

# Safeguarding Newsletter

Results from 2025 Parish Safeguarding Audits

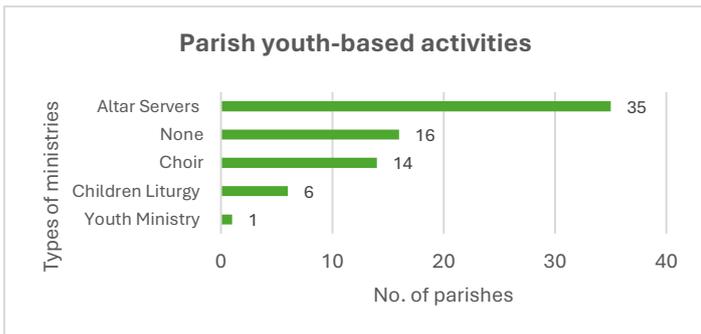
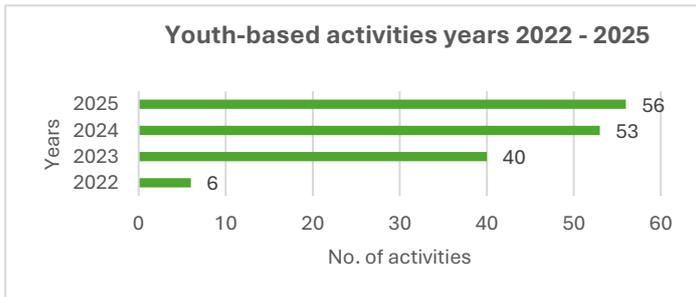
Diocese of Kerry, Issue 11, March 2026

Safeguarding remains a central priority across the Diocese. The results of the **2025 Parish Safeguarding Audits** highlight the strong commitment amongst parishes to maintaining safe environments for children, young people and vulnerable adults.

All **53 parishes in the diocese completed the parish safeguarding audit**, demonstrating continued engagement with safeguarding policies and procedures.

## YOUTH-BASED PARISH ACTIVITIES

Since covid there has been a steady increase in parish youth-based activities. In 2025 there were **56 parish activities** across the diocese, with **altar serving being the most popular activity**.



## SAFEGUARDING DOCUMENTATION

Almost all parishes have the correct safeguarding documentation in the church and sacristy. Important documents include this poster which should be displayed in the body of the church.



## REGULAR SAFEGUARDING MEETINGS

There are **114 Parish Safeguarding Representatives** across the diocese.

Reps are responsible for ensuring that youth-based activities are safe for children and compliant with the guidance from our safeguarding policy.

It is a requirement for Parish Reps to meet with Parish Priest/Moderator **3 times a year**. **20 parishes met this requirement in 2025**.

Regular safeguarding meetings are important for:

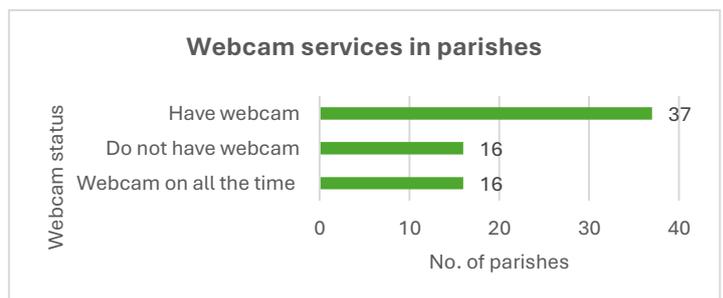
- Monitoring safeguarding practice
- Reviewing vetting and training records
- Completing annual parish audit



## WEBCAM AND STREAMING IN CHURCHES

37 parishes have webcam services available in their churches. **16 parishes reported that the webcam is on continuously**.

**Webcams should not stream continuously.** Streaming should only be during Masses and liturgical services, and should be turned off when the ceremony is over. It is important for Parish Pastoral Councils to review the document 'Data Protection Guidelines for Webcams and Streaming of Ceremonies. Diocese of Kerry.'

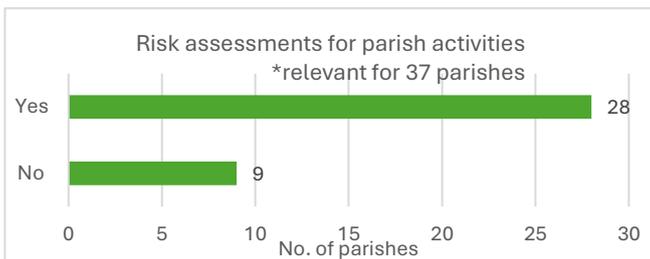


## RISK ASSESSMENTS

A risk assessment for each parish activity involving children must be reviewed on an annual basis. **In 28 parishes, Parish Reps have met with Group Leaders to complete risk assessments.**

Risk assessments look at an activity from start to finish, helping Group Leaders think through each stage and identify anything that could pose a risk to children. By planning and putting appropriate safeguards in place, these assessments help ensure activities run smoothly, safely, and in line with good safeguarding practice.

**Parishes that have not yet reviewed their risk assessments need to prioritise them.**



## VETTING AND TRAINING IN 2025

**210 parish vetting applications were processed.**

**191 people attended Safeguarding Children Training.**

Participants included: Priests, Deacons, Parish Reps, Sacristans, Parish Secretaries, Altar Servers Supervisors, Choir Leaders, Children Liturgy Leaders, Lay Pastoral Leaders, Primary and Secondary School Co-ordinators and Youth Ministry Leaders.

**53 people attended Adults At-Risk of Abuse Training.**

Participants included: Priests, Deacons, Eucharistic Ministers and Lay Pastoral Leaders.

## AREAS OF FOCUS FOR 2026

To continue strengthening safeguarding practices across the diocese, this year we will focus on:

- 1. Ensuring Parish Representatives meet with the Priest/Moderator three times per year.** Jacklyn McCarthy, Director of Safeguarding, will send out a reminder and agenda for these meetings to Reps and Parishes.
- 2. Completing risk assessments for parish youth-based activities in May of this year.** A reminder will be sent to all Reps and Parishes to arrange this meeting. Jacklyn is available to help with the completion of the risk assessments.
- 3. Reviewing webcam usage to ensure services are only streamed during Mass times.** Notice has been sent to all parishes requesting Parish Pastoral Councils to review this practice and the associated guidelines.
- 4. Continuing to update Vetting and attend Safeguarding Training** for all relevant roles in the diocese.

## MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR OF SAFEGUARDING

On behalf of our Diocesan Safeguarding Committee, I would like to sincerely **thank all parishes for completing their Safeguarding Audit.** Your cooperation and commitment help ensure that safeguarding remains a strong and active priority across our parish communities. We were also delighted to see the **largest attendance recorded at safeguarding training last year**, and we extend our gratitude to everyone who took the time to participate. **A special word of thanks to our Parish Safeguarding Representatives and Priests** for their continued care, dedication, and support in promoting and upholding safeguarding in their parishes.