



Safeguarding Development Newsletter

(Sept. 2017 - Issue 3)



Safeguarding Practices

A variety of questions presented to the Safeguarding Office over the past while and the answers of clarification provided in return are contained in this issue. Hopefully, the variety of topics will offer some understanding of good practice and possibly stimulate other questions.

All answers can be backed-up by templates and resources available at www.safeguarding.ie

The complete set of guidance and resources (hard copy) distributed to Local Safeguarding Groups (LSGs) who attended the Safeguarding Network (1 April) illustrates the range of templates and advice notes available.

LSGs are primarily focused on Standards 1, 5, 6 & 7 but a lot of the group's work will be directed towards Standard 1 – 'Creating & Maintaining Safe Environments', though not exclusively. Each answer given is supported by reference to the relevant Standard (e.g. S.1.1A. Safe Recruitment Procedures).

1. Vetting

I have already been vetted by two organisations and now want to volunteer for a third. Do I have to be vetted again?

Answer: Yes, it is up to the host organisation to process a vetting application for you as 'vetting clearance' under the National Vetting Bureau legislation remains organisation specific. You will be invited to complete the NVB e-Vetting Form on-line, though the first step requires a physical signature. See 1.1B.



OSA Policy

That all Friars in ministry be vetted, and re-vetted every four years, along with the following categories of voluntary and staff roles active within the local church/parish and related ministries: Children's Liturgies & Youth Folk Choirs; Parish Sister(s); Visiting Baptism Team, Bereavement Team & Eucharistic Ministers; Sacristan & Co-ordinator(s) of Altar Servers and Local Safeguarding Reps. Provincial Council (July 2016).

2. Photographing Children

Do we need parental consent for taking photographs of children or young people?

Answer: Yes, particularly if the images are going to be displayed publically (e.g. Facebook; Newsletter; Poster). *And in relation to a Webcam being present in Church – Do we have any special responsibilities?*



Church goers should be alerted to its existence by way of strategically placed notices and occasionally referenced in your Church Newsletter. Not to do so is to breach an individual's personal data rights. Those who by virtue of their ministry, paid or volunteer role, appear regularly on webcam need to give individual consent for their images to be broadcast. This will include parental consent for Altar Servicers. See S. 1.9B, C, D & E.

3. LSG Contact Details

Besides the Summary Policy Statement being displayed with relevant contact details (i.e. DLP, Gardaí & Tusla), should the names of the Local Safeguarding Group and a means of contacting them be displayed in the local church?

Answer: Yes. This will enable a parent or member of the congregation to raise a question and/or a suggestion about how practice is or could be undertaken, or to congratulate you on the good work!



The recently completed *Local Safeguarding Audits* confirm that 6 of nine church locations are correctly displaying such information. Perhaps, once a year the *Church Newsletter* could profile the LSG members including group photo & contact details. See S.6.2A.

4. Sacristy Sign-in/Out

The Sacristan or a Eucharistic Minister could find themselves moving in and out of the Sacristy throughout the course of the morning: Is there a need for them to sign in and out each time?

Answer: No. Once is sufficient to note the time of first arriving and then on finally leaving. Should s/he return later in the evening, for instance, that will require a new sign-in & out to be completed.



Remember also that visiting clergy should be asked to show a valid and

current *Celebret* before being allowed to vest and celebrate mass. Having a notice to that effect prominently displayed within the Sacristy will hopefully help to raise awareness and alert individual priests to volunteer before being asked. See S.1.1C & 1.4A(2).

5. Volunteering

If a new 'volunteer' comes forward what information about the person should be gathered?

At a minimum you should request the person's name, address, contact details, the particular ministry that is of interest to them; previous involvements, experience and/or training completed, along with the names of two referees (not family or relatives). They should be made aware of the need to undertake



training, vetting if working directly with children and sign-up to the OSA 'Adult Code of Behaviour' (when available later in the year). All such personal information should be kept in a secure filing cabinet and only accessible to the Prior/P.P & the Leader in Charge of the specific ministry area. In some cases, the Local Safeguarding Representatives may assist in

recruiting suitable personnel for such work and therefore would have sight of such documentation.

It is good practice for the Prior/P.P. and another Church representative to meet the person seeking to become involved, for references to be sought before a final decision is made and the outcome communicated to the applicant.

The whole area of 'recruiting, selecting & supporting volunteers' would be worthy of a specific workshop and back-up resource documents – all flagged as part of the *Safeguarding & Child Protection Development Plan '17 – '19*. See S.1.1A.

5. Proposed 'Mandated Persons'

Is there any update on the proposed 'Mandated Persons' element of Children First 2015? And what I do in the meantime if a concern or allegation is disclosed to me?

Towards the end of 2017 it is anticipated that 'Mandatory Reporting' under Children First Act 2015 will become law. This means that 'Mandated Persons' as specified in the Act will be required to report allegations of child abuse, suspicions & concerns to Tusla.

Amongst those identified as 'Mandated Persons' are "a member of the clergy (howsoever described) or pastoral care worker (howsoever described) of a church or religious community" & "a safeguarding or child protection officer".

The National Board for Safeguarding Children has agreed with the Minister for Children and Tusla personnel that any 'Mandated Person' within the Catholic Church should make the notification  to the civil authorities jointly with the DLP. Until then all allegations or concerns must be processed through the DLP.

Once the legislation is enacted Standard 2 will be amended accordingly and further updates provided to all LSGs.

Feedback or Queries Welcome

Contact Tony Murphy
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the Provincial directly.

Many thanks.