

# Newsletter

December 2025



## Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of our bi-annual newsletter. Since the last edition of our newsletter there have been two significant changes in safeguarding. The first is that outworking of the governance review of safeguarding is now complete, with the safeguarding team being restructured and new staff appointed, more detail on these changes is contained within this newsletter.

The second important change relates to our revised child safeguarding policy which was agreed by Standing Committee on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2025. It is our hope that this policy will be formally launched at General Synod 2026. This newsletter contains some information on the changes this policy brings and an outline of the next steps in the process.

May we take this opportunity to thank all the members of the clergy, volunteers and staff who work so diligently to ensure our Church is a safe space for children. We wish you a very happy and peaceful Advent.

## Key Contacts

Listed below are some key contacts for the staff working in the Safeguarding Team. Click on the email links below to send an email directly from this newsletter.

Gillian Taylor- Safeguarding Manager for Casework- [safeguarding@rcbcoi.org](mailto:safeguarding@rcbcoi.org)

Anthony Russell- Safeguarding Casework Officer- [safeguarding@rcbcoi.org](mailto:safeguarding@rcbcoi.org)

Niall Moore- Safeguarding Manager for Policy and Training- [safeguarding@rcbcoi.org](mailto:safeguarding@rcbcoi.org)

Alex Kinch- Vetting and Access NI Administrator  
[vetting.admin@rcbcoi.org](mailto:vetting.admin@rcbcoi.org) or  
[AccessNI.admin@rcbcoi.org](mailto:AccessNI.admin@rcbcoi.org)

Sarah MacBruithin- Vetting and Access NI Administrator  
[vetting.admin@rcbcoi.org](mailto:vetting.admin@rcbcoi.org) or  
[AccessNI.admin@rcbcoi.org](mailto:AccessNI.admin@rcbcoi.org)

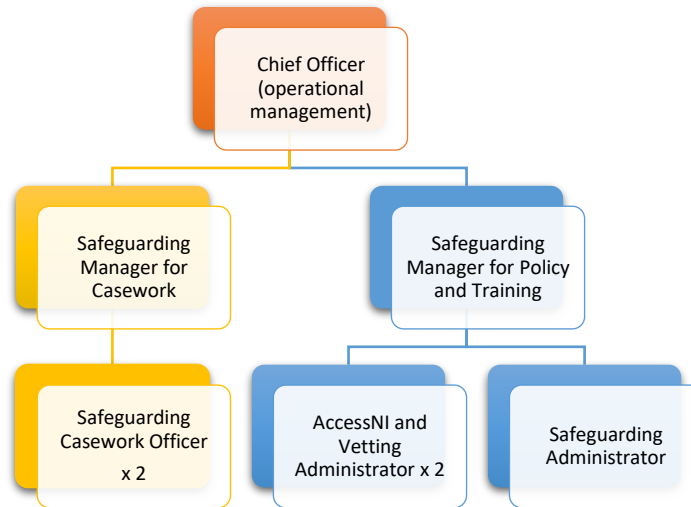
Chiara DeRaffaele- Safeguarding Administrator-  
[chiara.deraffaele@rcbcoi.org](mailto:chiara.deraffaele@rcbcoi.org)

## Subscribe

If you know of someone who wishes to subscribe to this newsletter or if you wish to unsubscribe, please email [chiara.deraffaele@rcbcoi.org](mailto:chiara.deraffaele@rcbcoi.org)

# New Safeguarding Structure

Following a governance review, the safeguarding team has been restructured to operate across both jurisdictions of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Existing staff now have a focus on specialisms with one team focusing on policy, training and proactive safeguarding and another team focusing on casework, as outlined in the diagram below.



## Casework Team

This team is managed by Gillian Taylor who is the Safeguarding Manager for Casework. Anthony Russell is the Safeguarding Casework Officer. If you have any issues related to the safety of a child or adult whether in Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland, or issues relating to persons of concern who wish to take part in church services you can contact Gillian or Anthony by emailing [safeguarding@rcbcoi.org](mailto:safeguarding@rcbcoi.org) or by calling +442897441245.

We are in the process of recruiting for another Safeguarding Casework Officer for the team and more information will be available when the recruitment process is complete.

## Policy and Training Team

This team is managed by Niall Moore who is the Safeguarding Manager for Policy and Training. Alex Kinch and Sarah Mac Bruithin are the Vetting and AccessNI Administrators, and Chiara DeRaffaele is the Safeguarding Administrator.

If you have an issue relating to policy, training or any safeguarding issue that is not related to an allegation whether in Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland you can contact Niall on [safeguarding@rcbcoi.org](mailto:safeguarding@rcbcoi.org) or by calling +353 1 412 5661.

If your query relates to vetting, you can contact Sarah or Alex by emailing [vetting.admin@rcbcoi.org](mailto:vetting.admin@rcbcoi.org) or by calling +35314125624 or +35314125617.

If your query relates to AccessNI you can contact Sarah or Alex by emailing [Accessni.admin@rcbcoi.org](mailto:Accessni.admin@rcbcoi.org) or by calling +44 7849 643083.



# New Safeguarding Policy

Last month the members of Standing Committee have approved the draft Child Safeguarding Policy. This new policy sets out the responsibilities of safeguarding under three standards of protecting, responding and complying. Each standard contains a series of indicators to assist parishes with implementation.

The revised policy is a much shorter document than the current Safeguarding Trust policy and will be accompanied by detailed online guidance which will include relevant procedures, templates and resources. A significant change in the policy is a centralising of the reporting structure for allegations, suspicions and concerns. Under the new policy any allegations, suspicions or concerns relating to a child, will be referred to the RCB Casework team, who will make the initial referral to statutory services, before referring it on to be managed (with the support of the casework team) by the relevant Diocesan Safeguarding Panel. This will mean that parish panels are not involved in the referral process and instead will focus on proactive safeguarding and ensuring that children's activities are safe.

It is our hope that the new policy will be formally commenced in May 2026 and between now and then the policy and accompanying guidance will be graphically designed, edited and legally proofed and a process of induction for members of the clergy, staff and volunteers will be completed. More information and key dates will be available in the new year.

## AccessNI Checks Important Update

The AccessNI team have been incredibly busy due to changes in the system for AccessNI, alongside many dioceses moving to a three yearly vetting cycle. **AccessNI is an important part of safe recruitment, and it is vital to remember that someone cannot take up a role in regulated activity if an Enhanced Check has not been completed and a certificate has been shared with their parish or diocese. Parishes and dioceses must follow up with applicants to ensure their certificate is shared, before commencing their role.**

Since the last Newsletter several changes have been implemented in relation to AccessNI. These include:

- A new Application Pack has been created with a **new pin code**; this pack must be used going forward. Please use the following website to access the latest version of the pack from our website here <https://safeguarding.ireland.anglican.org/access-ni/>.
- Alongside the new application pack, only pages 1,2 and 4 of the pack must be returned to the vetting team in the RCB. The pack in its entirety should be held by the diocese or parish that requested the check.
- In relation to whether certain roles are paid or unpaid, advice from AccessNI is that if someone receives more than out of pocket expenses for their role, this is to be considered a paid role. Please ensure that when you are applying that the correct box on page 2 of the application pack is completed. If you have any queries around whether a role is paid or unpaid, please contact Alex or Sarah by emailing [Accessni.admin@rcbcoi.org](mailto:Accessni.admin@rcbcoi.org) or by calling +44 7849 643083.

# Garda Vetting Update

Like AccessNI, the amount of Garda Vetting checks the team are receiving has been at a record level. We appreciate your patience and support as the process of completing checks adapts to the new vetting system and procedure. It is important to remember that someone cannot take up a role which requires a vetting check until the check has been completed, and a disclosure has been shared with their parish or diocese. For more information on roles that require vetting, guidance for parishes and related forms go to <https://safeguarding.ireland.anglican.org/garda-vetting/>.

All new organisations that register with the Church of Ireland Safeguarding Board, and all existing registered affiliates must receive training from the Vetting Team. This is a requirement of the Garda National Vetting Bureau. Since the last newsletter the team have delivered 12 online training sessions to dioceses, parishes and Church of Ireland schools. More dates are now available to book for this online training and is a requirement for anyone involved in the processing of Garda vetting who hasn't already attended training. The dates are:

- 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2026 at 7pm
- 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 2026 at 11am
- 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2026 at 11am
- 29<sup>th</sup> of January 2026 at 7pm

To book a place, please email your name, your parish or diocese and your role to Chiara De Raffaele at [chiara.deraffaele@rcbcoi.org](mailto:chiara.deraffaele@rcbcoi.org).

**It is important to note, that without a valid Service Level Agreement (SLA) in place and attendance at mandatory training, we may be unable to process your vetting check for you.**

