



St Colmcille's Parish Belfast

SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

JANUARY 2023

Now that life is getting back to a level of normality, so too are the activities in the parish and, in turn, the Safeguarding Committee. Since our last update there have been changes in the Committee. Kate Acton and Karen Diamond, who have both served as chairs for the safeguarding committee in the past, have now joined with Fr Conor to make up the Safeguarding Committee. Over the coming year we hope to build on this membership.



Our focus since re-forming has been to support the return of the parish groups working with children, young people, and adults at risk (this is the new term for what used to be vulnerable adults). Since June 2022 we have been working with parish groups to identify those volunteers needing vetted. Once a list was compiled, we either confirmed their current eligibility status to work in these groups or facilitated their recruitment process. To date there are fourteen volunteers for the youth programmes (children's liturgy, parish youth groups, sacramental preparation, and altar servers) and fifteen volunteers for adults (Eucharistic Ministers for the sick and housebound). All these volunteers have undergone the relevant diocesan safeguarding training before they can start to work in these groups. There are a further 9 potential volunteers currently undergoing the recruitment process.

Ensuring best practice as outlined by the diocesan safeguarding office is also within the safeguarding committee's remit. The committee have just completed the annual audit which is a vital tool in monitoring and reviewing the parish's compliance with diocesan safeguarding requirements. As a result of this year's audit, we are in the process of reviewing and renewing the noticeboards in the church and parish hall to ensure that all relevant information on safeguarding and on the use of CCTV and internet streaming is easily available. This will in time extend to the parish website.

On behalf of Fr Conor we would like to thank all parishioners who have signed up to volunteer - especially those who have accepted the added responsibility of leading groups. The numbers above are solely for those working with children, young people, and adults at risk but we are aware that there are other groups up and running again in our parish.

Building and nurturing the parish community is an integral part of our Catholic faith and our parish has long been committed to building opportunities for fellowship and faith development. If you would like to help strengthen and grow St Colmcille's Parish family by offering your time and talents, please make contact with Fr Conor or Noeleen and they will guide you in the right direction.

God's various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various ministries are carried out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God himself is behind it all. Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people! (1 Corinthians 12: 4-11 – The Message)

If you would like to know more about the Diocese's approach/commitment to safeguarding there is a dedicated website - <https://downandconnorsafeguarding.com>



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