

# Newsletter

Latest News from the National Office for Safeguarding Children in  
the Catholic Church in Ireland

December 2014



## National Office Staff

Chief Executive Officer [Teresa Devlin](#)

Training Manager [Niall Moore](#)

Administrators [Ann Doyle](#)  
[Imelda Ashe](#)

Advice and Support Sister Colette Stevenson

Independent Reviewers Peter Kieran  
Eamon McTernan  
David Foley  
Jacqueline O'Connor  
Kevin O'Farrell  
Patricia Molony  
Tom O'Donnell

## Welcome

After a very busy Autumn, we welcome you to our final newsletter of 2014.

It is important in the run up to the new year that we reflect on the work of the last three months and share the Board's plans for the coming months.

For more information on our activities please log onto our website [www.safeguarding.ie](http://www.safeguarding.ie)



## CEO's Report

2014 has been a very busy year for the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland. During the course of the year we have completed 36 reviews of safeguarding practice, 27 of these have already been placed in the public domain. The remaining 9 will be released by the Orders and Congregations early in 2015.

In addition, we have completed the second year of our 3 year training strategy, and this year national office staff have directly delivered unique training programmes to 691 volunteers and church personnel with key roles in safeguarding. This number has been achieved through the delivery of 10 national training days, 13 training days in local parishes and congregations and 6 days in houses and colleges of formation. This number does not include local training (full day safeguarding training and information sessions) delivered by local trainers who are registered by the National Board. Alongside this, the office has supported the Bishops Conferences of Ireland and Chile in organising the 2014 Anglophone Conference in Rome in July 2014. Most importantly we initiated a review of Safeguarding Children, Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland. Full details are referenced below. It is our hope that the process of rewriting, consulting and redrafting will be complete by June 2015 so that the revised standards will be adopted by all Church Authorities in July 2015.

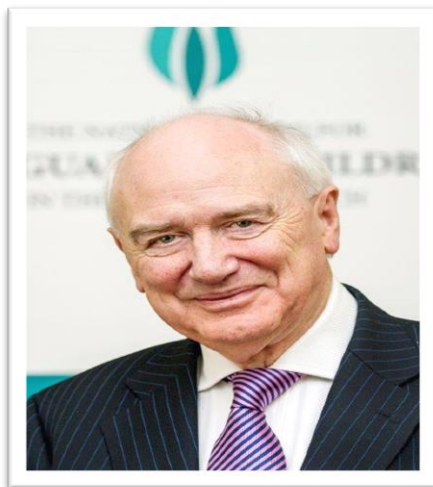
It is important at the end of my first year in office that I publicly acknowledge the quality and hard work of the National Office staff – Ann Doyle, Imelda Ashe, Niall Moore, Peter Kieran and volunteer Sr Colette Stevenson. In addition I want to thank Grace Kelly, our project manager, members of the National Case Management Reference Group, the reviewers of safeguarding practice and the training tutors, who all contribute so much to our collective efforts in making the Catholic Church a safe place for children.

Finally I wish to acknowledge the governance and leadership shown by the National Board, led by John Morgan. The support and commitment of the Board members should be acknowledged by the Church as an affirmation of their desire to ensure the implementation and maintenance of best practice standards in child safeguarding.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teresa Devlin".

Teresa Devlin

Chief Executive Officer



# Revision of Safeguarding Children – Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church In Ireland

All eight working groups have been convened and as a consequence the following documents have been produced in draft form:

- Overarching Child Safeguarding Policy for the Catholic Church in Ireland
- Standard 1- Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments
- Standard 2- Responding and reporting allegations of abuse
- Standard 3- Care of the Complainant
- Standard 4- Care and Management of the Respondent
- Standard 5- Training
- Standard 6- Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message
- Standard 7- Implementation and Monitoring

All of these documents are available in draft form for review by contacting [Grace.kelly@safeguarding.ie](mailto:Grace.kelly@safeguarding.ie)  
A series of consultation meetings are taking place with TUSLA; DHSSPSNI; Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland; An Garda Síochána; PSNI; Survivors of abuse; One in Four; Towards Healing; Accused priests and religious; parents and Children.

The proposed timeframe is as follows:

- Consultation with internal and external groups and redrafting – December – March 2015
- Legal proofing by canon and civil lawyer – February 2015
- Submission to Bishops Conference; CORI and IMU – draft standards and Guidance – March 2015
- 6 week consultation by Bishops Conference; CORI and IMU
- Responses to the Board for revision and final drafting – mid April 2015
- Final draft editing and printing June 2015
- Presentation for adoption – end June 2015
- Training and Induction – July- October 2015

## Reviews into Safeguarding Practice

All 26 Dioceses have now been reviewed and reviews of Religious Orders/Congregations are in process.

Invitations to conduct a review of safeguarding practice need to be made in writing to Teresa Devlin, CEO. A full list of completed reviews will be published on NBSCCCI website at end of June 2015 when the current review process will cease.

# Vetting Legislation -ROI

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Bill 2012 has been delayed. Before this Vetting Act could be commenced, a 2013 UK Court of Appeal judgment (T and others v Chief Constable of Greater Manchester) necessitated a review of the disclosure provisions in both the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 and the Spent Convictions Bill. That review has been completed and amendments to the National Vetting Bureau Act 2012 and consequential amendments to the Spent Convictions Bill 2014 are currently being drafted. Pending the amendment of the 2012 Act, an Administrative Filter for Garda Vetting Disclosures has been introduced, which provides that certain minor offences that are over 7 years old are no longer disclosed.

No date has been set for the commencement of the legislation, as this is dependent on the amendments being approved by the Oireachtas. Due to the volume of other legislation before the Oireachtas at present, it is unlikely that the necessary changes in legislation will be considered by the Oireachtas until early in 2015. On that basis, the earliest date that the Act can be commenced is likely to be March/April 2015.

The purpose of the Bill is to provide a legislative basis for the vetting of persons who seek positions of employment relating to children or vulnerable adults. Currently persons applying for such positions are vetted on a non-statutory basis. This Bill will make this vetting mandatory.

Part 2 of the draft legislation sets out the requirements to vet in a number of areas for simplification only those which may apply to Church bodies have been listed below:

**Relevant work or activities relating to children which will require vetting includes any work or activity which is carried out by a person, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having regular access to or contact with children in:**

- 2.3 Any work or activity which consists of treatment, therapy or counselling provided to a child by a person in the course of that work or activity.
- 2.4 Any work or activity which consists of care or supervision of children, unless the care or supervision is merely incidental to the care or supervision of persons who are not children.
- 2.5 Any work or activity which consists of the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities (whether or not for commercial or any other consideration) to children unless the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities is merely incidental to the provision of educational, training, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities to persons who are not children.
- 2.6 Any work or activity which consists of the provision of advice, guidance, developmental, or counselling services, (including by means of electronic interactive communications) to children unless the provision of the advice, guidance, developmental or counselling service is merely incidental to the provision of those services to persons who are not children.
- 2.7 Any work or activity as a minister or priest or any other person engaged in the advancement of any religious beliefs.
- 2.8 Work as a driver of a public service vehicle which is being used only for the purpose of conveying children.

As part of the process to revise the safeguarding standards, new guidance will be issued based on this legislation and will form part of Standard 1-Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments.



# Training

Since the last newsletter all training for this year has now been completed, additional dates for 2015 will be uploaded to the website soon, for updates please follow this link

<http://www.safeguarding.ie/training-strategy-2013-2015/>

## Upcoming Training in January and February 2015

### Contact Details

National Office for  
Safeguarding Children  
New House  
St. Patrick's College  
Maynooth  
Co. Kildare

T : 00 353 (01)5053124  
F : 00 353 (01) 5053026

- **Process of Inquiries for Ordained and Vowed Religious- 8<sup>th</sup> of January 2015-** As part of the training strategy we have asked Fr. Aidan McGrath (Franciscan Friar and Canon Lawyer based in Rome) to facilitate a one day training event for the process of Church Inquiries for ordained and vowed religious. This day will include a presentation of the process of inquiries from the time when allegation is received to its conclusion, and is designed for those members of religious congregations who have a role in this process. To book your place please follow this link <http://www.safeguarding.ie/events/training-on-church-inquiries-for-religious-ordained-vowed/>
- **National Conference – 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2015-** The National Board will host a National Safeguarding Conference in the Sheraton Hotel Athlone, commencing at 5pm with mass at St Mary's Church, Athlone on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February, the conference will conclude at 5pm on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2015. The event will focus on a number of key developments in safeguarding within the Church and will include speakers from a range of backgrounds. To book your place please follow this link <http://www.safeguarding.ie/?p=2560>
- **Training for Safeguarding Committees-** This training has proved immensely beneficial to the members of 13 safeguarding committees who have taken part to date. As this training is delivered locally there is an increased demand for dates and at present we are taking bookings for the delivery of this training in early 2015 and beyond. If you would like to avail of this training please send an email to the Training Manager ([niall.moore@safeguarding.ie](mailto:niall.moore@safeguarding.ie)).