



TRAINING AND SUPPORT MATERIALS FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN  
IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND


# Archdiocese of Cashel & Emly

Trainers:  
Fr. Tom Hearne & Cleo Yates



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR  
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN  
IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND

# Moment of Reflection



**“SAFEGUARDING THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS IS THE  
MOST NOBLE AND BEAUTIFUL END OF A HUMAN  
BEING.”**

**KHALIL GIBRAN**

© Lifehack Quotes



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# Group Contract



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR  
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## Layout of the day

10:30 – 11:30	Introduction –Tom Session 1. Working safely with children-Cleo
11:30 – 11:45	Break
11:45 – 13:00	Session 2-Why do we safeguard-Tom Session 3-Recognising, Reporting and Recording-Cleo
13:00 – 13:45	Lunch
13:45 – 15:30	Case Scenarios –Tom & Cleo



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# Introductions!

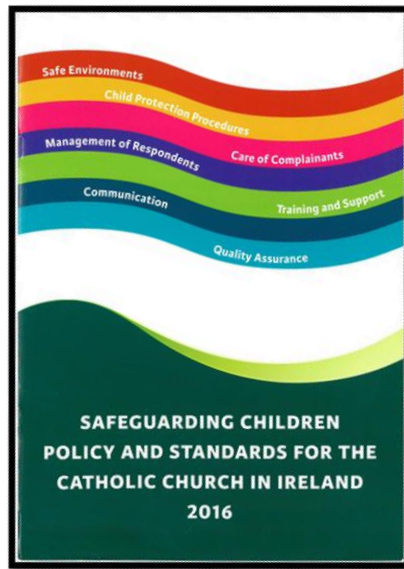
1. Name
2. Parish
3. Role



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## National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland

- Est 2006
- Advice and support
- Policy, procedures and practice
- Monitoring practice

## One National Policy

- Published 2016



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# Safeguarding Children Policy for the Catholic Church in Ireland

As a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland we recognise and uphold the dignity and rights of all children and are committed to ensuring their safety and wellbeing, and will work in partnership with parents/guardians to do this. We recognise each child as a gift from God, and we value and encourage the participation of children in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development

All Church personnel (including clergy, religious, staff and volunteers) have a responsibility to safeguard children through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment which supports their best interests and prevents abuse



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# Session One



## Working Safely with Children





# Preventing Harm to Children

**Church bodies provide an environment for children that is welcoming, nurturing and safe. This may include:**

- Safe recruitment and vetting practice
- Appropriate Codes of Behaviour for adults/children
- Safe environments and activities for all children
- Safe use of Church property by external groups
- Whistleblowing and complaints
- Hazard assessment
- Safe use of IT
- Ensuring priests/religious who minister in external organisations understand their child safeguarding responsibilities

# Safeguarding Checklists

## ✓ Checklist for persons supervising children

- Vetting approval (renew every 5 years)
- Receive copy of Summary Safeguarding Policy Leaflet
- Read and sign Volunteer Agreement form and Code of Behaviour for Adults
- Attend full day or information Sessions (renew every 3 years)



## ✓ Checklist for Sacristans

- Complete Volunteer Application Form / Employee Application Form
- Vetting approval (renew every 5 years)
- Receive Copy of Safeguarding Policy Summary Leaflet
- Read and sign the Code of Behaviour for Adults
- Attend full-day Safeguarding Training (renew every 3 years)



- ❖ Groups working with children must assign at least one adult who has overall **responsibility for safeguarding**; and this person must complete **volunteer / employee application form** and **attend safeguarding training**.



# Safeguarding Checklists

## ✓ Checklist for safeguarding representatives

- Complete Volunteer Application Form
- Vetting approval (renew every 5 years)
- Have access to a copy of the Safeguarding Policy
- Read and sign Code of Behavior Adults Working with Children Form
- Attend full-day Safeguarding Training (renew every 3 years)

## ✓ Checklist for parents / guardians

- Receive copy of Summary Safeguarding Policy Leaflet and Child friendly leaflets
- Complete Child and Guardian Joint Consent Form
- Child and parent to read and sign Code of Behaviour for Children form

# Safeguarding Checklists

## ✓ Priests and Deacons in full-time ministry

- Valid celebret
- Vetting approval (renew every 5 years)
- Safeguarding Training (renew every 3 years)
- Read and Sign Code of Behaviour for adults.

## ✓ Active retired Priests

- Valid celebret
- Vetting approval (renew every 5 years)
- Safeguarding Training (renew every 3 years)
- Read and sign Code of Behaviour for Adults

**Can assist the Priest of the Parish with any parish duties**

**Only occasionally concelebrate at Masses**

## ✓ Fully retired Priests

- Valid Celebret
- Vetting approval (renew every 5 years)

# WHAT FORMS–FOR WHO?

## **Altar Servers / Children who attend Parish Groups.**

- ▶ 1.4A. Parental Consent Form (to be signed) or the Altar Server Form (which ever you wish to use)
- ▶ Code of Behavior for children (to be signed)
- ▶ Concise policy leaflet
- ▶ Leaflet for Parent
- ▶ Child friendly leaflet
- ▶ (Register needs to be kept for all groups.)

# WHAT FORMS–FOR WHO. Cont

- ▶ **Volunteers / leaders working with children.**
- ▶ Garda vetting (valid for 5 years)
- ▶ 1.1A. Volunteer application form
- ▶ 1.2A. Code of Behavior for Adults
- ▶ Concise policy leaflet
  
- ▶ **Eucharistic Ministers.**
- ▶ 5.1A. Signed agreement form
- ▶ Garda Vetting (valid for 5 years)
- ▶ Concise policy leaflet



# WHAT FORMS–FOR WHO. Cont

## **All other Parish Personal.**

- ▶ 5.1A. Signed agreement form
- ▶ Concise policy leaflet

# Role of Parish Safeguarding Rep

The **Parish Priest** has **overall responsible** for ensuring that effective safeguarding procedures are in place.

The role of the Parish Safeguarding Representative is to **support** the Parish Priest with this work.

1. Check that all adults who supervise children are:

- Vetted (every 5 years)
- Attended safeguarding training (every 3 years)
- Completed relevant forms:
  - Volunteer Application Form / Employee Application Form
  - Agreement Form for Adult working with Children

2. Have access to where this information is stored.

3. Conduct an annual check of this information to ensure it is up-to-date.

4. Inform Parish Priest / Secretary if person needs to renew vetting / training.

5. Parish Priest / Secretary / Rep / can inform person about renewals.

6. Ensure that the current policy posters are displayed in the churches.

7. Be informed about safeguarding practice in the parish, for example, in sacristy with altar servers.

8. Meet and assist the Parish Priest once a year (October) to complete the Parish Audit.



# Session Two

**Why do we Safeguard?**



# Why do we Safeguard?

## The Gospel

Safeguarding children is a practical living out of the baptismal vocation of every member of the Church to ensure the safety and well-being of those 'little ones' whom the Lord sets before us as those to whom the 'Kingdom of God belongs'

(Mt 19:14)

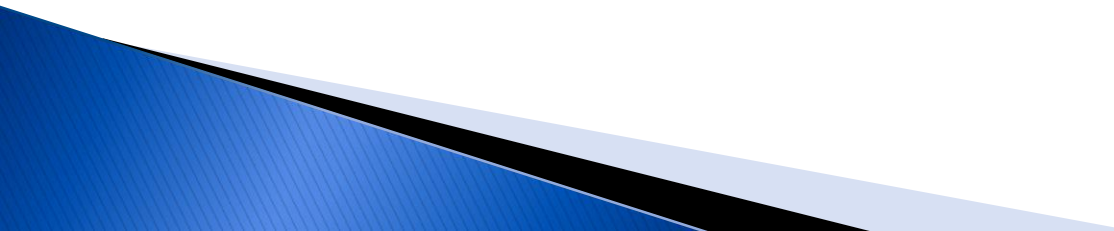




# Why do we Safeguard?


## The Law

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) recognises children as holders of forty two rights which must be respected by the laws of individual countries including the Holy See, Ireland and the United Kingdom.



# Why do we Safeguard?

## Key messages from the past

- Today the welfare of children is of paramount importance, in the past this wasn't always the case
  - Church bodies must be responsible for safeguarding in its widest sense (to ensure safe environments and safe practices for young people) as well as ensuring adequate responses to any apparent or reported concerns
- 

# Exercise

**What does 'safeguarding' mean?**



# **Safeguarding Means ...**

Creating safe environments for children and those who work with them.



**What is the difference between  
safeguarding  
and child protection?**



# Safeguarding and Child Protection

## Safeguarding

- Seeks to take preventative action and is not limited to responding to existing harm
- Is primarily pro-active, but will respond to any concern
- It includes Recognising, Responding to, and Reporting abuse (the 3 Rs)

## Child Protection

Child protection focuses on the 3Rs:

- Recognising abuse
- Responding to abuse
- Reporting abuse



# Session Three

## Recognising, Responding, Reporting





# Definition of a Child/Young Person

In both jurisdictions in Ireland, a child or young person is defined as anyone under the age of Eighteen.

In the Republic of Ireland this excludes a person who is or has been married

*Children First Act, 2015, p. 5.*

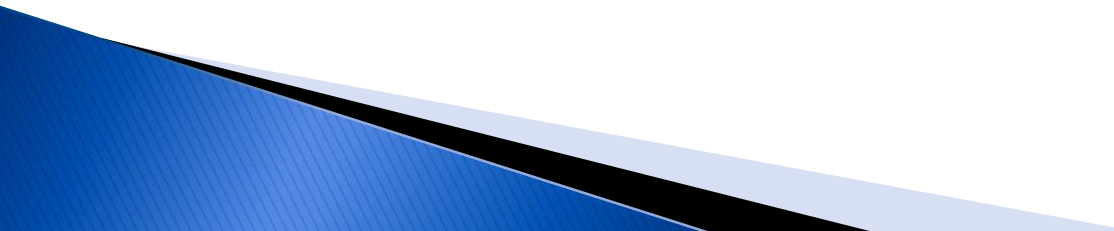
*Cooperating to Safeguard Children in NI, DHSSPS 2016 (revised 2017) (p. 12)*

# **Recognising Child Abuse**





# Child Abuse Categories

- Neglect
  - Emotional abuse
  - Physical abuse
  - Sexual abuse
- 

# Age of Consent & Sexual Abuse

In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in criminal law the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal. However, it may not necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse.

*(Children First Guidance, 2017, p.11)*

In Northern Ireland (as in the rest of the UK) the age of consent is 16

# Bullying


Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression – whether it is verbal, psychological or physical – that is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating, and occurs mainly among children in social environments such as schools. It includes behaviours such as physical aggression, cyberbullying, damage to property, intimidation, isolation/exclusion, name calling, malicious gossip and extortion. Bullying can also take the form of abuse based on gender identity, sexual preference, race, ethnicity and religious factors. With developments in modern technology, children can also be the victims of non contact bullying, via mobile phones, the internet and other personal devices.

*(Children First Guidance, 2017, p.12)*



# IKEA–Bulling a Plant Video

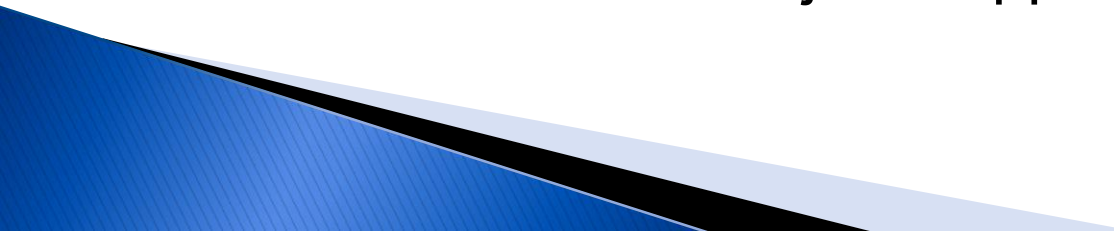
# Children with additional vulnerabilities

- Children with communication difficulties
  - Children with disabilities
  - Children who are homeless
  - Children who are separated from their families, e.g. Children in care, refugees
  - Children in the criminal justice system
  - Children who are carers
  - Children living with domestic violence
- 

# **Who Abuses Children and Young People?**



# Key Messages

- Most children are abused by someone they know, either in their family, by friends of family members or professionals  
(Rape Crisis Network Ireland, 2012)
  - Abusers can be from a number of professions and across a range of ages and backgrounds  
(Nexus, 2005-2006; Elliott, 1993; Elliott Brown and Kilcoyne, 1994)
  - Child abuse doesn't just happen in the Catholic Church
  - Child abuse doesn't just happen in Ireland
- 

# **Responding to a Disclosure**

# Responding to a Disclosure

Responding: Do	Responding: Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Stay calm &amp; listen</li><li>✓ Reassure</li><li>✓ Explain about informing the appropriate authorities</li><li>✓ Record using their own words as far as possible</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>X Make judgements</li><li>X Promise to keep secrets</li><li>X Tell stories about other people</li><li>X Tell them that everything will be fixed immediately</li><li>X press for details – clarify</li><li>X fill in words or complete sentences</li><li>X convey anger, shock, embarrassment or opinion</li></ul>

# **Reporting a Safeguarding Concern**



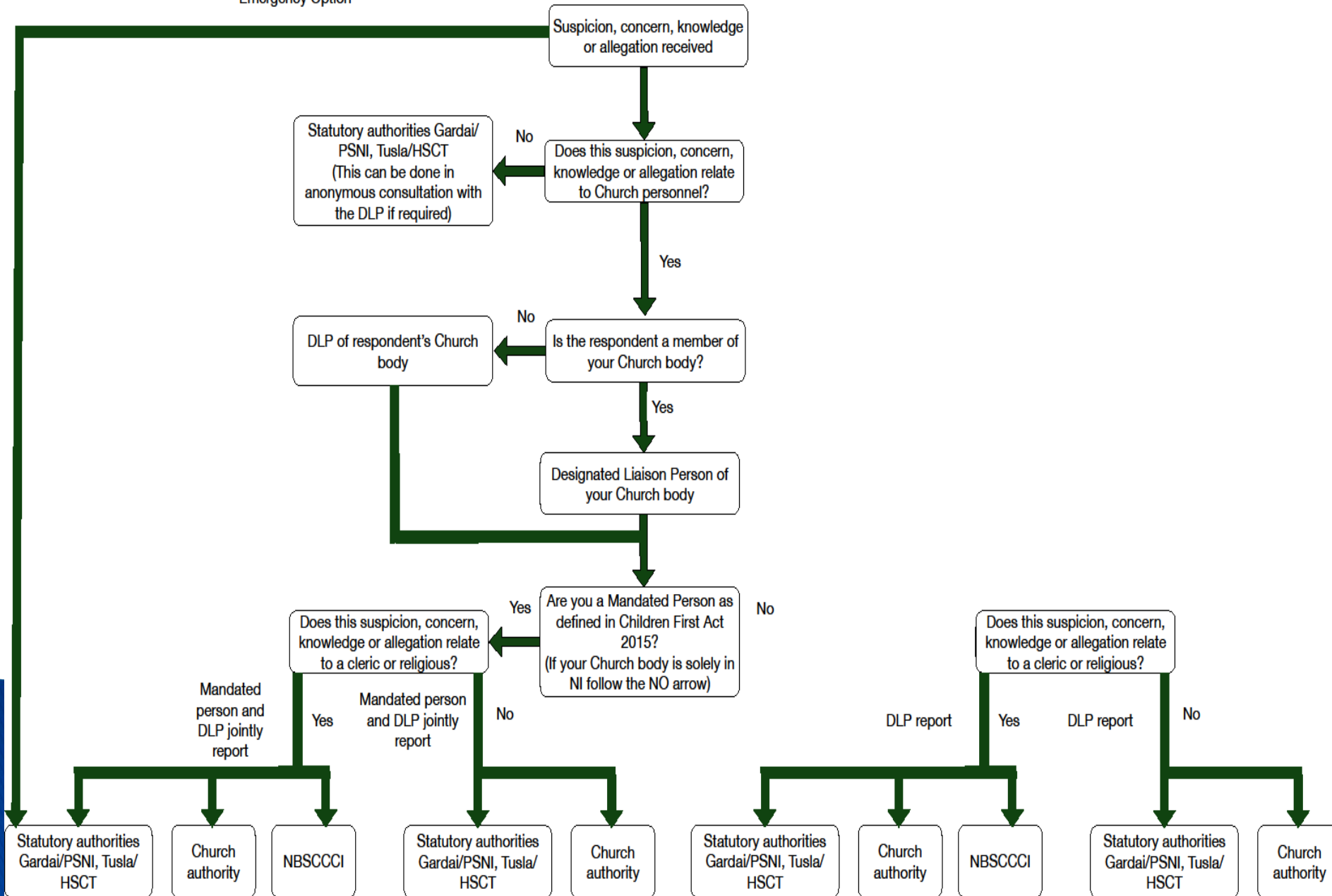
# Grounds for Reporting

- Disclosure from a child or adult
- Witness account – third party
- Direct evidence of injury or behaviour consistent with abuse
- Injury or behaviour which is ambiguous but where there are corroborative indicators of abuse
- Consistent signs of neglect over time
- Where you have a strong suspicion of injury/neglect or abuse

# Reporting Procedure

- If you have a safeguarding concern you must report this **without delay** to your Designated Liaison Person (DLP)
- Make a record which will be submitted to the DLP
- The DLP will respond back to you that the allegation has been received
- Store this correspondence with the document you have submitted to the DLP securely, in your local setting (but not in your own home)
- The DLP will report this to the statutory authorities, having ascertained that it is a safeguarding concern and not a disciplinary matter which does not constitute abuse
- The civil authorities will write back to the DLP to say that they have received the report
- The DLP will store this correspondence with the report they made securely
- You will only be contacted if requested by the civil authorities
- If the DLP decides not to refer the incident, you have the right to reasons in writing for this decision and to refer the matter yourself to the statutory authorities

## Emergency Option





# Mandated Persons (Only Applies in ROI)

Mandated persons are defined in Schedule 2 of the Children First Act (2015) and have two main obligations:

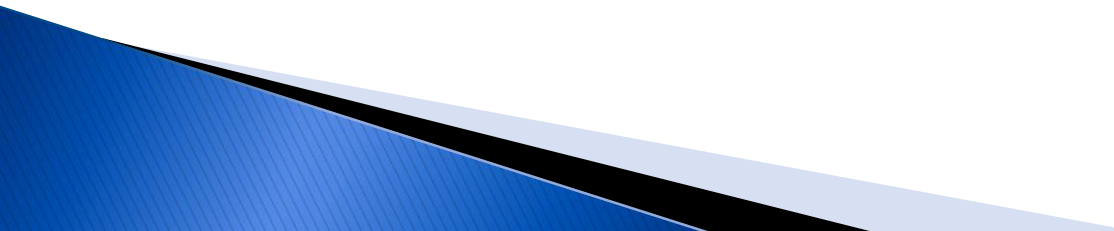
- To report the harm to children above a defined threshold to Tusla and the Gardaí
- To assist Tusla, if requested in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report

As a mandated person you must report any suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation to Tusla and An Garda Síochána

## In Cases of Emergency

- If a child is at immediate risk contact the DLP for advice on what to do
- If the DLP is unavailable TUSLA (ROI) or the HSC Trust Gateway Team (NI) should be contacted immediately
- Outside of office hours, where a child is at immediate risk, contact the Gardaí in the ROI. In NI the HSC Trust Gateway Team operate an out-of-hours service
- The DLP should be informed as soon as possible that you have passed on your safeguarding concerns directly to the statutory authorities

# Mandatory Reporting- The Church's Policy

- All allegations or suspicions of abuse must be reported to the statutory authorities, without delay using the reporting procedures
  - The only exception to this rule is if a disclosure is received during the sacrament of confession
- 

# ***Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 (ROI)***

Members of the public who report concerns of child abuse are legally protected from civil liability if they make the report:

- reasonably and
- in good faith

to a 'Designated Officer' of the TUSLA or the Gardaí.

It is an offence to maliciously make a false allegation.

# Reckless Endangerment of Children (ROI)

- An offence arising when someone with authority or control over a child, or an abuser, intentionally or recklessly causes or permits a child to be placed or left in a situation of serious harm or sexual abuse.

*(Criminal Justice Act, 2006, Section 176)*

- The offence is a recommendation of the *Ferns Report*, 2005.

**"Words cannot  
fully express  
my sorrow for  
the abuse you  
suffered."**

**—Pope Francis**



# **The Last Word**

Safeguarding and child protection is everybody's business – so never, ever, do nothing





GOD

OUR *help*

PSALM 46:1