Archdiocese of Dublin

CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

1. ARCHDIOCESE OF DUBLIN

The Archdiocese of Dublin, as a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland, 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. The Archdiocese recognises each child as a gift from God, and values and encourages the participation of children in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development. All diocesan 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.

The Archdiocese of Dublin is the largest Diocese in Ireland compromising of 197 parishes across the counties of Dublin, Wicklow, Kildare, Laois, Wexford and Carlow. Through our parishes and agencies, we engage with children in a variety of ways for the purposes of religious instruction. Activities which involve children include attendance at Church Services; Sacramental Preparation; Participation in ministries such as altar service, family mass groups and choirs; Participation in youth groups; Participation in retreats and pilgrimages.

2. OUR PRINCIPLES TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN FROM HARM

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- The best interests of children attending Diocesan Churches, Parishes and activities are paramount.
- All children, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, ability, race or ethnicity, will be safeguarded by providing a safe, child-centred environment.
- Children have a right to dignity and respect.
- Children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously.
- Parents/carers have the right to be consulted and involved in matters concerning their children. We require parental/guardian consent for the involvement of children in Church activities.
- The *Child Safeguarding in the Archdiocese of Dublin: Policies, Procedures and Good Practice Guidelines 2023 and Diocesan Safeguarding Strategy (2023-26)*, fully reflect the provisions of the Children First Act 2015 and the best practice outlined in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017).

3. RISK ASSESSMENT

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child attending Churches or participating in any parish or diocesan agency activity. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and a list of the procedures for managing those risks is summarised below:

RISK IDENTIFIED	POLICIES/PROCEDURES IN PLACE TO MANAGE RISK IDENTIFIED
Risk of harm* to a child from Clergy, Church personnel, member of staff, or volunteer.	• Safe selection and recruitment procedures, including Garda Vetting. • Child Safeguarding Training. • Procedure for recognising, recording and reporting child safeguarding concerns. • Procedure for dealing with allegations of abused against staff & volunteers. (*Child Safeguarding in the Archdiocese of Dublin: Polices, Procedures and Good Practice Guidelines 2023*) • Procedure for dealing with allegations of abuse against Clerics (*Procedure for dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Clerics, 2019*).
Risk of harm* to a child by a visitor to a Church, Parish or Diocesan Agency (e.g. parishioner, member of the public, 3rd party worker).	• For visiting Clerics or Religious they must have a celebret or letter of 'good standing'. • Codes of Conduct as per *Child Safeguarding in the Archdiocese of Dublin: Policies, Procedures and Good Practice Guidelines 2023.* • Child Safeguarding representatives appointed in each parish. • Visiting groups must confirm they have a Child Safeguarding Statement.
Risk of harm* to a child or young person from another child or young person.	• Anti-Bullying Guidelines. • Personnel/volunteers must ensure adequate supervision and ratios in place. • Codes of Behaviour for Children involved in diocesan activities. • Procedure for recognising, recording and reporting child safeguarding concerns.
Risk of harm* to a child during activities or trips away from home.	• Child Safeguarding Training. • Consent forms from parents/guardians, to include relevant contact details and medical information. • Existing personnel/volunteers must ensure adequate supervision and ratios in place.
Risk of harm*, or reasonable grounds for concern about child abuse, not being recognised or reported.	• Procedure for recognising, recording and reporting child safeguarding concerns (including reporting by mandated persons). • Child Safeguarding Training. • Diocesan Safeguarding Strategy (2023-26).
Risk of harm* to a child with access to Information Communications Technology (ICT) while participating in a Diocesan Activity.	• Diocesan Policy on the *Use of IT and Digital Media* (2022). • Codes of Behaviour for Children involved in diocesan activities. • *Child Safeguarding in the Archdiocese of Dublin: Policies, Procedures and Good Practice Guidelines 2023.*

* Harm to a child means: 'assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare, or sexual abuse of the child'

Our full, detailed risk assessment as well as a copy of this statement are available by scanning the QR code or by visiting the CSPS website

4. OUR CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Archdiocese of Dublin promptly reports all concerns that a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected and manages such concerns as they apply to diocesan personnel in accordance with procedures developed in line with the requirements of the: *Children First Act 2015; Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice; Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.*

In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children:

- Procedure for maintaining a list of persons in the Archdiocese of Dublin who are mandated persons
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person for the purposes of the Children First Act 2015.

All policies and procedures mentioned in our Child Safeguarding Statement are available upon request and online at www.csps.dublindiocese.ie.

5. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The Archdiocese of Dublin is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the practices and procedures that support our commitment to keeping children safe from harm while engaged in Church activities in the Diocese. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in July 2025 or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

If you have a concern for a child please contact Andrew Fagan, Director, or Deirdre Donnelly, Safeguarding and Support Officer, Child Safeguarding and Protection Service, Dublin Diocesan Offices, 20-23 Arran Quay, Dublin 7, D07 XK85. Phone: 01 8360314. Email: andrew.fagan@dublindiocese.ie and deirdre.donnelly@dublindiocese.ie (our relevant persons for the purpose of the Children First Act 2015).

+ Dermot Farrell

DERMOT FARRELL, ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN
Service Provider
July 2023
Archdiocese of Dublin, Archbishop's House, Drumcondra, Dublin 9, D09 H4C2

Your local safeguarding representative(s) are:

Margaret Ahearne

TUSLA An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency

Contact details for An Garda Síochána and Tusla Child and Family Agency can be found at www.garda.ie and www.tusla.ie