

Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cork and Ross

Table of Contents

Foreword	3
Diocesan Policy & Diocesan Safeguarding Committee	5
Standards.....	6
Appendix A: What is Child Abuse	13
Appendix B: Safeguarding in Church work.....	14
Appendix C: What to do if informed of a concern	15
Appendix D: Care of those abused	16
Appendix E: Those who pose a risk	17
Appendix F: Confidentiality and information-sharing	18
Appendix G: Recruitment procedures.....	19
Appendix H: Codes of Behaviour.....	20
Appendix I: Guidelines for child safety	22
Appendix J: Role of Parish Representatives.....	23
Appendix K: Supervision Ratios	24
Appendix L: Garda Vetting	25
Appendix M: Relevant Forms	26

Foreword

I warmly welcome the publication of the revised Child Safeguarding Policy for the Diocese of Cork and Ross. The first Policy document for the Diocese was published late in 2007, with the promise that it would be under regular review.

Early in 2009, the National Board for Safeguarding Children published a Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland (see www.safeguarding.ie). That document was designed to introduce uniformity where there had previously been a multiplicity of guidance containing different interpretations of what constituted best practice for the Church. This revised Child Safeguarding Policy for Cork and Ross seeks to bring the guidelines into uniformity with the National Board's document.

This new Policy document is a statement of the ongoing commitment of this Diocese to ensuring that all children and young people who are involved in Church-related activities are safeguarded and respected. It is aimed at creating a safe environment for everyone.

It is a continuing source of sadness and regret that people were deeply hurt in the past through abuse as children by Church personnel. It is also extremely regrettable that the Church failed to address this problem adequately. It is my hope and determination that the implementation of this Diocesan Policy will ensure that such will not occur again.

The new guidelines developed by the National Board are about putting procedures in place at all levels within the Church which will ensure the safeguarding of children. They are also about best practise in responding to allegations of abuse and about doing what is right by those who suffer as a result of abuse by Church personnel.

The Diocese of Cork and Ross is committed to:

- implementing this policy in every parish in the Diocese;
- co-operating fully with the statutory authorities in all aspects of this matter;
- welcoming and listening to anyone who has been a victim of abuse;
- doing everything possible to help victims towards healing;
- ensuring that all reports of wrong-doing are properly received and addressed.

I am very grateful to the members of the Diocesan Child Protection Committee for the work they have done in developing this policy document and for their willingness to oversee its effective implementation in this Diocese.

I ask God's blessing on all who have the task of implementing this Safeguarding Policy.



+John Buckley
Bishop of Cork and Ross.

Important Contact Details

Health Service Executive:

North Lee Community Services, Blackpool, Cork: Tel. 021/4927000

South Lee Community Services, St. Finbarr's Hospital, Cork: Tel. 021/4923001

West Cork Community Services, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen: Tel. 028/40447/40456.

An Garda Síochána

Anglesea St., Cork: Tel. 021/4522000

Clonakilty, Co. Cork: Tel. 023/8821570

Bantry, Co. Cork: Tel. 027/20860

Or any Garda Station. See www.garda.ie

Diocesan Designated Officer

The Designated Officer for the Diocese of Cork and Ross is:

V. Rev. Canon Liam O'Driscoll, Cork & Ross Offices, Redemption Road, Cork.

Tel. 087/3768599

Deputy Designated Officer for Safeguarding Children:

Rev. Tom Deenihan, Cork & Ross Offices, Redemption Road, Cork.

Tels: 087/3768599 or 021/4301717

Email: secretary@corkandross.org

Available Resources and Counselling Services

The following are listed without prejudice.

Towards Healing Agency will continue the work of Faoiseamh which provided telephone counselling and a counselling and psychotherapy referral service for people who have been sexually, physically or emotionally abused by a priest or religious. Freephone 1800 331234.

Connect is a freephone counselling service for any adult who has experienced abuse, trauma or neglect in childhood. Also available to partners or relatives of people with these experiences. Wednesday to Sunday 6 to 10 pm. Freephone 1800 477477.

National Counselling Service (HSE) is for adults who were abused in childhood. For an appointment at a location of your choice Freephone 1800 344116.

ISPCC: Tel. 021 4509588. See www.ispcc.ie

Childline: contact 1800 666666. See www.childline.ie

Cari provides child-centred therapy and counselling services to children, families and groups who have been affected by child sexual abuse. Based at the Dominican Centre, Popes Quay, Cork. Monday and Tuesday 9.30 am to 5.30 pm. For appointment contact the Limerick Office 061 58224. Helpline 1890 924567.

Diocesan Child Safeguarding Policy Statement

The Diocese of Cork and Ross recognises and upholds the dignity and rights of all children and is committed to ensuring their safety and well-being.

The Diocese values and encourages the participation of children and young people in the life of the Church, namely in all parish liturgies and in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

The Diocese recognises that while the safeguarding of children is everyone's responsibility, all involved in working with children and young people have a special duty of care towards them.

Ráiteas Deoise Chorcaí & Rois fé Chosaint na Leanaí

Aithníonn agus taobhaíonn Deoise Chorcaí agus Rois le dínit agus cearta gach uile leinbh agus na daoine óga go léir. Seasaimíd go daingean lena gcosaint agus lena leas.

Is mór againn páirtíocht na leanaí agus na daoine óga i liotúirgí na bparóistí agus i ngníomhaíochtaí a chuireann lena bhforbairt i gcúrsaí spriodáltachta, fisiciúlachta, mothaíochta agus sóisialta.

Aithnímid go bhfuil dualgas ar gach aon duine leanaí agus daoine óga a chosaint agus go bhfuil dualgas speisialta chúraim ar gach éinne a oibríonn le leanaí.

Diocesan Child Safeguarding Committee

This Policy document is the work of the Cork and Ross Diocesan Child Safeguarding Committee. The aims of this Committee are to oversee Diocesan Policy and Training in the area of Child Safeguarding within the Diocese of Cork and Ross. Their work in developing this document is acknowledged.

The members of this Committee are as follows:

Ciarán Boland	Ben Coy	Fr. Tom Deenihan
Jim Hayes	Marion Healy	Bernie O'Callaghan
Fr. Liam O'Driscoll	Fr. Teddy O'Sullivan	Una Webster
Bríd O'Connell (Secretary).		

For further information please log on to www.corkandross.org

Standards

The Standards and Guidance Document (SGD) published by the National Board contains seven standards designed to ensure Church organisations keep children safe. These standards represent best practice in the area of safeguarding children. The Diocese of Cork and Ross has signed up to these standards and is committed to putting their recommendations in place. The page references below are to that document. These standards are also in accordance with the national guidelines for the protection and welfare of children, published in 1999 by the Department of Health & Children under the title “Children First”.

These are the standards:

1. A Policy on Keeping Children Safe

The Diocese of Cork and Ross believes that each child should 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 (SGD pp.14, 27, 37-38).

The Diocese of Cork and Ross commits to having and promoting a written safeguarding policy for all Church personnel who work with people under the age of 18. This policy is approved and signed by the Bishop of Cork and Ross and is entitled “*Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cork and Ross*”.

This policy is supported by Procedures and Guidance which

- describe the Church’s understanding and definition of abuse (Appendix A)
- address child safeguarding in different aspects of Church work (Appendix B);
- state that all child protection concerns will be fully reported to the civil authorities without delay (Appendix C);
- state that those who suffer abuse will be offered appropriate help, such as counselling, practical support, therapeutic assistance; (Appendix D);
- state how Church personnel who pose a risk to children are managed (Appendix E);
- is under constant review and will be updated as necessary;

2. Responding to allegations and concerns

The Diocese of Cork and Ross recognises the right of children to be listened to and heard. The Diocese will respond effectively to all allegations and ensure that any allegations and suspicions of abuse are reported both within the Church and to the civil authorities (SGD pp 15, 28, 39-41, 60-62).

To ensure that such allegations and suspicions are responded to promptly, effectively and appropriately, the Diocese has in place:

- clear reporting procedures and processes, consistent with civil legislation. These must be followed when allegations or suspicions arise. They provide step-by-step guidance on the actions to be taken (Appendix C);
- a Designated Officer at Diocesan level with a clearly defined role (Appendix C);
- a process for recording and storing securely all aspects of each allegation/incident/suspicion/referral;
- contact details for the civil authorities and the Diocesan Designated Officer which are widely circulated in the Diocese (Appendix C);
- guidance on confidentiality and information-sharing (Appendix F).



3. Preventing Harm

Children should have access to good role models they can trust who will respect and nurture their spiritual, physical and emotional development. They also have a right to an environment free from abuse and neglect (SGD pp 16-17, 29-30, 42-45).

Church organisations will minimise the risk of children being abused by implementing the following:

- policies and procedures for recruiting Church personnel and assessing their suitability to work with children; (Appendix G)
- those who have regular contact with children completing a form declaring any previous court convictions and undergoing other checks as required by legislation;
- codes of behaviour, setting out what are and what are not acceptable standards of behaviour; (Appendix H)
- guidance on operating safe activities for children;
- clear ways in which Church personnel can “whistle blow” about unacceptable behaviour towards children by staff and/or volunteers; (Appendix C)
- guidelines for adults and children regarding discriminatory behaviour that is not acceptable; (Appendix H)
- guidelines on the personal/intimate care of children with disabilities;
- guidelines for activities with children, especially away trips. These include adequate supervision; (Appendix B)
- guidelines for the appropriate use of information technology, to ensure the safety of children; (Appendix I)
- guidelines regarding children’s behaviour towards other children should be worked out with children.

4. Training and Education

All Church personnel should be offered training in child protection to maintain high standards and good practice (SGD pp. 18, 31, 46-47).

All Church personnel, both paid and unpaid, will be offered appropriate training in child protection to maintain high standards and good practice. This includes priests and other identified personnel who work with children in a Church setting. Such personnel will be inducted into Church policies and procedures when they begin working in Church organisations. Regular opportunities to update their skills and knowledge will be provided through a national training programme. To ensure that this requirement is complied with, an audit of each parish will be conducted every two years.

Those with additional responsibilities such as recruiting and selecting staff, dealing with complaints, disciplinary processes, managing risk, acting as designated person will receive appropriate training.

Each Parish will have at least two Parish Safeguarding Representatives who will receive appropriate training. The role of the Parish Safeguarding Representative will be to ensure that Diocesan procedures for safeguarding children are known, implemented and monitored at Parish level. (Appendix J)

All training programmes will be approved by the National Board for Safeguarding Children. (SGD pp 18, 46, 47 & 71).



5. Communication

The Diocese of Cork and Ross welcomes, cherishes and protects children in a manner consistent with their central place in the life of the Church (SGD pp.19, 32, 48-49).

This means that there must be clear policies and procedures to ensure that the Child Safeguarding policy of the Diocese is communicated to all Church personnel and parishioners and to external agencies. This should be done in the following ways:

- by circulating this policy document widely in the Diocese;
- by explaining the policy and procedures which are in place on a regular basis to Church congregations by the priest and/or the Parish Representatives;
- by regular safeguarding updates in the Parish Newsletter;
- by the Parish Representatives monitoring the implementation of the procedures and raising awareness of them in the parish;
- by informing the public of Cork and Ross's policy and procedures when the opportunity arises, through the local and national media;
- by placing a copy of the Diocesan policy on the Diocesan website;
- by informing children of their right to be safe from abuse and who to speak to if they have concerns;
- by publishing the contact details for the civil authorities and the Diocesan Designated Officer in Church premises, Parish newsletter and Parish website. (Appendix C). The Designated Officer is available to and has regular contact with the civil authorities.

6. 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 (Appendix D). Those who have harmed others should be helped to face up to the reality of abuse, as well as being assisted in healing (Appendix E) (SGD pp. 20, 33, 50).

To ensure that anyone who has been abused or who has perpetrated abuse will be assisted and supported in seeking help, the Diocese will:

- ensure that Church personnel with responsibilities for keeping children safe have access to specialist advice, support and information on child protection;
- develop regular contact with the relevant child protection agencies and help lines;
- know how to respond to and support a complainant who has disclosed an abuse;
- ensure that the support offered to a person who may have been abused is appropriate and does not compromise any future inquiries or put the person at further risk;
- develop alternative ways of enabling vulnerable children (e.g. those with disabilities or communication difficulties) to access information and support;
- provide appropriate support to those who have perpetrated abuse.



7. Implementing and monitoring

To keep children safe, policies, procedures and plans have to be implemented across all Church organisations. Checks are needed 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 (SGD pp. 21, 34, 51-52).

A plan of action is in place to monitor how effective are the standards that the Diocese has implemented. This plan consists of the following:

- a written plan showing what steps should be undertaken to keep children safe, who is responsible for implementing those measures and when they will be completed;
- the human and financial resources available for implementing the plan;
- arrangements to monitor compliance with child protection policies and procedures;
- requests to parishioners for their views on the practises for keeping children safe; this to be done by means of regular contact with Parish Council/Assembly.
- a record of all incidents/allegations/suspensions of abuse which are stored securely.



Appendix A

What is Child Abuse?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. There are four basic types of abuse i.e. physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Physical Abuse: causing any kind of physical harm to a child or failing to act to protect a child who is being harmed. Harm can also be caused by the fabrication of symptoms of or by deliberately inducing illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse: the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. The child's need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse: when a child is used by another person for his/her sexual gratification or sexual arousal or that of others. Such activities may involve physical or non-physical contact.

Neglect: 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, medical care, attachment to and affection from adults. (See SGD pp 73-74).



Appendix B

The Church's child safeguarding in different aspects of Church work.

The Diocese of Cork and Ross recognises the value and right of every child to actively participate in the Church community in a safe environment.

Altar Servers: are important to the celebration of the Eucharist in the parish community. Good practice procedures include signed parental child consent forms; an information session for servers and parents; appropriate supervision ratios; signing in on arrival; local arrangements for vesting.

Choirs/Ministers: where members are under the age of 18, similar procedures apply as outlined above for altar servers.

Pilgrimages/Away trips: Adequate provision for safety with regard to transport, facilities and activities must be planned in advance. Appropriate insurance must be in place. An information session for leaders, parents and children must be held. The activities and responsibilities of the children must be agreed. Signed parental consent must be obtained. Gender appropriate supervision (Appendix K), understanding of roles and boundaries, suitable sleeping arrangements, and respect for privacy must be ensured. No child or young person should be left alone with an adult. The Diocese/Parish must have a named person on the trip to whom any complaints can be brought. Attendance records, contact information, medical information/treatment permission and incident report forms must be in place. A brochure with procedures for pilgrimages is available from the Diocesan Office, Redemption Road, Cork.

Parish Centres: Groups using halls or centres vested in the Diocese or local Parish must have their own Child Safeguarding Policy which is compatible with the Church policy. Leaders of such groups must provide a copy of their insurance policy to the parish. They must ensure that there is signed parental consent; adequate supervision; attendance records; incident report forms and signed self-declaration forms. (See SGD pp 69-70).

Where the Hall is legally leased to a Management or Community Group, that group is responsible for ensuring that an adequate child safeguarding policy is being implemented.

Appendix C

Action to take when you receive a concern, suspicion, disclosure or allegation of abuse.

Every citizen is obliged to report concerns, suspicions, disclosure or allegations of child abuse to the appropriate civil authorities i.e. the Garda Síochána and the duty Social Worker of the HSE. Reasonable grounds for concern include: indication from a child that (s)he was abused; a person saw a child being abused; injury or behaviour consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way. (See Children First, 1999 p. 38). If the abuse relates to Church personnel or is alleged to have happened at a Church activity, the matter must be referred as soon as possible to the Diocesan Designated Officer who will refer the complaint to the Garda Síochána and the HSE without delay. Contact details are posted on notice boards in every Church in the Diocese. Those details are as follows:

Health Service Executive:

North Lee Community Services, Blackpool, Cork: Tel. 021/4927000

South Lee Community Services, St. Finbarr's Hospital, Cork: Tel. 021/4923001

West Cork Community Services, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen: Tel. 028/40447/40456.

An Garda Síochána

Anglesea St., Cork: Tel. 021/4522000

Clonakilty, Co. Cork: Tel. 023/8821570

Bantry, Co. Cork: Tel. 027/20860

Or any Garda Station.

Diocesan Designated Officer for Safeguarding Children

The role of the Designated Officer is to hear any concerns or disclosures relating to safeguarding and to take responsibility for managing the response to that concern or disclosure. The details of this role are outlined in SGD p. 55.

The Designated Officer for the Diocese of Cork and Ross is:

V. Rev. Canon Liam O'Driscoll,

Cork & Ross Offices, Redemption Road, Cork.

Tel. 087/3768599

Email: liam.odriscoll@corkandross.org

Deputy Designated Officer for Safeguarding Children:

Rev. Tom Deenihan,

Cork & Ross Offices, Redemption Road, Cork.

Tels: 087/3768599 or 021/4301717

Email: secretary@corkandross.org

Appendix D

Care of those abused

The Diocese of Cork and Ross has, for many years, considered the needs of victims of abuse as having priority over all other aspects when a complaint of child abuse is made, whether current or historic. This is in accord with what is known as the Paramountcy Principle i.e. that the safety of the child is paramount; that it takes precedence over all other considerations. As a result, the Diocese, having heard the detail of the complaint, has offered and will continue to offer counselling to complainants, without prejudice to the truth or otherwise of the allegation. In addition, the Diocese will offer a Support Person to the person making an allegation. The role of the Support Person is to assist with communication between the person making the allegation and the Designated Officer. The Support Person is not a counsellor to the complainant and must not be or act as their therapist. (SGD p. 58)



Appendix E

How those who pose a risk to children are managed.

Once information about a concern/allegation has been made to the Diocesan Designated Officer, he must inform the Bishop and ensure that the procedures about how to manage such concerns/allegations are being followed. This involves referring the matter to the civil authorities and conducting an initial interview with the person accused (the respondent) as soon as possible. He/she is given information about his or her entitlement to seek legal advice (both civil and canonical), and about the child safeguarding process. The respondent should be informed that he/she 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 Designated Officer 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 respondent needs to be given enough detail about the disclosure/allegation/concern and the person raising it, to be able to offer a response. The respondent shall be offered the services of an Advisor whose role is to assist with communication between the accused and the Designated Officer (SGD p. 59). A written record of the interview must be prepared, agreed with the respondent, signed and dated. (See SGD p. 85).

The Advisory Panel (See SGD p. 56) must be convened to discuss the case and to advise the Bishop on what is considered the appropriate course of action.

A preliminary internal investigation will follow, and the respondent may be requested to stand aside from ministry while the investigation is in progress. A Church investigation may follow, but will not begin until the Garda investigation has concluded. The respondent is kept informed of the progress of the investigation and records are maintained of such communications. (See SGD pp. 84-88).

Anonymous allegations: These should be recorded and dealt with in so far as possible. If eventually the name of the person making the allegation becomes known, the above procedures can be applied.

Appendix F

Confidentiality and information-sharing

The Diocese of Cork and Ross recognises the importance of ensuring peoples' right to confidentiality and is committed to keeping confidential all personal information about children and their families. The only exception is when child safeguarding or welfare concerns arise in relation to a child.

- All information regarding concerns about child abuse will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis in order to safeguard the child. If information is being shared, parents and children are to be informed unless doing so puts the child at further risk.
- No undertakings regarding secrecy should be given. This should be made clear to all parties involved. Giving information to others for the safeguarding of a child is not a breach of confidentiality.
- The Seal of Confession requires absolute confidentiality and allows no exceptions.
- If a disclosure is made in the context of Confession, the priest is obliged to invite the person making the disclosure to discuss the matter outside of the Confessional.
- Because of the obligations of the sacramental seal, no priest performing a function under the procedures for dealing with a child-protection matter should celebrate the Sacrament of Penance with a respondent. (See SGD pp 54, 62).



Appendix G

Recruitment procedures

The Diocese of Cork and Ross ensures that all possible steps will be taken to prevent unsuitable people working with children in a Church-related activity. Whoever is employed by the Church either in a pastoral or voluntary role must be recruited safely and must be suitable for the job/role with children they are being asked to undertake.

Safe recruitment involves advertising through Parish Newsletter and Church announcement, describing the role and inviting volunteers

Applicants for such posts will be required to complete the following:

- An application form;
- A self-declaration form;
- A Garda Vetting form. (See Appendix L)

Applicants will provide proof of identification; will submit names of two referees from whom references will be sought and followed up; will be interviewed by at least two interviewers. The completion of all of these elements will help the Parish Priest to decide on acceptable personnel. (See SGD pp. 63-68).



Appendix H

Codes of Behaviour

(a) Code of Behaviour for those working with children and young people

- Leaders will treat children/young people with courtesy, respect and dignity, engaging with them in an open manner, not showing favouritism and respecting their right to privacy
- There will be an adequate ratio of leaders to children; a leader will never be alone with a child; leaders will be gender appropriate to the children in their care.
- There will be a designated leader with whom children can raise concerns.
- Leaders will not physically, sexually or emotionally abuse children;
- Leaders will not consume alcohol, smoke or use drugs in the presence of children.
- Leaders will not use inappropriate language, make sexually suggestive comments or engage in rough play with each other or with children.
- Tasks of a personal nature will not be undertaken by leaders except when the welfare of the child demands it.
- Leaders will not give their personal details to children; personal details of children will be held only by a designated leader. Except in emergencies, children will be contacted only via their parents.
- All concerns will be dealt with by the Diocesan Designated Officer who will liaise with the civil authorities in accordance with established guidelines.
- A code of conduct, specific to children, will apply. This includes codes of conduct for away trips, pilgrimages etc. (See Appendix B).

(b) Code of Behaviour specific to children and young people

It is important that children and young people know the limits and boundaries appropriate to their own behaviour and that of others. Children/young people must be consulted in the drawing up of such a code. This code will include the following as a minimum standard: Children/young people will respect the fact that adults also have a code of conduct; that leaders will not work alone with them; that everybody must be treated with respect; that alcohol, smoking and drugs will not be tolerated; that inappropriate language or rough play will not be permitted.

(c) An anti-bullying policy

The following are some examples of bullying that will not be tolerated: name calling, fighting, making suggestive comments, intimidation, excluding, damaging property, spreading rumours, sending abusive text messages. This list is not exhaustive; others may be added when drawing up this policy in consultation with children/young people. (See SGD p. 69)



Appendix I

Guidelines for Child Safety

This relates to questions such as events and activities supervised by Church personnel. Sometimes, one-off events are organised involving parents/volunteers or where individuals supply a service e.g. a photographer. Such people should be asked to sign a self-declaration form. There should also be an agreement with those who are going to supply a service or be involved in activities with children, stating that they will abide by the expected standards of behaviour and comply with the Church's child protection policy.

(See SGD pp. 67, 69 for sample declaration form and code of behaviour).

Guidelines on the use of digital and online systems such as internet, mobile phones and email must be developed to prevent children being groomed online by paedophiles, experiencing online bullying, accessing or being exposed to inappropriate or harmful material, personal contact details not being secure, personal images being uploaded and used without consent. Appropriate IT filters may be necessary in the case of internet use. General guidelines for these policies can be found on the following websites: www.ibec.ie and www.webwise.ie

Similarly guidelines on the use of photographs of children and their publication must be developed to ensure the safeguarding of the children involved. Written parental consent must be obtained before taking and publishing photographs of children. It is also advisable that children whose photographs are published would not be fully identified (See SGD p. 45)



Appendix J

Role of the Parish Representatives

Their role is to promote the safeguarding of children within Church organisations by:

- 1 Raising awareness of what safeguarding is through information sessions
- 2 Ensuring that any Church-related activities are managed in a way that guarantees the safety of children involved e.g. insurance, appropriate supervision, etc.
- 3 Developing a Parish Policy Statement and procedures for the local parish which must be regularly reviewed.
- 4 Publicising clearly the Parish Policy Statement and contact details for the civil authorities and the Diocesan Designated Officer in all Church properties.
- 5 Monitoring the implementation of the Policy at parish level.

The overall responsibility for safeguarding children in any Church organisation remains with the Parish Priest.

If a disclosure is made to a Parish Representative, (s)he should:

- 1 Advise the person to make a statement to An Garda Síochána. The Parish Representative may report directly to the Garda Síochána and the HSE.
- 2 Give the person the telephone number of the Diocesan Designated Officer.
- 3 Make contact with the Designated Officer and pass on the details as known and keep a record of this contact. The Diocesan Designated Officer is Fr. Liam O'Driscoll (087/3768599)

Appendix K

Recommended Supervision Ratios

The following supervision ratios are recommended:

Age	Adult/child ratio
0-2 years	1:3
2-3 years	1:4
3-7 years	1:8
8 years and over	1:10

The minimum adult to young person ratio should ideally be one adult per group of ten plus one other adult, and allowing an additional adult for each group of ten thereafter. Local circumstances, the ages of the children, the experience of the volunteers and the staff should be taken into consideration. Safety, ability/disability of young people and the nature of the activities being undertaken may require that these ratios be considerably lower. (See SGD p.44).



Appendix L

Garda Vetting

“Garda vetting is conducted in respect of personnel working in a full-time, part-time, and voluntary or student placement capacity in a position in a registered organisation, through which they have unsupervised access to children and/or vulnerable adults.”(www.garda.ie)

At parish level, any individual, whether paid or voluntary, who is in a position of trust with children/vulnerable adults in a Church-related activity must be Garda vetted. This includes priests, Ministers of the Eucharist and any other Church personnel whose ministry involves visitation of hospitals, nursing homes or family homes. (SGD p. 44). Specific Diocesan Garda Vetting forms are needed. For appropriate application forms, contact the Cork & Ross Diocesan Offices (Tel. 021/4301717).

For individuals who have not been vetted, adequate supervision arrangements must be in place to ensure they are not in a position to harm children.



Appendix M

Relevant Forms

Application Form for paid/volunteer roles involving children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Adult Volunteer/Staff Declaration Form (Confidential)

Altar Server Role.

Altar Server Ministry – Participant Application Form.

Role of Co-Ordinator/Supervisor of Altar Servers.

Parental/Guardian Consent Form.

Reference Form.

Template for Letter of Recommendation.

Diocese of Cork & Ross

Application Form for paid/ volunteer roles involving Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

If you have a disability that may make the completion of this form difficult, the form can be completed by someone on your behalf however we will still require your signature.
(Please complete in **BLOCK CAPITALS** using black ink)

Please state name of Parish, Religious Order or Organisation: _____

Role(s) Applied For: _____

Title: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other (please specify) _____

Current Surname: _____

First Names: _____

Name Known By (If applicable): _____

Full Address: _____

Preferred Contact Numbers: _____

Email: _____

Please tell us something about yourself – any interests or experience you have which are relevant to the role(s).

Have you previously been involved in voluntary work or Church ministry?

Yes No If yes, please give details:

Have you previously received any training for working with children?

Yes No If yes, please give details.

Do you have any current medical conditions you feel we should be aware of in order that we can ensure your wellbeing whilst you undertake the role(s)?

Please give names, addresses and telephone numbers of two people who we may contact who have known you well for at least 2 years and would be able to comment on your suitability for this role.

We cannot accept references from your relatives or family members; your Parish Priest / or members of your Diocesan/Religious Safeguarding Team. Please note that only 1 of the 2 required referees may be a member of the group/activity to which you are applying to work.

Referee 1

Full Name _____

Full Address _____

Preferred Contact _____

Telephone number(s) _____

Email Address _____

In what capacity does this person know you?

Referee 2

Full Name _____

Full Address _____

Preferred Contact _____

Telephone number(s) _____

Email Address _____

In what capacity does this person know you?

- I give my consent, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988, for the information contained in this form to be processed and stored for the purposes of recruitment.
- I understand that pre-appointment Garda vetting checks will be required as part of the recruitment process.
- By making this application I confirm that I am not barred from working with vulnerable groups and understand that to apply to work with children/vulnerable adults when barred from doing so is a criminal offence.
- In the event that I am not appointed or in the future step down from the post, I understand that relevant information will be retained on file until I reach normal retirement age, or for 10 years if that is longer.

I declare that the above information is true and that I am fit to serve as a

Signed: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:

Full Name: _____ **Position:** _____

Address: _____

PARISH/RELIGIOUS ORDER OR ORGANISATION USE ONLY:

Date Form Received: _____

Date Ref. Forms Sent: _____

Date Ref. 1 Received: _____

Date Ref. 2 Received: _____

References Received By: _____

Status of Application: _____

Invited to take up ministry: Yes / No (please circle)

Signed: _____ DATE _____

Diocese of Cork & Ross

Adult Volunteer/Staff Declaration Form (Confidential)

Legislation in both jurisdictions in Ireland, have at their core, the principle that the welfare of children and young people must be the paramount consideration.

Church organizations therefore ask that everyone working or volunteering for the Church, who will come into contact with children or personal details of children, abide by good practice by completing and sign 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 Bound Over Order (please tick)

Yes No

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

Date of offence: _____

Nature 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? (Please tick)

Yes No

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

Full name (print): _____

Any surname previously known by: _____

Address: _____

Date of birth: _____ **Place of birth:** _____

Declaration

I understand that, if it is found that I have withheld information or included any false or misleading information above, I may be removed from my post whether paid or voluntary, without notice. I understand that the information will be kept securely by the Church organization.

I hereby declare the information I have provided is accurate.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Diocese of Cork & Ross

Altar Server Role:

The primary role of the altar server is to assist the priest in the celebration of the liturgy during Mass. This is done through specific actions and by setting an example to the congregation by active participation in the liturgy (prayers, hymns, responses, etc), by looking alert and sitting/standing at the appropriate times.

Servers will:

- carry the cross,
- the processional candle(s),
- hold the book for the Priest/Celebrant when he is not at the altar,
- carry the incense and the censer,
- present the bread, wine, and water to the priest, during the preparation of the gifts,
- assist Priest/Celebrant when he receives gifts from the people
- assist the Priest/Celebrant as necessary.

Altar servers must attend every Mass that they have been scheduled.

Training will be given locally.

Local arrangements for permissions/transport during school times needs to be added to this and any other relevant information.

The Diocese of Cork & Ross

Altar Server Ministry

Participant Application Form

Parish: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

School _____ Class _____

I wish to apply for membership of the parish altar server ministry group

I understand that becoming an altar server is a very important way of helping my parish community and I accept that I must follow the rules as have been explained to me

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Diocese of Cork & Ross

Parish _____

Role : **Co-ordinator/supervisor of Altar Servers**

Responsible to: Parish Priest

Aim: To work with the altar servers in the parish assisting at mass and other liturgies and training new altar servers.

Main Responsibilities:

- 1 To work with servers and others (parents/guardians) to ensure the availability of servers to assist at the liturgy as required.
- 2 To liaise with the priests and other appropriate ministers presiding at the liturgy
- 3 To encourage the safety and well being of the children and young people serving
- 4 To encourage new servers and provide appropriate training
- 5 To ensure proper facilities are available for servers
- 6 To ensure that the responsibilities of the role are conducted in accordance with the diocesan Child Safeguarding procedures
- 7 To monitor good practice and implement changes where necessary to enhance both the quality of the liturgy and the safety of the children

Diocese of Cork & Ross

Parental/Guardian Consent Form

Parish / Church Organisation: _____

Venue/Activity/Group/Event: _____

Date & Time: _____

Name of Group Leader/Person Responsible: _____

Name of Child / Young Person: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Name of Parent / Guardian _____

Address (if different to above): _____

Daytime phone no: _____ Home phone no: _____

Mobile phone no: _____

E-mail: _____

Alternative Emergency Contact Name _____

Address: _____

Relationship to the Child/Young Person: _____

Phone no: Mobile phone no _____

Health/Other Information that the leaders ought to be aware of (e.g. allergies; asthma; dietary or medication that has to be taken etc.)

- I have read and I understand the activity outline accompanying this permission slip.
- I am satisfied that I have been sufficiently informed about the activity and I agree to allow the young person named above to take part in the outlined activity.

When this session is finished I will collect _____ or _____ will collect him/her.

I am happy for _____ to make his/her own way home.

Declaration:

In the event of an illness or an accident every effort will be made by the leader to contact me. If for any reason this is not possible, I agree to my son/daughter receiving medication as instructed and any emergency medical treatment as considered necessary by the medical authorities present.

Signature of parent or guardian: _____

Relationship to young person: _____

Date: _____

Diocese of Cork & Ross

Reference Form

(Please refer to the enclosed Role Description when completing this form & complete in **BLOCK CAPITALS** using black ink)

Role on behalf of: (Parish/Order/Organisation) _____

Role(s) Applied For: _____

Name of Applicant: _____

Can the information you provide in this reference be shared with the applicant?

(Please tick)

Yes

No

In what capacity do you know the applicant?

How many years have you known the applicant? _____

To your knowledge has the applicant any experience relevant to the Role Description?

(Please tick)

Yes

No

On a scale of 1 to 4 (where 4 is the highest), in your opinion is the applicant (Please circle)

Caring 1 (lowest) 2 3 4 (highest)

Trustworthy 1 (lowest) 2 3 4 (highest)

Reliable 1 (lowest) 2 3 4 (highest)

Do you consider this applicant to be suitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults?

(Please tick)

Yes

No

If no, please give details.

If you have any other comments or concerns regarding the suitability of this applicant for this role in the Church, please give details using the space overleaf.

PLEASE COMPLETE YOUR DETAILS

Full Name: _____

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form

Diocese of Cork & Ross

Parish Name
Parish Address

Date

Name
Address
Address

Dear

Re:

The above named person has offered to undertake the responsibilities of _____ in our parish.

In seeking to promote the welfare of parish members and, in particular, of children and vulnerable adults, we try to ensure the suitability of all parish workers, voluntary or paid. _____ has given me your name as a referee, and agreed that I may contact you.

I would be very grateful if you would be kind enough to let me have your opinion as to _____ suitability for this role. I would also ask if there is anything known about _____, that would deem the applicant unsuitable to work with children. I enclose a Role Description, a Reference Form and a stamped addressed envelope.

If you require any further information or explanation, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Parish Priest