



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

**Second Review of Child Safeguarding Practice**  
  
**in the**  
  
**Diocese of Cloyne**  
  
**undertaken by**  
  
**The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the**  
  
**Catholic Church in Ireland (National Board)**

**Date of Review Report: June 2022**

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### **Background**

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church Ireland (National Board) was established in 2006 to provide advice, services and assistance in the ongoing development of safeguarding children within the Roman Catholic Church on the Island of Ireland; to monitor compliance with legislation, policy and best practice; and to report on these activities. This is comprehensively set out in the Memorandum of Association of the Company.

Church authorities who have entered into an agreement with the National Board through signing a Memorandum of Understanding have committed to following *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016*.

In order to assess compliance, the Diocese of Cloyne invited the National Board to undertake a review of practice, which took place in June 2022.

The Diocese of Cloyne was previously reviewed in December 2013 under the *Safeguarding Children - Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2008*. The report of the first Review including recommendations can be found on the National Board's website at [www.safeguarding.ie/publications](http://www.safeguarding.ie/publications).

There were eight (8) recommendations made in the previous Review Report. *The Report on the response of Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee (CDSCC) to the recommendations, partial findings and concerns of the (December 2013) review of Safeguarding Practice in the Diocese of Cloyne, November 2014* indicates the steps taken by the diocese and the Bishop to implement these eight recommendations. This current Review was an opportunity for the National Board to confirm that these planned actions had been completed.

The Recommendations in the 2013 Review Report were:

#### **Recommendation 1**

That Bishop Crean ensures that when the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Persons in the Diocese of Cloyne policy and procedures is published in 2014, all priests and all other personnel involved in diocesan and parish activities that involve children in any way, sign and return to the Safeguarding Office a declaration that they have received, read, and will abide with the requirements of that document. In addition, Bishop Crean must ensure that appropriate training and induction is provided to those in safeguarding roles on the new policy document.

#### **Recommendation 2**

That the Designated Person ensures that a narrative account of the response given by the respondent priest is recorded on each case management file.

### **Recommendation 3**

That Bishop Crean should ensure that an appropriate and deliberate response to victims is established, including recruiting and training at least two lay people, a woman and a man, to act in a victim support role.

### **Recommendation 4**

That a specific whistle blowing policy is included in Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Persons in the Diocese of Cloyne (2013), to include the procedures a member of the Church can use to express concern about a child. It may be helpful to outline a number of reporting options, which could be utilised by an individual who is considering making a report, regardless of who their concern is about.

### **Recommendation 5**

That Bishop Crean arranges for a Training Needs and Analysis and Skills Audit to be conducted in the diocese to identify the training requirements of all safeguarding personnel, on the basis of which a Diocesan Training Plan can be developed and implemented.

### **Recommendation 6**

That the CDSCC should consider the production of further printed child safeguarding information materials, including some that would be particularly developed for and by children and young people, for general circulation within the diocese.

### **Recommendation 7**

That Bishop Crean should request the CDSCC to consider and put in place practical and emotional support for the current and future victim support persons.

### **Recommendation 8**

That Bishop Crean engages with the diocesan DLP and D/DLP in planning a suitable risk assessment and risk management protocol for respondent priests in the Diocese of Cloyne.

The reviewers confirm that these Recommendations have been implemented.

The purpose of this second round of Reviews is to assess child-safeguarding practice against the Catholic Church in Ireland's current standards as detailed in *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016* and make statements based on evidence, which provide:

- Public confidence that the Church body is safe for children;
- Affirmation to Child Safeguarding personnel that they are doing the right things well;
- Confirmation to the Church authority that what they want to be done is in fact being done;

- Independent verification of Self-Audit – or correction and/or improvement of Self-Audit;
- Opportunities for learning.

### Introduction

A full history of the Diocese of Cloyne was provided in the first Review Report of 2013. It is geographically extensive in area (3,440 square kilometres - 1,328 square miles), covering most of north and east of Co. Cork. The total Catholic population of its administrative area in 2021 was 157,752. The diocese has 46 parishes, and it is a suffragan diocese of the Cashel and Emly Archdiocesan Metropolitan Area. Bishop William Crean was appointed in November 2012.<sup>1</sup> Sixty-five (65) diocesan priests are in ministry, and have appointments, and a further five (5) Cloyne Diocese priests are in ministry outside the diocese, three of them abroad. Thirty-one (31) priests of the diocese have retired. Five (5) diocesan priests are out of ministry, and these men will be mentioned later in this report. In addition, Cloyne Diocese has ten (10) permanent Deacons in ministry.

There are eleven (11) female Religious Orders in twenty-one (21) locations within the Cloyne Diocese's administrative area, and in 2021, these had a combined membership of 119 Sisters.<sup>2</sup> In 2021, there were four (4) male Religious in the diocese, who were attached to a congregation comprised of priests, brothers, and religious Sisters.

### Process of Review

The Cloyne Diocese Review was undertaken after the lifting of government Covid-19 restrictions, so face-to-face interviews and meetings were used as much as possible. Some telephone interviews were also conducted when this was the most effective or acceptable means of communication.

The fieldwork was conducted on June 27, 28, 29 and 30, 2022.

The following is a list of those with whom the reviewers met or spoke with during the course of this Review:

- Bishop William Crean
- The DLP and the Deputy DLP
- The Diocesan Secretary
- The Safeguarding Coordinator (this person is also responsible for Vetting and for Training, and is one of the designated leads for Youth Organisations)
- The Chairperson and members of the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee
- Three Parish Safeguarding Committees
- Parish Safeguarding Representatives
- The CEO of the Cloyne Diocesan Youth Service (CDYS)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/diocese/dclloy.html>

<sup>2</sup> ibid

- The Youth Faith Camp Co-ordinator, along with participants and their parents
- The Co-ordinator of the Pope John-Paul II Awards Scheme, and participants on the scheme, along with their parents
- Two priest advisors
- One Support Person
- Three complainants, and a family member of a complainant
- One respondent priest. He and two other respondent priests completed and sent back a questionnaire
- A representative of An Garda Siochana
- A representative of Tusla

All were cooperative and forthcoming, and their participation ensured that the Review was inclusive and comprehensive.

### **Standards**

This section provides the findings of the Review. The template employed to present the findings are the seven standards, set down and described in the Church guidance, Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016. Cloyne Diocese agreed to adopt Safeguarding Children 2016 as its child safeguarding policy through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in 2016.

The seven Standards are:

Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

Standard 2: Procedures for responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or allegations

Standard 3: Care and Support for the Complainant

Standard 4: Care and Management of the Respondent

Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe

Standard 6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

Standard 7: Quality-Assuring Compliance with the Standards

Each Standard contains a list of indicators, which ensure that the standards are met. To support implementation of the Standards, the National Board has produced detailed guidance. The Diocese of Cloyne has adopted in full the guidance of the National Board.

This review does not assess written procedures, but concentrates on practice through a review of written records, interviews with church personnel, communication with children; information from complainants and respondents.

An assessment of practice under each standard is set out below.

## **Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments**

*Church bodies provide an environment for children that is welcoming, nurturing and safe. They provide access to good role models whom children can trust, who respect, protect and enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.*

Compliance with this standard requires a variety of structures, processes and practices to be in place and operational. What is clear to the reviewers is that the driver of the Safeguarding Children Standards - 1, 5, 6 and 7 - is the Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Committee. This diocesan grouping is mirrored at local level by a network of parish Safeguarding Committees, which exist in most parishes, and for which the diocese has produced a simple Template for Parish Safeguarding Children Committee. This structure, allied with a process of parish visits by members of the diocesan committee, and the encouragement provided by Bishop Crean, have all contributed to the development of safeguarding awareness, ownership and culture. The bishop has made a written commitment to safeguarding, which is part of the 2017 diocesan publication, *Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures for Parishes*.

### **Commitment by the Bishop.**

On behalf of the Diocese of Cloyne as a constituent member of the Catholic Church in Ireland, I commit to safeguarding children by agreeing to follow the National Board's Child Safeguarding Policy. I will abide by and uphold the seven standards and the applicable indicators in our entire ministry and contacts with children.

This document also reproduces the Child Safeguarding Statement of the Diocese of Cloyne, which is required for compliance with the requirements of the Children First Act 2015.

The location of child safeguarding responsibilities in Mallow, where the Cloyne Diocesan Youth Service (CDYS) and Diocesan Youth Ministry are also based, has allowed interrelationships to grow naturally between the staffs of these groupings, and for safeguarding to be easily embraced.

The Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Committee has a written constitution, which covers the rotation of membership, and four new members have recently been recruited, while others have retired. The Chairperson is a retired senior public service manager, whose work experience has provided him with an understanding of organisational dynamics, strategic management and planning. The committee is therefore well led and effective. It has nine (9) members, which include the Safeguarding Coordinator, and the Diocesan Secretary. The DLP attends the meetings in an *ex-officio* capacity. This attendance facilitates communication with the diocesan administration and the bishop, and with case management personnel. It meets four times per year.

Among the responsibilities discharged by the committee are:

- Governance, compliance, risk management and mitigation, and the development, clarification and dissemination of policy, procedures and guidance;
- Advising the bishop on all child safeguarding matters within the diocese; and
- Plans and oversees vetting, training, communications, and parish audits;
- Conducts parish visits and liaises with, advises and supports parish clergy and Parish Safeguarding Committees.

In order to avoid having to convene the full committee more often, a smaller Executive Committee has recently been created to deal with recurring business.

The Safeguarding Coordinator manages the Garda vetting that is required for all employees and volunteers who join the diocese at central or parish level. She also provides this service for all Religious living within the diocese who are involved in parish or diocesan work. The dedicated diocesan safeguarding website, which can be accessed via a link from the home page of the Diocese of Cloyne website, or through the URL [www.safeguardingchildrencloyne.ie](http://www.safeguardingchildrencloyne.ie), carries a suite of forms and explanatory documents relevant to vetting and other selection requirements. These include:

- Volunteer Information Handout
- Vetting Invitation Form, along with guidance for completing it (NVB1)
- Parent / Guardian Consent Form (NVB3)
- Volunteer - Groups working with children Safeguarding Pack
- Volunteers not working with children Safeguarding Pack
- Child and Parent / Guardian Safeguarding Pack
- Cloyne Diocese Safeguarding Children Procedures & Forms for Volunteers, Group Leaders, Parents and Children

What the Safeguarding Committee has done following the publication by the National Board of *Safeguarding Children 2016*, is to reproduce information and pro-forma forms in packs relevant to particular users; and in this way, individuals and groups do not have to navigate much larger documents in order to find what they need. This was an onerous but worthwhile task, which is commended.

In order to ensure that everyone who shares personal sensitive information in the course of recruitment processes understands how this is managed, the diocese has produced a comprehensive 7-page document entitled *Data Privacy Notice*, which explains current Data Protection legislation and the responsibilities of the diocese in this regard.

The reviewers have established that Garda vetting is up to date, and that the administrative system that has been developed is of a high standard. Currently, vetting is repeated every five years, but it is likely that this will become every three years.



As well as agreeing to be vetted, applicants for roles as staff or volunteers are also required to sign a Declaration Form, confirming that they have no criminal convictions. Another form that follows is a combined Agreement Form and Confidentiality Declaration. The agreement is to abide by the child safeguarding policy and procedures, while the confidentiality undertaking is to treat personal sensitive information accessed 'on the job' in confidence.

In their meetings with various parents and children, and with adult diocesan staff and volunteers, the reviewers were aware of a respectful attitude demonstrated towards children and adolescents. The reviewers met with children and young people who are engaged in the Pope John Paul II Awards scheme and in the Summer Faith Camps that are run across the diocese. The children and adolescents themselves confirmed that they felt comfortable and safe in participating in parish ministries and other Church related activities. There is a Code of Behaviour in place for adults, and this is reinforced in all briefing and training sessions provided as part of induction and ongoing involvement.

All children's and young people's groupings develop their own understandings and agreements about what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

Individual parishes are responsible for ensuring that when external groups are using any Church owned buildings or facilities, the appropriate checks are done on safeguarding policy and insurance compliance. This matter is then audited as part of the annual self-audit conducted across the diocese.

The diocese has a whistleblowing policy and procedure, but this has not needed to be used to date.

The diocese has a formal Complaints Policy. When any complaint is made, this is brought to the Diocesan Child Safeguarding Committee to be addressed and resolved. In response to the diocese widely advertising the National Board Review in advance, and inviting concerned people to contact the National Board, one person did so in order to make a complaint about an issue in their own parish. Having spoken with a reviewer, this person said that matters had greatly improved in the recent past. This was discussed by the reviewers with the diocesan committee, and in doing so discovered that it had already been dealt with in a low-key and sensitive manner.

Risk and hazard assessment is well managed by the Cloyne Diocese. Two practice examples were seen by the reviewers. The first was in a meeting with a parish Child Safeguarding Committee where the return of altar servers in September 2022 was being planned. In the course of this planning, which included recruitment, training and adult supervision, a comprehensive risk assessment was undertaken in which eight (8) potential risks and mitigations were identified. The two-page Risk Assessment Form is reproduced here to show its structure, and the first of the eight risks identified in that parish is described.

## Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Diocese of Cloyne

Risk Register – XY Parish							
Altar Servers							
Step 1 – Risk identification	Step 2 – Risk assessment		Step 3 – Risk management Levels 1, 2, 3, 4, 5				
Possible Risk	Likelihood H / L	Impact H / L	What are we already doing about it? (Mitigating factors)	What more can we do about it?	Timescale	Person responsible	Level of risk
Altar servers not effectively trained	Low	High	Full training given to new altar servers to ensure that they are in a safe environment when active in the church. Child protection literature from Diocese given to altar servers.	Ensure timely training is provided to new altar servers and that they are fully aware of the support that the parish offers them.	Ongoing	Parish Priest (named)  Altar server leadership team (two people named)	2

The Diocese of Cloyne runs Summer Faith Camps annually, and these are in three or four of the larger towns in the diocese. Again, as part of the planning process, a Risk Assessment is conducted prior to any engagement with the children and young people who take part. This is a five-page form, set out in a slightly different way to the altar server one above. There are sixteen (16) risks identified, each of which is assessed regarding whom it may affect, and its potential impact if not addressed. Each risk is then assessed according to consequences, the controls needed, and the person(s) responsible. For example, for the risk *Activity is not inclusive for those with additional needs*,

- the people who would be affected are both young people and adults;
- there would be a medium likelihood of harm resulting;
- among the consequences could be that the room is not suitable for those with poor mobility, or supervision ratios are minimal, or health and safety issues would arise; and the Controls required would include:
  - Ensuring room(s) used for camp are accessible to all.
  - Ensuring disabled toilets are available, or toilets are accessible.
  - Increasing supervision ratios when needed.
  - Camp coordinator consulting parent(s) re: child's needs prior to camp
  - Checking insurance etc. is in place.
  - Timetabling alternative appropriate activities, if needed.

This implementation of risk assessment is evidence that written policy has been adopted, and has influenced behaviours. The diocese has given a great deal of thought to developing risk assessment methodologies and templates. This is commended.

The Diocese of Cloyne has adopted the Guidance of the National Board on the use of technology, social media, photography etc., as required under Standard 1.9, and this is reproduced in their 2017 document, *Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures for Parishes*.

The operation of the Summer Faith Camps shows how this guidance is applied in practice. A reviewer met the priest who has responsibility for organising and overseeing these gatherings, along with two teenage daughters who participate in the camps, and their two parents. The priest explained that the faith camps cater for 13-18 year-olds. There had been a camp in Knockadoon, near Youghal just prior to the Review being conducted, with 27 young people attending, from within and outside the diocese. This facility is owned by the Dominican Order. There were 10 leaders (i.e. ratio of 3:1). The camp ran for a week (6 nights) and combined a diverse range of activities, alongside time for prayer, reflection and debate. One of the debate topics was –“How do TikTok and Instagram affect your faith? Discuss”.

The priest further explained that it was important to set boundaries around the running of the faith camps, for example, there was no internet use; young people handed in their mobile phones and had a half-hour slot each day to phone their families. The two young people said that they did not mind these boundaries and did not experience them as any infringement on their rights. This approach limited distractions, while facilitating and enabling the young people to focus on themselves as individuals and on the relationships with the other people on the camp. They and their parents spoke about the friendships that were developed, and about how they had set up a WhatsApp group in order to keep in touch. The parents noted how their children got so much out of the camp, in terms of their faith, but also in terms of being kind and non-judgemental.

The priest organiser had creatively embraced I.T. to connect with young people and to get across the safeguarding messages. He showed the reviewer how young people could now apply on line for the faith camps, and how they could access links to the Cloyne Diocese and to the Dominican safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance, including codes of behaviour, anti-bullying, consent etc.

Faith camps for the younger age groups, with no overnights, are offered in three locations across the diocese.

The reviewers clarified with the Diocesan Secretary the procedures for Cloyne priests ministering outside the diocese, and for external priests coming into the diocese to minister.

Both directions of movement are covered by written procedures and are the responsibility of the Diocesan Secretary. He maintains a dedicated recording system for incoming and outgoing clergy. There is a three-page diocesan document, *Requirements for Involvement in any form of Ministry in the Diocese of Cloyne 2022*, which is provided to any cleric or lay minister who wishes to minister within the diocese. It applies to:

- Priests/Deacons who wish to minister at a once-off event or multiple events e.g. Funeral (maximum of 3 days)
- Priests/Deacons who wish to minister for longer periods (including Priests wishing to be given faculties within the Diocese)
- Priests/Deacons who wish to be registered as a Temporary Solemniser for a Wedding
- Religious Brothers and Sisters (Non-Ordained/in any form of consecrated life who wish to minister in the Diocese)
- Lay Ministers who wish to minister in the Diocese

This document sets out the diocesan requirements, including the production of a range of documentation, the need for Garda vetting if required, the need for an Irish visa, if relevant, basic safeguarding children training, the production of evidence of being in good standing etc. It is made clear that non-compliance with any of the requirements will lead to no permission to minister being granted, and that the final arbiter is the bishop.

When a priest of the diocese wishes to undertake either short-term or long-term ministry in another diocese, there are rules set by Cloyne Diocese with which they need to comply. For any length of ministry outside Cloyne Diocese, Bishop Crean's prior permission must be sought.

**This Standard is met.**

**Standard 2: Procedures for responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or allegations.**

*Church bodies have clear procedures and guidance on what to do when suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations arise regarding a child's safety or welfare that will ensure there is a prompt response. They also enable the Church to meet all national and international legal and practice requirements and guidance.*

Since the previous Review, three priests of the Diocese of Cloyne have been stepped aside from ministry due to concerns raised about them. This brings to five the number of Cloyne diocesan priests who are currently out of ministry due to concerns or allegations raised about them. The cases of two of these men were covered in the previous Review. In addition, there have been allegations received about priests who were deceased and / or who had been discussed in the 2013 Review Report.

In the course of the fieldwork for this Review, thirteen (13) case files were examined. Nine (9) of these involved priests about whom concerns or allegations have been received since the previous Review in 2013. Of these, six (6) are Cloyne diocesan priests, and three (3) belong to other Church bodies. Two (2) of the thirteen (13) files examined relate to Cloyne diocesan priests whose situations were reviewed in 2013, but about whom no further allegations have been received since then. A further two (2) case management files examined relate to priests who are not incardinated into Cloyne Diocese and whose cases had been reviewed in 2013.

Table 1 overleaf sets out the overall situation.

**Table 1: Number of concerns and allegations reported to Cloyne Diocese since the 2013 Review**

<b>Diocesan</b>						
<b>Cleric</b>	<b>Current status</b>	<b>Number of complainants</b>	<b>Gardai notified</b>	<b>Tusla notified</b>	<b>National Board notified</b>	<b>Appropriate and timely canonical action taken</b>
1.	Out of ministry	1	Yes – within 3 days	Yes – within 3 days	Yes – within 3 days	Yes
2.	Out of ministry	Unclear	By another Church body	By another Church body	By another Church body <sup>^</sup>	Awaiting statutory assessment
3.	Out of ministry	1	Same day	Same day	Same day	Yes
4.	Deceased	1	Next day	By complainant	By complainant	N/A
5.	Deceased	1*	Yes – within 7 weeks	Yes – within 7 weeks	Yes – within 7 weeks	Priest unable to participate due to ill health
6.	Deceased	1	Next day	Next day	Next day	N/A
*The complainant did not provide either their name or their contact details. It was hoped that they would call again, but they did not do so.						
<sup>^</sup> This has been verified - and Cloyne Diocese has also notified the statutory authorities						
<b>Other Church body</b>						
7.	Out of ministry	1	Same day	Same day	Not required	Diocese abroad
8.	Dismissed from clerical state	There are a number of complainants	Next day	Next day	Next day	Diocese abroad
9.	Out of ministry	(1) (1) 2	Within three days Within six days	Within three days Within six days	Within three days Within six days	Religious Order abroad

The Diocese of Cloyne has a priest DLP and a retired senior public service manager as Deputy DLP. These two safeguarding staff have responsibility for making notifications to the statutory agencies and to the National Board. In general, these notifications have been made in a timely manner. If, as seems to be the case, the DLP is the person with whom complainants have the first and most enduring contact, it would be important for the diocese to consider a gender balance in the role of DLP. The reviewers note that previous attempts to recruit and deploy both female and male laypersons as DLPs have not been successful.

In the case of Cleric 5 above, the complainant did not provide their name or contact details to the DLP when they made the initial phone call. It was hoped that the complainant would telephone again, but when this did not happen, the notifications were made. The respondent priest was in supported accommodation at this time and posed no risk to anyone. The National Board would prefer if statutory notifications were made, even in situations where not all of the information is yet available.

The individual cases will be discussed in more detail under Standard 4 below.

The concern about Cleric 1 involves his use of the Internet some years ago.

Allegations against Cleric 2 relate to a time prior to his studies for the priesthood.

A retrospective allegation of abuse by Cleric 3 was received from a third party, and the matter was investigated by the Gardai and assessed by Tusla.

The complainant in the case of Cleric 4 made allegations about events of 30 to 40 years previously. By the time they came forward, the priest had died.

In the case of Cleric 5, an anonymous letter was received alleging inappropriate behaviour. Due to the priest's ill health and the absence of a named complainant, little could be done about the matter. This priest subsequently died.

Cleric 6 was long deceased when an allegation of retrospective abuse was made about him.

In the cases of Clerics 7, 8 and 9, they all visited Cloyne Diocese on different occasions from their base abroad. The complainants were from within the diocese, and the matters were appropriately notified to the priests' home Church body.

The reviewers had telephone discussions with senior officers of An Garda Síochána and Tusla. Both described an excellent working relationship with Cloyne Diocese. Interagency meetings take place between the diocese and the two statutory agencies twice per year, and over time, a good level of trust has been built up between all three bodies. It is common for the staff involved to telephone another agency to clarify some matter or to share information.

**This Standard is met.**

### **Standard 3: Care and Support for the Complainant**

*Complainants who have suffered abuse as children receive a compassionate response when they disclose their abuse. They, and their families, are offered appropriate support, advice and pastoral care.*

Seven (7) complainants were contacted by the DLP, and the parent of a complainant was contacted by the D/DLP, all prior to the Review. This was done to inform them of the Review taking place and to invite them to take part. The reviewers were able to interview four (4) people in the course of the Review to get a sense of how they experienced the response of Cloyne Diocese - three (3) complainants, and the parent of a fourth. One complainant opted to be met in person, and the other interviews were conducted by phone. In addition, the reviewers read the case management files in order to see how responses to complainants were conducted by diocesan personnel and by Bishop Crean.

In order to be fair regarding describing the period covered by this Review, some of the complainants spoke about events that preceded January 2014. There is a great deal of learning to be gained from them, and this will be described later.

The diocese presented the reviewers with thirteen (13) case management files to review. Of these, four related to priests who were not of the diocese, and these four were appropriately referred to the relevant Church bodies to be dealt with, including outreach to the complainants involved. In all cases involving a priest of the diocese, the services of Towards Healing were offered to complainants, and where a complainant could not access these, alternative counselling arrangements were made available.

Of the nine (9) cases that involved priests of Cloyne Diocese, three (3) were deceased at the time of the Review, but allegations related to them had been received since January 2014. Of the six (6) living priests, one of who had been dismissed from the clerical state, there were allegations received since January 2014 in relation to three of them.

One of these six (6) diocesan cases in which concerns and allegations had been reported since January 2014, one involved a boundary violation in the use of social media. The complainant's interest was to ensure that the priest's behaviour would be addressed.

In the case of a second man, the allegations received related to individuals living in another jurisdiction; and the incidents alleged preceded his ordination as a priest of the diocese. The bishop has been in correspondence with the relevant Church authority in the country involved. Support to the complainant in one case has been provided through contact with a parent, as the complainant did not wish to have direct contact with the diocese. A reviewer spoke to the parent who said that the diocese had been '...as helpful as they could be...', and was keeping the family informed of developments in the case. They described the DLP as very helpful and supportive. Counselling for their adult child has been paid for by the diocese.



The complainant in the case of one of the deceased priests alleged that they had been abused by him when they were a pupil in a local school. The approach to the diocese was made through the complainant's solicitor. A generous practical support arrangement was agreed between the bishop and the Religious Order that had managed the school.

In the case of another deceased priest, the complainant lives in another jurisdiction and so far, contact has been by email correspondence. This person has expressed a lack of trust in the diocese regarding the follow up investigation that has been conducted. Both the Gardai and Tusla have been involved, but neither can progress matters in light of the alleged respondent being deceased. The complainant has stated, in response to an offer of financial assistance with counselling, that they are not yet ready to avail of that service; and this offer remains open to them.

The complainant in the case of a third deceased priest made contact through an anonymous letter, but they never identified themselves to the diocese.

The three (3) other complainants who were interviewed spoke of issues related to priests of the diocese that had arisen prior to the previous Review. Their experiences were much more negative at a time when the diocese had not developed much by way of victim support. The three victims all spoke positively of the support that they subsequently received from two Religious Sisters who were retired teachers and known to them. The support provided over many years by these two women has been consistent, extremely helpful and exemplary. Though they began their support work in a personal capacity, they are now supported by the diocese to do so, and they liaise with the DLP. Their work has provided an essential lifeline to the victims with whom they work. Following the previous Review, the diocese recruited and trained a female and a male Support Person. However, no complainant has opted to use the services of these two people. All three experienced an insensitive Court process, and spoke of the absence of personal supportive follow up from the diocese at that time. These events contributed to the deep hurt that they described. One complained that when it came to the question of compensation, she experienced the process as cumbersome. The diocese has since assisted these victims with practical supports and by meeting costs of counselling and other items.

One complainant was very clear that they believe that the bishop and priests of the diocese could benefit from meeting with and listening to victims in a forum designed to be a safe place in which to share experiences and insights. This is a suggestion that could be considered by the diocese. The reviewers are satisfied that support to complainants has improved since the previous Review. The bishop and the DLP and D/DLP have worked together to ensure that the needs of complainants are kept in focus and are addressed. This priority will have to be sustained over many years, as complainants have been clear that their emotional distress can be easily triggered by real time events.

The complainants interviewed had valuable observations and suggestions to make, and one specifically talked of being willing to help the diocese by sharing their perspective on safeguarding children. This sort of engagement is something that Cloyne Diocese safeguarding personnel could well consider.

**This Standard is met.**

#### **Standard 4: Care and Management of the Respondent**

*The Church authority has in place a fair process for investigating and managing child safeguarding concerns. When the threshold for reporting has been reached, a system of support and monitoring for respondents (cleric or religious) is provided.*

Five (5) priests were invited to take part in the Review. The reviewers received feedback questionnaires from three (3) priest respondents, and subsequently met with one of them. Another priest respondent who had sent back the completed questionnaire subsequently sent a very comprehensive written account of their experiences since they were alleged to be a person of concern. The reviewers also spoke with Bishop Crean and the DLP and D/DLP, and they read the relevant case management files. They also spoke with two Priest Advisors.

Five (5) priests of Cloyne Diocese are out of ministry at present and are subject to a supervised management plan. Three of these have been discussed under Standard 2 above, and they will be mentioned again at the end of this section.

Two of these men were considered in the previous Review, and no subsequent complaints have been made against them. However, their situations have changed since the 2013 Review. One has had a final canonical decision that he can no longer minister due to his abuse. The second had a canonical review that upheld the decision that he remain out of ministry. In the case of the two (2) men, both are being supported and supervised by the diocese, and their case files contain records of their ongoing relationships with diocesan safeguarding personnel. They have been through the statutory processes of Garda investigation and Tusla assessment. The CDF in Rome is aware of both cases and are of the view that neither can be returned to ministry at any future time. They each have a Priest Advisor assigned to them.

A sixth man, who was also considered in the previous Review, has been dismissed from the clerical state and is no longer being supervised by the diocese.

Four (4) of these six cases, including that of the dismissed man, have been presented to the National Case Management Committee of the National Board for advice; and five of the men have been through an assessment process by external agencies, including assessment of risk. Three (3) priests have had concerns or allegations reported about them since the previous Review, and all are out of ministry. In the case of one of these, a decision from the CDF is expected, and their management plan may need to be changed because of this. He has not accepted a Priest Advisor.

In the case of a second priest, he is currently out of ministry and is participating in an assessment process.

In the case of a third priest, retrospective allegations have been made in relation to him from before his ordination for the diocese. These are being investigated, and no canonical process can be initiated prior to an outcome from these.

All priests have been offered the assistance of a Priest Advisor.

The three feedback questionnaires contained a variety of views and experiences.

In one, the priest respondent reported that he is satisfied with how the bishop and the diocese has managed his situation since a concern had been raised about him, and he has the support of a Priest Advisor.

In the responses of a second priest respondent, he described how he was dealt with prior to the previous Review, and he was quite dissatisfied with what was done. He is particularly critical of not being involved in the preliminary canonical investigation, and believes that this process was flawed. He believes that some of the information about him that was used in the subsequent canonical processes was erroneous. He would like this matter reviewed by the National Board. He went on however to explain that matters greatly improved with the appointment of Bishop Crean and the DLP and D/DLP. A reviewer also met with this respondent and confirmed the content of his questionnaire. He said that he had to spend a most of his savings defending himself once the allegations were made. He clearly draws a lot of support from family and friends.

The third priest is currently the subject of a Garda investigation. He has raised a number of questions about the canonical procedures that apply to his case, and no doubt, these will need to be addressed once the statutory authorities have completed their work. He spoke of his sense of being without purpose since he was stepped aside. He would also appreciate more personal contact and practical expressions of concern, that would not be focused just on the 'business' elements of his case. He is also very frustrated by the time it is taking the statutory agencies to complete their investigation and assessment of the allegations.

Bishop Crean offers an annual Pastoral meeting with each priest out of ministry, though not all take it up. If anything of importance related to the case is raised during such a meeting, there is an understanding that this is passed on to the DLP. Two respondent priests expressed their view that the meetings with Bishop Crean do not meet their needs. The reviewers see the benefit of inviting respondent priests to share their experiences with diocesan safeguarding personnel as an opportunity for learning from their experiences of having been through a process.

The reviewers spoke with two Priest Advisors by phone. Both were asked by Bishop Crean to consider taking on this role. Each is currently supporting two priests out of ministry. These two Priest Advisors communicated genuine interest in the welfare of the men with whom they work in that capacity. They came across as non-judgmental in their approach, while being understanding, practical and flexible in their approach. Both Priest Advisors received initial role-specific training from the National Board when they began, and both said that they would welcome refresher training in the future.

Each year, the DLP, D/DLP, the individual respondent priest and their Priest Advisor have a formal meeting to review the management plan and the respondent priest' needs. Each case management file contains written records of these meetings. One of the respondent priests is of the view that the role of his Priest Advisor is compromised by his participation in these regular review meetings.

Bishop Crean, the DLP and D/DLP meet regularly to review all open cases. 8 In 2017, there were eight (8) such meetings; five (5) in 2018; eight (8) in 2019; seven (7) in 2020; three (3) in 2021; and three (3) in 2022, up to the end of June. This practice is commended.

The reviewers are of the opinion that risk is being well managed in Cloyne Diocese, and that appropriate work is being undertaken to manage and support the priests who are out of ministry.

**Standard 4 is met.**

## Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe

*Church personnel are trained and supported in all aspects of safeguarding relevant to their role, in order to develop and maintain the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills to safeguard and protect children.*

Cloyne Diocese has two National Board registered Trainers, and has the facility to access other Trainers from the Metropolitan Area, as required. It also has a Training Plan in place for 2022, which has been signed off by the Child Safeguarding Committee.

The Training Plan is a two-page document and is set out in template form, as shown here.

Target group	Training required	Delivery by Registered Trainers / CDSCC members	Delivery by National Board	When	Location	Cost
Deacons in formation	Introduction training – safeguarding structures and procedures	Registered Trainers	No	Q.1 of 2022	Nano Nagle Centre, Killavullen	Hire of venue

This is an example of one of six Target Groups covered in the plan. The others are:

- Parish Information Sessions;
- New priests, new and existing Parish Safeguarding Representatives, new deacons, new diocesan personnel, Bethany Bereavement Group, and Group Leaders in youth choirs, Faith Camps and Children’s Liturgy;
- Priests;
- Parish Safeguarding Representatives, Parish Safeguarding Committees, Parish Secretaries, and Sacristans;
- The Cloyne Diocese Safeguarding Children Committee (CDSCC).

There is an *Upcoming Training* tab on the Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding website at <http://www.safeguardingchildrenclayne.ie/upcomingtraining.html>.

Training is a prerequisite for any person engaged in ministry or Church related activity involving children and young people in the Diocese of Cloyne. Safeguarding Training is built in to the activities of the Cloyne Diocesan Youth Service, the Summer Faith Camps, the Pope John Paul II Award Scheme and other Youth Ministry.

Training was greatly affected by the pandemic lockdown, so to provide an idea of the training activity in the diocese, the figures for 2018 and 2019 were examined. In 2018, 355 people attended training across the diocese. The main training activity included:

- Phase 2 training for the priests of the diocese
- Initial training for newly appointed Safeguarding Representatives, Group/Choir Leaders, etc.
- Phase 2 refresher training for Parish Safety Committee members, Parish Safeguarding Representatives, Sacristans, etc. - two (2) training courses delivered.

In addition, fourteen (14) parish information sessions were delivered.

In 2019, 192 people were trained, and the training programme included two full-day training sessions delivered in March and April for:

- Priests of the Diocese
- Newly appointed Safeguarding Representatives, and Group/Choir Leaders, etc.
- Refresher training for Parish Safety Committee members, Parish Safeguarding Representatives, Sacristans, etc.

Notification was received in September 2019 that a new National Board Training Programme was being developed for 2020, so the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee decided that it would be prudent to suspend further training until the new Training Programme would be ready to be rolled out.

In addition to providing training, the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee provides support to parishes by way of parish visits. In 2018, there were eight (8) such visits; and in 2019, there were seventeen (17). These visits are an opportunity to develop linkages between the central and the local administrations and personnel, and they are important in acknowledging and encouraging the voluntary work of child safeguarding at parish level.

The Child Safeguarding Coordinator liaises with the people who are in leadership of the Annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes and provides them with up to date child safeguarding training. The pandemic restrictions have led to there being no pilgrimages in the three years, 2020, 2021 and 2022.

Participation in Diocesan Pilgrimages to the Marian Shrine at Knock are the responsibility of parishes to arrange. Any need for the training of organisers, leaders and volunteer helpers for these pilgrimages could be addressed in the 2022 annual Parish Audit, and thereafter in the next Strategic Plan, if identified.

**Standard 5 is met.**

## Standard 6: Communicating the Church’s Safeguarding Message

*Church bodies appropriately communicate the Church’s child safeguarding message.*

The website of the Cloyne Diocese (<https://cloynediocese.ie/>) has a Safeguarding tab, which brings the user to a dedicated Safeguarding webpage, [www.safeguardingchildrenclayne.ie/](http://www.safeguardingchildrenclayne.ie/). This contains a lot of information, some of which has been described under Standard 1.

The Safeguarding Children Annual Communication Plan – 2022 is accessible on this website, as is the Digital, Social Media and Online Communication with Children & Young People Policy, 2021. The four-page annual plan is set out in the following template format.

Who	What	How	Responsibility	When	Review
All Church Personnel: Staff / Volunteers Parish Representatives Parish Safeguarding Committees	Diocesan Safeguarding Policy, Procedures, Guidance and Information.	Parish Safeguarding Notice Board	Parish Priest / Parish Safeguarding Representative	Ongoing	Annually
		Parish Audits	CDSCC / Parish Priest	Q.4	Annually
	National Safeguarding Board’s Policy and Guidance.	Parish Resource Pack	CDSCC / Parish Priest	Ongoing	Annually
		Training Sessions	CDSCC / Diocesan Trainers	Ongoing	Annually
	Contact details of the DLP	Designated Safeguarding Sunday	Diocesan Secretary / Parish Priest	Q.1	Annually
		Parish Visitations	CDSCC	Ongoing	Annually
		Local Bulletins / Diocesan Newsletter	Parish Priest / Parish Safeguarding Representative / Diocesan Secretary	Q.2, Q.3, and Q.4	Annually
		Information Sessions	CDSCC / Diocesan Trainers	Ongoing	Annually
		Social Media	CDSCC	Ongoing	Annually
		National Board’s Website	CDSCC (Advising Updates)	Available online	Quarterly
		Diocesan Website	Diocesan Secretary	Available online	Quarterly
		CDSCC Website	CDSCC	Available online	Quarterly

Similar targets are set out in the plan for:

- Children / Parents / Guardians / Carers;
- Priests; and
- Lay Faithful, General Public, Media, and External Organisations.

This is a comprehensive plan, the implementation of which is overseen and reviewed by the CDSCC. The attention to the necessity of communicating the safeguarding children message within the diocese is commended.

Cloyne Diocese has been organising two events to promote communications about safeguarding. The first of these is the autumn Cloyne Diocese Safeguarding Children Conference, which is organised on a three-year cycle in line with the Strategic Plan that is in place. This has not been held in 2020 and 2021 due to pandemic restrictions; and the focus in 2022 is to get ministries and safeguarding initiatives back up and running. The annual conference will next be held during the period covered by the Strategic Plan 2023 - 2025.

The 2019 Conference was held for the afternoon of an October Saturday; and as well as diocesan safeguarding personnel, the 107 attendees were addressed by senior officers of An Garda Síochana and Tusla about their respective statutory roles and responsibilities. This event allows representatives of individual parishes and local priests to come together to share experiences and meet others, to receive new information relevant to child safeguarding, and to hear from Bishop Crean who takes this opportunity to thank them for their work.

Safeguarding Sunday has been held annually in the spring, and the most recent one was in March 2022. Unfortunately, the pandemic restrictions affected this important communications event. Bishop Crean writes and circulates a special letter for Safeguarding Sunday, and in his 2019 edition, he stated his gratitude to everyone across the diocese whose contribution had led to the Church being safer for children and young people. He also set out his hopes for the future, when he said:

It is my hope and vision that in our Diocese:

- Young people will be able to continue to take part in the life of the Church;
- That all of us continue on the road to ensure that best practice in Safeguarding Standards are upheld; and
- That those who suffered abuse in the Church will find healing and peace.

The Diocese of Cloyne: Digital, Social Media and Online Communication with Children and Young People Policy of 2021 is an up to date ten-page document with guidance on the use of a variety of electronic media in communicating with children and young people.



Sections cover the use of Facebook and Messenger, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, Snapchat, Vimeo, Spotify, iTunes, email, texting, and Zoom. It includes a Code of Conduct for children and young people, as well as very useful guidance for adults who need to communicate with them in the course of Church ministry and other related activities. At the end of the document is a checklist, which is for use in planning for the use of electronic media for communication with the under-18 age group. This is reproduced here to indicate how this safeguarding issue is being addressed with parents / guardians, and children and young people, and is integrated in relation to training and oversight by the CDSCC.

Issue	Completed by and date	Approved by and date
<b>Step 1 - Initial Approval</b>		
Which technology / platform will be used?		
Ask the opinion of parents and young people about using this platform		
Complete risk assessment for the activity. Instruction on how to complete the risk assessment as well as the template are available on the Diocesan Website <a href="http://www.safeguardingchildrenclayne.ie">http://www.safeguardingchildrenclayne.ie</a>		
Group Leader to inform Director of Safeguarding about the activity.		
Diocesan Safeguarding Committee to review risk assessment and provide approval for the online activity.		
<b>Step 2 - Planning</b>		
Recruit Leaders for the activity in line with Diocesan recruitment procedures and supervision ratios.		
Leaders to familiarise themselves with the platform and the relevant diocesan policies.		
Leaders to complete code of conduct for working online with young people.		
At least one Leader to attend Safeguarding Training		
Parents / guardians and young people to complete consent forms		
Plan for session - including timings, alternative facilitation skills, resources etc.		
<b>Step 3 – Running the Ministry</b>		

## Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Diocese of Cloyne

Follow guidelines for the platform as outlined in this policy.		
<b>Step 4 - Evaluation</b>		
Ministry leaders meet regularly review platform		
Complete an evaluation with young people Seek views of parents / guardians on ministry, effectiveness and safety		

This document also addresses the requirements of Standard 1.9.

The Cloyne Diocese produces a spring issue of its Safeguarding Children Newsletter to coincide with Safeguarding Sunday. Past editions can be accessed on the website. At other times of the year, the Diocesan Secretary prepares and circulates safeguarding messages and information to parishes for inclusion in local newsletters. For instance, in a nine-month period, the Safeguarding Office sent out an email in October 2021 about Towards Healing; and in December 2021, the Bishop’s annual Safeguarding message was sent out for publication in parish newsletters. The Bishop sent out a letter to all priests in advance of Safeguarding Sunday in March 2022; and an email with advance notice of the National Board Review was sent to all parishes in June 2022. The reviewers spent time in two large town parishes and in a small rural parish during the Review fieldwork. On these visits, where they met with members of the Parish Safeguarding Committees provided evidence of how this structure and the processes that have been developed assist child safeguarding at a local level and ensure the communication of the essential child safeguarding message.

In one of the urban parishes, there is a large Polish community of approximately 800 people, and the committee had a Polish member to ensure that the needs of this grouping would be catered for. The members told the reviewer that the committee is community focused, with the aim of ‘creating a safe environment for children in the parish. They understand that safeguarding children is everyone’s responsibility, and they use a range of approaches to communicate and engage with the parishioners, parents and children, including:

- A Parish Newsletter and Facebook page; Newsletters from a seven year period were examined, and content included
  - telephone numbers of contact people for the parish Safeguarding Committee and the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee, TUSLA, and the Gardai, with guidance for people on what to do if they have a concern;
  - an explanation of the need for Garda vetting;
  - notices of safeguarding information sessions and training events;
  - updates on legislation, e.g. the Children First Act 2015, with reference to mandatory reporting, mandated persons and Child Safeguarding Statements; and
  - information on preparing to open up ministries with children following pandemic restrictions.

- The production of child-friendly posters in several languages, which were displayed in prominent places within the church, sacristy and parish hall.
- The development of the Parent / Young People information pack, referred to locally as 'the red folder'. This is clear, concise and relevant, with information on codes of behaviour (adult & child), anti-bullying, forms for media, vetting and hazard assessment of activities with children. It also contains a concise version of *Safeguarding Children 2016 - Policy Standards and Guidance*.
- The committee has developed an effective spreadsheet for volunteers, covering their role, what training they had / now require, and vetting, all with clear timescales and identified leads. All parish volunteers sign this, so they fully appreciate to what they have signed up. This is a live document, which is regularly updated.

The Parish Secretaries in the three Parish Safeguarding Committees that the reviewers met provide an essential service to ensure that the committees function and complete their business. In another urban parish, the Parish Secretary was completing an audit of all people who have a role in any ministry or other Church related organisation or activity in order to have a contact list to be used for communication purposes.

These Parish Safeguarding Committees generally have up to six members, and they convene approximately four times per year. They follow an agenda with a number of standing items – welcome and an opening prayer; minutes of previous minutes and matters arising; correspondence; matters of concern; new developments; vetting; training; and risk / hazard assessments required. In that parish, altar servers will be reintroduced in September 2022, and a risk assessment was being conducted as part of the planning for this.

In the third, rural Parish Safeguarding Committee, its existence provides a point of contact for diocesan initiatives, such as the Youth Faith Camps, the Pope John Paul II Award Scheme and the Cloyne Diocesan Youth Service. Again, it was clear that the Parish Secretary was a key conduit for communication in both directions – in, to the parishioners, including children and young people, and out, from the parish members to the various diocesan bodies, including the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee.

These Parish Safeguarding Committees are examples of a sharing of responsibility between clergy and lay people. They are also important for the conduct of the annual Parish Audit. They provide a forum in which issues can be discussed, and events planned.

In one of the urban parishes, the safeguarding committee took on various development tasks, including:

- Recruiting parents as volunteers, who are vetted and trained, to assist (on a rota) to be in the sacristy for the altar servers. Parents were also recruited to assist in the training programme *You should be my witness*, for young people preparing for Confirmation.

- Involving young people in events, e.g. the Corpus Christi parade in June 2022, the parish choir, and being readers at Mass. This parish successfully ran an online Zoom-based retreat for young people during the lockdown.
- Ensuring that new guidance or procedures introduced at diocesan level are explained to and implemented with the parishioners.

A number of the parishes in Cloyne Diocese have their own websites, and these are linked with the diocesan website. The reviewers would encourage the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee to explore with local parishes whether their websites could be further developed to include an agreed safeguarding children content and a standard access to this.

The diocesan Safeguarding Children website contains a great deal of very useful information. It would be beneficial to update it and to make it more attractive and easier to navigate.

**This standard is met.**

## **Standard 7: Quality-Assuring Compliance with the Standards**

*The Church body develops a plan of action to quality assure compliance with the safeguarding standards. This action plan is reviewed annually. The Church body only has responsibility to monitor, evaluate and report on compliance with the indicators under each standard that apply to it, depending on its ministry.*

Bishop William Crean invited the National Board to conduct a Review of all seven Standards contained in *Safeguarding Children 2016*. He and his safeguarding staff cooperated fully in the planning and conduct of the Review fieldwork. Cloyne Diocese placed a notice on its website, which was copied into parish Mass leaflets / weekly newsletters, to inform people of the National Board's forthcoming Review. Priests of the diocese, including those stepped aside from ministry, and complainants of abuse were informed that the Review would be taking place and that they could contact the National Board and its reviewers about any matter of concern.

The Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee takes overall responsibility for the planning and conduct of the annual Parish Audit, and the process used in the 2021 audit was described to the reviewers, illustrated with the six-page audit form that was sent out to all parishes. A standard Audit Analysis Sheet is used by the committee to take the data from the returned audit forms. This is then taken by the Safeguarding Coordinator who lists any issues that have identified that require a response from the committee.

An anonymised summary report on the 2021 Parish Audit was examined by the reviewers. All 46 parishes completed the exercise, which is commendable. Of these, seventeen (17) parishes required no response. The actions that were reported back to the Safeguarding Children Committee to be addressed included:

- Parish Information Session requested – eleven (11) parishes;
- Various Training sessions requested – nine (9) parishes;
- Matters requiring clarification with the parish – eleven (11) parishes;
- Safeguarding Children materials requested – three (3) parishes.

There is some double counting in these figures, as some parishes had two or more issues requiring a response.

It would be useful to place the completed Audit Report on the diocesan Safeguarding Children website. It is a very worthwhile exercise, which well demonstrates the work of safeguarding personnel across the diocese.

The reviewers have seen the January 2022 Report to Bishop Crean from the Safeguarding Children Committee on their Annual Review of the Safeguarding Children Strategic Plan 2020 – 2022, and their Review of Parish Safeguarding Audit Reports 2021. The Safeguarding Children Strategic Plan is a thirty-three (33) page document, which is formatted by addressing each of the *Safeguarding Children 2016* National Standards and Indicators in sequence. One Indicator under Standard 6 is reproduced here to illustrate the layout of the plan.

Standard 6.	Specific Objective	Action	Responsibility	Date Started	Target Date for Completion
6.1 The Diocese has a written plan, which details how the Church's child safeguarding message will be communicated.	6.1.1 Develop an Annual Communication Plan.	A) Prepare Annual Communication Plan and approve the Plan in Q.4 of each year	CDSCC	Jan 2020	Q.4 each year
		B) Prepare Annual Safeguarding Calendar in Q.4 of each year	CDSCC	Jan 2020	Q.4 each year

This level of detail is unusual for a diocesan Child Safeguarding Strategy. The completion of the document and the fact that it is in active use a blueprint for implementation and review are commended.

The reviewers read the DLP Annual Reports to Bishop Crean for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021. These are comprehensive and detail the work undertaken and the issues that arose in relation to Standards 2, 3 and 4. The bishop, the DLP and the D/DLP meet to discuss the DLP's annual reports in order for the bishop to sign off on them. This is commended.

**Standard 7 is met.**

## **Conclusion**

Bishop Crean was in post for less than a year when the previous Review was conducted. Clearly, he and his safeguarding team have been busy in the intervening years in implementing the recommendations of the 2013 Review Report, and Cloyne Diocese now has skilled personnel and effective systems in place to manage all aspects of safeguarding. Whilst there is never any room for complacency, the diocese is to be commended for the improvements made.