

Newsletter

March 2015



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Welcome

After an incredibly busy few weeks welcome to our first newsletter of 2015.

For more information on our activities please log onto our website www.safeguarding.ie



CEO's Report

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) and office staff would like to thank all who attended our first National Conference in Athlone on 27th and 28th February 2015. The event provided a great opportunity for formal and informal discussions, learning from others experiences and reflection on practice in Ireland.

The conference started with Mass in St Mary's Church Athlone, celebrated by Bishop Francis Duffy (Ardagh & Clonmacnois). Concelebrants were Bishop Denis Nulty (Kildare & Leighlin), Monsignor Steven Rossetti (Gregorian University in Rome), Monsignor Bob Oliver (Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors), Fr. Paul Crosbie (Diocese of Meath) and assisted by Fr. Turlough Baxter (Athlone). The music and beautiful singing were provided by Derek Mahady and the Ardagh & Clonmacnoise Youth Choir. The children, some as young as four years of age, were accompanied to Mass by their parents, who were justifiably proud of their performance.

Friday evening, back in the hotel, the opening address was delivered by Archbishop Eamon Martin who highlighted the safeguarding journey that we are on.

The full day of the conference started with an overview of the forthcoming revised draft safeguarding children standards. The key note address was delivered by Monsignor Steven Rosetti and later, the audience heard from Marie Collins and Monsignor Bob Oliver from the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors. The highlight of the day was the presentation by two young people, Matthew and Euan, who shared their experiences of working with the NBSCCCI on the creation and delivery of a workshop to review the draft standards.

The afternoon sessions included workshops on: *Caring for Survivors; Working with Respondents; Analysis of Diocesan Reviews, and Participation with Young People on Safeguarding Issues.*

Presentations can be accessed by following this link: <http://www.safeguarding.ie/national-safeguarding-conference-27th-28th-february-2015/>



Welcome

The NBSCCCI would like to introduce you to Julia Costelloe who has recently joined the National Office team. In the short term Julia will assist with the 'Reviews of Safeguarding Practice', so that all reviews can be completed this year. Julia is a qualified social worker with significant experience in child safeguarding.

Reviews into Safeguarding Practice

The NBSCCCI is entering its final stage of child safeguarding reviews. A planning meeting will be held with a number of religious orders and congregations who wish to participate in the 9th tranche of reviews on Wednesday, 1st of April 2015 at 11.30am in Maynooth. If you have not yet been reviewed and are interested in attending please contact imeldaashe@safeguarding.ie

We currently plan to complete all fieldwork into the remaining Church safeguarding reviews during 2015, with published reports to follow immediately thereafter.

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

Significant work redrafting the revised standards has now finished and is being forwarded to the Bishops Conference, CORI and IMU in March.

Thank you to all in the working groups who contributed and offered feedback on earlier drafts.

Given the diverse range of ministries and access to children, not all the standards or indicators will apply to everyone. To help you understand which standards apply to which ministries, the NBSCCCI has developed a colour coding system which will be explained in the introductory remarks *How to implement the standards*. Anyone who has ministry with children will be required to apply all the standards. Those who have no ministry with children will be guided as to which standards apply, as will those who have no ministry but who are managing allegations from previous ministries.

When the standards are approved, there will be a series of induction days across the country so that the NBSCCCI staff can assist with your understanding of applicability and implementation.

The current timeframe for introduction of the new standards is:

March 2015 – presented to Bishops Conference, CORI and IMU for consultation.

June 2015 – Responses from Bishops Conference, CORI and IMU received by the NBSCCCI.

June – September 2015 – review of consultation responses and any necessary revision based on comments received; editing and design of final materials.

October – December 2015 – Induction workshops.

January 2016 – Proposed adoption of revised standards.

During the consultation phase, the materials will be reviewed by civil and canon lawyers and statutory personnel in the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS NI) and TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, to ensure compliance with civil and canon law and state guidance.

Training

Since the last newsletter, new dates for training in 2015 have been uploaded to the website. As part of the revision of the standards, a comprehensive induction programme will be delivered in the later part of the year. Additional dates will be included to the training section of the website when they have been confirmed. To book places for upcoming training events and for further information please follow this link <http://www.safeguarding.ie/training-strategy-2013-2015/>.

Completed Training

Since December 2014 the NBSCCCI has delivered the following training:

- **Church Inquiry process for religious**
- **National Safeguarding Conference**
- **Safeguarding Committee Training-** 7 committees (both dioceses and religious congregations) have been trained since the 1st of January 2015.

Upcoming Training

- **22/04/2015- Training for Support People-** This training is designed for new and existing Support People and will focus on the practicalities of the role of the Support Person, including record keeping, dealing with complainants in a pastoral way and understanding the boundaries of the role as distinct from others in the safeguarding structure. To book your place please go to <http://www.safeguarding.ie/training-strategy-2013-2015>
- **13/05/2015- Training for New Designated Liaison People-** This training is for those who are new to the role of the DLP and will focus on the key requirements of the role as distinct from others in the safeguarding structure. To book your place please go to <http://www.safeguarding.ie/training-strategy-2013-2015>
- **27/05/2015- Training for Advisers-** This training is designed for new and existing Advisers and will focus on the practicalities of the role, including record keeping, dealing with respondents in a pastoral way and understanding the boundaries of the role as distinct from others in the safeguarding structure. To book your place please go to <http://www.safeguarding.ie/training-strategy-2013-2015>
- **Safeguarding Committee Training-** This training has proved immensely beneficial to the members of 21 safeguarding committees who have taken part to date. This training is delivered locally at a time and date that suits the members of the committee. If you would like to avail of this training, please send an email to the Training Manager (niall.moore@safeguarding.ie).

Work on an updated training strategy for 2016-2018 is currently being completed. If you have any suggestions for training that you would like to see included in the strategy, please contact niall.moore@safeguarding.ie



Updated on Proposed Legislative Changes

Children First – Republic of Ireland

The Children First Bill 2014 will go through Committee stage after Easter 2015. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs is hopeful that it will be enacted by July 2015 with a plan to commence by January 2016.

The requirements which will impact on the Church include, mandatory reporting and the obligation for all who provide services (including ministry) to children, to have in place a child safeguarding statement.

The Church has already in place, safeguarding policy and procedures, as well as mandatory reporting.

Within the revised standards, there will be an overarching policy and a requirement to have in place a safeguarding plan. This will fulfil the legal obligation stated in *Children First* to have a safeguarding statement.

Vetting – ROI

It is expected that the vetting legislation, National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 will commence in the next few months. The requirements to vet Church personnel are set out in the guidance which accompanies the revised standards.

The NBSCCCI has sought advice from the Garda Vetting Unit (Entitled “Garda Vetting Bureau” after the commencement of the legislation) and has received a legal opinion on who within the Church is required to be vetted. As a consequence of both advices, the NBSCCCI is seeking a meeting with the Justice Minister. Further guidance will be issued following that meeting.

If a Church authority is not yet registered with the Garda Vetting unit and is seeking to do so, the unit (following the commencement of the legislation will be called Bureau) will not accepting any new registrations. Consultation should take place between the Church authority and the diocese or IMU for vetting to be conducted through them.

Northern Ireland

There are no legislative changes in Northern Ireland. However there are plans to revise *Co-operating to Safeguard Children*, DHSSPSNI 2003. The process will commence in 2015. We will keep you informed of any proposed amendments in future Newsletters.

As we come towards the latter half of 2014 the Training Strategy is in the process of being revised to include forthcoming training for 2015. Training which is being developed will take account of recent legislative developments and the revision of Safeguarding Children, Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church.

If you have particular training needs that you would like the Board to address please contact the Training Manager (niall.moore@safeguarding.ie).

Practice Issues

Participation of children in the life of the Church

The Catholic Church in Ireland values and encourages the participation of children and young people in parishes, communities and in a wide range of Christian services. Opportunities should be given for the engagement of young people in services which both enhance the young person's character and benefit others. There are numerous examples of schemes such as the *Pope John Paul 11 Award*, summer camps, Lourdes pilgrimages and Taizé activities which already have good safeguarding practices in place.

A key component of the seven standards is understanding how to create and maintain safe environments. Before creating and participating with a group of young people, a range of safeguarding issues must be addressed which includes:

- Joint consent from the parents/guardians and the young person required, if the participant is under 18 years old.
- If applicable, the consent form should also include media permission for photos, videos and social media.
- Application forms should be completed by the young person.
- There should be a code of behaviour for the adults and for the young people.
- The young person must agree to abide by the safeguarding policy and procedures.
- All activities should be risk assessed and risk management strategies put in place where risk has been identified.
- Those working with the young people must be vetted.
- Young people may also require vetting – see Vetting guidance.
- Careful consideration should be given to how to accommodate children with specific needs.

Comprehensive guidance and templates for all the issues listed above are included as part of the revision of the seven standards. For more information please contact niall.moore@safeguarding.ie



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