

Safeguarding Newsletter

Spring Edition

Implementation of the National Board's New Standards and Policy 2016 Progress Report

Over the past six months, the Task and Finish Groups, established by the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee to scope our existing practice against the 7 New Standards have completed their work and identified the key priorities for the coming months.

Below, by way of an update, are some of the changes, which the safeguarding office will be implementing between now and September 2017.

Developments in training: (The requirements of which are outlined in Standard 5: of the NBSCCCI Policy & Standards Document 2016)

Under the new arrangements identified by the Board, the Diocese must have in place 'verified' trainers to deliver the mandatory one-day Child Protection training course for all staff, clergy and leaders whose ministry involves working with children. In order to satisfy this requirement, the Diocese identified 6 volunteers, 2 Safeguarding Office Staff and 1 member of the clergy to undertake the National Board's 'Training the Trainers' Programme in March 2017

This New Course:

1. Replaces the Diocese's Parish Information Sessions
2. Only those trainers identified by the Diocese who have completed the 'Training the Trainers' programme provided by the National Board will deliver the programme.
3. Initially, this new programme will only be targeted at group leaders and clergy. This arrangement will be reviewed in due course against demand and capacity to deliver it to relevant others (e.g. deputy group leaders)
4. All other volunteers who previously would have attended the Parish Information Sessions will be offered a new 90 minute Child Protection Awareness Course. The newly identified trainers will also initially deliver this course. In time it is anticipated that this 90 minute course may be delivered through e-learning.

Refresher training will no longer be required and will be replaced by the 90 minute course.

5. By way of information, the 9 new trainers include:
 - Angela McNickle
 - Brenda Horgan
 - Caroline Brogan
 - Fr. Peter Owens
 - Maddie Bell
 - Mary Wylie

- Pauline Dowd
- Philip O’Hara
- Susan Gordon

They undertook a 5-day course, delivered and co-ordinated by the National Office in Maynooth. The trainers are currently waiting to be assessed, to ensure their “Fitness to Practice”.



Accredited Trainers within Down and Connor with the National Board for Safeguarding (NBSCCCI)

6. All other training provided by the Safeguarding Office and the Safeguarding Support Officers will remain unchanged.
 - a. Parish Safeguarding Chairperson training will continue as before and
 - b. Joint Pastoral Community meetings will also continue.

The new training arrangements will take time to “bed-in” and we appreciate your support and patience whilst the office co-ordinates and targets the appropriate groups for training. All training dates for both the 90-minute course and the 1-day mandatory training will be placed on the Safeguarding Website. Contact can be made directly with the Safeguarding office to confirm a place on the course, once dates are released,. Susan Gordon and Philip O’Hara along with the Safeguarding Support Officers; Mary Wylie, Maddie Bell and Patsy Curry are available to clarify any queries.

Training Strategy

The Diocesan Safeguarding Office is expected, under the new Standards, to produce an annual training needs analysis, identifying what Child Protection training is to be offered and what groups of staff and volunteers are to be targeted for training. The strategy is currently in draft form and is due to be

signed off by the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee in June and will then be posted on the Safeguarding website.

3-Year Strategic Safeguarding Plan

As part of good safeguarding practice and transparency of process, one of the key objectives of the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee is to oversee the work of safeguarding. To that end the Committee is tasked, through the Safeguarding Office, to produce and publish a 3-Year Strategic Plan. This will outline how the Diocese intends to protect children from harm, to promote their welfare and the welfare of adults in need and protection. The plan, which is near completion, is divided into 2 broad themes:

- A. Prevention which includes
 - a. Training
 - b. Communication
 - c. Partnership work
 - d. Creating a safe environment.

- B. Monitoring which includes
 - a. Ensuring that all the necessary safeguarding policies are updated and in place at both diocesan and parish level
 - b. Ensuring effective protocols to monitor how the diocese complies with the agreed standards of safeguarding (e.g Parish self-audit tools being completed and independent reviews of diocesan safeguarding practices.)

Once agreed the plan will be placed on the Safeguarding Office and Diocesan websites. Progress and achievements will be updated annually.

Rebranding of Safeguarding Materials

To denote the changes and developments in our safeguarding practices and the updates to be made in line with the new standards, the Safeguarding Committee proposed that the safeguarding materials be re-branded, with a change in colour and an updated log. The first changes to the new rebranded materials will include:

1. A **bookmark** to be distributed throughout Parishes giving the contact details of who to contact if you have a worry or concern about an adult or child in need of help or protection.

2. **Two new posters:**
 - a. The first poster presents the Dioceses Policy Statement and commitment to Safeguarding. This mandatory poster must be displayed in each parish Church throughout the Diocese.
 - b. The second is an updated poster, with information about who to contact should anyone have a concern about a child, as well as a message for young people to speak to someone they trust, should they have a concern or worry.

The Safeguarding office will be in contact with each Parish regarding the initial distribution of the above.

These are replacement posters, so please remove all “OLD” materials once the new materials have been distributed.

3. Helpful **contact cards** for 7-10 year olds attending Parish based activities, will be distributed to group leaders, parents and children at the beginning of the new terms activities in September 2017.

The New Parish Self Audit Tool

The ethos of the parish self audit tool is to support parishes to have good safeguarding practices in place and to assist in whatever way it can to help identify challenges and gaps.

With this in mind, the parish self audit tool has been updated to incorporate the requirements of the new standards and the findings of the independent audit carried out by Maria Maguire last year. This new Self Audit tool will be circulated to all PSC Chairs and Parish Priests in the next few weeks.

By way of introducing the new Self Audit tool and supporting its implementation, the Safeguarding Office will be holding some information seminars to assist those responsible for completing the Audit.

Below is an outline of the time- line against which we hope to manage the implementation of the Self Audit Tool. Once all of the parish self audits have been returned to the Safeguarding Office, a report will be completed by Philip O’Hara and Susan Gordon in conjunction with the Safeguarding Support Officers, Mary Wylie, Patsy Curry and Madeleine Bell. The report will then be forwarded to Bishop Treanor who will formally write to the National Office regarding the level of safeguarding compliance of the Diocese of Down and Connor.

We hope by way of updating the safeguarding website to be able to share examples of best practice and good safeguarding initiatives that have been developed in parishes across the Diocese.



Figure 1. Time Line for implementation of Parish Self Audit Tool

The Interfaith Group of SBNI



Key Note Speaker Tom Clarke (Access NI) addresses SBNI Seminar

In March 2017, the Interfaith Group of the Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland (SBNI) hosted two special interest lunch- time seminars on the role of Vetting within the faith communities. The key note speaker was Tom Clarke from Access NI, who provided valuable information on the challenges and changes to the vetting arrangements and provided clarity to a number of questions posed relating to the identity of specific roles within the faith sector and the challenges, which faith communities face when vetting. The seminars were attended by a number of PSC Chairs and Committee Members who found the sessions “lively” and informative.



Members of the SBNI Interfaith Group and Presenters

The Interfaith Group is planning to host a number of additional lunch time seminars in the Autumn on safeguarding topics of special interest to the faith sector. Dates and venues will be posted on the website nearer the time.

Awareness Raising on the topic of domestic and sexual violence.



Many of the parishes in Down and Connor will be aware of an organisation called ONUS as Clergy and Parishioners have participated in training provided by them.

For those who are not so familiar ONUS is social enterprise that aims to raise awareness of domestic violence and abuse in society.

ONUS have developed a range of pathways to “empower communities in recognising and responding to domestic violence and abuse”. One of the pathways is called “Safe Church”.

Recently there have been a significant number of parishes in the Diocese who have participated in the programme and the Safeguarding Office want to say how encouraging it is to see so many of the parishes taking part and supporting the Safe Church initiative. Well done to all!

If you are interested in the Safe Church Award please contact the Safeguarding Office on **02890492798** or from: **www.onustraining.co.uk**

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