



# Safeguarding Trust

Newsletter

September 2008

Published by the Church of Ireland Board of Education (RI)

## ***Distribution of Safeguarding Trust***

The long awaited Safeguarding Trust 2008 (RI) was published in April, followed by the Northern Ireland version in May. A 'road show' by the Child Protection Officer, Renée English, and the Secretary of the Board of Education, Canon John McCullagh, between April and early June, provided updated information on its contents and the chance for those attending to familiarise themselves with the layout. Each parish was asked to send a panel member to one of the meetings and to collect 6 copies for their parish.

Meetings were held at 15 venues and there was plenty of lively discussion with those who attended. There was favourable comment about the new design and format which was seen as being more 'user friendly'. An updated version of the Leaders' summary card has also been produced.

A welcome development is the availability of the document online at [www.ireland.anglican.org](http://www.ireland.anglican.org). The Safeguarding Trust newsletter will also be available to view online.

There will not be further editions as amended or additional information can be incorporated in the ring binder.

Ongoing feedback on policy implementation is always welcome.

Renée English and Margaret Yarr had an information stand at General Synod in May. This provided a useful opportunity for interchange with Synod members throughout the island and with representatives of the Girls' Friendly Society and the Boys' Brigade. Some members collected Safeguarding Trust and the summary cards for their parish from the stand. The Safeguarding Trust quiz and word search allowed those attending to test their knowledge. It was also a good way for the Child Protection Officers to 'put a face' on people that had been known only via phone or email and vice versa.

Nearly thirteen-hundred copies of Safeguarding Trust have been distributed to date. If further copies are required please contact Vicki Hastie: tel 01-4125618, email [vicki.hastie@rcbdub.org](mailto:vicki.hastie@rcbdub.org).

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## ***Keeping Safe Training Course***

Renée English and Suzie Evans of Youth for Christ, who are Keeping Safe trainers are planning to run this 9 hour programme at a Dublin location (to be confirmed) next month.

The course was developed by the Volunteer Development Agency in Northern Ireland for the voluntary and community sector and is run in conjunction with the Health Service Executive. A certificate is awarded for full attendance. There is no charge.

It is suitable for youth leaders and covers topics addressed in *Safeguarding Trust* training in detail. These include child protection awareness, recruitment and management of workers, code of behaviour for workers and awareness of residential issues.

The dates set are Tuesday evenings 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> October and 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008. Places are limited to 14 and will be allocated on a 'first come' basis.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact Renée as soon as possible for an application form.

# CHECKLIST



**As a new activity year commences these are some things to check:**

- Have new panel members appointments been formally noted by the vestry?
- Has training been arranged for new panel members and youth leaders?
- Has each of your workers received a copy of the new summary card?
- Have you planned an event to support existing leaders? For example, first aid or managing difficult behaviour may be appropriate

## Panel notices

- Are these up to date? HSE titles have changed several times in recent years! Some parishes have supplied photos with the names of the panel members to make them more 'child friendly' and placed the notices at an appropriate level.

## Safety of premises

- Has there been a review of the health and safety statement?
- Is there an updated list of hazards?
- Did you know that your insurer will provide an outline health, safety and welfare at work statement?
- Did you know that your insurer may provide written guidance for the annual Health and Safety review?
- Are there plans for each organisation to hold an evacuation procedure (fire drill) during the year?
- Is the assembly point clearly marked?
- Who can access parish premises when children are present?

## First Aid

- Is there a current holder of a first aid certificate?
- Have the first aid boxes in the church/es and parish hall/s been fully stocked?

## Attendance lists

- Have the attendance lists for 07/08 been filed?

## Accident and incident books

- Have these been stored safely?  
A fireproof filing cabinet is the optimum standard for the safety of key documentation.



**Part 2 of Safeguarding Trust 2008 outlines the areas of responsibility of the vestry and the parish panel as well as that of the central church.**

## ***NOTE ON GARDA VETTING***

A worker vetted in respect of one parish in the Republic of Ireland **does not** need to be vetted again if they move parish within the same jurisdiction within five years. They need only give **written permission** for their vetting check to be forwarded to the new parish.



# Safeguarding Trust trainers meeting

A SGT trainers meeting was held on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2008 at Moran's Red Cow Hotel in Dublin. It was attended by 11 people involved in training and evaluations, with a good representation from around the country. It was a valuable opportunity for the trainers who may not have met before, to share experiences and suggestions.

It was evident that there was a wide variety of practice between the dioceses. Some points that emerged were:

- ◆ The desirability of building up the panel of trainers in each diocese to promote supportive working together and to facilitate training in local areas.
- ◆ Those interested in becoming trainers would also require training and ongoing support through their diocese and the Board of Education.
- ◆ The need to develop training for panel members and youth leaders in line with the recommended guidelines for youth work child protection was noted. This would allow for a more interactive style of training and learning using small group work and discussion of scenarios. It is widely accepted that adults learn better when learning is experiential. Six hours of training for panel members and three hours for youth leaders is the recommended national minimum standard

Canon McCullagh pointed out that training for youth workers should be ongoing, rather than being seen as a once off event. Topics such as First Aid or behaviour management are relevant to the promotion of good practice in youth ministry. With all the ongoing development in child protection, panel members and leaders should update their knowledge and skills every three years.

Volunteers will appreciate that the organisation has invested in their development and hopefully this will promote retention.

It was almost three years since the group last met. It was agreed that meetings would be held on an annual basis in future.



**An updated training package for leaders has been devised by the Child Protection Officer. Please contact Renée for details.**

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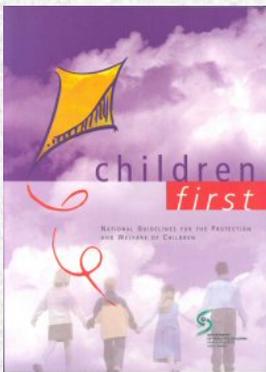
## Creating a Safer Church

***'The Anglican Communion should be leading the way in safeguarding children and all other vulnerable people against abuse in societies around the world.'***

This was a primary message emerging from a meeting in Woking, Surrey, of international delegates from seven Anglican Provinces, to discuss strategies for safeguarding the vulnerable in Church and society. The international Anglican 'Creating a Safer Church' event was timed to coincide with the opening of the Lambeth Conference in Canterbury in July and the findings were submitted to the conference. Participants were both clergy and lay professionals involved in child protection work. It was hosted by the Revd Pearl Luxon, National Safeguarding Advisor for both the Church of England and the Methodist Church.

Margaret Yarr and Renée English attended this 3 day conference. They gave a well received presentation on the development of child protection policy and practice in the Irish (RI and NI) context and emerging issues for the Church of Ireland in implementing its child protection policy. The delegates were favourably impressed with Safeguarding Trust and the detailed guidance which is provided for those engaged in youth ministry.

It was very useful to hear the experiences and ideas of other provinces of the Anglican Church. It is hoped to set up a network for people engaged in child protection throughout the Anglican Communion which will improve knowledge and promote the sharing of good practice.



## National review of compliance with *Children First*

*Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children* was published by the Dept. of Health and Children in 1999.

They embody principles contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Ireland in 1992. The Child Care Act, 1991 provides the legislative basis for dealing with children in need of care and protection.

The guidelines are intended to assist people in identifying and reporting child abuse and to improve professional practice in both statutory and voluntary agencies and organisations that provide services for children and families. Safeguarding Trust has been developed in compliance with *Children First*.

The National review of Compliance with Children First: Child Protection Guidelines was launched by Barry Andrews TD on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008. The review was carried out in response to the publication of the Ferns Report in 2005. (This report related to an Inquiry into clerical abuse of children in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Ferns).

Mr Andrews said that the key finding of the review is that, in general, difficulties and variations on implementation of the guidelines arise as a result of local variation and infrastructural issues, rather than from fundamental difficulties with the guidelines themselves. He stated that it was his view that *'the best way forward is a renewed focus on the provision of a more effective child welfare and protection system, through improved implementation of the existing guidelines, training, education and good recruitment procedures'*.

There has been much discussion of the merits or otherwise of mandatory reporting of child abuse. However it is not proposed to put *Children First* on a statutory footing at present.

Two other documents were also launched to accompany the review. These were an analysis of over 130 submissions on the Guidelines and a piece of research by Dr Helen Buckley et al: Service users' perceptions of the Irish Child Protection System. These documents can be viewed on [www.omc.gov.ie](http://www.omc.gov.ie). Dr Helen Buckley reviewed *Safeguarding Trust* before its publication for the Republic of Ireland edition.



### Remember...

New panel members **must** be vetted before appointment.

### No need to register for Data protection...



Prior to October 2007 schools and parishes holding information classed as 'sensitive' on computer were required to register with the Data Protection Commissioner's Office. This position has now changed it has been recently confirmed to us that there is no longer a requirement for 'not for profit' organisations to register. However, compliance with data protection rules is still obligatory, and this extends to all personal information held, whether manually or on computer. Information held must be accurate, relevant and kept in a secure manner.

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