

STANDARD 7

QUALITY ASSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE STANDARDS

GUIDANCE

**THESE PIECES OF GUIDANCE ARE TO ASSIST,
IF NECESSARY, WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
STANDARD 7**

STANDARD 7

QUALITY ASSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE STANDARDS

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Roles of Safeguarding Personnel in Relation to this Standard

Church authority

The role of the Church authority across all the seven standards is outlined in Appendix A. In relation to Standard 7, the Church authority is responsible for:

- Appointing a safeguarding committee and designated liaison person (DLP) and ensuring that they carry out their function in relation to monitoring effectively;
- Writing to the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) to confirm that an internal annual report has been completed;
- Inviting the NBSCCCI to conduct reviews as necessary;
- Carrying out systematic assessments of the standards through visits to local areas of responsibility.

Designated liaison person

The role of the DLP across all the seven standards is outlined in Appendix A. In relation to Standard 7, the DLP is responsible for:

- Completing a report to the Church authority on an annual basis, outlining compliance with Standards 2, 3 and 4.

Safeguarding committee

The role of the safeguarding committee across Standards 1, 5, 6 and 7 is outlined in Appendix A. In relation to Standard 7, the safeguarding committee is responsible for:

- Producing and reviewing the three-year child safeguarding plan of how to maintain standards 1, 5 and 6 across the Church body;
- Liaising with the local safeguarding representatives (LSRs) to ensure the compilation of a local safeguarding audit, and to identify areas where guidance and support on policy or practice is needed;
- Ensuring that an annual safeguarding report on Standards 1, 5 and 6 is made to the Church authority;
- Ensuring that records in relation to safeguarding matters are produced and stored securely.

Local safeguarding representatives

The role of the LSR across Standards 1, 5, 6 and 7 is outlined in Appendix A. In relation to Standard 7, the LSR is responsible for:

- Working with the safeguarding committee to ensure the completion of the local safeguarding audit.

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Local safeguarding council

Local safeguarding councils operate in some areas to provide safeguarding advice and support to the parish priest or local superior. In relation to this standard, the local safeguarding council can be involved in ensuring that diocesan or congregational child safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and implemented. This includes carrying out the annual local safeguarding audit and feeding back to the safeguarding committee.

NBSCCCI

The role of the NBSCCCI across all the seven standards is outlined in Appendix A. In relation to Standard 7, the NBSCCCI will:

- Conduct planned reviews on the Church body;
- Store the annual notification of the Church authority, which states that an annual audit of safeguarding has been completed.

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Storage and Retention of Records Associated with this Standard

The table below lists the types of records that need to be stored appropriately and securely as part of this standard, in accordance with best practice in record-keeping (see Appendix B). The templates for the production of each record, which have been included in the guidance for this standard, are listed in the final column.

Type of Record	Where to Store	Template/Guidance Number/Page Number
Three-year safeguarding plan	Diocesan/congregational level	7.2A Template 1 Page 36
Copies of local safeguarding audits conducted annually	Diocesan/congregational level	7.1C Template 2 Page 18
Copies of annual report made by DLP to Church authority	Diocesan/congregational level	Guidance 7.1D Page 30
Copies of annual notification to the NBSCCCI, which state that annual audit has been completed	Diocesan/congregational level	7.1C Template 4 and 5 Page 28 and 29
Copies of correspondence sent to the NBSCCCI regarding reviews and follow-up actions	Diocesan/congregational level	Guidance 7.3A Page 46
Copies of Crisis Management Plans	Diocesan/congregational level	Guidance 7.2B Page 39
Copies of reports and records relating to Serious Incident Reviews	Diocesan/congregational level	Guidance 7.3C Page 43

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7.1A Guidance on Ensuring Compliance with the Seven Standards at Local Level

Quality assurance procedures are a systematic method of assessing the extent to which the seven child safeguarding standards are implemented at all levels within the Church body. This is an important method of ensuring that a process of continuous improvement takes place, and of demonstrating accountability and transparency.

Quality assurance is done by applying three methods:

1. Assessing compliance by the Church authority during systematic visits to parishes or community houses (Guidance 7.1B);
2. Annual self-audit scheme (Guidance 7.1C) carried out locally, but coordinated by the safeguarding committee;
3. Annual report by the DLP to the Church authority on Standards 2, 3 and 4 (Guidance 7.1D).

All of the documents produced are internal to the Church organisation and **do not need to be sent to the NBSCCI**.

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7.1B Guidance on Compliance Visits by the Church Authority

Each Church authority should regularly visit parishes/community houses/ministries to ensure that there is an awareness of child safeguarding, and that effective practice is being implemented. It is important that these visits are outlined in the annual three-year child safeguarding plan (Guidance 7.2A Template 1).

It is advised that the Church authority has a checklist of items to examine during these visits. This list may include, for example:

- The attendance register (1.4A Template 2);
- Safeguarding posters (6.2A Template 2);
- Codes of conduct for groups of children (Guidance 1.2A, 1.3A);
- A copy of the previous year's annual child safeguarding audit from the local area (Guidance 7.1C).

This visit should, as far as possible, involve local people such as LSRs, alongside the parish priest or local superior, to allow the Church authority the opportunity to recognise good practice, and to thank those involved for their work in maintaining the child safeguarding standards.

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7.1C Guidance on Local Safeguarding Audit

One of the primary methods (alongside the annual report written by the DLP to the Church authority – Guidance 7.1C) of ensuring compliance with the seven child safeguarding standards is the conducting of a local child safeguarding audit on Standards 1, 5 and 6. Each standard contains a list of indicators that give details of the steps a Church organisation needs to take to meet the standard, and advises on ways to provide evidence that the standard has been met.

Process

1. The safeguarding committee will select the appropriate version of the local safeguarding audit, which relates to the indicators contained in the child safeguarding policy. These are:
 - If you have ministry with children, all of the indicators apply (blue, orange and green) as shown in **Table 1** (7.1C Template 1);
 - If you have no ministry with children but are managing allegations, only orange and green indicators apply as shown in **Table 2** (7.1C Template 2);
 - If you have no ministry with children and are not managing any allegations, only the green indicators apply as shown in **Table 3** (7.1C Template 3).
2. The safeguarding committee will forward the audit for completion by parishes/community houses/ministries on an annual basis.
3. Returns are scrutinised for compliance by the safeguarding committee.
4. An annual report is prepared for the Church authority, with a review of compliance and recommendations for further action and improvement.
5. Recommendations for change are incorporated into to the three-year child safeguarding plan (7.2A Template 1).
6. The Church authority will notify the NBSCCCI differently depending on the indicators that apply to them in the child safeguarding policy.
 - Church authorities working to indicators contained in **Table 1** of the policy will notify the NBSCCCI by the end of January each calendar year (using 7.1C Template 4) that:
 - The local child safeguarding audit (7.1C Template 1) has been completed;
 - The annual report made by the DLP has been completed (7.1D Template 1).
 - Church authorities working to indicators contained in **Table 2** of the child safeguarding policy will notify the NBSCCCI by the end of January each calendar year (using 7.1C Template 4) that:
 - The local child safeguarding audit (7.1C Template 2) has been completed;
 - The annual report made by the DLP has been completed (7.1D Template 1).
 - Church authorities working to indicators contained in **Table 3** of the child safeguarding policy will notify the NBSCCCI by the end of January each calendar year (using 7.1C Template 5) that:
 - The local child safeguarding audit (7.1C Template 3) has been completed.

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7.1C Template 1: Local Safeguarding Audit (Indicators Contained in Table 1 of the Child Safeguarding Policy)

Thank you for completing this audit, and for the work that you have done and continue to do to ensure the highest standards in best practice in child safeguarding.

Please feel free to call on any of the child safeguarding personnel if you have any questions or require assistance with the audit (contact numbers are at the back of this document).

The audit should be completed by the local safeguarding representatives, alongside the local parish priest/superior/community leader.

In areas where there are large numbers of Church-affiliated groups involving children, it may be necessary to ask group leaders to complete relevant parts of the audit, and for the local safeguarding representatives to then collate the responses into this audit.

Year under review (insert year)

It should be completed by (insert date):

And returned to (insert address):

Local details

Name of parish/local religious order/house _____

Name of parish priest/local superior/community leader _____

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Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

General

- Is there a register (an up-to-date listing) of **all groups and organisations associated with the Church in your locality?**
(circle as appropriate) Yes No N/A
- Is there an up-to-date register with the name of the person in charge of all groups and organisations associated with the Church in your locality? Yes No N/A

- List the people responsible for **compiling and maintaining** the groups and personnel listings:

Name _____ Role _____

Name _____ Role _____

Name _____ Role _____

For each group/organisation working directly or indirectly with children and young people (ignore if not applicable):

- Have parents/guardians and children signed a joint consent form? Yes No
- If applicable, have parents/guardians and children signed a media permission form? Yes No N/A
- Have parents/guardians and children been made aware of and received copies of:
 - a. The complaints procedure Yes No
 - b. The code of conduct for children and adults Yes No
 - c. The reporting procedures for allegations, suspicions/concerns Yes No
- Is each group aware and maintaining adequate supervision ratios? Yes No
- Does each group have access to the procedure for dealing with accidents? Yes No
- Is there an attendance register completed for the group? Yes No
- Does the group have an appropriate hazard assessment process in place? Yes No

For non-Church groups working with children and young people and using Church property (ignore if not applicable):

- Is there a register of all non-Church groups that use Church property? Yes No
- Does each group have its own insurance? Yes No
- Does each group have its own safeguarding policy? Yes No

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Recruitment

In recruiting applicable personnel working with children, have you ensured that:

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| • Clear job descriptions are provided? | Yes | No |
| • Application forms are completed? | Yes | No |
| • References are sought and checked? | Yes | No |
| • Vetting is complete (if appropriate)? | Yes | No |
| • Declaration forms are complete? | Yes | No |
| • A safeguarding policy has been provided? | Yes | No |
| • A whistle-blowing policy has been provided? | Yes | No |

Clerics/religious who are members of the Church body, but who are ministering with children in an external organisation/Church body:

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| • Is there a list of all clerics and religious who are ministering with children in an external organisation/Church body? | Yes | No |
| • For each external organisation/Church body where a cleric/religious is ministering with children, is a written agreement in place that the cleric or religious agrees to follow effective safeguarding practice? | Yes | No |

Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe

Induction

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| • Have all Church personnel been shown the child safeguarding policy and procedures as part of an induction process? | Yes | No |
| • Have all Church personnel signed an agreement form (Guidance 5.1A Template 1)? | Yes | No |

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Basic safeguarding awareness training

- Please list below the names of all **clerics/religious in active ministry with children** in the Church body, and the date they attended the full-day safeguarding programme.

Name	Role	Attended Full-Day Programme (Yes/No)	Date of Attendance

(Continue on separate sheet if necessary.)

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- Please list below the names of those who have a leadership role with a group of children within the local Church area, and the date they attended the full-day safeguarding programme or information session. At least one leader in every group working with children must attend a full-day programme. Other leaders only need to attend an information session. Other leaders only need to attend an information session.

Name	Role	Attended Full-Day Programme (Yes/No)	Attended Information Session if Applicable (Yes/No)	Date of Attendance at Either Full-Day or Information Session

(Continue on separate sheet if necessary.)

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Role-specific training

- Please use the box below to highlight any child safeguarding training need that you feel is unfulfilled and would like the safeguarding committee to consider.

Safeguarding awareness with parents/guardians

- Use the table below to demonstrate (if applicable) any safeguarding awareness initiatives you have carried out with children and young people and/or their parents/guardians.

Name of Group	Training Delivered	Date of Delivery

Support

- Is a system of formal or informal support in place to provide support to all Church personnel involved in child safeguarding? Yes No

Standard 6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

- Are the contact details for the Church designated liaison person, social services and Gardaí/PSNI displayed in all appropriate places? (circle as appropriate) Yes No
- Do you have information about how the Church safeguards children both available and displayed prominently? Yes No
- If you have groups in your local area whose first language is not English, do you have copies of the safeguarding message in accessible formats? Yes No

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Recording

Are the following records stored safely and securely?

Type of Record	Where to Store	Template/Guidance Number/Page Number
Application forms of those successful	Parish/local congregation	1.1A Template 2
Application forms of those unsuccessful	Parish/local congregation	1.1A Template 2
Attendance lists/sign-in and sign-out records for each activity involving children	Parish/local congregation	1.4A Template 1 and 2
Parental and children's consent forms	Parish/local congregation	1.4A Template 3
Accident/incident forms	Parish/local congregation	1.4B Template 1
Hazard assessments for activities carried out by each group involving young people associated with the Church	Parish/local congregation	Guidance 1.8A
Records of checks completed on external groups using Church property	Diocese/province Parish/local congregation	Guidance 1.5A and 1.5B
Media permission forms	Parish/local congregation	1.9A Template 1
Copies of signed agreement forms for all Church personnel	Parish/local congregation	5.1A Template 1
A record of dates and times for supervision and support meetings with key Church personnel	Diocesan/provincial level Parish/local level	Guidance 5.6A
Written agreements from external organisations/Church bodies, where clerics and religious who are members of the Church body are ministering with children	Diocese/province	Guidance 1.10A

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7.1C Template 2: Local Safeguarding Audit (Indicators Contained in Table 2 of the Child Safeguarding Policy)

Thank you for completing this audit, and for the work that you have done and continue to do to ensure the highest standards in best practice in child safeguarding.

Please feel free to call on any of the child safeguarding personnel if you have any questions or require assistance with the audit (contact numbers are at the back of this document).

The audit should be completed by the local safeguarding representatives, alongside the local parish priest/superior/community leader.

In areas where there are large numbers of Church-affiliated groups involving children, it may be necessary to ask group leaders to complete relevant parts of the audit, and for the local safeguarding representatives to then collate the responses into this audit.

Year under review (insert year)

It should be completed by (insert date):

And returned to (insert address):

Local details

Name of parish/local religious order house _____

Name of parish priest/local superior/community leader _____

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Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

For non-Church groups working with children and young people and using Church property (ignore if not applicable):

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| • Is there a register of all non-Church groups that use Church property?
(circle as appropriate) | Yes | No |
| • Does each group have its own insurance? | Yes | No |
| • Does each group have its own safeguarding policy? | Yes | No |

Clerics/religious who are members of the Church body, but who are ministering with children in an external organisation/Church body:

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| • Is there a list of all clerics and religious who are ministering with children in an external organisation/Church body? | Yes | No |
| • For each external organisation/Church body where a cleric/religious is ministering with children, is a written agreement in place that the cleric or religious agrees to follow effective safeguarding practice? | Yes | No |

Standard 5: Training and Support

Induction

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| • Have all Church personnel been shown the child safeguarding policy and procedures as part of an induction process? | Yes | No |
| • Have all Church personnel signed an agreement form (Guidance 5.1A Template 1)? | Yes | No |

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Basic safeguarding awareness training

- Please list below the names of those who have a **specific role** in child safeguarding, and the date they attended the full-day safeguarding programme.

Name	Role	Attended Full-Day Programme (Yes/No)	Date of Attendance

(Continue on separate sheet if necessary.)

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- Please list below the names of **all other Church personnel** who have taken the opportunity to attend an information session, their role and the date they attended an information session.

Name	Role	Attended Information Session (Yes/No)	Date of Attendance

(Continue on separate sheet if necessary.)

Role-specific training

- Please use the box below to highlight any child safeguarding training need that you feel is unfulfilled and would like the safeguarding committee to consider.

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Support

- Is a system of formal or informal support in place to provide support to all Church personnel involved in child safeguarding? Yes No

Standard 6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

- Are the contact details for the Church designated liaison person, social services and Gardaí/PSNI displayed in all appropriate places? Yes No
- Do you have information about how the Church safeguards children both available and displayed prominently? Yes No
- If you have groups in your local area whose first language is not English, do you have copies of the safeguarding message in accessible formats? Yes No

Recording

Are the following records stored safely and securely?

Type of Record	Where to Store	Guidance Number/ Page Number
Records of dates and times for supervision (formal/informal) and support meetings with local Church personnel	Parish/local level	Guidance 5.6A
Records of checks completed on external groups using Church property	Diocese/province Parish/local congregation	Guidance 1.5A and 1.5B
Written agreements from external organisations/Church bodies, where clerics and religious who are members of the Church body are ministering with children	Diocese/province	Guidance 1.10A

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7.1C Template 3: Local Safeguarding Audit (Indicators Contained in Table 3 of the Child Safeguarding Policy)

Thank you for completing this audit, and for the work that you have done and continue to do to ensure the highest standards in best practice in child safeguarding.

Please feel free to call on any of the child safeguarding personnel if you have any questions or require assistance with the audit (contact numbers are at the back of this document).

The audit should be completed by the local safeguarding representatives, alongside the local parish priest/superior/community leader.

In areas where there are large numbers of Church-affiliated groups involving children, it may be necessary to ask group leaders to complete relevant parts of the audit, and for the local safeguarding representatives to then collate the responses into this audit.

Year under review (insert year)

It should be completed by (insert date):

And returned to (insert address):

Local details

Name of parish/local religious order house _____

Name of parish priest/local superior/community leader _____

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Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

For non-Church groups working with children and young people and using Church property (ignore if not applicable):

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| • Is there a register of all non-Church groups that use Church property?
(circle as appropriate) | Yes | No |
| • Does each group have its own insurance? | Yes | No |
| • Does each group have its own safeguarding policy? | Yes | No |

Clerics/religious who are members of the Church body, but who are ministering with children in an external organisation/Church body:

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| • Is there a list of all clerics and religious who are ministering with children in an external organisation/Church body? | Yes | No |
| • For each external organisation/Church body where a cleric/religious is ministering with children, is a written agreement in place that the cleric or religious agrees to follow effective safeguarding practice? | Yes | No |

Standard 5: Training and Support

Induction

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| • Have all Church personnel been shown the child safeguarding policy and procedures as part of an induction process? | Yes | No |
| • Have all Church personnel signed an agreement form (Guidance 5.1A Template 1)? | Yes | No |

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Basic safeguarding awareness training

- Please list below the names of those who have a **specific role** in child safeguarding, and the date they attended the full-day safeguarding programme.

Name	Role	Attended Full-Day Programme (Yes/No)	Date of Attendance

(Continue on separate sheet if necessary.)

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- Please list below the names of **all other Church personnel** who have taken the opportunity to attend an information session, their role and the date they attended an information session.

Name	Role	Attended Information Session (Yes/No)	Date of Attendance

(Continue on separate sheet if necessary.)

Role-specific training

- Please use the box below to highlight any child safeguarding training need that you feel is unfulfilled and would like the safeguarding committee to consider.

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Standard 6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

- Are the contact details for the Church designated liaison person, social services and Gardaí/PSNI displayed in all appropriate places? Yes No
- Do you have information about how the Church safeguards children both available and displayed prominently? Yes No
- If you have groups in your local area whose first language is not English, do you have copies of the safeguarding message in accessible formats? Yes No

Recording

Are the following records stored safely and securely?

Type of Record	Where to Store	Guidance Number in Standards
Records of checks completed on external groups using Church property	Diocese/province Parish/local congregation	Guidance 1.5A and 1.5B
Written agreements from external organisations/Church bodies, where clerics and religious who are members of the Church body are ministering with children	Diocese/province	Guidance 1.10A

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7.1C Template 4: Notification to NBSCCCI (Indicators Contained in Table 1 and 2 of the Child Safeguarding Policy)

Date:

Dear _____ (insert name of CEO),

I am writing to confirm that the annual child safeguarding audits for _____ (insert year under review) in _____ (insert name of Church body) have been completed. These audits have been collated and analysed by the safeguarding committee in a report examining how we are meeting Standards 1, 5 and 6. Recommendations for change have been sent to me and will be included in our three-year child safeguarding plan.

Alongside this important information, the designated liaison person has also provided me with a report outlining how well we are meeting Standards 2, 3 and 4.

Using both of these reports, I have identified areas for change and am working with my child safeguarding team to meet these recommendations.

Yours sincerely,

(Insert name)

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7.1C Template 5: Notification to NBSCCCI (Indicators Contained in Table 3 of the Child Safeguarding Policy)

Date:

Dear _____ (insert name of CEO),

I am writing to confirm that the annual child safeguarding audits for _____ (insert year under review) in _____ (insert name of Church body) have been completed. These audits have been collated and analysed by the safeguarding committee in a report examining how we are meeting the relevant indicators under Standards 1, 5 and 6. Recommendations for change have been sent to me and will be included in our three-year child safeguarding plan.

We have no new cases and are not currently managing any existing cases.

Using this report, I have identified areas for change and am working with my child safeguarding team to meet these recommendations.

Yours sincerely,

(Insert name)

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7.1D Guidance on the Annual Report Made by DLP to the Church Authority (Indicators Contained in Table 1 and 2 of the Child Safeguarding Policy)

One of the primary methods (alongside the local safeguarding audit Guidance 7.1C) of ensuring compliance with the seven safeguarding standards is by means of an annual report written by the DLP on Standards 2, 3 and 4. Each of these standards contains a list of indicators, which give details of the steps that a Church organisation needs to take to meet the standard, and advises on ways to provide evidence that the standard has been met.

Process

1. The DLP, or a person appointed by the Church authority, will analyse all allegations and case files that have been reported within the year, using 7.1D Template 1 as a guide.
2. An annual report is prepared for the Church authority, with a review of compliance and recommendations for further action and improvement.
3. Recommendations for change are incorporated into the three-year child safeguarding plan, if appropriate (7.2A Template 1).
4. All documents produced will be in compliance with data protection requirements.

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7.1D Template 1: Guide on Completing a Review of Allegations and Case Files for the Annual Report to the Church Authority (Indicators Contained in Table 1 and 2 of the Child Safeguarding Policy)

Introduction

This template is designed to formally update the Church authority on an annual basis (to cover January-December) as to the current status of cases. This is particularly important when a changeover of personnel or leadership occurs.

Active case files and associated documents for the year being reviewed contain the information needed to answer the questions below.

NEW ALLEGATIONS FOR THE YEAR BEING REVIEWED

Standard 2

Please complete the table below by entering the appropriate number of allegations received **this year** in each box (enter zero if no allegations have been received for a category)

Respondent Type	Number by Respondent	Number Reported to Garda/PSNI	Number Reported to Tusla/Social Services	Number Reported to NBSCCCI
Clerics				
Non Ordained Religious				
Lay Church Personnel				N/A
Non Church Personnel				N/A

Report on Liaison Meeting with Statutory Authorities

How many liaison meetings have taken place with the statutory authorities this year?

Complaints from complainants who are dissatisfied with how their allegation has been handled

How many complaints from complainants who are dissatisfied with how their allegation has been handled have been received this year?

- How many of these complaints have been resolved?
- How many of these complaints have been referred to the NBSCCCI for investigation?

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QUALITY ASSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE STANDARDS GUIDANCE FOR INDICATOR 7.1

ONGOING ACTIVE CASES

Standard 2

Total number of active cases (Including new allegations for this year) that have been received that relate to clerics/religious?

- How many of these allegations have been reported to the statutory authorities?
- How many of these allegations have been reported to the NBSCCCI?

Standard 3 (only applies where an allegation is against clerics/religious)

For each complainant:

- How many times has the support person(s) had contact with the complainant(s) over the year?
- What organisations have been used to provide support to the complainant(s) over the year?

Standard 4 (only applies where an allegation is against clerics/religious)

For clerics

Detail the answers to the questions below for each respondent:

- How many times has the advisor(s) met with the respondent(s) over the year?
- How many cases are there canonical procedures in process or complete?
- How many cases have resulted in a permanent management plan?
- Of the respondents who are subject to a permanent management plan, how many monitoring visits have been carried out over the year?

For religious (non-ordained)

Detail the answers to the questions below for each respondent:

- How many times has the advisor(s) met with the respondent(s) over the year?
- How many cases have resulted in dismissal?
- How many cases have resulted in a permanent management plan?
- Of the respondents who are subject to a permanent management plan, how many monitoring visits have been carried out over the year?

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7.1E Guidance on Safeguarding Handover and Induction of a New Church Authority or DLP

All aspects of safeguarding children are the responsibility of the Church authority. Most of the functional roles are delegated to others, but the responsibility to ensure all necessary child safeguarding actions have been taken rests with the Church authority.

It is therefore essential that Church authorities, upon coming into office, familiarise themselves with their child safeguarding policy and procedures, the child safeguarding structure, personnel, and case management records.

Where possible, the incoming Church authority should:

- Meet with the outgoing Church authority in person to share all relevant issues;
- Meet with the chair of the safeguarding committee to familiarise themselves with the processes that are in place to create safe environments, including training and communication;
- Meet with the DLP to receive a briefing on all cases against living priests or members of the religious order, which includes the status of inquiries, Church investigations, management plans and responses to complainants.

New DLPs

- New DLPs should receive an induction for their role.
- New DLPs should review all case files of living priests or members of the religious order against whom there are allegations.
- Where possible, the outgoing DLP should meet with the incoming DLP to share issues of significance in relation to case management.

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7.1F Guidance on Developing a Constitution for a Safeguarding Committee

Role and Function

A safeguarding committee is constituted by the Church authority to promote child safeguarding by:

- Developing a three-year child safeguarding plan, including the establishment of the local child safeguarding policy and procedures;
- Coordinating local safeguarding representatives (LSRs);
- Coordinating activities related to child safeguarding, e.g. training;
- Ensuring the annual audit, including the correlation of records for training-related activities;
- Ensuring the completion of training needs assessments across the various child safeguarding roles in the Church body;
- Ensuring, with the Church authority, that the appropriate child safeguarding personnel are in place;
- Upholding the seven standards in practice and behaviour.

Membership

Committee membership is determined by the Church authority, reflecting the needs of the church body.

As a guide the committee should include people who have the following:

- Knowledge of the Church body and its ministry
- Experience of implementing policy and procedures
- Practical knowledge of working with children and child safeguarding
- Knowledge and experience of auditing and identifying hazards
- Experience of working with and supporting volunteers

It is advisable that each member of the committee has a set term of office which is agreed by the Church authority; to ensure continuous functioning of the committee membership should not be concurrent.

Each committee member must be safely recruited (Guidance 1.1A) and this should include:

- Signing a Confidential Declaration Form (Guidance 1.1A Template
- Signing a Confidentiality Declaration (1.1A Template 5).

All committee members should be inducted into the child safeguarding policy and procedures and sign an Induction Agreement (Guidance 5.1A Template 1).

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Training

In accordance with Guidance 5.3A all members of the committee must attend a full day safeguarding training every three years.

Additionally it is advised that the safeguarding committee undertake role specific training on the function of the committee provided by the National Board (<https://www.safeguarding.ie/index.php/what-we-do/advice-on-effective-practice/training>) .

Record Keeping and Administration of Meetings

The committee should appoint a chair and minute taker. All meetings should be minuted; it is advisable that a note of actions taken by the committee should be publically available, as long as it does not contain sensitive, personal information. For advice on minute taking see Guidance 2.2C.

All records should be stored in accordance with data protection (Appendix B).

The frequency of meetings will be determined by the Church authority and the members of the committee and will depend on the level of ministry the Church body has with children

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7.2A Guidance on Developing a Three-Year Child Safeguarding Plan

The Church organisation must develop a child safeguarding plan to assess the effectiveness of the steps it is taking to keep children safe.

The purpose of this internal child safeguarding plan is to set out **what, how, who and in what time frame** key elements of child safeguarding practices and procedures are going to be met by the Church body.

A child safeguarding plan should include the following:

- **Specific objectives linked to each of the safeguarding standards.** It is important that specific objectives are set in line with the child safeguarding standards, any previous annual audit recommendations and any review recommendations by the NBSCCCI. These objectives can be broken down into set actions. The training plan and communications plan should be included under Standards 5 and 6.
- **Resources.** The achievement of this child safeguarding plan is fully dependent on the availability of sufficient resources. In order to successfully implement the three-year strategy, it is important to set specific and realistic objectives linked to identified allocated resources.
- **Implementation.** The Church authority, through the safeguarding committee, should identify clear time frames for implementation, which should take account of the completion of the local safeguarding audits (Guidance 7.1C).
- **Review and evaluation.** It is important that the three-year plan sets clear dates for review of each specific objective outlined in the plan. These review dates should be achieved on an annual basis, and reviews should take account of the outcomes of the annual local safeguarding audits (Guidance 7.1C), and, if appropriate, of the annual report made by the DLP to the Church authority (Guidance 7.1D).

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GUIDANCE FOR INDICATOR 7.2

7.2A: Template 1: Example of a Three-Year Child Safeguarding Plan

Church Body:

Date:

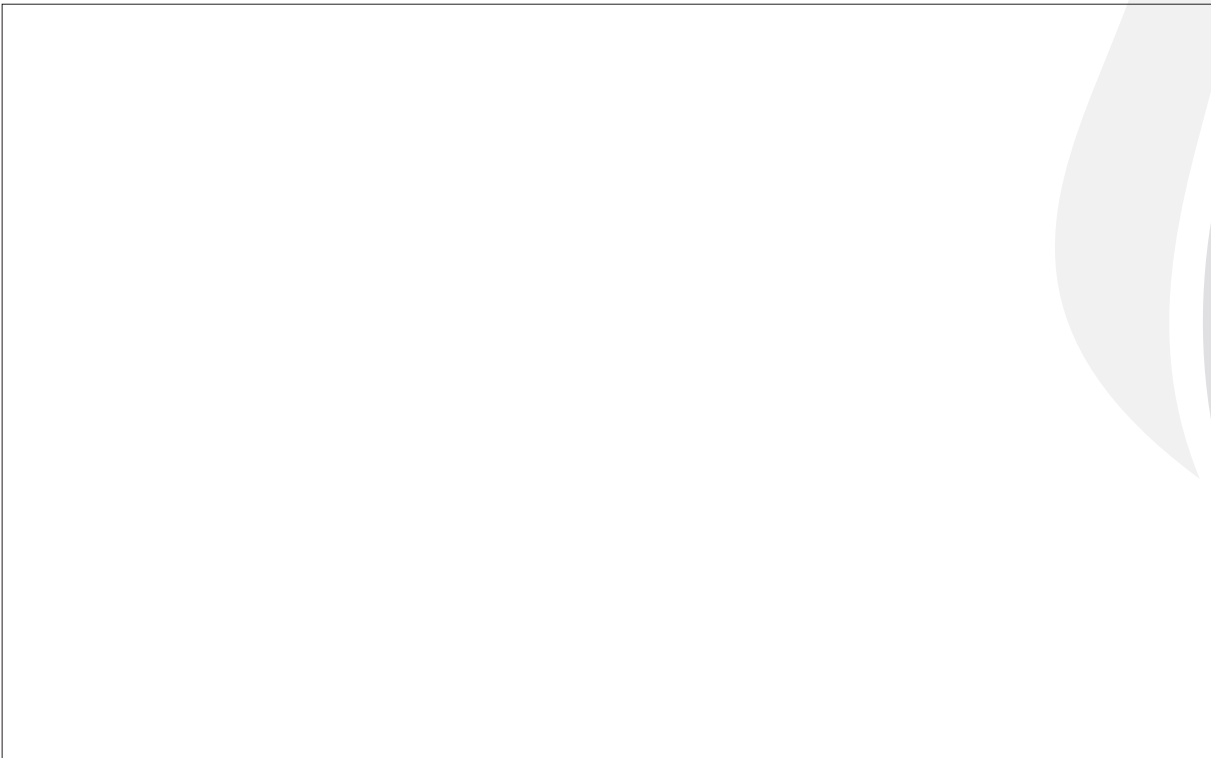
Standard	Specific Objective	Action	Responsibility	Implementation Date	Review Date
1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments	Ensure that all new groups using Church facilities have insurance and a safeguarding policy in place	LSR to complete checks on all new and existing groups using Church property (identified through the local safeguarding audits)	LSRs	01/01/2015	01/12/2015
	Ensure that Church personnel have been vetted in accordance with guidance on vetting	Those requiring vetting are identified through local safeguarding audits Copies of vetting forms provided to identified personnel Completed forms sent to vetting coordinator	LSR LSR Authorised signatory	01/01/2015	01/12/2015
5: Training and Support	Ensure that all Church personnel receive appropriate training in safeguarding	Develop annual training plan Deliver annual training plan	Safeguarding committee Safeguarding committee	01/01/2015 01/01/2015	01/12/2015 01/11/2015
6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message	Ensure that the Church's safeguarding message is communicated to identified audiences	Develop annual communications plan Deliver annual communications plan	Safeguarding committee Safeguarding committee	01/01/2015 01/01/2015	01/12/2015 01/12/2015

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GUIDANCE FOR INDICATOR 7.2

What resources are needed to carry out the child safeguarding plan?



Signed _____

Review date _____

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7.2B Guidance on Crisis Management

Crisis management is the application of strategies designed to help a Church body deal with a sudden and significant negative event. In terms of safeguarding this can be a range of things including removal of a cleric or religious from ministry, the resignation of a Church authority or exposure of poor practice through an audit or media investigations

This guidance is designed to assist Church authorities and personnel manage a crisis situation which ensures:

- Children are safeguarded
- Risk is assessed and managed
- Communication is clear, open and honest
- Action required to manage all aspects of the crisis is taken

This guidance is not designed to be an exhaustive list (as each crisis is different) but to provide a guide to the areas that should be addressed.

Each crisis will require a different approach with different personnel involved in the management, so that damage to children, the lay faithful and Church personnel is limited. The priority must always be to ensure that the well-being of children is safeguarded.

Step 1 - Preparation

The Church authority should consider with a 'critical friend' the best approach to adopt by scoping:

- The nature of the current crisis and how it might be managed
- Who will be in a crisis management team
- Who might coordinate of responses to the crisis
- Church authority responsibilities and redlines.

The term critical friend can be defined as 'a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens and offers critique of the person's work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes of the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work'¹.

Within a child safeguarding setting in the Church, such a person could be available to reflect ideas and honestly assist in analysing a situation with a focus on safeguarding children and not the reputation of the Church or the Church authority.

¹ Costa & Kallick, 1993, Through the Lens of a Critical Friend. Educational Leadership

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With this in mind it is important that the Church authority selects someone who will offer them honest advice and will balance an appropriate blend of support and challenge, to enable the Church authority to reflect on the issues outlined above.

Step 2- Convene Crisis Management Team

The Church authority convenes the Crisis Management Team. The makeup of this team will depend on the nature of the crisis.

Depending on the nature of the crisis, the team should be selected from role holders within the safeguarding structure (Appendix B). For example if the crisis relates to case management it would not be appropriate to involve the chair of the safeguarding committee due to confidentiality.

Examples of those involved in the Crisis Management Team may include

- Church authority
- Communications person
- DLP
- Canon lawyer
- Civil lawyer
- Support for both complainant and respondent
- Chair of safeguarding committee
- Critical friend

At all times confidentiality and data protection requirements must be respected. If the crisis relates to a situation where personal sensitive data is shared, all members of the crisis management team should sign a confidentiality agreement (Guidance 1.1A Template 5). This will apply in situations eg where a respondent is asked to step aside from ministry.

The purpose of convening a group of people is to identify the Church Authority's response and communication approaches so that there is clarity around what is happening; who is taking responsibility for actions and to ensure that all those potentially impacted by the crisis are responded to appropriately.

At the meeting of the Crisis Management Team the crisis should be discussed from a range of perspectives to help identify issues that need to be addressed. These perspectives could include:

- Children and Young people
- Lay faithful
- Complainants and families
- Respondent and their families
- Church personnel (Pope, Papal Nuncio, Metropolitan, Superior General, Clerics, religious and lay)

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- NBSCCCI
- General public
- Media

Once the discussion has taken place, the Crisis Management Team should then:

- Advise on priorities – safeguarding of children, responding to complainant etc
- Identify actions based on these priorities
- Identify roles based on these actions
- Using these actions produce a crisis management plan (this can be updated and revised throughout the crisis management process)
- Identify coordinator to ensure the plan is completed

Step 3: Crisis Management Plan

The Crisis Management Plan is developed based on the priorities agreed by the Crisis Management Team; this will differ for each crisis and may change throughout the process of managing the crisis. The agreed plan should provide a clear outline of the actions required, date to be completed and personnel assigned to these actions. The actions within the Plan need to include clear targets to:

- Ensure statutory obligations are met
- Ensure canonical obligations are met
- Ensure there is no risk to children
- Ensure support is being offered as appropriate
- Develop communications plan
- Outline when the plan will be reviewed or updated
- Conduct a serious incident review (Guidance 7.2C) after the process, to identify future learning and improved practice

Step 4: Communications

Throughout the process clear and appropriate communication is vitally important. To assist with this a communications plan should be developed as part of the Crisis Management Plan. This will include information to answer the following questions:

- What decisions need to be made early in the process that will not change? These need to be agreed and communicated to all so that there is absolute clarity about the Church Authority's position in relation to agreed actions.
- Who are the audiences you want to target?
- What are the messages you want to send to these audiences?

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- How are you going to send these messages to the audiences identified?
- Who will take responsibility?

In developing the communications plan it is helpful to consider the following:

DOs

- Be honest and apologise
- Appropriately share information
- Anticipate and prepare
- Get to the truth quickly and effectively
- Ensure that public information is current and correct (check own social and other media outlets)
- Maintain control- plan when you want to release information and only comment on what you are being asked about
- Be humble
- Take responsibility

DON'Ts

- Panic
- Minimise or relativise
- Allow emotion, vanity or ego to cloud your judgement
- Don't breach confidentiality
- Don't be dishonest and cover up

Step 5: Serious Incident Review

Once the crisis has passed, an important part of the Crisis Management Plan is to conduct a Serious Incident Review (Guidance 7.2C) to identify and distil future learning to prevent the crisis happening in the future.

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7.2C Guidance on Serious Incident Reviews

What is this guidance?

A key part of safeguarding and effective practice is evaluating and learning from previous practice. This is particularly important when a safeguarding concern is raised (not an allegation of abuse), this could for example be a crisis (Guidance 7.2B) a first aid accident (Guidance 1.4B) or dealing with a breach of a code of behaviour (Guidance 1.3B).

The pieces of guidance listed above outline the process of dealing with each of these situations.

What this guidance is not

This guidance is not a process to deal with allegations of abuse (Guidance 2.1A), Complaints (Guidance 1.7A) or Whistleblowing (Guidance 1.6A).

Process

Once the incident has occurred, it is important to review what happened, what procedures were in place before, during and after the incident, so as to assess if mistakes were made in order to improve future practice.

Listed below is a suggested approach which is not exhaustive but provides a framework to be adapted depending on the particular incident being reviewed.

1. Set Terms of Reference for the Review

The Church authority should outline in writing the following:

- Brief Background to the Incident being reviewed
- The purpose of the review- which sets out the rationale for a review and what the review is required to examine
- The scope of the review- which sets out the limits of the review and defines clearly what the review is and is not about.
- Membership of the Review Team-once the Church authority has appointed the Review Team their names should be listed in this section; consider the need for independence
- Timeframe for completion of the review
- Who should be consulted during the review
- Revision of the terms of reference- the documents may change depending on the process of the review, if the Review Team feel they need to change the terms of reference this needs to be agreed by the Church authority

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- Data protection- This section should outline how personal sensitive data will be managed, stored, retained and destroyed in line with data protection principles (Appendix B). This should include a clear statement that the data generated through the review belongs to the Church body not the Review Team
- Commitment to follow the recommendation and learning from the review
- If any child safeguarding allegations are raised during the review, there must be a commitment to reporting these to the statutory authorities

2. Appointment of the Review Team

Once the terms of reference have been agreed the Church authority should appoint a person or number of people to carry out the review. The people appointed should:

- Be suitably experienced in carrying out similar reviews
- Have a clear understanding of the type of incident being investigated
- Have a working knowledge of the safeguarding policy and procedures of the Catholic Church in Ireland
- Be independent of involvement in the incident

Once appointed the Church authority should:

- Name the individuals in the Terms of Reference Document
- Require the individuals to sign a confidentiality agreement form (1.1A Template 5)
- Go through the Terms of Reference document and answer any questions the individuals may have

3. Carrying out the Review

The assessment of the incident will vary depending on the circumstances but should include the following areas:

Preparation

The practice of the Church body should be examined to ensure that all preparation work was conducted according to the policy and procedures of the Church body. For example:

- If the incident related to the management of a respondent, the Guidance under Standard 4 may be helpful
- If the incident related to a safeguarding concern in relation to working safely with children and young people, the Guidance under Standard 1 may be helpful
- If the incident related to a case management issue the guidance under Standard 2 may be helpful

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Concern

This phase aims to examine the practice during the incident/concern. The review team should use the terms of reference to develop questions for interview, and then carry out interviews with relevant people involved in the incident. This could include:

- The Church authority
- Members of Church personnel
- Those present during the incident
- Other relevant parties who may be experts in the field or have a link to the incident

Aftermath

This phase of the review process seeks to assess everything that happened after the incident and should examine all responses so as to ensure that statutory responsibilities were discharged; parents/carers were informed; children were supported and that risk was addressed and managed

In carrying out all of the above it is important consent is gained from all relevant children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers to participating in the review and a commitment given to ensuring that personal details are anonymised (if appropriate) in the final report. As always if those interviewed raise anything of a safeguarding nature this must be passed using the reporting process (Guidance 2.1A).

4. The Report

Using the three areas listed above, the Review Team should complete a report for the Church authority which provides:

- An assessment of the planning leading up to the incident
- An assessment of the incident itself and how it occurred, and response afterward
- A list of recommended actions from the findings of the review.

5. Implementing Actions

Once the report is presented the Church authority should implement the recommendations of the review these should form part of the Child Safeguarding Plan (Guidance 7.2A).

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7.3A Guidance on Reviews Carried out by NBSCCCI

NEEDS TO BE INSERTED FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF NEW AUDIT FRAMEWORK AND
METHODOLOGY