



# DIOCESE OF DOWN & CONNOR



PARISH INFORMATION SESSION

## **Vicariate Support Team Facilitator's Manual**

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BEST PRACTICE IN SAFEGUARDING AND  
PROTECTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
AND THE ADULTS WHO WORK WITH THEM

Spring 2010

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## The Safeguarding Committee, Diocese of Down and Connor:

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**Fr John McManus**  
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**PSNI EXCHANGE: 0845 600 8000** (non-emergency police number)

**NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000**

**HSC** - telephone numbers of relevant local offices for parishes may be obtained from:

**Northern Trust: 0845 601 2333**  
*(Formerly Homefirst/Causeway)*

**Belfast Trust: 028 9096 0000**  
*(Formerly North and West Belfast HSS Trust and South and East Belfast HSS Trust)*

**South Eastern Trust: 028 9266 9111**  
*(Formerly Down Lisburn Trust and Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust)*

**Southern Trust: 028 3833 4444**  
*(Formerly Craigavon/Banbridge HSS Trust, Armagh/Dungannon HSS Trust, Newry and Mourne HSS Trust)*



## SECTION 1

# Introduction: Use of this Manual

This facilitator's manual has been developed to provide Vicariate Support Team (VST) facilitators with the necessary information and resources to co-deliver the Diocese of Down and Connor Parish Information Sessions within and across parishes as identified by the Child Care Committees in each parish.

It includes background reading material and other resources which are essential for the effective delivery of the Parish Information Session and is intended to be read and used by facilitators in preparation for delivery of the Parish Information Session.

The manual is divided into six sections each outlining key aspects for the effective preparation and delivery of a Parish Information Session.

VST facilitators will receive specific training (Training for Trainers Course) regarding this programme and manual and, once completed, you must only deliver the new Parish Information Session to all staff and volunteers in parishes who are required to attend, and disregard any previous training materials you may have used. This is not a Cascade Model and only those facilitators trained may deliver the materials.

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**NB: It is a requirement that all VST facilitators deliver the Parish Information Session using the same materials across all Diocesan parishes. The Safeguarding Office also recommends that all Parish Information Sessions are delivered by two facilitators. This builds upon the principle of support for one another as well as sharing the work load.**

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This manual also contains the handouts, group exercises and power point presentation slides with accompanying facilitator notes for easy reference, as well as templates of the Evaluation Questionnaire form and Certificate of Attendance for each participant.

## Background: How it all started - A Brief Summary

The development of safeguarding and protecting children and young people policy and procedures in the Diocese of Down and Connor initially began in 2003 when Monsignor McCaughan was given the task of setting up a structure in Down and Connor for managing and addressing child protection issues. Up until that time, the Church in Ireland had experienced a number of high profile allegations of child sexual abuse by clergy and the conference of Irish Bishops had commissioned a number of significant initiatives to focus on the aspect of safeguarding children within the Catholic Church throughout the island of Ireland.

The following is a chronological list of the initiatives taken by the Church:

- 1994** *Irish Catholic Bishops' Advisory Committee on Child Sexual Abuse by Priests and Religious*
- 1996-** *Publication of Child Sexual Abuse: Framework for a Church Response (Green Book)*
- 1997** *National resource group established.*



- 1999 *Bishops' Committee on Child Abuse established under Bishop Eamonn Walsh.*
- 2001 *The Royal College of Surgeons commissioned to carryout research on the impact of clerical sexual abuse on victims, perpetrators, colleagues, parishes and the wider community. The results were published in the "Time to Listen" document in December 2003.*
- 2001 *The Child Protection Office of the Irish Bishops established.*
- 2001 *The Bishops' Committee on Child Protection established under Bishop Walsh which replaced the Bishops' Committee on Child Abuse.*
- 2002 *Nationwide independent audit into the handling of all complaints of child sexual abuse by diocesan priests/religious as far back as 1940.*
- 2002 *Hussey Commission commenced and professional members of the commission drawn from social work, psychology, law, law enforcement and criminology.*
- 2002 *December - Judge Hussey ceases this work as it was being studied within the work of the Minister for Justice, therefore deemed to be duplication of the work.*
- 2003 *Establishment of the The Working Group on Child Protection, chaired by Maureen Lynott, by Bishop's Conference, the Conference of Religious in Ireland (CORI) and the Irish Missionary Union (IMU) to develop a child protection policy document for the Irish Catholic Church.*
- 2003 *Publication of "Time to Listen".*
- 2004 *Bishops' Child Protection Office commences its national Training Initiative to train Child Protection trainers.*
- 2005 *Publication of "Our Children-Our Church: Child Protection Policies and Procedures for the Catholic Church in Ireland (OCOC).*
- 2006 *National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland established (through OCOC) to provide advice in best practice as well as monitoring the safeguarding of children in the Catholic Church.*
- 2009 *Publication of "Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland" in relation to safeguarding children.*

In 2001 the Nolan Report, "A Programme for Action" in England, also made a number of recommendations for the Catholic Church in England and Wales regarding the issue of safeguarding children and pointed to the importance of having a clear structure at parish level for managing this.

Within the Diocese of Down and Connor, work began in 2003 in developing a structure/framework for addressing the issue of Safeguarding children and young people and the Interim Child Protection Policy and Procedures were drawn up to meet the needs of the Diocese. This included the establishment of the Child Care Committees (CCCs) and Vicariate Support Teams (VSTs). The ethos behind the establishment of CCCs was to ensure that Parishes were engaged in the promotion of safe child care practices in all parish-related activities involving children and young people, with a shared responsibility between priests and laity. This was also in keeping with the recommendations from the "Programme for Action" report (Nolan 2001) and "Our Children Our Church", 2005.

The Diocese of Down and Connor has been operating the same structure since 2003 and is compliant with the new "Standards and Guidance" document with regard to the seven key standards required to ensure that children are safeguarded and protected.

## SECTION 2

# Facilitator's Preparations and Planning

In preparing for the delivery of a Parish Information Session the following check list is a useful tool for all VST facilitators to go through to ensure that key tasks are not over looked:

Familiarise yourself with the materials and seek clarity and guidance from the Safeguarding Office Training and Development Consultant if unsure of any aspects.

Prior to the session arrange to meet with your co-facilitator and go through the Co-facilitator Agreement (see Appendix 1) and decide how the session will be delivered and who will do which parts of the presentation. This will help facilitators to reach agreement as to how they may manage difficult questions, potential resistance from participants and any other issues which they might anticipate arising during the session.

Liaise with the Chairs of the CCCs to identify the likely number of attendees and the needs of the audience, for example, the range of roles, the age range of volunteers/staff attending and the size of the audience. This will help to identify how to pitch the session and whether facilitators will need to adjust the group exercise (this is outlined in further detail in sections 3 and 4 of this manual), and also the amount of handouts etc required. Facilitators should always ensure there are enough pens/ pencils and paper for participants to make notes, if they wish to, during the session.

Agree with the CCC Chair the date, venue and time of session and who will take responsibility for booking the venue, photocopying handouts, securing the projector/laptop and informing attendees of the details of the event.

Check also with the CCC Chair if tea/coffee will be available for attendees, who will organise this and at what stage of the session the break will take place. From experience, it may be more manageable to have the break at the end of the session. Often having tea/coffee at the start of a training event can delay the commencement of the session and can be a disruption for the facilitators. If tea/coffee is not being provided it would be important to have a ten minute comfort break approximately half way through the session. This needs to be carefully and assertively managed particularly if the group is large in number.

Make arrangements to collect materials before the event and ensure that access to the venue can take place at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the session.

### **Set up and prepare the venue so as to ensure that:**

- everyone can see the screen
- the projector/laptop are working
- tea/coffee is prepared/organised and,
- There are sufficient seats for the intended number of participants.
- Facilitators are clear about access for disabled participants and location of toilets and fire exits.

Have a Participant Attendance sheet (see Appendix 2) available with a pen for participants to print their name, address, parish and role. A copy of this should be retained for the CCC Chair of the parish or parishes who are attending, a copy for your own record and one for the



Safeguarding Office. This will provide the Safeguarding Office with the necessary information required for its central database.

Arrange, if possible, for the Parish Priest/Curate to open the session with a prayer and a few words, highlighting the importance of the work of safeguarding and thanking individuals for their commitment to the work.

Finally ensure that there are sufficient copies of the Evaluation Questionnaire to distribute (see Appendix 3) to all participants for their comments and ask for them to be completed and left with the facilitators before leaving.

Provide all participants who completed the Parish Information Session with a signed Certificate of Attendance (see Appendix 6). Remind participants to keep their certificate in a safe place for future reference.

## SECTION 3

# Presentation and Facilitator's Notes

### The Diocese of Down and Connor Parish Information Session



Developing Best Practice in  
Safeguarding Children and Young People  
and the Adults who work with them.

The following pages show the powerpoint presentation slide  
and the accompanying facilitator's notes



**WELCOME**

.....

**INTRODUCTIONS**

.....

**CHECKING THINGS OUT**

## Slide 2

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

#### **Welcome**

Thank everyone for attending and welcome them to the venue in question.

#### **Introductions**

Introduce yourself and co-facilitator and explain your role (member of the Vicariate Support Team (VST)) and tell them that you will say more about this later in the session.

Invite participants to introduce themselves briefly stating their: name; role in parish life and how this brings them into contact with children and young people; if they have had any previous training in child protection. (Facilitators should prepare the questions on a flip chart sheet in advance as it often helps the audience to stay focused on what they are saying). Facilitators also need to be aware that some participants may find it uncomfortable speaking in front of other people, so be mindful not to labour this too much. Depending on the size of the audience, it may mean that this exercise can be overlooked, however you should remind participants that they will get a chance to find out who others are throughout the course of the session. This introduction exercise can help participants to get a sense of who is who and the chance to see how the different levels of contact with children in the parish can mean different things to different people. The facilitator should conclude this by thanking the group and expressing the hope that the session will help people to see how and in what way the Diocese of Down and Connor Child Protection Policy is applicable to them and their role.

#### **Checking Things Out**

Check out that participants received the explanatory and invitation letter regarding the Best Practice Parish Information Session. This may be communicated differently from parish to parish ie, some parish CCCs place a notice in their weekly parish bulletin and some CCSs choose to write to individuals informing them of the next Parish information Session.



## **How we will work together during this session**

- Keep children and young people at the centre of our discussions
- Respect the views and opinions of others
- Disclosures
- Nexus Helpline 028 9032 6803
- Time - session will last approximately 2 hours.

## Slide 3

### ***FACILITATOR'S NOTES:***

Facilitator takes the participants through the above suggested ways in which we hope to conduct the session. Take a few moments to go through and briefly explain each point. Invite participants to add to the list if they feel it will be important for the session.

#### **Keeping Children at the Centre of Our work:**

It is important to share with participants the need to keep children and young people at the centre of the discussions as their welfare and protection is the central focus of the session.

The aim is for everyone to understand what best practice is in relation to working with children and young people and to engage in this.

#### **Respecting Views:**

We need to ensure that everyone has a voice. Different views and beliefs about what is good for children exist, and participants need to be open to listening to and respecting different views but also open to challenging them. This needs to be done respectfully.

Whilst the information may be unpleasant or uncomfortable for some people, trainers need to reassure individuals that the session will not include any unpleasant details or images.

#### **Disclosures:**

It is particularly important to refer to the disclosures point. Facilitators should highlight that even within a small group of participants there may be someone present who may have experienced abuse or they know someone who has been. If the session does raise issues for individuals, this would not be the appropriate environment to disclose them but they could approach either of the facilitators at the close of the session who will be able to advise them.

#### **Help line telephone number:**

Remind participants of the telephone number of Nexus explaining the purpose of this service (help and support to Adult survivors of abuse) and that this will be on the handout they will receive at the end of the session. You may also refer to PSNI and Social Services for help and assistance.



## **What the session will cover**

- Introduction
- Church teaching and principles
- Safeguarding structure in the Diocese of Down and Connor
- Code of Conduct
- Defining the problem of child abuse
- Recognising and responding to abuse
- Safe recruitment and selection
- Summary of Best Practice.

## Slide 4

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

The facilitator outlines to the group what will be covered in the session by going through each bullet point.

Allow for questions and/or clarifications at this point, in particular, from those individuals whose work involves close contact with vulnerable adults in the parish. Very often it is difficult for such volunteers to see the relevance of attending a session which is about safeguarding children. It is important that the facilitator puts this in context and explains that it is important that all staff and volunteers who work with children and/or vulnerable adults comply with the best practice guidance and reporting procedures as set out in the Diocese of Down and Connor Child Protection Policy and Procedures document. Facilitators need to be aware that the needs of volunteers working with vulnerable adults should be accommodated and that this should be part of the planning prior to the session. It is important that such information about the participants attending the session (i.e. their roles) is provided to the VST facilitators by the CCC Chair in the parish prior to the event.

If the majority of participants are volunteers who work closely with vulnerable adults, then facilitators, as part of their planning might choose Group Exercise B See Appendix 5, which includes reference to Eucharistic Ministers



## **Statement by Bishop of Down and Connor**

*"As Bishop of Down and Connor Diocese, I wish to thank all those involved both at Diocesan and parish level for their work in implementing the "Best Practice in Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Young People Policy and Procedures". To date, in the Diocese of Down and Connor, 3,282 people are involved directly in ensuring that best practice in safeguarding children is delivered across the Diocese. This document outlines the key elements of best practice in safeguarding children and the structures which are needed to implement Best Practice"*

***Bishop Noel Treanor, March 2010***

## Slide 5

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

The facilitator outlines the statement from Bishop Treanor.

The Diocese of Down and Connor Child Protection Policy and Procedures sets out the focus of best practice in safeguarding children and of the importance of having a clear and robust structure which enables the implementation of best practice.



*Good / safe / best practice should be the basis of all parishes.*



## **Church's Vision and Pastoral Care of children**

*"Acceptance, love, esteem...emotional educational and spiritual concern for every child that comes into this world should always constitute a distinctive, essential characteristic of all Christians..."*

*Pope John Paul II  
The Christian Family in the Modern World 1981*

*"Along with the family, the parish has a key role to play in promoting and protecting the rights of children. This means that within the parish the families, schools and parish organisations/ groups work together in creating a safe and caring community in which children can develop and mature"*

*Pontifical Council for the Family  
The Family and Human Rights 2001*

## Slide 6

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

When we refer to the Church's vision of the pastoral care of children it means we need to see the link between Church teaching on children's rights and how these rights are enshrined in law. There are clear similarities between Church and society with regard to protecting children from harm.

As a Church we can promote children's best interests through sound and safe practice. We are referring to the Church's teaching concerning the pastoral care of children. We will also look at how the Church focuses on protecting and promoting children's rights and how these are upheld in law.

The quotes above are taken from *The Christian Family in the Modern World 1981* and *The Family and Human Rights 2001* and both clearly highlight the fact that the church has fundamental guiding principles which promote the value of children and their place in the church and enhance their welfare.

The Church has a central role in working with parents, with families, schools and other agencies/bodies to protect and promote children's rights.



## **Church's response to the abuse of children**

*"In your continuing efforts to deal effectively with this problem, it is important to establish the truth of what happened in the past, to take whatever steps are necessary to prevent it from occurring again, to ensure that the principles of justice are fully respected...."*

*Pope Benedict XVI  
Ad Limina Address to the Irish Bishops  
Rome, 28 October 2006*

## Slide 7

### FACILITATOR'S NOTES:

The above quote taken from Pope Benedict's Ad Limina Address to the Irish Bishops 2006, reflects very clearly where the Church is in relation to recognising the problems and mistakes of the past and "taking whatever steps are necessary" to protect children and prevent abuse from occurring again.

More recently in his Pastoral letter to the Catholics of Ireland, Pope Benedict XVI (March 2010); he adds; "Only by examining carefully the many elements that gave rise to the present crisis can a clear-sighted diagnosis of its causes be undertaken and effective remedies found..."

He goes on to say... "inadequate procedures for determining the suitability of candidates for the priesthood and the religious life; insufficient human, moral, intellectual and spirit formation in seminaries and novitiates; a tendency in society to favour the clergy and other authority figures; and a misplaced concern for the reputation of the Church and the avoidance of scandal, resulting in the failure to apply canonical penalties and to safeguard the dignity of every person."

This clear message is asking Parishes, Dioceses, Clergy, Laity, Religious, Employees of the Church and Volunteers to work together in partnership with other key agencies to ensure that the Church is a safe place for children and young people.



***We need to acknowledge the hurt and pain that some people have experienced as a result of abuse by members of clergy/Church. There needs to be a willingness on everyone's part to do the right thing and to ensure that this does not happen again. The importance of raising awareness of the safeguarding mechanisms, and consistency in our practice with children and young people, must be emphasised.***



## The Rights of Children

<b>Church Teaching</b>	<b>UN Convention on the rights of the Child UNCRC 1991</b>	<b>Children (NI) Order 1995</b>
The dignity of every human being must be recognised and respected	The Rights of the Convention apply equally to all	Children should not be discriminated against
Parents have the primary responsibility in ensuring the integral development of children	All actions and decisions made by individuals and organisations are based on the best interests of the child	We should always act in the best interests of children
Children.. Offer their own precious contribution to building up the family community	Children have the right to be heard and to say what they think.	The particular views of children and young people must be taken into account when making decisions about them
As a Church we should protect children from harm	Children should be kept safe and given proper care. Any child who has been badly treated must be given help to recover	A child or young person requires special protection, including legal protection

## Slide 8

### **FACILITATOR'S NOTES:**

Facilitators need to highlight the link between Church Teaching, the law and the Rights of children.

Remind participants that the key piece of Legislation here in NI governing children and their families is the Children (NI) Order 1995. The Children Order is grounded on 5 key principles which are:

- The welfare of children is Paramount
- Prevention
- Parental responsibility
- Protection
- Partnership

These are commonly referred to as the 5Ps

The principle we will focus on this session is protection, but there is overlap from the other principles and they need to be understood within the context of parish-related activities.

This slide demonstrates clearly the link and the overlap between the teachings of the Church, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (which the UK signed up to in 1991) and the Children (NI) Order 1995. The facilitator does not need to go through each point on the table, but should select a sample and give some explanation of the meaning, e.g. the bottom 3; Church teaching on the importance of protecting children, clear articles in the UNCRC which call for protection and safety for all children, and the Children Order having the legal framework to ensure the protection of children



***We have to remind ourselves that we are talking about children's right to be safe from harm and the responsibility of the Church to ensure that children do not come to any harm. When Children are safe, the Church is safe - When the Church is a safe place, Children are safe.***

### **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS 3 & 5**



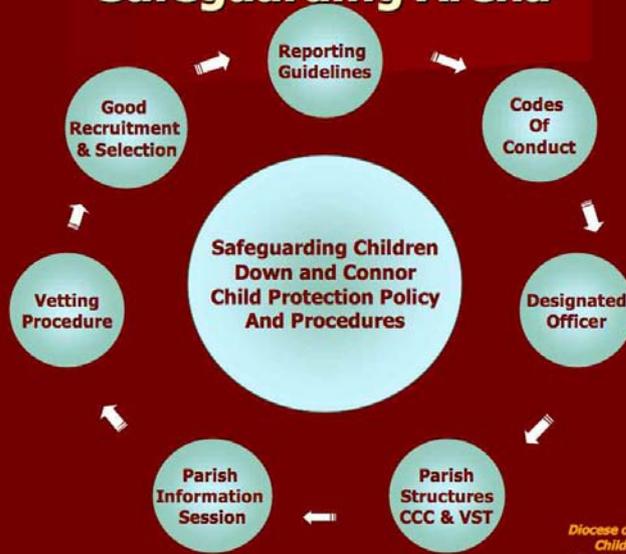
**What do we want to have  
in place in the Diocese of  
Down and Connor?**

## **Slide 9**

***NO FACILITATOR'S NOTES REQUIRED WITH THIS SLIDE***



# Safeguarding Arena



## Slide 10

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

An organisation can create a safe environment by ensuring that all involved in the organisation are aware of what it is trying to achieve in respect of protecting children and vulnerable adults - i.e. what it takes to create an arena of safety. The analogy would be that of a building - constructed by solid supporting pillars - one unsecured pillar creates a dangerous structure, and one which could disintegrate easily as a result of this breakdown.

These are the elements which make up a robust child protection policy - each part having a role to play and understanding what is trying to be achieved.

The reality is that individuals who would wish to target and harm children and vulnerable adults are attracted to occupations which provide opportunities for this to happen.

To prevent and deter such individuals from gaining access, organisations such as the Church, need to send out a clear message to their staff and to others that their culture and ethos is based on the promotion of safety and that they are alert to areas of potential danger for children. The inherent danger is that weaknesses in any part of the arena can create opportunities for others to target and abuse children.

The facilitator explains briefly each pillar and what it means in relation to the policy framework. Particular emphasis is made re the recruitment and selection process and at this point the facilitator explains the need for vetting checks on those who require them. An outline of the process should be made and allow for questions at this stage. In the event that there are a lot of questions, one option is to bank these on a flip chart or note pad and remind the audience that you will return to these at the end. This needs to be followed up at the end of the presentation. Also remind participants that you will return to the issue of recruitment and selection later in the session.



*An organisation interested in ensuring that children and young people are safeguarded, needs to ensure that the pillars in the safeguarding arena are in place and that they are robust.*

### **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6**



## **The Diocesan Safeguarding Structure**

Why do we need a structure?

- Structure is the means by which safeguarding practice can be implemented.
- Structure makes us accountable and provides support to those who work with children and young people in parishes.

## Slide 11

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Explain that you are now going to take everyone through the structure of the Diocesan safeguarding system and show how the structures make us accountable to children/young people and how it supports those who work with them.

The facilitator uses the analogy of the Safeguarding Arena, discussed previously to highlight the structure and reinforce that if things are not in place then we would have a weak structure.



*What does the Diocese of Down and Connor have in place to demonstrate the Safeguarding Arena?*

**NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6**



# Safeguarding structure within the Diocese of Down and Connor



*Diocese of Down and Connor  
Child Protection Policy & Procedure  
Booklet 2008 Pg 6*

## Slide 12

### **FACILITATOR'S NOTES:**

The facilitator briefly explains each component part of the structure and how they interrelate with one another.

It is important to clarify that the Diocese has 12 Vicariate regions and each Vicariate has a group of identified facilitators who deliver the Parish Information Sessions. This links clearly to the CCCs which are present in all parishes (some smaller parishes may be clustered, overseen by one CCC) and whose role it is to audit the work in the parish(es), identify individuals for attendance at the Parish Information Session and ensure that those who require to be vetted are provided with the necessary forms to complete. The CCC Chair is the key person to verify identification of individuals and liaise with the Northern Dioceses Vetting Office regarding the vetting process.

The whole process is overseen by an elected voluntary Safeguarding Committee (comprising of representatives from Social Services, legal and educational sectors and Diocesan clergy). The Director for Safeguarding, the Training and Development Consultant and the Northern Dioceses Vetting Officer report to the Safeguarding Committee and are accountable to them for the strategic planning and implementation of their work.

The Education and Training Sub Group is responsible for the development of training materials and maintaining standards.

The Safeguarding Office consists of the Director for Safeguarding, the Training and Development Consultant and the Northern Dioceses' Vetting Officer



*All of the parts work effectively together to safeguard children and young people from harm. Good communication and understanding between each of the parts is essential for good outcomes for children.*

**NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7**



## **What is a child protection policy?**

A policy outlines what needs to be done to ensure best practice when working with children.

The policy outlines:

- How to behave toward children and young people
- What is meant by abuse and harm
- What to do if you have concerns about a child's safety

## Slide 13

### FACILITATOR'S NOTES:

The Diocese of Down and Connor Child Protection Policy and Procedures (2008) is now the agreed policy for use by all Diocesan parishes and is applicable to all those who engage with children and young people in parish life.

The care and protection of children/young people is the responsibility of the whole Church. The application of the policy and procedures is required by all parishes throughout the Diocese regardless of the nature of the Church "activity" in which children are involved.

The purpose of implementing the one policy for Diocese of Down and Connor is to create a safe and supportive environment for Church staff, volunteers and children and young people who engage in Church related activities and to provide consistency in practice across all parishes.

Show the audience a copy of the document and explain that a full copy is available from their local parish and that a shortened version of the key messages of the policy via an A4 leaflet is on their seats. In particular, draw to the participant's attention the safety checks at the bottom of each page. These explain to participants what each parish needs to do, or have in place, in order to comply with the policy requirements.



*A policy and procedures document for Child Protection is designed to let everyone know what is expected of them in relation to safeguarding children. This new Child Protection Policy is designed to protect not only the children and young people, but also the adults who work with them in parish related activities.*

### NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 1



## **Who does the policy apply to?**

**The policy is applicable to all staff, clergy and  
volunteers who fall within the**

### **THREE STRIKE RULE!**

- Contact with children and young people
- Work not governed by a separate child protection policy
- Work involving children which takes place on parish premises

## Slide 14

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

The facilitator should refer to page 8 of the Policy and Procedures document and outline the criteria for those staff/volunteers who are required to attend the Parish Information Session and to consent to an ACCESS NI check.



*Two important elements to remember for all staff and volunteers whose work involves children and young people:*

- *They must be vetted if they are eligible (you will refer to this later in the session)*
- *They must attend a Parish Information Session*

*Those here tonight meet the 3 strike rule, and therefore must comply with policy requirements.*

### NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 1



## **3 Strike Rule**

If the above applies to you then you must:

- Attend a Parish Information session
- Adhere to Diocesan vetting arrangements
- Comply with the Diocese of Down and Connor policy

## Slide 15

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Refer to page 8 of the Policy and Procedures document and outline the rationale for compliance with the policy.



## **Why do we have Policy and Procedures?**

The Diocese needs to provide guidance to staff, volunteers, and young people about safe practice and the legislative framework which governs it.

## Slide 16

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

It is important to ensure that everyone knows what is expected of them and their responsibilities regarding safeguarding children.



## **Group Exercise**

## Slide 17

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

At this point, if agreed as part of the plan for the session, the facilitator runs Group Exercise A (see Section 4 of the manual and Appendices 4 and 4a for details on how to run this exercise and the resources for it).



## **Code of Conduct - What is it?**

- A code of conduct is not just a list of what you do and don't do with regard to behaviour
- It states the value we place on children
- It reflects the Church's teaching regarding children
- It helps aid understanding between adult and child

## Slide 18

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

What is a code of conduct/practice and why should we have one in place?

The purpose of a code of conduct/practice is similar in some ways to a policy statement i.e., a set of guiding principles and practices which we are all required to sign up to.

It is exactly what it says - an acceptable list of behaviors, practices and expectations for everyone involved.

A good child protection policy ensures that there are codes of conduct to protect everyone's rights - workers and children.

Do not presume that everyone knows the right way to behave towards others, in particular with children and young people. Sometimes we need to be clear and specific and provide guidelines for adults working in different activities with children and young people.

A code of conduct allows everyone to know what is expected of them.

### **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 3**



## **Code of Conduct - Who needs it?**

- It should be widely communicated between adults/staff, young people, children and their parents/carers.
- A copy of the code should be displayed and easily accessed
- A code of conduct protects not only children but also the adults working with them.

## Slide 19

### **FACILITATOR'S NOTES:**

Continue with the slide points above.

Outline that we can have different codes of conduct for different activities.

Point out that there is a generic example of a code of conduct in the Appendix page 20 of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures booklet.

Encourage groups to draw up a Code of Conduct for the children/young people in their activity and also some written expectations for parents i.e., outlining their role in consenting to their child's participation, transporting children and supervising them getting to and from the activity. If a group or activity has not got a code of conduct in place, they can be assisted in this by their local Child Care Committee (ensure participants know who the members of the Child Care Committee are and how to make contact with them)

Drawing up a Code of Conduct specific to that group/activity, helps the group to take ownership of what they do - it is more meaningful and relevant to that group.

Reinforce that good Codes of Conduct can protect children as well as the adults who work with them. It establishes openness and transparency in the working relationship with children and other colleagues.



***Codes of conduct should be:***

- ***Written by the group for the group***
- ***Displayed where everyone can have easy access to it***
- ***Given to parents when they are signing consent forms.***

### **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 3**



***“Here is the dilemma:***  
*How to distinguish between*  
*intrusion and avoidance*

*How to respect privacy and*  
*provide protection*

***There are no simple answers but***  
***two base guidelines:***  
*Know thyself and listen to the children..”*

*Margaret Crompton, 1990*

## Slide 20

### **FACILITATOR'S NOTES:**

Refer to the above quote from social work author Margaret Crompton as the basis for how child protection can be perceived. Margaret and her husband were involved in working therapeutically with a whole range of children who had experienced abuse over the years and in one of her articles she referred to child protection involving a number of key aspects:

The trainer should firstly read through the quote and then begin to dissect it into very clear messages: the first being - Here is the dilemma - child protection issues can present a great many dilemmas, the greatest one often being - What is the best thing to do with this child so as to ensure it is done in his or her best interests?

Very often when children come forward and talk about abuse the process of managing the complaint can take over and the children can often feel isolated from what is going on and it can feel like they are left in the dark as to what is going to happen and when.

Margaret Crompton also talks about the balancing act we need to work through, i.e., distinguishing between sticking our noses into other people's affairs unnecessarily yet at the same time avoiding the situation not seeing it as "our problem... this is something for someone else to sort out!"

The next balancing act is the need to ensure that privacy is respected. We all are entitled to a level of privacy in our lives, including children, and this is highlighted clearly in the UNCRC. So how then do we balance privacy with the need to protect which may mean an infringement of that privacy?

Crompton states "There are no simple answers" and she is correct in this. Child protection is a complex area, filled with dilemmas, balancing needs and rights of children and adults alike, working within a legal framework and dealing with strong sensitive and emotional issues. But from her point of view, there are two guidelines to start from, know thyself and listen to children. What was Margaret referring to here? Know thyself is about paying attention to the way we feel about the circumstances. What are our views and beliefs about what has happened, do we see it as something to be concerned about? This is important because we all see things differently and hold strong values/attitudes about what is ok and not ok for children.

At this point the facilitator asks the audience to imagine that society is represented by a straight line running from the left of the room to the right. At the far left there is a section of people in society who would not consider children to be valued highly and as a result would be disrespectful of children and have no hesitation in physically harming children, slap them about, degrade them and see them as a hindrance to their lives. At the very opposite end of the line there is a section of people in society who would be abhorred by this and would find it unbelievable that anyone could treat any one, let alone children, in this way. This section of society would value children's place in society very highly and would be encouraging, loving and nurturing of children and their development.

In between the two poles of course are a whole range of other views, opinions and beliefs about children. These are formed in a number of ways, through family values, school, religion, personal experiences, peer groups, media and so on. The difficulty of course is that in knowing yourself and knowing the views that you hold, if you are on the line towards the left end, and are someone who sees no big issue in giving a child a boot up the back side or a quick slap as a means of disciplining them, then if you were to witness others doing this, you may not see this as something you need to respond to. Working with other people's children requires us to be aware of our own views and how these can influence how we behave towards children. When it comes to child protection we need to be aware that at times the values and opinions we hold may be influencing our decisions and that the child is always placed at the centre of the process.

Margaret Crompton refers finally to the second guideline: listen to the children. So what did she mean by this? Margaret refers to how easy it is as adults to miss what children are trying to tell us. Very often we only hear what we want to hear. The difficulty is that often children (young) do not have the language to describe how they feel or indeed to outline what is happening to them particularly if they are being harmed. Often children will say nothing through fear or may behave differently or in a way that is unusual for them. Sometimes we pick up on this and sometimes we might miss this completely. When a child dies in N Ireland following an abusive experience, we hold what is called a Case Management Review. The purpose of this is to examine why it happened and to learn from the experience in order to prevent it happening again. Very often there is a column in the report recording the words/voice of the child. Not surprisingly, this part is usually virtually empty or minimal, highlighting how the voice of the child is often not heard nor valued.

This session will therefore focus on a number of these aspects, namely the dilemma's, the balancing of needs, awareness of self in the process and the importance of listening to children.





## **Defining the Problem**

## Slide 21

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Before we can do anything we need to be clear about what we mean by abuse. As we all hold different views and opinions about what is good for children and what is not good for them, the possibility is that we will think about abuse differently also.

Recent definitions of abuse drawn up by the Department of Health and Social Services help by creating a yard stick, as it were, by which to measure abusive behaviour towards children.

Show the next slide here.



## **What do we mean by child abuse?**

We generally refer to 4 categories of abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

## Slide 22

### FACILITATOR'S NOTES:

The facilitator highlights the 4 categories of abuse and emphasises how abuse as a term changes over time. An example here would be behaviour towards children which was acceptable, prior to 1985 here in NI but would not be acceptable to day (corporal punishment in schools).

The facilitator invites participants to share their views: The example refers to corporal punishment. At one time it was considered perfectly acceptable for a teacher to use a cane or strap to physically punish a child as a way of disciplining them. Today this would not be acceptable and is illegal. The definitions therefore of what would be considered physical abuse have changed over time. This is in part related to the evolving nature of society and the research over the last number of decades which has shaped and informed our understanding of human development and needs, particularly in relation to children and young people.

So let's go through the definitions and what they mean.

Things to remember:

- Abuse often falls into one category. Categories tell us very little about the abuse, or the impact of this on the child.
- They are merely a guide for understanding.
- Definitions are there to provide us with an understanding of what is meant by the terms neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.
- They are standardised ie, they are taken from government guidance which is based in law.



*There are some key words within each of the definitions which are important, e.g. persistent; deliberate; actual or likely involvement; significant. These give us the threshold of an act being abusive. It is up to the professional experts to decide if abuse has taken place.*

Facilitator then shows each slide of the category definitions.



## **Physical Abuse**

*Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.*

*Co-operating to Safeguard Children  
DHSS&PS 2003*

## Slide 23

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Allow the audience time to read through the definition.

Highlight the words "deliberate injury" and the "failure to prevent"

"The confinement to a room or cot" should not be confused with naughty stair/chair where the concept of "time out" applies. The confinement refers to the child having no choice but to remain where they are placed, e.g. locked into a room, left in a cot unattended for long periods of time, with no opportunity to develop motor skills etc.



## **Emotional Abuse**

*Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose children to emotional abuse.*

*Co-operating to Safeguard Children  
DHSS&PS 2003*

## Slide 24

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Outline the key words “persistent” and “persistent adverse effects” on a child.

The last sentence “Domestic violence..... may expose children to emotional abuse” was added to the definition in 2003, following on from the wealth of research in this area and of what we now know about the impact of domestic violence on children.



## **Sexual Abuse**

*Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.*

*Co-operating to Safeguard Children  
DHSS&PS 2003*

## Slide 25

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Emphasize the words, "forcing or enticing" and "..physical contact and.... non-contact activities"

The age of consent to sexual activities is now reduced to 16 years in NI in line with the rest of the UK. This has implications in deciding whether abuse has taken place depending on the child/ young person and the adult involved, ie a 17 year old and a 16 year old. From the Children (NI) Order 1995, a child is someone below the age of 18 years.



## **Neglect**

*Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical and/ or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate foods, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non-organic failure to thrive.*

*Co-operating to Safeguard Children  
DHSS&PS 2003*

## Slide 26

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Emphasize the key words; “persistent failure.....” Neglect usually occurs when the child is persistently left unprotected, inadequately fed or clothed and deprived of access to medical care, supervision and stimulation.

Non-organic failure to thrive refers to the medical description of children not meeting their milestones (in terms of health & development) as a result of neglect. Organic failure to thrive would result from a medical condition and needs to be diagnosed as such.

This is consistently the most common category of abuse experienced across all age groups.

Children subject to neglect can be at risk to other forms of abuse.



## **Signs and Indicators of Abuse**

*Indications that a child is being abused may not necessarily be the presence of a severe injury-concerns may become apparent in a number of ways*

## Slide 27

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

The facilitator needs to be careful about reading too much into signs and symptoms - they are there merely to prompt possible concerns - which should be passed on to the right people.

There could well be a clear logical explanation for any sign or symptom.

It is the responsibility of the statutory sector (Social Services/PSNI/NSPCC) to assess the circumstances in order to decide if a child/young person is at risk of harm.

Facilitator may wish to use an example here to highlight how signs and symptoms were picked up or acted upon.



## Indicators

- Bruises or marks on a child
- Remarks made by a child, his parents or friends
- Over hearing conversation by the child, or his parents
- Observing that the child is being scape goated or has a poor relationship with his parents
- Child having sexual knowledge or exhibiting sexualised behaviour which is unusual for his/her age/ level of understanding
- Observation of a child's behaviour and changes in his behaviour
- Indications that the family is under stress and needs support in caring for their children

*NB Signs and symptoms are Indicators and may highlight the need for further investigation and assessment by Social services/PSNI*

## Slide 28

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

The facilitator should go through these briefly outlining what each could mean.

In many cases there are no outward physical signs, but changes in children's behavior can trigger cause for concern.

Again, as with physical signs, there needs to be a full assessment of all of the factors concerning the child/young person. This is the responsibility of Social Services/PSNI.

This is not an exhaustive list and remember, if you are concerned in any way about a child's safety, pass it on!



## **Some facts about abuse**

- Children are most likely to be abused by someone they know and trust
- Child abuse occurs in all sections of society and across all age groups and genders
- It is not only men who abuse, women and other children abuse – you cannot tell abusers by appearances
- Most abuse goes unrecognised and therefore unreported
- A child is never to be blamed for the abuse
- Children rarely make false allegations and often deny abuse has occurred and retract allegations.
- Children with a disability are 3.6 times more likely to be abused than children who are not disabled

## Slide 29

### **FACILITATOR'S NOTES:**

The above points are just a few examples (based on NSPCC research and statistics) of what we know about child abuse.

The information above is there to highlight the context and understanding of child abuse and the key facts which staff and volunteers should be aware of.

Go through the points allowing for questions or clarification.



***Child abuse is an extremely complex subject.  
Understanding what has happened to a child demands a thorough assessment by a number of qualified professionals.***



## **Children with a Disability**

*In recognising child abuse all staff and volunteers should be aware that children who are disabled can be particularly vulnerable to abuse. They may need a high degree of physical care, they may have less access to protection and there may be a reluctance on the part of professionals to consider the possibility of abuse.*

## Slide 30

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Reference should be made to abuse of children who are disabled. Research indicates that children who are disabled are 3.6 times more likely to be abused than children who are not disabled. (Sullivan and Knutson, 2000)

It is important to highlight some of the factors which make disabled children more vulnerable to abuse:

- They may need an intense degree of physical/personal care
- They may have communication difficulties and therefore less access to protection
- They may be more compliant to adults and therefore more susceptible
- They may not have the assertiveness required to say when they feel uncomfortable about how they are being treated.
- There may be a reluctance on the part of professionals to even consider the possibility of abuse.



## **Recognition of abuse of children who are disabled**

Recognition of abuse can be difficult in that:

- Signs may be confusing
- Child may not recognise behaviour as abusive
- Child may have problems with communication and unable to disclose abuse
- There may be a dependency on several adults for intimate care
- There may be a reluctance to accept that children who are disabled may be abused.

## Slide 31

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Recognizing possible abuse of children who are disabled may be difficult for the reasons outlined on the slide.

Go through each point above providing examples if you can. This helps the audience to understand each point and therefore more able to apply it to their role and function in the parish.



## Recognising Abuse

The ability to recognise child abuse depends as much on a person's willingness to accept responsibility of its existence as it does on knowledge and information.

### Three stages of recognition:

-  Consider the possibility
-  Observe the grounds for concern
-  Record the grounds

*Remember your role is to pass on any concerns you might have.  
It's up to the experts to investigate this and make the necessary decisions.*

## Slide 32

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

It is important for participants to understand that it is:

- Not their job to go looking for abuse of children
- Not their job to investigate concerns that they might have.

It is their role, however, to keep an “open mind” and to pass on, to the right people, any concerns which they may have about a child’s safety and welfare.

Child abuse is a difficult subject and it can make us feel very uncomfortable. As such, there is a real danger that we close our minds to it’s existence and consequently do not pass on any worries, or gut feelings or concerns.



*Pass on your concerns - don't do nothing!*

### **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 2**



## **Allegations and Suspicions of Abuse**

- An allegation of abuse is something that is direct, specific and supported by some type of evidence
- A suspicion of abuse is something that is less direct or specific, but still concerning
- In either case this needs to be shared with someone.

## Slide 33

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Sometimes it is very difficult to clarify what we mean by our concerns and worries about particular children.

People use different terms to describe these.

The slide refers to the distinction between an allegation and a suspicion.

The most important message, however, is the last bullet point - a problem remains a problem and still needs to be passed on/shared with the key people.



*If you have a concern or worry about a child, share it with someone  
Know who to contact  
Do not worry if you are unsure - just check it out.*

### NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 2



## **How abuse may come to your attention?**

- A child or adult tells you directly and names the person responsible
- A child or adult tells you directly, but does wish to name any one involved
- A child or adult tells you that they have been abused but the alleged perpetrator has died/moved away.
- Third party information
- A child may tell you in an indirect manner.
- You may observe an adult behaving in a way towards a child which concerns you
- Information may come to your attention about an adults' inappropriate behaviour towards children through Whistle blowing.

## Slide 34

### FACILITATOR'S NOTES:

This slide highlights just some of the ways in which a volunteer/employee may become aware of a concern.

The real danger lies in adults waiting for a child to tell them directly or confide in them.



*Participants should be aware of three things:*

- 1. It is rare for children to be direct about worries and concerns, particularly around abuse.*
- 2. It is difficult for children to talk about abuse - they are often frightened, confused, traumatised and may feel that they will not be believed.*
- 3. Always, always, always share your concern about a child - pass it on.*

### NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 4



## Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse

### Do

- Stay calm
- Listen
- Believe
- Reassure
- Record in writing
- Report the incident

### Do not

- Panic
- Promise to keep secrets
- Ask leading questions
- Make the child repeat
- Delay
- Start to investigate

## Slide 35

### ***FACILITATOR'S NOTES:***

If a child/young person does share with you their worries or concerns this slide highlights some best practice things to consider.

Go through each one and explain what each step entails.

The message needs to be reinforced that - "the one thing you must not do, is do nothing!"



*If you have an immediate concern about a child's safety you should report immediately. Concerns which are not immediately worrying should be shared within 24hrs with the appropriate source.*

### **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 2**



## **The 4 Rs**

- Respond to the child
- Reassure the child
- Record
- Report to Designated Officer / PSNI / Social Services

## Slide 36

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

This is not taken directly from the policy document but is a useful mnemonic to aid memory of the procedures when responding to possible allegations/suspicions of abuse.

This is best illustrated using an example and how people should respond.

#### **Respond:**

Let the child/young person/vulnerable adult know that you are taking seriously what is being said

#### **Listen:**

Do not interrupt/interpret or make a value judgement. Ask questions for clarification purpose only.  
No leading questions

#### **Reassure:**

Tell the individual that they have done the right thing in talking about it. You will then need to let them know what you have to do.

- You have a duty to pass the information on
- Tell them who the Designated Officer is and what he/she does
- They will also need to know that at some point the person whom the complaint is about has a right to be informed

#### **Record:**

Let the individual know that you will be making a record of what was disclosed and sharing this with the Designated Officer or Social Services or PSNI

#### **Report:**

Make contact with the Designated Officer/Social Services/PSNI

### **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 2**



## **Diocesan Designated Safeguarding Officer (D.O)**

The D.O will provide advice, guidance and assistance.

Staff/ clergy/ volunteers can contact the D.O for advice / guidance regarding safeguarding issues - it is a free consultative service.

If the concern raised is in regard to the safety of a child, then the D.O will consult with the statutory authorities.

The D.O is the link person between the Diocese and the Statutory Authorities

**The D.O will:**  
Gather information;  
Consult with Social services;  
Make a referral in writing if necessary;  
Record the information;  
Report back.

## **Slide 37**

***NO FACILITATOR'S NOTES REQUIRED WITH THIS SLIDE***



## **Who is the Designated Safeguarding Officer?**

### **The Diocesan Designated Officer is:**

Mrs Barbara McDermott  
'Director for Safeguarding'  
Safeguarding Office  
Good Shepherd Centre  
511 Ormeau Road  
Belfast  
BT 7 3GS

Telephone: 028 90 492798 (W) 07713642855 (M)  
Email: [cpodownconnor@gmail.com](mailto:cpodownconnor@gmail.com)

## Slide 38

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Explain to the audience that the current Diocesan Designated Officer is Barbara McDermott and the details of how to make contact with her are on the slide. The facilitator should also point out that Barbara works 9 to 5pm.

If any one has concerns which come to light outside of these hours and consider them to be an immediate risk to a child, then the options available are to make contact with the out of hours Social Services Gateway Team (the contact number will be on Handout One, Appendix 6) or the PSNI. If the situation is not an immediate concern regarding a child, but concerning none the less, then contact with Designated Officer can be made the next day and within 24 hours. A brief record (using the parish proforma) should then be sent to the Designated Officer outlining as much information as is possible, ie the name of child, address, name of the alleged perpetrator, what was disclosed and contact details. It is important to outline that the Designated Officer will then consult with Social Services/PSNI as to the management of the allegation and what needs to happen next.

### **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 2**



## What to do if you have a concern

- *What should be reported?*
  - *Who should it be reported to?*
  - *When should it be reported?*
  - *Why should you report it?*
- *The facts - The concerns- something heard, seen or disclosed*
  - *The Designated Officer. You may wish to go directly to Social services/ PSNI*
  - *As soon as possible-within 24 hours*
  - *To enable those with the statutory responsibility to take appropriate action*

## Slide 39

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

This slide outlines the procedure for reporting concerns.

Go through each point and briefly explain the What, Who, When and Why involved in the reporting of concerns about a child's safety and well being.

### **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 2**



## **Group Exercise**

## Slide 40

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

At this point, if applicable, the facilitators should run group Exercise B (see Section 4 of the manual and Appendices 5 and 5a for the information and resources regarding running this exercise).



## **Safe Recruitment and Selection of Staff / Volunteers**

- While the vast majority of adults working with children are suitable and well motivated, safe recruitment and selection procedures will help screen out those who are not.
- Diocese is responsible for applying the same selection process for everyone wishing to work with children and young people in our parishes.

# Slide 41

## FACILITATOR'S NOTES:

Remind participants of the earlier slide and the pillars in the arena of safety. At this stage you are going to examine the recruitment and selection of staff/volunteers in parishes, one of the pillars in the arena of safety.

The above slide highlights the change in the approach of the Diocese in deciding who, and how individuals, become involved in working with children in parishes. The Diocese also needs to ensure that the same selection processes apply for everyone wishing to work with children and young people.



1. *Safe Recruitment - Safe Children - Safe Staff/Volunteers*
2. *A legislative requirement (Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2008) - It's not just a good idea!*
3. *The Child Care Committee will advise as to who needs to be vetted - i.e. if their role provides any of the following:*
  - *Teaching, training or instruction of children or vulnerable adults*
  - *Care for or supervision of children or vulnerable adults*
  - *Any form of advice or guidance to children or assistance to vulnerable adults*
  - *Direct supervision or management of staff and volunteers working to 1,2 and 3*
4. *You cannot take up a new post working with children and young people until the vetting check has been completed.*

## NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 3



## **Key Elements of Safe Recruitment:**

Everyone working, or in contact with children in parish life must:

- Complete an application form
- Be provided with a job description/code of conduct
- Attend for an interview
- Provide two referees (not family members)
- Confirm their identification
- Consent to a criminal records check - Access NI
- Attend a Parish Information Session

## Slide 42

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Go through each point on the slide, explaining the process (as outlined in the new Best Practice in Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Volunteers in Parishes booklet). This will have been distributed to all CCC Chairs from December 2009 and will be formally used from January 2010. (If CCC members are in attendance the facilitator may invite the CCC member to say a little about this if they wish to.)

It is important here to focus on the vetting procedures and the decision made as to whether an individual post requires vetting or not. For clear advice direct participants to their CCC Chair or to make direct contact with Andy Thomson, Vetting Officer for the Northern Dioceses, Vetting Office, Good Shepherd Centre. His contact number is: 028 9049 2783 or mobile: 07825017211. Alternatively Andy can be contacted by emailing [vetting@btinternet.com](mailto:vetting@btinternet.com)

The final point on the slide refers to the attendance at the Parish Information Session. This is an important forum in helping to clarify the information by providing participants with the opportunity to ask questions and to learn from the experience of others.

### **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARD 3**



## **Summary of Best Practice for safeguarding**

The Diocese should have in place:

- CCCs and VSTs
- Good recruitment and selection processes
- Designated Officer
- Reporting guidelines
- Parish Information Sessions
- Code of conduct for each group in parishes

## Slide 43

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

This slide summarizes what the Diocese needs to have in place within each parish in order to ensure compliance with the Diocese of Down and Connor Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Reinforce the need for parishes to ensure that they have a fully functioning CCC not only for dealing with best practice matters but also for insurance purposes. This is the first mention of this in the session and needs to be outlined clearly that the Diocesan insurance arrangements to cover liability and any litigation is based on the fact that a robust Child Protection Policy and Procedures is operating and fully functioning across the diocese within each parish.

Highlight and summarize what best practice means in real terms. Go through each point clarifying what it means for parishes, linking back to earlier messages regarding the Arena of Safety.

### **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6**



**Thank you for your  
co-operation and attention  
have a safe journey home**

For further information and/or advice please check with  
your parish CCC or  
contact Jim Tracey on 028 9049 3518 or 07825 017 612  
or email [jimtraceydownandconnor@gmail.com](mailto:jimtraceydownandconnor@gmail.com)

## Slide 44

### *FACILITATOR'S NOTES:*

Show this slide and thank everyone for their attendance and contributions. Remind participants of the contact details of the Safeguarding Office.



## SECTION 4

# Group Exercises and How to Manage These

The new Parish Information Session includes an option for facilitators to make use of either of two exercises (A or B)

### Exercise A: Attitudes Exercise

### Exercise B: Case Scenarios

#### Exercise A: Attitudes Exercise

is designed to raise awareness of the attitudes we hold when making decisions about how children and young people are treated. It consists of a series of statements 1 to 10, which require the participant to respond by choosing one of three options: Acceptable; Sometimes Acceptable or Not Acceptable (see Exercise A Appendix 4). This exercise would follow slide 16 in the power point presentation. The timing of the exercise, again depending on the size of the audience, should take no more than 25 minutes to complete.

#### How to run the exercise:

The facilitator(s) invites the participants to read through the statements for about 5 minutes and consider the answer that best reflects their opinion. Remind participants that there are no right or wrong answers and that they should try not to deliberate too much over the statement, rather they should aim to respond fairly quickly to each one. Distribute the sheets. (See Appendix 4)

Once this is completed, the facilitator(s) then asks individuals, in pairs, to share with the person next to them their answers paying attention to the similarities and differences in these. **This should take 8 to 10 minutes.**

The facilitator needs to keep to time on this.

The facilitator then invites feedback from participants and the following is a suggested method for doing this:

1. Facilitator poses the question to the whole group -  
"How did the exercise impact on you and your partner?"  
Listen to the comments and summarise these, e.g. "it made you think about things differently", "I was surprised at how similar/differently we felt about the statements", "It felt awkward as I wasn't sure how the other person saw things", "it felt ok, I was comfortable talking about these things"...
2. Check with participants if there were more similarities or differences in their answers.
3. Invite the group to share the statements which were different and check with others their responses also. This is the key part of the exercise and the facilitator needs to be able to draw out the reasons for the choices people make and to enable the group to discuss these. Timing is also important here and the facilitator needs to ensure that people are given sufficient time to speak but also to move the conversation on appropriately. The facilitator should also provide answers as you go through them.



(See Exercise A - answer sheet Appendix 4a). There will not be time to consider all of the statements so only those where there are differences in responses should be considered. **This should take 10minutes.**

4. Thank the group for their contributions and explain that this has been designed to assist thinking about what we mean by Best Practice or a Code of Practice. The facilitator outlines the rationale for a Code of Practice and the important part this plays in any Child Protection Policy and Procedures. (refer to power point slides 18 and 19)

## **Exercise B: Case Scenarios**

is designed to give participants the opportunity to explore scenarios (see Appendix 5) and think through their responses and apply the procedures as outlined in the Policy and Procedures. This exercise would follow slide 39 in the power point presentation. This exercise should take no more than 25 minutes to complete and again facilitators need to manage this carefully to ensure that the exercise does not run over the time.

### **How to run the exercise:**

The facilitator(s) invites the group to take part in a small group exercise which will help to consolidate the learning from the session regarding responding to potential concerns and applying their understanding of the procedures.

Depending on group size, divide the group into smaller groups of 3 or 4.

Distribute the sheets (Exercise B) to each participant.

Ask them individually, without any discussion with others, to read through the scenarios and consider their responses. (The timing of this exercise does not allow for all scenarios to be addressed. Depending on who is attending and the variation in roles, both facilitators should agree, prior to the session, 3 out of the 7 scenarios for the exercise).

**Allow 5 minutes for this part.**

Facilitators then invite each group to discuss each of the 3 scenarios and come to an agreement regarding the questions posed. Inform participants that you will be taking feedback at the end of the session from each group, and therefore each group should identify someone to summarise the answers.

**Allow 10 minutes for this part.**

Once completed, take feedback using the following suggested method:

1. Pose the question to the whole group  
“What impact did the exercise have on you?” This is designed to encourage sharing of how difficult or comfortable it is for some people to share views opinions with strangers. It also allows individuals to say what impact some of the scenarios may have had on them. Facilitator listens and summarises these.
2. Take each scenario and check with each group what they would do. Check for similarities and differences in approach and ensure that the correct procedures are applied in responding to the cases.(See Exercise B suggested answer sheet, Appendix 5a)

3. Allow time for questions and issues to surface. If unsure how to answer, acknowledge specific questions, log them on a sheet and let people know that you will find out and get back to them either through their CCC or the Parish Priest.
4. Conclude the exercise by thanking individuals for their contributions and remind them of the procedures for reporting concerns (power point slide 39).

**Allow 10 minutes for this part of the exercise.**

Which exercise (A or B) you use will depend on the facilitators' judgement of the following aspects:

- The size of the group
- The comfortableness and competence of the facilitators delivering the exercises
- What the facilitators think needs more emphasis and this will be based on the needs of the group.

Whichever exercise both facilitators decide to use it is important to:

- Ensure good time management
- Agree how you both will manage difficult questions and participants who show resistance to engaging with the session and the content. (See Section 2).



## SECTION 5

# Resources

The resources necessary for the delivery of a Parish Information Session include the following:

- An LCD projector and a laptop: These should be available within each Vicariate region. It was agreed that each Vicariate would purchase these items so that they would be available for VST facilitators to use in the delivery of the Parish Information Session. Each VST facilitator should check this with the Vicar Forane (VF) in their region and make arrangements for this. Any difficulties with access to the equipment should be reported to the Training and Development Consultant in the Safeguarding Office. (By telephoning: 02890 493518 or mobile: 07825017612 or via email on jimtraceydownandconnor@gmail.com )
- A hard copy of this manual and a CD Rom which includes the power point presentation. Each Vicariate Support Team will receive two of these manuals once they have completed the mandatory Training for Trainers Course.
- Handout One (see Appendix 6)
- Exercises A or B (see Appendices 4,4a,5 and 5a)
- The Evaluation Questionnaire (see Appendix 3)
- Participant Attendance Sheet (see Appendix 2)
- Co-Facilitators Agreement (see Appendix 1)

The above mentioned resources are contained in the Appendices Section 6 and can be photocopied and used accordingly for the delivery of all Parish Information Sessions.

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**NB: With the exception of the lap top and projector, the above resources are the property of the Diocese of Down and Connor Safeguarding Office and MUST NOT be reproduced, altered or used for any other purposes other than the delivery of Parish Information Sessions. Written permission is required from the Safeguarding Office if an individual or group wishes to reproduce or use these materials for any other purpose.**

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## **SECTION 6**

# **Appendices**

- Appendix 1      Co-Facilitators Agreement**
- Appendix 2      Participant Attendance Sheet**
- Appendix 3      Evaluation Questionnaire**
- Appendix 4      Exercise A - Attitudes Exercise**
- Appendix 4a     Exercise A - Answer Sheet**
- Appendix 5      Exercise B - Case Scenarios**
- Appendix 5a     Exercise B - Answer Sheet**
- Appendix 6      Handout - Summary of Best Practice**
- Appendix 7      Certificate of Attendance**



# **Appendix 1:**

## **Co-Facilitators Agreement**

1. What do we need to know about each other for us to work together?  
(Relevant background, experience, lifestyle)
2. How confident do we feel about each other's knowledge and skills in the subject area?
3. What is my learning style and how does it inform my approach to facilitating?
4. How will we share the workload?
5. How will we manage conflict
  - a) Within the participant group?
  - b) Between us?
6. How and when will we de-brief?
7. Where might we go for additional support/advice?

**Training for Trainers Course**

**Safeguarding Office,  
Diocese of Down and Connor**





# Appendix 3: Evaluation Questionnaire

date:
venue:

We would appreciate it if you would complete the following questions and return to the facilitators at the end of the session.

1. How would you rate your understanding of why you were asked to attend the information session?

Not Clear                       Fairly Clear                       Very Clear

2. Has your understanding of the context of Child Protection and Best Practice for parish life changed as a result of this session?

Reduced                       Remains the same                       Significantly increased

3. Which element of the information session did you find most helpful?

Child Protection Policy and Procedures                       Best Practice   
Other (please specify)  .....

4. Which element did you find least helpful for parish volunteers? (please specify)

.....

5. Do you understand the relevance of this Information Session in regard to the role you currently have / or have applied to do within the parish?

Reduced                       Remains the same                       Increased

6. How might you apply the learning from this Information Session to your current role or the role you have applied to do in the parish?

.....

7. Can you indentify at least two learning points from this Information Session which have influenced how you might relate to children and young people within the parish?

.....

.....

*Please feel free to put any additional comments on the back of this sheet.  
Thank You for taking the time to complete this questionnaire*



## Appendix 4:

# Exercise A - Attitudes Exercise

Choose the answer that best reflects your opinion

1. A 23 year old male choir leader having sexual intercourse with a 15 year old female choir member?  
*Never Acceptable*       *Sometimes Acceptable*       *Acceptable*
2. Over the last number of weeks you have noticed that another volunteer has collected a number of children in his car. You have seen the group get into his car to go home with him. You think there is something odd about the way they are all together.  
*Never Acceptable*       *Sometimes Acceptable*       *Acceptable*
3. You are running an after school club in January which finishes at 5.00pm. One of the 7 year old boys has not been collected by his parents and lives some distance away.  
*Never Acceptable*       *Sometimes Acceptable*       *Acceptable*
4. A volunteer in the local parish disco states he believes in firm discipline to set boundaries and prevent children from being hurt.  
*Never Acceptable*       *Sometimes Acceptable*       *Acceptable*
5. You are a volunteer with an all day summer scheme and a 12 year old regularly turns up without a packed lunch which parents should provide.  
*Never Acceptable*       *Sometimes Acceptable*       *Acceptable*
6. You are planning a residential weekend with a group of children from the local parish youth club, when another staff member approaches you and explains that they thought you should know that one of the 12 year old members wets the bed, the staff member knows this from experience on a previous residential.  
*Never Acceptable*       *Sometimes Acceptable*       *Acceptable*
7. A 10 year old boy/girl is sick on the mini-bus travelling back from an away trip after eating a lot of sweets. The staff member shouts at him/her for the mess he/she has made.  
*Never Acceptable*       *Sometimes Acceptable*       *Acceptable*
8. A parent arriving at the Youth club's theatre production with a group of children with a home video camera and asks you if can they film the event?  
*Never Acceptable*       *Sometimes Acceptable*       *Acceptable*
9. A staff member expressed his delight during a quiz activity by slapping one of his young female club members on the bum.  
*Never Acceptable*       *Sometimes Acceptable*       *Acceptable*
10. Before the activity starts 3 young children run out of the club's tuck shop shouting and laughing that another child 'stinks'. You go into the shop to find a 12 year old crying.  
*Never Acceptable*       *Sometimes Acceptable*       *Acceptable*



## Appendix 4a:

# Exercise A - Attitudes Exercise (answer sheet)

Choose the answer that best reflects your opinion

1. A 23 year old male choir leader having sexual intercourse with a 15 year old female choir member?

*ANSWER: Never acceptable; the adult in question is committing a criminal act and is in contravention of the Code of Conduct and the civil laws.*

2. Over the last number of weeks you have noticed that another volunteer has collected a number of children in his car. You have seen the group get into his car to go home with him. You think there is something odd about the way they are all together.

*ANSWER: The issue here is that of transporting children in your own car. As a matter of best practice, unless it is your role as volunteer driver, then all staff and volunteers should not be transporting children in their car. Issues of insurance, consent from parents for this and the potential for allegations exist. It has to be accepted that there may be situations where staff/volunteers are faced with emergency circumstances and you may need to transport a child(ren) home. Best practice would be to inform the parent/carer by telephone that you are doing so and that they can speak to their child at any time during the journey. Best practice, however, is not to transport children at all. Parents driving other parents children, which is arranged privately, is acceptable, but if parishes are asking parents to do this on behalf of the parish activity then appropriate arrangements need to be put in place and agreements reached about the above aspects.*

3. You are running an after school club in January which finishes at 5.00pm. One of the 7 year old boys has not been collected by his parents and lives some distance away.

*ANSWER: Never Acceptable: Allowing for problems with traffic and natural delays as a consequence is very different to parents making the assumption that it is ok to take their time collecting children. A code of expectation needs to be made out for parents outlining what you need from them. To not do this sends out a message that as a group of staff/volunteers it is ok to work over your time and that you will baby sit for as long as is necessary.*

4. A volunteer in the local parish disco states he believes in firm discipline to set boundaries and prevent children from being hurt.

*ANSWER: The issue here is what is meant by firm discipline. If the volunteer means that there should be firm and clear rules for children to follow so as to ensure health and safety of all concerned then this would be acceptable. If the volunteer is implying that children should be harshly disciplined, put down and humiliated as a means of ensuring that others do not get hurt that would not be acceptable.*

5. You are a volunteer with an all day summer scheme and a 12 year old regularly turns up without a packed lunch which parents should provide.

*ANSWER: Never acceptable. As a group you need to be explicit about what is expected regarding the needs of the children. If your activity is unable to cater for meals/lunch for the children then it is important that parents provide packed lunches. A child arriving regularly without a packed lunch is unacceptable. Communication with parents is important to ascertain if a lunch is being provided (it could be that the child has eaten the lunch on the journey to the scheme or has thrown it away each time). Either way it is about ensuring that the child has an appropriate lunch whilst in the care of the scheme.*



6. You are planning a residential weekend with a group of children from the local parish youth club, when another staff member approaches you and explains that they thought you should know that one of the 12 year old members wets the bed, the staff member knows this from experience on a previous residential.

*ANSWER: Acceptable. This information would be important to know about so as to better plan for the child's needs and prevent potential bullying/ teasing from other children. The leader in charge should make contact with the parent alerting them that they have the information and would value their input as to how the volunteers should manage the situation so as to ensure the child is treated as sensitively as possible and that their stay is unaffected.*

7. A 10 year old boy/girl is sick on the mini-bus travelling back from an away trip after eating a lot of sweets. The staff member shouts at him/her for the mess he/she has made.

*ANSWER: Never acceptable. Although it can be frustrating when children ignore well intentioned advice and suffer the consequences, it would be inappropriate to degrade or put the child down by shouting at him or her. There are alternative ways to respond to this, some of which could involve the child in helping to clear up the mess which has been made at the end of the journey*

8. A parent arriving at the Youth club's theatre production with a group of children with a home video camera and asks you if can they film the event?

*ANSWER: This is a difficult one in that it is not easy to ask a parent to put all cameras away and to not allow them to photograph their children. However, we are aware that photographs of children can be taken and used inappropriately by some adults in a way which can be harmful to them. The world of mobile telephones, computers and the advances of technology has enabled a range of individuals to gain access to children and cause harm. Groups in Parishes need to be clear that any events which result in parents wanting to photograph children, needs to be done so by consent from all involved. Alternatively, the parish could make arrangements to have a bonafide photographer (equipped with identification etc) to take all photographs and provide clear information of what will happen to the photographs, who will have access to them and where they will be stored. Parental consent and consent from older young people is required for the taking of and use of photographs.*

9. A staff member expressed his delight during a quiz activity by slapping one of his young female club members on the bum.

*ANSWER: Never acceptable. Whether the child was a female or a male, it would be inappropriate and unacceptable to slap them on the bum or any part of their body.*

10. Before the activity starts 3 young children run out of the club's tuck shop shouting and laughing that another child 'stinks'. You go into the shop to find a 12 year old crying.

*ANSWER: Never acceptable. We will not always be able to prevent other children behaving in a cruel or insensitive manner towards other children. The issue here is how we respond to this and manage it. It would be important to nip any potential bully type behaviour of one child towards another. The children need to be reminded that their behaviour is unacceptable and in breach of the code of conduct and that one of the consequences may be that they are asked to leave the club. The child who was subject to the potential bullying needs to be listened to and helped to think about how they might treat the bullying behaviour. This needs to be recorded, who was involved, date and who you shared this with. The parents of the children involved need to be informed of the incident.*

## **Appendix 5:**

# **Exercise B - Case Scenarios**

1. During a day trip you become aware of a young girl who is very quiet and seems neglected. You know her family are under a great deal of stress and that in the past there have been a number of incidents of domestic violence.
  - a) *What would you do if you were that member of staff/volunteer?*
  - b) *What does the Diocese expect you to do?*
  - c) *What would be in the best interests of the child in question?*
2. You have invited a well known speaker to talk to your parish youth group. The session goes very well and afterwards many young people want to talk to the speaker. The speaker happily obliges but at the end of the meeting someone sees him talking and laughing with a couple of teenage girls; he then leaves the building with them and offers to drop them home in his car.
  - a) *What would you do if you were that youth leader?*
  - b) *What does the Diocese expect you to do?*
  - c) *What would be in the best interests of the children in question?*
3. You are starting to feel uncomfortable about the relationship developing between a young boy and the leader of the parish youth group. Nothing specific has happened or been said, but you have noticed that the leader seems to give the child special treatment which singles him out from his peers and has once or twice led to them making derogatory comments to the young boy.
  - a) *What would you do if you were that member of staff/volunteer?*
  - b) *What does the Diocese expect you to do?*
  - c) *What would be in the best interests of the child in question?*
4. As a Children's Liturgy volunteer you help out each Sunday with a group of young children during the Mass by reading stories to them. One young female (age 6) points to the picture/photograph book you are reading from and states, "My daddy takes pictures of me with no clothes on"
  - a) *What would you do if you were that volunteer?*
  - b) *What does the Diocese expect you to do?*
  - c) *What would be in the best interests of the child in question?*
5. You wish to sign up as a disco supervisor in the local parish under 14 year disco. After a chat with the disco leader, you are invited to try out on the Friday evening. When you arrive you discover that only 3 other volunteers and the disco leader have turned up. There are approximately 250 children in the hall. The disco leader states that this is not uncommon and that "it generally is a good crowd of children who are no hassle!"
  - a) *What would you do if you were that disco supervisor?*
  - b) *What does the Diocese expect you to do?*
  - c) *What would be in the best interests of the children in question?*



6. Following a meeting of Eucharistic Ministers you agree to visit an elderly woman who lives with her daughter and her four children all under the age of 6 years. When you arrive at the home, one of the children, a boy aged 4 years, answers the door and looks as if he has been crying. When you ask if his mum is in the house he says "My nana is sick!" You ask if his nana could come to the door and you hear a frail adult voice replying "Can you come back another time?" Two of the other children appear beside the little boy and they are crying also.

*a) What would you do if you were that Eucharistic Minister?*

*b) What does the Diocese expect you to do?*

*c) What would be in the best interests of the children in question?*

7. The Choir mistress of your parish has agreed to take a group of children from the choir for a day trip to the seaside and asks some of the parents to assist on the trip. Only one parent and one volunteer (male) is available and as the children are keen to go, the choir mistress presses the remaining parents for their permission to take the children. There are 12 children in total. The parents reluctantly agree. Using the parish mini-bus, the choir mistress, one of the children's fathers and the volunteer head off to the sea side for the day.

*a) What would you do if you were the volunteer?*

*b) What does the Diocese expect you to do?*

*c) What would be in the best interests of the children in question?*

## Appendix 5a:

# Exercise B - Case Scenarios (answer sheet)

1. During a day trip you become aware of a young girl who is very quiet and seems neglected. You know her family are under a great deal of stress and that in the past there have been a number of incidents of domestic violence.
  - a) *What would you do if you were that member of staff/volunteer?*
  - b) *What does the Diocese expect you to do?*
  - c) *What would be in the best interests of the child in question?*

### *Possible answer:*

- a) *Engage the child. Try and ascertain if things are ok with her. Listen to what she might have to say. If the child discloses any information which causes you to be concerned that she may be experiencing harm follow the 4 Rs. Respond, Reassure, Record and Report. You will need to let the child know that you have a duty to report your concerns to the Designated Officer and what might happen as a result.*
  - b) *Follow the guidelines as outlined in the Diocese of Down and Connor Child Protection Policy and Procedures document, ie Share your concerns with the appropriate person.*
  - c) *Keep the welfare of the child at the centre of your response. Recognise that there could be reasons/ explanations other than child protection concerns for the behaviour of the child and not to jump to any conclusions/judgements and not to begin to investigate this as a possible abusive situation.*
- 
2. You have invited a well known speaker to talk to your parish youth group. The session goes very well and afterwards many young people want to talk to the speaker. The speaker happily obliges but at the end of the meeting someone sees him talking and laughing with a couple of teenage girls; he then leaves the building with them and offers to drop them home in his car.
    - a) *What would you do if you were that youth leader?*
    - b) *What does the Diocese expect you to do?*
    - c) *What would be in the best interests of the children in question?*

### *Possible answer:*

- a) *Approach the guest speaker to explain the policy with regard to transporting children in cars (consent from parents etc). The speaker also needs to be aware of the code of conduct that the youth club adheres to and that all adults would be expected to adhere to. The initial invitation to the guest speaker should have consisted of informing the speaker in advance that the parish operates to the Diocese of Down and Connor Child Protection Policy and expects all adults to comply with the Code of Conduct. If the speaker has been informed of this and continues to offer to transport the girls, then this needs to be passed to the Designated Officer as an issue to be addressed.*
- b) *Follow the guidelines outlined in the Policy.*
- c) *Ensuring that the children in question are made aware that they should not accept lifts by adults they are unfamiliar with and to inform the group leader if this happens. Parents also need to inform their children that they need to comply with club rules and expectations.*



3. You are starting to feel uncomfortable about the relationship developing between a young boy and the leader of the parish youth group. Nothing specific has happened or been said, but you have noticed that the leader seems to give the child special treatment which singles him out from his peers and has once or twice led to them making derogatory comments to the young boy.

- a) *What would you do if you were that member of staff/volunteer?*
- b) *What does the Diocese expect you to do?*
- c) *What would be in the best interests of the child in question?*

**Possible answer:**

- a) ***Share your concerns with the Designated Officer for safeguarding. This would include any particular aspects which are causing you concern, in particular the potential bullying of the young boy by others, the individual time given by the leader to the boy and "special treatment" also needs to be clarified.***
- b) ***Follow the guidelines outlined in the Diocese of Down and Connor Child Protection Policy.***
- c) ***Check with the child how he feels about the way in which he is being treated by other children and how he feels about the group leader. Need to monitor the behaviour of others towards the boy and address any potential or actual bullying, as a matter of priority.***

4. As a Children's Liturgy volunteer you help out each Sunday with a group of young children during the Mass by reading stories to them. One young female (age 6) points to the picture/photograph book you are reading from and states, "My daddy takes pictures of me with no clothes on"

- a) *What would you do if you were that volunteer?*
- b) *What does the Diocese expect you to do?*
- c) *What would be in the best interests of the child in question?*

**Possible answer:**

- a) ***Respond to the child by listening and clarifying what she means by photographs with no clothes on. This could be an innocent family behaviour taking snap shot photographs while in the bath, at the swimming pool or holidays. However it could mean that the child is being coerced into taking off her clothes for other inappropriate reasons and she is experiencing harm as a result. It is not your role to decide or judge what is or has been happening but if the child responds by telling you that her father takes photographs all the time and lets other people see them, this would need to be reported to the Designated Officer as a matter of concern. You would need to inform the child that you will be speaking with the Designated Officer and that she was right to tell you about this. Report immediately to the Designated Officer and, if not available, report to the PSNI/Social Services.***
- b) ***Follow guidelines outlined in the Diocese of Down and Connor Child Protection Policy.***
- c) ***Place the welfare of the child at the centre of your actions. Ensure that the child is kept informed of what may happen.***

5. You wish to sign up as a disco supervisor in the local parish under 14s disco. After a chat with the disco leader, you are invited to try out on the Friday evening. When you arrive you discover that only 3 other volunteers and the disco leader have turned up. There are approximately 250 children in the hall. The disco leader states that this is not uncommon and that "it generally is a good crowd of children who are no hassle!"
- a) *What would you do if you were that disco supervisor?*
  - b) *What does the Diocese expect you to do?*
  - c) *What would be in the best interests of the children in question?*

**Possible answer:**

- a) ***Acknowledge that it is disappointing but state that you would not be comfortable supervising such a large number of children and that you understood it was the policy that there needed to be adequate numbers of supervisors in order to proceed. In this situation the leader needs to consider the impact of closing the disco down against the risks involved in keeping it open until parents arrive to collect the children. The needs of the children come first and should be managed accordingly. If the disco leader cannot offer assurance that adequate numbers of supervisors will be available then consideration of postponing the disco until it can, must be given.***
  - b) ***Follow guidelines outlined in the Diocese of Down and Connor Child Protection Policy.***
  - c) ***Place the welfare of the children at the centre of your actions.***
6. Following a meeting of Eucharistic Ministers you agree to visit an elderly woman who lives with her daughter and her four children all under the age of 6 years. When you arrive at the home, one of the children, a boy aged 4 years, answers the door and looks as if he has been crying. When you ask if his mum is in the house he says "My nana is sick!" You ask if his nana could come to the door and you hear a frail adult voice replying "Can you come back another time?" Two of the other children appear beside the little boy and they are crying also.
- a) *What would you do if you were that Eucharistic Minister?*
  - b) *What does the Diocese expect you to do?*
  - c) *What would be in the best interests of the children in question?*

**Possible answer:**

- a) ***The first thing is to try and ascertain if mum is there and, if not, if nana is able to come to the door. You would want to be sure that the children are not left with a frail, or ill grandmother who is unable to supervise the young children appropriately. If this is the case (you have two issues, unattended upset young children and a possible frail vulnerable adult) you might suggest asking the next door neighbour (if suitable) to come and sit with the woman and her grandchildren until their mother/father return. You will need to report this to the PP and/or the Designated Officer outlining any concerns you have. Make a brief record of what you heard/observed.***
- b) ***Follow the guidelines outlined in the Diocese of Down and Connor Child Protection Policy.***
- c) ***To ensure they are properly supervised before leaving and informing the appropriate people about your concerns.***



7. The choir mistress of your parish has agreed to take a group of children from the choir for a day trip to the seaside and asks some of the parents to assist on the trip. Only one parent and one volunteer (male) is available and as the children are keen to go, the choir mistress presses the remaining parents for their permission to take the children. There are 12 children in total. The parents reluctantly agree. Using the parish mini-bus, the choir mistress, one of the children's fathers and the volunteer head off to the sea side for the day.

- a) *What would you do if you were the volunteer?*
- b) *What does the Diocese expect you to do?*
- c) *What would be in the best interests of the children in question?*

***Possible answer:***

- a) ***Share your concerns with the PP and/or the Designated Officer. Issues regarding day trips away or residential trips require specific aspects regarding safeguarding to be in place, ie, insurance cover, risk assessment of the activity, appropriate supervision of children by adults, appropriate and informed consent by parents for their children to attend or take part in a parish related activity***
- b) ***Put their safety and welfare at the centre of any planning of activities and arrange for adequate resources needed to carry this through.***
- c) ***Ensuring adequate supervision of children. If unable to sustain adequate supervision cover then the trip should not proceed (temporarily suspended) until appropriate arrangements can be made.***

## Appendix 6:

# Handout - Summary of Best Practice

The welfare and protection of children and young people is a vital part of parish life and activity. It is fundamentally about building Church and building community. This requires commitment to Best Practice and working from a demonstrably child centred perspective.

Best Practice focuses on two aspects of promoting and protecting children's welfare. The Diocesan Policy and Procedures define these arrangements:

### 1. Keeping children safe by:

- Involving staff and volunteers who by their experience/background are suitable to work with children.
- Recording basic information about children participating in activities, giving information to parents and obtaining their consent.
- Working with defined Codes of Conduct on the dos and don'ts to protect children, staff and volunteers.
- Following guidance in relation to health and safety, transport, residential or away day trips.

### 2. Responding to concerns by:

- Physical abuse      ● Sexual abuse      ● Neglect      ● Emotional abuse
- Reporting any concerns, suspicions or allegations to the Diocesan Designated Officer or Social Services and/or Police.

No-one is required to, or should, investigate concerns, suspicions or allegations - this is the role and responsibility of the statutory agencies. It can be easy to dismiss concerns, particularly if the concern is against someone that is in a strong position of trust. The key messages remain:

- *Pass it on*
- *Seek advice, if necessary (anonymously if you wish), from Diocesan Designated Officer, Social Services, NSPCC*
- *Don't decide to do nothing*

## If in doubt - pass it on

It is important also to be aware of the structures in place for Best Practice in Child Protection.

**Childcare Committees (CCC)** - one in each parish or in some instances for a cluster of parishes. They provide advice, guidance and support to groups of individuals and will arrange for them to attend a Developing Best Practice in Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Young People - Parish Information Session and arrange for the vetting of individuals, if required.

**Vicariate Support Teams (VST)** - one for each Vicariate (group of parishes in a geographical locality) who are trained and tasked with delivering the Parish Information Session and address issues arising on implementation of the Policy and Procedures.



## Diocesan Designated Officer for Safeguarding children and young people and the Safeguarding Committee.

Diocesan Designated Officer

Barbara McDermott

Tel: 028 9049 2798 or mobile: 0771 3642855

Provide advice and guidance on safeguarding children matters.

## What to do?

*It is vital you know what is in the current Diocese of Down and Connor Child Protection Policy and Procedures. (June 2008)*

### What if...?

You have a worry or suspicion about child abuse or an allegation or disclosure is made to you.

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### Action

Report to Social Services or Police **and** inform the Diocesan Designated Officer; Mrs Barbara McDermott

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You are worried or concerned but unclear about what to do.

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Speak to the Diocesan Designated Officer or you can contact Social Services or NSPCC Helpline for advice (anonymously if you wish).

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### How...

Should I respond to a young person who shares concerns or worries with me

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### Action

- Listen
- Accept what is being said
- Do not ask questions
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Explain you need to pass it on
- Jot down what was said

**Then** pass the concern on to:  
Social Services / Police  
and Diocesan Designated Officer

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To keep safe...

- Following Code of Conduct
  - Health and Safety guidance
  - Avail of the Parish Information Session
  - Following Best Practice for transport, trips away, residential.
- 



- Ensure your group has a Code of Conduct for adults and children
  - If unclear, speak to a member of your parish Child Care Committee about what to do
  - Keep appropriate records of children participating
-

**Diocese of Down and Connor Safeguarding Office.**  
Good Shepherd Centre, 511 Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 3GS

Director for Safeguarding: **Mrs Barbara McDermott (M) 07713 642855**  
(Designated Officer)

Training and Development Consultant: **Mr Jim Tracey (M) 07825 017612**

Northern Dioceses' Vetting & Barring Officer: **Mr Andy Thompson (M) 07825 017611**

Safeguarding Office Tel: **028 9049 2798**

Vetting Office Tel: **028 9049 2783**

Safeguarding Email: **cpodownconnor@gmail.com**

Vetting Office Email: **cponorthernvetting@gmail.com**

## **CODE OF BEHAVIOUR**

### **DO**

- *Follow the Diocesan Procedures for Best Practice*
- *Plan activities that involve more than one adult and ensure adequate supervision*
- *Challenge unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour*
- *Give children and young people a say in how activities are run*
- *Treat children with respect, dignity and openness at all times*

### **DO NOT**

- *Have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children and young people*
- *Treat children differently showing favouritism to one over another*
- *Be alone with children or young people other than when you can be seen by others*
- *Do anything for children that they are physically able to do for themselves*

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## **REMEMBER...**

*Share concerns - pass them on*

*Do not investigate or act independently*

*Follow Best Practice and guidance*

*Do not leave yourself vulnerable to suspicions or allegations from others by your action or inaction*

**FOLLOW THE DIOCESE OF DOWN AND CONNOR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES (JUNE 2008), WHICH KEEP CHILDREN SAFE AND KEEP YOU SAFE.**

Nexus Helpline - 028 9032 6803

*Help and support for adult survivors of abuse*



# *Certificate of attendance*

This is to verify that

.....

attended the  
Diocese of Down & Connor  
***Parish Information Session***  
on

.....

*facilitated by*

.....

.....

