



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

Annual Report 2019



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in the Catholic Church in Ireland
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CONTENTS



Statement from the Chairman	5
Report of the Chief Executive Officer	7
Governance	10
Data Protection	11
Allegations Notified to the National Office between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020	13
Initiatives undertaken and Advice provided by the National Office in response to specific requests from Church Authorities: 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020	14
Training and Related Support 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020	19
Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards	27
Operational Plan and Objectives for 2020	30
The Board and Other Corporate Information.	31

STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRMAN



The paramountcy principle, concerning the best interests of children and minors, contains within it the essence of best safeguarding practice. It is a key foundation for the Board in undertaking its activities and is pivotal in terms of Church credibility in this matter.

Pope Francis, in a letter addressed 'to the Bishops of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' early last year, discussed the crisis of credibility and the discrediting of the Church's mission resulting from clerical sexual abuse scandals; he underscored the fact that credibility is not rebuilt by marketing strategies and efficient business plans. 'Credibility is born of trust and trust is born of sincere, daily, humble and generous service to all, especially to those dearest to the Lord's heart.' And we know how dear to him our children and minors are.

I make these points, by way of introduction to this year's Annual Report, to highlight the fact that much of the attention of the Board in the period covered by this report was taken up by considerations and consultation concerning the impact, effects and interpretation of new data protection legislation introduced in 2018. A key issue concerns the area of appropriate and necessary information sharing. Information is of the essence if we really seek to work for justice. It is particularly so in the circumstances of much of our activity.

Comments made by German Cardinal Reinhard Marx, referring to traceability and transparency in the field of child safeguarding, of a necessity for us to redefine confidentiality and distinguish it from data protection, are apposite. Otherwise, as he says, we squander the chance to maintain a level of self-determination regarding information or we expose ourselves to the suspicion of covering up.

I referred in last year's statement to the February 2019 meeting in the Vatican 'on the Protection of Minors in the Church', attended by the Presidents of Bishops' Conferences from around the world. The fruits of this meeting were seen, when, on 7 May last, Pope Francis issued an Apostolic Letter to the whole Church, *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* ('You are the Light of the World'). This document established new procedures for reporting abuse, ensuring that Bishops and their equivalents are held accountable for their actions, significantly modifying universal Church law in the process and putting emphasis on concrete actions. As evidenced in this Annual Report, we have given much attention to its contents and likely effects and, where necessary, augmented appropriate safeguarding guidance to our Sponsoring Bodies accordingly.

The Board and National Office

The Board met nine times in the period covered by this report, which included a joint meeting with the Members, as representatives of the Sponsoring Bodies, to discuss Board activities and objectives.

All of the Directors served throughout the year. Fr Paul Murphy, Sr Colette Stevenson and myself, who 'retired' by rotation, were unanimously re-elected Directors at the Annual General Meeting held on 10 June 2019. I wish to thank each of the Directors for their outstanding support and commitment in undertaking all our tasks during the last year.

Just after our reporting period, we learnt with great sadness of the death of Fr Ed Grimes CSSp, on 15 April 2020. We mourn his loss greatly and will miss him. A Board colleague for nine years, his advice and contributions were invariably filled with wisdom. May he rest in peace.

STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We are extremely grateful to Teresa Devlin, our Chief Executive Officer, for her exceptional dedication to any and all aspects of our work and that of the National Office staff. Teresa and her National Office team performed with extensive and sustained skill and attention in pursuing our aims and objectives, for which I offer the Board's heartfelt thanks.

Outlook

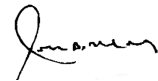
Our reporting year closed in a period of emerging and deep uncertainty, as Irish society grapples with the effects of the global coronavirus pandemic. Our capacity to undertake key board objectives set for the coming year cannot be realistically or accurately determined as a result. A casualty will be our planned biennial National Conference, which will be deferred until 2021.

All fieldwork concerning our Review Programme has been put 'on hold' for the present.

One of the activities we have been most anxious to progress has been the utilisation of the redesigned

Training Manual you will read about in this Report and the retraining of our registered trainers based on the new manual. The maintenance of the highest possible standards in all training programmes and implementation sessions is essential both in implementing our guidance materials and in delivering the most effective levels of safeguarding. Current circumstances lead us to give thought to considering the possible development, in some areas, of online support services to assist in furthering our objectives.

We patiently await the period when our full range of activities can safely resume.



John B. Morgan
Chairman
17 April 2020



2019 was another vitally important year in the Church's child safeguarding journey. Building on Pope Francis' extraordinary 'Meeting on The Protection of Minors in the Church' in Rome in February of that year, he issued a motu proprio, '*Vos Estis Lux Mundi (VELM)*' 'You are the Light of the World'. The National Board viewed this motu proprio as a major sign of how Pope Francis intends to ensure greater accountability in the Church for safeguarding ministries. In response, all National Board guidance was reviewed to ensure compliance with *VELM*; new guidance was drafted; and two critiques of *VELM* were produced, one of which has been written up in our most recent Guidance and Practice Paper (GAP), '*Shedding Light on Vos Estis Lux Mundi*'. The National Board presented its understanding of *VELM* at training events and metropolitan meetings. We recognise from *VELM* that there is more work to be done in relation to integrating child safeguarding ministry as a core part of the Church's overall ministry.

In the past we have cautioned against complacency. We are now urging a refocusing, so that in addition to following the requirements of legislation and policy, we are encouraging recognition that children are gifts from God, and that ministering with them and ensuring their safety is an integral part of Church ministry.

This Annual Report will identify the areas in which National Office staff have taken steps to encourage an approach to child safeguarding which is more proactive than reactive. This approach is most obvious in our training, including in the revision of training materials delivered by National Board registered trainers; in the formation programme we undertake with seminarians; and in bespoke training delivered by National Office staff.

There were other significant changes in the reporting year which had an impact on how we deliver our services in the National Board. Firstly, following on from General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and its incorporation into domestic legislation by way of the Data Protection Acts 2018, the National Board reviewed all data protection policies and the data it held for the purposes of compliance with the legislation. New procedures have now been devised and a data protection officer has been appointed. In terms of data held, the National Board acts, in the main, as a data processor for Church authorities who have signed data processing deeds, allowing the processing of data by the National Board for specific purposes. Data was returned to data controllers in situations where the processing of the data had been completed.

The Data Protection Acts 2018 have had an impact on the monitoring role of the National Board. The reader will note in the section of this report on allegations received, that the National Board is unable to provide detailed statistical information. Representation was made to Tusla for delegated authority to be given to the National Board to receive notification information relating to clerics and religious. Under current legislation, this is not possible; moreover engagement with government departments in the Republic of Ireland to try to find a way around this difficulty have not yielded any positive result. Discussions with the Department of Health in Northern Ireland continue. The National Board is therefore unable to furnish any information of value about the numbers of allegations made against Church personnel, as the information now provided to it by Church authorities is completely anonymised. Notifications do, however, inform the National Board as to whether a report to the statutory authorities has been made; and where there are

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

gaps in this information, we follow up with the relevant Church authority to ensure all allegations are reported to the statutory authorities.

The National Board has continued to offer detailed advice to Church authorities on case management matters, especially following the completion of statutory investigations, when the internal Church inquiry process can begin. Engagement with complainants of abuse underlines the necessity of this canonical inquiry process, following the completion of the statutory processes. It allows the complainant to be heard in and by the Church, for actions to be taken which may satisfy their need for a compassionate response and for justice. It can also help to establish if there is 'a case to answer', and whether there is an outstanding risk to children. The internal Church procedure offers due process to the accused, which, while being difficult and intrusive to experience, has the objective of reaching a conclusion in a fair and transparent way. The National Board's National Case Management Committee (NCMC) has, over the past five years, refined its comprehension of effective case management, and the quality of its work has been recognised by the Church authorities who have presented cases to it. Details of the work of the NCMC are set out in this report.

The Charities Act 2009 in the Republic of Ireland was given effect in 2014 and has gradually been implemented in the subsequent years. The requirements of this Act have had an impact on the work of the National Board, especially regarding its governance arrangements. The National Board has now in place an operational plan; a code of corporate governance; risk register; a complaints procedure; and a training and support strategy. A communications strategy and a review of internal HR procedures are in development.

In terms of operational matters, the National Office has continued to provide advice, training and guidance to Church leaders on a range of child safeguarding matters. One of the highlights of the year was in assisting the Bishops' Conferences of Ireland and New Zealand to host an international Safeguarding Conference in Rome in July 2019. The theme of the conference was 'Formation'; and

the purpose was to explain and explore the concept of integrating child safeguarding and Catholic Christian formation at all levels of the Church. It will be summarised in the Training and Support section later in this report. By meeting and sharing practices, experiences and initiatives with others involved in child safeguarding work, we have enhanced our understanding of best practice. We have also recognised that Irish missionaries continue to minister across the world, and we have sought to influence them and others with whom they work by sharing our positive experiences and developments of training and policy guidance.

Other training highlights in the year include the work being undertaken in the development of a child safeguarding curriculum within three Irish seminaries which we have entitled *Head to Heart*; and the revised Training Manual, with accompanying support to registered trainers. Both new programmes have been under continual review, resulting in significant modification over the last number of years.

The National Office has a very small but dedicated team of staff who work proactively in keeping up to date with research and practice from other countries. During 2019 we produced three detailed Guidance and Practice (GAP) papers to share learning with those ministering in Ireland. The first paper, entitled 'Enabling a Child Safe Church', sought to present an understanding of how to ensure that children are safe in the Catholic Church. The second paper, 'Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message', offers detailed guidance on using communication strategies to keep children safe; and the third paper, already mentioned, is 'Shedding Light on *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*'. The purpose behind these research-based papers is to summarise international studies, in order to prompt new insights and ideas for creative ways of working in child safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

In 2009, the National Board began a process of examining child safeguarding practices in dioceses and religious orders, a process of Review that took seven years to complete; each of the Review Reports produced can be found on the

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

National Board website, www.safeguarding.ie. National Office staff then engaged in a large-scale consultation exercise to review and rewrite the Church's standards, after which there was a three-year period of training and support. A revised methodology was trialed in 2018; and amended and accepted by the Irish Bishops' Conference as the structure for the next phase of Reviews. Following further consultation and discussion, a decision was made by the National Board in 2019 to undertake a second round of Reviews, with a new focus on facilitating feedback from those who receive Church safeguarding services: children and their parents/carers; complainants of abuse; and respondent priests and religious. Hearing directly from the people who use Church safeguarding services adds an independent perspective to complement what is written in Church records. To date, six diocesan second Reviews have been initiated, five are complete and a further four are planned. At the time of writing, Reviews, as with other planned National Board work, have been delayed, due to the coronavirus crisis. Further information on Reviews and their findings is presented in the section of this report entitled 'Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards'.

Details of the services that we have provided in training, writing guidance, offering advice, and in monitoring practice are set out elsewhere in this Annual Report. While the National Board is independent, working collaboratively with bishops, provincials and all Church personnel ensures greater impact in achieving our shared twin aims: namely, safeguarding children and responding appropriately and compassionately when allegations are made.


I want to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Directors for their unfailing support and their hard

work in setting the strategic direction and ensuring the best quality of practice of the organisation. They do this on a voluntary basis and always with positivity, energy and commitment. I also want to express my gratitude to the team in the National Office.

In July 2019, we said *slán* to our long serving and hardworking member of staff, Ann Doyle. Ann will remain a valued friend, and we remember her as a lady who welcomed everyone with care and finesse. Ann, I am happy to report, is enjoying her retirement in the midst of family and golf! We also said *fáilte* to Ann Cunningham who has already demonstrated her skills, abilities and professional approach; we look forward to many years working alongside her.

I would also like to congratulate Niall Moore, Director of Training and Support, for achieving his doctorate after years of study. We hope that his research on children's rights can influence our safeguarding practice in the Church in Ireland.

I salute all the hard-working staff of the National Office, who, through good and bad times, remain engaged in work that can be very challenging and stressful. Child safeguarding practice relies on caring people who respond with compassion; I am privileged to work with such caring staff.



TERESA DEVLIN
Chief Executive Officer
31 March 2020



As a charity, the National Board is obliged to comply with statutory regulations, which set out the minimum standards required to manage and control the business of the charity. In 2019 a Charities Governance Code was introduced which requires the National Board to review its human resources, financial and oversight arrangements in order for us to be able to demonstrate that, as a charity, we achieve our charitable objectives with integrity, and that the Board is managed in an effective, efficient, accountable and transparent way.

Following a review of procedures we redeveloped the following:

- Code of Corporate Governance
- Governance compliance record
- Operational plan
- Risk register
- HR procedures ensuring supervision and appraisal of staff
- Internal financial procedures
- Complaints procedure

The National Board aims to meet at least ten times per year (through remote meetings where physical attendance is not feasible) and is addressing other systems and procedures to ensure compliance with the Charities Regulator.



Since the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the subsequent Data Protection Acts in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland in 2018, a significant portion of the time of National Office staff has been dedicated to ensuring compliance with legislative requirements. We therefore redrafted National Board procedures and initiated a process of reviewing data held, returning it to the data controller where it was determined that the purpose for sharing it with the National Board had been fulfilled.

National Board Data Protection Procedures

In line with legislation, procedures relating to data protection, destruction and storage have been redrafted and revised. The following policies and procedures are now in place:

- Data Flow
- Data Protection Policy
- Data Breach Policy
- Data Protection Impact Assessment Procedure
- Data Retention Policy
- Subject Access Request Procedure
- Data Privacy Statement for the website
- Employee Data Protection Statement
- Data Destruction Policy

Sharing information with the National Board

Following extensive consultation with the Data Commission in the Republic of Ireland and with the Information Commissioner in Northern Ireland, the National Board has clarified that for the purposes of data protection legislation it is, in most circumstances, a data processor in relation to information received from a Church authority, the data controller. There are some circumstances where the National Board may be a data controller, mostly relating to internal personnel matters. To assist in

explaining and maintaining this critical distinction, the National Board has drafted separate data processing deeds for each of the services it provides to the Church where there is sharing of personal sensitive data.

The five services involved are:

1. Monitoring compliance with legislation
2. Advice on case-management issues by National Office staff
3. Advice by the National Case Management Committee (NCMC)
4. Reviews by National Board reviewers
5. Assistance with case-file management

In services 2, 3, 4 and 5, the National Board acts as a data processor; and it has put in place memoranda of understanding (MOU) and data processing deeds specific to each service. The data controller – Church authority – requests the service from the National Board and signs the deed and MOU. It is for the data controller to determine the legal basis for sharing information with the National Board. Throughout the service relationship, the Church authority controls the data; and the National Board maintains appropriate records only as evidence of its advice and of the product of its work.

The other service provided by the National Board (service 1 above) relates to ensuring compliance with both civil statutes and Church obligations around the notification of allegations and the management of risk. To avoid being deemed a data controller, the National Board does not access any identifying information, and it does not retain a record beyond the annual reporting period. The anonymised information that is shared with the National Board in this context is for statistical reporting purposes only.

DATA PROTECTION

Data Destruction

In line with the National Board's data protection procedures, a review of all the records held relating to allegations shared with the National Office since 2008 has been undertaken. As a result, this data has been returned in full to Church authorities. The National Board no longer holds the previous year's data and will undertake an annual review and return of data.

A similar process is currently underway in relation to records shared with the National Case Management Committee (NCMC), and this will be complete by the end of 2020.

ALLEGATIONS NOTIFIED TO THE NATIONAL OFFICE BETWEEN 1 APRIL 2019 AND 31 MARCH 2020



GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 brought clarification about what information could be shared with the National Board. In relation to notifying the National Board regarding allegations against clerics and religious doubts have been cast on the legal basis for a Church authority to share sensitive personal data with the National Board, relating to allegations against clerics and religious. The National Board cannot fulfil its monitoring function, track trends year to year, nor offer assurances that Church bodies are consistently applying safeguarding standards in relation to their notification and management of cases outside the scope of a specific review of that Church authority.

While allegations are still notified, the information is anonymised and significant detail is removed. As a direct result, we cannot advise with any certainty on whether reports we receive may also have been forwarded by another Church authority, which would result in double-counting. We can advise that 116 notifications were forwarded to the National Board in the year being reported. Upon receipt of allegation information, the National Board checks whether notification to statutory authorities has been made, and beyond that we are not able to analyse the information and therefore cannot offer comment on developing patterns, or on the time period to which the allegations relate.

The inability to analyse and monitor allegations is, in the view of the National Board, a significant loss to the Catholic Church, and is detrimental to the efforts to safeguard children.

The National Board has made representations to Government ministers, civil servants, Tusla and the Data Protection Commission in the Republic of Ireland, seeking support to have legislation amended to enable sensitive personal data to be shared with the National Board on allegations against clerics and religious. These efforts have failed.

We have also engaged with the Department of Health in Northern Ireland and the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland; but due to the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly at the time of the discussions, officials were unable to progress any discussions, but did indicate their support for the important work of the National Board in helping to keep children safe. We will pursue this further now that a Minister has been appointed, and has taken office.

INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN AND ADVICE PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC REQUESTS FROM CHURCH AUTHORITIES: 1 APRIL 2019 – 31 MARCH 2020



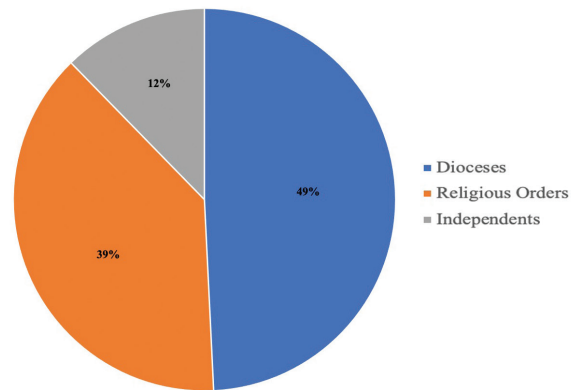
One of the main objects for which the National Board has been established is to provide advice, services and assistance to any Constituent – or Constituents – as provided for in the Memorandum of Association of the Company Coimisce, in furtherance of the development of the safeguarding of children within the Roman Catholic Church on the island of Ireland. One approach adopted by the National Board to fulfil this objective is to write extensive guidance for Church personnel to consider when dealing with a range of safeguarding and child protection matters. (For further information, see Guidance under Training and Support Section).

In addition to this written guidance, National Office staff are regularly called upon to offer advice on all seven standards in *Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*. Advice is offered directly by National Office staff or by the National Case Management Committee to those Church authorities who are members.

The National Board is required to report upon its activities, and to that end we set out below details of the range, type and ‘quantity’ of advice offered during 2019/20.

On 260 occasions, advice was requested by and offered to Church personnel – broken down into advice offered to Dioceses on 128 occasions (49%); to Religious Orders on one hundred (39%) occasions; and to Independents on thirty-two occasions (12%) – ‘Independents’ include complainants of abuse; those accused; lay apostolates; other Church agencies; and Irish missionaries working overseas.

Figure 1: Advice by type of Church body and independents



These figures compare to advice requested in the previous year (2018/19) as follows:

Overall 260	Dioceses 177 (68%)	Religious Orders 54 (21%)	Independents 29 (11%)
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Data Protection Considerations

Concern was expressed in 2019 about the barriers to accessing advice from the National Board due to data protection legislation and regulation. As already stated in this Annual Report, the National Board has been clear that requests for advice, particularly relating to case management issues, are at the discretion of the data controller – the Church authority. Legal advice provided to the National Board is that as data processor, the National Board can access sensitive personal data upon execution of a memorandum of understanding and a data processing deed when the data controller has determined the legal basis for sharing information. The National Board has developed clear guidance about the legal basis for sharing information and is satisfied that it is for the data controller to identify the appropriate legal basis before requesting case management advice from the National Board.

The National Board developed detailed data retention and destruction procedures which ensure that it retains data for a specific purpose, and when this purpose has been fulfilled, the data is

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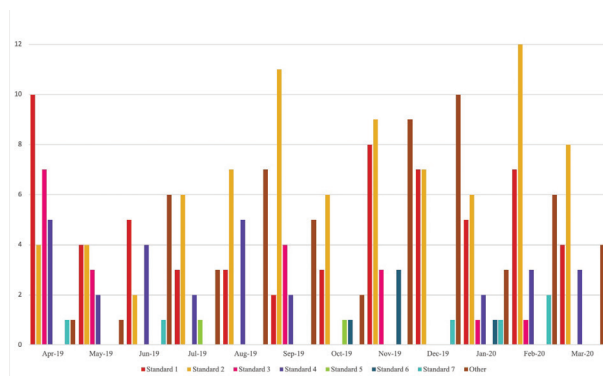
returned to the data controller. The National Board is required to retain information on advice it has offered as evidence of its work product.

Bearing this in mind, it is noteworthy that the number of requests for advice (260) remains consistent with the number in the previous year (2018/2019), also 260.

Types of Advice Offered

Figure 2 below represents the 260 pieces of advice provided in the year, broken down by month and by category. Advice not categorised under a specific standard is denoted in the 'other' (dark brown) category:

Figure 2: Advice Categories by Month



The seven safeguarding Standards can be divided into three general categories:

- Maintaining safe environments – Standards 1, 5 and 6
- Case management – Standards 2, 3 and 4
- Quality assurance – Standard 7

For ease of reading, this section is broken down under these headings.

MAINTAINING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS (STANDARDS 1, 5 AND 6)

Standard 1 – Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

The aim of Standard 1 is for Church bodies to create and provide environments for children that

are welcoming, nurturing and safe. Critical to this standard therefore are the people who minister to children; and there is an expectation that adults are good role models who can be trusted, and who show respect for children, protect children, and enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development. Of all National Board guidance, that is provided Standard 1 is the most detailed and extensive. Despite the guidance being in place advice was issued sixty-one times on a range of issues, including vetting; visiting priests; codes of behaviour; external groups using Church property; safeguarding concerns that are not allegations of abuse; hazard assessments; use of web cameras; social media; and safeguards around photographing children.

Standard 5 – Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe

In order to support the application of guidance by Church safeguarding personnel, the National Office provides direct training, backed up by written training materials and resources for accredited trainers. (Full details of the training delivered can be found at <https://www.safeguarding.ie/index.php/what-we-do/advice-on-effective-practice/training>). Given the ready availability of the Director of Training and Support, it is not surprising that requests to the National Office for additional advice are infrequent. He has engagement with trainers on a formal basis twice per year, and then through phone and email contact as needed. On the two occasions where advice of the Director of Training and Support was sought, this related to the frequency of training required for those who had ministry with children, and to training in relation to the John Paul II Award programme.

Standard 6 – Communicating the Church's safeguarding message

The safeguards that have been put in place across the Church can only be effective if everyone knows what they are, so the National Board encourages extensive use of communications media to spread necessary child safeguarding information. The National Board itself has developed a range of approaches to communicating its work, including

INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN AND ADVICE PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC REQUESTS FROM CHURCH AUTHORITIES: 1 APRIL 2019 – 31 MARCH 2020

through its website, an app, e-newsletters, notices and GAP papers. For example, in a National Board website notice in February 2020, for International Safer Internet Day, we put up advice on how to engage safely on the internet with children; and we further offered advice in the March 2020 newsletter on dangerous software that can create fake imaging. Our aim is to share as much information about national and international developments on keeping children safe, in person and online.

Church personnel sought advice on topics including translating safeguarding materials into languages such as Polish; how to engage children in safeguarding in a manner appropriate to their age and understanding; and collaborative working with other agencies to safeguard children. In all, five requests for advice on this standard were sought.

CASE MANAGEMENT (STANDARDS 2, 3 AND 4)

Standard 2 – Procedures for responding to child protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations

Advice on case management matters, including responding to allegations of abuse, remains the type of advice most frequently sought, with eighty-two requests out of 260 relating to this category.

The nature of advice typically sought under Standard 2 are: whether the threshold for reporting has been reached; how to manage potential risk in the initial stages of an allegation which is not proven; and where the statutory authorities have not responded by indicating whether they are conducting inquiries; information sharing; and the role and responsibilities of mandated persons.

Standard 3 – Care and Support for the Complainant

Nineteen requests for advice were sought in relation to this standard. Each person who discloses abuse by a cleric or religious should be offered a compassionate pastoral response. Examples of advice sought included: how to respond when allegations were made by third parties and the victim was not aware that the allegation had been made relating to them; information sharing; and the role of the support person.

Standard 4 – Care and management of the respondent

A respondent is a term used in canon law for a cleric or religious accused of abuse. The term does not differentiate between proven or unfounded allegations. The process for each respondent should be fair and just, in line with the human, civil and constitutional rights of the accused. The requests for advice in this category illustrate some of the challenges faced by a Church authority when dealing with the complexities of assessing and managing risk related to a cleric or religious about whom full information is not available; or where statutory agencies have not conducted investigations; or where complainants are unable or unwilling to engage in the Church canonical processes. Advice was offered on twenty-eight occasions by National Office staff on appointing personnel to support a respondent; on how to develop an interim management plan; on how to conduct canon law inquiries when statutory investigations had concluded; on how to assess and manage risk; on how to manage funerals of accused clerics and religious where a credible allegation has been made; and on information sharing if a respondent goes into hospital or care.

National Case Management Committee

In addition to individual advice offered in relation to Standards 2, 3 and 4, more Church authorities have signed MOUs and data processing deeds to allow them to receive case management advice from the NCMC.

The membership of the NCMC changed during the reporting year due to the elevation of Fr Fintan Gavin from being Chancellor of the Dublin Archdiocese to become Bishop of Cork & Ross, and the National Board wish him every success and blessing in his new role. The National Board invited Reverend Professor Michael Mullaney, also a canon lawyer, to return as a member of the NCMC to replace Fr Gavin.

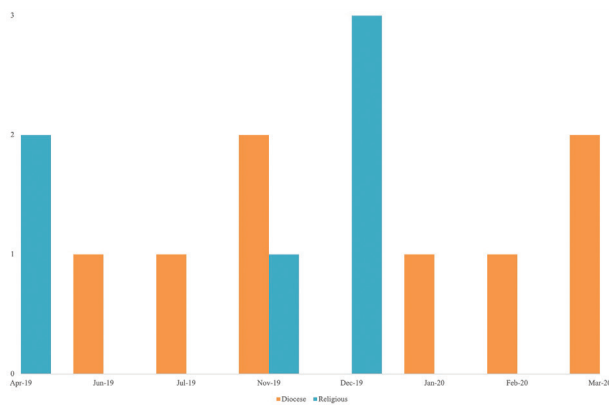
The Committee members are: Justice Iarfhlaith O'Neill (retired Judge of the High Court); Mr Sean Moriarty (formerly of the Probation Service); Ms Anne Confrey (retired lawyer); Fr Michael Mullaney (canon lawyer); Sr Helen O'Riordan (support for complainants); Mr Phil

INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN AND ADVICE PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC REQUESTS FROM CHURCH AUTHORITIES: 1 APRIL 2019 – 31 MARCH 2020

Mortell (former HSE social worker); Sr Colette Stevenson (Board member of Coimirce); Fr Brendan O' Rourke, CSsR (psychotherapist); Mr Peter Kieran, Director of Safeguarding, National Board (former HSE social worker); and Ms Teresa Devlin (minute taker), CEO, National Board.

There were fourteen case presentations to the NCMC for advices during the year (2019/20), as displayed in Figure 3 below:

Figure 3: NCMC Cases per Meeting



The NCMC met twice as often (eight times) this year than it had in the previous year; and all cases put forward and discussed related to priests.

The figure of fourteen has to be explained, as it relates to twelve clerics, two of whom were discussed twice during the twelve-months reported on. This is not unusual, as sometimes the advice offered by the NCMC requires the Church authority to complete a particular piece of work before returning for a fuller discussion of their case. The issue that arises quite regularly is that a preliminary canonical investigation has to be commissioned and completed, and then presented to the committee for consideration. The committee also has the capacity to meet virtually if there are logistical problems in bringing everyone together around the table.

In the cases of 4 clerics, the NCMC advised that they remain in ministry as priests in good standing, or they should be returned to ministry as a priest in good standing. This advice was given as the preliminary canonical investigations had not shown that there was 'a case to answer', and the statutory authorities – police and statutory children's services – had completed their work with no concerns having been identified.

The advice to the Church authority regarding three clerics was that it was safe and just to allow them to remain in ministry while the preliminary canonical investigation was being completed. In these three cases the statutory authorities had no concerns about these men.

It was advised in the cases of three other clerics that they step aside from ministry or remain 'stepped aside' while the preliminary canonical investigation was being conducted or completed.

Finally, four clerics were considered to not be in good standing; with there being an identified risk to justify their remaining out of ministry, which was the advice given. The cases of three of these men had previously been considered by the committee; and they were returned for a review of their circumstances.

It is the belief of the members of the NCMC that every cleric and religious who is a respondent to an allegation has the right to due process and fair procedures, which includes having their case canonically investigated; this prevents circumstances arising where they remain out of ministry, but in an open-ended, unresolved situation. At times, the NCMC included in its advice that the Church authority should follow up contacts with the relevant police or statutory children's service to have it complete its work and so avoid the respondent being 'left hanging' due to the tardiness of decision-making.

INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN AND ADVICE PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC REQUESTS FROM CHURCH AUTHORITIES: 1 APRIL 2019 – 31 MARCH 2020

Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards (Standard 7)

Each Church authority has responsibility for ensuring that practice in their Church body is in compliance with the Church's Standards (see section entitled Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards). The National Board recorded that it offered advice on 6 occasions in relation to Standard 7. This figure however is not a true reflection of the amount of advice offered. Advice in relation to Standard 7 is often given in the course of individual support work to Church bodies through bespoke training and other practical assistance; or through Safeguarding Committee training (see Training and Support section); or in tandem with other individual categories of advice as outlined above.

During 2019 the National Board began its second round of Reviews; and fuller details are provided under the section on Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards.

Other advice

A review of advice offered indicates a further fifty-seven requests for advice about issues which do not fall under any of the standards. Some of these requests relate to matters that are not within the remit of the National Board, but are nonetheless significant and should be referenced in this report. The requests can be grouped into three categories: international safeguarding policies; data protection; and adults at risk.



During the period covered by this report a new Training and Support Strategy was developed. The strategy aims to empower and support Church authorities, Church bodies and Church personnel to create and maintain safe material and spiritual environments for young people and the adults they work with, through the provision of relevant, effective and high quality training and support.

This section will report on work undertaken on the objectives of the Training and Support Strategy (2019-2022), available at https://www.safeguarding.ie/images/Pdfs/Training_Resources/Training%20and%20Support%20Strategy%202019-2022.pdf.

1. Building competence and skills at local level
2. Training and supporting trainers
3. Supporting individual Church bodies
4. Facilitating national training events
5. Facilitating national formation programme
6. Supporting child safeguarding internationally
7. Developing policy, guidance and resources
8. Supporting best practice

Building competence and skills at local level

A key component of the training strategy is for the National Board to assist in enabling local Church personnel to implement the policy and standards outlined in *Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*. The National Board has a strong belief that face-to-face training is the best approach to building capacity in safeguarding personnel. We therefore continue to invest time and resources in writing and delivering training programmes to meet the specific needs of those with safeguarding responsibilities; and during the reporting period the following programmes were delivered.

Safeguarding Committee Training

The role of the Safeguarding Committee is to work on behalf of the Church authority to ensure that the

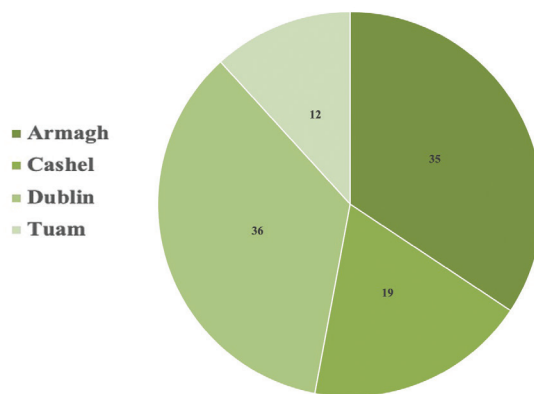
child safeguarding requirements of Standards 1, 5, 6 and 7 (Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments; Training and Support; and Communicating the Church’s Safeguarding Message) are implemented locally within each Church body.

Since 2013, National Office staff have been delivering training to committees to assist them in clarifying their role and function in relation to the stated standards; and as each Safeguarding Committee is unique in terms of its membership and stage of development, this programme is adapted to suit the needs of individual committees. This year, the programme was delivered to four dioceses and three Religious Orders. Between 2013 and the end of 2019, sixty-nine Church bodies have accessed Safeguarding Committee training delivered by the National Board.

Training and Supporting Trainers

The National Board’s Train the Trainers course is a detailed programme that is run over six days. On completion, course participants are assessed by National Board tutors, and those who are successful are approved to deliver Church-specific child safeguarding training to Church personnel. There are currently 102 trainers registered with the National Board; the spread of trainers by ecclesiastical provincial area is displayed below.

Figure 4: Trainers by Ecclesiastical Provincial Area



TRAINING AND RELATED SUPPORT

1 APRIL 2019 – 31 MARCH 2020

There has been a slight decrease in the number of trainers since last year's Annual Report (110 in total) as over the course of 2019/2020, eight trainers have resigned.

Local Safeguarding Awareness Training Delivered in the Reporting Period

National Board registered trainers are supported by a network of tutors and by the Director of Training who meets them regularly. Together they ensure that the training being provided is still fit for purpose. In consultation with the trainers, the materials contained in the Training Manual have been redesigned (see Redevelopment of Training section further on in this report). In addition, based on advice from recipients of training, localised child safeguarding training is now structured into five separate sessions:

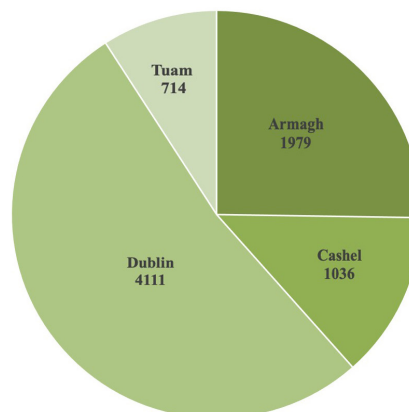
- Full day training (5 hours)
- Refresher session (3 hours)
- Mandated person session (1.5 hours)
- Training for young leaders (3 hours)
- Information session (3 hours)

Registered trainers are being provided with updated guidance and training to support them in delivering the revised programmes.

This year 7,842 Church personnel were trained by registered trainers. The requirement is for Church personnel to undergo this local training every three years, and therefore the figures detailed are not representative of all Church personnel trained, but only those trained during 2019/20. The numbers reported here exclude information sessions delivered by local safeguarding representatives rather than by registered trainers.

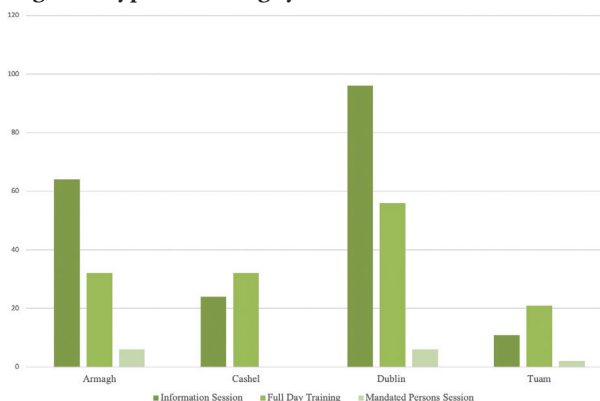
Figure 5 breaks down the number of people trained by ecclesiastical provincial area. This figure combines attendance at information sessions, mandated persons sessions and full day training:

Figure 5: Number of People Trained by Ecclesiastical Provincial Area



In 2019 a new session was introduced into the training portfolio of trainers, specifically targeted at those who are defined as mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015. The session can be delivered as a stand-alone option or as part of the full-day training or information session. As shown in Figure 6, fourteen mandated persons' sessions were delivered. However, many of the training returns submitted by the trainers indicated that mandated persons information sessions had been incorporated into the content of the full-day training and information session programmes, negating the requirement for a dedicated mandated persons option. Trainers who are registered by Religious Orders dedicated a significant portion of their training to clarifying the requirements of mandated persons with their members, who alongside clerics, are classified as mandated persons.

Figure 6: Type of Training by Ecclesiastical Provincial Area

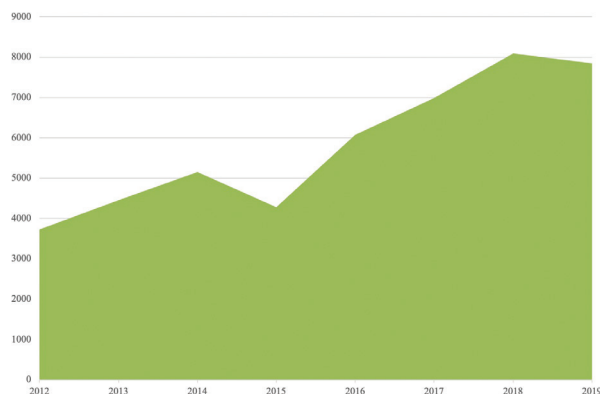


TRAINING AND RELATED SUPPORT

1 APRIL 2019 – 31 MARCH 2020

As demonstrated in Figure 7, the overall number of 7,842 people trained represents a 9% decrease in training compared with training for 2018. There are three important considerations as to why this occurred: firstly, the revision of the training manual took place throughout the year and a number of trainers postponed training until the manual was complete; secondly, the impact of the Government's restrictions on movement following the outbreak of Covid-19 resulted in a number of training sessions which were scheduled for March 2020 being cancelled; and thirdly, the implications of the Covid-19 outbreak also meant that some trainers completed their returns from home, and had to use approximate numbers, resulting in a more conservative estimate on some returns.

Figure 7: Numbers of People Trained by Year



Despite these considerations, the figure of 7,842 people trained across the Church is a tremendous achievement for trainers, most of whom volunteer in the role. The National Board would like to acknowledge the great contribution trainers make to the primary outcome of keeping children safe.

Supporting individual Church bodies

Staff from the National Board facilitated eight bespoke training and support sessions to a range of Church bodies during the reporting year, on practice areas including constructing and managing case records; creating and maintaining safe environments; advisory panel training; and

training and support to implement children's ministry in safety.

Facilitating national training events

The National Board facilitates national training courses for those who hold specific safeguarding roles in the Church, to support the development of knowledge and skills, encourage debate and reflection, and to share best practice. The National Board tries to keep abreast of national and international developments and to share these at national training events. During 2019/20 the following national events were centrally organised for specific safeguarding role holders:

15 May 2019: Care and support for Church personnel

This training day was specifically focused on the support aspect of Standard 5, and included presentations on:

- Care and support for Church authorities when an allegation has been received about one of their members.
- Care and support for parish and religious communities when an allegation has been received about one of their members.
- Care and support for members of religious communities when living with a member who has been accused.

The presentations also covered aspects of case management, data protection and information sharing.

5 June 2019: Influencing international missionary practice

This course was previously facilitated in May 2018. Its purpose was to influence good child safeguarding practice among Irish missionaries who engage with children in an international context. The aim was to ensure that anywhere Irish missionaries minister to children, the safety and wellbeing of children will be prioritised and promoted. Resources made available to participants include guidance on writing international safeguarding policies, with accompanying templates.

TRAINING AND RELATED SUPPORT 1 APRIL 2019 – 31 MARCH 2020

18 September 2019: Trainers update day

This session was for those who are currently registered as trainers with the National Board and covered the following areas:

- Presenting the first draft of the new Training Manual to allow everyone to contribute to the review process
- Providing an opportunity to network with other trainers from across the country.
- Outlining further support that is being developed for trainers.

6 November 2019: Help for the helper understanding trauma

This training was facilitated by representatives of 'Towards Healing' and focused on understanding trauma and its impact on Church safeguarding personnel in dioceses and religious congregations. This training was targeted at Church authorities, DLPs and those involved in providing support for Church safeguarding personnel.

12 November 2019: Self-audit training for Category 3 Church bodies

This training was for those religious who have no ministry with children and are not managing child protection cases to help them understand the purpose of annual self-audits and to provide practical advice on how to successfully complete them.

29 January 2020: Training for new DLPs

This training was designed for people who have recently taken on the role of Designated Liaison Person (DLP) or Deputy DLP, and covered the following areas:

- Clarifying the role of DLP
- Hearing safeguarding concerns and record keeping
- Communication and supervision
- Producing an annual internal report on cases for the Church authority

19 February 2020: Training day for new Church authorities

This training was organised specifically for Church leaders to induct them into their strategic role in relation to child safeguarding. The day covered a range of topics relating to safeguarding including:

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

7 March 2020: Annual trainers update day

This day provided and familiarised all registered trainers with the new Training Manual and associated resources. It will be repeated later in 2020 for a second cohort of registered trainers.

Facilitating National Head to Heart Formation Programme for Seminarians

The National Board has been working with three seminaries (St Patrick's College, Maynooth; the Pontifical Irish College, Rome; and Redemptoris Mater, Dundalk) to develop a national child safeguarding formation programme. The course is called *Head to Heart: Child Safeguarding in Formation*. The aim of this programme is to provide participants with a deeper understanding of the core elements of child safeguarding, which we believe will assist in the development of priests who are more aware of and more responsive to safeguarding matters. The training is designed to be reflective, and to facilitate open dialogue about difficult historical and current challenges of ministry with children.

In 2019/20, three induction sessions were delivered, as well as the following two modules:

Safeguarding and Theology – The aim of this module is to explore Gospel values, Scripture and Church tradition and the place of children and safeguarding within these.

Impacts of Abuse – The aim of this module is to understand the impact of abuse at multiple levels on a person's life by hearing directly from

TRAINING AND RELATED SUPPORT 1 APRIL 2019 – 31 MARCH 2020

a survivor. This module includes consideration of the impacts at a personal level; on secondary victims such as friends and family; and on the complainant's life choices and career.

The third module – *Spiritual Healing* – will be delivered in the current academic year.

Modules 6, 7, 8 and 9 of this course will be delivered in the academic year 2020–2021. The programme will then be evaluated to establish whether course content and delivery methods have had a positive impact on seminarians in their understanding of the unique role they will play in safeguarding children as clerics in the Catholic Church in Ireland, and to make any necessary amendments based on the evaluation outcomes.

The National Board plans to continue the *Head to Heart* programme in 2021–2022 and to extend it to other clerics and Religious in formation.

Other formation initiatives

Staff from the National Board delivered training to Pastoral Theology students in St Patrick's College, Maynooth on elements of practice in their pastoral placement. This session included focusing on boundaries, reporting procedures and the safeguarding links with effective pastoral ministry; and the students were asked to complete a short reflective exercise as part of this.

In addition, the National Board was asked in 2019 to deliver a session on the 'History of Child Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland' as part of the formation process for a religious order.

Supporting Child Safeguarding Internationally

The remit of the National Board is to support child safeguarding ministry on the island of Ireland. Many Religious men and women minister across international boundaries, and several have expressed concerns to the National Board about the absence of good safeguarding practices in their partner Church bodies and communities in missionary countries. Missionaries therefore

invited the National Board to organise and deliver knowledge and skills-based safeguarding training which they could adapt and apply within their missionary work overseas. As a starting point the National Board consulted on appropriate international safeguarding standards. This was followed by training, the aim of which was to assist in the practical application of safeguarding standards in an international context.

Participants identified two areas for development. The first was for template policies and guidance on child safeguarding internationally; and the second was to provide training to leaders on implementation of the safeguarding standards from a governance perspective. Following consultation with a number of key stakeholders, a template policy and accompanying guidance was produced, and a second training day was delivered in June 2019.

Further work is being explored with a small number of religious leaders to identify how the National Board might assist in developing child safeguarding leadership and governance training.

Developing Policy, Guidance and Resources

To support the implementation of *Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*, the National Board produced extensive web-based practice guidance. This was based on research of international best practice within statutory child protection services, and Catholic Church child safeguarding initiatives, as well as on experiences in the Catholic Church in Ireland. The guidance is an optional resource to be used as appropriate when a concerning matter arises. By its nature, it is open to review and revision following changes to legislation, regulation, canon law, developments in best practice, and experience; so, for instance, this year the guidance has been updated fifty-five times.

While most of the amendments to guidance have been minor, the publication of Pope Francis' motu proprio, *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* in 2019, and other

TRAINING AND RELATED SUPPORT 1 APRIL 2019 – 31 MARCH 2020

practice-related issues, resulted in a number of important guidance changes during this past year, including:

- Guidance on responding to allegations relating to child pornography
- Guidance on respondents and complainants wishing to access their records
- Guidance on protection for persons reporting child abuse
- Redrafted guidance on Child Safeguarding Statements
- Guidance on Church property as community-service sites
- Guidance on respondents wishing to worship
- Guidance on managing allegations against Church leaders who are not bishops or their equivalents

Additional pieces of guidance required as part of *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* are currently in development and will be published following consultation during the next year.

Redevelopment of the Training Manual

As part of the National Board's interest in developing a reflective approach to training and mindful of developments in legislation, policy and practice, a consultation with all those currently registered as trainers for the National Board began in the summer of 2019. The intention was to seek the views of trainers in order to make training more impactful and meaningful, and the outcome was a revision of the safeguarding training manual.

A small working group, comprising diocesan and religious trainers from across the four ecclesiastical provincial areas of Ireland, then met with the Director of Training and Support to begin the process, and to consider how training could become more interactive and engaging, and this group assisted in producing a revised suite of training materials for the redesigned training manual.

Retraining all currently registered trainers and new applicants began in March 2020 based on the revised manual, and this will continue in the coming year.

The manual now includes five Training Programmes:

1. Full-day training: this training lasts five hours and covers the following three areas:

- Who and how we safeguard
- Creating and maintaining safe environments
- Recognising, Responding, Recording and Reporting

2. Information sessions: these sessions are shorter in length (three hours), and cover topics including the reporting procedures required under Standard 2.

3. Refresher sessions: These are shorter in length (three hours) and cover the topics listed in the full day training for those who have previously attended the full day training.

4. Mandated Persons' Training: This is a short, one-and-half hour session specifically for those who are defined as mandated persons in the Republic of Ireland. The content can be delivered as part of the other sessions above.

5. Training for Young Leaders: This is three hours in length and covers the same content as the information session but has been designed for young people who are taking on a leadership role with other children or young people.

The sessions have been redesigned and refocused in line with guidance offered by the Child and Family Agency, Tusla, and the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland. Alongside the sessions, resources and materials for delivery have also been updated.

Supporting best practice

Throughout the year the National Board has received a number of requests for training to support child safeguarding during pilgrimages. In addition, the National Board has become aware of a number of safeguarding issues that occurred during and after pilgrimages to national and international shrines. Pilgrimages are an extremely important and valuable religious experience for young people; however, careful consideration and planning needs to occur, before and during pilgrimages, and review after the pilgrimage has finished is necessary.

TRAINING AND RELATED SUPPORT 1 APRIL 2019 – 31 MARCH 2020

In the forthcoming year training which provides advice, support and guidance to assist with running pilgrimages involving young people in a safe and faith-enriching way will be facilitated.

Interagency initiatives

During the reporting year, staff from the National Office met with a range of lay apostolates, agencies of the Irish Bishops' Conference, government officials,

non-governmental organisations, international bodies and representatives of international Bishops' Conferences to share best practice. The purpose of the exchanges was to learn from each other about what improvements can be made, individually and collectively, in relation to child safeguarding in the Church. The following is a listing of these meetings and their purpose:

Meeting	Purpose
Tusla (various strategic managers including CEO)	Information sharing
Data Commissioner	Information sharing
Tusla Regulatory Enforcement Office	Child Safeguarding Statements
Towards Healing	Joint working
Towards Peace	Joint working and formation training
DLP from Africa	Study visit
Pastoral Theology Department (SPCM)	Formation training
St Patrick's College, Maynooth	Formation training
Pontifical Irish College, Rome	Formation training
Chair of Clerical Abuse Inquiry Northern Ireland	Information sharing
Church of Ireland Safeguarding Office	General update and information sharing
Probation Service (Republic of Ireland)	Working on guidance on use of Church property as community service sites
AMRI and Irish Bishops' Conference	Implications of <i>Vos Estis Lux Mundi</i>
Garda National Protective Services Bureau	Collaborative working
Trocaire	Policy advice
Lay Apostolates (various)	Practice advice
Irish Bishops' Conference Communications Office	Assistance with development of resources
Net Ministries	Safeguarding advice
International Safeguarding offices: South Korea; Chile; Australia	Policy advice and support
Safeguarding training managers of interfaith Churches in UK and Ireland	Advice and information sharing
Department of Health, Northern Ireland	General update and information sharing
Child Safeguarding Network- Republic of Ireland	General update and information sharing
Misean Cara	Safeguarding in missionary contexts

TRAINING AND RELATED SUPPORT 1 APRIL 2019 – 31 MARCH 2020

Development of GAP (Guidance, Advice and Practice) Papers

This series of papers provides information on research, advice and resources that will assist in supporting and developing best practice in safeguarding children. During the period under review three GAP Papers were produced:

Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message This paper focused on Standard 6 of *Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016* and illustrates the practical ways this can be achieved for all Church personnel and lay faithful.

Enabling a Child Safe Church This paper identifies the principles and approaches to creating a child-safe Church, developing an understanding of situations of potential risk and outlining forms of assessment and management.

Shedding light on *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* This paper highlighted the implications of the Pope's motu proprio in relation to child safeguarding in Ireland, by examining each of its articles in light of current developments and procedures in Ireland. The paper ends with a number of matters that require further consideration by our sponsoring bodies.

Ecclesiastical Provincial Area Meetings

Four ecclesiastical provincial area meetings were facilitated during the year: Armagh, Cashel, Tuam and Dublin. The purpose of these meetings was for staff from the National Office to meet with bishops, provincials, superiors and designated liaison persons (DLPs), and with trainers from dioceses, Religious congregations and orders, to discuss child safeguarding imperatives and the development of best practice in relation to safeguarding children. Topics for discussion included:

- Current projects underway in the National Board
- Revision of Guidance following *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*
- Legal mechanisms for sharing information
- Training and Support Strategy requirements, and revision of the Training Manual
- Collaboration with Towards Healing and Towards Peace
- International missionary practice
- Safeguarding Sundays

Anglophone Conference

In July 2019, the National Board assisted in the organisation of the sixteenth consecutive Anglophone Safeguarding Conference which was held at the Pontifical Irish College and the Notre Dame Centre in Rome. The hosts were the Episcopal Conferences of Ireland and New Zealand.

The theme of the Conference was 'Formation'; and the purpose was to explain and explore the concept of integrating child safeguarding and Catholic Christian formation at all levels of the Church. The Conference speakers shared their experiences of forming parishes and communities that are attractive to and safe for children; of providing and facilitating safeguarding formation training for clerics, religious and Church leaders; of working to form children, young people and their parents and carers in faith development within safe environments; and of ministering to survivors of abuse who wish to re-engage with their faith in an initiative of re-formation.

The Conference was attended by eighty-one delegates from fourteen countries – Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland, England, Malta, Chile, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Canada, the United States, Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Malawi.

A new element of this year's Anglophone Conference was the invitation to influential people from key Vatican offices to receive and respond to the Conference feedback in a Listening Session at the end of each of the three core working days. These representatives were Ms Teresa Kettlekamp, a member of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors; Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay and a member of the eight-person Council of Cardinal Advisers to Pope Francis; and Monsignor John Kennedy, Head of Discipline Section, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The undertaking given by each of these three listeners was that they would harvest and report back to their particular office on the fruits of that day's work.

As this was the final Anglophone Conference in its current format, the National Board was particularly pleased to be able to assist in the organisation of such an important international safeguarding gathering in the Church.



The memorandum and articles of association of Coimisce require that the National Board reports on compliance by Church bodies. Standard 7 of the 2016 Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland relates to Quality Assurance, and it has three indicators against which compliance by a Church body is evaluated. Two of these require the Church body to conduct certain activities internally, including conducting an annual self-audit exercise; while the third refers to requesting an external review by the National Board. The guidance for Standard 7 available on the National Board's website provides the detail of what is involved in each activity.

The expectation is that a Church authority (bishop or religious leader) has robust systems in place, including a safeguarding plan, training plan, and communications plan which set out objectives under each of these strategic requirements. At the end of each calendar year the Church authority should direct that a self-audit is conducted to ensure that the standards are being met and that corrective action is put in place where required. This system of self-audit is now well established across larger Church bodies, who report annually to the National Board that they have conducted their self-audit. Smaller religious bodies that have limited personnel require more support from the National Board and that is generally offered through Safeguarding Committee training and individual guidance from National Office staff, which may form part of the other pieces of advice offered.

Self-audits

Responsibility for ensuring compliance with the safeguarding standard rests with a Church

authority. The expectation is therefore that annually the Church authority ensures that a process of self-auditing practice against the standards is undertaken; and that if there are deficits, correction actions are put in place to bring practice up to the standard. The Church authority is required to confirm to the National Board that this exercise has been completed. When the National Board conducts a review of practice within a Church body, the evidence of self-audits completed can be checked and verified as part of that review.

In the year being reported on, the National Board received letters of confirmation from the Church authorities in all twenty-six dioceses that self-audits had been completed in their diocese (24), or were in progress (2); and from one hundred and fifty (150) provincials/superiors of religious orders that they had obtained completed self-audit reports, and from three (3) to say their self-audits are still in progress.

This is a very positive situation and indicates that priority is being given to this exercise of examining the effectiveness of child safeguarding at local Church body level.

National Board Reviews

The Catholic Church's revised Policy *Safeguarding Children, Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland* was published in 2016. This overlapped with the completion of the first round of Reviews of Church bodies, which was achieved with the publication of the final four Review Reports in early 2017. Their publication was deferred due to the statutory Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry (HIA) in Northern Ireland. The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic

QUALITY ASSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE STANDARDS

Church in Ireland (National Board) undertook to release these four reports back to the relevant religious orders only after the HIA had reported on them.

In association with the Irish Bishops' Conference and with AMRI, the National Board convened a Working Group in late 2015 to develop a new Review Methodology to be utilised in the second round of Reviews, in which Church bodies would be reviewed against the 2016 Standards. When this methodology had been completed, following very extensive consultation across the Catholic Church in Ireland, it was decided to field trial it with a diocese and a religious congregation. This was done following invitations from Bishop Leo O'Reilly of Kilmore Diocese, and from Abbot Brendan Coffey of the Benedictine Community at Glenstal, Co. Limerick. Reviews were conducted in March 2018 in Kilmore Diocese and in May 2018 with the Benedictines of Glenstal Abbey. Overall, the new methodology, which among other things, places a greater emphasis on the preparatory phase, and which allows for children and young people, complainants and respondents to be consulted, worked well. A small number of changes in approach have been made, based on the feedback received from the field trial sites. A decision was made following this pilot to extend National Board Reviews to other Church authorities who have ministry with children and are managing allegations of child abuse.

All twenty-six dioceses are deemed to have a ministry with children, and all dioceses are managing retrospective abuse cases, so they have been and will be reviewed against all thirty-five indicators that comprise the seven new Standards. For Review purposes, the National Board considers these Church bodies to be in the 'Type 1' category. They are the Church bodies to which Table 1 in the 2016 Safeguarding Children Standards apply.

Some forty-seven religious orders clearly have ministries with children and therefore are also considered to be Type 1.

There are thirty-eight religious orders that had a ministry with children historically which they no longer have, but that are still managing one or

more cases of retrospective abuse, are categorised as Type 2; and Table 2 in the 2016 Standards apply to them, which entails applying twenty-two indicators.

Finally, the remaining sixty-five or so religious orders that have no ministry with children and are not managing any retrospective cases are considered to be Type 3 and the fifteen indicators in Table 3 of the 2016 Standards apply to them.

The National Board is aware that there are a number of new Religious orders that have established houses and ministries on the island of Ireland, and it is in the process of identifying what category these belong to for Review purposes. There are at least a dozen such Church bodies, but the number may be higher.

Again, in cooperation with the IEC and with AMRI, the National Board has recruited a number of reviewers to conduct the second round of Reviews. Between July 2019 and the end of March 2020, six second round Reviews of dioceses have been initiated with five completed. Invitations to conduct Reviews have been received from a further four bishops; and a small number of religious orders have opened discussions with the National Board about what being reviewed would entail for them.

The dioceses reviewed so far are Ferns, Dublin, Killaloe, Cork & Ross and Limerick. Three further diocesan reviews were timetabled to take place in April and May 2020, which have now been rescheduled.

The Working Group that helped to develop the methodology to be used in the second round of Reviews was of the view that attempting to audit or review any service without hearing from those who use that service would be incomplete. The second round of Reviews is also concerned with the application of policies and procedures rather than simply with their existence and adequacy as written documents.

While there are an insufficient number of second round Reviews completed to be able to report on any emerging patterns, some observations can

QUALITY ASSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE STANDARDS

still be made. The National Board is extremely heartened by the readiness of bishops to arrange for access to children and young people taking part in Church-related activities, such as Confirmation clubs, junior choirs, youth ministry groups and altar-server training groups. This has been achieved with parental consent in all cases, as well as through advance engagement with activity leaders. Reviewers have been facilitated to visit activities in progress, observe the dynamics and the atmosphere, and have short discussions with participants about their sense of feeling safe and comfortable, their understanding of safeguarding and their knowledge of what to do and who to go to in the event of having any concerns. This has been extremely informative in a way that merely reading policy documents could never be.

The 2016 Standards include a dedicated standard on the 'care of the complainant'. A method of engaging with complainants has evolved over the course of the Reviews conducted to date. This is done on a person-to-person basis where a known and trusted person from the Church body contacts a number of complainants who they believe would not be distressed by involvement in a forthcoming Review. They are provided with information about the Review process, are guaranteed confidentiality, and are assured that their participation would be completely voluntary. In cases where a complainant opted for telephone contact from a reviewer, this is how their interview took place, with some complainants being abroad. Email correspondence with a reviewer was the preferred method of communication for others; while being accompanied by a support person to an interview with a reviewer was the choice of others. Some complainants sent letters to reviewers; and a number wanted one-on-one interviews.

The focus of these contacts has been on hearing from complainants about their experiences with the

Church body following their reporting retrospective abuse, and this has been extremely helpful in identifying what has worked well for complainants, and what they suggest could be improved. The focus is not to hear from complainants about their experiences of being abused, or to mediate between them and the Church body.

Another development in the 2016 Standards was the inclusion of a standard specifically related to the 'care and management of respondents'. The method for doing so has been for the Church body to distribute a National Board questionnaire to respondents, which they have been invited to complete and return to the National Office, and they have the option of doing so anonymously or by signing their name. Like the engagement with complainants, the focus of the communication with reviewers is on the respondents' experiences of the response of their Church authority and safeguarding personnel when a complaint had been received about them. There is no attempt to engage respondents in any discussion about the veracity or otherwise of the complaint, or to mediate between them and their Church authority. The take up of the invitation to respondents to communicate with reviewers has been quite high.

The National Board is satisfied by the evidence it has seen so far that risk to children and young people in the Church is being well-managed and contained.

One area where further improvements are required in some Church bodies, however, is in the recording of all of the work that is being undertaken by Church authorities and their safeguarding personnel. Without good recording, important evidence is not being generated.

OPERATIONAL PLAN AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2020



The National Board Operational plan can be found at https://www.safeguarding.ie/images/Pdfs/Corporate_Publications/Operational%20plan%202020.pdf.

Specific objectives for 2020/2021 are:

1. Redevelop the National Board's website to ensure better accessibility and ease of access to information.
2. Develop a communications plan for the National Board, which includes ideas to develop better social media presence; an information leaflet on the work of the National Board and greater accessibility to guidance materials, for example by developing an index.
3. Conduct and report to the National Board on reviews of safeguarding practices; and providing an account of reviews undertaken in the National Board's annual report.
4. Produce two GAP papers on relevant safeguarding issues: Information Sharing and Children's Rights.



John Morgan, Chairman has had a career in business, primarily as a corporate lawyer. He served as chairperson of the Bishops' Committee on Child Protection from 2002-2006. Prior to that, he had been a member of the committees established by the Bishops dealing with Child Protection, beginning with the first formal Bishops' Committee on Child Abuse, which was set up in 1999. He joined the Board in 2006, and was appointed Chairman in 2009.

Fr Edward Grimes CSSp is a Spiritan canon lawyer, with experience of rendering assistance to religious congregations and dioceses in safeguarding children. He has served on the Spiritan Leadership Team. He has also served as National Director of Pontifical Mission Societies in Ireland, Director of Gambia Pastoral Institute, and Secretary General of the inter-territorial Bishops' Conference in West Africa. He joined the Board in 2011.

Dr Keith Holmes is a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist. He was formerly lead clinician and Chairperson of the Medical Board in Lucena Clinic, Dublin, and former Chair of the Faculty of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry within the College of Psychiatry of Ireland. He joined the Board in 2009.

Marie Kennedy has a background in social work and has extensive experience in child protection and welfare with a post-graduate diploma in child protection and an MSc in Health Services Management. Through a range of important assignments, Marie provides significant and extensive experience in all aspects of child-care management. She joined the Board in 2008.

Michael Ringrose is formerly Chief Executive PWD (People with Disabilities in Ireland), the National Representative Organisation for all

people with disabilities, their parents, carers, families and advocates. Prior to that, he served as a Chief Superintendent with An Garda Síochána. He joined the Board in 2006.

Fr Paul Murphy OFM Cap has wide experience in his own Order in Child Safeguarding, both as a member of its Leadership Team and as Designated Liaison Person. He served on the Child Safeguarding desk in CORI for eight years, during which time he was the Company Secretary for Faoiseamh Ltd, (Towards Healing) the victims' support service. He also participated in the working group which drew up *Our Children, Our Church*. Paul has qualified as a Trainer of Trainers in Child Safeguarding; he also researched the monitoring and rehabilitation of sexual offenders in religious communities for a MA with the University of the West of England in Bristol. He joined the Board in 2013.

Jim O'Higgins is a practising solicitor and accredited mediator. He was founder member and co-designer of the state Family Mediation Service. He served as honorary secretary and Board member of Cheeverstown, a service for the intellectually challenged. He chaired the Advisory Panel on child abuse for the Ferns Diocese for eight years. He is a former Chairperson of the Peter McVerry Trust and of the Board of two national schools in a disadvantaged area in Dublin's North City. He joined the Board in 2013.

Sr Colette Stevenson PBVM is a Presentation Sister. She has been involved in child-protection work within the Church since 1995, when she became Director of the CORI child protection office. Previously she worked as a teacher and later in retreat work. She is a qualified marriage and family therapist. She recently retired from the National Office as Director of Professional Standards. She joined the Board in 2013.

THE BOARD AND OTHER CORPORATE INFORMATION

Sr Nuala O’Gorman is a Sister of Mercy of the Southern Province of the Congregation, a retired secondary school teacher. She has served as principal of the school, chairperson of board of management and was a member of the provincial team in the province. She was a member of the steering group in the Diocese of Cloyne when child safeguarding policies were being established and served as a member of the child safeguarding committee in that diocese for a number of years, drafting policies with same. She is currently one of the victim-support persons for the diocese. She joined the Board in October 2017.

Sr Evelyn Greene is a Holy Faith Sister with a background in education. She has been involved in various ways in the area of child safeguarding at congregational, diocesan and national levels for several years. At present she is designated trainer for child safeguarding. She joined the Board in October 2017.

Management of National Office

Teresa Devlin, Chief Executive Officer, with a background in social science, social studies and psychology, and an advanced diploma in child protection, she has extensive experience in child protection management and family support, both at the levels of senior management and in the specific areas of risk assessment and care planning. Formerly Director of Safeguarding, appointed as CEO in January 2014.

Niall Moore, Director of Training and Support has a degree in Law and Master’s in Criminology which he completed whilst working in the office of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY). He has experience facilitating professionals, coordinating teams and working directly with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Alongside his full time role of Director of Training and Support, he has recently completed his doctorate at Queens University in Belfast, examining the role of the Holy See as a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Appointed 1 February 2013.

Peter Kieran, Part-time Director of Safeguarding – Policy and Case management advice: Peter is a professionally qualified social worker and has a Masters qualification in counselling. He worked in child protection with the SEHB / HSE South from 1974, and became the Regional Specialist in Children and Family Services in 2004. He worked in that role until his retirement in December 2010. He has conducted a number of Reviews for the National Board since 2011 and is now working on research and policy development. He co-founded the Masters in Therapeutic Child Care at Carlow College.

Imelda Ashe: Company Secretary and Administrator

Ann Cunningham: Administrator

Training Tutors: Fr Paddy Boyle, Sr Helen O’Riordan, Sr Anne Lyng, Eleanor Kelly, Aoife Walsh, Avril Halley, Maureen Walsh and Kevin Duffy – supporting the Director of Training and Support in the delivery of the Training and Support Strategy.

Other Corporate Information

The Members of the Board comprise the directors of Coimirce, a company limited by guarantee without a share capital (Co. Number 465899). The Members of Coimirce comprise nominees of each of the Episcopal Conference of Irish Bishops and AMRI (Association of Leaders of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland).

The registered office and address of Coimirce is New House, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

Company Secretary: Imelda Ashe

Website Address: www.safeguarding.ie



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

