

Newsletter

Spring 2014



Launch of Child and Family Agency

On 1st January 2014 the long promised Child and Family Agency (Tusla) became an independent legal entity, comprising HSE Children and Family Services, Family Support Agency and the National Educational Welfare Board as well as incorporating some psychological services and a range of services responding to domestic, sexual and gender based violence. The name Tusla, borrowed from the Irish words 'tus' + 'la' reflects a desire for a new beginning.

The Child and Family Agency is now the dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children. It represents the most comprehensive reform of child protection, early intervention and family support services ever undertaken in Ireland. It brings together some 4,000 staff and has an operational budget of approximately €600m.

Remit of the Child and Family Agency

Under the Child and Family Act, 2013 the Child and Family Agency is charged with:

- supporting and promoting the development, welfare and protection of children, and the effective functioning of families;
- offering care and protection for children in circumstances where their parents have not been able to, or are unlikely to, provide the care that a child needs. In order to discharge these responsibilities, the Agency is required to maintain and develop the services needed in order to deliver these supports to children and families and provide certain services for the psychological welfare of children and their families;
- responsibility for ensuring that every child in the State attends school or otherwise receives an education, and for providing education welfare services to support and monitor children's attendance, participation and retention in education;
 - ensuring that the best interests of the child guides all decisions affecting individual children;
 - consulting children and families so that they help to shape the agency's policies and services;
 - strengthening interagency co-operation to ensure seamless services responsive to needs;
 - undertaking research relating to its functions and providing information and advice to the Minister regarding these functions;
 - commissioning services relating to the provision of child and family services

To contact your local Child and Family Agency social worker click on www.tusla.ie Our Services/ Child Protection & Welfare/ Contact a social worker.

Introducing the new authorised signatory



Ruth Burleigh

The Board of Education is delighted to announce the part-time appointment of Ruth Burleigh as vetting administrator. Ruth has been assisting with vetting administration since November 2013. She has experience of Safeguarding Trust as a parish panel member and vetting administrator for Rathfarnham Parish. She has attended training and has been registered as an authorised signatory by the Garda Central Vetting Unit.

Ruth will have major responsibility for administration of the vetting service. Renée English remains as the second authorised signatory and will continue to provide advice and guidance to parishes. Eimear Ryan will provide vetting advice to schools in her role as Education Advisor but will no longer be an authorised signatory.

All Garda vetting forms should now be forwarded to Ruth at Church House.

Her current working hours are Monday and Wednesday mornings.

Safeguarding Trust Website

www.sgt.ireland.anglican.org

Safeguarding Trust is currently designing a website, www.sgt.ireland.anglican.org. While the site is still being designed, some limited information (see below) is already available.

In due course news items will be uploaded on a regular basis – please be sure to stop by often!

As part of a green initiative, it is hoped that fewer Newsletters will be produced, saving a tree or two.

The website is a work in progress. Currently uploaded:

1. The policy is available to view and/or download
2. Safeguarding Trust newsletters archive
3. Information about how to complete a Garda vetting form
4. The Children's poster with 3 or 4 photo box options is available to download.
Instructions for adding photos are provided.





Vetting News



In 2012 the Church of Ireland Board of Education was selected to participate in the Garda e-Vetting pilot project. There have been legal and technical difficulties but the task group continues to work towards development of an online vetting application system through a secure website. The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 was enacted in December 2012 and it is understood that it will be commenced later in 2014. The Act will place Garda vetting on a statutory footing and a breach of the Act will constitute a criminal offence.

Retrospective Vetting for Members of Clergy in progress

Last year a vetting facility was extended to members of clergy who had not been vetted via the Board of Education since the provision was made available in 2006.

This facility was initially provided to a limited number of dioceses, but has since been extended to include all members of clergy with permission to officiate in the Republic.

At present retrospective vetting is undertaken on a voluntary basis.

Processing of Garda Vetting application forms

In recent months additional members of staff have been assigned to the Garda Central Vetting Unit.

This has greatly reduced the processing period. It is currently taking approximately four weeks for processed forms to be returned to Church House.

Please allow seven to eight weeks in total to allow for in house administration at either end of the process.

Please contact Ruth Burleigh if vetting is urgently required. She may be able to prioritise urgent vetting requirements.



Safeguarding Trust for Junior Leaders 2014



Junior leader training has been developed in response to a perceived need to provide training for young people who make a valuable contribution to many parish children's clubs and groups. A power point presentation is now available for use in the dioceses.

The material is highly interactive and should be delivered by trainers with particular skills in working with the 14-17 year old age group.

If you are interested in delivering the training please contact Renée.



Congratulations Olive!

Congratulations to Olive Good, who provides Safeguarding Trust training and support and carries out parish evaluations for the Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough. She was recently awarded the Certificate in Child Protection and Welfare offered by the Department of Applied Social Studies National University of Ireland Maynooth (NUIM) in partnership with the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) Child Protection Programme.

This new course is designed to develop capacity within the youth work sector to respond effectively to child protection and welfare concerns which present throughout organisations working with children. It aims to develop a more comprehensive partnership approach with the statutory and other relevant services. It is also intended to enable organisations to respond more comprehensively to the safeguarding needs of children and young people and to maintain a child centred focus in this work. Most importantly, the course enables organisations to fulfil their obligations in relation to Children First (2011) and other related national guidance and legislation.

Olive found the course very informative and said that it 'allowed me to update my skills and knowledge which in turn allows me to be more informative when providing training to workers and panel members. It has also developed a network of child protection workers who can support each other and provide assistance when one of us is dealing with a new situation or developing new resources'. She added that the knowledge she has gained from the course has proved very helpful in her other work with the Boys' and Girls' Brigades, in assisting them and some other independent organisations to develop and update their child protection policies.



Left to right Anastasia Crickley Head of Dept. of Applied Social Studies NUIM, Olive Good and Minister for Children Frances Fitzgerald TD.



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The *Safeguarding Trust* policy
can be accessed via
www.sgt.ireland.anglican.org
or
www.ireland.anglican.org/policy