

Newsletter

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

September 2016



Welcome

Welcome to the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland's (NBSCCCI) September edition of our Newsletter. We hope you all had an opportunity for rest and relaxation over the summer period.

After a very busy spring, the NBSCCCI staff have been taking time during the summer to undertake work on data protection, retention and purging records, information sharing and to plan ahead for 2017 in terms of training and support. Details of all these issues are located in the body of the Newsletter. In October 2016 we will be hosting our second National Conference. Please ensure you are registered to attend as numbers will be capped and we do not want you to be disappointed. Staff met all the speakers over the last two months and we are excited with the programme which we have planned and will be placed on our website in the coming days. (www.safeguarding.ie). Please note that NBSCCCI's website has been revamped and we hope that information is more easily accessible. Please let us know your views.

The NBSCCCI has met with the Chair of the Northern Ireland Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry to share our Policy and Standards. In addition the Royal Commission in Australia has consulted with the NBSCCCI and has sought copies of the Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards (2016) as well as the accompanying guidance.

National Office Staff

Chief Executive Officer [Teresa Devlin](#)

Director of Training and Support [Niall Moore](#)

Part time Director of Safeguarding [Peter Kieran](#)

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[Imelda Ashe](#)

Advice and Support [Sister Colette Stevenson](#)

Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016

Copies of Safeguarding Children 2016 have been distributed across the Catholic Church. If you require further copies (€10 per copy) please contact imeldaashe@safeguarding.ie as supplies are now running low.

All Church Authorities have been asked to sign a revised Memorandum of Understanding and Data Processing Deed (s) to sign up to their commitment to follow Safeguarding Children 2016. Almost all Church Authorities have now completed this process and the NBSCCI will place a list of constituent members on the website in the near future. If you have not yet signed and wish to do so, please do this and return it to ann.doyle@safeguarding.ie by 19 September 2016.

Child Safeguarding Review Methodology

A consultation document was circulated on 14th June 2016 and again on 17th August, seeking initial views on reforms to the review process for child safeguarding practice. The consultation date has been extended until 5th September, to allow for those who are on holiday. Your views are being sought on:

- Should future reviews by the NBSCCI be conducted in the same manner as the first round, i.e. using consultants who conduct an assessment of compliance against the relevant Standards?
- If a Church authority requests a review, does he/she accept that there may well be adverse findings which have to be highlighted in the subsequent written Review Report?
- If there is an openness to change the way in which reviews are conducted, should the views of complainants be sought and represented?
- If there is an openness to change the way in which reviews are conducted, should the views of respondents be invited and represented?
- If there is an openness to change the way in which reviews are conducted, should the views of children and young people who participate in the Church, and of their parents / guardians, be invited and represented?
- Are there justifiable and defensible circumstances in which a decision might legitimately be made not to publish the full report of a review?

Once responses are received the working group will reconvene to draft a methodology for future reviews which will be presented to the Sponsoring Bodies for approval.



Information Sharing

The NBSCCCI has consulted the Data Protection Commissioner in the Republic of Ireland and as a result, is in the process of developing a Privacy Impact Assessment (will be required under an EU directive coming out in 2017). Once completed, this will be shared with the Data Commissioner (ROI), the Information Commissioner (N.I) and the Church Authorities' legal advisors.

Training

There are a number of training events which are now available for booking online, these are displayed below with links to book online.

- **20th September 2016- *Dublin Ecclesiastical Provincial Area Meeting***

An invitation has been issued on behalf of Archbishop Diarmuid Martin to all Church authorities in the Dublin Ecclesiastical Province, to attend a free meeting which will be co-hosted by staff from the NBSCCCI. The event will take place at the Holy Cross Diocesan Centre, Clonliffe Road, Dublin 3 on the 20th of September 2016 between 15:00 and 17:00. To confirm your place please contact imeldaashe@safeguarding.ie

- **28th September 2016- *Workshop on adapting the NBSCCCI Guidance for Safeguarding Children***

Following a number of requests from safeguarding coordinators, DLPs and members of safeguarding committees, this event will focus on the next steps required to implement the new child safeguarding policy and procedures for the Catholic Church in Ireland. The day will focus on understanding and discussing the following areas:

- What is required in terms of electronic storage or hard copy policies and procedures
- How to decide what needs to be adapted from existing procedures and new guidance
- Who needs access to what part of the guidance?
- Questions and answers regarding all aspects of implementation

The day is tailored to those involved in developing and implementing policy and procedures in each Church body. Usually this role is carried out by the Safeguarding Committee, or Safeguarding Coordinator along with the Church authority.

This training is free of charge. To book your place, please follow this link

<http://www.safeguarding.ie/index.php/workshop-on-adapting-the-nbsccci-guidance-for-safeguarding-children>

- **22nd of November 2016- *Information Sharing and Governance Issues for Church Authorities to Monitor Child Safeguarding Practice***

At the request of a number of Church authorities, we are organising a training day specifically for leaders of Church bodies across Ireland.

The day will include presentations on a number of areas including:

- The strategic role of the Church authority in relation to child safeguarding
- Information sharing between Church bodies
- Visiting religious/clerics and vetting
- Quality assuring compliance with the seven Standards

To book a place for this event please follow this link <http://www.safeguarding.ie/index.php/information-sharing-and-governance>

Training Continued

29th of November 2016- *Child Safeguarding Induction Training for New Church Authorities*

This training day is specifically for newly appointed leaders of Church bodies across Ireland. **This training was previously facilitated on the 05/11/2014.**

The day will cover a range of topics relating to safeguarding including:

- The strategic role of the Church authority in relation to child safeguarding
- Pastoral ministry and safeguarding
- The importance of support and supervision

To book a place for this event please follow this link <http://www.safeguarding.ie/index.php/induction-for-new-leaders>

National Conference

The NBSCCCI will host a Child Safeguarding Conference in the Tullamore Court Hotel, Co. Offaly. The conference will commence on Thursday 13th October 2016 with Mass at 5pm in the Church of the Assumption, Tullamore followed by an opening address and welcome dinner. The conference will continue through the next day (14th October) with speakers from a range of backgrounds focusing on key developments in child safeguarding within the Catholic Church in Ireland.

The cost for this event is subsidised by the NBSCCCI (*and does not include accommodation*) and attendance at the conference is available as two options:

OPTION 1: €75 per person for two days (including welcome dinner) – Starting at 5pm on Thursday 13th October 2016

OR

OPTION 2: €50 per person for one day (Includes lunch) - Starting at 10 am on Friday, 14th October 2016.

To book your place, please follow this link <http://www.safeguarding.ie/index.php/national-safeguarding-conference>

Collaborative Work with Towards Healing and Towards Peace

NBSCCCI has been undertaking joint work with Towards Healing and Towards Peace to develop thinking about what constitutes a compassionate and effective pastoral response to the needs of adult victims of clerical child sexual abuse. This initiative has been taken by the three agencies to mark the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. As Pope Francis reminded us in April 2015 when he was announcing the Jubilee,

In short, the mercy of God is not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality with which he reveals his love as of that of a father or a mother, moved to the very depths out of love for their child. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that this is a “visceral” love. It gushes forth from the depths naturally, full of tenderness and compassion, indulgence and mercy.

Practice Issues: Vetting (Republic of Ireland)

Staff from the NBSCCCI met with Superintendent Sarah Myler and Sergeant Marissa Costello to clarify a number of matters relating to Garda vetting. The following is a summary of points:

- The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 was passed by the Oireachtas in 2012, and was amended by the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain disclosures) Act 2016. The legislation has now been commenced by ministerial order and came into effect on 26th April 2016
- The Act makes it a criminal offence, for a Church authority to **commence** the employment of an employee or engagement of a volunteer (including priests and religious) without first obtaining a vetting disclosure from the Bureau in respect of that person, where that employee or volunteer is undertaking relevant work or activities with children or vulnerable person. Church Authorities are required to ensure that applications for statutory vetting have been made in respect of all such persons **before 31 December 2017**
- Section 21 of the Act, which commenced on 29 April 2016, concerns retrospective vetting of employees, volunteers and others who have never previously been vetted and who are already (i.e. prior to 29 April 2016) employed, contracted, permitted or placed by the Church to undertake relevant work or activities with children or vulnerable persons. Church Authorities are required to ensure that applications for statutory vetting have been made in respect of all such persons **before 31 December 2017**
- A move to E-Vetting is recommended (please contact the Garda Vetting Bureau to set up e-vetting). E-vetting checks take 5 working days
- Visiting priests and clergy can apply for vetting in advance
- Vetting is required in both jurisdictions where a member of the Church ministers across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland
- 16-18 year olds require parental consent prior to being vetted

Contact Details

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For guidance on Garda vetting please follow this link

<http://www.safeguarding.ie/images/Pdfs/Standards/Standard%201.pdf>

Tusla Central Reporting for Allegations against Clerics and Religious

Tusla (Child and Family Agency) have started a short consultation on the benefits of developing a single point of contact for notifications of allegations against priests and religious. If developed, this will form Phase 1 of a single point of contact for all "retrospective" allegations in Ireland, irrespective of the organisation of the respondent.

Notifications will be processed through a Tusla office in Blanchardstown and from there will be forwarded to local social work teams for assessment. The Blanchardstown team will be able to track notifications, similar to the central Garda National Protective Services Bureau in Harcourt Square. There are still a number of matters to be resolved including agreeing a single notification form (which meets the needs of an Garda Síochána and the NBSCCCI) before the project is established. Tusla will write to Church Authorities confirming a start date and contact details for this central reporting office.

Tusla have now stated that they require all allegations, including those against deceased clerics and religious, are reported to them. Their rationale for receiving allegations against deceased members is to allow them to offer counseling to the complainant and to clarify that there is not a case of mistaken identity.