



Review of Child Safeguarding Practice in

The Salesians of Don Bosco in Ireland

undertaken by

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

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

The reviewers wish to gratefully acknowledge the genuine welcome and hospitality that they received when conducting the fieldwork for this review. They were afforded every assistance in their work over the two days of January 28th and 29th, 2015 by Fr. Michael Casey, Provincial and by the Designated Officer of the congregation.

The reviewers met and interviewed the Provincial, the Designated Officer, who also chairs the Advisory Panel, the priest member who has responsibility for Garda vetting, the priest member who acts as the Safeguarding Coordinator and who chairs the Safeguarding Committee, the Brother member who is the congregation's child safeguarding Trainer and a lay woman, who is a Parish Safeguarding Representative. Telephone interviews were conducted with a Priest Advisor, the lay woman who acts as the Victim Support Person, a second lay woman who is a Parish Safeguarding Representative, and a senior Garda detective. Written correspondence was entered into with Tusla, the Child and Family Agency.

This report then contains the findings of the *Review of Child Safeguarding Practice in the Salesians of Don Bosco in Ireland* (hereinafter referred to as the Salesians) undertaken by the NBSCCCI in line with the request made to it by the Sponsoring Bodies. It is based upon the case material made available to the reviewers by the Provincial, Fr. Michael Casey SDB, along with interviews with selected key personnel who contribute to safeguarding within the Salesians. The NBSCCCI believes that all relevant documentation for these cases was passed to the reviewers and the Provincial has confirmed this.

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

Introduction

The Salesian Society (or Congregation) was founded in December 1859 by a young Italian priest named Fr. John Bosco (1815 – 1888). He believed from a young age that he had a particular vocation from God, and he gradually developed his vision of a mission to the education of youth. He named the congregation Salesian in honour of St. Francis of Sales to whom he had a special devotion and who he nominated to be the Patron Saint of the Salesians. Don Bosco was ordained to the priesthood in June 1841 in Turin, and he immediately started working with young people. In 1846 he bought a small shed which became the centre of his activities with the poor youth of Turin, and he opened small recreational, spiritual and educational centres in the Oratory tradition in 1845, 1847 and 1849 in various locations. In 1852 the Church of Saint Francis de Sales was completed and consecrated. Large schools and workshops for boy-artisans grew up around the area in which this church was located. He called his growing group of boys and young men his *Festive Oratory*.

This work attracted a group of helpers who were attracted to his approach. The congregation was formed with 17 of these young men, and its formation received Papal approval ten years later. In 1863 and 1864 three colleges were opened in Italy by the Salesians. In 1874 the Rule and Constitutions of the Society were definitively approved by Pius IX. This recognition seemed to lead to a very rapid growth in the congregation, and by 1890, houses were developed in France, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Ecuador, England, Austria, Spain and Belgium. In 1887 the religious magazine named the *Salesian Bulletin* was first published, and it is still distributed monthly throughout the world, in **31** languages.

According to the international Salesians of Don Bosco website, (http://www.sdb.org/en/About_Us/Our_Choice), the Congregation explains its choice to prioritise work with young people, in the following terms:

We feel called by God to walk in the footsteps of our founder. “The Lord made clear to Don Bosco that he was to direct his mission first and foremost to the young especially to those who are poorer.”

*We believe that this **choice for young people is of supreme importance:***

“Young people are at the age when they must make basic life-choices which affect the future of society”.

*We are convinced that our **option for the poorer youth of society is imperative.***

They are at a greater disadvantage, more impressionable, more vulnerable and often exposed to grave danger thus making them easy “victims of injustice”.

“With Don Bosco we reaffirm our preference for the young who are ‘poor, abandoned and in danger’, those who have greater need of love and evangelization, and we work especially in areas of greatest poverty.”

“Making the concern of Don Bosco our own, we go to them to prepare them to take their place with dignity...and to alert them to the role they must play in the Christian transformation of social life” (source: C. 26, 27)

The Salesian Congregation now has approximately 1965 houses worldwide. These are organised into 90 Provinces, in 132 nations. Ireland and Malta constitute one Province of the Salesian Congregation, with the Provincial headquarters in Crumlin in Dublin. Ireland separated from the Province it shared with England in 1972. The members who minister in Malta are guided by State legislation, and local Church guidelines. The Provincial who is based in Ireland shares resources and best practice in terms of policy and procedures. The practice of the Salesians in Malta was not assessed as part of this review.

The Salesians of Don Bosco is led by the Rector Major and the society's General Council. Each of Provinces is headed by a Provincial and he is supported by a Provincial council. All of these congregational leaders serve six-year terms. The Rector Major and the members of the general council are elected by the Chapter General, which meets every six years, or upon the death of the Rector Major. A Provincial is appointed every six years, following a consultation process; and he is supported by a five member Provincial Council. Each local Salesian community is headed by a superior, called a Rector who is appointed to a three-year term; he can serve a second three-year term if required.

The Salesians came to Ireland in 1919 when the congregation opened a community house at Pallaskenry in Co. Limerick. They developed an agricultural college and a secondary school on the site, both of which are still operational. Since their arrival in Ireland, the Salesians have opened community houses in Milford, Limerick, Maynooth and Celbridge, Co. Kildare, in three locations in Dublin and in Drumree, Co. Meath. The congregation is predominantly made up of ordained priests, with 7 Brothers (3 of whom are students) as members.

The Salesians in Ireland focus their work on the needs of young people in a number of centres and services throughout the country.

They are involved as Trustees in two schools – the Salesian College in Celbridge, Co Kildare (<http://www.salesianscelbridge.com>), a 700 plus student secondary school for boys; and the Salesian Secondary College Pallaskenry, Co. Limerick (<http://salesiancollege.ie>) a 615 student co-educational secondary school.

The Salesians own and operate an agricultural college at Pallaskenry, Co. Limerick (<http://www.pallaskenry.com>), which works in partnership with the Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT), Teagasc, QQI, SOLAS, City and Guilds and the local Education and Training Board. Full and part-time courses are provided in agriculture and in farm machinery mechanics. The congregation has closed an Agricultural and a Horticultural college at Warrenstown, Drumree, Co. Meath

The congregation operates a university student residence for young men at the University of Limerick (<http://www.uldigs.ie>) and supplies the Chaplain to the University of Limerick (UL).

Two parishes, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Sean McDermott Street, Dublin 1, and Our Lady Help of Christians Parish in Milford, Limerick are operated by the Salesians on behalf of the respective Archdiocese of Dublin and Diocese of Limerick.

The Salesians are involved in three non-formal community and education projects: The Southill Project in Limerick; the ACRE Project, an eco-friendly horticultural project in Celbridge, Co. Kildare; and the Crinan Youth Project, a community based drug treatment facility in Sean McDermott Street in Dublin's North inner city (<http://crinanyp.org>).

Two Spirituality Centres are run by the Salesians, at St. Catherine's on the North Campus of Maynooth College, and at the Don Bosco Centre next to the University of Limerick (<http://www.salesiansireland.ie/prayer-spirituality/spirituality-centres>).

The congregation also has a retreat ministry, operating from its houses in Milford Limerick, Crumlin, Dublin and Maynooth, Co. Kildare. Salesian priests provide a range of chaplaincy services, especially to members of the Defence Forces.

There is a related organisation associated with the Salesians of Don Bosco that provides residential care, aftercare to adolescent boys and young men as well as other support services to young men and women in Dublin, operating under the registered company and charity Don Bosco Teenage Care. This provides its day to day services under the name of Don Bosco Care. While this is a registered company and charity, it clearly espouses the Salesian approach, uses a logo that is closely modelled on that of the congregation, and is described on the Salesians' website at <http://www.salesiansireland.ie/what-we-do/care-services>. The two branches of the organisation have their own websites, at <http://www.donboscocare.ie> and at <http://www.teenagecare.ie>. The representatives of the Trustees, who are members of the management boards of these two services and who promote the Salesian Charism and spirit, report any child safeguarding concerns as well as developments in relation to best safeguarding practice to the Provincial and his Council. Don Bosco Care and Don Bosco Teenage Care are both monitored and inspected by statutory authorities. These services have not been assessed by NBSCCCI as part of this safeguarding review.

The Salesian Congregation opened a secondary boarding and day school in Ballinakill, Co. Laois in 1947 in the premises that had been the congregation's novitiate. In December 1990, the Department of Education opened a new Community School on this campus, which had been formed through an amalgamation of the existing Salesian school with second level schools run by the Presentation Order, the Brigidine Order and the Co. Laois V.E.C. The new school is now an independent entity. The Salesians share joint Trusteeship and are represented on the Board of Management.

While the Salesian Congregation is growing in some parts of the world, it is less vigorous in Europe, with an escalating age profile and falling vocations. The congregation internationally has developed what is referred to as *Project Europe*, where members from non-European countries, and from European countries which have sufficient numbers of priests and brothers, volunteer to serve in other European countries – including Ireland –

to help revitalise the Salesian charism. There are four Salesians from Poland (1), Vietnam (2) and India (1) currently living and working in Ireland under *Project Europe*.

The table below attempts to identify where the Salesians live in Ireland and what activities they are engaged in, and also presents information on the age profile of the membership.

Membership of the Salesian Congregation in Ireland

Pallaskenry Co. Limerick	Milford Limerick	Crumlin Dublin	Celbridge / Maynooth Co. Kildare	Warrenstown Co. Meath	Sean McDermott St Dublin
85 yrs. + 1 Retired priest		85 yrs. + 3 Retired priest			
	80 yrs. + 1 Retired priest 1 retired Brother	80 yrs. + 1 Retired priest	80 yrs. + 1 Retired priest	80 yrs. + 1 Retired priest 1 Retired Brother Bursar	80 years + 2 Retired priests
75 yrs. + 1 Retired priest 1 retired Brother in Nursing Home	1 priest acting as chaplain to nursing home	75 yrs. + 1 Retired Priest 1 Retired Brother 1 priest involved in writing		75 yrs. + 1 Retired priest	75 yrs. +
70 yrs. + 1 Retired priest 1 Priest working in Missions Office		70 yrs. + 1 priest lecturing 1 priest involved in Administration 1 retired priest	70 years + 2 Priests involved in Administration	70 yrs. +	70 year + 1 Priest involved with Don Bosco Care
65 yrs. + 1 Army Chaplain	65 yrs. + 1 Priest in Retreat work 1 Parish Curate	65 yrs. + 1 priest involved in Administration 1 Priest Naval Chaplain	65 yrs. +		65 yrs.+ 1 Priest Bursar
	55 yrs. + 1 Parish Priest; 1 Priest Army Chaplain	55 yrs. + 1 Priest Provincial			55 yrs. + 1 Parish Curate
50 years + 1 Priest in	50 years + 1 Priest Univ.	50 years + 1 priest Parish	50 yrs. + 1 Priest in	50 yrs. + 1 Priest Army	50 year + 1 Priest Parish

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Parish duties	Chaplain)	duties	Retreat work 1 Priest Rector 1 Priest in administration	Chaplain 1 Priest VEC Chaplain	Administrator
45 yrs. + 1 Brother involved in Social Work	45 yrs. +	45 yrs. +	45 yrs. +		
40 yrs. +			40 yrs. + 1 Priest School Chaplain 1 Novice		40 year + 1 priest in Parish work 1 priest studying
30 yrs. + 1 priest involved in media and website responsibilities			30 yrs. + 2 student clerics		30Years + 1 Student Cleric
		20 years + 1 Novice	20 year + 1 Pre-novice		
Total number of Salesians in Ireland (2013)					
10	7	16	11	5	9

These figures are approximately accurate, having been collated in 2013 - 2014, but they give a picture of the age profile, numbers and roles of the Salesians who live in Ireland.

In February 2015, there were 58 Salesians in Ireland and another 40 in Malta, the other part of the Province. Being a missionary congregation, there is some movement of men to and from other countries.

The term *retired* does not mean that every member in that category is completely inactive, as many retired members still undertake liturgical and/or administrative duties of some sort. Not all such duties are, or could be, listed in this table; for instance, each community house has a Rector or Priest in Charge, and there is also a Bursar who takes responsibility for financial matters.

STANDARDS

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

Standard 1 A written policy on keeping children safe

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

Standard 3 Preventing harm to children:

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

Standard 4 Training and education

Standard 5 Communicating the Church's safeguarding message:

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

Standard 6 Access to advice and support

Standard 7 Implementing and monitoring the Standards

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

Standard 1

A written policy on keeping children safe

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

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

Criteria

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

The relevant document for this congregation is *The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province* of 2010. This document was formally adopted and signed by the Provincial Council of the Irish Salesian Province on 08/12/2010. It is available in hard copy format, as well as on the congregation's website at <http://www.salesiansireland.ie/who-we-are/child-protection-policy>

This 45-page document is comprehensive and easy to follow. It states on page 3 that:

All Salesian personnel – Salesians, employees, volunteers – are required to comply with this document.

The policy document sets out the attitude of the Salesians to the protection of children and young people on page 8:

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

A Child's right to safety and care are inalienable.

Everybody, Salesian and Lay-helper or Volunteer (as well as everybody in the Church) has an obligation to ensure that the fundamental rights of children are respected.

These guiding principles inform the policy for Safeguarding Children of the Salesian Congregation in Ireland. The policy has been written to ensure that the Irish Salesians and their co-workers and volunteers take every reasonable measure to prevent abuse. It aims to ensure that none of its personnel or volunteers engages in behaviour that could allow abuse to occur or actions that could be misinterpreted by children, their families or other adults as constituting, or leading to abuse.

Criteria 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are met in full, based on the foregoing observations.

The Salesians had scheduled a review and revision of their policy and procedures for 2014, and this is written into their 2010 document, but they were discouraged by the NBSCCCI from undertaking this in the light of the review and revision of the Church's *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*.

The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province is structured in a way that mirrors the seven child safeguarding standards of the Church in Ireland. Under Standard 3 – *Preventing Harm to Children* – the policy addresses the various Church related activities in which children can be involved and therefore need to be protected. There is a *Code of Behaviour when Working with Children and Young People*, and this is followed by guidance on meetings with children and young people, the care of children with special needs, vulnerable children and trips away from home. This section also sets out

Best Practice Procedures to be followed. The guidance is comprehensive, relevant and accessible.

In its treatment of Standard 2 – How to manage allegations and suspicions of abuse – the policy document has a specific section on *Managing Allegations and the Accused (also called Respondent)*. The procedures outlined are transparent and are in line with good practice and canon law.

Criteria 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6 are met fully.

The types of abuse of children and young people are well described in the policy document, both in the section on Standard 1 – *A written policy on keeping children safe* – and in more detail in Appendix 1, which is headed, *Signs and Symptoms of Abuse*. These definitions are accurate and are consistent with statutory and Church guidance documents.

In the sections of the Salesian Congregation’s policy that deal with Standard 1 and Standard 2, it is made clear that child protection concerns must be reported without delay to the statutory authorities, An Garda Síochána and Tusla.

The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province has been created at Provincial level and is made available to all involved in Salesian related activities.

Criteria 1.7, 1.8 and 1.9 are deemed to be met fully.

Standard 2

Management of allegations

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

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

Criteria

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
2.1	There are clear child protection procedures in all Church organisations that provide step-by-step guidance on what action to take if there are allegations or suspicions of abuse of a child (historic or current).	Met fully
2.2	The child protection procedures are consistent with legislation on child welfare civil guidance for child protection and written in a clear, easily understandable way.	Met fully
2.3	There is a designated officer or officer(s) with a clearly defined role and responsibilities for safeguarding children at diocesan or congregational level.	Met fully
2.4	There is a process for recording incidents, allegations and suspicions and referrals. These will be stored securely, so that confidential information is protected and complies with relevant legislation.	Met fully
2.5	There is a process for dealing with complaints made by adults and children about unacceptable behaviour towards children, with clear timescales for resolving the complaint.	Met partially
2.6	There is guidance on confidentiality and information-sharing which makes clear that the protection of the child is the most important consideration. The Seal of Confession is absolute.	Met partially
2.7	The procedures include contact details for local child protection services e.g. (Republic of Ireland) the local Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána; (Northern Ireland) the local health and social services trust and the PSNI.	Met partially

Table 1

Incidence of safeguarding allegations received within the religious congregation against priests and brothers, from 1st January 1975 up to time of review

Salesians of Don Bosco in Ireland		
1	Number of Congregational priests and brothers against whom allegations have been made since the 1 st January 1975 up to the date of the review.	9*
2	Total number of allegations received by the Congregation since 1 st January, 1975.	11
3	Number of allegations reported to An Garda Síochána/PSNI involving priests and brothers since 1 st January 1975.	6
4	Number of allegations reported to the Tusla/ HSE / HSC (or the Health Boards which preceded the setting up of the HSE,) involving priests and brothers of the Congregation since 1 st January 1975.	3
5	Number of priests and brothers (still members of the Congregation) against whom an allegation was made and who were living at the date of the review.	5
6	Number of priests and brothers against whom an allegation was made and who are deceased.	4
7	Number of priests and brothers against whom an allegation has been made and who are in ministry.	1
8	Number of priests and brothers against whom an allegation was made and who are 'out of ministry', but are still members of the Congregation	1
9	Number of priests and brothers against whom an allegation was made and who are retired	3
10	Number of priests and brothers against whom an allegation was made and who have left the Congregation	0
11	Number of priests and brothers of the Congregation who have been convicted of having committed an offence or offences against a child or young person since the 1 st January 1975	0

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

*Includes 1 member against whom there was an allegation of physical abuse

The reviewers had access to all case management files that have been created by the Salesians in response to child safeguarding concerns received about individual members of the congregation. In all, there are nine such files, eight of which relate to concerns about possible sexual abuse. Of these, four pertain to deceased members of the congregation, three priests and one Brother. In relation to one of the deceased priests the allegation was completely withdrawn by claimant with full apology

The reviewers read all of the case management files, on both the living and deceased respondents. These were well constructed and easy to follow, and they are stored confidentially and securely. Criterion 2.4 is met fully.

In the first case where the respondent priest is still living, all required steps were taken – reporting to the two statutory authorities and to the NBSCCCI; stepping the priest aside while all investigations and inquiries were conducted; and completing a canonical Preliminary Investigation – but no evidence was established to indicate that abuse of any sort did take place. The priest was returned to ministry and the local diocesan Ordinary has provided him with faculties.

In a second case a priest member of the congregation has been withdrawn from ministry while a canonical Preliminary Investigation is being conducted. He lives in a community house under supervision and has signed a behavioural contract. The statutory authorities are aware of what has been alleged.

Both of these cases have been considered by the Salesians' own Advisory Panel and by the National Case Management Reference Group (NCMRG) of the NBSCCCI.

In a third case a third-party report was made to An Garda Síochána, but the named alleged victim did not wish to make a statement, so no Garda investigation was possible. The priest was stepped aside from ministry and was sent for assessment. The written Assessment Report said that no evidence of abusive attitudes or tendencies was adduced. The case was discussed at the congregation's Advisory Panel on two occasions. This priest was returned to ministry. There was some delay in informing HSE about the case, which was due to a misunderstanding. This notification was formally made by the congregation and they have discussed the matter with the relevant Area Children's Services Manager.

There are two other Salesian priests about whom child safeguarding concerns have arisen. In the case of one of these men what is alleged is physical abuse in 1969 in a Salesian school. This matter is the subject of professional mediation with the complainant. The respondent priest is retired.

The final case involved rumours about a named priest. These were fully investigated on three occasions and nothing untoward was established. The priest is retired and in nursing home care. This matter undoubtedly had a significant psychological and emotional impact on the priest. The congregation and other interested parties invested significant efforts to comprehensively examine whether there existed any substance to the rumours,

but nothing was found. It would be important that this priest is assured of his status as a priest in good standing and that he is given every support and assistance to process and recover from what he has experienced. It would be just if there could be some way found to maintain this case file in some separate secure place so that this man's name is not forever associated with child safeguarding concerns.

It is the opinion of the reviewers that the Salesians have no significant risk management concerns related to current members of their congregation. All cases reviewed have been well managed and recorded, and clarity regarding reporting to HSE / Tusla has now been achieved.

Against this background of case management within the Salesians, compliance with the criteria that underpin Standard 2 was examined. *The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province* contains very clear guidance on how to manage allegations and suspicions of abuse in its treatment of Standard 2. HSE / Tusla have audited the congregation, and HSE / Tusla authored minutes of a formal meeting between the two organisations in September 2013 were examined. It appears from these minutes that the statutory child protection service is satisfied with the adherence of the congregation to good child protection practices as set out in statute and statutory guidance.

The Salesians have appointed a Designated Officer and Deputy Designated Officer, and the evidence of their work indicates that they have been effective in discharging their duties. The Designated Officer role and responsibilities is set out clearly in *The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province*.

Criteria 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 are met fully.

The final three criteria under Standard 2 are assessed as being met partially, because *The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province* does not contain the information required, even if this information is available at local level in the congregation's community houses. It is acknowledged however that the Congregation has held off revising its documentation in advance of the launching later this year of the revised national guidance by the NBSCCCI. The reviewers did clarify in their discussions during the fieldwork visit that the Provincial and DLP are fully aware of the requirements of these criteria.

The written policy at Appendix 6 deals with *Safeguarding Children & Maintenance of Records*. In this it is stated that:

The Superior/ Director/ Rector shall ensure that:

[1...5]

6. Grievance, Discipline and Complaints Procedures are in place for all personnel.

However, the policy document does not provide any guidance on how to develop and operate a Complaints Procedure; and complaints from people who are not ‘personnel’ are not mentioned. On this basis, Criterion 2.5 is not met.

In the same appendix it is directed, in bolded print, that:

All files will be protected and confidentiality in compliance with the Data Protection legislation will be observed.

However, this specifically relates to records created and maintained by Local Safeguarding Representatives (LSR) – but then all community house Rectors are an LSR. In order to fully comply with the requirements of Criterion 2.6, more explicit guidance in the congregational policy document is required. On this basis, Criterion 2.6 is assessed as being partially met.

Unfortunately, while *The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province* is clear about communication and cooperation with the statutory child protection agencies, it does not include any contact information for these agencies. The reviewers are aware that this information is available to congregation personnel at local level; but Criterion 2.7 requires that it is also contained in the policy document. On this basis this criterion is not met.

Recommendation 1

That the Provincial direct the Safeguarding Committee of the Salesian Congregation to produce additional written guidance on developing and operating a Complaints Procedure, and on the congregation’s understanding of confidentiality and information sharing. This should be approved by the Provincial Council and then distributed to all Salesian personnel. Assistance with this task can be provided by the NBSCCCI.

Recommendation 2

That the Provincial direct the Safeguarding Committee of the Salesian Congregation to develop an *Erratum* for insertion into *The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province*, containing the contact details for Tusla and An Garda Siochana, at both national and local community level. This contact list can also be placed on the relevant page of the congregation’s website.

Standard 3

Preventing Harm to Children

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

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

Criteria – safe recruitment and vetting

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
3.1	There are policies and procedures for recruiting Church personnel and assessing their suitability to work with children.	Met fully
3.2	The safe recruitment and vetting policy is in line with best practice guidance.	Met fully
3.3	All those who have the opportunity for regular contact with children, or who are in positions of trust, complete a form declaring any previous court convictions and undergo other checks as required by legislation and guidance and this information is then properly assessed and recorded.	Met fully

Criteria – Codes of behaviour

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
3.4	The Church organisation provides guidance on appropriate/ expected standards of behaviour of, adults towards children.	Met fully
3.5	There is guidance on expected and acceptable behaviour of children towards other children (anti-bullying policy).	Met fully

3.6	There are clear ways in which Church personnel can raise allegations and suspicions about unacceptable behaviour towards children by other Church personnel or volunteers ('whistle-blowing'), confidentially if necessary.	Met fully*
3.7	There are processes for dealing with children's unacceptable behaviour that do not involve physical punishment or any other form of degrading or humiliating treatment.	Met fully
3.8	Guidance to staff and children makes it clear that discriminatory behaviour or language in relation to any of the following is not acceptable: race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political views.	Met fully
3.9	Policies include guidelines on the personal/ intimate care of children with disabilities, including appropriate and inappropriate touch.	Met fully

*This is addressed in the Staff Handbook

Criteria – Operating safe activities for children

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
3.10	There is guidance on assessing all possible risks when working with children – especially in activities that involve time spent away from home.	Met fully
3.11	When operating projects/ activities children are adequately supervised and protected at all times.	Met fully
3.12	Guidelines exist for appropriate use of information technology (such as mobile phones, email, digital cameras, websites, the Internet) to make sure that children are not put in danger and exposed to abuse and exploitation.	Met fully

The reviewers interviewed the priest member of the congregation who has overall responsibility for safe recruitment, including Garda vetting. The Salesians used to have the services of the CSPS Dublin Archdiocesan Office for Garda vetting, but they appointed a priest member to take on this responsibility in 2014. He undertook training with the Gardai in Templemore in preparation for the task. He has received vetting information from Dublin Archdiocese on 12 members of the congregation who had been vetted between December 2009 and December 2013.

The Vetting coordinator keeps all Garda Vetting Forms returned in a special filing cabinet in his office, and he stressed the confidentiality involved. He has developed a two-page document, *Policy for Disclosures from Garda Vetting that affect suitability for positions within the organisation*, which policy needs to be implemented by establishing a small Decision Making Committee:

A Decision Making Committee (DMC) is appointed by the Provincial to assess Garda Vetting Disclosures and make decisions as to the suitability of vetting subjects for positions within the organisation.

The policy also deals with the issue of disputed information and how this can be rechecked by the Garda Vetting Bureau.

Two other forms are kept on file and have a role in relation to recruitment:

1. Volunteer / Paid Employee Application Form – a two-page form
2. Confidential Declaration Form for Applicants for Voluntary / Paid Employment with Children, Young People / Vulnerable Adults – the Vetting coordinator was not certain that this declaration form is yet in use but believes that the new Safeguarding Committee will take it on as a responsibility.

Any member who is working in a parish, school or children's residential unit is vetted in that location according to that organisation's policy and procedures.

The Vetting coordinator only seeks vetting for members who will have regular contact with children in the course of their ministry; so, for instance, the men living in Warrenstown and in Crumlin do not require vetting as they do not have contact with children. He mentioned that he has recently processed three applications, all for were men in training with the congregation

The guideline is to update vetting every three years, so he has set up his system to begin the process at 2 years and 10 months.

Appendix 4 - *Safe Recruitment and Selection Checklist* – of *The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province* provides additional guidance in this area of practice.

On the basis of the information provided, the reviewers find that Criteria 3.1 and 3.2 are met fully, while Criterion 3.3 is met partially.

In its treatment of Standard 3 – *Preventing Harm to Children* – the Salesians policy document has excellent guidance on the behaviours that are expected of Salesian personnel who have contact with children through Church related and other activities, and of the behaviours that children and young people involved in such activities are expected to display. There is a detailed section titled *Best Practice and Code of Behaviour when Working with Children and Young People*; and Appendix 2 contains a *Children's Code of Behaviour*.

The policy contains sub-sections on children with special needs and disabilities; vulnerable children; trips away from home; parental consent; record keeping and the use of computers and other IT technology. There are relevant forms contained in the appendices that relate to some of these matters.

Based on what is contained in these sections of the policy document, Criteria 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11 and 3.12 are fully met.

Criterion 3.6 is quite specific about the need for guidance on how to raise concerns, including through the development and operation of a whistleblowing policy. In its policy document, the Salesian Congregation makes a strong commitment to child safeguarding. In Appendix 7 - Summary of Irish Salesian Province Child Protection Policy & Evidence of Implementation – amongst others, the following statements are made:

Through its signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Board for Safeguarding of Children in the Catholic Church 2009 the Salesian Congregation in Ireland has adopted the Board's policy and procedures document Safeguarding Children : Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2009), and the documents that may be added to it from time to time, as its basic regulation in all matters pertaining to the protection of children and, hence, for all procedures relating to our child safeguarding practice we will follow those as contained in this document. Furthermore, regarding its implementation of the said document, it accepts the supervisory role of officials of the Board's National Office and pledges its cooperation with them in their work.

Conscious of its grave responsibility to prevent the sexual, physical and emotional abuse of children and their neglect, the Salesian Congregation undertakes to report all allegations made to it of such abuse to the civil and church authorities without delay; it also urges all who disclose allegations of abuse against its members, or anyone else, to do likewise. Anyone making an allegation of abuse will be received with respect and listened to, will be informed of actions taken as a result of their disclosure and will have their need for counselling met, if required.

These commitments are strong and are commended. The Whistleblowing Policy of the Congregation is contained in the Staff Handbook and is sufficiently detailed to meet the requirements of Criterion 3.6. The reviewers suggest that this is also included in the next revision of the Congregation's child safeguarding policy and procedures document.

The Salesians, although no longer the owners and managers of the two Salesian secondary schools, are still very involved in their operation, as can be seen from their websites. The congregation also has a direct link with Don Bosco Care and Don Bosco Teenage Care, while each of these is now an independent company. However, any Salesian member who lives in a community attached to one of these schools is Garda vetted. The Congregation has members serving on the Boards of Management of these schools; and in line with the requirements of Circular 0065/2011 of the Department of Education and Skills, these Boards conduct an annual review of child safeguarding in their respective schools.

Standard 4

Training and Education

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

Criteria

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
4.1	All Church personnel who work with children are inducted into the Church's policy and procedures on child protection when they begin working within Church organisations.	Met fully
4.2	Identified Church personnel are provided with appropriate training for keeping children safe with regular opportunities to update their skills and knowledge.	Met fully
4.3	Training is provided to those with additional responsibilities such as recruiting and selecting staff, dealing with complaints, disciplinary processes, managing risk, acting as designated person.	Met fully
4.4	Training programmes are approved by National Board for Safeguarding Children and updated in line with current legislation, guidance and best practice.	Met fully

The reviewers met the Salesian Brother who has responsibility for Child Safeguarding Training within the congregation and its constituent units. This member of the congregation has a number of child safeguarding roles, as a member of both the Advisory Panel and the Safeguarding Committee, as well as having responsibility for anti-bullying policy and initiatives across all Salesian ministries. He has only recently taken on the training role and is completing a *Train the Trainer* course with the NBSCCCI and was preparing for his supervised training later that week. He has already done child safeguarding awareness-raising sessions with domestic staff in four Salesian community houses, as well as with domestic and teaching staff at the Pallaskenry Agricultural College.

The reviewers examined the Training Events folder kept by the congregation. While needing better organisation, this file contains certificates of completion of training for different members of the congregation.

Training took place in 2010 for Salesians of Don Bosco run by a *Keeping Safe Trainer* with Archdiocese of Dublin on the 7 Standards.

Nearly 30 members of the congregation attended a Limerick Diocese training day in June 2011.

A training workshop on Child Safeguarding was held in September 2013 in Maynooth for the Salesians, and at least 30 members were in attendance.

The reviewers saw documentary evidence of the Provincial and the Designated Officer each completing 6 courses relevant to their safeguarding responsibilities, between 2011 and 2015.

There is a commitment to child safeguarding training in the Salesian Congregation in Ireland, and the recent appointment of a designated Trainer will signal a prioritisation of this area of practice.

Recommendation 3

That the Provincial direct the Safeguarding Committee to review Child Safeguarding activities within the congregation and its constituent ministries, and from this to develop a Training Needs Analysis framework for application by the Trainer, in cooperation with the Rectors of the community houses and Directors of specific ministries.

A Training Needs Analysis involves:

- Monitoring the current performance of child safeguarding roles;
- Determining shortfalls or problems; and
- Identifying the type and level of training required.

Standard 5

Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

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

Criteria

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
5.1	The child protection policy is openly displayed and available to everyone.	Met fully
5.2	Children are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse and who to speak to if they have concerns.	Met partially
5.3	Everyone in Church organisations knows who the designated person is and how to contact them.	Met fully
5.4	Church personnel are provided with contact details of local child protection services, such as Health and Social Care Trusts / Health Service Executive, PSNI, An Garda Síochána, telephone helplines and the designated person.	Met fully
5.5	Church organisations establish links with statutory child protection agencies to develop good working relationships in order to keep children safe.	Met fully
5.6	Church organisations at diocesan and religious order level have an established communications policy which reflects a commitment to transparency and openness.	Met partially

The Salesians placed the following notice on their website prior to this NBSCCCI review:

Safeguarding Children

The Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB) in Ireland are committed to the highest Child Safeguarding standards.

We have invited the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) to review our Safeguarding procedures.

The NBSCCCI have been conducting such reviews of Dioceses and Religious congregations and our review will take place in January 2015. This review we hope will be another step on the long road to justice and healing.

We invite anyone who has concerns or complaints to make contact with us.

Our Designated Person is:

Fr. M L who can be contacted at (email address) or on (mobile phone number)

The NBSCCCI can be contacted directly at 01-5053124

At the time of writing, no concerns or complaints were received by the Salesians or by the NBSCCCI in response to this notice.

As mentioned previously, *The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province* is available in both hard copy and on the Salesians' website. Each community house within the congregation has just inside its entrance a statement of the Child Safeguarding Policy of the congregation, as well as a list of contact details for the Designated Officer, Gardai, Tusla, the NBSCCCI and other relevant agencies. On this basis, Criteria 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4 are fully met.

In its Appendix 2 – Children's Code of Behaviours - *The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province* states that children should

Talk to the person in charge if you have a problem of any kind.

This is useful, but it is not specific enough to fully meet the requirements of Criterion 5.2.

The reviewers have been in communication with a senior Garda manager by phone and with a senior manager in Tusla in person and by email. They have also been able to examine correspondence with Tusla regarding their independent audit of the Salesians, and to see from the case files how the congregation liaises with the statutory child protection agencies. Based on this evidence, Criterion 5.5 is met fully.

The Salesian Congregation does not have a written Child Safeguarding Communications Policy *per se*. It does use its website appropriately in relation to its safeguarding message: Its policy document is available and accessible; and the Congregation is clearly committed to openness and transparency in relation to Child Safeguarding. Criterion 5.6 is considered to be met partially.

Recommendation 4

That the Provincial direct the Safeguarding Committee to develop a written Child Safeguarding Communications Policy

Standard 6

Access to Advice and Support

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

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

Criteria

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
6.1	Church personnel with special responsibilities for keeping children safe have access to specialist advice, support and information on child protection.	Met fully
6.2	Contacts are established at a national and/ or local level with the relevant child protection/ welfare agencies and helplines that can provide information, support and assistance to children and Church personnel.	Met fully
6.3	There is guidance on how to respond to and support a child who is suspected to have been abused whether that abuse is by someone within the Church or in the community, including family members or peers.	Met fully
6.4	Information is provided to those who have experienced abuse on how to seek support.	Met partially
6.5	Appropriate support is provided to those who have perpetrated abuse to help them to face up to the reality of abuse as well as to promote healing in a manner which does not compromise children's safety.	Met fully

The Salesian Congregation has parishes in the Archdiocese of Dublin and the Diocese of Limerick, and has access to the well-developed expertise in both of these Church authorities for child safeguarding training and advice.

While only recently convened, the congregation's Safeguarding Committee has a membership that includes people who have backgrounds in teaching, residential child care and chaplaincy. While this is not as wide a range of professional experience as might be assembled over time, it does provide the congregation with a pool of advice and support.

The Salesian Congregation has its own Advisory Panel, which has been actively involved in case management; but the congregation has also joined the NBSCCCI's National Case Management Reference Group at which it can receive advice and support regarding any child safeguarding concern. The congregation's Provincial and Designated Officer also contact the NBSCCCI if they have a query about child safeguarding.

The Salesian Congregation refers complainants to *Towards Healing* and contributes to the cost of that service.

The congregation has been involved with HSE / Tusla in its independent audit of religious orders and has received advice through that process on further improving its child safeguarding services.

The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province in its section on Standard 2 does contain detailed information on how to respond to a complainant who is a child or young person. There is scope to perhaps develop this more in the section of the policy that deals with Standard 6.

Appendix 3 - Recording form for safeguarding children - of the congregation's policy document is closely modelled on the template provided in Resource 16 of the Church's standards and guidance document of 2009, although its title is not as clear as it might be (Resource 16 is entitled *Child protection recording form (template)*, which is unambiguous).

As mentioned under Standard 5 above, the Salesians placed a notice on their website announcing the NBSCCCI Review and inviting anyone with a child safeguarding concern to come forward.

It is not immediately obvious when looking at the home page of the congregation's website where information on child safeguarding / child protection can be accessed. There is a drop-down menu from the icon headed *WHO WE ARE*, and *Child Protection Policy* is item seven of eight that are listed on the menu. The following text is displayed on the Child Protection Policy page that can then be opened:

The Salesian Congregation in Ireland is committed to the safeguarding of children by its members, its employees and voluntary co-workers, in its churches, schools, youth clubs and houses and in its ministry. We are committed to promoting the safety, welfare and protection of children and take all concerns, allegations, suspicions and disclosures of abuse very seriously. We pledge ourselves to treat with compassion all those afflicted by abuse.

Our Child Protection Policy has been written to ensure that the Irish Salesians and their co-workers and volunteers take every reasonable measure to prevent abuse. The Policy document is available below to read or download.

Download and read our [Child Protection Policy](#)

After this the name and contact details of the Designated Officer are given. This is all the information provided, and it does not contain any message for someone who may want to come forward to make a complaint to, or share a child safeguarding concern with the congregation. This is a matter that needs to be addressed.

On a more positive note, the Salesian Congregation has developed a mediation procedure that is used with complainants, if they are happy to agree to use such an approach. Professional, independent mediation is paid for by the congregation, and the process is kept alive until a mutually acceptable resolution is arrived at. The reviewers saw evidence in case management files of good outcomes that had been reached without the levels of conflict that is often apparent when matters are handled through the civil legal process. While mediation is not an inexpensive option, it does provide a less costly alternative to engaging two legal teams to prepare and present cases in a contested High Court case. The congregation is commended for developing this attitude and approach to working with complainants. It does demonstrate a genuine focus on the needs of those who have been hurt through the actions of a small number of members of the congregation.

The Salesians make available an Advisor or Support Person to respondents within the congregation. There is evidence on the case management files of respondents receiving appropriate supports and interventions to both help them to deal with their unacceptable behaviours and to ensure that children are kept safe.

Criteria 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, and 6.5 are met fully.

The Salesians can easily achieve full compliance with Criterion 6.4 when they put accessible information on their website for potential complainants. The congregation has a Media Office at Pallaskenry, Co. Limerick, and in this the Provincial has available to him expertise that he can employ in communicating information to potential complainants through Salesian publications.

Recommendation 5

That the Provincial review with the Salesian personnel who are engaged in maintaining the Congregation's website and in the production of the Congregation's publications how the amount and quality of information made available to potential complainants can be improved.

Standard 7

Implementing and Monitoring Standards

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

Criteria

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
7.1	There is a written plan showing what steps will be taken to keep children safe, who is responsible for implementing these measures and when these will be completed.	Met partially
7.2	The human or financial resources necessary for implementing the plan are made available.	Met fully
7.3	Arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with child protection policies and procedures.	Met fully
7.4	Processes are in place to ask parishioners (children and parents/ carers) about their views on policies and practices for keeping children safe.	Met partially
7.5	All incidents, allegations/ suspicions of abuse are recorded and stored securely.	Met fully

As mentioned under Standard 6 above, the Salesian's Safeguarding Committee has only recently been convened. From an examination of the relevant file records, it appears that the members of the Advisory Panel had been involved from time to time in discussions about preventative developments that could be taken to make children and young people safe; in effect, the Advisory Panel had become a forum in which Child Safeguarding was being dealt with as well as case management. This is an historical situation that has been observed in other Church Authorities reviewed by the NBSCCCI. The Salesians have now resolved the matter by establishing a Safeguarding Committee.

The membership of the new committee needs to be adjusted to bring in a greater gender balance as well as a better ratio of religious / lay-persons; this matter was discussed in feedback to the Provincial and the Chair of the Safeguarding Committee.

A number of the recommendations made in this report will require the Safeguarding Committee to become very active over the coming months. A further responsibility that is

recommended is that this committee develops a Child Safeguarding Plan for the congregation. This would involve the bringing together in one short document the various goals and targets that are set at local community level, along with actions to address any required developments as identified in local audits. Criterion 7.1 therefore is met partially, and it can be met fully within a short period.

The Provincial Council meets every month, as do the local Salesian communities, and child safeguarding is on the agendas for all of these meetings. This is another way in which necessary child safeguarding developments can be identified.

Recommendation 6

That the Provincial direct the Safeguarding Committee to review the results of the most recent Self-Audits conducted by each community house and ministry within the congregation, and to consult with the Provincial Council; and to develop from this information a Child Safeguarding Plan for 2015-2016 based on addressing issues identified as requiring attention.

The reviewers are satisfied that the Salesians have invested sufficient resources into child safeguarding, and that no developments have been held back due to lack of support from the congregation's leadership.

The reviewers examined the file record detailing the results of a congregation-wide self-audit conducted in 2014. The Designated Officer has already compiled a report that can be given to the Safeguarding Committee for action.

On the basis of the evidence examined during this review, Criteria 7.2 and 7.3 are fully met.

Having read through all file records detailing how child safeguarding concerns have been responded to and managed, the reviewers are of the opinion that Criterion 7.5 is fully met.

The Salesians operate two parishes, one in Dublin and the second in Limerick. There are Parish Safeguarding Representatives (PSR) in both parishes, and the reviewers spoke with both of these lay women. They impressed with their obvious commitment to their tasks and knowledge of what their responsibilities are. Each PSR gave detailed descriptions of all of the ways in which they and other parish personnel, including Salesian members, ensure the safety of children in consultation with their parents.

The reviewers did not see or hear evidence of specific ways in which children and parents are consulted about safeguarding policies and practices, in parishes and other Salesian ministries. On this basis, Criterion 7.4 is considered to be met partially.

In conclusion the reviewers are satisfied with the commitment of the Provincial and the Salesians in Ireland to child safeguarding and to their standard of safeguarding practice.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

That the Provincial direct the Safeguarding Committee of the Salesian Congregation to produce additional written guidance on developing and operating a Complaints Procedure, and on the congregation's understanding of confidentiality and information sharing. This should be approved by the Provincial Council and then distributed to all Salesian personnel. Assistance with this task can be provided by the NBSCCCI.

Recommendation 2

That the Provincial direct the Safeguarding Committee of the Salesian Congregation to develop an *Erratum* for insertion into *The Child Protection Policy of the Irish Salesian Province*, containing the contact details for Tusla and An Garda Siochana, at both national and local community level. This contact list can also be placed on the relevant page of the congregation's website.

Recommendation 3

That the Provincial direct the Safeguarding Committee to review Child Safeguarding activities within the congregation and its constituent ministries, and from this to develop a Training Needs Analysis framework for application by the Trainer, in cooperation with the Rectors of the community houses and Directors of specific ministries.

Recommendation 4

That the Provincial direct the Safeguarding Committee to develop a written Child Safeguarding Communications Policy

Recommendation 5

That the Provincial review with the Salesian personnel who are engaged in maintaining the Congregation's website and in the production of the Congregation's publications how the amount and quality of information made available to potential complainants can be improved.

Recommendation 6

That the Provincial direct the Safeguarding Committee to review the results of the most recent Self-Audits conducted by each community house and ministry within the congregation, and to consult with the Provincial Council; and to develop from this information a Child Safeguarding Plan for 2015-2016 based on addressing issues identified as requiring attention.

Review of Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland

Terms of Reference

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

1. To ascertain the full extent of all complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the Diocese by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1st January 1975 to 1st June 2010, against Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and who are ministering/or who once ministered under the aegis of the Diocese and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the Diocese.

2. If deemed relevant, select a random sample of complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the Diocese by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1st January 1975 to 1st June 2010, against Catholic clergy and/or religious now deceased and who ministered under the aegis of the Diocese and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the Diocese.

3. To ascertain all of the cases during the relevant period in which the Diocese:

- knew of child sexual abuse involving Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and including those clergy and/or religious visiting, studying and/or retired;
- had strong and clear suspicion of child sexual abuse; or
- had reasonable concern;

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

4. To consider and report on the following matters:

- Child safeguarding policies and guidance materials currently in use in the Diocese and an evaluation of their application;
- Communication by the Diocese with the Civil Authorities;
- Current risks and their management.

Accompanying Notes

Note 1

Definition of Child Sexual Abuse:

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

“While definitions of child sexual abuse vary according to context, probably the most useful definition and broadest for the purposes of this Report was that which was adopted by the Law Reform Commission in 1990¹ and later developed in Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Department of Health and Children, 1999) which state that ‘child sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or that of others’. Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

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

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

Note 2 Definition of Allegation:

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

Note 3 False Allegations:

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

Note 4 Random sample:

The random sample (if applicable) must be taken from complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse made against all deceased Catholic clergy/religious covering the entire of the relevant period being 1st January 1975 to 1st June 2010 and must be selected randomly in the presence of an independent observer.

Note 5 Civil Authorities:

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