

Training and Development

Over the past ten years, the Diocese has provided training to approximately 14,849 Staff, Clergy and Volunteers, to raise awareness about what to do if concerns are raised about the safety or well-being of a child. The training is mostly provided by a designated group of volunteers (known as the Vicariate Support Teams, VST's) who have educational, health and training backgrounds. They are tasked to provide face-to-face delivery of safeguarding information to those volunteers in Parishes who engage directly with children. In 2012, training materials were developed further to include volunteers who provide contact and services for those in the community, who may be considered as vulnerable adults.

The Safeguarding Office disseminates its training through what it calls 'Parish Information Sessions'. The trainers have available to them a comprehensive suite of training materials which have been developed for the purpose of cascade training. This arrangement was described by Dr John Devaney in his Audit Report of 2013 as '*Comprehensive and of a high standard*'¹.

In 2012, the Diocese commissioned the Safeguarding Office to further develop and deliver specialist training to its fifteen full time Diocesan Youth Centres.

There were three areas identified that required this specialist training, these included:

- (1) Developing training and delivery of specific Child Protection Policy and Procedures for Youth Centre Staff;
- (2) Training on recording information;
- (3) Training to address 'Managing Challenging Behaviour of Children and Young People in Youth Centres'.

As well as delivering its own training, the Diocese also avails of training offered by the National Board for the Safeguarding of Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI), who provide training targeted at those individuals who carry out specialist safeguarding roles or functions (e.g., Designated Liaison Persons, Advisory Panel Members and Safeguarding Committee Members).

Training continues to play a pivotal role in the overall safeguarding practice within the Diocese. It is a vehicle through which the Diocese can communicate its safeguarding messages and identify future needs of those who volunteer in parish, staff and clergy.

Annually the Safeguarding Office carries out a training needs analysis, which captures the needs of parish volunteers through the Self Audit Parish Returns. It is the analysis of these returns that provides the agenda for the training delivered by the Safeguarding Office and the Vicariate Support Teams. Recently the demand identified a need to provide training for those who regularly take Children and Young People away on both day trips and residential weekends.

¹ In the independent, external audit report commissioned by Bishop Noel Treanor in 2013 and carried out by Dr John Devaney from Queens University Belfast to examine 'Child Safeguarding Structures and Processes in the Diocese of Down and Connor'.

The challenge for the next 18-24 months in respect of training is to:

- (a) Update the materials of Parish Information Sessions (training offered to volunteers who engage with Children and Young People)
- (b) To engage the services of the NBSCCCI to “Train a Trainer” in the Diocese of Down and Connor. A formal request has been made and the Diocese is awaiting a place.
- (c) To revisit the training needs of the Diocesan Youth Services.

The statistics below indicate the level of training activities, which has taken place since 2006. A more detailed breakdown is provided in Appendix 4.

Training Delivered from January 2006 to June 2016

Jan 2006-Dec 2008:

We facilitated 8 training events, which included clergy, staff and volunteers.

Total number trained:

6,244

Jan 2009-Dec 2011:

We facilitated 15 training events, which included clergy, staff and volunteers.

Total number trained:

2,120

Jan 2012-Dec 2014:

We facilitated 40 training events, which included clergy, staff and volunteers.

Total number trained:

4,123

Jan 2015-June 2016:

We facilitated 12 training events, which included clergy, staff and volunteers.

Total number trained:

1,388

(Source: *Ad limina* p: 29-32)