



Overview of the Safeguarding Practice from 7th Tranche of Reviews conducted in the religious congregations of:

The Augustinians ;

The Passionists :

The Sacred Hearts Fathers of Jesus and Mary (SSCC);

The Discalced Carmelites (OCD);

The Franciscan Friars (OFM);

The Franciscan Brothers ;

The Servites (OSM);

The Marist Fathers and

The Dominican Sisters

And

The 2nd Tranche of small female congregations of:

Missionary Sisters of the Holy Rosary;

Holy Faith Sisters ;

Holy Family of Bordeaux;

Sisters of Charity of Nevers ;

Infant Jesus Sisters ;

Society of the Holy Child Jesus and

The Sisters of Charity of Our Lady Mother of Mercy.

In September 2014, the fieldwork began into reviews of safeguarding practice of 8 male religious congregations and 8 female religious congregations. The 8 male

religious and 1 of the female religious were assessed against the Catholic Church's 7 safeguarding standards. The remaining 7 female religious, due to their limited ministry with children, aging profile and absence of allegations relating to sexual abuse of children were assessed against a different framework, proportionate to the degree of ministry they hold. The Terms of Reference for both sets of reviews are appended to the individual reports.

The purpose of the full reviews is to ensure compliance against the Church's safeguarding standards, approved and adopted in 2009, *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*, with particular reference to the management of safeguarding allegations. Where there were allegations of sexual abuse, all cases files were examined. In addition, at the request of the Church Authority, allegations of other forms of abuse, physical and emotional were also examined. The Terms of Reference are clear in stating that in terms of allegations, the concentration is on current risk, in other words the reviewers read files relating to living priests/brothers/sisters. Where the reviewers referenced priests, or brothers or sisters who were deceased, it is because the review of those cases merited comment in terms of future safeguarding practice.

Also included are reviews of the policy and procedures documents and other supporting written evidence maintained by the congregations including notifications to the civil authorities, advice offered on case management issues and contact with survivors of abuse. In all cases, contact was also made by the reviewers with the civil authority agencies, to ensure that notifications had been made and for their critique of the relationship between the congregation/society and the statutory body in working together in the interests of safeguarding children.

All reports have been checked for factual accuracy, have been reviewed by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland's (NBSCCCI) lawyer and have been scrutinized by an independent Reference Group, made up of Dr. Helen Buckley, TCD, Paul Harrison, HSE and John Toner, independent consultant and chair of safeguarding trust boards in Northern Ireland. This process ensures that all comments contained in the report are based on evidence and represents a fair assessment of the fieldwork findings. In other words it is in place to ensure the NBSCCCI conducts the reviews properly.

As with all other reviews, the process was initiated through the signing of a data processing deed which allowed the exchange of information with the NBSCCCI. The review process involved fieldwork conducted by reviewers employed by NBSCCCI and this fieldwork took place over a 1/2/3 day period between September 2014 and January 2015.

The reviews involved a time period from 1st January 1975 to the period of the review.

Key Findings of the Reviews

This can be divided into two parts – a) findings from the full reviews which were assessed against the 7 standards and b) the shorter reviews of female religious where there is limited or no ministry with children and no allegations of sexual abuse in Ireland.

In relation to a) – findings from full reviews – the following themes emerged:

- There have been 285 allegations made against 98 priests, brothers or sisters.
- There have been 8 criminal convictions.
- Allegations relate to the period 1940 – 1998 with the largest number of incidents recorded between 1950 and 1990's.
- Variable delays in reporting allegations to the civil authorities up until 2009 (introduction of *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*) for most orders and congregations, however for some practice did not improve until 2013.
- Poor record management in many cases making an assessment of practice difficult.
- Opportunities to safeguard children were missed, known abusers allowed to remain in ministry in 1990's.

- Management plans relating to accused priests and brothers and sisters have improved significantly over time, though there is still room for improvement, in terms of clarity of roles, review of restrictions and sharing of information.
- Support for complainants is good in many cases. Good evidence of pastoral support, outreach and direct contact between the provincial and the survivor.
- Adherence to other aspects of the 7 standards was less well developed in many congregations. Many have limited ministry with children in Ireland today therefore the applicability of all criteria was limited. Recommendations for improvement where relevant have been made.

Order/Congregation	Numbers of Priests/Brothers	Numbers of allegations, suspicions and concerns (sexual, physical and emotional)	Numbers convicted
Augustinians	11	33	0
Passionists	20	42	0
Franciscan Friars	28	109	3
Franciscan Brothers	14	56	3
Servites	6	8	2
Discalced Carmelites	6	11	0
Sacred Heart Fathers (SSCCs)	3	5	0
Marist Fathers	7	18	0
Dominican Sisters	3	3	0
Total	98	285	8

In terms of b) – small scale reviews – the following issues emerged:

- Very aging profile and limited ministry through their congregation with children.
- Sisters who minister outside the congregation follow the policy and procedures of the diocese/service.
- Strong sense of commitment to working positively with the NBSCCCI, in spite of their limited ministries.

Conclusion

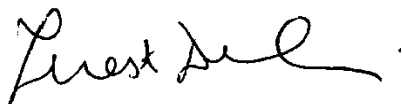
In terms of the large reviews, the NBSCCCI is disappointed that for the majority of orders, the whole area of safeguarding is only being embraced in the last couple of years. Two orders have demonstrated good compliance with the standards and have demonstrated their commitment to putting in place good safeguards for children as well as prompt responses to allegations of abuse. For the other 7 congregations, there is considerable work to be done. A series of recommendations have been made within each report and there is an expectation that these will be developed into plans of action. NBSCCCI will request an update on progress of implementation of recommendations in 9 months.

Finally it is important that complainants come forward if there are still unreported allegations of abuse. NBSCCCI encourages reporting to the diocese/religious order and to the civil authorities.

NBSCCCI also would encourage anyone who has suffered abuse to contact Towards Healing, counselling and support service for survivors of clerical and religious congregations abuse, which is totally independent although funded by the Catholic Church.

Contact details are:

Towards Healing – Click to visit the website : www.towardshealing.ie



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