

Section 5 Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

Guidelines for empowering children to speak out

Q. 12. When I am making children aware of their right to be safe and giving them the confidence to speak out – what should I tell them?

A. Section 5.3 of the diocesan policy *Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne*, provides specific guidance on this issue -

At parish level, children should be made aware that:

- they have the right to be safe
- they can raise concerns with specific individuals within the parish church organisation.
- if they feel uncomfortable about raising concerns with the named individual(s) within the Church organisation, they should tell someone they can trust and keep telling them until they are listened to.
- they can contact the Diocesan Designated Officer, Gardaí, H.S.E. and that these contact details are on display
- there are contact details for other agencies that they can contact e.g. child safeguarding and children's help-lines
- the codes of behaviour are on display

Consideration should be given to how disabled children can communicate their complaints especially if they have verbal communication difficulties.

Remember how vulnerable disabled children are to abuse.

Additionally, children should be aware of the codes of behaviour including Sections 3.6 & 3.7 of the diocesan policy.

Section 1 of The Parish *Safeguarding Children Policy Statement, Guidelines Roles and Responsibilities* (Dec.2010), is also relevant –

Children will be made aware of the code of behaviour and of the safeguarding procedures, they will also be advised regarding whom they can speak to if they have a concern, and, made aware of the basic rules of the Stay Safe Programme i.e. **“Say No! Get away! Tell someone you can trust and keep telling them until you are listened to.**

Children should be made aware of these guidelines particularly during training/induction.