



# Reporting Concerns

## DISCLOSURES AND REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT SAFEGUARDING

Any person who has a suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation that a child or an adult at risk has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm, must report the matter to the proper authorities.

The duty to report applies to all – clergy and lay persons – who work with children or adults at risk. There are no exceptions to the duty to report.

Concerns and disclosures about safeguarding are not investigated by the parish, or by any committee or person in the parish. Investigations must be independent and carried out only by those with the legal authority and expertise to do so.

### Responding to a disclosure

A disclosure occurs when a child or adult at risk says that he or she has been, or is being, abused in some way. This could be physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect or bullying.

Indicators giving rise to the concern could be sudden changes in behaviour or physical signs or worrying remarks made by the child or adult at risk or a situation where there is exposure to risk or harm.

You should receive the information disclosed in a non-judgmental way and reassure the individual that they were right to tell you about the matter. Write down the facts of what you have been told and date and sign the document which you should keep confidentially. Do not ask leading questions about the matter and do not promise them secrecy.

### Reporting a concern to the authorities

The report should be made to the PSNI or to the Social Services. Contact details are as follows:

**PSNI:** Phone 101. For an immediate emergency phone 999. **Ask for** The Public Protection Team, Child Protection.

**SOCIAL SERVICES:** Phone 028 9050 7000. Out of Hours phone 028 9504 9999. **Ask for** The Duty Social Worker.

A report may also be made to the Church authority. Contact details are as follows:

**THE DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING OFFICE:** **Ask for** the Designated Liaison Officer, Philip O'Hara during office hours at 028 9049 2798 or mobile 07534 992 124.