



Fact sheet: Managing child protection matters

If a child protection concern is reported to the Vicar General, it is essential the safety of children continues to be protected; support is provided to their parents and others who work with them; and that the alleged wrongdoer is treated fairly.

If a child protection concern is reported to the Vicar General, the Vicar General will work with the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office and the Parish Priest (or administrator) or agency head to manage and respond to the matter. The matter should be kept confidential unless and until the Vicar General indicates otherwise.

In addition, each parish and agency should take the following steps:

Steps in relation to children 3 'R's

- Stay calm, listen carefully and patiently.
- **Reassure** them that it was right to tell you. Explain that you will have to inform the appropriate authorities.
- **Record** what they have said as soon as possible after the meeting using their own words as far as possible.
- **Report** as appropriate – contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office and the Vicar General
- Do not speak to other children about the matter until approval is received from the Vicar General

Steps in relation to parents and guardian

These steps should only be taken if the child protection concern does not relate to a risk or concern in relation to the child's parent or guardian

- Provide the parent or guardian of any children affected by a child protection matter with the contact details of the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office
- Seek the parent or guardian's permission before their child is interviewed or otherwise
- Do not speak to other parents or guardians about the matter until approval is received from the Vicar General

Steps in relation to an employee, volunteer, clergy or religious brother or sister who is the alleged wrongdoer

- Due to the sensitivities involved, no steps should be taken without receiving advice from the Vicar General.
- In addition, no steps should be taken to make any investigative enquiries, as the Vicar General will arrange for an investigation to take place.