



RCDO Safeguarding News



SPRING – March 2022

Foreword by Geraldine Allen

Safeguarding Co-ordinator for the Diocese of Westminster

Dear PSR,

As the Confirmation and First Communion classes start again, thank you for the time you are putting in to ensure all catechists are safely recruited, including an up to date DBS check.

The Safeguarding Team continue to work with the new National Catholic Safeguarding Standards agency to ensure compliance to their standards. It is important for us to deliver a high quality service so always welcome your feedback.

The Team have enjoyed the opportunity to speak at some Deanery meetings recently. They provide a useful exchange of ideas and information; we look forward to attending more in the coming months.

I hope to meet you at our forthcoming PSR Conference—watch this space for the details!

Best Wishes,
Geraldine Allen

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WELCOME

To the Spring edition of our safeguarding newsletter, the first of the year 2022.

This year has started very busily for the Diocesan Safeguarding team. The easing of many of the Covid-19 restrictions means that we have been able to start going out for parish safeguarding visits again. Arianna and Maria are performing visits both individually and also alongside members of the Safeguarding Committee who are interested to see for themselves the hard work of the Parishes.

To date, 26 parishes have been visited and more visits have been planned for the months of April and May. These will continue throughout the year to give everyone a possibility to refresh and update their safeguarding knowledge, establish a positive and cooperative relationship with a member of the diocesan safeguarding team, provide an opportunity to ask questions and receive the support needed. The aim is to visit as many Parishes as possible within the next year.

The team are also organising the annual Safeguarding Conference which will take place at the beginning of July, so please watch this space (and your safeguarding accounts' emails!) regularly as details are released. Should the response for the Conference be very high and should we not be able to accommodate everyone in July, we are making additional plans for another Conference in October.

We hope to meet as many of you as possible to repeat, as in the words of two of our long serving PSRs the "...truly wonderful day..." of the last PSRs' Conference held on 8th March 2020 in Pinner.

THANK YOU

4 AREAS of PSR's WORK



These are:

- **RESPONDING TO CONCERNS**

PSRs are the first point of contact for the parish community should anyone wish to disclose a safeguarding concern. The PSRs are hence responsible to check their dedicated SG email address on a regular basis and at least once a week. Should PSRs become aware of any concern they have to pass this on to the central safeguarding team within the first 24/48 hours of learning about the concern. This is a vital area of work in order to assure an appropriate response to anyone in need of support. The email address can also be set up on the PSR's mobile phone as long as this is secured with safety access codes at all times to enhance third parties' data protection.

- **SAFE RECRUITMENT**

The process of securely recruiting anyone who wish to work/volunteer in the parishes with groups of vulnerable like children and/or adults at risk. This process includes the initial processing of DBS applications including ID verification, interviews, and reference requests for example.

- **CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

An incredibly important part of a PSR's work to be carried out with the collaboration of parish priests, activity group leaders, parish admins and any volunteer in contact with vulnerable groups. It is about knowing and implementing both safeguarding policies and procedures whenever a parish activity, especially for children and/or adults at risk, takes place. CSSA (Catholic Safeguarding Standard Agency) is the web site to visit and the guidance "Creating a safer environment" should be a central piece of this work with which every person working/volunteering at the parish should be familiar with. This includes use of social media, photographing and videoing, off-site trips, bullying and more.

<https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/national-safeguarding-standards/national-safeguarding-policy/practice-guidance/> Please click on the link to be directed on the page where to find the above mentioned guidance.

- **ADVANCING A "CULTURE OF SAFEGUARDING"**

This part of the work aims at educating the parish communities with a basic understanding of what safeguarding means and does to keep everybody safe from harm and abuse. PSRs should encourage the community to enrol in safeguarding EduCare online modules by contacting Mr Gabriele Sedda at safeguardingadmin@rcdow.org.uk to be registered and start/complete these safeguarding courses. Also safeguarding literature should be regularly distributed in the parish. This ranges from leaflets to support survivors of abuse with free counselling service (SAFE SPACES) to recognise and responding to abuse (HURT BY ABUSE) and more. A so called "safeguarding corner" in the parishes consisting of a small table, rotating stands and/or a wall plastic bag to keep the literature would be ideal.

All safeguarding literature can also be downloaded from each diocesan parish micro website (About/Safeguarding).



4 AREAS OF PSRs
WORK pdf.pdf

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS:

Please email any concern to: safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk

THE SEVEN GOLDEN RULES TO SHARING INFORMATION

Our PSRs often tell us that they would like to be sure about which, how much and when to share any safeguarding information relating to a concern for example.

The '**Seven Golden Rules' to Sharing Information**' by the Government is a great tool which provides some clarity and guidance in the matter.

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1062969/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf

Please do not hesitate to contact us for any further advice/assistance with this topic by writing to: safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk

SAFE RECRUITMENT: DBS Matters

EBULK VERIFIER GUIDANCE: UK DRIVING LICENCE ISSUES

Not finding UK in the list - occurs when the applicant has chosen the driving licence from group 2 instead of group 1. Click on the link that this wasn't the ID provided then choose the correct 'UK Driving Licence' option from group 1.

DBS UPDATE SERVICE GUIDANCE

DBS processed through another Organisation:

If an applicant informs you that they have an existing certificate which has been registered for the update service, you first need to check if the workforce is applicable to the Church role applied for, and if it is at the correct level i.e. Enhanced with access to the relevant Barred List(s) (if the Church role is deemed Regulated Activity). If this matches, then the Diocese will accept the existing certificate – the original document should be sent to the Safeguarding Office along with the following as normal:

[Applicant Consent For DBS Processing \(DBS 17\)](#)
[Volunteer Registration Form](#)
[Volunteer Reference Form](#)
[Confirmation of ID \(DBS3a\)](#) or [Confirmation of ID \(DBS3b\)](#)
[Safeguarding Self Declaration \(DBS 4\)](#)

Once the applicant's online status has been checked the certificate will be returned to them.

Further guidance on this can be found on the [PSR Resource Area](#).

REFERENCES

References should be requested at the parish by the activity group leader, parish admin or PSR. The references must be checked at the parish to assess the applicant's suitability before sending all the Safer Recruitment forms to the Safeguarding Office. Please include the role description when sending out a reference request; role descriptions and guidance on how to create one, can be found at <https://safeguardrcdow.org.uk/safer-recruitment/roledescriptions/>.

If anyone is having problems logging into the Resource area, please contact Maria mariaeid@rcdow.org.uk or safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk.

CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT:

PILGRIMAGES

In March, we met with Elizabeth Uwalaka who is responsible in the Diocese for pilgrimages and discussed in detail how these are organised to ensure that they are implementing the safe recruitment and safe environment guidelines.

During the meeting, we particularly focused on Lourdes pilgrimages as these often include people considered as vulnerable. Elizabeth provided a considerable amount of information that evidenced the importance they place on good safeguarding practices, including the availability of a trainer that prepares all volunteers with safeguarding training prior to the trips. We were also able to provide some additional advice to the current work of the diocesan pilgrimage team.

Should your parish wish to organise pilgrimages to Lourdes or to other destinations and wish to have any additional support/advice please do contact Ms Elizabeth Uwalaka by writing to: elizabethuwalaka@rcdow.org.uk

DEALING WITH BULLYING

A zero-tolerance approach to bullying must be taken and bullying must always be reported within the Church, whomever the alleged bully and the person being bullied, wherever the bullying is taking place.

When setting up group activities, consideration should be given to producing a statement to say that bullying will not be tolerated, should be reported and that action will be taken. The following statement can be adapted for local use:

“We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our children and young people so that they can develop in a caring and secure environment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in this group/event. If bullying does occur, children, young people or adults should feel confident to tell the group leader or somebody else within the group and can expect action to be taken to prevent the bullying continuing”.

RESPONDING TO BULLYING

- intervene immediately to stop the bullying taking place;
- report bullying to staff, event or activity leaders or organisers as appropriate and where appropriate notify the safeguarding representative;
- make a record of the behaviours and actions taken;
- determine who will investigate the bullying and act (this might include referring to the Police for investigation if a crime is thought to have been committed);
- consider the need to involve the parents and carers or person(s) responsible for those accused of bullying;
- attempt to help the instigators of bullying to understand the impact of their behaviour and effect change.

Source: CSSA – Guidance – Create a Safer Environment

<https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Practice-Guidance-Creating-a-Safer-Environment.docx>

SAFEGUARDING IN FAITH COMMUNITIES

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) has created a brochure and poster providing social media guidance for faith-based groups.

Download the resources: [Social media guidance for faith-based groups](#)

Frequently asked questions

Questions:

Q: Can children's details be shared with a photographer?

Q: Can parish Halls host a toddlers' football club?

Q: When hiring a coach to take teenagers to a retreat, do we need to ask the coach company if their driver is DBS checked or not?

Q: Where can I find a Code of Conduct for young people?

Q: Can parents be part of Adults' ratios for children's activities in the parish?

Q: Can my parish priest be my referee?

For any additional clarification please write to:

Answers:

A: No, children's details cannot be shared with anyone, even with parental permission as they are minors. The parents' details can be passed on to the photographer with their prior consent (GDPR) or even better, the photographer's details can be passed on to the parents who will contact the photographer for their arrangements. If the photographer is going to be the official photographer for a first communion group for example, the parents could nominate one/two reps to manage the communication between the parents' group and the photographer. The photographer should also sign an agreement where it is clearly stated that the photos of children taken will not be shared online by the photographer but passed on to the parents. Group photos are always recommended than individual ones to avoid any eventual manipulation with criminal intent.

It depends first if the parish Hall is a suitable space to run this type of activity from a health & safety perspective. If the activity is organised by the parish, the PSR should carry out safeguarding risk assessments and ensure that volunteers involved are safely recruited prior to the start of the activity including clearance of DBS checks if eligibility applies. If this activity is conducted by an external group and not categorised under the parish activities list, the external group must read, understand, sign, date and implement the requirements of Chapter 16 (Safeguarding) of the 'Hall Hire Agreement' for parishes that can be found on the RCDOW website <https://rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/creating-a-safe-environment/>

A: Please take all the details in advance and contact our DBS team asking for advice by writing to: dbsadmin@rcdow.org.uk

A: The form can be found on the [CSSA website](https://rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/creating-a-safe-environment/), forms library or the RCDOW website, safeguarding section, Creating a Safe Environment <https://rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/creating-a-safe-environment/>

A: No, a parent cannot be involved in regulated activities unless they have been vetted appropriately however, they can stay during the activity but are only responsible for their own child. The child ratio guidelines can be found on the [CSSA website](https://rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/creating-a-safe-environment/), Create a Safe Environment document, page 9

A: The parish priest of the parish where the applicant is applying for a role cannot be their referee however, a priest of a different parish that perhaps the applicant used to frequent could act as a referee for the applicant.

safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk

ADVANCING A CULTURE OF SAFEGUARDING: E-Learning and other sources

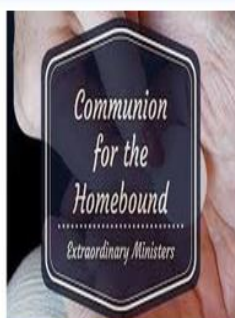
Comprehensive guidance covering Church activity areas can be accessed on the CSSA – Catholic Safeguarding Standard Agency at <http://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/national-safeguarding-standards/national-safeguarding-policy/practice-guidance/> “Creating a safer environment” document.

Below are some examples of areas to look at when creating a safe environment contained in the guidance:

DOES THIS HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH SAFEGUARDING IN THE PARISH???



Family holidays



Taking the Eucharist to the housebound



Cleaning the parish



First Holy Communion memories (photos)



Teaching the liturgy



Arranging flowers for the parish



Online catechism



Kids' Sunday Mass Choir

Is this
“acceptable
behavior”?

Codes of Conduct

- 1) Family Holidays: It depends by the scope of the holiday. Usually family holidays are happy and relaxing times where no major safeguarding concerns are present however, consider safeguarding and report any concern if the family holiday provides signs of possible forced marriage abroad or FGM (female genital mutilation) for example.
- 2) Eucharist to the housebound: Safe recruitment including DBS checks are necessary for people who volunteer in this area.
- 3) Cleaning up the church: This is not a regulated activity involving groups of vulnerable so no safeguarding risk assessment usually necessary.
- 4) Photographing children at First Holy Communion: Taking photos of children during such events requires careful consideration and prior parental consent. Please refer to CSSA guidance ‘Creating a safer environment’ – Chapter 9 Photographing and Filming.
- 5) Teaching the Liturgy: Safe recruitment including DBS checks required before the catechist starts volunteering in this area.
- 6) Arranging the flowers: This is not a regulated activity involving groups of vulnerable so no safeguarding risk assessment usually necessary.
- 7) Online catechism: Remote sessions need careful and correct planning/implementation to protect children. Please refer to CSSA guidance ‘Creating a safer environment’ – Chapter 8 Safer use of technology.
- 8) Kids' Sunday Mass Choir: Same advice as for no. 5 (Teaching the Liturgy).
- 9) Codes of conduct: Lead by example. Appropriate behaviours and boundaries are necessary to set the limits that are necessary to protect everyone and allow people to thrive and enjoy their activities in the parishes in safety.

SUPPORT TO SURVIVORS OF ABUSE

A key feature of the work that we do is to ensure that Parishioners, including children and vulnerable adults feel safe and able to seek support.



We have launched a CHILDREN'S POSTER, which aims to encourage children to speak out and make them feel that our parishes are safe places where they can be heard. It should be displayed alongside the PSR's poster, on the parishes' notice boards.

In addition, we want to ensure that parishioners are aware of the many agencies available to offer support. These include:

[Podcast: NSPCC Helpline's Domestic Abuse Practice Advisors](#)

Learn how the NSPCC Helpline's new Domestic Abuse Practice Advisors support children and families experiencing domestic abuse

[Podcast: Child Trafficking Advice Centre](#)

CTAC team talks about providing a specialist service to professionals worried that a child may be a victim of trafficking

Please promote these services within your Parish.

SAFEGUARDING NEWS

Catholic Standards Safeguarding Agency CSSA **Safeguarding Standards**

There are 8 standards which require church bodies to:

1. Embed safeguarding in the Church body's leadership, governance, ministry and culture
2. Communicate the Church's safeguarding message
3. Engage with and care for those who report having been harmed
4. Effectively manage allegations and concerns
5. Manage and support subjects of allegations and concerns (respondents)
6. Implement robust human resource management
7. Provide and access training and support for safeguarding
8. Quality assure compliance to continuously improve practice

The standards operate as a coherent whole, which together form an overarching framework within which all church bodies are expected to operate. They represent the expected level of practice that is to be applied by church bodies for the purpose of safeguarding the children and adults with whom the Church has contact. The Safeguarding Service are committed to ensure the work they deliver reaches the required standards. More details can be found on the CSSA website.

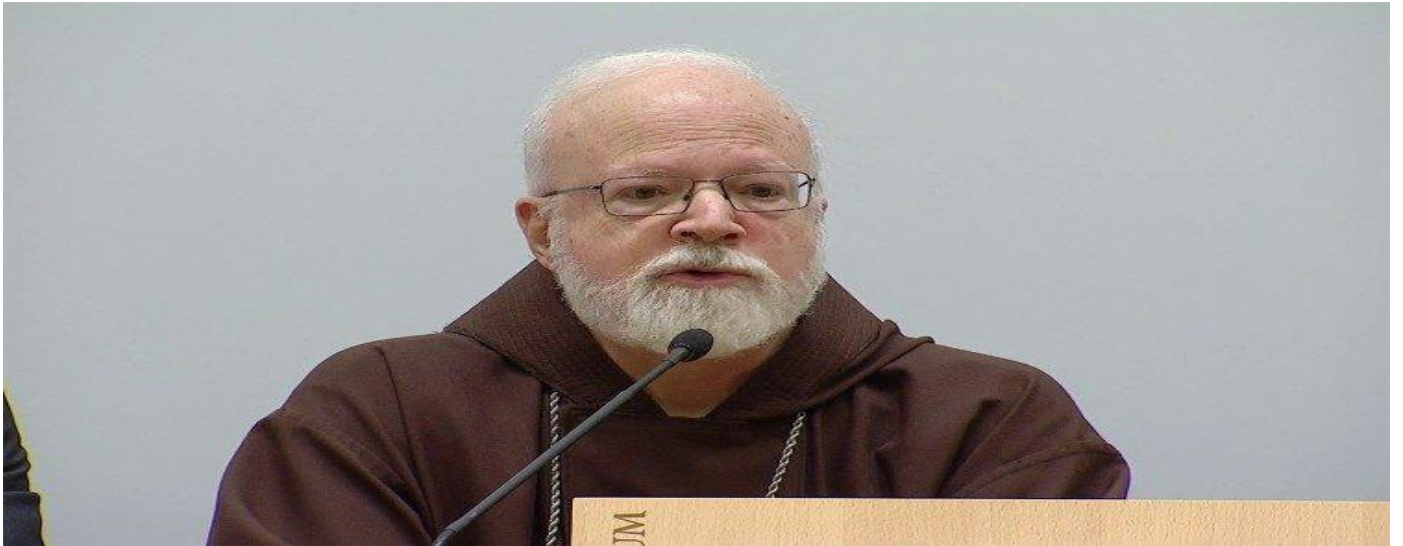
Appointment of a new Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator

I am pleased to announce that Monawara Bakht has been successfully appointed to the role. She will assist in delivering training, supporting the caseworkers and continue to review the historic/open cases. We are pleased that she will now be a permanent member of our team.

Appointment of a new Caseworker

We welcome Frederick Coombs to the team to replace Sarah Robinson, working alongside Rebecca Williams. Freddie is an experienced social worker who is now learning about safeguarding in the Catholic Church.

VATICAN NEWS



Cardinal O'Malley: 'Praedicate evangelium' reinforces protection of minors

The President of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, Cardinal Seán Patrick O'Malley, says the new Apostolic Constitution promulgated by Pope Francis will help the Commission better ensure that the Church is a safe place for children and vulnerable persons.

By Vatican News staff reporter

“For the first time, Pope Francis has made safeguarding and the protection of minors a fundamental part of the structure of the Church’s central government: The Roman Curia.”

Commenting on the promulgation on Saturday of “*Praedicate evangelium*” on the Roman Curia and its service to the Church and World, Cardinal Seán Patrick O'Malley welcomed the new Apostolic Constitution.

He said it reaffirms the Commission’s role “in ensuring the Church is a safe place for children and vulnerable persons”.

“Linking the Commission more closely with the work of the new Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith represents a significant move forward in upgrading the place and mandate of the Commission, which can only lead to a stronger culture of safeguarding throughout the Curia and the entire Church,” he said.

The Cardinal praised the decision to maintain the Commission "as a separate body within the Dicastery that enjoys direct access to the Holy Father and with its own leadership and staffing".

Cardinal O'Malley added that "the renewed and re-affirmed Pontifical Commission will play an increasingly incisive role in ensuring the Church is a safe place for children and vulnerable persons."

Source: Vatican News

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/vatican-city/news/2022-03/apostolic-constitution-child-protection-cardinal-omalley.html>

CONTACT DETAILS the essential

The Central Safeguarding Team:

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Parish Safeguarding Support Officer:

Name: Maria Eid

Email: mariaeid@rcdow.org.uk

Phone: 07874 878 710

Other Contacts:

Catholic Safeguarding Standard Agency (CSSA)

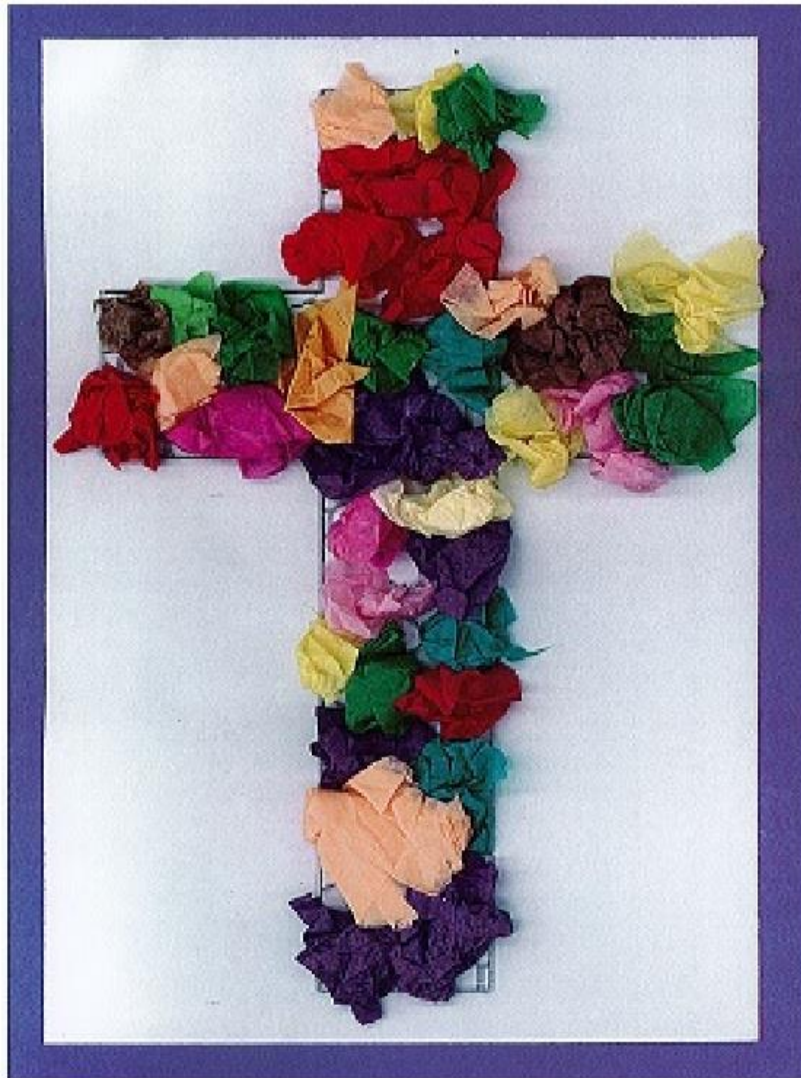
Email: admin@catholicsafeguarding.org.uk

Phone: 020 7901 1920

Website: <https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/>

EASTER IS A SYMBOL OF HOPE, RENEWAL AND LIFE

We thank you for your ongoing support and wish you all
the best at this special time



Images in this newsletter kindly provided by children and young people of RCDOW parishes. THANK YOU to them all and the adults who helped in organising and delivering this lovely parish communities project.