

Overview of the Parish Safeguarding Committee

- The Parish Safeguarding Committee's primary role is in ensuring that our parish is a safe and welcoming place for children and adults at risk of harm and a place of encouragement and support for all those working with them.

- The Parish Safeguarding Committee structure has been up and running within the diocese for 15 years and within our parish. This is a structure that we are proud of as it gave all of us an opportunity to become involved in Safeguarding work within our parish.

- Our work is guided by the Policy and Standards set by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

- As a Committee, we have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and we are supported in what we do by the Diocesan Safeguarding Office, who provide advice, support and guidance to us in carrying out our role.

- The St Brigids Parish Safeguarding Committee members are
 - Father O'Donnell (Parish Priest)
 - Sheila McGivern (Chair)
 - Pauline Forker (Secretary)
 - Áine McKeating
 - JP Irvine
 - Mary Murphy
 - Geraldine O'Hare

So what do the Parish Safeguarding Committee do?

- The remit of the Committee is to raise awareness of Safeguarding and to ensure the highest possible standards of practices in creating and maintaining a safe environment for children and adults in our parish.

- The PSC is required to:
 - **Be aware of all activities taking place within the parish** (including those activities which use parish facilities) which need to comply with Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. PSCs ensure that Group Leaders and volunteers involved in activities are vetted and trained in safeguarding best practice and that this training is kept up to date.

 - **Raise awareness** of both Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures within the Parish. Communicate the Safeguarding message regularly in the parish bulletin, newsletter and put in place arrangements for a celebration of 'Safeguarding Sunday' within the parish.

 - Make sure **church activities are provided in a way that children/young people and adults are looked after safely** and protected from abuse. This involves regular liaison with the leaders of the activity, ensuring the required levels of supervision and ratios are being met and safe recruitment and vetting of volunteers involved in parish activities.

- **Publicise contact details** of the relevant civil and diocesan safeguarding personnel widely signposting support available to anyone who has a concern.

 - **Ensure that the Parish complies with legislation** regarding the processing of information (Record retention and disposal). This has had a particular focus with the introduction of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
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- The PSC also has a pivotal role in ensuring that statutory guidance is followed, and best practice is encouraged, in relation to **recruiting volunteers and vetting individuals who carry out a regulated activity as part of their role in the Parish.**

 - Finally, each year we complete an annual safeguarding audit to assist us in reviewing the safeguarding practices within the parish and identify any gaps. We are required to report on this audit to the diocese and this also informs the future work of the Committee.

 - **Summary**

 - Risk to children, young people and adults in our parish is minimised within a culture of safeguarding such as the one we have here in our parish. It is a culture where everyone plays their part in promoting the welfare of children and adults, encouraging their full participation in the life of the parish and in creating

and nurturing a safe environment for children and adults taking part in Church activities.

- **Safeguarding is and should always be a shared responsibility amongst us all**
- Within our parish we are supported in promoting a culture of safeguarding by group leaders, volunteers and parishioners involved in various aspects of parish life.

Thank you for your continued support for the work that we do.

St Brigids Parish Safeguarding Committee