking no longer than three months, wherever possible. In cases where there is a delay, and particularly where a Priest has been temporarily removed from active ministry, it is important to keep everyone informed of the progress of the investigation and to maintain records of such communications. Where an investigation concerns Clergy, the requirements of Canon Law will be observed.

WHEN A MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEER IS THE SUBJECT OF AN ALLEGATION

Each Parish should follow the procedures set out in **SECTION 2.1** when there is an allegation or suspicion of child abuse in regard to a member of staff or volunteer. (See **SECTION 2.2** - Definition of child abuse).

Use **FORM C1** (see appendix) to make such a referral to your Parish Designated Person.

Parish Designated Person

Every Parish should designate a person or persons to be responsible for dealing with complaints or concerns regarding child abuse and to promote the safeguarding of children within that Parish. See **SECTION 2.7** for more information

The name and contact details of the Parish Designated Person(s) and the Diocesan Designated Person (Delegate) should be made known to everyone involved in the organisation and its activities - e.g. workers, volunteers, children and young people, parents and guardians.

Disciplinary process

It will be the responsibility of the Parish Priest /Parish Administrator in consultation with the Diocesan Designated Person (Delegate), to deal with and manage all disciplinary matters relating to the continuing employment and/or voluntary service of the person concerned.

The management of such matters should be based on the guidelines contained in **'Children First'**: *National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (1999) – Chapter 12*. It should take cognisance of employment legislation.

'Disciplinary Procedures' will operate at the same time as and in parallel with the 'Reporting Procedures'. In general it is recommended that the same person should not have responsibility for dealing with both the reporting issues and the employment issues. It is preferable to separate these issues and manage them independently.

There will be consultation with the HSE and Garda regarding protective measures for child/children, always aware that the safety of children is paramount.

Those who are the subject of an investigation 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.

Staff/volunteers may be subjected to erroneous or malicious allegations. Therefore any allegation of abuse should be dealt with sensitively and support provided for staff including counselling where necessary. The primary goal is to protect the child while taking care to treat the employee fairly.

The approach to resolving conflict should always be one of open dialogue in a safe space and in a friendly and informal atmosphere.

Parish Procedures

- Develop a clear and transparent complaints procedure and appeals process to be used by young people, staff, workers, volunteers, or by parents who are dissatisfied with any aspect of activities or services provided.
- Make sure that children and young people and their parents or guardians receive a copy of the complaints procedure.
- Fully inform all staff and volunteers about the complaints procedure.
- All complaints should be recorded.

Making a complaint

What to do if you have a complaint about someone, working on behalf of the parish, at parish activities for children and young people

- Communicate immediately with the person in charge of the project /event.
- Once a communication is received, the leader will try to resolve the issue promptly and fairly.
- Should the matter not be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction the complainant may discuss the issue with the Chairperson of the Parish Pastoral Council who will, similarly, try to resolve the issue promptly and fairly.
- If a satisfactory resolution cannot be arrived at, an external mediator will be invited to dialogue with all concerned.
- The determination of the external mediator, proposed after discussions with all parties, will be final.

Should the issue relate to the Parish's Child Protection procedures, the leader, upon receiving the communication, must contact the Parish Designated Person who will deal with the matter.

The Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin is committed to ensuring peoples' rights to confidentiality.

However, in relation to child protection and welfare we undertake that:

- Information will only be forwarded on a 'need to know' basis in order to safeguard the child;
- Giving such information to others for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality;
- We cannot guarantee total confidentiality where the best interests of the child are at risk;
- Primary carers and children have a right to know if personal information is being shared and/or a report is being made to the Health Service Executive, unless doing so could put the child at further risk;
- Images of a child will not be used for any reason without the consent of the parent/carer (however, we cannot guarantee that cameras/videos will not be used at public liturgies/events);
- Procedures will be put in place in relation to the use of images of children;
- Procedures will also be put in place for the recording and storing of information in line with our confidentiality policy.

Parish Record Keeping

When situations become vacant the Parish has a responsibility to receive from each individual concerned, a completed 'declaration form'. The application forms, declaration forms and all other documentation should be stored securely. Access will be restricted to the Parish Priest and / or the Parish Designated Person and / or Diocesan Designated Person (Delegate).

Each Parish Group will be responsible for storing in a confidential way an accurate record for each activity involving children including, but not limited to, programme details, attendance, parental consent, necessary medical information etc.

The **Data Protection Rules** as outlined in the European Communities (Data Protection) Regulations 2001 must be adhered to in retaining records. More information - www.dataprotection.ie

As a diocese we are committed to a culture of safety that minimises risk to children and following best practice in regard to -

- **safe recruitment and vetting practices** – helping prevent those who pose a risk to children from holding positions of trust
- **codes of behaviour** – having clear guidelines that set out what is and is not acceptable behaviour as an essential part of keeping children safe
- **running safe activities for children** – can help ensure a safe environment for children.

At Parish level, the Parish Priest/Curate/Parish Staff/Parish Council will be responsible for ensuring that any activities that are run under the agency of the Parish are provided in a manner that ensures the safety and security both of the young people and of the leaders involved.

The person or people who manage the parish facilities that are being loaned to groups, or rented to groups, should be aware that the parties wishing to use them either have their own 'child protection policy' or that they endorse **in full and in writing** the parish/diocesan policy before use of the facilities is considered / permitted. The contact details of the Parish Designated Person and the Diocesan Designated Person (Delegate) should be carefully noted.

Each Parish Group will be responsible for storing in a confidential way (see **SECTION 2.12**) an accurate record for each activity involving children or young people, e.g. programme details, attendance, parental consent, necessary medical information etc.

Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers

A code of behaviour, which respects the dignity and rights of the child, should be drawn up for staff and volunteers in regard to their work with children and young people.

It should state that corporal punishment of children is never permitted and that discipline problems should be handled in partnership with parents and guardians. (See **SECTION 3.2**)

This code should include a disciplinary procedure to be used in the event of a worker or volunteer breaching the code. It should be read, understood and signed by every worker and volunteer before starting in their role.

Code of Behaviour for Children and Young People

A code of behaviour for children and young people involved in Parish-related activities should be drawn up, in consultation with children and parents/guardians.

The issue of the appropriate response to breaches of discipline and to disruptive behaviour should be covered in the code.

A copy of the code should be given to all children and young people participating in activities and to their parents or guardians. It should be read, understood and signed by every child or young person and their parents or guardians.

The code should be read, understood and signed by every worker and volunteer before starting in their role.

General Conduct

- Avoid spending time alone with a child or young person. Should circumstances arise where this is unavoidable, immediately inform another responsible adult, by telephone if necessary. Make a diary note that the meeting with the young person took place, including the reasons for it
- Observe best practice in relation to travel with children and young people. Workers and volunteers should not undertake any car or minibus journey alone with a child or young person. If in certain circumstances only one adult is available, there should be a minimum of two children or young people present for the entire journey. In the event of an emergency where it is necessary to make a journey alone with a child, make a record of this and inform the child's parents or guardians as soon as possible. Inform a colleague at the time if the parents/guardians are not available.
- Unless there are at least two adults present avoid permitting children and young people to work or remain in churches and parish property.
- Treat all children and young people with equal respect; favouritism is not acceptable.
- Be cognisant of the imbalance in power inherent in adult-child relationships.
- Do not engage in or tolerate any behaviour – verbal, psychological or physical – that could be construed as bullying.
- Do not spend a disproportionate amount of time with any particular child or group of children.
- Under no circumstances, give alcohol, tobacco or drugs to children or young people.
- Do not use alcohol, tobacco or drugs when supervising or working with children and young people.
- Use only age-appropriate language, media products and activities when working with children and young people. Sexually explicit or pornographic material is never appropriate.

Meetings with Children and Young People

- If the pastoral care of a young person necessitates the arrangement of a meeting alone with them, do not meet in isolated environments.
- Schedule meetings at times and at designated locations that allow for transparency and accountability (for example, rooms with a clear glass panel or window, an open door, and in buildings where other people are present).
- Scheduling meetings by text messages is inappropriate.
- Limit both the length and number of meetings.
- Inform parents or guardians that the meeting(s) are taking place, except in circumstances where to do so might place the child in danger. In that case, inform a colleague.
- Do not encourage visits to, or conduct meetings in, private homes or personal living quarters.
- When the need for a visit to the home of a child or young person arises, professional boundaries must be observed at all times.

Discipline

- Corporal punishment of children is never permitted
- Discipline problems should be handled in partnership with parents and guardians

Respect for Physical Integrity

- Respect the physical integrity of children and young people at all times.
- Do not engage in inappropriate physical contact of any kind, including rough physical play, physical reprimand and horseplay (tickling, wrestling, etc).
- This should not prevent appropriate contact, with the permission of the child, or young person, in situations where it is necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of a child, but where the child expresses discomfort or resistance then this contact should cease.

Respect for Privacy

- Respect the privacy of children and young people at all times.
- Particular care regarding privacy must be taken when young people are in locations such as changing areas, swimming pools, showers and toilets.
- Never take photographs of children or young people while they are in changing areas (for example, in a locker room or bathing facility).
- Never do things of a personal nature (for example, helping with toileting, washing or changing clothing) for children and young people that they can do themselves.

Photography and film

- Always ensure that the content of the photo/ film is appropriate
- One-to-one photo sessions with children are supervised.
- Parents and children consent to the use of an image and that this is recorded
- Photographs/ images likely to be published in press or on the Internet should avoid using children's full names (first name and surname) and detailed addresses
- Parents and children are aware of the way the image will be used to represent the Church organisation or activity

Parental Consent

- Signed consent must be obtained from parents or guardians of each child or young person prior to their participation in events, activities and groups. (See **FORM A2** in the appendix)
- Establish from parents or guardians whether the child or young person has any specific dietary requirements or medical or special needs.

Trips Away From Home

Trips away from home include but are not limited to pilgrimages, day trips, overnight stays and holidays.

- All trips need careful advance planning including adequate provision for safety in regard to transport, facilities, activities, and emergencies. Adequate insurance should be in place. Leaders must be properly qualified and supervised for activities undertaken
- Written parental consent specifically for each trip and related activities must be obtained well in advance. Contact details for the duration of the trip are necessary. Written permission for leaders to make decisions of an emergency nature should be obtained in case of accidents.
- A copy of the itinerary and contact telephone numbers should be made available to parents or guardians.
- There must be adequate, gender-appropriate, supervision for boys and girls. Training must be provided for all leaders.
- Arrangements and procedures must be put in place to ensure that rules and appropriate boundaries are maintained in the relaxed environment of trips away. These rules and boundaries must be clearly outlined to all leaders during preparation/training for the event
- Particular attention should be given to ensuring that the privacy of young people is respected when they are away on trips.
- Sleeping areas for boys and girls should be separate and supervised by two adults of the same sex as the group being supervised.
- Under no circumstances should an Adult Leader share a bedroom with a young person.
- If, in an emergency situation, an adult considers it necessary to be alone in a children's dormitory or bedroom without another adult they should (a) immediately inform another adult in a position of responsibility and (b) make a diary note of the circumstances.

Complaints Procedure

- Develop a clear and transparent complaints procedure and appeals process to be used by young people, staff, workers, volunteers, or by parents who are dissatisfied with any aspect of activities or services provided. (see **SECTION 2.11**)
- Make sure that children and young people and their parents or guardians receive a copy of the complaints procedure.
- Fully inform all staff and volunteers about the complaints procedure.
- All complaints should be recorded.

Health and Safety

- Adequate and appropriate supervision must be provided in relation to all events and activities organised for children and young people (see below for recommended ratios).
- In places such as changing areas, toilets and showers, separate provision must be made for boys and girls.
- There must be adequate and gender-appropriate supervision of boys and girls in such areas.
- Ensure that buildings and/or facilities used for events and activities are suitable, safe and secure.
- Make sure that fire precautions are in place and that fire extinguishers are checked regularly.
- Make sure a first aid kit is readily available. This should be regularly checked and replenished. It is advisable that first aid training be provided for workers and volunteers.
- Be alert to the risk of injury involved in some contact sports, paying particular attention to the child's age and to any medical condition or disability.
- Access to a telephone at all times is essential in case of emergency.
- Adequate insurance must be obtained to cover all activities. In cases of uncertainty about the level of cover, check with the relevant insurance provider.
- Where transport is being provided by the parish or parish activity, make sure that drivers and vehicles meet legal requirements. Where transport is being hired, check with the service provider that drivers and vehicles conform to legal requirements. Always inform parents/guardians about transport being used.
- A clear policy should be agreed with parents and guardians regarding the taking of photographs and the making of video recordings of children or young people involved in parish-related activities or events.
- There should be regular health and safety reviews of facilities, procedures and practices.

Recommended Supervision Ratios

0-2 years	1 member of staff to 3 children
2-3 years	1 member of staff to 4 children
3-7 years	1 member of staff to 8 children
8 years and over:	2 members of staff (ideally 1 of each gender) for up to 20 children.

There should be one additional staff member for every ten extra children and/or young people. The ratio of staff and volunteers to children with disabilities is dependent on the individual needs.

Record Keeping - Activities

- Each Parish Group will be responsible for storing in a confidential way an accurate record for each activity involving children or young people (see **FORM A1**)
- This record should include a copy of the signed parental/guardian consent form (**FORM A2**) with contact details for parents/guardians and should include necessary medical information
- A written record of organisers and supervisors in attendance at events should also be kept.
- Ensure that an **Incident Report Form** is completed in the event of any accident or incident relating to a child or young person. (**FORM A4**)

When situations become vacant those responsible for filling them should be aware of best practice in recruiting of employees and volunteers for work with children – this will include interview, references (which are verbally checked) and declaration form.

The following should be observed -

- Develop clear job descriptions, skills descriptions and person specifications for all paid and voluntary posts.
- All vacancies should be openly advertised.
- **Application Forms** should be used for recruitment to all posts, including those to be filled by volunteers. Application forms should include a **Declaration Form** which applicants should be required to sign stating that they do not have criminal charges, cautions or convictions against them, or any other reason why it may be inappropriate for them to work with children.

See **FORM B1** - Staff/Volunteer Declaration Form in the appendix

- The diocesan policy and procedures for Garda Vetting - see **SECTION 3.6**
- Applicants should be required to provide the names of two referees who can attest to their suitability for working with children and young people. These references must be checked by the designated person/priest of the parish.
- Suitable applicants should be interviewed by an interview panel of at least two people with appropriate competence and authority.
- Written references should be obtained in respect of all candidates being considered for full-time paid or voluntary appointment. All written references must be followed up by verbal contact with referees.

Record Keeping - Recruitment

The application forms, declaration forms and all other documentation should be stored securely. Access will be restricted to the Parish Priest and/or the Parish Designated Person and/or Diocesan Designated Person (Delegate).

For more information see **SECTION 2.12** – Confidentiality Statement

Garda Vetting is one component of a good practice recruitment framework, which includes such practices as verification of identity, gathering of personal details, interview and references.

SECTION 3.5 sets out the arrangements for Garda Vetting in the Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin for:-

- Diocesan Agencies and Parishes
- Clergy, seminarians and religious within the Diocesan setting
- Church volunteers
- Ancillary Staff in Primary Schools under the Patronage of the Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin

For the purposes of this section, “Applicant” refers to those individuals applying for Garda Vetting – i.e. clergy, students, staff members and church volunteers. “Organisation” refers to the parish, religious order or church body – including the diocese itself - which has required that Garda Vetting be sought and to which the applicant is directly accountable.

Where “relevant information” is mentioned, it refers to disclosures within the Garda Vetting process of all convictions and/or prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, in the State or elsewhere. (The scope of disclosures may change depending on future legislation).

Garda Central Vetting Unit

The Garda Central Vetting Unit (**GCVU**), based in Thurles, is the single point of contact in An Garda Síochána to conduct Garda Vetting.

Vetting forms cannot be sent to the GCVU directly but must be processed at diocesan level by the **Diocesan Authorised Signatory** – who has been formally enrolled in this task by the GCVU. Garda Vetting is not conducted for individual persons on a personal basis.

Within current disclosure policy, the GCVU issues details of all convictions and/or prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, in the State or elsewhere as the case may be, to the authorised liaison person in the registered organisation.

All correspondence and inquiries for the Diocesan Authorised Signatory – also known as the **Diocesan Garda Vetting Administrator** – can be addressed to Bishop’s House, Carlow.

Recruitment / Vetting best practice

In accordance with best practice, Garda Vetting should be sought in respect of each applicant prior to the offer of employment/engagement and approximately every 5 years thereafter, or at any time or times within the said 5 year period as deemed necessary.

Applicants should be informed early of the requirement for Garda Vetting - ideally at the time of advertising.

It is recommended that no person should start work or be engaged, until Garda Vetting procedures have been completed. This is discretionary depending on whether working with children or vulnerable adults is involved. For example it may be possible for an applicant to start work, subject to vetting, but not with children or vulnerable adults until the vetting process has been completed. However, advice should be sought, and a Garda Vetting Form should be completed before taking up any duty.

Vetting Process in Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin

Legal responsibility for employment and duty of care remains with the organisation that enters into a contract of employment or engages an applicant.

1. The Garda Vetting Forms (see **FORM B2** in the appendix) are available from the **Diocesan Garda Vetting Administrator** ('Administrator').
2. The applicant is responsible for completing the form truthfully and fully and returning it to the organisation. Applicants are required to make a full and complete declaration. Failure to do this may jeopardise the offer of employment/engagement.

Please note that a false declaration will be viewed very seriously and may affect the offer of employment/engagement.

3. It is the responsibility of the organisation to ensure that the forms are completed correctly and returned to the 'Administrator'.
4. The form is forwarded by the organisation to the 'Administrator' who will examine it for any omissions, mistakes or lack of clarity.
5. An incomplete form is dated and returned to the organisation with a cover letter requesting the form's correction and resubmission. Changes cannot be made other than by the applicant on the authorised form.
6. When the 'Administrator' is satisfied with the form, the applicant's details are entered into the Diocesan Database for Garda Vetting.
7. As soon as possible, the 'Administrator' forwards the form to the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU), either singly or in batches.
8. Forms are returned to the 'Administrator' (usually between 4-6 weeks). The organisation is informed of the outcome.
9. When the vetting information is returned, the organisation will make a decision to offer employment/engagement depending on all of the information that is available including interview, education and qualifications achieved, skills assessment, previous employment history/experience, references and medical checks where appropriate etc.
10. Where the returned form contains relevant information to the employment / engagement of the applicant, the organisation must consider seriously whether or not a review meeting is appropriate (see next page).

Data Confidentiality

A diocesan database/filing system will be maintained which will track the progress of an application, and will contain information regarding Garda Vetting.

The information on this database/filing system will be securely retained by the diocese and, in line with data protection laws. It will be retained only for as long as is reasonably necessary. All information passed to other appropriate and relevant staff must only be done on a basis required by the recruitment process.

Any member of staff of the diocese who breaches confidentiality in the management of vetting information may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Other serious sanctions may apply in respect of non-staff members. All organisations who avail this service from the diocese are required to be vigilant about confidentiality and will be expected to treat breaches of confidentiality on the part of any member of their staff in similar fashion to the diocese. In the case of a review meeting, the applicant's information must be protected.

After receipt of information from the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU):**Consideration of holding a Process Review Meeting**

The Garda provides the organisation with details of all prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, and/ or convictions. If this form contains none of the above, no Process Review Meeting is necessary.

Consideration for a Process Review Meeting will occur when an application is returned from the GCVU with relevant information attached. The organisation should clarify any information received from the GCVU with the applicant. If information is received which gives rise to concern, a Process Review Meeting is strongly recommended. Advice can be sought from the **Diocesan Garda Vetting Administrator** in relation to holding a Process Review Meeting.

Chairpersons of Boards of Management of Primary Schools can also seek the advice of the Diocesan CPSMA office.

The Process Review Meeting**In the event that a Process Review Meeting is to be held please note the following:**

- It is the organisation who will arrange the meeting. They may be supported and accompanied by a Diocesan representative. Appropriate decision makers and support personnel if required should attend.
- The applicant is invited to attend and to bring someone along as a support if they so wish.
- The meeting has two purposes, firstly to clarify the applicant's identity and secondly to give the applicant an opportunity to discuss their application in the light of the information received from the Garda. The applicant must provide proof of his/her identity.
- A discussion then takes place following which a decision will be made. The discussion is for clarification purposes so that all information required to make a recruitment decision is accurate. A written record will be kept of the meeting.
- Applicants who assert that their Garda Vetting Disclosure may be inaccurate must provide satisfactory evidence to support their assertion.
- If the applicant provides satisfactory evidence to support their assertion that their Garda Vetting Disclosure may be inaccurate, the Diocesan Garda Vetting Administrator will contact the Garda Central Vetting Unit with the information, and any other information as deemed necessary.
- The Garda Central Vetting Unit will conduct further checks as necessary in respect of the applicant and write back to the Diocesan Garda Vetting Administrator who will communicate the response to the Organisation.

Risk Assessment Guidelines

A conviction, prosecution or case pending will not necessarily bar an applicant from being considered for employment/engagement.

The decision making process is fundamentally to assess the suitability of an applicant.

Any information, which arises from the Garda Vetting process, may influence the decision of the organisation to offer employment/engagement.

The following criteria will be considered (this list is not exhaustive):

- The nature of any convictions
- The number of any convictions
- The frequency of any convictions
- The post for which the person is seeking employment/engagement
- The self disclosure of the conviction/case pending by the applicant
- Time lapse since last conviction
- The steps the applicant has taken to prevent reoffending

The following areas must also be considered with care:

- Number and frequency of convictions, particularly in the last ten years
- Non-child protection related offences that may still give cause for concern: for example a prosecution and successful conviction under the Domestic Violence Act 1991
- Serious road traffic offences such as drunk driving, dangerous driving, hit and run, no insurance and car theft.

VISITING PRIESTS AND TEMPORARY SOLEMNISERS

Visiting priests

It is a diocesan regulation that **before** priests from outside the diocese can be allowed to minister in this diocese, it must be clearly established that they are in 'good standing' and that there are no child protection concerns.

Before a parish makes any arrangement with a visiting priest, the parish must confirm their 'good standing'. If there are any doubts, the parish is obliged to contact Bishop's House, Carlow. The diocesan office will contact the priest's own Bishop or local Superior/Provincial directly to confirm the priest's 'good standing' and that there are no child protection concerns.

Parishes are required to inform Bishop's House if a non-incardinated priest takes up residence in the parish (excluding in a religious community).

Temporary Solemnisers

Under legislation effective since November 2007, in order to officiate at a marriage that will be civilly registered, priests must be on the 'List of Solemnisers' submitted by their local Bishop to the Registrar-General.

Priests from overseas can be added to this list as temporary solemnisers – this covers just the specific marriage(s) they are officiating at here in Ireland.

The local Bishop for **where** the marriage is taking place has the responsibility – once notified – of submitting the name, overseas address and date of birth of the visiting priest to the Registrar-General so that they can be listed as a temporary solemniser.

Before doing so, the Bishop's office will contact the priest's own Bishop or local Superior/Provincial directly to confirm the priest's 'good standing' and that there are no child protection concerns.

It is essential that all Church personnel that are involved in either providing or overseeing activities with children or have a designated child protection role must be provided with appropriate child protection training - along with regular opportunities to update their skills and knowledge.

Maintaining a high standard of training and education will protect:

- children – by ensuring they are in a good safe environment and minimising risk of abuse to them if allegations and suspicions of further abuse do arise
- Church personnel – by clarifying how they are expected to behave with children and what to do if there are allegations and suspicions about the safety of a child
- the integrity of the Church and its missions – by making clear its commitment to keeping children safe and by modelling best practice.

Diocesan and Parish Training

The Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin will require that -

- All personnel – lay people, religious and clergy – should undertake a recognised programme of child protection training and will receive induction training into the diocesan policy and procedures and any specific parish requirements.
- All Training and Education procedures for priests, religious, staff and volunteers should be reviewed on a regular basis.
- **'Keeping Safe'** - the recognised Child Protection training model under **'Children First'**: *National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (1999)* will be completed by all who are preparing to serve as a Parish Designated Person.
- Up-to-date files should be kept in respect of all personnel; these should include application forms, references and other relevant documentation.
- Ensure that all personnel are properly supervised and supported in order that issues of concern are promptly dealt with as they arise.

Trainers

The diocese will ensure that we will have a number of 'trained trainers' available in order to deliver the **'Keeping Safe'** training course regularly throughout the diocese.

See **Contact Details for Child Protection Services** at the beginning of this document for listing of current office holders

COMMUNICATING THE CHURCH'S SAFEGUARDING MESSAGE

Policies and procedures are only effective if everyone, including children, understands their purpose and know how to use them. Our diocese is committed to making its child protection procedures widely known and understood.

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

Our communications efforts will include making the latest edition of our *'Kildare & Leighlin Diocese: Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures'* available on the diocesan website – www.kandle.ie

Parish Communications

Every parish should display a copy of their **Parish Safeguarding Children Statement** along with the **Diocesan Safeguarding Children Poster** (see Resources) in all church porches, parish halls, and any other parish location where parish events with and/or for children or young people are run.

All who work with children and/or young people in or on behalf of the parish should be made aware of contact numbers for the HSE, An Garda Síochána, and the Parish Designated Person(s).

Giving children the confidence to speak out

- Give details of how to contact the Parish Designated Person should they have any concerns.
- Display posters or have information leaflets especially for new children who join about child safeguarding and children's helplines.
- Have a copy of your code of behaviour and complaints procedure on display and available as brochures available to all staff, volunteers, children and young people, families, visitors.
- Openly discuss your child safeguarding principles, policy, codes of behaviour with them and make sure they know who to turn to if they have a worry or concern.
- Ask children what makes them feel safe and not safe. Really listen and take account of what they say – make sure it is not tokenistic – and make sure that they know you are listening.
- Conduct short questionnaires or run groups to check on how things are going.
- Consider how disabled children can communicate their complaints especially if they have verbal communication difficulties. Remember how vulnerable disabled children are to abuse.

Those who have been abused

Anyone who has been abused should be assisted and supported in seeking help. Children need someone to turn to when they are being abused. Often they do not know where to go for help so it is important to give them information about where and how to get help and advice if they have a concern.

Support Person

Appointed by the Bishop, the Support Person is to be available to those who make an allegation or disclose abuse under these procedures. The role of the Support Person is to assist, where appropriate, with communication with the Delegate to facilitate access to information and to represent their needs and concerns during the inquiry.

See **Contact Details for Counselling Services** at the beginning of this document for listing.

Those who have abused

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

Adviser

Appointed by the Bishop, the Adviser is to be available to the person about whom a child protection concern, suspicion, disclosure or allegation has been made. The role of the Adviser is to represent their needs and assist, where appropriate, with communication with the Delegate and the Diocese.

Church personnel

Child abuse is distressing and can be difficult to deal with. The diocese recognises that it has a duty to ensure advice and support is available to help Church personnel and volunteers play their part in protecting children.

- See **SECTION 2.5** – How to respond to people raising a concern
- See **SECTION 2.6** - If a child begins to tell you about abuse

Remember: all Church organisations and personnel can access specialist advice about child protection issues from **National Board for Safeguarding Children** (see overleaf)

National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC or 'National Board')

The first National Board was established by the Irish Bishops' Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland and the Irish Missionary Union to provide independent advice and to monitor safeguarding practices in the Church.

The National Board is independent in order to allow it to undertake independent advisory, audit and inspection functions. The National Board will produce an annual report, which provides data and commentary on the practice of the Church organisations regarding the safeguarding of children. In particular, the annual report will contain summaries of the learning gained from reviews and audits carried out during the year to which the annual report relates.

The National Office for Safeguarding Children ('the National Office')

The National Office for Safeguarding Children was established by the National Board.

Its main purpose is to:

- implement the policies and decisions of the National Board
- undertake advisory and audit tasks
- act as a resource for Church organisations and will be accessible to all such bodies for
- advice, or guidance
- support the diocesan / congregational Designated Officers
- monitor practice within the Church organisations regarding adherence to the standards set down within this guidance, both through the self-audit process and through its auditors

See **Contact Details for Child Protection Services** at the beginning of this document for contact details for the National Office.

To keep children safe, agreed policies, procedures and plans have to be implemented. Checks are needed both at diocesan and parish level to ensure this is happening consistently.

The views of those involved inside and outside of Church organisations can help to improve the effectiveness of any measures taken.

It will be the responsibility of the Safeguarding Committee and of the Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator to ensure that the policy and procedures as set out in the latest edition of *'Kildare & Leighlin Diocese: Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures'* are implemented.

They will ensure that all parishes have a written plan showing –

- what steps will be taken to keep children safe,
- who is responsible for implementing these measures
- when these will be completed.

They will also ensure within the diocese that that all incidents, allegations or suspicions of abuse are, dealt with appropriately, recorded, and stored securely.

National Audits

Our diocese will co-operate fully with the planned audits by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC).

PARISH:

ACTIVITY /PROJECT

Venue:

Day/Date:

Duration

Time

Leaders in Charge

.....

- It is the responsibility of parent(s)/guardian(s) to be on time when dropping off or collecting children and young people for this activity.
- All participants must keep to the Code of Behaviour for this activity, otherwise they may be asked not to continue with the programme.
- Parents/guardians must provide contact details for the duration of activities.
- Leaders are not allowed to give participants a lift to or from activities.
- Any concerns regarding the welfare and safety of children participating in parish programmes should be brought immediately to the attention of the Parish/Diocesan Designated Person.

PARISH DESIGNATED PERSON/S

Name

Contact Details

DIOCESAN DESIGNATED PERSON [DELEGATE]

Name

Contact Details

FORMS

Our forms are divided into three groups.

- A - Activities
- B - Recruitment/Staff
- C - Reporting

Downloads

All the forms included in this document are available for download from our diocesan website

www.kandle.ie

Apart from the GARDA VETTING FORM and the HSE REPORTING FORM, all the forms can be amended as required to enter the specific parish contact information etc.

These forms are available as Word Documents on www.kandle.ie

The HSE REPORTING FORM here is only intended as a sample. When making a report to the HSE you need to use the hard copies supplied to all Parish Designated Persons and which are also available from your local HSE Child Social Workers.

ACTIVITY PERMISSION FORM FOR PERSONS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

Page 1 of 1

PARISH:

PARISH DESIGNATED PERSON:

ACTIVITY:

DATE/TIME:

DURATION:

GROUP LEADER:

NAME OF YOUNG PERSON:

DATE OF BIRTH:

ADDRESS:

CONTACT DETAILS OF PARENT/GUARDIAN:

NAME :

TELEPHONE NUMBER(S) FOR THE DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:

MEDICAL INFORMATION:
Please give details of ANY medical condition of which the leaders ought to be aware, e.g. asthma, allergies etc.

MY CHILD **DOES** **DOES NOT** HAVE PERMISSION TO WALK HOME ALONE ON RETURN

Having read all the information provided on this page concerning the above activity, I hereby give permission for my son/daughter/ward to participate in the above activity. I also give permission for group leaders to make any necessary emergency decisions during this activity.

SIGNED:

(Parent/Guardian)

DATE:

INFORMATION

'SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'
 DIOCESAN DESIGNATED PERSON (DELEGATE):-

MONSIGNOR JOHN MCDONALD PP

HE CAN BE CONTACTED AT THE CURRAGH, CO. KILDARE 045-441369

Any concerns regarding the safeguarding of children taking part in this activity should be brought immediately to the notice of the 'Designated Person' listed by the Parish for this activity.

All those participating in Parish activities are expected to abide by the Code of Behaviour for the activity, and to accept instructions from leaders, otherwise they may be excluded from activities.

Please ensure that your child has any medication he or she might require and knows how to take it. All medical information provided will be treated in confidence.

Parents are reminded to drop off and collect children and young people promptly from all activities. Only those with signed permission will be allowed to leave unaccompanied.

The Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin only accepts liability or responsibility for an incident or accident caused by the negligence or breach of statutory duty of the Diocese, its servants or agents.

CONFIDENTIAL

ALTAR SERVERS APPLICATION FORM

Page 1 of 2

Parish:

Name:

Address:

School Attending: Class:

Home Tel No:

Parent's/Guardian's Mobile No:

Has Your Child Been Baptised? Yes No

Has your child celebrated First Holy Communion? Yes No

Does your child have permission to walk home alone from the church? Yes No

Please give details of any medical conditions of which we would need to be aware. Examples would be asthma, allergies etc. Please ensure that your child has any necessary medication and knows how to take it.

.....
.....

Any other relevant information

.....
.....

Altar servers make a commitment to assist at Sunday Masses, Funerals, and other liturgies as required during the year.

I/We are willing to allow our child serve at Masses and other Liturgies, and to leave school under conditions agreed with the school for ceremonies when necessary.

Signed:

Date:

ALTAR SERVERS APPLICATION FORM

Any concerns regarding the safety and welfare of an altar server should be reported to the Parish Designated Person

Name:

He/She can be contacted at (Telephone):

The Sacristan is

Other adult leaders who will be involved are:-

Name:

Name:

Name:

All information contained in this form will be treated as confidential.

Safeguarding Children

Our Parish adheres to the diocesan policy and procedures as set out in the latest edition of 'Kildare & Leighlin Diocese: Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures'. This document is available on the diocesan website – www.kandle.ie

CONFIDENTIAL
INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORT FORM

Page 1 of 2



**To be returned as soon as possible to _____
for secure storage.**

Parish: _____

Name of Child /Young Person: _____

Address: _____

Name(s) of Parent(s)/Guardian (s) – and Addresses if different from above:

Nature of Incident/Accident

Date Time and location of Incident/Accident

Date and Time of Reporting: _____

Passed to Parish/Diocesan Designated person by: _____

Name(s) of those present at the time of the incident/accident

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) informed by: _____

Date _____ Time: _____

CONFIDENTIAL

INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORT FORM

Page 2 of 2

Leader in charge of the programme: _____

Informed By: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Further action taken:

Signed: _____ Date: _____



Full Name (please PRINT)

Any name previously known by.....

Address:

.....

.....

Telephone Date of Birth

Programme applied for

Do you have any previous paid or voluntary experience of working with young people? If so, please give details

.....

.....

Any other information which you feel might be relevant

.....

Please provide the names and contact details of two people whom we could contact for a reference (These people should not be your relatives)

Name:

Address:

.....

Telephone:

Name:

Address:

.....

Telephone:

Signed :Date:.....

STAFF/VOLUNTEER DECLARATION FORM

Legislation in both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland, have at their core, the principle that the welfare of children and young people must be the paramount consideration. Therefore the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin and all its Parishes ask that everyone working or volunteering for them who will come into contact with children and young people or with personal details of children and young people abide by good practice by completing and signing this declaration.

Do you have any prosecutions pending or have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution or of a bind over order?

Yes No

If yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s)

Nature of Offence	Date of Offence
.....
.....
.....
.....

Have you ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures or been asked to leave employment or voluntary activity due to inappropriate behaviour towards a child?

Yes No

If yes, please give details including date(s) below:

.....

.....

.....

DECLARATION

I declare that I do not know of any reason why I might be considered to be unsuitable to work with children or young people. I also understand that, if it is found that I have withheld information or included any false or misleading information above, I may be removed immediately from my post whether paid or voluntary, without notice. I have no objections, if requested, to submitting an application for Garda Vetting.

I understand that this information will be kept securely by parish and will not be used to unfairly discriminate against me assessing my application.

Signed : Date:

Have you ever been convicted of an offence in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere?

Yes

No

DATE	COURT	OFFENCE	COURT OUTCOME

DECLARATION OF APPLICANT

I, the undersigned who have applied for a position as a _____ hereby authorise An Garda Siochana to furnish to **Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin** a statement that there are no convictions recorded against me in the Republic of Ireland or elsewhere or a statement of all convictions and / or prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, in the State or elsewhere as the case may be.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date: _____
()

To be completed by Employer/School /Parish

Name of Line Manager/ Contact Person*: _____

** (Must be the Chairperson of the Board of Management in the case of the school)*

Name of Employer (ie school/ parish): _____

Full Address _____

_____ Tel Number _____

To be completed by Diocesan Office, Bishop’s House, Carlow

Authorised Signatory: _____ (Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin)

PLEASE PRINT ALSO ()

Registration Number: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by the Garda Central Vetting Unit

According to Garda records there are no previous convictions recorded against the above named applicant

OR the attached convictions appear on Garda Records

OR the attached prosecutions are pending

NOTE:

Checks were carried out by this office based on the information supplied.

The convictions supplied may apply to the subject of your enquiry.

Please verify information disclosed with the applicant

Signed: _____ Member I/C



1. About the disclosure/concern

Date of disclosure/concern _____

Time of disclosure/concern _____

How was information received? (attached any written information to this form)

Telephone Letter Email In person

2. Details of person making disclosure/raising concern

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Relationship to child or alleged victim: _____

3. Details of child or alleged victim

Name; _____ DOB: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Mobile: _____

Ethnic origin: _____

Language (is interpreter/ signer needed): _____

Disability: _____

Special needs: _____

Parish / Order (if applicable): _____

4. Parent / Carer details (where appropriate)

Name: _____

Address (if different from above): _____

Tel: _____ Mobile: _____

Are they aware of the allegation, suspicion or complaint?

Yes No

CHILD PROTECTION RECORDING FORM

5. Details of alleged perpetrator

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Mobile: _____

Relationship to child/ victim (*parent/Priest/teacher etc*): _____

Position in Church/ Order: _____

Address at time of incident(s): _____

Current contact with children if known (*sit on board of governors of school, runs youth activities etc*): _____

Any additional information: _____

6. Details of concern, allegation or complaint

*(Include dates / times and location the incident(s) occurred, witnesses, if known.
Does the child /victim know this referral is being made?)*

7. Reporting

If you are **not** a Parish Designated Person please complete section 7

Have you reported this matter to your Parish Designated Person/Diocesan Delegate?

Yes No

If Yes, give details of Designated Person you reported to:

Name: _____

Position/Parish: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

If no explain why: _____

If no, has the matter been reported to civil authorities?

Yes No

Have you reported the matter to any other member of the Church?

Yes No

If Yes

Date: _____ Time: _____

If yes explain why: _____

Who was it referred to:

Name: _____

Position/Parish: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

CHILD PROTECTION RECORDING FORM

8. Parish Designated Person

If you are a Parish Designated Person please complete section 8

Has the matter been referred to civil authorities?

Yes No

How was the referral made? _____

Date: _____

Have you notified the Diocesan Delegate?

Yes No

What actions were agreed and by whom when the matter was referred onto Civil / Church authorities?

Are there any immediate child protection concerns? If so, please record what they are and state what actions have been taken by whom to address them:

9. Details of person completing the form

Name: _____

Tel: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Position in Church: _____

Parish/Order: _____

Form completed

Date: _____ Time: _____

Signed: _____

(A copy must be retained by the recipient and filed in a secure location, and a copy must be sent to the designed officer and civil / statutory authorities)

STANDARD FORM FOR REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION AND/OR WELFARE CONCERNS

In case of Emergency or outside Health Board hours, contact should be made with An Garda Síochána.

A. To Principal Social Worker/Designate: _____

This will be printed as relevant to each Community Care Area

1. Details of Child:

Name: _____

Male

Female

Address: _____

Age/D.O.B.: _____

School: _____

1a. Name of Mother: _____

Name of Father: _____

Address of Mother if different to Child: _____

Address of Father if different to Child: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Telephone Number: _____

1b. Care and Custody arrangements regarding child, if known: _____

1c. Household Composition:

Name	Relationship to Child	Date of Birth	Additional Information e.g. School/Occupation

Note: A separate report form must be completed in respect of each child being reported.

2. Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) if known).

STANDARD FORM FOR REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION AND/OR WELFARE CONCERNS

3. Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child:

Name: _____ Age: _____ Male: Female:

Address: _____

Relationship to Child: _____

Occupation: _____

4. Name and Address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child:

Social Workers: _____ School: _____

Public Health Nurse: _____ Gardaí: _____

G.P.: _____ Pre-School/Crèche/Youth Club Club: _____

Hospital: _____ Other, Specify e.g. Youth Groups, After School Clubs: _____

5. Are Parents/Legal Guardians aware of this referral to the Social Work Department?

Yes: No:

If Yes, what is their attitude? _____

6. Details of Person reporting concerns:

(Please see Guidance Notes re. Limitations of confidentiality)

Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Nature and extent of contact with Child/Family: _____

7. Details of Person completing form:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Occupation: _____ Signed: _____

STANDARD FORM FOR REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION AND/OR WELFARE CONCERNS

Guidance Notes:

Health Boards have a statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act, 1991, to promote the welfare and protection of children in their area. Health Boards therefore have an obligation to receive information about any child who is not receiving adequate care and/or protection.

This reporting form is for use by:

- Health Board Personnel
- Professionals and individuals in the provision of child care services in the community who have service contracts with the health boards
- Designated person in a voluntary or community agency
- Any professional, individual or group involved in services to children who becomes aware of a child protection or welfare concern, or to whom a child protection or child welfare concern is reported.

Please fill in as much information and detail as is known to you. (Health Board personnel should do this in consultation with their line manager). This will assist the Social Work Department in assessing the level of risk to the child, or support services required. If the information requested is not known to you, please indicate by putting a line through the question. It is likely that a social worker will contact you to discuss your report.

Health Boards aim to work in partnership with parents. If you are making this report in confidence you should note that the Health Board cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality as:

- A Court could order that information be disclosed.
- Under the Freedom of Information Act, 1997, the Freedom of Information Commissioner may order that information be disclosed.

You should also note that in making a 'bona fide report' you are protected under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998.

If you are unsure if you should report your concerns, please telephone the duty social worker and discuss your concerns with him/her.

Form to be returned to the HSE Principal Social Worker, in your area.

Please use any of the contacts below if you wish to talk a HSE duty social worker about the safety and/or protection of children or young people:

Carlow Area, 059/9136587 (Office Hours)

Kilkenny Area, 056/7784842 or 056/7784782 (Office Hours)

Kildare/ West Wicklow Area : 045/882400 (Office Hours)

Laois Area : 057/8678236 (Office Hours)

Offaly Area : 057/9322488 (Office Hours)

Outside of these hours in cases of emergency please contact An Garda Síochána.

FORMS

Our forms are divided into three groups.

- A - Activities
- B - Recruitment/Staff
- C - Reporting

Downloads

All the forms included in this document are available for download from our diocesan website

www.kandle.ie

Apart from the GARDA VETTING FORM and the HSE REPORTING FORM, all the forms can be amended as required to enter the specific parish contact information etc.

These forms are available as Word Documents on www.kandle.ie

The HSE REPORTING FORM here is only intended as a sample. When making a report to the HSE you need to use the hard copies supplied to all Parish Designated Persons and which are also available from your local HSE Child Social Workers.