

AN INVITATION FROM THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW GROUP (IRG) TO MEET WITH THEM

SATURDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2019 FROM 11.00

**ST MATTHEW'S PARISH CHURCH HALL, GRASSYARDS ROAD,
KILMARNOCK, KA3 7SH**

“A Conversation about Safeguarding”

This letter invites you to an open meeting with members of the IRG and the Diocesan Safeguarding team.

You may be aware that the IRG (Independent Review Group) was established by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland following the publication of the McLellan Commission Report which reviewed safeguarding policies, procedure and practice.

The IRG was tasked with scrutinising the progress of the implementation of the McLellan recommendations in the Catholic Church in Scotland. Its first report has just been published. It shows that a good start has been made but that there is much still to do to ensure that safeguarding is understood as a core part of the mission of the church.

As part of its ongoing work the IRG has, therefore, approached all dioceses to collaborate in hosting some open meetings. These will provide information about the work of the IRG and, more importantly, hear ideas from all parts of the church about how to progress a shared understanding of safeguarding and improve the church's approach to all aspects of safeguarding. This includes the church's response to those who have been hurt by abuse.

These are short gatherings which we hope will be a listening exercise in which everyone can have a voice. With that in mind they may not be the best place for you to raise specific grievances or concerns. If you do wish to attend, however, there will be information about sources of advice and help. Diocesan staff and members of the IRG will do their best to respond separately to any individual concerns or issues. There will be a mechanism for leaving comments and feedback for those who do not want to speak.

Finally, these meetings are a small part of the work of the IRG. It is the responsibility of the church to continue the work of making the church safe for all. It is our fervent hope, however, that your part in these conversations will provide much wisdom and impetus to help that journey.

We look forward to meeting with you.

Lisa Markham - Independent Review Group
(on behalf of Baroness Helen Liddell Chair and IRG members)