

Newsletter



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

October 2018

National Office Staff

Chief
Executive
Officer

[Teresa Devlin](#)

Director of
Training and
Support

[Niall Moore](#)

Part time
Director of
Safeguarding

[Peter Kieran](#)

Administrators

[Ann Doyle](#)

[Imelda Ashe](#)

Advice and
Support

[Sister Colette Stevenson](#)

Introduction

Welcome to the third Newsletter of 2018

During 2018, the National Board communicated with all Church personnel who are on our database seeking permission to retain their data. As a result, the circulation of this Newsletter may not be as extensive as previously was the case. If you are aware that someone who wishes to receive the newsletter is not, can you advise them to contact imeldaashe@safeguarding.ie and we will add their contact details to the database.

This Newsletter provides information on:

- Reflections on the Papal Visit and relevance to Child Safeguarding
- National Safeguarding Conference
- GDPR and Information Sharing and; MOUs and Data Processing Deeds
- Review Methodology and future timetable for Reviews
- Lay Apostolates
- Child Safeguarding Sundays
- Communicating the Church's Child Safeguarding Message - Using the website.

World Meeting of Families, Pope Francis and Child Safeguarding

The National Board is aware of the considerable preparations undertaken by the organisers to ensure that the World Meeting of Families (WMOF) provided a safe environment for children. Recruitment of Host Families, vetting of volunteers and providing child safeguarding personnel in the RDS, Croke Park, Phoenix Park and in Knock did not happen by chance but were possible because of the efforts of the organisers and volunteers. The National Board therefore would like to acknowledge and thank those who worked hard to ensure that children's safety was a priority during the WMOF.

There was considerable media interest in the WMOF and the Papal visit and it would appear their particular interest was highlighting the deficits in managing allegations that are so much part of the narrative of child safeguarding in the Catholic Church. It is easy to become disillusioned and to think that the failures in terms of inadequate responses to allegations are the full story of child safeguarding. No one was terribly interested in what has been effective in turning the tragic reality of previous management of allegations into a better reality today.

Pope Francis himself commended the Irish Church for its robust norms, in his final address to the Irish Bishops.

"A recurrent theme of my visit, of course, has been the Church's need to acknowledge and remedy, with evangelical honesty and courage, past failures – grave sins – with regard to the protection of children and vulnerable adults. Among these, women who were mistreated. In recent years, you as a body have resolutely moved forward, not only by undertaking paths of purification and reconciliation with victims and survivors of abuse, but also, with the help of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Church in Ireland, you have set in place a stringent set of norms aimed at ensuring the safety of young persons. In these years, all of us have had our eyes opened – painfully – to the gravity and extent of sexual abuse and the abuse of power and conscience in various social settings. In Ireland, as elsewhere, the honesty and integrity with which the Church chooses to confront this painful chapter of her history can offer an example and a warning to society as a whole. Continue on this path. Humiliation is painful, but we have been saved by the humiliation of the Son of God and this gives us courage. The wounds of Christ give us courage. I ask you, please, to be close – this is the word, "closeness" – to the Lord and to God's people. Closeness. Do not repeat the attitudes of aloofness and clericalism that at times in your history have given the real image of an authoritarian, harsh and autocratic Church."

The message that we in the National Board take from the anger and concern expressed by survivors and others during the WMOF is that we need to have a renewed vigour when responding to those who come forward with allegations. The National Board has produced a GAP (Guidance and Practice Paper) on caring compassionately for those who have been harmed which will be launched in the coming weeks.

National Safeguarding Conference 2018

The National Board will host its National Safeguarding Conference on the 26 and 27 October next in the Ormonde Hotel, Kilkenny (see map).

The theme of this year's conference is **Be Not Afraid**. Speakers will explore ways of having confidence to engage with complainants, respondent's families and ministering with children with drive and energy.

The Conference will start with Mass in St. Patrick's Church, Kilkenny followed by dinner in the Ormonde Hotel.

To book your place and for further information please follow this link

<https://www.safeguarding.ie/component/eventbooking/national-safeguarding-conference-2018>

GDPR, Information Sharing, MOUs and Data Processing Deeds

As previously noted in our newsletters, the National Board has been actively addressing the requirements under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which commenced on 25 May 2018. The regulations require greater care in the use of sensitive personal data and in the sharing of information.

The following is a summary of actions to date:

- Permission has been sought from personnel, where the National Board is a data controller and retains information on our database, seeking permission to continue to hold their data. In addition we have also contacted specific role holders for additional consent. This includes:
 - Trainers registered with the National Board who are required to retain information for accreditation purposes and also for the sharing of resources across the Church.
 - Tutors registered with the National Board to enable the display of their name and contact details on the National Board's website.
 - Diocesan DLPs and Deputy DLPs to enable their contact details to be visible on the National Board's website so that complainants can access the correct person to report allegations to.
 - Applicants for training courses through the National Board's website, so that their information can be held for financial and reporting purposes.
- The existing MOU and data processing deeds are being revised to make them GDPR compliant. This means that all Church authorities will be issued with the revised MOU and relevant data processing deeds to sign, agreeing to share relevant data with the National Board. This applies to situations relating to Advice, National Case Management Committee activity and formal Reviews of Child Safeguarding practice.
- The National Board is writing to all Church authorities asking them to cease providing the National Board with identifying information when notifying allegations in relation to clerics or religious. To be clear it is a requirement that the National Board is notified of all allegations relating to clerics or religious, this notification now needs to be made **without identifying information**.
- The National Board is preparing Privacy Notices to ensure compliance with Articles 13 and 14 of GDPR.
- The National Board is appointing a data protection officer.
- The National Board is updating its data protection policy and will place this on its website when completed.

Review Methodology

The final draft Review Methodology was approved by the Bishops' Conference at the meeting in June 2018. The methodology has been forward to AMRI for approval.

Revised data processing deeds which are GDPR compliant will be shared with the Bishops' Conference and AMRI within the coming weeks.

Two Church bodies, (Kilmore Diocese and Benedictines in Glenstal) who were reviewed under the revised methodology have placed their Review reports on their websites. These can also be accessed on the National Board's website by following this link <https://www.safeguarding.ie/publications>

Recruitment of reviewers for the next round of reviews will commence in Autumn 2018 and will be done in cooperation with the Irish Bishops' Conference and AMRI.

Websites

It is the responsibility of each Church authority and their safeguarding committee to develop a communications plan, a key part of which is assessing how effective the various methods of communication are at delivering key messages to their target audience.

A major communications tool in this plan is through the Church body's website. Following an internal audit of websites, it is clear that some guidance is needed to assist Church personnel in understanding what is required on each website. There are a number of important documents which must be on the website including:

- The policy statement (Page 8 of the policy document). This should be clearly visible without the need to click into documents to find it.
- A copy of *Safeguarding Children 2016: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland*.
- Tusla Child Safeguarding Statement (only required for Church bodies in the Republic of Ireland).
- Procedures to implement the policy- here there are two options:
 1. If you have developed your own procedures for implementing the policy (not the National Board's guidance). Copies of these procedures should be available on your website.

OR

2. If you take the National Board's guidance as your procedures, this statement (or the equivalent), should be on your website:

'For the procedures to implement the child safeguarding policy, the [INSERT NAME OF CHURCH BODY] follows the guidance of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland available here <https://www.safeguarding.ie/index.php/guidance>.'

An indicator of effectiveness of a website is to test it with a number of people to see how easy it is for them to find the information they need. The National Board suggests that child safeguarding committees should examine their website with the above in mind to ensure it is an efficient and effective tool for communicating the Church's child safeguarding message. In doing so please examine the documents currently uploaded to the website and ensure that all outdated documents, procedures and resources are removed.

Safeguarding Sundays

A number of dioceses and religious institutes have taken initiatives to highlight the positive messages of child safeguarding for their lay congregations. One popular way of giving child safeguarding a focus has been to nominate a particular Sunday to be Safeguarding Sunday for that particular Church body. There is no national agreed date for Safeguarding Sunday, and it is a matter for individual Church authorities as to whether one is organised in their administrative area. However, where these events have been well planned and supported, it seems that the benefits in terms of raising awareness and sharing important safeguarding information have been significant.

The National Board would like to hear from dioceses and religious institutes about your experiences of running an annual Child Safeguarding Sunday, or Safeguarding Weekend (we have come across one Church body that has had a Safeguarding Month), and to receive copies of any resources that you have developed to be used in conjunction with these events, such as special newsletters, brochures or leaflets, liturgies, notes for homilies or addresses to Mass congregations about safeguarding, outlines of information sessions held etc.

Depending on the response we receive, we would like to be able to share examples of best practice (without identifying the Church body, if that is their preference) across the Catholic Church in Ireland; and to provide dioceses and religious institutes that have considered but not yet run such an event with ideas and suggestions that they might find helpful.

Lay Apostolates

Following consultation the National Board has now issued guidance which ensures that any lay apostolate ministering within a Church body has appropriate child safeguarding policy and procedures, as well as adequate insurance in place. The guidance differentiates between apostolates that are part of a national structure and local individually developed ministries who provide good work to children within parishes and congregations.

The National Board is considering developing MOU Associate status for national lay apostolates, so that they can follow *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016* and so that the National Board can offer training and advice to these organisations on good child safeguarding practice.

Local small apostolates will be supported through diocesan and congregational structures.

Guidance Updates

Following recommendations from Church personnel a decision was made to time the guidance updates to coincide with the publication of the newsletter, to assist Church personnel in keeping up to date with the latest developments. A complete list of the guidance changes by date are available here <https://www.safeguarding.ie/index.php/guidance>.

During this quarter the changes include:

- Updated Pope John Paul II guidance and templates
- Guidance on lay apostolates
- Guidance on international missionary safeguarding policies
- Guidance on conducting serious incident reviews
- Template precepts
- Guidance on crisis management.
- Guidance on trainers who wish to be re-registered following a period of absence.

Training and Support

All training and support activities are outlined in the Training and Support Strategy which can be downloaded by following this link https://www.safeguarding.ie/images/Pdfs/Training_Resources/Training_and_Support_Strategy_2017-2019.pdf.

Upcoming training for this year is available at this link <https://www.safeguarding.ie/index.php/what-we-do/advice-on-effective-practice/training>

National Training Delivered Since the last Newsletter

- Crisis Management Training
- Governance for Church Authorities
- Armagh Ecclesiastical Provincial Area Meeting
- Working Safely with Children.

Upcoming Training

14th November 2018-Compassionate Response Training

This training will be structured around the NBSCCCI latest GAP (Guidance Advice and Practice) Paper which will be launched at this training event. Specifically the training day will include presentations centred on best practice in working with complainants.

To book your place please follow this link <https://www.safeguarding.ie/component/eventbooking/compassionate-response-training>

November and December 2018- Ecclesiastical Provincial Area Meetings

Following a successful and well attended ecclesiastical area meeting in Armagh, the next meeting will take place in the Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly on the 31st of October. Dates will also be set for equivalent meetings in the Archdioceses of Dublin and Tuam. Check out this link for upcoming dates <https://www.safeguarding.ie/index.php/what-we-do/advice-on-effective-practice/training>. An email will be sent to all Church authorities and relevant Church personnel in the relevant ecclesiastical area inviting them to attend once dates have been confirmed.

February and March 2019- Train the Trainers Course

Due to demand from a number of Church authorities we have agreed to run another Train the Trainers course for those wishing to become registered as trainers for 3 years with the NBSCCCI. The training will be delivered over 5 days and structured as follows:

- 02/02/2019 and 03/02/2019 (both days starting at 10:00 and finishing at 16:00)- context, group work skills and facilitation skills
- 09/02/2019 and 10/02/2019 (both days starting at 10:00 and finishing at 16:00)- delivering the safeguarding children programme
- 02/03/2019 (10:00 until 16:00)- assessment of each trainer by a tutor from the NBSCCCI and their peers
- Additional Date- Final assessment of the trainer in their local Church body, by a tutor registered with the NBSCCCI at a date a time that suits the trainer.

Cost per person is 1000 euro and those wishing to become trainers need the permission of a Church authority to apply for the course. Booking will be available from January 2019 and attendance at all days is compulsory. Contact niall.moore@safeguarding.ie for further information.

Practice Issue - International Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

There are a number of Principles which should underpin a child safeguarding policy, irrespective of geographic boundaries. These are:

- Gospel Values – Children had a special place in the heart of Jesus (Luke 18:17) and therefore there is a sacred obligation on the Church to ensure that children are welcomed, cherished and protected in a manner consistent with Gospel values and children’s central place in the life of the Church. It would be helpful if reference to the charism of the Church body is included here.
- Children’s Rights – The UNCRC outlines the 42 rights to be implemented by signatories to the convention (including the Holy See and most countries across the world); National Law – Insert here relevant local and international legislation which safeguards children; and Canon Law and requirements of the Holy See- Reference grave delicts against children and norms issued by Holy See.

1. Identify what is abuse - In line with canon and civil law of the country.

2. Outline the commitments you wish your members to honour. In Ireland we have the following commitments:

- Caring for children by creating environments which are safe (this includes codes of behaviour and the safety of children in the physical planning and development of projects (e.g. open spaces, etc).
- Reporting allegations of abuse to the civil authority agencies (Police and Social Services). You may add in something about seeking advice about whether it is safe to report.
- Caring for complaints of abuse through pastoral support and counselling.
- Caring for those who have been accused through offering counselling, but also by ensuring that risk is assessed and managed. Taking appropriate canonical action if necessary to restrict an accused persons ministry.
- Caring for others affected by providing training for all members in relation to good safeguarding practice; offering support; having good communication about your policy and procedures. (Newsletters, resources etc).

3. Set Safeguarding Standards

These will largely be based on the commitments above. You can adapt “Safeguarding Children, Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016” to your local situation. You can access the policy and standards at this link

<https://www.safeguarding.ie/index.php/guidance>

If there are two or more Church bodies ministering, identify who is accountable and what policies will be followed.

4. Get agreement from all members to follow standards

It is important that all members read and understand the policy of your Church body. There should be a personal commitment to following these through the signing of an agreement. The NBSCCCI have a form in our guidance to this effect if you wish to use and adapt it. It can be found in our guidance here

<https://www.safeguarding.ie/roles?task=document.viewdoc&id=305>

5. Put Training and induction in place

All members of the Church body , volunteers and staff must have an understanding of what constitutes child abuse and what to do to prevent abuse as well as how to respond if there is a concern. There must be clear statements about what is acceptable and not acceptable when ministering with children within the congregation.

6. Set out Governance arrangements

- Superior General accountabilities
- Review and evaluate
- Ensure that child safeguarding practice is mainstreamed across all project/programme/organisational reviews
- Local Leader responsibilities
- State how often you will do refresher training with staff.

