

# SAFEGUARDING



**Our Child Protection Officer is Michael Curtin the phone number is 0851359772.**

## **Our Parish Safeguarding Policies**

The Parish of Sallynoggin and Glenageary 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 Dublin 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 available at [www.dublindiocese.ie](http://www.dublindiocese.ie)

As required of all church personnel in this diocese, we will adhere to Dublin Diocese: Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures.

## **Parish of Sallynoggin and Glenageary – Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures**

### **Standard One – A Written Policy on Keeping Children Safe**

This policy applies to all those activities which are organized directly by the Parish of Sallynoggin and Glenageary relating to the pastoral care of children and young people under the age of eighteen. It aims to enable the parish to put in place the structures that will help us to provide the safest possible environments for all those involved in parish based youth activities – our children, our young people, our volunteer adult leaders and parish staff, deacons and priests. The welfare and safety of children and young people engaged in parish groups or activities is always the most important consideration. All those adults who are involved with children or young people under the age of 18 in Parish programmes or activities must familiarise themselves with, accept, and act in accordance with the Parish Child Protection policy and procedures. Adults involved in parish groups which deal with

children or young people must agree to abide by the guidance contained in this document. Failure to do so will result in their exclusion from involvement. Group leaders will take responsibility for informing young people who reach the age of eighteen that they are now adults involved in a programme, and will inform one of the Parish Designated Persons that this is the case.

## **Standard Two – Procedures**

The Parish Designated Persons, the Priests of the Parish, all Parish Staff and adults who are involved in a long term role in any ministry with children and young people in the Parish of Sallynoggin and Glenageary will be required to avail of the training offered by the Diocese of Meath or by the Parish of Sallynoggin and Glenageary in safeguarding children.

- All parents of children and young people involved in parish programmes will receive a permission form to sign. This form will include the contact details of the Parish Designated persons. Any complaints arising from any parish programme whether from children, parents, staff or volunteer leaders should be brought to the attention of the leader in charge of the programme or to one of the Parish designated persons. If a complaint is to be made regarding a member of staff or volunteer who is the programme leader, this should be brought directly to one of the

Parish Designated Persons.

- Any leader observing a situation which exposes a child or young person to danger or puts them at risk of harm must act immediately to ensure the safety of the child.

- Where abuse is observed, suspected or disclosed the one thing leaders must not do is nothing – any concern or incident must be passed on to one of the Parish Designated Persons as soon as possible. A written record of what is observed, suspected or disclosed must be made. This written record will be stored securely and confidentially by the Parish Designated Person, in a folder in a secure location. Any access to this

information will be through one of the Parish Designated Persons, and all access will be recorded and dated by the Parish Designated Person concerned.

- Where a report is to be made to the HSE or to the Gardai, one of the Parish Designated Persons will make the contact with or on behalf of the concerned leader. The Parish Designated Person concerned will also inform the Diocese of Dublin once the report has been made to the statutory authorities.

- If there is any type of incident, leaders must not discuss it with anyone other than the Parish Designated Person concerned. This is to protect confidentiality for those involved; for children and young people and for adult leaders. No leader will ever promise a child that they will keep a secret.

- If a situation arises where there are reasonable grounds for concern about the welfare of a child, parents will be notified and the concern discussed with them in all situations, except those which the Parish Designated Person feels might cause further risk to the safety or welfare of the child or children concerned.

- If any child or adult is unhappy with any aspect of a programme involving children or young people, they should bring that concern to one of the Parish Designated Persons. Awareness of this process will be highlighted during all training and preparation by young people for parish activities, and on the consent forms circulated to parents.

- If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or a volunteer leader in a parish youth programme, that person will be removed from contact with children and young people in parish activities until an investigation is carried out. The matter will be referred to the statutory authorities for investigation, and the Diocese of Dublin will be informed. The person against whom the allegation is made will also be informed of the nature of the allegation. The Parish Priest and the Diocesan Designated Person will deal with and manage any disciplinary matters relating to the continued employment

and/or voluntary service of the person concerned. The Diocese of Dublin will take responsibility for notifying the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church.

- If there is a concern about one of the Parish Designated Persons, it should be brought to one of the other Parish Designated Persons.

### **Standard Three – Preventing Harm to Children**

#### **Section One – Recruitment & Selection**

- All Priests, all Deacons, all members of Parish Staff and all Parish Designated Persons will be required to undergo Garda Vetting through the Diocese of Dublin.

- Those who are involved in an ongoing or regular leadership role in Parish Programmes involving children and young people will be required to undergo Garda Vetting as this becomes available through the Diocese of Dublin

- In recruiting leaders for short term Parish Activities with children and young people under the age of eighteen, each potential leader will be required to complete an application form and a declaration of suitability, which will include the names of two referees. These references will be checked by one of the Parish Designated persons. These will be treated as confidential documents and stored with the appropriate security measures.

#### **Section Two – Maintaining a Safe Environment for Children**

- Appropriate training will be mandatory for those engaged in organising activities with children and young people in the parish.

- Adequate ratios of leaders to young people must be maintained in parish activities. Those who are under eighteen must not be used to make up this ratio. For general parish activities, two adults must be present for the first eight children, and one for every further eight children. However, ratios must take into account the age of the children and the nature of the activity, and may need to be adjusted accordingly. Gender balance will be observed with leaders in

Parish Programmes as far as possible.

- A current permission form must be signed by a parent or guardian, before a child or young person can participate in any parish activity. This form must include parental consent, contact details, medical/other relevant information and whether children have permission to walk home alone. All written consent forms will be treated as confidential information and will be stored with the appropriate security measures. All access to stored information will be through one of the Parish Designated Persons where necessary. Parents/guardians may request access to information concerning their own child through one of the Parish Designated Persons.

- Attendance records will be kept for all activities where anyone under the age of eighteen is present. Registers for youth groups meeting on a regular basis or for liturgies which involve the participation of anyone under the age of eighteen, will be checked by the Parish Priest on a monthly basis; all checks will be signed, dated and recorded. Registers will be stored securely in the Sacristy.

- All parish youth activities will have at least two named adult supervisors in attendance. No leader will spend time alone with individual children who are participating in parish activities. If an emergency situation arises proper and sensible precautions will be taken by leaders in accordance with health and safety considerations. An open door policy will be implemented in all situations where children or young people are present eg in the Sacristy at Mass times where altar servers are attending.

- Accurate records must be kept of any accident or incident that gives rise to any type of concern regarding a child or young person. An incident book will be provided for all activities involving children or young people. This incident book will be confidential, and will be stored with the appropriate security measures.

- No young person will be asked or expected to take on any responsibility that is more suited to an adult. While those

under 18 can take a leadership role, their responsibility will not be equal to that of an adult leader.

- These requirements will apply whether parish activities take place on parish property or in an outside venue.
- All groups using the parish centre for youth activities will be required to provide their insurance details and details of whether they have a current child protection policy and procedures, together with the name of their designated person with responsibility for the welfare of children participating in their programme. The Parish Priest will be responsible for acquiring this information and updating it on an annual basis.
- Information will only be shared on a “need to know” basis with Parish Designated Persons and Programme Leaders, in order to safeguard the child.
- Images of children and young people under 18 will only be used with the consent of the child and the parent/guardian.
- The parish will store all information regarding children in a secure location with the appropriate security measures applicable in the Parish.

### **Section Three – Codes of Behaviour**

- All children and young people will be treated with dignity, respect and courtesy, and will be expected to treat each other and their leaders in the same manner. Parents and guardians will be expected to adopt the same attitudes of courtesy respect and dignity with regard to the participation of their children in parish activities.
- No child or young person must ever be left in a situation which exposes them to danger or puts them at risk of harm.
- No physical chastisement or rough handling of children is appropriate.
- When in leadership roles in parish activities, adults will not use alcohol, tobacco or any illegal substances.
- Inappropriate language or behaviour will not be used by children, young people or leaders.
- Any behaviour which is of a bullying nature will not be tolerated.

- All leaders will be familiar with the procedures for dealing with a suspicion, observation or disclosure of abuse.
- The physical integrity and right to privacy of children and young people must be respected.
- Leaders must not engage in inappropriate physical contact or conversation with children or young people.
- Leaders must not do for a child anything that the child is capable of doing for him or herself.
- Those in leadership roles will not allow parental or personal relationships with children or young people to interfere with the running of programmes. Favouritism or unnecessary or unapproved contact with children outside of the parish activity is to be avoided by adult leaders.
- If a situation demands that a child be alone with an adult, parents or guardians should be made aware of this, and the meeting should be held in a place which is open and visible to others rather than in an isolated environment.
- All leaders should be aware that sharing concerns about a child is not a breach of confidentiality—concerns should be brought to the Designated Person, rather than being discussed with other leaders involved in the same programme.
- Children will be involved as far as possible in drawing up a code of behaviour for specific activities with the group leaders for that activity, and in reviewing the content of this on an on going basis for the duration of their involvement

#### **Standard Four – Training and Education**

- All Priests, all Deacons, and all members of staff will be required to complete the Safeguarding training available through the Diocese of Dublin.
- All those dealing with children and young people in Parish programmes will be familiar with the Parish Designated Persons or safeguarding representatives, and how to contact them should a concern arise or a disclosure be made during the course of a parish programme.

- Appropriate training in safeguarding issues will be a part of the preparation and training for all leaders in any programme which deals with children and young people.

### **Standard Five – Communicating the Church’s Safeguarding Message**

- The Parish Safeguarding Statement and the Parish Safeguarding Policy & Procedures will be displayed in all parish properties.
- The Parish Safeguarding Statement and the Parish Safeguarding Policy Document will be available on the Parish Website or on request from the parish office.
- Contact details for the relevant statutory authorities will be displayed in all parish properties.
- Details of the Parish Designated Persons/Safeguarding Representatives will be included on every permission form issued for parental consent for activities.

### **Standard Six – Access to advice and Support**

- The Parish Designated persons will, through the Diocese of Dublin assist any person who reports current or retrospective child abuse to access the appropriate pastoral care and support needed by them to come to terms with what has occurred in their lives.
- The Parish Designated Persons will, through the Diocese of Dublin, help any person against whom an allegation is made to access the appropriate pastoral care and support needed by them to come to terms with what has occurred in their lives.

### **Standard Seven – Implementing and monitoring the Standards**

This Policy Document will be reviewed on an annual basis, by the Parish Designated Persons, the Parish Child Protection Advisor’s Group or more often if the Parish becomes aware of the need to do so.

The Diocesan Policy Document is available on the Diocesan

website [www.dublindiocese.ie](http://www.dublindiocese.ie). The Policy Document of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church is available from the NBSCCC WEBSITE [www.safeguarding.ie](http://www.safeguarding.ie) Children First is available to download from the website for the office of the Minister for Children and youth affairs at [www.omc.gov.ie](http://www.omc.gov.ie) We welcome any feedback on this document from parents, guardians or parishioners.

Renewed and revised June 2015

Signed: Fr. Padraig Gleeson, Parish Administrator

**“If You See Something – Say It!”**