



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

Second Review of Child Safeguarding Practice

in the

Diocese of Waterford & Lismore

undertaken by

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the

Catholic Church in Ireland (National Board)

Date of Review Report: June 2023

CONTENTS

Page

Background:	3
Introduction:	5
Process of Review:	6
Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments:	8
Standard 2: Procedures for Responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or Allegations:	12
Standard 3: Care and Support for the Complainant:	15
Standard 4: Care and Management of the Respondent:	16
Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe:	19
Standard 6: Communicating the Church’s Safeguarding Message:	21
Standard 7: Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards:	22
Conclusion:	25

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 Coimirce 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*.

The Diocese of Waterford and Lismore was previously reviewed in November 2012 under the *Safeguarding Children - Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2008*. The report of the first Review can be found on the National Board's website www.safeguarding.ie/publications.

This current Review is an opportunity for the National Board to confirm that recommendations from the previous Review, November 2012, were implemented.

The recommendations from the previous Review, November 2012, are set out below along with the status of implementation:

Recommendation 1:

Bishop Lee should review the role of the support person to ensure that those who need her help do avail of this. Consideration might be given to the support person accompanying the designated person at the initial meeting with the complainant:

Achieved - Following the retirement of Bishop Lee, this recommendation was completed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee with points of guidance for the DLP and Support person.

Recommendation 2:

Bishop Lee, the designated person and the support person must record all contacts with the complainants in order to both reflect their views and the support offered:

Achieved – A protocol was developed for the completion of records of all contacts with the complainant by the DLP and support person to achieve implementation of this recommendation.

Recommendation 3:

Bishop Lee must ensure that all priests who are stepped aside from ministry have written supervision plans, which are reviewed by the bishop and the supervising priest at regular intervals:

Outstanding - A protocol was developed and incorporated into the Code of Conduct and Supervision Agreement for priests stepped aside from ministry. These currently need to be reviewed, formalised and updated.

Recommendation 4:

Bishop Lee should develop a protocol for deciding which cases are referred to his local Advisory panel and which cases are forwarded to the National Case Management reference group to avoid potential confusion and conflict of advice:

Achieved - A protocol was developed and in place until the Diocesan Advisory Panel was stood down. Referrals are now made to the National Case Management Committee.

Recommendation 5

Bishop Lee currently requires that all visiting priests who wish to minister in the diocese produce a *celebret*. In addition Bishop Lee should draft a protocol which ensures that all priests who are not incardinated into the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore, but who chose to retire to the diocese, prior to taking up residence (in the diocese) produce a current letter from their Ordinary/Superior indicating that they are in good standing, before being allowed to minister in the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore:

Achieved - A protocol was completed to support implementation of this recommendation.

Recommendation 6:

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Committee should review all policies and procedures, identify gaps and develop new procedures accordingly, in line with the requirement for a full revision of their policy and procedures by 2013:

Achieved - A review and revision of the policy and procedures was completed.

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

The Diocese of Waterford and Lismore is situated in the South East of Ireland. The diocese includes Waterford City and County, as well as much of South Tipperary and a small portion of County Cork. It is one of six suffragan dioceses in the ecclesiastical province of Cashel (also known as Munster). The Reverend Dr Alphonsus Cullinan was installed Bishop of the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore on 12 April 2015. The Bishop Emeritus is William Lee.

There are a total of forty-five (45) parishes and eighty-five (85) churches in the diocese. There are an estimated 44,000 Catholic households in this diocese, with a population of 153,206. There are eighty-nine (89) priests overall in the diocese, of whom thirty-two (32) are incardinated diocesan priests in full-time ministry. In addition, fifteen (15) incardinated priests are fully retired; four (4) incardinated priests are retired but minister in parishes; three (3) incardinated priests live outside the diocese; and eight (8) incardinated priests are out of ministry. Twenty-five (25) priests from religious orders and other dioceses are incardinated into the diocese; and two (2) retired priests from elsewhere are living in the diocese.

Twenty-three (23) Religious Orders have a presence and ministry in the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore, and there are sixty-one (61) Religious community residences across the diocesan administrative area.

Together with the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (the National Board), the reviewers would like to thank the Most Reverend Bishop Cullinan for his invitation to undertake a Review of child safeguarding arrangements and practices in the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore. Everyone we met with, including personnel from St. Paul's and Ardfinnan parishes were willing and open to discuss safeguarding practice arrangements in the diocese, and share their safeguarding documentation.

Ministry with children and young people in the diocese includes children's liturgy, altar server ministry, Pilgrimages, Good News Summer Faith Camps, the Holy Family Mission, Ascend Youth and Young Adult Ministry, children's liturgy including sacramental preparation, and the Pope John Paul II Award.

During 2020 and 2021, a range of activities involving children and young people were paused to comply with government guidelines on Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. Staff were also furloughed for a period. However, planned actions have since been taken by the diocese and parishes to resume activity with children and young people.

Process of Review

The Review of compliance was measured against the National Board's seven standards, contained in *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*, which is accessible at <https://www.safeguarding.ie/policy-guidance/policy-document>. The Review concentrated on safeguarding arrangements and practices through evaluating written records and meetings with Church personnel.

In order to assess compliance, Bishop Cullinan invited the National Board to undertake a review of practice, which took place in June 2023.

A Memorandum of Understanding and a Data Processing Deed agreement were signed prior to the Review taking place.

The Diocese of Waterford and Lismore Review fieldwork was undertaken between June 26 and 28, 2023.

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

- Most Reverend Bishop Cullinan DD
- The Safeguarding Director
- The DLP and the Deputy DLP
- The Accredited Children's Safeguarding Trainer
- A Diocesan Vetting team member
- The Good News Summer Faith Camp Co-ordinator/Diocesan Advisor for Post Primary Schools
- The Ascend Diocesan Youth & Young Adult Ministry Officer/Diocesan Pope John Paul II Award Co-ordinator
- The Mission Director, Holy Family Mission
- Religious Sisters from the Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother – Children's Liturgy Group
- A Priest Advisor
- A Support Person
- The Chairperson and members of the Diocesan Child Safeguarding Committee
- Parish Priests
- Local Safeguarding Representatives
- A Sacristan
- An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion
- Children involved in Altar Server Ministry and their parents
- The Chairperson of a Parish Pastoral Council
- A representative of Tusla
- A representative of An Garda Síochána

STANDARDS

The Standards are a level of practice required to ensure good child safeguarding arrangements. Each standard is self-contained and supported by indicators to evidence if safeguarding arrangements and practice meet the required standard. The National Board has produced detailed Guidance, which is accessible on its website (<https://www.safeguarding.ie/guidance>).

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

This Review concentrates on practice through evaluating written records, interviews with Church personnel, and 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.

The diocese has fully adopted the Church's policy, *Safeguarding Children Policy* and Standards 2016.

The Diocese of Waterford and Lismore Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures for Parishes is comprehensive, up to date and accessible on the diocesan website at

https://waterfordlismore.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/WL_Safeguarding-Children-Policy-Procedures.pdf .

Vetting of all relevant personnel, including volunteers was up to date. The vetting process is well-organised, and it is kept under review by diocesan vetting staff and parish personnel. The reviewers had access to the diocesan vetting database and to hard copy documentation, both in the diocesan and parish offices visited, all of which were securely stored.

Vetting figures:

Year	Number
2017	208
2018	195
2019	41
2020	125
2021	87
2022	184

Information is held in the Diocesan Office of all clergy who are living and working outside the diocese.

Guidance is in place on the use of technology, social media, Zoom, texting/email and photography. Notices for CCTV / webcams / live streaming were clearly displayed in church buildings visited. Online guidance was provided for Youth Ministry enabled activities to continue during Covid-19 lockdown, for example, through Google Classroom.

There is guidance for external organisations/groups using diocesan premises. Completed documentation of confirmation from external organisations that they had a child protection policy and insurance in place was available to the reviewers.

There were no whistleblowing reports since the last Review in 2012. The diocese has a Complaints Procedure for Safeguarding Concerns that are not Allegations of Abuse. There were no complaints received that met the criteria under this procedure since the last Review in 2012.

As part of the Review, reviewers visited two parishes and had an opportunity to meet with a range of parish personnel, including Parish Priests, Local Safeguarding Representatives (LSRs), and leaders for altar server ministry and children's liturgy preparation for first communion and confirmation (a partnership with schools and families). They also met the Chairperson of a Parish Pastoral Council, an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, a Religious Sister, a Sacristan, and children involved in altar server ministry and their parents.

All personnel met by the reviewers were clear about their roles and responsibilities within their remit to safeguard children and young people. All advised that there were good working relationships, and they were very positive about the support they received from the Diocesan Safeguarding Director, the DLP and the diocesan Trainer. They were able to articulate their knowledge of safe care and arrangements needed to achieve this, for example, through safe recruitment, volunteer application screening, vetting, training, parental consent, adult supervision ratios, hazard risk assessments, attendance registers, codes of behaviour for adults and children, display of safeguarding information in Church premises, and how to respond to and report a concern. The reviewers were provided with documentation to evidence the aforementioned.

There were clear links between LSRs and Parish Pastoral Councils. A local safeguarding representative was also the Chairperson of the Parish Pastoral Council, where safeguarding was a standing item on the agenda.

The Sacristan met was clear about their role and responsibilities to safeguard children. The sacristy attendance register was up to date, and child friendly safeguarding posters and a *celebret* notice were on display. Two children involved in altar server ministry were met with and they talked about their role enthusiastically. If they had any worries, they would talk to the sacristan or to their mothers. The children's parents were aware of safeguarding arrangements in place for altar servers and were happy for their children to have an opportunity to be involved in altar server ministry. The diocese has excellent Information and Guidance for Altar Servers and Sacristy Safeguarding Information available on the diocesan website at <https://waterfordlismore.ie/safeguarding-children/>

The diocese has employed a full-time Youth and Young Adult Ministry Officer, who reports to the bishop, and who works in conjunction with the Ascend Strategic Task Force, which was assembled as a follow-on from the Diocesan Youth Council, which was in existence pre-Covid-19. The Task Force has developed the Strategic Plan for Youth and Young Adult Ministry, and it continues to meet to discuss and plan its implementation, particularly around the recruitment and training of Faith Representatives. It will be involved with ongoing support and mentoring of Faith Representatives. The Ascend Youth and Young Adult Strategic Plan 2023 to 2026 to maintain and build capacity for Youth Ministry is part of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan, 2019 to 2024. The Ascend Youth Officer was able to evidence clearly that safeguarding arrangements are integral to all children's and youth ministry activities provided in the diocese, including the Holy Family Mission and Faith Summer Camps (described below), Pilgrimages, and the Pope John Paul II Award.

A range of examples of safeguarding guidance developed for diocesan and parish activities was provided and examined by the reviewers, which included the Garda Vetting Policy, Information Packs for Parish Groups Working with Children, Information and Guidance for Children, Young People and Parents/Guardians, the Safeguarding Policy for Diocesan and Parish Pilgrimages, and the Volunteer Safeguarding Information Booklet. The Ascend Youth Officer has oversight of youth ministry in the diocese, and is a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee.

The diocese has an established Holy Family Mission based in a retreat centre in the diocese. The main ministries carried out by Holy Family Mission are School Retreats (Confirmation Retreats or Secondary School Retreats) and monthly Family Days. Young people apply to join the Mission formation programme as volunteers for one academic year, and they have the option to apply for a second year and be part of the Mission team. They are trained and equipped by the Formation staff who have vast experience at both diocesan and parish level across Ireland. The youth community that has been developed engages in youth ministry across the diocese in fun and meaningful ways, and offers other young people and families a positive faith experience. A reviewer had an opportunity to meet with the Mission Director who clearly demonstrated their knowledge and experience of child safeguarding arrangements and practice. The Holy Family Mission have developed their own Safeguarding Policy tailored to the activities they provide; for example, a Family Day Code of Conduct for children and adults, a retreat attendance register, and appropriate adult supervision ratios. Hazard risk assessments for onsite school retreats and for family days had been completed. All the aforementioned examples are based on the diocesan children's safeguarding policy and procedures.

The Diocese of Waterford and Lismore organises annual Pilgrimages to Knock National Shrine, as well as to other pilgrimage sites within Ireland and abroad. The organisers shared evidence of their risk assessment and management procedures for these trips. The reviewers learned about how delicate situations had been managed on more than one occasion, which demonstrated where the Pilgrimage leaders and volunteers prioritised the safety of children.

Within the Waterford and Lismore Diocese, there are 'Campa Mhuire Mháthair' Faith Camps in Ardmore and Tramore (from 2005). Dungarvan also has a camp (from 2015), which has not restarted post-Covid-19, but the plan is to do so in 2024. The Faith Camps are an opportunity for children, including those with special needs, to experience the joy of faith in a safe, fun-filled way that builds friendship and a personal relationship with Jesus through the media of art, music, drama, sport/games and interactive lessons. The teen helpers, who have come up through the camps, as well as young adult leaders, (who are all Garda vetted and have completed safeguarding training), also get time to grow in their own faith and to develop faith friends during the week-long camp.

A reviewer had an opportunity to meet with a camp co-ordinator who discussed the safeguarding arrangements in place for the Camp. These included the safe recruitment of volunteers, the provision of information for parents/guardians, and a hazard risk assessment, which is updated for each annual camp. Also discussed were the adult supervision ratio requirements, the display of safeguarding posters during the camp (including in Polish), codes of conduct for children and leaders, accident and incident reporting, and first aid and fire safety arrangements. A leader is designated for safeguarding duties for the duration of the camp. The leaders are committed to 'build faith, build fun and build relationships'.

The Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother have a children's liturgy group for 8 to 12 year olds in St. Mary's Parish, Cahir. They were clear about their role and responsibilities to safeguard children. The Sisters were Garda vetted, and they had completed safeguarding training provided by the diocese. The Order has their own DLP, and they can contact the diocesan DLP when required. The Sisters provided evidence of their Safeguarding Children Statement, a child-friendly safeguarding information leaflet, a code of Conduct, a hazard risk assessment, attendance register, and accident/incident forms.

Everyone spoken with confirmed that there were established good working relationships with the Director of Safeguarding, the DLP, and the diocesan children's safeguarding Trainer, all of whom were accessible for support, advice and guidance.

The reviewers acknowledge the commitment, care and contribution of current and former safeguarding staff and clergy alongside volunteers for the development of safeguarding arrangements and practices to create a safe environment for children and young people.

The reviewers are satisfied that arrangements are in place to create and maintain a safe environment for children and young people.

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.

The reviewers were satisfied that the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is widely identified, so that everyone knows who to go to if they have a safeguarding concern. This has been achieved through display of DLP contact details on the diocesan website and in notices at all Church premises. Parish personnel were very clear about how to respond to and report concerns, and that the DLP was available for guidance and advice.

There is also a deputy DLP to support the DLP and to provide cover as and when required. The reviewers completed an evaluation of new and ongoing cases since the last National Board Review in 2012. These involved:

- Ten incardinated priests from the diocese (six of whom were previously audited as part of the last Review). All new complaints since the last review were notified to Tusla, Gardaí and National Board in a timely manner.
- Two unidentified male Religious from the same Church body. One complainant made a complaint of physical abuse against two male Religious. Timely notifications were made.
- One male Religious from a different Church body. There were two separate complaints made by separate complainants. Statutory notifications were made by the diocesan DLP including to the National Board, the Church Body updated and informed about outcome of the investigation. Notifications were delayed regarding one complaint of physical abuse (Cleric 7) due to the need to clarify information. These were retrospective allegations of abuse.
- One layperson (a child made a disclosure of physical abuse to a mandated person in the diocese). Timely notifications were made to Tusla, Gardaí and National Board within one day – this matter is not included in table.

Table 1: New allegations against clergy since the 2012 National Board Review

Cleric	Number of complainants	Gardai notified within	Tusla notified within	National Board notified within	Canonical action taken
1.	1. (sexual)	Same day	3 days	Same day	N/A
2.	1. (sexual)	9 days	9 days	1 day	N/A
3.	1. (sexual)	Same Day	Same Day	Same month [date not recorded]	Appropriate canonical action taken and reviewed by reviewers.
4.	1. (sexual)	1 day	1 day	Same day	Appropriate canonical action taken and reviewed by reviewers.
5.	Audited as part of last review 1 new complaint since the last review - sexual	8 days	8 days	8 days	Appropriate canonical action taken and reviewed by reviewers.
6.	1. (physical)	8 days	8 Days	Same day	N/A
7.	1. (sexual) 2. (physical)	19 days 44 days	19 days 46 days	13 days 3 days	Actioned by other Church Body

The DLP submitted timely notifications of reports of alleged abuse, and was proactive in maintaining contact with Tusla and the Gardaí about the progress of investigations. He had named contacts in Tusla and Gardai and reported good working relationships, and that contact with both agencies was helpful to him. The reviewers received positive feedback from representatives of Tusla and the Gardai, who confirmed good working relationships with the previous and current DLPs and bishops, timely notifications of alleged abuse and exchange of information, and co-operation to progress investigations and assessments to identify any ongoing risks. Both statutory agencies were open to providing ongoing consultation, advice and guidance to the DLP and bishop.

There was evidence on case files of the DLP's consultation with the National Board about new notifications and ongoing case management, as well as records showing that actions agreed had been progressed.

Canon law processes were initiated as appropriate, following completion of civil investigations. In one case (Cleric 4), there was delay due to the impact of Covid-19, the health of the respondent, and the time taken to complete statutory agency investigations.

The reviewers are satisfied that procedures are in place for responding to child protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations.

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.

The National Board Review of Safeguarding Children in the diocese was clearly promoted and a notice of it was placed on the diocesan website.

There was evidence on case records, and from discussions with the bishop and DLP that complainants were listened to, treated with respect, offered a support person and counselling support from Towards Healing and Towards Peace. The bishop also provided the opportunity for complainants to meet with him.

The DLP proactively reached out to meet with and support complainants, and maintained ongoing contact as appropriate. Complainants were provided with guidance about how to access legal advice, offered support from a diocesan support person and were kept up to date about progress with their case.

A reviewer spoke with a diocesan Support Person who confirmed that he had been Garda vetted, and had completed National Board support person training. He was clear about his role and responsibilities, and the need to complete records of contact with a complainant and to provide these to the DLP. The support person has not been allocated a complainant to support since undertaking the role, but remains available when required.

It was suggested to the DLP that it would constitute good practice to re-offer support to those complainants who had originally declined it.

The bishop discussed the importance of a dedicated Day of Prayer for survivors and victims of sexual abuse, and informed the reviewers that a Candle of Atonement Mass is held on the first Friday of Lent each year.

The reviewers are satisfied that appropriate arrangements are in place to care for and support complainants.

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.

Respondents were given an opportunity to complete a questionnaire about their experience of the care and management they received, and to meet with the reviewers during their visit to the diocese. No requests from respondents to meet with the reviewers were made.

One completed questionnaire was received.

This respondent priest confirmed that he had been informed about the allegations, but said that he would have preferred to have received information about the purpose of the initial meeting beforehand, and to have had the opportunity to have a support person present. He advised that consultation and support improved “as time went on”. He was informed about his right to access a civil and canon lawyer, and he did avail of canon lawyer representation. He was offered the support of a priest advisor, and he availed of support from other clergy as well. He found the public announcement at Mass regarding him being stepped out of ministry distressing.

The review of the case file regarding the above respondent (Cleric 3, Table 1) found there was overall good management of the case, a priest advisor was appointed, and there was written evidence that the respondent received good support. Following completion of civil and canonical investigations, he returned to full ministry in good standing.

Two incardinated priests of the diocese (Clerics 1 and 2, Table 1) who had allegations of abuse made against them were not identified by the complainants. The reviewers were satisfied that these cases were well managed. Notifications were made to the Gardaí and Tusla. The National Board was notified and consulted. All efforts were made by the DLP to identify the respondents, but without success. The complainants in these cases were offered support.

Two male Religious from the same Order (Case 6, Table 1), had allegations made against them by one complainant. The two male Religious could not be identified due to the limited information provided. The Religious Order DLP was notified of the report, as were Tusla and the Gardaí. The National Board was consulted and the actions agreed with it were progressed. Information about the complainant was provided to the DLP of the Religious Order.

There were two separate reports made by different complainants about one male Religious from another Church body (Case 7, Table 1). The review of the case management files found that there was overall good case management, including communication between the DLP and the statutory authorities. The relevant Religious Order was notified of these allegations of abuse. Following completion of statutory and canonical investigations regarding the two separate notifications, this priest returned to full ministry in good standing.

There were seven (7) incardinated priests from the diocese out of ministry including clerics four (4) and five (5), (Table 1.), six of whose cases were audited during the previous Review in 2012.

Following examination of these seven case management files, the reviewers recommended the following to be actioned by Bishop Cullinan, together with the DLP:

1. To complete a review of the management and supervision of all respondent priests out of ministry:
 - 1.1. To formalise and update management/supervision plans (to include frequency of visits to the respondent) to take account of the canonical precept, current circumstances of the respondent and identified risk issues. To be signed by the Church authority, DLP and respondent, and a review date to be set within 12 months.
 - 1.2. To appoint an appropriate Priest Advisor, who should report to the DLP; complete a written record of their contacts with the respondent; and provide these to the DLP.
 - 1.3. To appoint a Monitoring Officer, who should report to the DLP; complete a written record of their contacts with the respondent; and provide these to the DLP.
 - 1.4. To file current case information in one file; use the file index outlined in Standard 2; and centrally store in a secure room.
 - 1.5. The bishop to keep CDF (now DDF) up to date about any change of circumstances of the respondent.
 - 1.6. The bishop to put in place supervision dates with the DLP.
 - 1.7. The DLP to put in place supervision dates with the Priest Advisor and Monitoring Officer.

The bishop agreed to progress the necessary actions with the DLP to implement the recommendation as soon as possible.

The reviewers suggested to the DLP that it would be useful, on an annual basis to complete a summary case review form on active cases to include new concerns or complaints, liaison between the complainant and their support person, liaison between the respondent and their advisor, a legal update, and updating the management/supervision plan. The outcome of this review should be recorded in writing and placed at the front of the current case file. The bishop and DLP agreed to implement this.

A support person to a current respondent out of ministry provided feedback about his role. He did not consider himself a Priest Advisor, but rather someone to befriend the priest. He had not received any role-specific training, but he was willing to avail of this. He reported that he was happy to provide support to the priest. He provided feedback to the bishop. It is included in the above recommendation that a priest advisor must be clear about their role, receive role specific training and keep the DLP up to date about their involvement.

The review of cases identified the need for Priest Advisors to be appointed to support priests out of ministry. These men would need to complete Priest Advisor training, and need to receive clear guidance about the purpose of and boundaries to their role. The Priest Advisor should usually report to and receive support from the DLP. The bishop agreed to review current cases and to appoint a Priest Advisor to support each respondent priest. The Bishop has confirmed with the National Board following the completion of the Review fieldwork in June 2023 that Priest Advisors have been appointed.

The bishop and DLP reported that they meet as and when required, to discuss new notifications of abuse made against diocesan personnel and ongoing case management, but these meetings are not on a planned basis. The reviewers suggested that planned meeting dates should be scheduled between the bishop and DLP to discuss all cases, and that at one meeting each year the professional development, support and training needs of the DLP should be discussed. The bishop agreed to implement this suggestion.

The reviewers appreciated the openness and willingness of the bishop and DLP to discuss the areas of improvement related to this standard.

Bishop Cullinan and the DLP confirmed, following the Review fieldwork, that actions have been agreed to start the implementation of the above recommendation, and that they will inform the National Board when full implementation has been achieved.

This standard is not met.

The diocese will be compliant with this standard when implementation of the above recommendation has been achieved.

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.

The reviewers were satisfied that training is included in the diocesan Safeguarding Children Strategic Plan, 2023 to 2025, where specific objectives and actions are set. At the June 2023 Safeguarding Committee meeting it was decided that an updated training plan would be ratified at the next Committee meeting.

The National Board accredited diocesan safeguarding Trainer maintains a centralised training record of all personnel who have completed one-day safeguarding training and refresher training. Training records from 2017 to the present were provided to the reviewers. The Safeguarding Committee receives a training update about progress with actions from the previous meeting, as well as information about future training delivery.

Training needs at parish level are identified during analysis of self-audits completed by LSRs, and through ongoing feedback to the diocesan Trainer. This informs training required for the following year. It was clear that training provision is responsive to need; for example, to provide training to personnel/volunteers (who change from year to year) involved in annual Summer Faith Camps and Pilgrimages.

Safeguarding Training Figures from 2017 to May 2023:

Year	Full Day	Half Day	Total
2017	241	95	336
2018	180	509 (386 were parish information attendees)	689
2019	136	235	371
2020	42	64	106
2021	43	88	131
2022	103	31	134
2023	9	165	174

The diocesan Trainer, who has undertaken the training role since 2007, highlighted the need for additional trainers, as well as the challenge to recruit volunteers to undertake the training role; and that recruitment of additional trainers is a priority for the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee. The diocesan Trainer commended the work, commitment and time given by LSRs, other parish volunteers and clergy; and she reinforced the importance of nurturing and supporting parish volunteers to maintain and develop existing good safeguarding arrangements, together with providing opportunities for ongoing training.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Committee hold an annual Safeguarding Day (which is a training event) for clergy, staff and volunteers, which involves guest speakers, and provides an opportunity to share learning and celebrate safeguarding practice in the diocese.

The reviewers discussed with the bishop and safeguarding staff the impact of trauma on everyone involved in safeguarding children, and the benefits of taking a trauma-informed approach to support everyone involved. A starting point for this is to raise awareness with safeguarding staff, clergy and volunteers about the impact of adverse childhood experiences and trauma on victims of abuse. This could be incorporated into current child safeguarding training.

The reviewers are satisfied that training is a priority for the Safeguarding Committee and that arrangements are in place for the delivery of children's safeguarding training.

This standard is met.

Standard 6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

Church bodies appropriately communicate the Church's child safeguarding message.

The National Board Review of Safeguarding Children in the diocese was clearly promoted and a notice of it was placed on the diocesan website.

The Diocese of Waterford and Lismore has a Safeguarding Statement (updated in May 2023) on its website, which is compliant with Children First, 2015. It was evident during the reviewers' attendance at the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee that members are committed to communicate the safeguarding message, and to provide support to parish safeguarding personnel, children's leaders and volunteers.

The reviewers commend the comprehensive Communications Policy March 2023 - December 2024 that the Safeguarding Committee has in place to support the Safeguarding Children Strategic Plan 2023 to 2025. Church buildings visited had clearly displayed information (posters and leaflets) about safeguarding, with current DLP and statutory authority contact details at entrances and in the Sacristy including *celebret* notices. Adult and children's versions were on display.

Information about Towards Healing and Towards Peace support services were also on display. Notices about the use of CCTV, webcams and live streaming were clearly displayed at Church entrances.

Safeguarding information has been translated into Polish, Ukrainian and Irish.

The reviewers were provided with past annual Safeguarding Newsletters. It is planned to issue another newsletter in the autumn of this year. Parishes visited reported good communication with diocesan safeguarding staff.

The reviewers are satisfied that there are effective arrangements in place to communicate the safeguarding message.

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.

The reviewers are satisfied that the recommendations from the last Review in 2012 were achieved, apart from Recommendation 3 (please refer to the section on Standard 4 above and the recommendation made). The reviewers were given an assurance by the bishop that he will lead the implementation of this recommendation, and a meeting has already taken place to agree actions to achieve the areas of improvement identified.

The Diocesan Child Safeguarding Committee has an up-to-date constitution in place. Committee membership meets the requirement of the constitution. Meetings are scheduled for the year ahead.

A record of mandated persons - diocesan clergy and pastoral care staff - is maintained, and this was last reviewed on May 5, 2023.

Evidence was provided to reviewers that safeguarding children Strategic Plans, Parish Self-audits, Annual Reports and training returns were completed each year from 2017. Parish self-audits for 2022 were completed with a 100% return. The analysis and outcome of the self-audits were presented in pie charts with clear, visual and easy to read information. This important data will inform actions and priorities for the year ahead. The current Safeguarding Children Strategic Plan 2023 to 2025 is comprehensive, with objectives set under each of the seven standards, along with the actions to be taken and the resources required. The plan identifies who is responsible for delivering on the actions, the date by which these are to have started, and the target date for their completion.

The reviewers would like to thank the deputy Chairperson of the Safeguarding Committee for the invitation to attend the committee meeting during their visit. There was clear evidence at the meeting of good working relationships between members. The deputy Chairperson had a prepared agenda, and he enabled the participation of members. He reviewed matters arising/actions from the previous meeting and agreed actions to be taken forward.

At the Safeguarding Committee meeting, a safeguarding issue about an adult and supervision arrangements was discussed that related to a planned activity which involved young people. The reviewers were fully satisfied from the discussion and examination of documentation that appropriate actions were taken, and the final decision taken by the Church authority, was proportionate, fair, and based on the need to safeguard young people, and a sensitive response to the needs of the individual who was the subject of the safeguarding concern was given. This complex case involved multi-agency information sharing within the requirements of GDPR, and it was suggested that diocesan safeguarding staff should meet with representatives from Tusla and the Gardaí to discuss challenges and learning from this case. The diocese evidenced good practice in this case, which included reporting and responding to a concern, multi-agency liaison, the analysis of risk, as well as completion of safeguarding training for personnel involved in the annual event, Garda vetting, an up-to-date hazard risk assessment, and ensuring appropriate adult and youth leader supervision ratios.

The reviewers met with the Director of Safeguarding, who has been in post since January 2022. They had been contracted initially for sixteen hours per week, reduced to ten hours per week in August 2022. Recruitment to the post involved an interview, completion of references and vetting.

The Director had completed National Board training and he received a handover and support from the previous Safeguarding Co-ordinator. He appreciated and valued this support, as well as the support provided by the bishop and members of the Safeguarding Committee. He is accountable to the bishop. He attends Diocesan Safeguarding Committee meetings. He was clear about his role and responsibilities, and discussed the challenges of the resumption of youth ministry post Covid-19 across the parishes in the diocese. He viewed the outreach and support to parishes as a priority, and discussed his limited capacity to fulfil the wide range of his responsibilities within his current contracted hours. The Safeguarding Director has provided invaluable support to the Safeguarding Committee to implement the Children's Safeguarding Strategy. He was open to having planned meetings with the bishop to discuss progress with his work, and to receive support in his role.

The reviewers had an opportunity to meet with the DLP who was appointed to the role in early 2018, and who had completed National Board DLP training. He was clear about his role and responsibilities and demonstrated care, understanding and competence in fulfilling the DLP role. This was also evidenced in case management files examined by the reviewers, where DLP records were meaningful, detailed and up-to-date. The DLP ensured that timely notifications of allegations of abuse were made to the civil authorities and National Board, that complainants received a caring response and support, and that the bishop was kept up to date about case management. The DLP discussed the competing demands involved in undertaking the DLP role, including monitoring of respondents, alongside responsibilities to his parish. He highlighted the need for clear lines of accountability and communication between those involved in case management i.e. the bishop, DLP, Deputy DLP, Support Persons and Priest Advisors.

The DLP was open to have planned meetings with the bishop to discuss cases, and to receive support in his role. The DLP is also deputy Chairperson of the Safeguarding Committee. A Deputy DLP is available to support and cover for the DLP as and when required. The deputy has completed children's safeguarding training and National Board DLP role-specific training. The Deputy DLP was clear about their role and responsibilities and confirmed that advice and support was available from the DLP and from Bishop Cullinan. Since their appointment in January 2021, they have had limited experience in the role. The Deputy DLP was open to learning and ongoing training.

The bishop is a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee. He is committed to the safety of children and young people, and to the ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are an integral part of all youth ministry activities in the diocese. He was available throughout the Review fieldwork visit to meet with the reviewers, who appreciated his time, willingness and openness to discuss safeguarding arrangements and practices in the diocese, as well as areas for improvement. The reviewers suggested to the bishop that a Review of diocesan safeguarding was timely given the impact of Covid-19, the resumption of a range of children's youth ministry/activities, the challenge of recruiting volunteers, training demands, and changes in safeguarding personnel. This review of structures provides the opportunity to take account of the capacities of the Director of Safeguarding, the DLP, and the diocesan Trainer to fulfil their role and responsibilities.

Consideration should be given to the benefits of employing a layperson as DLP, who would be accountable to the Church Authority; and to the establishment of a Diocesan Advisory Panel. Clear lines of accountability and reporting arrangements, including support and supervision of everyone within the structure, would be positive developments. The bishop was open to this suggestion, and the reviewers consider that this way forward would enhance existing safeguarding arrangements for children and young people in the diocese post Covid-19.

All diocesan and parish safeguarding personnel are to be commended for the time and dedication they give to their work to safeguard children and young people.

The reviewers are satisfied that arrangements are in place to quality assure compliance with the standards.

This standard is met.

Conclusion

The reviewers were assured regarding the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore's commitment and dedication to have arrangements in place to safeguard children and young people to comply with the *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*. This is based on evidence from documentation examined, feedback from clergy, staff and volunteers engaged with during the Review.

The bishop and DLP agreed, as a priority, to put a plan in place to implement the recommendation overleaf to review management and supervision arrangements for respondent priests out of ministry. The Bishop has confirmed with the National Board following the completion of the Review fieldwork in June 2023 that Priest Advisors have been appointed and they will receive training to undertake the role delivered by the National Board.

Everyone spoken with during the Review fieldwork visit had a clear understanding about their safeguarding role and responsibilities, and were committed to work together to safeguard children. There was an openness and willingness to learn to enhance existing services to safeguard children and young people in the diocese.

The reviewers suggested to the bishop that a review of the diocese's safeguarding structure would assist in taking account of the impact of Covid-19, changes in safeguarding personnel and their capacity to fulfil their responsibilities including support to parishes. It could also establish training needs, and support the resumption of youth ministry/children's activities. The reviewers consider that this would be a positive way forward to enhance children's safeguarding arrangements in the diocese.

The reviewers were encouraged about the restart of activities for children and young people, and were impressed with the time, dedication and care everyone gave under the leadership of Bishop Cullinan, to work together to keep children and young people happy and safe, and to enable them to grow in their faith into adulthood.

Recommendation 1.

Standard 4

The bishop and DLP to complete a review of the management and supervision of all respondent priests out of ministry.

- 1.1 To formalise and update management/supervision plans (to include frequency of visits to the respondent) to take account of the canonical precept, current circumstances of the respondent and identified risk issues. To be signed by the Church authority, DLP and respondent, and a review date to be set within 12 months.

- 1.2 To appoint an appropriate Priest Advisor, who should report to the DLP; complete a written record of their contacts with the respondent; and provide these to the DLP.
- 1.3 To appoint a Monitoring Officer, who should report to the DLP; complete a written record of their contacts with the respondent; and provide these to the DLP.
- 1.4 To file current case information in one file; use the file index outlined in Standard 2; and centrally store in a secure room.
- 1.5 The bishop to keep CDF (now DDF) up to date about any change of circumstances of the respondent.
- 1.6 The bishop to put in place supervision dates with the DLP.
- 1.7 The DLP to put in place supervision dates with the Priest Advisor and Monitoring Officer.