

## STANDARD 6: Working together in Safeguarding

In our shared responsibility for Safeguarding, we work together effectively: recording, communicating and sharing information safely, in full compliance with both civil and canon law.

### 6.1 In each Diocese the Bishop takes prime responsibility for Safeguarding, assisted by key personnel.

- 6.1.1 Each Bishop is ultimately responsible for the Safeguarding arrangements within his Diocese. In appointing appropriate personnel to key Safeguarding posts, he must ensure that the organisation of Safeguarding is secure and well regulated. By facilitating quarterly meetings of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group (DSAG), he must demonstrate leadership and serious personal concern for keeping people safe. In giving serious consideration to, and acting upon, the written recommendations of his Diocesan Risk Assessment Management (DRAMT) team in relation to convictions and allegations, he must be seen to act justly for all. In his meetings with clergy, he must show his determination to promote the wellbeing of the Diocesan community and to ensure that every parish offers a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults. Above all, in his manner of responding to survivors, he must provide a powerful example of Christian love and compassion.
- 6.1.2 The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and other key Safeguarding personnel must support their Bishop by offering sound advice, by planning to ensure the recruiting and development of Diocesan Safeguarding Trainers and by working together closely, not only in their Diocesan teams, but with Safeguarding colleagues across the country.
- 6.1.3 Membership of **DSAG** must include the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and any key individuals charged with Diocesan Safeguarding responsibilities, as well as representatives of relevant Diocesan groups: Pilgrimage leaders, SPRED, Youth Office etc. The National Safeguarding Co-ordinator may be invited to these meetings to share information about national developments and to discuss resource needs and training development. The responsibilities of **DSAG** include:
- advising the Bishop on Safeguarding matters in the Diocese
  - ensuring compliance with national Safeguarding standards within all Diocesan groups
  - responding to issues emerging from the Safeguarding Audit
  - organising training for parish clergy, Safeguarding volunteers and Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinators
  - liaising with the Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Service on national developments, resources, legislative changes etc.

- 6.1.4 The main function of the **DRAMT** is to offer recommendations to the Bishop in relation to situations of risk, convictions on PVGs, allegations or cases in relation to anyone involved in the life and work of the Diocese who has contact with children and vulnerable adults. The DRAMT must comprise a small number of individuals with relevant expertise, including those with experience of working in the legal profession, healthcare, social work and the Police. Its composition should be balanced, in numbers of both ordained and lay members, and in their gender.
- 6.1.5 It is for each Bishop to decide if he wishes to preside at meetings of the DRAMT, or if he wishes to receive its recommendations in writing. The group must discuss each case, agree the recommendations that it has made to the Bishop and record these in writing. It is the ultimate responsibility of the Bishop to decide the action he will take in each case. The Bishop must communicate his decision in writing to the individual concerned.
- 6.1.6 The DRAMT must meet as often as is required, as cases are brought to its attention. The content of any meeting must ensure the anonymity of the individuals discussed, as far as is reasonably possible. Minutes of meetings must be written and retained securely, in accordance with the Diocesan Data Protection Policy. All members of the DRAMT must declare any real or potential conflicts of interest at the start of each meeting.

## 6.2 In each Parish the Parish Priest takes prime responsibility for Safeguarding, assisted by a Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and volunteers.

- 6.2.1 The Parish Priest (or Parish Administrator, where no Parish Priest is currently appointed) is responsible for the Safeguarding arrangements within the parish. The key step in showing his commitment to keeping the parish safe is his appointment of a Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator who possesses all the necessary qualities to be effective and is prepared to commit to regular training. His monitoring of Safeguarding, in close collaboration with the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator, will ensure that risks can be identified, managed and prevented. His recruitment and encouragement of volunteers who support various parish groups and ministries will provide a strong platform of well-trained and committed people who can keep others safe.
- 6.2.2 The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator must be a diligent, trustworthy and committed individual who takes this voluntary role very seriously. He/she must be well-versed in the procedures and practices outlined in this Instruction and in other advice provided by the Diocese and SCSS. (S)he must participate in support meetings and training provided by the Diocese and, where appropriate, by SCSS. The PSC must be skilled in promoting the participation of parish volunteers in on-going Safeguarding training.

### 6.3 In each Religious Institute the Major Superior takes prime responsibility for Safeguarding, assisted by key personnel, including the CRS Safeguarding Link Co-ordinator.

- 6.3.1 Each Major Superior is ultimately responsible for the Safeguarding arrangements within his/her Religious Institute. In agreeing with the local Ordinary that members of his/her Religious Institute in Scotland will follow the guidance provided in this document, he/she must ensure that consistent standards of Safeguarding practice are being met across Scotland. In appointing an appropriate person to the key post of Safeguarding Link Co-ordinator, he/she must ensure that the organisation of Safeguarding arrangements is secure and well regulated. By meeting regularly with the Link Co-ordinator, he/she must demonstrate leadership and serious personal concern for keeping people safe. In meetings with members of the Religious Institute he/she must show determination that every activity in every establishment offers a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults. Above all, in her/his manner of responding to survivors, he/she must provide a powerful example of Christian love and compassion.
- 6.3.2 The Safeguarding Link Co-ordinator must support their Major Superior/Provincial by offering sound advice, by planning to ensure compliance with these Safeguarding standards and by working closely with the Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Service.

### 6.4 The Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Service provides support, guidance and training to Diocesan & Religious Institute personnel to ensure that Safeguarding standards are met consistently across the country.

- 6.4.1 The Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Service was established by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland to lead the Church's strategy for developing effective Safeguarding arrangements. Its primary role is to support the Safeguarding work of Dioceses, Religious Institutes and Catholic organisations that interact with vulnerable groups.
- 6.4.2 SCSS offers support through the collation of PVG applications, the design and provision of training, the development of guidance and the facilitation of an annual Audit to check compliance with national Safeguarding standards. The National Safeguarding Co-ordinator is also expected to offer advice and counsel to Safeguarding staff in Dioceses and Religious Institutes as required by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland.
- 6.4.3 The National Safeguarding Co-ordinator is the Church's main Safeguarding liaison officer at a national level with statutory bodies, other Church Safeguarding groups and voluntary organisations.
- 6.4.4 Working with Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers, the NSC must develop a range of effective Safeguarding training opportunities and materials that will meet the on-going needs of Safeguarding personnel and volunteers across Scotland.

## 6.5 We have established communications strategies to ensure that Church Safeguarding approaches are widely understood.

- 6.5.1 The publication of this document provides an excellent opportunity to review the communications strategies which will be required to ensure that, across Catholic Church communities in Scotland, there is an improved understanding of, and commitment to, the best practices in Safeguarding.
- 6.5.2 Following publication, a series of awareness-raising sessions must ensure that Safeguarding personnel at every level and clergy in Dioceses, parishes, Religious Institutes and Catholic organisations are assisted to become familiar with the guidance it contains. In particular, each group must be asked to reflect on the implications of the new Safeguarding standards for their own roles.
- 6.5.3 New publications will be developed to complement the publication of the document. These will include: posters, advisory leaflets and newsletters for clergy and Safeguarding personnel, as well as for parishioners and Religious Institutes.
- 6.5.4 The Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Service website will be re-designed to improve the accessibility of Safeguarding resources and advice and to facilitate the sharing of good practice.