



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR  
**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**  
IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

**Private and Confidential**

**Review of Safeguarding Practice**

**in the Archdiocese of**

**ARMAGH**

**undertaken by**

**The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland  
(NBSCCCI)**

**The content of this report is not to be accessed or shared without the consent of**

**Cardinal Sean Brady**

**Date: August 2013**

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## **Background**

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) was asked by the Sponsoring Bodies, namely the Episcopal Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland and the Irish Missionary Union, to undertake a comprehensive review of safeguarding practice within and across all the Church authorities on the island of Ireland. The purpose of the review is to confirm that current safeguarding practice complies with the standards set down within the guidance issued by the Sponsoring Bodies in February 2009 *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* and that all known allegations and concerns had been appropriately dealt with. To achieve this task, safeguarding practice in each Church authority is to be reviewed through an examination of case records and through interviews with key personnel involved both within and external to a diocese or other authority.

This report contains the findings of the *Review of Safeguarding Practice within the Archdiocese of Armagh* undertaken by the NBSCCCI in line with the request made to it by the Sponsoring Bodies. It is based upon the case material made available by the Archdiocese, along with interviews with selected key personnel who contribute to safeguarding within the Archdiocese. The NBSCCCI believes that all relevant documentation for these cases was passed to the reviewers and the Archdiocese has confirmed this.

The findings of the review have been shared with a reference group in redacted form before being submitted to Cardinal Brady, along with any recommendations arising from the findings.

For ease of reference, Cardinal Brady will be referred to in this report as Archbishop Brady when discussing the period of his tenure as Ordinary of the Archdiocese prior to his elevation to Cardinal and as Cardinal Brady when discussing the period following his elevation to Cardinal.

## **Introduction**

At the request of Cardinal Sean Brady, staff from the NBSCCCI engaged in a process of reviewing safeguarding children policy, procedures and practice on the 19th, 20th and 21st August 2013. Over the three day fieldwork period, case files were examined and interviews were conducted with key personnel in the diocesan safeguarding structure. The reviewers also read diocesan safeguarding policy and procedures documents and evaluated these against the 2009 national *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*.

The fieldwork team want to acknowledge the very positive engagement of Cardinal Brady with the review process and his assistance to them. They also want to acknowledge the participation in the review by a range of people involved in safeguarding within the diocese, both employees and volunteers.

## **Archdiocese of Armagh**

The Archdiocese of Armagh serves a geographical area approximately 1341 square miles (3472 km sq), and consists of 61 parishes spanning the counties of Armagh, Louth, Tyrone and Derry. Twenty four of the parishes are located in the Republic of Ireland and thirty seven in Northern Ireland. Two parishes span the border between the two jurisdictions. There are some 221,000 Catholics resident throughout the diocese, served by one hundred and eleven priests in active ministry. This number is supplemented by twenty priests from twenty five religious orders or congregations ministering with the Archdiocese. There are approximately eighteen retired diocesan priests. Three of the religious orders (Marists, Redemptorists and Rosminians) attend to the spiritual needs of three parishes. The Archdiocese serves two jurisdictions, with separate political, legal, administrative, policing, welfare and educational systems. The area is mainly rural, but with a number of urban centres including Armagh, Newry (part), Dundalk, Drogheda, Dungannon, Cookstown, Coalisland and Portadown.

Archbishop Brady was appointed to the Archdiocese in 1996. His predecessors were Archbishops Cathal Daly (1990 - 1996); Thomas O Fiach (1977 - 1990) and William Conway (1963 - 1977). The Archdiocese also has a Coadjutor Archbishop, Archbishop Eamon Martin (appointed in 2013) who is also a Vicar General and in addition there is one other Vicar General.

The NBSCCCI was aware of the HSE *Audit of Safeguarding Arrangements in the Catholic Church in Ireland* (Volume 1, Dioceses Report), dated July 2012, but published on October 11th 2012. That audit covers the period to the end of November 2011 and examines safeguarding children practice in the 24 dioceses that are fully or partly in the Republic of Ireland, including the Archdiocese of Armagh. Safeguarding practices in each diocese are given separate chapters in the HSE audit report and where relevant, HSE findings related to the part of the Archdiocese of Armagh that is in the Republic of Ireland are referred to in this review report.

## **NBSCCCI Reviews**

The purpose of this NBSCCCI review is set out within the Terms of Reference that are appended to this report. It seeks to examine how practice conforms to expected standards in the Church, both at the time an allegation was received and currently. It is an expectation of the NBSCCCI that key findings from the review will be shared widely so that public awareness of what is in place and what is planned may be increased, as well as confidence that the Church is taking appropriate steps to safeguard children.

The review was initiated through the signing of a data protection deed, allowing full access by staff from NBSCCCI to all case management and diocesan records. This access does not constitute disclosure as the reviewers, through the deed, were deemed to be nominated data processors of the material for the Cardinal.

The process involved the fieldwork team reading all case management records of living priests who are incardinated into the Archdiocese of Armagh and against whom a child-safeguarding allegation had been made or about whom a concern had been raised. The reviewers also read some case files relating to deceased priests about whom concerns had been raised, either while they were alive or after their death. In addition, meetings were held with Cardinal Brady, the Coadjutor Archbishop, the Director of Safeguarding, the Chair and members of the Safeguarding Committee, the Chair and members of the Advisory Panel, the Training Co-ordinator and three Safeguarding Information Facilitators, the staff responsible for vetting in the two jurisdictions, six parish representatives, two staff who provide a support service to victims and two staff who provide a support service to accused or convicted priests.

The review included an assessment of the diocesan policy and procedures entitled *Safeguarding – Best Practice in Safeguarding and Protecting Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults* against the standards set down in the 2009 *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*. All other written material provided to the reviewers was evaluated for relevance and accuracy, as was the child safeguarding information contained on the diocesan website.

Reviews into safeguarding have two objectives, to establish how concerns of clerical child sexual abuse have been managed in the past and to evaluate the efforts that have been made to create safe environments for children to ensure their current and future safety. To achieve these two objectives, the review process uses the seven standards outlined within *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* as an assessment framework. The report below discusses the findings of the fieldworkers under each standard. Conclusions are drawn regarding both the effectiveness of diocesan policies and practices in preventing abuse and the ability of the relevant personnel within the diocese to assess and manage risk to children. Recommendations for improvements are made where considered appropriate.

## **STANDARDS**

This section provides the findings of the review. The template employed to present the findings are the seven standards, set down and described in the Church guidance, *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*. This guidance was launched in February 2009 and was endorsed and adopted by all the Church authorities that minister on the island of Ireland, including the Archdiocese of Armagh. The seven standards are:

**Standard 1** A written policy on keeping children safe

**Standard 2** Procedures – how to respond to allegations and suspicions in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

**Standard 3** Preventing harm to children:

- recruitment and vetting
- running safe activities for children
- codes of behaviour

**Standard 4** Training and education

**Standard 5** Communicating the Church's safeguarding message:

- to children
- to parents and adults
- to other organisations

**Standard 6** Access to advice and support

**Standard 7** Implementing and monitoring the standards

Each standard contains a list of criteria, which are indicators that help decide whether this standard has been met. The criteria give details of the steps that a Church organisation, diocese or religious order, needs to take to meet the standard and ways of providing evidence that the standard has been met.

## Standard 1

### A written policy on keeping children safe

*Each child should be cherished and affirmed as a gift from God with an inherent right to dignity of life and bodily integrity, which shall be respected, nurtured and protected by all.*

Compliance with Standard 1 is only fully achieved when a diocese meets the requirements of all nine criteria against which the standard is measured.

### Criteria

No	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
1.1	The Church organisation has a child protection policy that is written in a clear and easily understandable way.	Met fully
1.2	The policy is approved and signed by the relevant leadership body of the Church organisation (e.g. the Bishop of the diocese or provincial of a religious congregation).	Met fully
1.3	The policy states that all Church personnel are required to comply with it.	Met fully
1.4	The policy is reviewed at regular intervals no more than three years apart and is adapted whenever there are significant changes in the organisation or legislation.	Met fully
1.5	The policy addresses child protection in the different aspects of Church work e.g. within a church building, community work, pilgrimages, trips and holidays.	Met fully
1.6	The policy states how those individuals who pose a risk to children are managed.	Met partially
1.7	The policy clearly describes the Church's understanding and definitions of abuse.	Met fully
1.8	The policy states that all current child protection concerns must be fully reported to the civil authorities without delay.	Met fully
1.9	The policy should be created at diocese or congregational level. If a separate policy document at parish or other level is necessary this should be consistent with the diocesan or congregational policy and approved by the relevant diocesan or congregational authority before distribution.	Met fully

The Archdiocese launched its revised safeguarding policy and procedures entitled *Safeguarding – Best Practice in Safeguarding and Protecting Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults* in the Synod Hall, Armagh on 24th November 2012. The formal launch was attended by some one hundred and eighty people. In a foreword to the main document the Archdiocese upholds the right of everyone to be treated with dignity and respect and to be safeguarded from harm and the risk of harm. It goes on to state that *we are even more aware of this responsibility when we deal with children, young people and vulnerable members of society. The principle of the paramouncy of the rights of the child is clearly stated and it is noted that these basic rights are embedded in Gospel values and in international and domestic law.*

The document states that the policy applies to all diocesan personnel and that they are all required to comply with the guidance. The policy and procedures have been produced in a well-structured and accessible format and as well as being available in hard copy format, are more widely available on the diocesan website [www.armagharchdiocese.org/safeguarding](http://www.armagharchdiocese.org/safeguarding). They have been supplemented by an impressive series of explanatory pamphlets which are addressed later in the report.

The guiding principles confirm that the policy and procedures will be reviewed at least every three years. The policy and procedures contain both detailed codes of general conduct for adults and children, as well as conduct in specific settings such as the sacristy or on trips and pilgrimages. They clearly state the Church's understanding and definitions of abuse and articulate the requirement that all concerns must be reported to the civil authorities without delay. The reviewers consider that Criteria 1.1 through 1.5, and 1.7 through 1.9 have been fully addressed.

Whilst the policy and procedures are comprehensive in setting out how to manage risks to children when they are initially uncovered and in the short/medium term, they are less clear in setting out how the Church proposes to manage individuals in respect of whom there are longer term risks. The reviewers saw no reference in the policy and procedures to a protocol for dealing with respondent priests or others against whom an allegation might have been made but where the civil processes have been discontinued. The policy and procedures need to be clearer about the processes for internal investigation by the Church and for the management of those who continue to present a risk to children.

The reviewers have noted the work of the Advisory Panel in this area, in particular the progressive thinking and practice about risk management that is evidenced in the draft documents on the Covenant of Care and on a supervision policy. These need to be finalised, placed in the context of the canonical processes and summarised in the policy and procedures document at its next review. Resource 15 of the NBSCCCI guidance may be of benefit in drafting this. Criterion 1.6 is therefore considered to be partially met.

## Standard 2

### Management of allegations

*Children have a right to be listened to and heard: Church organisations must respond effectively and ensure any allegations and suspicions of abuse are reported both within the Church and to civil authorities.*

Compliance with Standard 2 is only fully achieved when a diocese meets the requirements of all seven criteria against which the standard is measured.

### Criteria

No	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
2.1	There are clear child protection procedures in all Church organisations that provide step-by-step guidance on what action to take if there are allegations or suspicions of abuse of a child (historic or current).	Met fully
2.2	The child protection procedures are consistent with legislation on child welfare civil guidance for child protection and written in a clear, easily understandable way.	Met fully
2.3	There is a designated officer or officer(s) with a clearly defined role and responsibilities for safeguarding children at diocesan or congregational level.	Met fully
2.4	There is a process for recording incidents, allegations and suspicions and referrals. These will be stored securely, so that confidential information is protected and complies with relevant legislation.	Met fully
2.5	There is a process for dealing with complaints made by adults and children about unacceptable behaviour towards children, with clear timescales for resolving the complaint.	Met fully
2.6	There is guidance on confidentiality and information-sharing which makes clear that the protection of the child is the most important consideration. The Seal of Confession is absolute.	Met fully
2.7	The procedures include contact details for local child protection services e.g. (Republic of Ireland) the local Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána; (Northern Ireland) the local health and social services trust and the PSNI.	Met fully

**Table 1**

<b>Name of Diocese ARMAGH</b>		
1	Number of Diocesan priests against whom allegations have been made since the 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1975 up to the date of the Review.	16
2	Total number of allegations received by the Diocese since 1 <sup>st</sup> January, 1975.	36
3	Number of allegations reported to the relevant Police Service involving priests since 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1975.	36
4	Number of allegations reported to the relevant Social Services involving priests of the Diocese since 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1975.	33
5	Number of priests (still members of the Diocese/Order) against whom an allegation was made and who were living at the date of the review.	8
6	Number of priests against whom an allegation was made and who are deceased.	7
7	Number of priests against whom an allegation has been made and who are in ministry.	4
8	Number of priests against whom an allegation was made and who are “Out of Ministry, but are still members of the Diocese”.	2
9	Number of priests against whom an allegation was made and who are retired	2
10	Number of priests against whom an allegation was made and who have left the Diocese/ priesthood.	1
11	Number of priests of the Diocese who have been convicted of having committed an offence or offences against a child or young person since the 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1975.	1

**Footnote:** The term allegation in this table includes complaints and expressions of concern

In the course of their audit of safeguarding activity in the Archdiocese of Armagh from 1st January 1975 to the present, reviewers noted references to total of thirty six alleged victims of clerical sexual abuse during this time. All of the allegations made refer to the period between 1950 and 2000. Nineteen events are reported to have happened between 1950 and 1980 and thirteen between 1980 and 2000. In four instances the dates of alleged abuse are not recorded. There have been no new allegations which refer to abuse having been perpetrated post 2000. The alleged locations vary, but include settings such as parochial house, sacristy and car. The files contain a number of statements from complainants, some in a legal format, but others in the format of a personal statement, about the negative impact of the abuse on their lives.

There has been a considerable time lag in many cases between the time when abuse was alleged to have taken place and the time when it was reported to the Archdiocese. Some nineteen reports were made about events alleged to have taken place over thirty years beforehand, six have been made between ten and thirty years after the alleged event, two within five to ten years and three within five years. In six cases it was not possible to tell from the record. These lapses in time present obvious difficulties for the investigation and assessment of complaints. They may also be indicative of enduring impact on victims and they underline the fact that historically there has been great reluctance on the part of victims to come forward. An objective of the safeguarding project is to create an environment not only to prevent abuse happening but also to ensure that victims and their families feel confident that they can come forward to tell their story, and that responses from the Church will be prompt and supportive. More contemporaneous reporting, will in time, be one of the tests. The reviewers acknowledge the communications efforts, as demonstrated in the body of this report, that the Archdiocese has taken positive steps in the right direction to encourage complainants to come forward.

The records indicate that the referrals to the Archdiocese concerning allegations of abuse date from 1998 (in one case the year is not recorded). Whilst reporting of the allegations to police authorities did take place from 1998 to the present, adherence to time scales is variable in some cases. In other instances the record is not specific. In a number of instances, priests were deceased at the time the allegations were reported. In some cases there were delays in relaying the same information to the relevant child protection agencies. The reviewers have been assured that the requirement to report allegations without delay to the civil authorities is now fully understood and embedded in the diocesan safeguarding project and have assessed the Archdiocese as fully compliant with the relevant criteria in relation to reporting under Standard 2.

The allegations made to the Archdiocese of Armagh include the names of sixteen diocesan priests. Several of the allegations have been and some still are extremely complex and contested. Nine priests (eight diocesan and one who has since been laicised) are still alive and seven are deceased. The reviewers have read the files of all nine living priests, as well as two files relating to priests who are deceased. The reviewers also sampled historical material held in a composite file created from documents assembled following a thorough review by Cardinal Brady of all of the papers related to safeguarding of children left by his predecessors.

In relation to living priests who have been the subject of allegations, the reviewers saw evidence in these cases of notification to the civil authorities, as well as an internal Church investigation and are satisfied that the appropriate decisions were made for those priests who have remained in ministry.

Two priests are currently on long term administrative leave pending consideration of cases submitted by the Archdiocese to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) in the Vatican. In both of these cases, the allegations made reference to periods of time up to twenty years ago. One of the cases was prosecuted and the defendant was acquitted. The criminal investigation in the other case did not result in a prosecution. The allegations remain contested and all proceedings are subject to legal scrutiny. The

Diocesan Advisory Panel, most notably since 2010, has been closely involved in the risk assessment and management of both cases.

One priest was convicted in December 2004 for the abuse of five children and served six years of a twelve year prison sentence before his release. This priest was removed from ministry after allegations were made in 2002 and on foot of a petition he has since been laicised.

Another priest stood aside from his ministry voluntarily for a period of time to enable legal and investigative processes to take place, but has now been re-instated.

In another case there were a large number of allegations. After police investigation, the DPP directed no prosecution. The case was reviewed by the Advisory Panel who recommended, following a number of assessments that he could return to ministry.

The reviewers were informed that there is little information on the receipt and management of allegations in the Archdiocese prior to 1995, with inconsistent filing leading to a lack of clarity about how decisions were made. Cardinal Brady made a commendable decision to gather and document whatever information was available. However the reviewers cannot be confident that the records of allegations made prior to 1995 are complete. The reviewers looked at a small sample of documentation from this period.

From 1996, coinciding with the coming to office of Archbishop Brady, there is evidence of the emergence of a more focused and committed approach to the safeguarding of children and the development of a safeguarding structure. However the reviewers have noted that the file records point to gaps in some key areas. The use of the Advisory Panel prior to 2010 for example, is not always evident in the records (there is no record of any meeting in 2009, and meetings in the preceding two years were not frequent according to the records examined). The reviewers acknowledge a lack of clarity in the available guidance nationally, in respect of risk assessment and monitoring prior to 2008/2009. They would encourage the Archdiocese to put in place risk management plans which lead to effective monitoring in all cases where there are credible allegations against accused priests.

In some case files there are significant gaps in the record. The increased use of assessments is evident. However, the record of activity by the Advisory Panel since 2010, supported by the input of the Director of Safeguarding, has reassured the reviewers that the Archdiocese now has an effective process in place to assess and manage allegations and risk to children and young people. The reviewers were informed that the Advisory Panel changed its modus operandi in 2010, with more emphasis on scrutiny and risk assessment and were assured that all new or re-emerging cases must now be assessed by the panel, which now meets very regularly.

The membership of the Advisory Committee has put a wealth of relevant experience at the disposal of the Cardinal. The Archdiocese has opted for this local model in preference to the centralised NBSCCCI reference group. Members of the Advisory Panel assert that

the advantages of the local model are better local knowledge, more time and a greater capacity to scrutinize and monitor developments in cases. Their priority training agenda is in the area of risk assessment and they have highlighted the need for a standardised risk assessment model.

The reviewers have noted that the Advisory Panel have developed a draft Covenant of Care and a draft policy on supervision, both of which are innovative and when completed and piloted, these should be assessed for application elsewhere. Members of the panel have pointed out that the application of the supervision policy will have additional resourcing implications. They also raised the issue of the interface between safeguarding children and safeguarding vulnerable adults, an issue which has already been the subject of correspondence with the NBSCCCI. It is not within the terms of reference of this audit to comment on a 'vulnerable adults' policy. The reviewers wish to state however that the principle of the paramountcy of the child must underpin the safeguarding policy and procedures for children and young people and they accept that the position of the Archdiocese on this is unambiguous.

The period from 1996 saw the creation of a dedicated filing system for safeguarding documents. The reviewers recommend that the system is in need of re-organisation to bring it into line with the NBSCCCI template for case recording. The safeguarding files are often unwieldy, containing material which is repetitive, or material which has not been properly integrated. Some lack accessible case summaries, case narratives and time lines.

### **Recommendation 1**

**The Archdiocese should set up a formal review of safeguarding files, with a view to standardising the structure, addressing gaps in the record, cross-referencing safeguarding and canonical information and ensuring that all files have summaries and time lines.**

The Advisory Panel is in the process of confirming the safeguarding status of the twenty five religious orders within the diocese. The reviewers saw evidence of a good collaborative relationship and good communication between the Archdiocese and the religious orders which are resident in its area. Each religious order has been asked to make a copy of its safeguarding policy and procedures available to the Advisory Panel for review. The reviewers were told that some five documents have still not been made available, but that this will be followed up. The reviewers recommend that the Archdiocese develop an information protocol with the religious orders to ensure that it is informed whenever an allegation is made or in the event of a priest or other religious being removed from ministry, so that the Archdiocese can take any safeguarding action that is appropriate to its own terms of reference.

## **Recommendation 2**

**The Archdiocese should develop an information protocol with the religious orders to ensure that it is informed whenever an allegation is made or in the event of a priest or other religious being removed from ministry. Information exchange must be based on the principle of the paramouncy of the child. This initiative should be undertaken in consultation with the NBSCCCI.**

In relation to the standards, the reviewers consider that Standard 2, Criteria 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 are fully met. The policy and procedures fully address the requirements to provide guidance on what action to take. The procedures are written clearly and legibly and are consistent with legislation and guidance. The Designated Officers in the Archdiocese have clearly defined roles and profile and processes for recording and storage are set out.

In relation to Standard 2, Criterion 2.5 regarding Complaints, the reviewers consider that this is fully met in the policy and procedures. It is noted that, in addition, a draft Diocesan Complaints Policy covering all areas of service, not just safeguarding, has been considered by the Safeguarding Committee. The reviewers draw attention to the fact that this standard applies to a complaints policy for children and young people as well as adults. There is a need for the Archdiocese to take steps to write the policy in a manner that ensures effective communication with children and young people. Recommendation 3 is designed to enable the Archdiocese to improve on Standard 2, Criterion 2.5.

Criterion 2.6 in relation to confidentiality and the protection of the child is fully met, as is Criterion 2.7 setting out contact details for the civil agencies.

## **Recommendation 3**

**The Archdiocese should design a programme and invite children and young people to become more actively involved in safeguarding awareness, including the design of complaints, referral and communications material for children and young people.**

### Standard 3

#### Preventing Harm to Children

*This standard requires that all procedures and practices relating to creating a safe environment for children be in place and effectively implemented. These include having safe recruitment and vetting practices in place, having clear codes of behaviour for adults who work with children and by operating safe activities for children.*

Compliance with Standard 3 is only fully achieved when a diocese meets the requirements of all twelve criteria against which the standard is measured. These criteria are grouped into three areas, safe recruitment and vetting, codes of behaviour and operating safe activities for children.

#### Criteria – safe recruitment and vetting

No	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
3.1	There are policies and procedures for recruiting Church personnel and assessing their suitability to work with children.	Met Fully
3.2	The safe recruitment and vetting policy is in line with best practice guidance.	Met fully
3.3	All those who have the opportunity for regular contact with children, or who are in positions of trust, complete a form declaring any previous court convictions and undergo other checks as required by legislation and guidance and this information is then properly assessed and recorded.	Met fully

#### Criteria – Codes of behaviour

No	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
3.4	The Church organisation provides guidance on appropriate/ expected standards of behaviour of, adults towards children.	Met fully
3.5	There is guidance on expected and acceptable behaviour of children towards other children (anti-bullying policy).	Met fully
3.6	There are clear ways in which Church personnel can raise allegations and suspicions about unacceptable behaviour towards children by other Church personnel or volunteers ('whistle-blowing'), confidentially if necessary.	Met fully
3.7	There are processes for dealing with children's unacceptable behaviour that do not involve physical punishment or any other form of degrading or humiliating treatment.	Met fully

3.8	Guidance to staff and children makes it clear that discriminatory behaviour or language in relation to any of the following is not acceptable: race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political views.	Met fully
3.9	Policies include guidelines on the personal/ intimate care of children with disabilities, including appropriate and inappropriate touch.	Met fully

**Criteria – Operating safe activities for children**

No	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
3.10	There is guidance on assessing all possible risks when working with children – especially in activities that involve time spent away from home.	Met fully
3.11	When operating projects/ activities children are adequately supervised and protected at all times.	Met fully
3.12	Guidelines exist for appropriate use of information technology (such as mobile phones, email, digital cameras, websites, the Internet) to make sure that children are not put in danger and exposed to abuse and exploitation.	Met fully

The reviewers consider that all three criteria (3.1- 3.3) relating to safe recruitment and vetting are fully met. They were informed that some three thousand people throughout the diocese have now been vetted, which is a significant achievement. There are two members of staff who co-ordinate vetting and recruitment at archdiocese level, one with responsibility for the jurisdiction of Northern Ireland and the other for the Republic of Ireland. Records for each jurisdiction are stored separately.

The Archdiocese has a formal process for registering and vetting visiting priests before they are given permission to exercise ministry and there is a member of staff dedicated to this role. The reviewers were informed that the Archdiocese has had two historical complaints regarding two separate visiting priests, both of whom were deceased before these complaints were received.

Parish representatives play a very important role in the vetting of volunteers and local organisations. The presentation of regular reports to the Safeguarding Committee and the collection of parish level data on vetting also mean that any apparent gaps in local vetting activity can be reviewed. Parish representatives point out that the formal vetting information is in practice supplemented by their local knowledge, which acts as an additional assurance.

Vetting is based on each individual's home address and on their work address. One issue for consideration is how to manage the vetting of individuals who may live in one

jurisdiction and work in the other or who may relocate from one jurisdiction to the other. The reviewers are assured that the current arrangements are fit for this purpose and that this issue is kept under review.

The reviewers consider that all of the criteria relating to *Codes of Behaviour* (3.4 – 3.9) are met in the policy and procedures. Appendix 14 contains a whistleblowing policy. Pages 20-25 provide comprehensive guidance on good practice when working with children and vulnerable adults, supplemented by Appendices 16, 17 and 18 (the latter deals with specific situations such as altar servers and sacristy).

Criterion 3.10 in relation to assessing risks in working with children, is fully met. The standards relating to adequate supervision of children and young people and for guidance in relation to information technology (Criteria 3.11 and 3.12) are also considered to be fully met.

## Standard 4

### Training and Education

*All Church personnel should be offered training in child protection to maintain high standards and good practice.*

#### Criteria

No	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
4.1	All Church personnel who work with children are inducted into the Church's policy and procedures on child protection when they begin working within Church organisations.	Met fully
4.2	Identified Church personnel are provided with appropriate training for keeping children safe with regular opportunities to update their skills and knowledge.	Met fully
4.3	Training is provided to those with additional responsibilities such as recruiting and selecting staff, dealing with complaints, disciplinary processes, managing risk, acting as designated person.	Met fully
4.4	Training programmes are approved by National Board for Safeguarding Children and updated in line with current legislation, guidance and best practice.	Met fully

The Archdiocese has a dedicated NBSCCCI accredited Training Co-ordinator (in post since 2011), who works on the basis of a two day week. The reviewers saw evidence of an extensive training programme, using the standardised NBSCCCI framework (Standard 4, Criterion 4.4). It is a mandatory requirement, stated on page 29 of the policy and procedures that all personnel involved with children attend basic safeguarding training (Standard4, Criterion 4.1). In 2012, forty training events took place, reaching four hundred and fifty one people.

In addition to training at parish level, the Archdiocese has evolved a model for developing parish level Information Facilitators to deliver safeguarding material at local level. The decision was made to avoid calling these posts Training Facilitators, on the basis that information sharing and briefing is more acceptable and creates less resistance than training. Some thirty three Parish Information Facilitators (from a total of sixty one parishes) have been trained. The Archdiocese has commissioned an independent evaluation of training provided using this model. Whilst the report of the consultant providing the evaluation was not complete at the time of the audit, he met with the reviewers and advised that the feedback from those who attended training had been very positive.

The reviewers also met with three Information Facilitators, who described their roles. This model for using local people to cascade safeguarding training is very innovative. The reviewers are of the view that the evaluation of the model should be carefully considered when it has been completed, with a view to the possible wider application of the approach. The reviewers established that to date, training programmes have been completed in thirty parishes. The plan is for completion of the parish programme by the end of the current year.

Training has also been provided to a number of groups, such as the Diocesan Youth Commission, SPRED (Special Religious Education) Catechists, Permanent Deacons, Rainbows Facilitators, Ardee Parish Youth Group, Diocesan Lourdes pilgrimage staff and others. The reviewers have been advised that additional specific training can be made available as required. In addition, some staff have attended training provided by the NBSCCCI. The reviewers were informed that safeguarding training has also been made available by the Archdiocese to some religious orders (Servites, Redemptorists). The reviewers are of the view that Criterion 4.3 is met fully.

The training programme is managed by the Safeguarding Committee and reviewers saw very regular written reports which were presented to the committee between December 2011 and May 2013. The commendable level of training activity in the Archdiocese needs to be captured in an annual training plan based on a training needs analysis. This has not yet been done. However, much of the groundwork for a sound training needs analysis and plan is already in place or under way. The reviewers therefore agree that Criterion 4.2 is met.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**The Safeguarding Committee should co-ordinate training activity and practice within a formal training needs analysis and Training Plan and ensure that an evaluation of the cascade approach takes place.**

## Standard 5

### Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

*This standard requires that the Church's safeguarding policies and procedures be successfully communicated to Church personnel and parishioners (including children). This can be achieved through the prominent display of the Church policy, making children aware of their right to speak out and knowing who to speak to, having the Designated Person's contact details clearly visible, ensuring Church personnel have access to contact details for child protection services, having good working relationships with statutory child protection agencies and developing a communication plan which reflects the Church's commitment to transparency.*

#### Criteria

No	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
5.1	The child protection policy is openly displayed and available to everyone.	Met fully
5.2	Children are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse and who to speak to if they have concerns.	Met fully
5.3	Everyone in Church organisations knows who the designated person is and how to contact them.	Met fully
5.4	Church personnel are provided with contact details of local child protection services, such as Health and Social Care Trusts / Health Service Executive, PSNI, An Garda Síochána, telephone helplines and the designated person.	Met fully
5.5	Church organisations establish links with statutory child protection agencies to develop good working relationships in order to keep children safe.	Met fully
5.6	Church organisations at diocesan and religious order level have an established communications policy which reflects a commitment to transparency and openness.	Met fully

The reviewers saw evidence of a considerable commitment in the Archdiocese to the safeguarding message. This is summarized in a document entitled *Communications Strategy 2013*, which states that it will be reviewed periodically as required, but at least annually. The document identifies ten key objectives (related to awareness of safeguarding issues and policy, promotion of best practice, effectiveness of communication), with associated actions and details of those responsible for implementation. The reviewers saw a number of leaflets and posters which have been distributed, including those entitled *Handbook for Parents and Carers*, *Short Guide for Parents and Carers*, *Information and Guidance for Children, Young People and Parents*, *Safeguarding Information*, *Making Contact with the Designated Officer*, *Information and*

*Guidance for Altar Servers, The Seven Standards of Best Practice in Safeguarding Children within the Catholic Church.* Posters and leaflets for distribution at parish level were also very evident.

The reviewers met with a group of Parish Safeguarding Representatives, who were impressive in terms of the awareness and energy that they expressed about their roles. They conveyed a very strong sense of active, committed lay input into the safeguarding project in the Church. It is clear that considerable effort has been made by the Archdiocese to convey the safeguarding message, and that Criteria 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, and 5.6 are met fully.

Criterion 5.2 is judged to be fully met. In its further development of best practice, the reviewers would like to see the Archdiocese involve children and young people more in the creation of communication materials. The active involvement of children and young people, in addition to specific areas such as improved communication, will strengthen the overall impact of the safeguarding project. This is addressed in Recommendation 3.

The reviewers have spoken by telephone to representatives of the Child Protection services in the HSE, the Southern Health and Social Care Trust and the Northern Health and Social Care Trust and to representatives from the Police Service of Northern Ireland and from An Garda Síochána. All have confirmed that relationships with the diocesan Safeguarding Office are positive and open, and have stated their considerable satisfaction with the quality of communication and information sharing. Criterion 5.5 therefore is met fully.

## Standard 6

### Access to Advice and Support

*Those who have suffered child abuse should receive a compassionate and just response and should be offered appropriate pastoral care to rebuild their lives.*

*Those who have harmed others should be helped to face up to the reality of abuse, as well as being assisted in healing.*

### Criteria

No	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
6.1	Church personnel with special responsibilities for keeping children safe have access to specialist advice, support and information on child protection.	Met fully
6.2	Contacts are established at a national and/ or local level with the relevant child protection/ welfare agencies and helplines that can provide information, support and assistance to children and Church personnel.	Met fully
6.3	There is guidance on how to respond to and support a child who is suspected to have been abused whether that abuse is by someone within the Church or in the community, including family members or peers.	Met fully
6.4	Information is provided to those who have experienced abuse on how to seek support.	Met partially
6.5	Appropriate support is provided to those who have perpetrated abuse to help them to face up to the reality of abuse as well as to promote healing in a manner which does not compromise children's safety.	Met fully

In relation to Criterion 6.1, reviewers have been advised that all parishes can highlight any specific training needs over and above those already provided and that the training needs of specific groups are kept under review. The reviewers agree that this standard is met, but have already noted the need for a formal training needs analysis to be regularly undertaken and reviewed.

Details of safeguarding agencies are published and widely distributed in policy, posters and other safeguarding material and the reviewers have been assured that there is an open process of review and information sharing in relation to safeguarding issues. Criterion 6.2 is therefore considered to be fully met.

Standard 6, Criterion 6.3 is addressed in pages 11-18 of the policy and procedures document. The Archdiocese provides a direct support service for those who have experienced abuse, through a panel of two, a religious sister and a priest, both of whom

have a background in counselling. Whilst this service, which is not a counselling service, has been valuable, the reviewers understand that its uptake has been relatively low. The reviewers have been informed that a lay support person is available, if needed, from the adjoining diocese of Down and Connor. The Archdiocese gives support, both financially and in terms of referral and publicity, to *Towards Healing* and has also identified several community based agencies to which it can refer those who require or request counselling as needed. A leaflet has been produced which has been distributed to all parishes and which is given to victims who come forward, explaining the role of the Designated Officer and the availability of a support person.

There has been, as already noted, too long a delay historically between the occurrence of alleged incidents and the timing of reporting of abuse by victims to the Church. The reviewers recognise the progress that has been made in current practice in the Archdiocese to recognise the needs of victims and to manage allegations sensitively. However a more pro-active and strategic policy for reaching out to, encouraging and responding to victims or alleged victims needs to be in place. The reviewers acknowledge that this is a challenging area of safeguarding policy, which will require careful reflection and innovation. The development of principles for victim outreach, the design of structures based on these to facilitate practice and review of practice, are some of the key milestones. For this reason Criterion 6.4 is judged to have been met partially.

#### **Recommendation 5**

**The Archdiocese should start a process of developing a written policy for victim outreach and support. This should be taken forward in consultation with the NBSCCCI to ensure that learning and good practice can be shared nationally.**

In relation to Criterion 6.5, the reviewers have already noted the emphasis on risk assessment, the draft Covenant of Care and associated supervision policy developed through the work of the Advisory Panel.

The reviewers met with two diocesan priests who provide an advisory service to respondent priests. This is a difficult and demanding role, often working with men who not only face prosecution and loss of good name and status, but who have also been isolated from their vocation, their community, their peers and their families. Whilst the policy and procedures meet the requirements of Criterion 6.5, the reviewers considered that aspects of this service which could be improved, include more formal mentoring for the Advisers, better opportunities for Advisers to network and learn from peers who carry out the same role elsewhere, and the exploration of models for community consultation in relation to the placement/rehabilitation of alleged perpetrators.

## Standard 7

### Implementing and Monitoring Standards

*Standard 7 outlines the need to develop a plan of action, which monitors the effectiveness of the steps being taken to keep children safe. This is achieved through making a written plan, having the human and financial resources available, monitoring compliance and ensuring all allegations and suspicions are recorded and stored securely.*

### Criteria

No	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
7.1	There is a written plan showing what steps will be taken to keep children safe, who is responsible for implementing these measures and when these will be completed.	Met partially
7.2	The human or financial resources necessary for implementing the plan are made available.	Met fully
7.3	Arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with child protection policies and procedures.	Met fully
7.4	Processes are in place to ask parishioners (children and parents/ carers) about their views on policies and practices for keeping children safe.	Met fully
7.5	All incidents, allegations/ suspicions of abuse are recorded and stored securely.	Met fully

In concluding that Standard 7, Criterion 7.1 (which requires a strategic plan for safeguarding) has not been fully met, the reviewers acknowledge that commendable progress has been made in the Archdiocese to develop a sound safeguarding structure. Cardinal Brady has provided leadership and has set out to create an open, participatory and transparent process. The reviewers note that he has reached out to partners in the statutory services in order to do this and that at the same time, he has drawn heavily on the expertise, commitment and energy of lay members of the Church. It is evident that his decision to appoint a Director of Safeguarding in 2011 has brought great focus, organisation and purpose to the project. The reviewers saw an advisory panel, a safeguarding committee, training and a vetting process, support persons and advisers, and parish level representatives who were highly capable and motivated. The Archdiocese has also provided the NBSCCCI with copies of its annual parish audit and of its annual report of its safeguarding office. With all of these elements in place, supported by an emerging data base (with key statistical indicators), the time is opportune for the Archdiocese to take a more strategic view of where its future priorities lie. The reviewers suggest that it would now be appropriate for the Cardinal to convene a facilitated workshop with all of the people engaged in the safeguarding structure, in order to agree on the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and to set out priorities, milestones and time scales in a development plan for the next three year period.

**Recommendation 6**

**The Cardinal should convene a safeguarding workshop in the Archdiocese and lead on a three year strategic safeguarding plan.**

Criterion 7.2 has been fully met. The Archdiocese has stated that financial resources have been made available as required to date and the reviewers have been assured that financial support will not be an obstacle to any necessary actions identified in the strategic plan to improve the safeguarding of children and young people in the Archdiocese.

The reviewers believe that Criterion 7.3 is met through the annual self-audit and the annual report of the Director of Safeguarding. The self-audit of the seven standards is the main process for consulting at parish level.

The reviewers have noted that the Director of Safeguarding and the Coadjutor Archbishop have already begun a process for meeting with Parish Safeguarding Representatives. Criterion 7.4 is therefore assessed as fully met.

The reviewers were shown a safe and secure file storage system, fulfilling Criterion 7.5.

## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1**

**The Archdiocese should set up a formal review of safeguarding files, with a view to standardising the structure, addressing gaps in the record, cross-referencing safeguarding and canonical information and ensuring that all files have summaries and time lines.**

### **Recommendation 2**

**The Archdiocese should develop an information protocol with the religious orders to ensure that it is informed whenever an allegation is made or in the event of a priest or other religious being removed from ministry. Information exchange must be based on the principle of the paramountcy of the child. This initiative should be undertaken in consultation with the NBSCCCI.**

### **Recommendation 3**

**The Archdiocese should design a programme and invite children and young people to become more actively involved in safeguarding awareness, including the design of complaints, referral and communications material for children and young people.**

### **Recommendation 4**

**The Safeguarding Committee should co-ordinate training activity and practice within a formal training needs analysis and Training Plan and ensure that an evaluation of the cascade approach takes place.**

### **Recommendation 5**

**The Archdiocese should start a process of developing a written policy for victim outreach and support. This should be taken forward in consultation with the NBSCCCI to ensure that learning and good practice can be shared nationally.**

### **Recommendation 6**

**The Cardinal should convene a safeguarding workshop in the Archdiocese and lead on a three year strategic safeguarding plan.**

## **Review of Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland**

### **Terms of Reference**

which should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes

1. To ascertain the full extent of all complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the diocese by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 to time of review, against Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and who are ministering/or who once ministered under the aegis of the diocese and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the diocese.
2. If deemed relevant, select a random sample of complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the diocese by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 to time of review, against Catholic clergy and/or religious now deceased and who ministered under the aegis of the diocese and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the diocese.
3. To ascertain all of the cases during the relevant period in which the diocese:
  - knew of child sexual abuse involving Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and including those clergy and/or religious visiting, studying and/or retired;
  - had strong and clear suspicion of child sexual abuse; or
  - had reasonable concern;

and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the diocese.

4. To consider and report on the following matters:
  - Child safeguarding policies and guidance materials currently in use in the diocese and an evaluation of their application;
  - Communication by the diocese with the Civil Authorities;
  - Current risks and their management.

## **Accompanying Notes**

### ***Note 1***

#### **Definition of Child Sexual Abuse:**

The definition of child sexual abuse is in accordance with the definition adopted by the Ferns Report (and the Commission of Investigation Report into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin). The following is the relevant extract from the Ferns Report:

“While definitions of child sexual abuse vary according to context, probably the most useful definition and broadest for the purposes of this Report was that which was adopted by the Law Reform Commission in 1990<sup>1</sup> and later developed in Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Department of Health and Children, 1999) which state that ‘child sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or that of others’. Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child;
- intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
- masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
- sexual intercourse with the child whether oral, vaginal or anal;
- sexual exploitation of a child which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for, or to engage in prostitution or other sexual acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape, or other media) or the manipulation for those purposes of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children which is often a feature of the ‘grooming’ process by perpetrators of abuse.

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<sup>1</sup> This definition was originally proposed by the Western Australia Task Force on Child Sexual Abuse, 1987 and is adopted by the Law Reform Commission (1990) *Report on Child Sexual Abuse*, p. 8.

**Note 2**

**Definition of Allegation:**

The term allegation is defined as an accusation or complaint where there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, or is being sexually abused, or is at risk of sexual abuse, including retrospective disclosure by adults. It includes allegations that did not necessarily result in a criminal or canonical investigation, or a civil action and allegations that are unsubstantiated but which are plausible. (NB: Erroneous information does not necessarily make an allegation implausible, for example, a priest arrived in a parish in the diocese a year after the alleged abuse, but other information supplied appears credible and the alleged victim may have mistaken the date).

**Note 3**

**False Allegations:**

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland wishes to examine any cases of false allegation so as to review the management of the complaint by the diocese.

**Note 4**

**Random sample:**

The random sample (if applicable) must be taken from complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse made against all deceased Catholic clergy/religious covering the entire of the relevant period being 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 to time of review and must be selected randomly in the presence of an independent observer.

**Note 5**

**Civil Authorities:**

Civil Authorities are defined in the Republic of Ireland as the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána and in Northern Ireland as the Health and Social Care Trust and the Police Service of Northern Ireland.