



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Review of Child Safeguarding Practice
in the religious congregation of
The Daughters of Wisdom

undertaken by

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

March 2015

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Background

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) was asked by the Sponsoring Bodies, namely the Irish 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 NBSCCCI is aware that some religious congregations have ministries that involve direct contact with children while others do not. This review is not based on a review of case material as during the relevant time period there were no allegations made against members of the Congregation that fell within the Terms of Reference (TOR). The review therefore is primarily based on Safeguarding Policies and Procedures developed by the Daughters of Wisdom plus interviews with key personnel involved in the Safeguarding Process within the Congregation.

In religious congregations that have direct involvement with children, reviews of child safeguarding have been undertaken by measuring their practice compliance against all seven Church standards. Where a religious congregation no longer has, or never had ministry involving children and has not received any allegation of sexual abuse the NBSCCCI, reviews are conducted using a shorter procedure. The size, age and activity profiles of religious congregations can vary significantly and the NBSCCCI accepts that it is rational that the form of review be tailored to the profile of each Church authority, where the ministry with children is limited or non-existent. The procedure for assessment of safeguarding practice with such congregations is set out in the contents page of this report. The NBSCCCI welcomes that in order to have full openness, transparency and accountability, religious congregations that do not have ministry with children have made requests to have their safeguarding practice examined and commented upon.

The purpose of this review remains the same and it is to confirm that current safeguarding practice complies with the standards set down within the guidance issued by the Sponsoring Bodies in February 2009 *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* and that all known allegations and concerns had been appropriately dealt with. To achieve this task, safeguarding practice in each of these Church authorities is reviewed through an examination of policy and procedures and through interviews with key personnel involved both within and external to the religious congregation.

This report contains the findings of the *Review of Child Safeguarding Practice in the religious congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom* undertaken by the NBSCCCI in line with the request made to it by the Sponsoring Bodies.

The findings of the review have been shared with a reference group before being submitted to the Daughters of Wisdom along with any recommendations arising from the findings. The independent reviewer is satisfied that there are no outstanding safeguarding matters to be addressed.

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Introduction

At the request of Sr. Jean Quinn, staff from the NBSCCCI engaged in a process of reviewing Safeguarding Children's Policy, Procedures and Practice on the 2nd March 2015. Interviews were conducted with key personnel involved in safeguarding children within the Congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom. These included the Provincial, the Designated Liaison Person, the Deputy Designated Liaison Person and two members of the Leadership Team.

As noted previously there are no allegations against any member of this Congregation, therefore there were no case files that required examination, within the Terms of Reference of this Review...

The reviewer read the following documents as part of the review:

'Safeguarding Children Information: Policy, Principles and Guidance Document' Ireland June 2014.

'Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults – Policy, Principles and Guidance Document' Great Britain. June 2014.

Training: Child Protection. Daughters of Wisdom. 2007.

It should be noted that the Daughters of Wisdom have had a Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Document in place since 2003.

Role Profile (past and present role with children)

The Daughters of Wisdom were founded in France in 1703 by St. Louis Marie de Montfort and Blessed Marie Louise Trichet. Their shared inspiration was Divine Wisdom and their longing to make her known and loved. Marie Louise lived this inspiration by founding the first communities of the Daughters of Wisdom among the poor and most excluded people in society.

In 1891 French Daughters of Wisdom arrived in the UK due to difficult circumstances in France for religious communities. The Sisters provided basic education and care for orphans and catered for the social and health needs of society.

In 1955 the Daughters of Wisdom came to Ireland in response to a request from the then Minister for Health to establish a service for children with an intellectual disability. This was to be the first service of its kind in the North West of Ireland. A Training School for Nurses was also established at Cregg House, Sligo and the Centre has been at the forefront in initiating innovative projects which give a better quality of life for service users with an intellectual disability. For many years sisters worked there as nurses, in management roles, as support staff and in a pastoral capacity.

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In 2013, Wisdom Services, Cregg House was handed over to the HSE. At one time Daughters of Wisdom Sisters also taught in St. Cecilia's Special School in Cregg which is situated on the Cregg Campus.

The Donegal Parents and Friends Association bought Drumbeg Hotel, Inver, Donegal, and converted it to be a residential Centre for girls with an intellectual disability. The Daughters of Wisdom were requested to staff and administer Drumbeg House which was to be an extension of the work they were doing in Cregg House, Sligo. Drumbeg House was established in 1968 and closed in 1979.

At the time of this review the Daughters of Wisdom have only a small presence in Sligo. At the moment there is only one Sister who continues to have a pastoral presence at Cregg. She also serves on the governing body of St. Cecilia's School. One Sister is retired and another Sister facilitates a support group for people with health issues.

In September 1986 a small community was established in Dublin with two Daughters of Wisdom. For many years these two sisters worked in Focus Ireland.

In 1999 Sophia Housing Association, which provides supportive housing for people was established, Sr. Jean Quinn, the current Provincial, was the Founder and Joint CEO. Another Sister later joined in a management capacity. Sophia projects are now established in Dublin – Cork Street, Donabate, Tallaght, Churchtown, Greystones, Wicklow, Cork, Limerick and Sligo. The Sisters no longer work full time with Sophia but Sr. Jean Quinn is Chair of the Board and does consultancy work, with one other Sister sitting as a member of the Board and serves in a voluntary capacity with Sophia.

Sr. Jean Quinn is Provincial Leader of Great Britain and Ireland and serves as Congregation representative on UNANIMA.

Today the Daughters of Wisdom number about 1458 women working in Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America and Oceania. They continue to seek and reveal the love of wisdom as they respond to the various needs and challenges of the 21st century in creative and holistic ways, denouncing all forms of injustice, affirming their priority for those on the margins of society.

Profile of members

There are a total of 7 Daughters of Wisdom in Ireland; six in the Republic and one in Northern Ireland. All the Sisters are over 65 years and the average age is 70 plus years. The profile of the Province is of an ageing population and one of declining numbers. There is one Sister in formation in Britain.

Structures

The Province of Great Britain and Ireland comprises of 7 sisters in Ireland and 41 sisters in Great Britain. There is also one sister in Papua New Guinea, one sister in India and one sister in Rome.

The Provincial Leader is based between Southampton and Dublin and serves internationally within the Congregation. The Provincial Leader is in the final months of her ten year term of

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office. Sr. Jean Quinn, as Provincial Leader, is assisted by her Council (Leadership Team) of three sisters, two of whom live in Britain. The Leadership Team meets on a monthly basis.

The standing agenda for these meetings is;

- Items from the team in Rome
- Communities
- Sisters
- Affairs of the Province
- Commissions

One such Commission is the Safeguarding Commission, who report to the Leadership meeting each month.

The Provincial and her team are accountable to the Congregational (General) Team in Rome. In Britain the Congregation is registered as a charity and is accountable to the charities commission. As Trustees of the charity, the Provincial and the team submit a detailed Annual Report of all activities to the Commission.

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Document

The policy and procedures document for the Daughters of Wisdom Congregation is entitled *Safeguarding Children Information: Policy and Principles and Guidance Document. Ireland June 2014.*

Prior to this review taking place the Daughters of Wisdom, in early 2015, carried out a self-audit of their compliance in respect of the current national standards for Safeguarding children. This information was given to the reviewer and was discussed during the review with Daughters of Wisdom Safeguarding personnel.

The Safeguarding Document is written in a clear format and sets out the requirements of the National Safeguarding standards comprehensively. There are elements which are not included, such as ‘the intimate care of children’ but it should be recognized that the Congregation is not responsible for delivering direct services to children at this time.

The current document is signed off by the Provincial Leader Sr. Jean Quinn and the other members of the Leadership Team. It gives a clear message throughout that it applies to sisters, employees and volunteers in respect of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children. It was noted that the Leadership Team visit all communities twice a year and safeguarding is always on the agenda. Every community leader is responsible for ensuring Safeguarding Policies are followed.

In terms of the management of individuals who pose a risk to children (Standard 1) the reviewer would feel that this could be strengthened with regard to case management plans for the respondents and the supervision requirements required by such plans. In view of the fact that revised national safeguarding guidelines are imminent it is not felt appropriate to make a specific recommendation regarding this issue as they should be covered in the revised procedures.

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The Daughters of Wisdom are to be commended for establishing a viable safeguarding structure, within the context of Standard 1, with such a small number of members. There are clear lines of accountability in the structure and individuals have clarity as to their responsibility in ensuring that any children who come into contact with the Daughters of Wisdom will be safeguarded.

The Safeguarding document sets out in a comprehensive manner how allegations and suspicions are to be dealt with. It also names the Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person in the document, gives their contact details and defines the Designated Liaison Person's role, in Appendix 1.1.

The prevention element of the Daughters of Wisdom Safeguarding document, represented primarily by Standard 3, is covered with a degree of cross referencing to the existing NBSCCCI Standards and Guidance Documents. It was noted in the context of Standard 3 that the Daughters of Wisdom last carried out an audit to ensure that each Sister working with children in Gt. Britain and Ireland in 2011, had been vetted through the Garda Vetting Bureau or the Criminal Records Bureau in England.

In terms of Standard 4 with regard to training and education, it was noted that all Sisters are provided with a 'Safeguarding Information Pack'. It was recognized by the reviewer that those members working or volunteering within the context of parishes or agencies access Safeguarding Training in these environments. The Congregation does however need to consider the need to ensure that they have access to appropriately trained members/identified that can act as support people to complainants and as advisors to respondents should the need arise. Due to the size of this Congregation they may wish to consider cooperating with other Congregations/Dioceses to ensure the availability of such a resource.

In terms of communication (Standard 5) the Daughters of Wisdom, as noted previously, have ensured that each member has a Safeguarding Information Pack. In addition, Safeguarding Information is on the Daughters of Wisdom's website and a hard copy of the full policy is available in all their communities.

Access to advice and support is covered within the document but not necessarily in a child friendly text. It is hoped that the revised National Safeguarding Standards Documentation will assist the Daughters of Wisdom in any revision based on use of child friendly language.

In terms of implementing and monitoring the Standards this is reviewed twice a year through the site visits by the Leadership Team to all communities.

To date there have been no allegations within the terms of reference to assess the full extent to which the Standards have been implemented.

The Daughters of Wisdom in their pre-review audit recognized that they do not have a written Action Plan for Safeguarding. This will be developed post the launch of the revised National Standards.

The primary roles for Safeguarding within the Daughters of Wisdom are carried out by the Designated Liaison Person and Deputy Designated Liaison Person, both members of the

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Congregation. The Safeguarding Committee is essentially the Leadership team of the Congregation. All of these members support the Provincial Leader in her function of having overall responsibility for monitoring, auditing and ensuring implementation of the 7 Standards.

The safeguarding advisory function is fulfilled by the National Case Management Review Group of the NBSCCCI.

Management of allegations and Liaison with the statutory authorities.

As previously noted within Terms of Reference of this Review, the Daughters of Wisdom Sisters have not been required to process any allegations within the relevant time period. If ever required to respond to an allegation their current Safeguarding Policy Document gives clear direction on how to respond without any undue delay, in particular with regard to notifying the civil authorities.

There has been no need for liaison with the civil authorities.

Conclusion

This review was a short review based on the Safeguarding Documentation of the Daughters of Wisdom and interviews with key Safeguarding personnel. It is clear from the documentation and discussions, that the Daughters of Wisdom display a strong commitment to safeguarding children and the relatively small number of members are clearly committed to the primary principle of protecting children.

Review of Child Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland
Terms of Reference
Small Religious Congregations
(which should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes)

Introduction

In order for the NBSCCCI to be able to state that all Church Authorities on the island of Ireland have been evaluated in respect of their child safeguarding policies and practices, both historical and current, then some form of appropriate assessment has to be conducted of every one of these. It is rational however that the form of assessment is tailored to the profile of each Church Authority, and that needless expenditure of resources and unnecessary interference in the life of religious orders and communities that have no children-specific ministry would be avoided.

This review seeks to examine the current arrangements for safeguarding children across small religious congregations /orders, and missionary societies in Ireland who have limited or no direct contact with children as part of the congregation's ministry.

It would also scrutinize practice within all known cases to ensure that they have been responded to appropriately.

The review's methodology is an adaptation of the methodology developed for all dioceses and large religious congregations and missionary societies, where the ministry involves regular contact with children.

The proposed review would consider the following:-

- (a) Former role with children
- (b) Allegations of child abuse against members and how these have been responded to
- (c) Existing relationships with statutory authorities such as the HSE, Gardai in the Republic and the HSCT or PSNI in Northern Ireland.
- (d) Policies in place and being applied for safeguarding children
- (e) Roles and responsibilities and where they exist the operation of Advisory Panels, and Safeguarding Committees

The objective of the review would be to confirm if there have been any allegations and how known allegations have been responded to; in addition the review seeks to confirm what the current arrangements for safeguarding children are. In particular, emphasis will be placed on establishing how policies and practice match up to the standards set down in *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* published by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland and launched in February 2009. Priority, at all times, will be given to how policy and practice can be improved and strengthened. If policies and/or practices are identified that are concerning, inadequate, or dangerous, they will be addressed through the provision of guidance and support, and through the reporting of these situations to the appropriate statutory authorities, if this has not already happened. Similarly, those that are good examples will be highlighted with a view to them being adopted comprehensively across all parts of the Church. All cases that relate to alleged or known offenders that are alive will be read and included in the review. In cases where the alleged or known offender is deceased, these will

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be sampled in an attempt to gather learning from them that will be used to inform the framing of recommendations.

Guidance Documents

The review will be guided by the following:-

- (a) *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*
- (b) *Children First* Guidance in ROI; and Regional Child Protection Guidelines in Northern Ireland;
- (c) Legislation that exists in each jurisdiction which contributes to safeguarding children and young people.

The review will be undertaken by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) through their National Office and led by the Chief Executive Officer.

The review process will be overseen by a Reference Group to whom the CEO will report on a regular basis. The membership of this Reference Group has been drawn from each of the statutory child protection agencies in both jurisdictions, along with eminent individuals in the field from academia. The current Reference Group consists of: Dr Helen Buckley (TCD); Mr Paul Harrison (Tusla), and John Toner (SBNI).

It is important to confirm that the value of the review is dependent upon full and complete access to all relevant documentation and information relating to the abuse of children known to the individual Church authorities. The review will proceed on the basis that willingness exists on the part of each of the subjects of the review to provide full access to the fieldwork team, subject, where relevant, to the terms of the Data Processing Deed agreed between the Sponsoring Bodies and entered into between the parties hereto.

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Step Guide to the Review Process

Step 1.

A letter of invitation to review is sent by the Provincial/Regional Superior or other person responsible for the congregation/ order or missionary society (hereinafter referred to as 'the Ordinary').

Step 2.

The CEO will forward a survey to the provincial which will identify:

- Current number of members
- Past role with children
- Current role with children
- Total number of allegations received up to 2014
- Number of living members against whom there are allegations

Step 3.

For any Order where there have been allegations a full review will proceed, as per step 4 - 23. For those Orders where there have been no known allegations a desk top examination of policies and procedures will take place followed by a site visit to interview all relevant personnel within the safeguarding structure. For these orders step 5 and 13-23 will apply.

Step 4.

The CEO and Ordinary will confirm the dates for the fieldwork for the review, and names of the fieldwork team.

Step 5.

The Church Authority will be asked to make available all of the case files and related documentation in respect of any safeguarding concerns that have been identified within the diocese. The Church Authority will make available a room with wireless internet access for the reviewers to conduct their review of files, so that any records made by the reviewers can be directly typed and stored onto a secure server which is only accessed by the reviewers. In the absence of internet access the reviewers will type their notes onto a secure encrypted USB stick for later uploading onto the secure server.

Step 6.

The Church Authority will be requested to sign the revised Data Processing Deed prior to the arrival of the team.

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Step 7.

The Church Authority will arrange a schedule of interviews with all who hold safeguarding roles within its functional area. The designated person and the Church Authority will be available to the reviewers throughout the period of fieldwork.

Step 8.

The fieldwork team when they arrive on site will firstly confirm that they have a suitable place to work in and that all the required documentation has been provided to them for their review. In the event that the fieldwork team forms the opinion that the Church Authority has not provided access to all such documents, the NBSCCCI shall give notice in writing to the Church Authority of the opinion of the fieldwork team and such notice shall specify the reasons for same. Thereupon, the Church Authority shall respond in detail to the notice. Each party shall use its best endeavours to resolve any differences of opinion which shall arise and, in the event that resolution is not arrived at, the parties will attempt to resolve the dispute by recourse to the services of a mediator agreed between them or nominated for the purpose at the request of any of them without prejudice to the NBSCCCI's entitlement to terminate the review. In the event that resolution has not been arrived at following mediation, either party shall be at liberty to terminate forthwith the review.

Step 9.

On arrival, the fieldwork team should be supplied with a single case file index that lists all the cases that have been created within the diocese. These may be divided into two groups. The first group will contain all allegations that relate to living alleged or known perpetrators. The second will contain any that are deceased.

Step 10.

Depending on the volume involved a decision should be made as to whether all or a random sample of the "deceased group" should be reviewed. Care should be taken to include all prominent cases in the sample.

Step 11.

Each case file will be reviewed by each fieldworker independently in the first instance. They will create a written summary with chronological information of the case. In certain cases a second reader may be required, this will be discussed and agreed between the fieldworkers.

Step 12.

Following the reading of the case and the creation of a summary, the fieldworkers will analyse and assess the actions taken in the case. They will assess compliance with agreed Church policy that was extant at that time. They will also indicate whether any current risk exists in respect of the information contained within the file and advise the church Authority of necessary safeguarding action to reduce the risk.

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Step 13.

When all the case files have been read, the fieldwork team will then examine and review any procedures or protocols that exist within the diocese to confirm that they are in compliance with the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* document issued by the NBSCCCI in February of 2009.

Step 14.

To complete the review, the fieldwork team will then seek to speak to those directly involved in the safeguarding structure in the diocese. This should include the Advisory Panel, a sample of parish safeguarding representatives, the designated person, the safeguarding committee, victim support and advisors and the Bishop/Provincial. The purpose of these interviews is to form a view of the competence and effectiveness of the safeguarding structure that exists within the Church Authority.

Step 15.

The fieldwork team will also seek to speak to representatives of the key statutory agencies to provide them with an opportunity to express their views on the quality of the working relationships that exist between them and the Church Authority.

Step 16.

A verbal feedback session on initial key findings will be given to the Church Authority.

Step 17.

Upon completion of the field work, the team may request to take materials – other than casework records to review off-site; this alongside all materials gathered by the reviewers, including written notes on cases and meetings, will be analysed and will form the basis of the draft assessment review report.

Step 18.

The draft will be forwarded to the Church Authority for factual accuracy checking.

Step 19.

Alongside all other reports under review, the report will be presented in draft to the Reference Group for their critique and comment. If further work is required at the direction of the Reference group the CEO will ensure this work is completed and advise the Church Authority accordingly.

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Step 20.

The report will be legally proofed by NBSCCCI lawyer.

Step 21.

The report will be forwarded to the NBSCCCI for approval

Step 22

A final draft report will then be submitted to the Church Authority. The expectation would be that the report will be published by the Church Authority at an agreed time in the future.

Step 23.

All case material written, including summaries, as part of the review, which are for the reviewers use only, will be stored on a secure server.

Guide for Reviewers

In terms of small (female religious orders) reference should be made to the following:

1. Has the Order provided alternative care to children in an orphanage, industrial school or children's residential home, but no longer is engaged in running such services;
2. Has the order provided education to children, in both or either boarding schools and day schools, but no longer does so ;
3. Has the order provided medical and/or nursing services to children, but no longer does so;
4. Has the order provided any other services to children, in community services centres, youth clubs etc., and no longer does so;
5. Does the order currently provide any sort of service to children and families that brings them into regular contact with children;
6. Has the order never provided any service to children (e.g. contemplative orders).

In relation to category 1 above;

1. The reviewers will establish whether any service they provided is included in the list of children's residential services produced by the Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB);
2. If this is the case, reference should be made to this.
3. If complaints have been referred to the Redress Board or Ryan Commission, this review cannot access these records and that will be stated in the report.
4. If the order has received complaints which have not been processed through Redress or Ryan these cases will be thoroughly examined as detailed above.

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Review of Policy and Procedures

1. It is recognised that not all Orders will have any ministry with children and therefore their policies and procedures should reflect the work that they do with children.
2. If the Order only works through other organisations, example in Diocesan work or in schools, they are required to follow the policies of those organisations.
3. If there are gaps in the policy document an assessment should be made as to whether the ministry engaged in requires full compliance with all criteria attached to the seven standards
4. Where it is clear that the criteria do not apply a reference should be made at the beginning of the review report that the Order's ministry is not directly with children and therefore adherence to particular criteria do not apply.
5. If the Order is a contemplative Order, there is no expectation that they will have detailed policies and procedures, but reference should be made to their ministry and that they have no contact with children.
6. In all cases, contact will be made with the civil authorities to identify if they have any child safeguarding concerns in relation to the order.