



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

**Private and Confidential**

**Review of Safeguarding Practice**

**in the**

**Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois**

**undertaken by**

**The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic**

**Church (NBSCCC)**

**The content of this Report is not to be accessed or shared without the consent of  
the Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnois**

**April 2011**

## **CONTENTS**

<b>Background</b>	<i>Page 3</i>
<b>Introduction</b>	<i>Page 4</i>
<b>Standard 1</b> <i>A written policy on keeping children safe</i>	<i>Page 6</i>
<b>Standard 2</b> <i>Management of allegations</i>	<i>Page 8</i>
<b>Standard 3</b> <i>Preventing Harm to Children</i>	<i>Page 11</i>
<b>Standard 4</b> <i>Training and Education</i>	<i>Page 14</i>
<b>Standard 5</b> <i>Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message</i>	<i>Page 15</i>
<b>Standard 6</b> <i>Access to Advice and Support</i>	<i>Page 16</i>
<b>Standard 7</b> <i>Implementing and Monitoring Standards</i>	<i>Page 17</i>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<i>Page 18</i>
<b>Terms of Reference</b>	<i>Page 19</i>

## **Background**

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC) 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 was to examine if current safeguarding practice complied with the standards set down within the guidance issued by the Sponsoring Bodies in February 2009, and that all known allegations and concerns had been appropriately dealt with. To achieve this task safeguarding practice in each Church authority is being reviewed through an examination of case records and through interviews with key personnel involved both within and external to the diocese.

The summary findings of the review will be shared with a reference group in redacted form before being submitted to the diocese along with any recommendations arising from the findings. This report contains the findings of the *Review of Safeguarding Practice within the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois* undertaken by the NBSCCC in line with the request made to it by the Sponsoring Bodies. It is based upon the case material made available to us by the diocese. NBSCCC do not have powers of compellability, and therefore sharing of data has been done on the basis of Trust. The NBSCCC believes that all relevant documentation for these cases was made available to the reviewers. This has been confirmed by the diocese.

### ***For Clarification –***

***The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church, NBSCCC, National Board, National Office - all these terms are synonymous with each other and refer to the same entity.***

***Also the term Designated Person is interchangeable with that of Designated Officer or Delegate. A precise definition of the content of the role may be found on Page 55 of Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance document.***

## **Introduction**

The NBSCCC would wish to place on record its appreciation of the openness of Bishop O'Reilly, his Designated Person, and other team members involved in the safeguarding of children in the Diocese of Ardagh & Clonmacnois, and for their commitment to the review process. Prior to arrival of the reviewers, Bishop O'Reilly had placed a notice on the diocesan website announcing that the process was shortly to begin. This simple action illustrated the clear desire on the part of Bishop O'Reilly and others to commit to and support the review process. In addition, Bishop O'Reilly and his team demonstrated commitment to safeguarding in inviting the reviewers in to examine their practice at an early date.

The purpose of the review is set out within the Terms of Reference that are appended to this report. It seeks to examine how practice conforms to standards in the Church at the time an allegation was received and currently. It is an expectation held by the National Board that key findings from the review will be shared widely so that public awareness of what is in place and also what is planned may be increased and with it, confidence that the Church is taking appropriate steps to safeguard children. It is also an expectation of NBSCCC that Bishop Colm O'Reilly prepares a time bound action plan based on the recommendations made in this review.

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

The methodology employed by the reviewers involved reading case management records of living priests incardinated into the diocese against whom a child safeguarding allegation had been made or a concern raised. Case files were examined to form a view of the services provided to complainants and respondents in the area of safeguarding children. In addition, people with a safeguarding role within the diocese, including Bishop O'Reilly and representatives from key outside agencies, such as the Health Services Executive, have been interviewed to provide further evidence upon which an assessment of the current practice could be made.

This report uses the seven standards outlined within *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* as a template for comparisons and drawing conclusions regarding practice. This is followed by a number of recommendations which are offered to the diocese as a means of enhancing their current practice.

Of the nineteen case files made available to the reviewers, only three fell within the scope of the review. The other cases related to deceased priests, and notifications about religious personnel from, or in the diocese against whom allegations had been made. None of those cases fall within the authority of the Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnois and were deemed not relevant by the reviewers.

The three cases which fall within the scope of the review involve allegations against priests who were alive at the time the allegations were brought to the attention of the diocese. Two of the priests involved in these cases have since died. One of these priests, now deceased, was convicted in the courts. Upon examination all files were found to be well organised and contained chronologies drawn up by the designated person. This made the task of reading and assessing the content easier. It would be our view that all the relevant documentation held by the diocese was made available for inclusion in the review process.

Interviews were conducted with Bishop O'Reilly, the Designated Person and his Deputy, members of the Safeguarding Committee, and Parish Representatives. The reviewers also met with the local HSE Child Care Manager, but it was not feasible to meet with representatives from An Garda Síochána (see separate note on management of allegations and reference to An Garda Síochána areas covered by the diocese)

It had been agreed with Bishop O'Reilly that the Advisory Panel appointed to the diocese would not be interviewed during this review. The diocese shares this group with the Diocese of Kilmore and the Diocese of Clogher. It was felt that it would be more expedient to meet with them when engaged in the review of those dioceses rather than at this time; in addition the National Office was very aware of and involved in the setting up of the Advisory Panel, and has positive views of the panel.

## **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*. This guidance was launched in February 2009 and was endorsed and adopted by all the Church authorities who minister on the island of Ireland, including the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois.

Bishop O'Reilly holds the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that children are appropriately safeguarded in the Catholic Church's ministry in the diocese. To assist him with this responsibility he has developed a safeguarding structure led by the current designated person. The Designated Person has officially held this post for two years, but prior to this, in his role as Diocesan Secretary, he offered support to Bishop O'Reilly in the development of a safeguarding structure and in the management of allegations of abuse. The Designated Person oversees aspects of safeguarding, on behalf of the bishop and holds significant information, both in his head and in written format. He keeps the bishop fully briefed on the progress of all safeguarding issues in the diocese.

### **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.*

#### **Policy & Procedures**

In terms of policy and procedures, the Ardagh and Clonmacnois Safeguarding Committee have developed coherent easy to read documents in line with current Church guidance. Guided by *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance*, the Committee have produced a booklet setting out the diocesan policy statement, guiding principles, reporting procedures, how the diocese creates a safe environment – through their recruitment procedures, codes of conduct, health and safety and how they respond to complaints. To support this booklet, there is an “eye catching” child friendly poster pointing all to information on the policy and procedures of the diocese and how to make a child abuse complaint. These clear guidelines on how to report allegations of abuse in the diocese emphasise the necessity of passing all allegations to the state authorities promptly.

In an effort to monitor compliance, the Safeguarding Committee has developed a parish audit, which has been completed for the first time in the latter part of 2010-2011. The information returned to the Committee will now be assessed to ensure that all parishes are acting in accordance with diocesan policy and procedures in relation to safeguarding children.

This approach is laudable. However, like many dioceses, Ardagh and Clonmacnois have not to date completed the Diocesan Audit set out in the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* document and forwarded this on an annual basis to the National Office for Safeguarding Children.

The National Office would encourage the Safeguarding Committee to continue the process of ensuring compliance at parish level, by completing the self audit tool contained in Section 2 of the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* document, to assess compliance at diocesan level, and forwarding a summary of their findings, along with any plans for improvement to the National Office.

**Recommendation 1:**

**The Safeguarding Committee should assess the information received from the parish audit, feed this into the annual diocesan self audit, and assess if current policies, procedures and practice are in line with the expected standards set out in *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance*.**

**Standard 2**

**Table of the incidence of Safeguarding allegations received  
within  
The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois  
from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 up to April 2011**

1. Number of priests incardinated in the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois against whom an allegation or allegations have been made since 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1975 and up to the date of the Review.	<b>13</b>
2. Number of allegations reported to an An Garda Síochána involving priests of the diocese since 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1975 and up to the date of the Review	<b>14</b>
3. Number of allegations reported to HSE (or the Health Boards which preceded the setting up of the HSE, involving priests of the diocese since 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1975 and up to the date of the Review.	<b>9</b>
4. Number of priests of the diocese against whom an allegation has been made and who are living at the date of the Review.	<b>1</b>
5. Number of priests against whom an allegation has been made and who are deceased at date of the Review.	<b>12</b>
6. Number of priests against whom an allegation has been made and who are “Out of Ministry” or who have left the priesthood.	<b>1</b>
7. Number of priests of the diocese who have been convicted of having committed an offence against a child or young person since the 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1975 up to the date of the Review.	<b>1</b>
8. Number of priests against whom an allegation was made and who are in ministry or retired.	<b>0</b>
9. Number of priests who are not of the diocese but who reside within it, and who are known to be the subject of an allegation arising from their past ministry.	<b>2</b>

**Footnotes:**

*The difference between the numbers in 2 and 3 can be explained by the fact that in one case the name of the complainant was never made known to the diocese.*

*In item no.2 & 3 above, one allegation came through the Gardaí, another through the HSE; all allegations reported to the Gardaí and not the HSE related to allegations against priests who were deceased at the time of the allegation and it was presumed that the Joint Protocol would operate.*

*Item 1. 4 alive and 9 deceased at time of allegation*

*Item 5. 9 at the time of the allegation, 3 have subsequently died*

*Item 7. Now deceased.*

### ***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.*

The case files that were examined were all well recorded. This made the task of reviewing their content very much easier. It is clear that a great deal of attention is paid by the designated person and by the bishop, to ensuring that the records are up to date and comprehensive in their content. The present designated person is well experienced in this area stretching back a number of years. He was able to recall advice that had previously been given to the Church that the approach to recording should emphasise the minimum rather than seek to be full in its content. The review of older files in other Church authorities reflects this and has also led to the creation of considerable difficulties in interpreting and assessing the limited content of some files. It is very much to the credit of all those involved in maintaining the records in this diocese that this is not the case here. All the files in Ardagh and Clonmacnois achieve a high standard. However there are some recommendations that we would seek to offer for consideration as to whether they might bring added value to existing good practice if they were adopted.

The content of the files are comprehensive. Last year, the National Board introduced a template for case files and provided training for those maintaining records in safeguarding in the Church. The intention was to establish a consistent approach to the challenging task of recording effectively. It is acknowledged that the records that were examined as part of the review were good but it may be helpful for the diocese to consider adopting the case file template proposed by the National Board for all new cases. Copies of the template are available for downloading from the Boards website [www.safeguarding.ie](http://www.safeguarding.ie).

### **Recommendation 2:**

**Consideration should be given to adopting the case file template, proposed by the National Board for all new cases.**

Emphasis is placed by the Board on ensuring that allegations when they emerge are reported to statutory authorities promptly. This is to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to secure the protection of any vulnerable young people on the foot of the information that has come to the attention of the diocese. As such this task of reporting allegations represents a major part of any assessment of effective safeguarding practice. It is gratifying to record that the diocese has performed well in this regard.

Throughout the files there is an implicit appreciation of the risk that may exist as a consequence of what has been alleged against the respondent or what is known of their past behaviour. The impression that is given is of a developing appreciation and understanding of the nature of the risks posed by individuals who may have caused harm to a child. A great deal has been learned as a result of experience by both the bishop and the designated person who present as being aware of and sensitive to these issues.

There is evidence to confirm that both Bishop O'Reilly and the designated person communicate well with each other on all matters relating to safeguarding concerns. Although the present designated person does a very good job, it is a challenging and demanding role for anyone to undertake. It is even more so if it is undertaken by a member of the clergy. The safeguarding workload in the diocese is not particularly high but it exists. The possibility of a suitably experienced and motivated lay person may be a better option in the circumstances. It is always tempting to continue with what you know and are familiar with. However, it would be unfair to the present designated person to expect him to continue in that position indefinitely. NBSCCC increasingly believes that the designated role should be filled by lay people, given the challenges stated above. If an appropriate lay candidate is available within the diocese s/he could begin to shadow the existing designated person and also undertake some training provided by the National Office. This could make the adjustment to change a great deal easier in the months ahead.

**Recommendation 3:**

**Attempts should be made to identify and recruit a suitable lay person who could be trained to take over the role of designated person at some agreed point in the future.**

The deputy designated person in his interview asserted his belief that a complainant should have the option to speak to someone who is not a priest and concurred with the designated person that at least one of them should be a lay person with the appropriate skills and experience. This is a view that would be shared by the review team.

When asked about working relationships with the civil authorities (HSE, An Garda Síochána), both Bishop O'Reilly and the designated person saw the relationship with An Garda Síochána as being less effective than the relationship with the HSE. Bishop O'Reilly and the designated person reported that it is difficult to forge a positive relationship with the Gardaí due to the number of Garda areas covered by the diocese and the frequency with which some senior officers change.

The relationship with the HSE is more regulated by way of meetings and exchange of information on case management issues.

It is important to note that both Bishop O'Reilly and the designated person impressed as being keenly interested in establishing and maintaining good working relationships with the key statutory agencies in the diocese. Any assistance that can be given by the National Office in this regard will be freely available to both of them if any particular issues arise in respect of advancing this work.

### **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.*

This standard requires that all procedures and practices relating to creating a safe environment for children are in place and effectively implemented. This is achieved by ensuring as far as possible that those engaged by the diocese in paid and voluntary capacities, to work with children, are safe. The mechanisms set out in the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* to support this standard include ensuring that safe recruitment and vetting practices are in place, having clear codes of behaviour for adults and children and by operating safe activities for children. The following information is a summary of the structures, and procedures that are in place. This section considers all roles in the diocese including those responsible for section 2 of this report – responding to child protection allegations and suspicions.

#### **People and Structures**

(i) **The Safeguarding Committee** was set up in 2005 and has nine members including a religious sister with a background in psychology, a social worker, an ex member of the Gardaí, two priests, two diocesan trainers, and two lay women, one of whom was a principal of a school. The committee is chaired by a priest, who is also the Deputy Designated person. The Safeguarding Committee communicated their role as promoting good practice with regard to children. Amongst their achievements, the committee have designed a booklet on safeguarding policy and procedures in Ardagh and Clonmacnois, which is supported by a poster for display in all Churches. As already stated, the poster and booklet are well designed, clear and easy to read. In addition, the Safeguarding Committee have instigated this year, an annual audit of practice at parish level. The committee have oversight responsibility for ensuring recruitment of staff and volunteers. This is managed on a day to day basis by the appropriate parish priest in association with chair of the Safeguarding Committee and the authorised signatory. A centralised record of all diocesan volunteers and staff is maintained at the diocesan offices. In the event of there being a dispute in relation to Garda vetting a committee of three is on standby to address any complaint. The authorised signatory was advised of National Office Guidance on vetting which will be issued during training in May 2011.

#### **Recommendation 4 – The authorised signatory and Chair of the Safeguarding Committee to consider attending National Office training on vetting in May 2011.**

(ii) **Parish Representatives:** All parishes have safeguarding representatives. Some of the parish representatives reflected in interview a degree of confusion around their role. Their role is to promote safeguarding and ensure that safe environments are created and maintained; ensuring codes of behaviour, supervision ratios etc. Given the stated role uncertainty, an annual conference/seminar should be arranged to refresh representatives on their roles, and to offer support for their work.

**(iii) Safeguarding Trainers.**

There are currently two safeguarding trainers who are Volunteer Development Agency (VDA) accredited. The trainers have recently engaged with the National Office and will consider registration with the National Office to become Church Trainers, and therefore be able to deliver the new Church specific training materials in the dioceses.

**Recommendation 5**

**The Safeguarding Trainers should arrange an annual meeting with Safeguarding Representatives and Parish Priests to: clarify role; raise awareness of the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance*; and to offer support.**

**Recommendation 6**

**The existing trainers should engage with the National Office around registration and delivery of NBSCCC training materials.**

**(iv) Designated and Deputy Designated person**

The designated person has a very good awareness of the standard in relation to recognising, responding and reporting allegations of abuse. He enjoys a good working relationship with the local HSE child care manager responsible for responding to allegations from the church, and she has responded admirably to all contact from the diocese. The diocese has within its geographic locations, 6 Gardaí areas, therefore relationships with all the superintendents presents a greater challenge. The designated person has welcomed the centralisation of referrals through Harcourt Square in Dublin and recently attended a training session on the management of allegations by An Garda and HSE. There have been difficulties in obtaining adequate responses from both the HSE and Gardaí on occasions, but these have been addressed. The diocese has engaged informally with the HSE around the establishment of regular meetings, as recommended following the Inquiry into the Diocese of Ferns. There appears to be some reluctance on the part of the Gardaí to enter into these meetings, but the benefit of the meetings elsewhere in the country are proof that the effort made to set them up is worthwhile.

**Recommendation 7**

**Bishop O'Reilly should make a formal approach to the HSE and a representative from An Garda Síochána to hold bi-annual meetings to develop relationships and share practice relating to safeguarding.**

The relationship between the designated person and the bishop is very good ensuring that allegations are addressed in full. Bishop O'Reilly displays a gentle caring approach, but with great wisdom and honesty, and this alongside a determined resolve by the designated person, ensures that allegations are addressed in full.

The diocese has also in place a deputy designated person, who is also a priest. It might be appropriate for the diocese to now consider appointing a female lay person to the role, to allow greater choice for any complainant wishing to raise an allegation.

**Recommendation 8**

**Bishop O'Reilly should consider appointing a second Designated Person and to consider appointing a female lay person to this role**

**(v) The Advisory panel**

The Advisory Panel is shared with neighbouring dioceses – Kilmore and Clogher. This is a recently reconstituted panel, with some very competent members, including appointees from both jurisdictions. The panel have devised terms of reference and are keen to have training in their role. The volume of work of the three panels is small and therefore bi-monthly meetings are not required. There is an anxiety that the members may become de-skilled or that their relationships will not be able to develop adequately to fulfil their responsibilities.

**(vi) Priest adviser**

There are two Priest Advisers in the diocese, again given the paucity of allegations; their services are rarely called upon.

**(vii) Support person**

Two Support People were appointed in 1996. These people offer support to complainants as well as families affected by allegations of abuse, including, where possible families of accused priests.

**(viii) Complaints Person**

The Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois have taken the unusual step of appointing a Complaints Person – someone to deal with complaints other than child abuse. This initiative was born out of concerns around adult bullying. The role holder is a retired school principal, with experience of working with children. To date he has not had to respond to any bullying situations that involve children.

## **Standard 4**

### ***Training and Education***

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

### **Training of Church Personnel**

As already stated there are currently two accredited VDA trainers in the diocese. On the whole the trainers indicated a good understanding of their remit in providing training. However, given the confusion detailed above relating to a lack of clarity on the part of the safeguarding representatives, it is important for the trainers to develop an annual rolling training programme to keep the representatives updated on policies, procedures and their roles. There is an opportunity, with new training materials being developed, for all representatives to be updated on the new materials, their role and on the seven standards. As with most trainers, the remit of Ardagh and Clonmacnois trainers stretches to cover priests and safeguarding representatives. However, in conjunction with the Safeguarding Committee the trainers should identify the training needs of all safeguarding personnel in the diocese and in consultation with NBSCCC, identify how these needs could be met.

### **Recommendation 9:**

**The Safeguarding Committee and the Diocesan Trainers should consider running an annual awareness training event to update all personnel involved in safeguarding on developments in relation to the task.**

## **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.*

#### **(i) Child Protection Policy Display and Availability**

We have already noted that the Safeguarding Committee have produced a booklet and poster for display in Churches. It is important for the committee to ensure a continuous updating and supply of these for parishioners and safeguarding personnel. We also note that the diocesan policy and procedures are available on the website alongside statistics in relation to allegations of abuse. The diocese is to be commended for this.

## **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.*

On the whole the reviewers found that appropriate information is in place to ensure that specialist advice, support and information on safeguarding issues is accessible throughout the diocese. It is important that this information is continually updated and made easily accessible.

The manner in which Bishop O'Reilly and the designated person responded to complainants is to be commended. Worthy of special note is the appointment of Support Persons, not just to victims of abuse, but also to anyone affected by allegations, including complainant and respondents family members. In addition, the Complaints post to deal with bullying is a refreshing appointment and should be developed further. This could be done by the appointee delivering awareness training on bullying and its impact.

The diocese supports *Towards Healing* and refers all complainants of child abuse to this service.

The diocese has also accessed the services of specialist assessment centres and risk assessors, in identifying and managing risk.

Finally, both Bishop O'Reilly and the designated person notify and seek advice from the National Office in relation to the management of allegations and in the management of alleged perpetrators. There is always willingness on the part of both to follow the advice and keep the National Office staff updated on developments. There is also an openness in approach which is very much appreciated.

## **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.*

#### **(i) Monitoring Compliance**

In order to ensure compliance with Standards on self-auditing, as set down in Section 3 of the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* an annual review of cases is required. It is important that this is fully implemented and undertaken each year. The NBSCCC will continue their monitoring role in ensuring that the procedures and guidance are being adhered to as recommended. However, the diocese itself should seek to self audit their practice as set down in Section 2 of the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* document. It is noted that a process of auditing parish policies and practice is underway and the expectation is that this would feed into a Diocesan audit

#### **Recommendation 10.**

**Bishop O'Reilly and his safeguarding team should develop a plan (with timescales) in consultation with the National Office to implement and report on the recommendations of this audit.**

## **Recommendations**

**It is recommended that:-**

- 1. The Safeguarding Committee should assess the information received from the parish audit, feed this into the annual Diocesan self audit, and assess if current policies, procedures and practice are in line with the expected standards set out in *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance*.**
- 2. Consideration should be given to adopting the case file template proposed by the National Board.**
- 3. Attempts should be made to identify and recruit a suitable lay person who could be trained to take over the role of designated person at some agreed point in the future.**
- 4. The authorised signatory and Chair of the Safeguarding Committee to consider attending National Office training on vetting in May 2011.**
- 5. The Safeguarding Trainers should arrange an annual meeting with Safeguarding Representatives and Parish Priests to: clarify role; raise awareness of the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance*; and to offer support.**
- 6. The existing trainers should engage with the National Office around registration and delivery of NBSCCC training materials.**
- 7. Bishop O'Reilly should make a formal approach to the HSE and a representative from An Garda Síochána to hold bi-annual meetings to develop relationships and share practice relating to safeguarding.**
- 8. Bishop O'Reilly should consider appointing a second Designated Person and to consider appointing a female lay person to this role**
- 9. The Safeguarding Committee and the Diocesan Trainers should consider running an annual awareness training event to update all personnel involved in safeguarding, on developments in relation the task.**
- 10. Bishop O'Reilly and his safeguarding team should develop a plan (with timescales) in consultation with the National Office to implement and report on the recommendations of this audit.**

## **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 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010, 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 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010, 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.

---

<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 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011 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.