

Child Safeguarding Statement for the Diocese of Meath



As a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland, the Diocese of Meath recognises and upholds the dignity and rights of all children, is committed to ensuring their safety and well-being and will work in partnership with parents/ guardians to do this. We recognise each child as a gift from God, and we value and encourage the participation of children in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development. All Church personnel (including clergy, religious, staff and volunteers) have a responsibility to safeguard children through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment that supports their best interests and prevents abuse.

Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm

The following ministries are undertaken with children: Altar Servers; Children`s choir; Children`s liturgy; Pre-Sacramental preparation; Ministers of the Word; Youth leaders/Parish youth teams; Youth pilgrimages; John Paul II Awards; Rainbows programme; Junior Pioneers; Junior Legion of Mary.

We are committed to the following principles:

- Mandatory reporting to the statutory authorities of any concerns, knowledge or allegations that a child is or has been abused, that reach the threshold for reporting.
- Caring for the welfare of all children and the adults who work with them
- Caring pastorally for complainants and other affected persons
- Caring pastorally for respondents and other affected persons

Risk Assessment

Potential risks to the safety of children involved in Church activities have been identified and steps taken to minimise the risks of abuse. The risk assessment and all relevant procedures are available in the *Operational Guidelines* section of the website www.meathsafeguarding.ie at section 4.50.

Procedures

In addition to the procedures outlined in the risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while engaged in Church related activities. (Details are available in the *Operational Guidelines* on the website www.meathsafeguarding.ie.)

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/ volunteers of a child availing of our service.
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children.

- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla.
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

Implementation

The Diocese of Meath is committed to safeguarding children through the implementation of *Safeguarding Children 2016 Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland*. This Child Safeguarding Statement and our practice supports our desire to keep children safe from harm while in our ministries. We will review the effectiveness of our practice as outlined in this statement against the relevant indicators of the safeguarding standards as part of our annual audit and will revise it as appropriate.

Signed  Bishop of Meath

For any queries relating to this statement, please contact Mr Alan Doran (Relevant Person) through the Diocesan Office at 044 9348841.

(A more detailed version of this Child Safeguarding Statement is available on the website www.meathsafeguarding.ie in the *Operational Guidelines* - Section 4.50 or is available on request)