

Newsletter

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

October 2013



National Office Staff

Interim CEO
and Director of
Safeguarding

[Teresa Devlin](#)

Training
Manager

[Niall Moore](#)

Administrators

[Ann Doyle](#)

[Imelda Ashe](#)

Advice and
Support

Sister Colette Stevenson

Welcome

Welcome to our autumn 2013 newsletter.

Since our last newsletter in April 2013 Ian Elliott has retired as CEO and Teresa Devlin has been appointed as interim CEO (in addition to her role as Director of Safeguarding).

The Board members and staff in the National Office would like to take this opportunity to thank Ian for his contribution over a six year period to safeguarding children in the Catholic Church. We also wish him well in his future endeavours.



Thoughts from Ian on the work of NBSCCCI

A video interview is available on the NBSCCCI website focusing on Ian's thoughts on the work of the office. [To view the video follow this link.](#)



National Board of Directors

New directors appointed to the National Board

Over the last number of months the National Board has been replenished with new Directors, we welcome Father Tony Mullins from Limerick Diocese; Mrs Mary Waddell, a former Director of Nursing at the Mater Hospital, Belfast and of the Eastern Health and Social Services Board, Belfast; Mr Jim O Higgins, civil lawyer; Father Paul Murphy Capuchin Friar; and Sister Colette Stevenson former member of staff from the National Office. Further details and profiles of all board members are on the website. www.safeguarding.ie

The wealth of knowledge and experience which comes with the new members, will enhance the work of the Board and the Office and will contribute greatly to our mission around safeguarding children.

The National Office staff wish to thank the existing and new members of the Board for their constant support and help.

Interim Evaluation of NBSCCCI



The National Board has been operational now since 2008; prior to appointing a new CEO it was felt opportune that an interim evaluation of the Board be conducted. This evaluation which is being carried out by David Kennedy and Sr Margaret Joyce, is well underway and it is hoped that a report of their findings will be presented at the end of October 2013. The evaluators sent out questionnaires to all MOU holders. This evaluation does not preclude a more comprehensive review of the Board operations at a future date.

Update on our work

Staffing Issues

Given the resource shortfall until a new CEO is appointed there may be delays in actioning some of the planned initiatives, such as revision of Safeguarding Children, Standards and Guidance. We ask that you bear with us during this interim phase.

Training

Following the extension of the Training Manager's contract until 2016, a three year training strategy has now been developed and will soon be posted on the website. This strategy will outline the proposals for skills based training for all safeguarding roles in the church over the next three years.

The final Training the Trainers programme is being run throughout October and November. Following this there will be 122 registered trainers across the Church capable of delivering the NBSCCCI training programme. In going forward whilst the Train the Trainers programme will not be run again in the foreseeable future, the current trainers will continue to be updated with new training annually and will be supported by the Training Manager and the tutors in each metropolitan area of Ireland.



Review of Safeguarding Practice in Dioceses and Religious Congregations

The reviews are now a well embedded and accepted function of the National Office. The fieldwork of those involved in the fourth tranche have all been completed, initial draft reports written and the process of factual accuracy checking is underway. At the same time the planning for the fifth tranche has started and it is hoped that the reviews of all 26 Dioceses will be complete by April 2014, alongside 4 Religious Congregations, which will bring the total number of Religious Congregations reviewed to 11.

National Case Management Reference Group (NCMRG)

An awareness raising training day took place on 7th March, 2013 to share the independent evaluation carried out into the functioning of the NCMRG. The evaluation was very positive and the report can be found on our website www.safeguarding.ie

As stated in the last newsletter this initiative continues to thrive and prosper. The meetings take place monthly and the requirement is that the Church Leader submits in writing his/her concerns, attends to discuss and receive verbal advice which is then followed up with written advice within 3-7 days. The Church Leader is expected to confirm whether he accepts the advice.



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Practice Issues

Renting or Leasing Church Property

It is a requirement that all groups working with children in the Diocese/Religious Order and/or using facilities owned by the Diocese/Religious Order are insured and that there is a child safeguarding policy in place.

If Church property is rented or leased to a third party (not running a church activity) then there are additional requirements around insurance and safeguarding policies and procedures. The advice is that as part of any rental agreement that the Church establishes, those renting Church Property should have insurance in place in respect of the activities provided. The parish priest or his representative (local safeguarding representative -LSR) should check that the insurance policy is in date.

In relation to safeguarding policies, the advice is that the priest/religious should only allow his/her facilities to be used if the organisation has confirmed in writing that they have a safeguarding policy in place. It is not the role of the diocese/religious order to validate the adequacy of the policy; that is the responsibility of HSE/HSC.

Complaints Procedures

Standard 2 requires that each diocese/religious order has in place a process for dealing with complaints made by adults and children about unacceptable behaviour towards children, with clear timescales for resolving the complaint. NBSCCCI has noted an absence of such a complaints procedure when conducting reviews into safeguarding practice.

In addition there have been an increasing number of complaints received by the National office from survivors about how they were responded to by the diocese/order.

In response NBSCCCI now would like each church authority to draft a complaints procedure which incorporates these two issues.

The complaints procedure regarding how an allegation was dealt with should incorporate a mechanism for a local resolution to the complaint and only if the matter cannot be resolved locally should the complainant be redirected to NBSCCCI.

If you require help with developing a complaints procedure please contact the National Office staff.