

# Diocese of Kilmore

www.kilmorediocese.ie

*Safeguarding Children Newsletter May 2014*

## *Message from Bishop O'Reilly*



I welcome the 2014 edition of the Safeguarding Children Newsletter for the Diocese of Kilmore. It is a valuable means of communicating with all our safeguarding personnel throughout the diocese and it helps to keep us abreast of new developments in the area of child protection. The former CEO of the National Board for Safeguarding Children, Mr Ian Elliott, retired from this position last June and has been replaced

by Ms Teresa Devlin, who took up her position on 1st February. I would like to take this opportunity of putting on record our thanks to Ian for his support and encouragement of our efforts at all times in the diocese of Kilmore, and our appreciation of the service he has given to the work of safeguarding children in the Church throughout the country. I welcome Teresa Devlin as the new CEO and wish her every success in her new role.

I also welcome the new service called Towards Peace. This is a Spiritual Support Service for Survivors of Abuse, specifically those who were abused by clergy or religious. It complements the work of the other support service, Towards Healing, which focuses on counselling and group support. I hope the new service will be widely availed of and that it will assist survivors in their journey towards healing.

We have decided not to bring out a new edition of our policy manual in hard copy at this point. Many revisions are needed, but we have been advised that major revisions to the national policy documents are envisaged within the next year. Our policy manual is being revised to take account of changes that have already taken place. The revised policy manual will be available online on the diocesan website under the safeguarding children tab. A new hard copy manual will be prepared when the current policy changes at national level have been completed.

Once again I want to thank and pay tribute to the 200 volunteers working in the area of safeguarding children in the diocese. This includes clergy, parish safeguarding children representatives, parish recruitment committees, chairs of parish pastoral councils, pastoral assistants, candidates for permanent diaconate, diocesan advisors, Lourdes leaders, Advisory Panel members, care persons, parish youth officers, diocesan trainers and coordinator of safeguarding. I also wish to thank our very hardworking Diocesan Committee for Safeguarding Children and our Advisory Panel for Case Management. All of these represent a huge commitment to care of and ministry to children and a wonderful example of lay participation in the life of the Church at its best.

Leo O'Reilly,  
Bishop of Kilmore.



### DIOCESAN POLICY STATEMENT

We in the Diocese of Kilmore value and encourage the participation of children and young people in all diocesan and parish activities promoting their spiritual, emotional, physical and social development. Recognising the dignity and rights of all children we will undertake to do all in our power to create a safe environment for children and young people in order to facilitate their full participation in the life of the Church. Our children's welfare is paramount. All Church personnel are expected to comply with the diocesan safeguarding policies and procedures. The diocesan safeguarding children manual has been updated in April 2014 and can be downloaded from:

*www.kilmorediocese.ie*



## New CEO for NBSCCC

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland has appointed a new chief executive officer to replace Ian Elliot who retired last June. Teresa Devlin has extensive experience in child protection management and family support, both at the levels of senior management and in the specific areas of risk assessment and care planning. Teresa took up her

position on 1st February 2014 and is the first woman to hold the position.

The NBSCCC was established in 2006 to provide best practice advice and to monitor the safeguarding of children in the Catholic Church. Its sponsoring bodies are the Catholic Bishops' conference as well as the Conference of Religious and the Irish Missionary Union.

## NBSCCC Training Strategy 2013 – 2015

The training strategy of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church outlines training that will be delivered by the National Office during 2013-2015. This document can be viewed on [www.safeguarding.ie](http://www.safeguarding.ie) The strategy may be revised based on need and requests for training from dioceses and religious orders throughout Ireland.

## Towards Peace (*Spiritual Support for Survivors of Abuse*)

*Towards Peace* is one of three specific responses by the whole Church in Ireland to survivors of sexual abuse by clergy and religious which were first announced in March 2011 when the Irish Catholic Bishops Conference published *Towards Healing and Renewal*. The other two commitments were:

- a) To provide funding for the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.
- b) To establish and fund a counselling service for abuse victims, *Towards Healing*.

These three services are funded by the Irish Catholic Bishops Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland and the Irish Missionary Union.

*Towards Peace* exists as a response to the fact that "Abuse by clergy and religious often has a profoundly negative impact on the faith of those abused and on that of their families." (*Towards Healing and Renewal*, p10). This consequence of sexual abuse was made clear to bishops by survivors at their meetings. Survivors asked that those who suffered a loss of faith as a consequence of their abuse should be offered spiritual help and support.

The aim of the *Towards Peace* service therefore, is to offer spiritual support to those whose faith has been damaged as a result of the abuse they experienced, and who wish to rediscover or deepen their relationship with God and to link with other people of faith. It is anticipated that the service will start simply and growth will be gradual. Importantly, there is no specific template in terms of spiritual support, and each request will be addressed with the needs of the client to the fore at all times.

### How will it work?

The basic service is a helpline. Any person wishing to

use the services of *Towards Peace* will contact the coordinator by telephone. The caller will have the opportunity to talk through their hopes and desires for spiritual support and will be told the nature of the help on offer. S/he will be advised that in the case of an allegation of sexual abuse, *Towards Peace* is obliged to report it to the civil authorities and to the National Board for Safeguarding Children, or to confirm that an allegation has already been reported.

If the survivor wishes, s/he may opt to be put in touch with a spiritual companion for an initial one-to-one meeting. A number of spiritual companions, lay and religious, male and female, who are trained to accompany people on their spiritual journey are located throughout the country. If desired, the meetings may then continue for a period of up to nine sessions. All sessions are free of charge. Other options may also be considered, such as referral to retreats or other spiritual events provided by various organisations that may be available in their own locality. Although the service is meant primarily for survivors of sexual abuse, consideration may be given on a case by case basis to former residents of institutions, or family members of survivors whose faith has been damaged.

*Towards Peace* supports and respects the needs of those survivors who wish to embark on a spiritual journey. There is no pre-determined road map for this journey. Each person starts at a different point and walks at a different pace towards deeper peace.

### Contact Details

Towards Peace, Columba Centre, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

Tel: 01 5053028 / 086 7710533.

E-mail: [towardspeace@iecon.ie](mailto:towardspeace@iecon.ie)

Tuesday – Thursday. 10am – 1pm. 2 – 4pm.

## Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee

As you will be aware there is a need for ongoing review and updating of policies and procedures regarding safeguarding children. The aim of this is to ensure that people are fully informed and equipped with the knowledge to deal with all matters to the highest possible standards. Since our last diocesan safeguarding children conference the diocesan safeguarding children committee have updated the volunteers and parish safeguarding children representatives application form, the participants consent, the reporting procedure, the complaints procedure, the role and function of the parish recruitment committee, the parish audit, the child friendly leaflet and the diocesan contact details. The committee has adopted the Garda vetting policy, Garda vetting flowchart, intimate care for children with disability, guidance for challenging behaviour, handing over form for use by the parish representatives, an equality policy, persons requiring Garda vetting, safeguarding checklist for parishes and a whistle blowing policy. Whistle blowing is a term used to describe the action of someone who discloses wrongdoing within an organisation to the public or to those in a position of authority. It enables them to report concerns in a way that will not be seen as disloyal to their settings and colleagues. These policies, procedures and updated forms have been distributed to all safeguarding children personnel in the diocese. I wish you all well as we continue this very important work in our dioceses.

Christy Dooley,  
*Chair of Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee.*

## Tusla (New Child and Family Agency)

Tusla, the new child and family agency was established on the 1st January 2014 and is now the dedicated state agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children. It represents the most comprehensive reform of child protection, early intervention and family support services ever undertaken in Ireland. It brings together 4,000 staff and an operational budget of approximately €600m. Tusla became an independent legal entity, comprising of HSE Children & Family Services, Family Support Agency and the National

Educational Welfare Board as well as incorporating some psychological services and a range of services responding to domestic, sexual and gender based violence. The agency operates under the Child and Family Agency Act 2013, legislation with children at its heart, and families viewed as the foundation of a strong healthy community where children can flourish. Partnership and co-operation in the delivery of seamless services to children and families are central to the Act.

[www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie)

## Diocesan Support Persons

The bishop has appointed a male and a female support person to accompany a complainant if the complainant so wishes. The complainant has the choice of either support person. The support persons receive ongoing training from the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC) for this role.

### Role of Diocesan Support Persons:

- To be available throughout the case management process to the complainant.
- To encourage and support the complainant in getting suitable help.
- To assist in gaining access to information and help.

- To represent the concerns of the complainant during the case management process.
- To assist, where appropriate, with communication between the complainant and the designated liaison person.
- To arrange, where appropriate, a meeting between the complainant and the bishop.
- To consider the wishes of the complainant in regard to a pastoral response by the church to their family.

### Diocesan Support Person is not:

- A counsellor or spiritual guide for the complainant and should not act in that role.

## Diocesan Designated Liaison Persons

The diocesan designated liaison persons (DLP's) are Suzie Duffy and Fr. Séan Mawn. The DLP is appointed by the bishop to receive any complaint of child abuse by church personnel.

### *Role of Diocesan DLP*

- Provide information and advice.
- Receive concerns and complaints of abuse by church personnel.
- Inform the bishop and advisory committee of concerns / complaints.
- Inform the Gardai/PSNI and TUSLA/HSCE and NBSCCC.
- Make appropriate referrals.
- Maintain confidential records.
- To keep the complainant informed.
- To keep the respondent informed.



*Suzie Duffy*



*Fr Séan Mawn*



### **TOWARDS HEALING**

A Catholic Church response to Clerical/Religious abuse

Freephone **1800 303416** (Rep. of Ireland)

Freephone **0800 0963315** (Northern Ireland and UK)

### **Diocesan Safeguarding Children Contacts**

#### **Designated Liaison Persons:**

Suzie Duffy,  
Kilmore Diocesan Pastoral Centre, Cullies, Cavan, Co. Cavan.  
Tel. 049 - 4375004, ext 105.  
Email: [safeguardingchildren@kilmorediocese.ie](mailto:safeguardingchildren@kilmorediocese.ie)  
Website: [www.kilmorediocese.ie](http://www.kilmorediocese.ie)

Fr Séan Mawn,  
Convent Road, Ballinamore, Co. Leitrim.  
Tel. 071 - 9644039.

All other diocesan contacts visit: [www.kilmorediocese.ie](http://www.kilmorediocese.ie)

**National Office for Safeguarding Children**  
New House, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.  
Tel. 01 - 5053124.  
[www.safeguarding.ie](http://www.safeguarding.ie)



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