

Diocesan Safeguarding Day Sunday, 22nd September 2024

Message from the Parish Safeguarding Representatives in this parish, Catherine and Dominic

We work with Fr Liam Belton and the Parish Pastoral Council to ensure that diocesan safeguarding policies and practices are followed in this parish.

We were trained for this role, and we have access to advice and support from the diocesan Child Safeguarding and Protection Service.

This year Archbishop Farrell has asked us to focus on all the things we do to make our parish a safe and welcoming place for children and vulnerable adults.

The new child safeguarding policy for the Catholic Church in Ireland, launched in June of this year, is called *A Safe and Welcoming Church*. It replaces an earlier policy which was called *Safeguarding Children*. The reason for the new title is that we have come to a point where we recognise that safeguarding can no longer be seen as a response to a crisis, brought about by abuse within the Church and the failure of many Church authorities to adequately address this abuse. Now we understand safeguarding as deeply rooted in gospel values, scripture and church teaching.

Further, we commit ourselves not just to the prevention of harm but to the promotion of good, and to the creation of the material and spiritual conditions for children's full development, as described by Pope Francis.

Children need to know that there are adults who care for them and will come to their assistance if they are in any difficulty. Parents who wish to raise their children in the faith need the support of the parish community so that their children can come to know the love that God has for them through involvement in his Church.

With the right safeguarding policies and practices in place, our parishes can once again be places where children, young people and vulnerable adults can be welcomed and invited to make their own contribution to the building of God's kingdom of love.

The Parish Pastoral Council meet most months of the year (about 10) and we update the Group on Implementation of Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults in Our Parish. The Archbishop Guidelines on Safeguarding are included in the Parish Website.

It is our job to help you to understand that good safeguarding practice is not hard to implement. We can and should have children involved in our parish and it is possible to do so by proceeding with care, working in partnership with parents, and demonstrating through our words and actions respect for our children and for all the vulnerable members of our parish community. The PPC would really like some younger parents to volunteer as Safeguarding Representatives in our Parish – both the present representatives are Grandparents!.

We can be contacted through the parish office.

Thank you.

Catherine & Dominic