STANDARD 6

Communicating the Congregation's Safeguarding Message

MERCY GUIDANCE

These pieces of guidance are to assist, if necessary, with the implementation of Standard 6

Contents

Indicators	Name			
All	Roles of Safeguarding Personnel in Relation to this Standard	1		
All	Storage and Retention of Records Associated with this Standard			
6.1	A: Guidance on Developing a Communications Plan Template 1: Example of a Communications Plan for One Target Group			
6.2	A: Guidance on Ensuring that Information Regarding the Church's Child Safeguarding Message is Accessible	7		
	 Template 1: Example Public Poster for Adults Template 2: Example Safeguarding Leaflets for Parents/ Guardians 	8 9		
	 Template 3: Example Safeguarding Leaflets for Children Template 4: Example Safeguarding Poster for Children 	10 13		
6.2	B: Guidance on Creating User-Friendly Versions of the Child Safeguarding Policy	14		
	Template 1: Example Concise Version of the Child Safeguarding Policy	15		
6.2	C: Guidance on Creating a Child Safeguarding Newsletter	16		
6.3	A: Guidance on Communicating Appropriately to those whose First Language is not English, and to those who have Specific Needs	18		
	Template 1: Example Child Safeguarding Poster in Polish Template 2: Example Child Safeguarding Poster in Irish	19		
	Template 2: Example Child Safeguarding Poster in Irish	20		
6.4	A: Guidance on Developing Links with Other Organisations in the Locality in Order to Promote a Safe and Caring Community, and to Share Good Practices	21		

Roles of Safeguarding Personnel in Relation to this Standard

Provincial Leader

The role of the Provincial Leader across all the Seven Standards is outlined in Appendix A. In relation to Standard 6, the Provincial Leader is responsible for:

• Ensuring that Practice and Policy with regard to communication is compliant with Civil and Canon law.

Safeguarding Committee

The role of the Safeguarding Committee across Standards 1, 5, 6 and 7 is outlined in Appendix A. In relation to Standard 6, the Safeguarding Committee is responsible for:

- Producing a three-year Child Safeguarding Plan. Part of this plan will include evidence that a communications plan is developed and implemented across the Province body. To do this, an annual Child Safeguarding communications plan needs to be developed;
- Coordinating Local Safeguarding Representatives in the development of a communications plan.

Local Safeguarding Representative (LSR)

The role of the LSR across Standards 1, 5, 6 and 7 is outlined in Appendix A. In relation to Standard 6, the LSR is responsible for:

- Working with the Safeguarding Committee to consult with key members of the community.
- Checking that methods of communication are effective and in place. This information should be communicated to the Safeguarding Committee as part of the consultation and evaluation phases of developing and reviewing a communications plan.

Storage and Retention of Records Associated with this Standard

Type of Record	Where to Store	Guidance Number/ Page Number
Communications plan	Congregational level	Guidance 6.1A Page 3

6.1A Guidance on Developing a Communications Plan

Step 1: Reviewing Current Policies, Procedures and Practice

Communicating what Child Safeguarding Policies, procedures and practice are in place is a core element of the Province's strategy to safeguard Children. Policies and procedures are only effective if everyone, including Children, understands their purpose and knows how to use them. To successfully implement the Province standards, effective communication systems must be in place.

Province personnel who are appropriately trained (Guidance 5.3A) must be available to listen to and communicate with Children, their Parents/Guardians regarding the Province's Safeguarding message.

There must be a range of methods to communicate what the Province is doing to create safe environments for Children, and how it is responding appropriately to allegations of Child abuse.

It is helpful to identify what current communication practices are in place. The following checklist suggests some ideas for the Safeguarding Committee to consider.

Does the Province:

- Have a written communications plan, stating what you wish to communicate, to whom, by whom, and how often?
- Display the name and contact details of the designated liaison person (DLP) where relevant.
- Place information on your website about Safeguarding Children?
- Ensure that communications between the Province and Parents/Guardians/Carers/Children/community leaders take account of language or communication differences?
- Ensure that Parents/Guardians, Children and relevant others know about your Child Safeguarding and Child protection Policies and reporting procedures?
- Have a process for enabling people, including Children and relevant others, to make a complaint and ensure that this process is publicised so that everyone knows about it?
- Involve Parents/Guardians, as well as Children, in developing codes of behaviour, e.g. about anti-bullying?
- Devise ways of obtaining feedback from Parents/Guardians/Carers/Children/the Province to find out what you are doing well, and what is not working?

Step 2: Gathering Further Information

Using the information in Step 1, the Province should gather any further information necessary to develop a communications plan that reflects transparency, openness, accountability and responsibility. The aim of this plan is to make information available about all aspects of Policy and practice, which keep Children safe.

To develop this plan, the Safeguarding Committee needs to develop information on the following:

- **Who** are the target groups? The Safeguarding Committee should consult with relevant personnel to establish the target audiences for inclusion in the wider Safeguarding plan. It is likely that the main target groups with whom the Province needs to communicate regarding its Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are:
 - Children/Parents/Guardians/Carers:
 - Volunteers
 - External Organisations, e.g. Tusla, PSNI, An Garda Síochána, HSCT (Health and Social Care Trust);
 - Other relevant external agencies, the general public and the media.
- What are the Safeguarding messages? Although Child Safeguarding messages must be consistent, the information needed may change depending on your target audience. Child Safeguarding messages may include:
 - Information on what is meant by Child Safeguarding;
 - Information on the Child Safeguarding Policy;
 - Information on the procedures for reporting allegations, suspicions and concerns;
 - Contact Details of the DLP:
 - For Children and Parents/Guardians: how to keep safe; what to do if you, or someone you know, is in danger of being harmed; sources of advice and support; roles of agencies involved in Child Safeguarding; how the referral process works;
 - For Province personnel: how to deliver best practice; safe recruitment; dealing with allegations; accessing advice and support; availability of training; contact details for relevant Child Safequarding personnel.
- **How** are you going to promote Child Safeguarding? Before deciding how you will do this, it is important to consider the most effective methods for reaching out to key groups of people. Methods could include:
 - Province websites that could host material such as the Child Safeguarding Policy, any additional resources developed in relation to Child Safeguarding, the annual report on Child Safeguarding within the Province, the annual training plan, a Safeguarding Children newsletter, or signposts to other websites such as the NBSCCCI or the civil authorities;
 - **Provincial newsletters** providing general information and updates on Safeguarding;

- **Provincial bulletins** with information on Child Safeguarding events and key contact details:
- Provincial printed publications such as copies of Child Safeguarding Policies, handbooks and information pamphlets, posters for display in the Province, bookmarks for Children with Child Safeguarding information and contacts, annual reports, a Childfriendly version of the Child Safeguarding Policy, etc.;
- National/Local press releases announcing annual reports, updated resources, etc.;
- Other innovative methods: it is important to develop positive messages when
 promoting Child Safeguarding within the Province. Use the skills and expertise of key
 people in the Province body to develop creative ways to put forward the positive Child
 Safeguarding message of the Province. This could include suggestion boxes, meetings of
 key Child Safeguarding personnel, questionnaires
- **Who** is responsible? Using the information outlined in Step 1 and Step 2, alongside the roles identified in Appendix A, it is important to identify who is responsible for each method of delivery. Once identified and agreed, this should be written into the role description, in line with best practice in recruitment and selection (Guidance 1.1A). These roles could include, for example:
 - The Child Safeguarding Committee;
 - Local Leader;
 - The DLP and deputy DLP;
 - The Local Safeguarding Representative
 - It must be understood that within each Local Province, the overall responsibility for implementing the Child Safeguarding Policy remains with the Provincial Leader. The overall responsibility for ensuring that each Province implements effective Child Safeguarding practice lies with the Province Leader.
- When will it be achieved? It is important that each plan has clear, realistic and achievable time frames within which each target can be achieved.

Step 3: Writing the Plan

Using the information in Steps 1 and 2, it is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Committee to write the communication plan using a format such as that outlined in 6.1A Template 1. This plan will form part of the overall three-year Safeguarding plan (Guidance 7.2A).

Step 4: Review

It is important to remember that communication is a two-way process. Developing mechanisms for consultation and feedback to review the communication plan is critical to ensure that the Child Safeguarding message is effectively heard, understood and revised in order to meet the needs of the target groups.

6.1A Template 1: Example of a Communications Plan for One Target Group

Who	What	How	Who is responsible?	When	Review
Lay Faithful	One Church Policy	Printed Copies	Province Office prints hard copies	Annually	Annually
			LSR checks to ensure that Policies are in designated location	As part of Annual Audit	Annually
		Provincial website	Province Office updates website to ensure Policy is up to date and available	Annually	Annually
	Name of DLP		Community Leader is responsible for ensuring the name of the DLP and contact details are included in the bulletin	Annually	Biannually
		Provincial website	Province office updates website to ensure name of DLP is up to date and available	Annually	Annually
		NBSCCCI website	Province informs the NBSCCCI of new or updated informationon DLP	As necessary	As necessary

6.2A Guidance on Ensuring that Information Regarding the Province's Child Safeguarding Message is Accessible

A key part of Child Safeguarding is ensuring that the methods used to communicate information on the Province's Child Safeguarding message are accessible and appropriate.

Methods of Communication on the Safeguarding Message May Include:

- Public posters for adults, with information about what to do if there is a Child Safeguarding concern, including contact details for appropriate Child Safeguarding personnel (6.2A Template 1). These posters should be displayed in areas with public access, including residences of priests and religious to which Children have access. There is no requirement to put up Child Safeguarding posters in private homes connected with the Province if no public ministry with Children takes place there;
- Child Safeguarding leaflets for adults about how the Province responds to Child Safeguarding concerns, the management of allegations and access to counselling and support (6.2A Template 2);
- Leaflets for Children about what to do if they have a Child Safeguarding concern (6.2A Template 3);
- Posters for Children about what to do if they have a Child Safeguarding concern, including contact details for appropriate Child Safeguarding Personnel (6.2A Template 4);
- The Child Safeguarding Policy in reader-friendly accessible formats (Guidance 6.2B);
- The dissemination of regular newsletters that detail Child Safeguarding practices (Guidance 6.2C);

6.2A Template 1: Example Public Poster for Adults

Child Safeguarding Policy Statement of the constituent members of 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, are committed to ensuring their safety and well-being, 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.

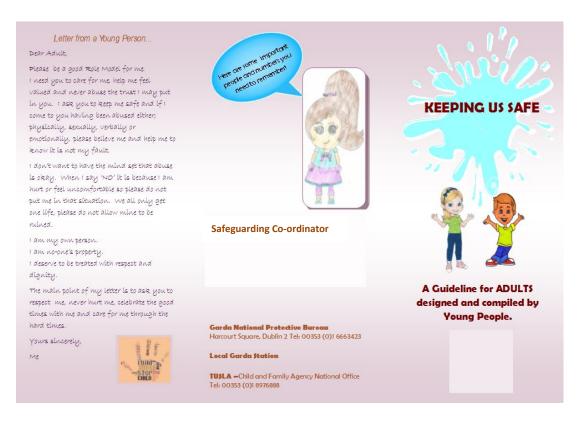
All Province personnel (including clergy, religious, staff and volunteers) have a responsibility to safeguard Children through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment that supports their best interests and prevents abuse.

Details of personnel to contact if you are concerned about the welfare and safety of Children

Insert below the names and contact details of the relevant designated liaison person (DLP), and statutory authorities (An Garda Síochána or PSNI; Tusla or HSCT), as appropriate.

DLP:
POLICE:
CHILD PROTECTION SERVICE:

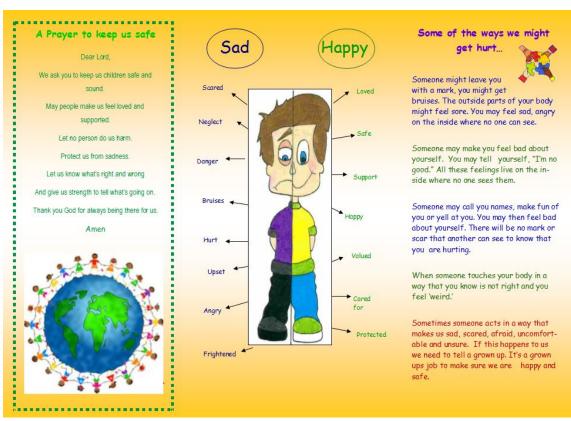
6.2A Template 2: Example Safeguarding Leaflets for Parents/Guardians

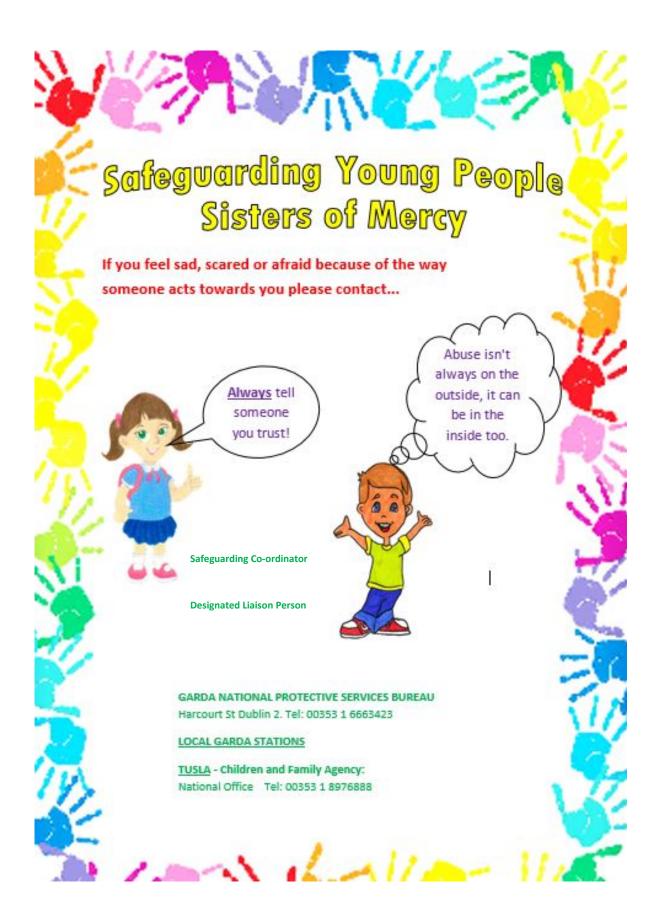




6.2A Template 3: Example Safeguarding Leaflets for Children



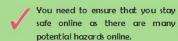




HOW TO KEEP YOURSELF

and others safe...

Important things you should always remember:



Never let someone persuade you to do something that you feel uncomfortable with or do not want to do

Put a number in your phone of someone you trust.

Make sure that you learn this number in case your phone dies.

Always have awareness of your human rights.

Remove yourself from a situation you don't feel comfortable in.

You should always know what abuse is.

What to do if someone

hurts you?

- Make sure to always tell someone when someone has hurt you for example, friends, family, a teacher or a carer.
- When someone hurts you, you need to realise that it is not your fault.
- You should never keep it a secret.
- Carn to say NO.

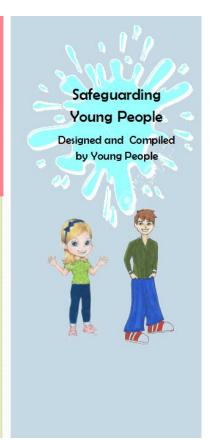


Garda National Protective Services Bureau

Harcourt Square, Dublin 2. Tel: 00353 1 6663423

Local Garda station

TU\$LA – Child and Family Agency. National Office Tel: 00353 18976888



What is a safeguarding

The aims and objectives of a safeguarding policy is to help keep you safe and free from harm

It is to ensure that all people working with young people have certified child protection training

It is to ensure that all young people are growing up in a friendly and safe



What is Abuse? Abuse can be in different forms. It is hurtful in different ways. It has a huge effect on someone. Abuse happens in secret. The offender can be a family friend, neighbour, a family member or a child worker. He or she may be someone we know and love.

Some of the facts:

- 82.2% of child abuse offenders are found to be between the ages of 18-44.
- 90% of child sexual abuse victims know the offender in some way. 68% are abused by a family member.



Types of Abuse...

Physical

Shaking, beating, burning, failure to provide the necessitates of life. It can include: hitting and smacking, punching and kicking.

Emotional

This is when someone regularly behaves nastily to you. It could be someone you care about, or someone you often have to spend time with eg, when someone puts you down or says you aren't good enough.

Verba

Abuse characterised by constant verbal harassment and belittlement of young people. e.g. excessive yelling, verbal attacking and teasing.

\$exual

Abuse that results in any act of a sexual nature with a young person, e.g. someone touching you inappropriately, or making you take part in a sexual act.



6.2A Template 4: Example Safeguarding Poster for Children



6.2B Guidance on Creating User-Friendly Versions of the Child Safeguarding Policy

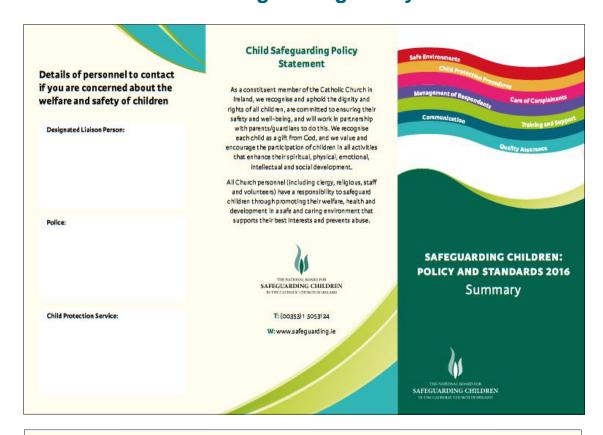
Some Church bodies have found it helpful to create shortened or condensed versions of the diocesan/religious order's Child Safeguarding Policy for key audiences. This is done for a number of reasons:

- It makes the Policy more attractive;
- It is easier to read and understand by key audiences;
- It makes the Policy more relevant for each ministry in which Province personnel are involved;
- Shortened versions are more portable.

However, when developing a condensed version it is important to be mindful of the following points:

- Do not create so many versions of the Policy that it dilutes the key messages of Child Safeguarding;
- Creating multiple versions will mean that updates and revisions will be more difficult to carry out:
- Ensure that the messages contained across the various versions of the Policy are consistent and do not contradict each other:
- Make sure that key pieces of information, such as the reporting procedure, are consistent across all of the various versions of the Policy, to ensure that allegations or suspicions are reported appropriately.

6.2B Template 1: Example Concise Version of the Child Safeguarding Policy



The Seven Safeguarding Standards

There are seven standards that every Church body is required to meet to fulfil the child safeguarding policy statement. They are:

Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

Church bodies provide an environment for children that is welcoming, nutruring and safe. They provide access to good role models whom the children can trust, and who respect, protect and enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

Standard 2: Procedures for Responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or Allegations

Church bodies have clear procedures and guidance on what to do and how to ensure there is a prompt response when suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations arise regarding a child's safety or welfare. They also enable the Church to meet all national and international legal and practice requirements and guidance.

Comment only the findermone of the Comment only the Comment on the Comment on the Comment on the Comment on the Comment of th

Standard 3: Care and Support for the Complainant

Complainants who have suffered abuse as children receive a compassionate response when they disclose their abuse. They, and their families, are offered appropriate support, advice and pastoral care.

Standard 4: Care and Management of the Respondent

The Church authority has in place a fair process for investigating and managing child safeguarding concerns. When the threshold for reporting has been reached, a system of support and monitoring for respondents (cleric or religious) is provided.

Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe

Church personnel are trained and supported in all aspects of safeguarding relevant to their role, in order to develop and maintain the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills to safeguard and protect children.

Standard 6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

Church bodies appropriately communicate the Church's child safeguarding message.

Standard 7: Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards

The Church body develops a plan of action to quality assure compliance with the safeguarding standards. This action plan is reviewed annually. The Church body only has responsibility to monitor, evaluate and report on compliance with the indicators under each standard that applies to it, depending on its ministry.

6.2C Guidance on Creating a Child Safeguarding Newsletter

Newsletters are a helpful way to keep everyone involved in the Safeguarding structure updated on the Province's Safeguarding message.

Questions For Consideration

Before creating a newsletter, it is important to consider the following carefully:

- Will the newsletter be electronic or hard copy?
- What resources do you have in terms of producing the newsletter (finances, time and personnel)?
- Do you have a list of postal or email addresses to send the newsletter to?
- Have you gained permission from the owners of the addresses to send them the newsletter?
- How and where are these addresses stored?
- Do you have a procedure in place to allow people to opt out of receiving the newsletter?
- How often will you send the newsletter out?

Sources of Content

In order to make the content of the newsletter as current and relevant as possible, it is important that personnel involved in its creation are informed on recent developments within Child Safeguarding. Some useful organisations include:

- **NBSCCCI:** The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland produces a quarterly newsletter that is free to register for. If you would like to receive the newsletter, further details are available on www.Safeguarding.ie.
- **Tusla:** The Child and Family Agency provide regular newsletters, available through their website www.tusla.ie.
- Safeguarding Board NI: There is a range of information that may prove useful to those developing newsletters. This can be accessed on www.Safeguardingni.org.

Structure of Newsletter

The structure of your newsletter will depend on your target audience. Some useful areas to include are:

- Recent legislative developments;
- Upcoming training or Child Safeguarding events;
- Information on contact details for key Child Safeguarding personnel;
- Frequently asked questions.

Review

To ensure the newsletter is working, it is important to periodically review and evaluate its effectiveness by consulting with the target audience.

6.3A Guidance on Communicating Appropriately to Those Whose First Language is not English, and to those who have Specific Needs

The Province needs to be aware of the particular requirements of those whose first language is not English. It is important that informative material is translated into the appropriate language so that all Children and their Parents/Guardians are made aware of the Child Safeguarding practices in their parish or religious congregation. To do this, it is helpful to engage and participate with appropriately certified Local groups/translators to help translate key Child Safeguarding resources into other languages (6.3A Template 1). The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) provides additional Child Safeguarding resources in a range of formats. Their website is www.nspcc.org.uk.

Children who have specific needs because of disability or other vulnerabilities require extra care and attention. They may find it more difficult to access support and advice services because they may not have the communication skills needed to disclose what is happening to them. They may rely on adults to provide for their most intimate care, and so find it challenging to speak about any concerns they may have about such an adult.

A number of services are available in formats that are appropriate to young people with specific needs.

These may include:

- Childline (ROI) text support: ChildLine run a free text service for Children and young people. Children often find it easier to text rather than talk on the phone if they have a worry or concern. Information on a range of issues is available through text. Text 'Talk' to 50101;
- Childline (UK) online support: Childline answers all messages posted by young people on their message board. This website also provides access to games and information about specific topics such as bullying, family breakup and lots more;
- Childline (UK) Ask Sam: This is a message board called 'Ask Sam', where young people can engage with trained personnel and receive support on a range of topics.

It is important when communicating with young people with specific needs that the information on the services above is made accessible by being posted alongside appropriate codes of behaviour about the care of Children with specific needs, and that it is also made known to parents and guardians.

Where written information is not appropriate, visual images should be developed to indicate to Children how they can raise a concern.

6.3A Template 1: Example Child Safeguarding Poster in Polish

Oświadczenie w sprawie polityki bezpieczenstwa dzieci dla Kościoła w Irlandii

Jako integralna część Kościoła Katolickiego w Irlandii uznajemy i wspieramy godność i prawa wszystkich dzieci oraz gwarantujemy ich bezpieczeństwo i pomyślność. Zamierzamy także współpracować z rodzicami/ opiekunami dla osiągnięcia tego celu. Uznajemy, że każde dziecko jest darem od Boga oraz cenimy je i zachęcamy dzieci do aktywnego udziału we wszystkich zajęciach, które rozwijają je duchowo, fizycznie, emocjonalnie, intelektualnie i społecznie.

Wszyscy pracujący w Kościele (włączając księży, osoby zakonne, pracowników oraz woluntariuszy) mają obowiązek troszczyć się o dzieci poprzez popieranie tego, co służy ich dobru, zdrowiu i rozwojowi w bezpiecznym i troskliwym otoczeniu zgodnie z ich najlepszym interesem i zapobiegać ich wykorzystywaniu.

Dane kontaktowe personelu jeżeli ma miejsce uzasadniona obawa o dobro i bezpieczeństwo dzieci

Wpisz nazwiska i dane kontaktowe według kolejności

DLP:
Policja:
Służba Bezpieczeństwa dziecka:

6.3A Template 1: Example Child Safeguarding Poster in Irish

Ráiteas pholasaí chomhbhaill na hEaglaise Caitlicí in Éirinn um chosaint leanaí

Mar chomhbaill na hEaglaise Caitlicí in Éirinn, aithnímid agus dearbhaímid dínit agus cearta gach uile linbh agus táimid tiomanta dá sábháilteacht agus dá leas a chinntiú, agus saothróimid i gcomhar lena dtuismitheoirí/gcaomhnóirí chun sin a chur i gcrích. Tugaimid aitheantas do gach aon leanbh mar thabhartas ó Dhia, agus is luachmhar linn é, agus spreagaimid rannpháirtíocht gach linbh sna himeachtaí go léir a fhorbraíonn iad go fisiciúil, go spioradálta, go mothaitheach, go hintleachtúil agus go sóisialta.

Tá freagracht ar chuile oibrí Eaglaise (cléir, lucht na beatha rialta, foireann agus oibrithe deonacha) as leanaí a chosaint trína leas, a sláinte agus a bhforbairt a chur chun cinn i dtimpeallacht shábháilte, chúramach a chothaíonn barr a leasa agus a choisceann mí-úsáid.

Sonraí teagmhála má bhíonn imní ort faoi leas agus shábháilteacht leanaí

Scríobh anseo thíos ainmneacha, sonraí teagmhála an Oifigigh Idirchaidrimh Ainmnithe (OIA) na n-údarás reachtúil (An Garda Síochána nó PSNI agus Tusla nó HSCT mar is cuí.

Oifigeach Idirchaidrimh Ainmithe:
An Garda Síochána/PSNI:
Tusla/HSCT:

6.4A Guidance on Developing Links with Other Organisations in the Locality in Order to Promote a Safe and Caring Community, and to Share Good Practices

The importance of good and regular interagency communication has been consistently highlighted across a range of reports and recommendations on Child Safeguarding and Child Protection.

On Page 259 of the Ferns Report¹ it is highlighted that this method of communication is important

... to identify and report any lessons which might usefully be learnt from the past, which will result in improved Child protection.

It is important that this interagency cooperation happens at a number of different levels. Alongside the NBSCCCI, who can be contacted for advice and support on good practice, there are other organisations, listed below, that should be included in interagency work.

Statutory Services

It is important that those involved in communicating the Province's Child Safeguarding message regularly meet with key Representatives from the Local statutory agencies to discuss and develop best practice in terms of communication and cooperation, including:

- An Garda Síochána/PSNI
- Tusla/HSCT

Minutes of these meetings should be stored safely and securely in accordance with Appendix B.

Counselling and Support Services

There are a number of counselling and support services that can offer support and advice to Province personnel, Parents/Guardians and Children in relation to Child Safeguarding matters, including:

- www.barnardos.ie
- www.barnardos.co.uk
- www.ispcc.ie
- www.nspcc.org.uk
- www.webwise.ie

- www.hotline.ie
- www.Childline.ie
- www.Childline.org.uk
- www.internetsafety.ie
- www.samaritans.org

¹The Ferns Report (2005) was an official Irish Government inquiry into the allegations of clerical sexual abuse in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Ferns in County Wexford, Ireland.