



Safeguarding Report

Diocesan Councils of Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe (June 2024)

Introduction

I am very grateful to have been given the opportunity to serve the Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe in the role of Safeguarding Compliance Officer. It has been a real pleasure to connect (and reconnect) with so many people across the Dioceses over the past few weeks and I look forward to continuing to do so in the years ahead. At this point, I do want to pay tribute to the members of the Diocesan Councils: by setting aside the resources to appoint a Safeguarding Compliance Officer, amid all the other worthy and necessary things which must be funded and supported in a diocese, you have shown by that very act that you value and place a high priority on safeguarding. It's my responsibility to try to live up to that!

Annual online safeguarding returns

The annual online safeguarding return to the RCB for each parish must be submitted by **Friday 28th June**. I have been in touch with the incumbents and priests-in-charge (as well as parish panel members when I have their contact details) to support parishes in making the returns. An online folder of resources has been made available which contains in one place the materials (templates, forms, etc.) which might be needed to complete the returns. I am very grateful to Canon Kevin O'Brien for his assistance in preparing this folder of resources.

Diocesan Adult Safeguarding Panel

The previous Tuam Adult Safeguarding Panel and the Limerick & Killaloe have now been amalgamated to form one TLK panel. The names of those on it are: **Mr. Bill Fennell, Professor Michael Mulqueen, Canon Kevin O'Brien, Ms. Beverley Stafford and Canon Jim Stephens**. The email address to use to raise a concern or share a disclosure related to adult safeguarding is adultsafeguarding@tlk.ie. Adult safeguarding panel notices for display in churches and parish premises are available from Heather, Lorna, or me.

Parish panel training

This autumn, we plan to host five in-person training sessions for parish panel members, delivered by Dr. Niall Moore (Safeguarding Officer for the Republic of Ireland). They will take place on the following dates:

- **Wednesday 18th September**, near Enniscrone, Co. Sligo
- **Thursday 19th September**, near Galway City
- **Wednesday 25th September**, near Killarney, Co. Kerry
- **Thursday 26th September**, near Limerick City
- **Wednesday 2nd October**, near Birr, Co. Offaly

The areas have been chosen with panel members from particular parishes in mind, please note that if one of the other training sessions would suit a panel member better in terms of time or proximity, they

are free to attend that. Please share these details with the panel members for your parishes – if that includes you, please save the dates!

Worker training

Thank you to **Dr. Catherine Emerson** for delivering training for “workers” (clergy, staff, and volunteers) in an innovative online format, and to Lorna and Heather for their help in organising and promoting these training sessions. While we are greatly appreciative to Catherine for her continuing commitment in this regard, it is important that we recruit and train more people who can deliver this training. To do so involves attendance at a “Train the Trainer” course delivered by Dr. Niall Moore. Please get in touch with me using the details below if you would like to express interest in undertaking this role.

Auditing of parishes

Thank you to **Canon Kevin O’Brien and Mr. Bill Fennell** for their coordination of the auditing of parishes up until now. Going forward, I see the reviewing of audits and then supporting parishes as they implement the required actions as being the one of my core ongoing tasks. However, to have audits to review, we need people to act as auditors. We are deeply indebted to those who already do this valuable work, but it would be wonderful to have more, ideally placed around the extent of the Dioceses. Being an auditor is less daunting than it sounds! It could be a pleasant task for someone who is comfortable with administration, as the key job of an auditor is to visit the parishes you have been assigned, meeting people, viewing the premises, and working through a given audit form with the parish panel. Please get in touch with me if you are interested in exploring whether this role might be for you.

Revised child safeguarding policy

A revised child safeguarding policy for the Church of Ireland is currently in preparation at a national level. On Tuesday 4th June, Heather, Lorna, and I attended a Zoom meeting of Diocesan Secretaries/Administrators and Safeguarding Officers with David Ritchie (CEO of the RCB) and the two Safeguarding Officers to hear about the progress on this. The main thing to note is that not much will change in terms of the day-to-day business of compliance. Anything that is different will be a bridge which we will all cross together!

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