

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Latest News

New Safeguarding Secretary

Since November 2018 Marion Adams has joined the Safeguarding Team as our new secretary replacing Lorna Baker who successfully secured a new job closer to home. Marion previously worked as a Parish Secretary in the Belfast area for many years and is familiar with the demands of parish Life.

We are delighted to have Marion as part of the Safeguarding Team.

Retirement of Maddie Bell

It's with sadness that we say farewell to Maddie Bell, one of our three Safeguarding Support officers. All the staff at the Safeguarding Office would like to take this opportunity to thank Maddie for all her hard work, commitment and dedication to safeguarding over the years. However, we are not losing her completely, Maddie will continue to deliver training as one of our nine National Board Trainers for Down and Connor and continue in her role as a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee.

SPRED

On the 1st April 2019, the SPRED groups in our parishes across the diocese became a formal part of pastoral ministry under the auspices of Down and Connor.

All SPRED groups in parishes are now Parish Groups and should be treated as such. For our Parish Safeguarding Committees this will mean input and support around safe recruitment of volunteers, vetting, accessing training offered by the Safeguarding Office and inclusion in the annual parish audit.

Louise McQuillan is now employed by the Diocese and is part of the Living Church team. She will continue to provide support and guidance to all SPRED Parish Groups across our Diocese and can be contacted at the Living Church number **02890 690920**.



The Safeguarding Office has moved to 120 Cliftonville Road, BELFAST BT14 6LA

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Coming Soon...

The Safeguarding Office in conjunction with Fr Magee in the press office, are exploring the possibility of having dedicated Down and Connor email addresses for all parish Safeguarding Committee Chair Person's. We will keep you updated about this development.

The training booking form is currently under review and will be available on the Website shortly.

It's re-design will hopefully be seen as more user friendly and has the addition of guidance notes on the back of the form by way of a reminder as to who needs to complete what level of safeguarding training.

Training delivered Apr 18 to Mar19

Since April 2019 the Safeguarding Office have delivered a number of safeguarding training sessions in Belfast, Newcastle and Ballymena.

The sessions have included Adult Information, Child Information Awareness Sessions, Mandatory Child Safeguarding training for Clergy, & Volunteer Leaders only.

In addition, Safe Recruitment Training was provided by Andy Thomson in Belfast and Ballymena.

In total, 667 volunteers and Clergy have been trained since Apr 18 to Mar 19, an increase on the figures from the previous year.

The breakdown of Safeguarding Training is as follows;

Adult Information Sessions	165
Child Information Sessions	265
Mandatory Child Sessions	165
Safe Recruitment	25
Total for 2018/19 is	667

TRAINING UPDATE



Attendees at the recent Child Level 2 Safeguarding Training in St John's, Belfast

All training Sessions are available to view on our website as follows;

<http://www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com/calendar/>

Remember

- To secure your place, you can download a booking form from the website, complete and return it to Marion in the Safeguarding Office.
- To advise your Safeguarding Committee Chair Person when you have booked or attended a training session so that they can record who has attended training.
- You must submit your booking form in advance, to secure your place on any training session.
- Child Level 2 Training is for Group Leaders, Deputy Leaders and Clergy only.



Training Developments—Domestic Violence

Many of the parishes in the Down and Connor Diocese have participated in the training offered by ONUS -Safe Church Initiative.

The Safe Church Initiative was a specific project developed by ONUS to empower churches to recognise and respond to domestic violence and abuse both within the church and wider community context.

The Safeguarding Office would recommend this initiative to all parishes. To find out more, you can visit the ONUS website:

<http://onus.more-dev.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Safe-Church-Leaflet.pdf>



KEY MESSAGES FROM THE 2018 PARISH SELF AUDIT RETURNS



please ensure that your parish is operating safe recruitment and vetting procedures.

The audit indicates that we need to remain alert to this particular issue which underpins the safe environment for children, young people and adults.

The Safeguarding Team were delighted to have received all the parish self-audits – 100% return.

We are extremely grateful for all the hard work that is undertaken by Parish Safeguarding Committee Chair Persons, their Committees and Clergy.

Your co-operation and hard work is much appreciated as we all continue on the path of achieving best practice in safeguarding at parish level.

It was pleasing to note that a return in excess of 90% was recorded for attendance of the Parish Priest at PSC meetings. The involvement of clergy in supporting Parish Safeguarding Committees is central to the work of safeguarding.

One of the themes from the Parish Self-Audit is around the issue of the storage and retention of data. Parishes have been requesting assistance in this area. The Safeguarding Office have sought specialist advice regarding this, which should be available to Parish Safeguarding Committee Chair Persons in the very near future. The Safeguarding office will contact PSC's to alert them to the new advice and will provide any points of clarification needed.

Managing Offenders Returning to Faith

One of the agreed objectives of the SBNI Interfaith Group was to deliver a number of awareness raising seminars on the Management of Offenders wishing to return to faith.

The group co-ordinated the delivery of two information sessions in 2018/2019, one in Enniskillen hosted by the Church of Ireland, the second in Ballymena hosted by the Presbyterian Church.

There was input in both sessions from Community Policing and Faith Representatives with a strong emphasis on interactive discussion with participants.

These awareness raising discussions were positively received with participants availing of the opportunity to raise questions and concerns directly with the statutory representatives.

It has been agreed that a further two sessions will be scheduled for the autumn.

SBNI Interfaith Group is Co-Chaired by Barbara McDermott on behalf of Down and Connor.

The New World of Safeguarding - Awareness raising morning hosted by SBNI at Titanic Exhibition Centre

What's New...

“ There is no more important work to be done in the field of safeguarding than to promote the safety and wellbeing of all our children and young people than being aware of the impact of trauma on children’s lives”.

(Sean Holland, DoH Chief Social Work Officer).

On the 2nd April 2019, the SBNI (Safeguarding Board for NI), in partnership with the Early Intervention Transformation Programme at the Department of Health, the NI Executive and the Atlantic Philanthropies, joined forces to introduce two concepts;

1. A.C.E’s Adverse, Childhood, Experiences and it’s long term impact on the wellbeing of children.
2. Creating a Trauma Informed Work Force... being aware of the impact of and being a worker or volunteer who’s trauma informed.

The target audience for this informative morning was wide but representative of all of the key agencies, who comprise the SBNI Board Membership and more.

The launch aimed to convey a clear message that becoming a ‘ trauma aware workforce’ and educating ourselves on what it means to be a child growing up and experiencing ‘Adverse Childhood Experiences’, eg, living with domestic violence, substance abuse, divorce, mental illness, poverty and discriminations, must be the new direction of travel for safeguarding children.

There was a loud and clear message that it is incumbent upon us all to gain a real sense of the lasting impact that trauma has on the lives of children, and more importantly, how we can all help. To further understand what is meant by ACE’s, click on the link below to watch a short animated video.

VIMEO (no subtitles) - <https://vimeo.com/327246740>

VIMEO - Subtitled - <https://vimeo.com/330114583>

YOUTUBE - <https://youtu.be/l-r3Xi7qByU>

YOUTUBE - subtitled - <https://youtu.be/LY-8HilOzh0>

Pictured from left to right are, Helen McKenzie Project Lead for EITP (Early Intervention and Transformation Project) and Barbara McDermott, Director for Safeguarding.



Training Catholic Chaplains in Germany

In March 2019 Susan Gordon the lead for Safeguarding Training and Barbara McDermott the Director of Safeguarding, were invited to provide safeguarding training in Leubeecke, Germany by the Right Reverend Paul Mason, newly appointed Bishop to the Chaplains.

The request was for a tailored safeguarding training course to raise awareness amongst Catholic Chaplains serving across the UK and Europe, with particular emphasis on what was new in the world of safeguarding training.

The session included:

- The impact on children living with Domestic violence.
- The dangers to children and young people of social media and useful tips for parents and children as to how to stay safe whilst on line.
- Neglect as one of the growing areas of child abuse long term impact.

Feedback showed that the training was well received and met the identified needs of the Chaplains.



Pictured from left to right are, Father Ian Evans, Barbara McDermott, Bishop Paul Mason and Susan Gordon.

Keeping Children Safe Online Virtual Reality Training for Student Teachers St Mary's University College, Belfast.

St Mary's University College, Belfast is now providing virtual reality safeguarding training for all its student teachers, in conjunction with the Police Service for Northern Ireland (PSNI) Public Protection Branch.



Information and Communications Technologies and the Internet in particular have become an integral part of modern life and they play an important role today in the education and social development of children both at home and at school. However, it is recognised that they also expose children to the risk of new and evolving forms of sexual exploitation.

The virtual reality safeguarding training at St Mary's started during the 2017-2018 academic year and it was made available for some five hundred students who were preparing for their placements in over three hundred and fifty schools. The students were informed that the training programme, delivered by PSNI Officers, would be set in the context of the Code of Values and Professional Practice model of the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland and one professional competence in particular which states:

“ Teachers will have developed a knowledge and understanding of how to use technology effectively, both to aid pupil learning and to support their professional role and how this competence embeds across all of the competences”

It was therefore, not an 'add on' activity but one which was integral to their professional development, albeit aligned with the highly significant matter of child protection. From this academic year (2018/2019) and thereafter each entry cohort of student teachers will receive the training in the first semester of their studies.

The student response to Virtual Reality Safeguarding Training has been very positive. The feedback informed the college that the students appreciated what might be described as a “no-nonsense” approach to delivery as well as an explicit articulation of the risks involved for children and young people. Upon completion of the training each student received a 'Keeping Safe Online' information pack and an attendance certificate.

Ref: Professor Peter Finn: Principal, St Mary's University College Belfast.

Rights Verses Responsibilities

When the Legislation and Protocols that allowed organisations employing individuals who work with Children and Adults, in certain circumstances, was introduced by the Government it not only created Rights but also imposed Responsibilities on all employers.

<u>RIGHTS</u>	V	<u>RESPONSIBILITIES</u>
The Ability to obtain private information about an individual's past		Information must only be used for the purpose it was obtained (Employment)
The right to breach protections provided by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act		Information must be retained confidentially and access strictly limited.
The ability to use information obtained to inform employment decisions.		Information obtained must be destroyed after the reason it was obtained is concluded.
Certain exemptions from protection provided by the Data Protection Regulations		Only those who need to see the information can have access to it. (Only CCND Vetting Office).
The reasons to appeal decisions are limited.		Access NI Manuel of Guidance must be strictly complied with.
The rights of the vulnerable take primacy over the rights of the individual.		Formal Government Audit carried out by Access NI compliance staff.
The ability for the employer to ask for 'Self Disclosure' of previous relevant convictions.		Failure to operate within Legislation is a criminal offence.
The option to ask for representations from applicant re: information disclosed during breaks		Employing an Individual for a Regulated Activity when 'Barred' is a criminal offense.

The CCND Vetting Office is due the regular Access NI Audit this summer and compliance with the limits of our rights and adherence to our responsibilities will be closely assessed and checked.

Useful Contacts

Down & Connor

Safeguarding & Vetting Office

120 Cliftonville Road
BELFAST
BT14 6LA

Contact Us:

Safeguarding: 028 9049 2798

Email: office@soddc.org
www.downandconnorsafeguarding.org

Vetting: 028 9049 2783

Email: vetting@soddc.org
www.downandconnorsafeguarding.org

Down & Connor Safeguarding & Vetting Office

Director for Safeguarding

Barbara McDermott

Designated Liaison Person

Philip O'Hara

Training & Parish Development Officer

Susan Gordon

Safeguarding Secretary

Marion Adams

Vetting and Barring Co-Ordinator

Andrew Thomson

Vetting Supervisor

Lorraine Moreland

Vetting Assistant

Denise Rooney

Useful Telephone Numbers

Designated Liaison Person
07534 992 124

Police (PSNI)
101

Social Services
Belfast Trust Children's Social Services
028 9050 7000 (Office Hours)

Regional Emergency Social Work Service
028 9504 9999 (Out of Hours)

Down & Connor

Vetting Office Opening Hours

Monday & Tuesday: 10am – 2pm
Wednesday to Fri: 10am – 4pm

These times may vary occasionally.

Down & Connor

Safeguarding Office Opening Hours

Monday to Friday 9am—5pm

Closed at lunchtime, from 1pm to 2pm.

KEEP UP TO DATE

Things to Remember

The Safeguarding Office recently produced a selection of tools for children who want to share a worry or concern, along side a Parent's Information Leaflet. To access both resources, follow the link below;
<http://www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com/parish-resource-pack/>

Please see below link to the Holy Father Apostolic Letter of 16.09.05 2019. on Safeguarding;
<http://www.downandconnorsafeguarding.com/pope-francis-apostolic-letter-you-are-the-light-of-the-word/>

Do we have your correct Contact Details ?

Parishes & PSC
Chairs

Are you receiving emails and communications from the Safeguarding Office ?



Does the Safeguarding Office have your correct contact details ?

Has your telephone number or email address changed recently ? If so, let Marion in the Safeguarding office know and she will update the database with your new details.

Access NI Update –Processing an Access NI Application

In order to process an Access NI application online, applicants are required to create their own NI Direct Account and submit their application.

I have been advised by the compliance officer within Access NI that in some cases, applicants are not creating their own account but instead applications are being processed through another person's NI Direct Account.

This practice must cease immediately as this will result in applications being deleted or returned.