



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Review of Child Safeguarding Practice
in the religious congregation of
The Religious of Jesus and Mary

undertaken by

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

July 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. 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 Religious of Jesus and Mary* 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 Provincial Leader, Sr Mary Mulrooney, along with any recommendations arising from the findings. The 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 were within the Terms of Reference. There also were no allegations in respect of other forms of abuse within the time period, in respect of deceased and living members of the congregation. The review therefore is primarily based on policies and procedures made available plus interviews with key personnel involved in the safeguarding process within the congregation, particularly in the services run by the congregation.

1. Introduction

The Religious of Jesus and Mary abbreviated as R.J.M form a Roman Catholic religious congregation of women dedicated to the education and service of the poor. The congregation was founded in Lyon, France, in October 1818, by Claudine Thévenet, who had survived the siege of her native city by the forces of the French Revolution. Her two brothers were executed in 1794 and this inspired her to dedicate her life to the relief of the suffering in the world. Twenty years later, her work came to be guided by a local Catholic priest who was committed to establishing institutions to educate and help the children of the poor. Thévenet then established a small house of refuge called La Providence to care for the children of the city.

In 1818 Thévenet decided to commit herself to the consecrated life under Ignatian Spirituality and founded a small convent in the neighbourhood of La Croix- Rousse. They soon expanded and moved to a house in the [Fourvière](#) area of the city. The congregation received the approval of the [Bishop of Le Puy-en-Velay](#) in 1823 and of the [Archbishop of Lyon](#) in 1825. Their Constitutions were approved by [Pope Pius IX](#) on 31 December 1847. The objective of the congregation was to give girls a Christian education conformable to their social position. For this purpose the Sisters developed boarding schools and academies.

Sister Thévenet died in 1837 and the congregation continued to expand. In 1842 they established themselves in India and in the 1850s progressed to Canada. The first Sisters settled in England in the 1860s. During this time Irish families sent their daughters to be educated at Willesden School in England and to complete their formation in Lyon, France. After their expulsion from France in 1901 the General Motherhouse was transferred to Rome in September of that year.

In 1912, at the request of Bishop Naughton, seven Sisters settled in Errew House on the shores of Lough Conn, County Mayo. The founding mission was the education of young. The ethos of the congregation was making Jesus and Mary known and loved through Christian education in every social milieu, with poor children being given special attention.

In 1916 the congregation established itself in Gortnor Abbey, in County Mayo as a boarding school and in 1919 the first young people entered. Subsequently, in 1925, the Sisters founded a hostel for third level university students in County Galway. A primary school followed in 1952 and a secondary school ten years later.

In 1941 the congregation founded a Secondary School in Enniscrone, County Sligo and taught in the local Primary School. In 1955 the congregation extended to Dublin and established a centre for the junior professed in Milltown. The Sisters moved from here to Goatstown Road and established a secondary school in 1962. The congregation promoted the holistic education of the child and stressed the importance of the individual reaching his or her potential.

Today 1,300 Religious of Jesus and Mary serve in 28 countries around the world. They are supported in their work by over 1,600 associates, who form the Family of Jesus and Mary. Their foundress, Claudine Thévenet, was canonised by John Paul II in 1993.

2. Role Profile (past and present role with children):

The mission of the Congregation of the Religious of Jesus and Mary is in the education of children. In Ireland the congregation has had governance of six schools, both primary and secondary, and the Sisters have acted as principals and teachers within these schools. From the 1960s on the congregation has employed increasing numbers of lay people as teachers.

More recently, the four secondary schools have been transferred to the charge of the Le Cheile trust. The main objective of Le Cheile trust is the development of a vision of Catholic education and overseeing its implementation in their schools. The Provincial Council continues to operate as trustees of the two primary schools.

Some Sisters are involved in the following Ministries to day:

- Chaplain in a JM School
- Chaplain in a non JM School
- Pastoral Counsellor
- Learning Support-two Sisters
- Language –one Sister
- One-to one Learning-two retired Sisters
- Prayer Ministry-two Sisters
- Parish Ministry –five Sisters
- School Principals-two Sisters PS (This replaces the Yellow piece in original report)

All of the Sisters involved in direct ministry with children are Garda vetted and adhere to the policy of the education department, the individual school, and the child safeguarding policy of the Religious of Jesus and Mary. When the congregation revised and completed their policy in 2011 they contacted all of the schools within which they are still involved and provided them with a copy of the policy and the instruction of the expectation of members of the congregation to adhere to this policy.

One of the members of the congregation is employed as a Leader with the “Rainbows” program in Galway. This Sister is Garda vetted and adheres to the child safeguarding policy of “Rainbows” as well as that of The Religious of Jesus and Mary.

One Sister is involved in parish ministry in Galway and organises children with the liturgy in the local church. All Sisters must be Garda vetted to minister in the parish and must operate within the guidelines of the diocesan child safeguarding policy and procedures.

Two Sisters currently minister as chaplains within community schools not connected to the congregation. Again these members adhere to the child safeguarding policy of the individual schools and the policy of the Religious of Jesus and Mary.

3. Profile of Members:

There are currently forty three members of the Congregation of Religious of Jesus and Mary in Ireland. The age ranges are as follows:

(3) in the 90-100 age range

(7) in the 80-90 age range

(15) in the 70-80 age range

(11) in the 60-70 age range

(1) in the 50-60 age range

(1) in the 30-40 age range

Members of the congregation are resident across the areas of County Sligo, County Galway, County Mayo, and Dublin.

In Galway, ten Sisters live in two private houses and one Sister lives independently. In County Mayo, three members continue to reside in Gortnor Abbey, six Sisters in a private house, one Sister independently, and one in a nursing home. The remaining Sisters reside in a private residence in Dublin, one lives independently, and two members of the congregation are resident in nursing homes in the Dublin area.

Policy and Procedures Document:

The Religious of Jesus and Mary have a comprehensive, twenty nine page policy relating to child safeguarding and vulnerable adults. The policy appropriately adhere to the seven standards as outlined in: *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*.

The Provincial Leader has visited all communities in the congregation to explain the policy document and procedures.

The congregation has a one page Safeguarding Policy Statement signed by the Provincial Leader Sister Mary Mulrooney in 2011. While visiting all communities Sister Mulrooney ensured that a copy of this statement is visible to all residents. Sister Mulrooney has also provided a laminated one page document adjacent to every telephone in the houses detailing how to respond to an allegation or disclosure of abuse and the names and contact details of the Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person.

The Provincial Leader has completed all appropriate training with the NBSCCCI, as have the Designated Liaison Person and Deputy and has provided introductory child safeguarding training to all members of the congregation.

The congregation has recently developed a *Care Policy* for the needs of their aging population and a detailed *Anti Bullying Policy* completed in 2012.

The Congregation of the Religious of Jesus and Mary has a comprehensive and accessible child safeguarding policy document which is appropriate for the services they provide. The visibility of the safeguarding policy statement and accessibility of details of how to respond

to allegations creates an everyday awareness for the congregation and integrates child safeguarding into the practice of the Sisters. They are commended on the work and commitment invested in the document and the promotion of child safeguarding awareness within the congregation.

4. Structures:

Ireland is designated as a Province within the international structure and Sister Mary Mulrooney is the Provincial Superior. She is supported in decision making by three Council members. With the inclusion of the Provincial Bursar this completes the Provincial Government. The congregation has a Mother House in Rome which is led by the Superior General Sister Monica Joseph, who is supported by four Councilors and seven members who make up the General Government.

Sister Mulrooney has a responsibility to attend all the General Visitation meetings and to oversee the Provincial Chapters. She visits all of the houses in Ireland on an annual basis except during a year when the General Chapter is being held. To assist her in all matters relating to child safeguarding Sister Mulrooney has appointed a lay person as the Designated Liaison Person and a Religious of Jesus and Mary as the Deputy Designated Liaison Person.. The congregation has also identified support persons for both the complainant and respondent should an allegation be made.

5. Management of Allegations and liaison with the statutory authorities:

There have not been any allegations of abuse against any member of the Religious of Jesus and Mary in Ireland, and as such there has been no contact between this congregation and the civil authorities, An Garda Siochana or TUSLA.

4. Conclusion:

There are no allegations of abuse against any member of the Congregation of the Religious of Jesus and Mary in Ireland and consequently there was no case management material examined during this review.

The congregation has a history within Ireland of the education of children. Although their direct ministry with children has declined over time, some members still work within the education sector. The congregation maintains governance of two primary schools and has four secondary schools under the management of the Le Cheile trust.

The congregation has a comprehensive child safeguarding policy that appropriately follows the seven standards of the NBSCCCI. The current Provincial Leader, Sister Mulrooney has taken progressive action to ensure that all members of the congregation have a raised awareness of child safeguarding. The reviewer concludes that there are no concerns about child safeguarding practice within the Congregation of the Religious of Jesus and Mary.

Review of Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland

Terms of Reference (which should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes)

Small Religious Congregations

Introduction

In order for the National Board 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 Congregations 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 matches up to the standards set down in the Safeguarding Children Guidance published by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church 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 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;
- (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 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.

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.

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 Board 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 Board'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.

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.

Step 20.

The report will be legally proofed by NBSCCCI lawyer.

Step 21.

The report will be forwarded to the National Board 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.

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. In 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.

