

Newsletter



Latest News from the National Office for Safeguarding
Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland

March 2019

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Introduction

Pope Francis called together Presidents of Bishops' Conferences for a Meeting on Child Safeguarding. The three day meeting took place in Rome on 21-24th February 2019. The long term outcomes will undoubtedly impact on our practice here in Ireland, and we in the National Board will work closely with Church authorities and Church personnel to ensure we offer support in developing and maintaining best practice standards on all aspects of child safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

Amongst his closing remarks, Pope Francis said "Notwithstanding the measures already taken and the progress made in the area of preventing abuse, there is need for a constantly renewed commitment to the holiness of pastors, whose conformity to Christ the Good Shepherd is a right of the People of God. The Church thus restates "her firm resolve to pursue unstintingly a path of purification, questioning how best to protect children, to avoid these tragedies, to bring healing and restoration to the victims, and to improve the training imparted in seminaries".

Full meeting details can be obtained at <https://www.pbc2019.org/>

The National Board will soon be preparing our annual report for the period 2018/19 and reviewing what we have achieved in terms of the objectives set last year. A quick reflection of the years' work was highlighted in the December 2018 Newsletter. One matter which seems to have consumed a lot of effort was "Information Sharing and data protection". The National Board recognises and upholds an individual's right to privacy, so we have been consulting with AMRI, the Irish Bishops' Conference, lawyers and officials to ensure that any arrangements between Church authorities and the National Board are firmly fixed both in data protection legislation and with a focus on child safeguarding.

Reminder:

Each Diocese and Religious Order should undertake an annual self-audit to ensure compliance with the relevant standards. There is a requirement to notify the National Board that these have been completed or are in process by the end of March 2019. Can any outstanding self-audit confirmation letters be forwarded to

imeldaashe@safeguarding.ie by 1.4.19

GDPR, Information Sharing, MOUs and Deeds

The National Board's data privacy statement can be viewed at

https://www.safeguarding.ie/images/Pdfs/Corporate_Publications/Privacy%20Statement%20for%20Website.pdf.

Over the past months the NBSCCI has redeveloped the following procedures to comply with data protection law:

- Subject Access Request procedure;
- Data Protection Policy;
- Data Breach Procedure;
- Data Protection Impact Assessment and
- File Retention and Destruction Procedure.

In line with the Data Retention and Destruction Procedure, the National Board is assimilating all hard copy records onto an electronic system after which we will contact Church authorities to advise them of allegation notifications held in the National office and our intention to delete these records. This is a significant piece of work and we will advise you upon completion, of the destruction date of these records.

As previously stated the National Board has produced a series of MOUs and Deeds which refer to:

- Adherence to *Safeguarding Children, Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*, and notification of allegations (anonymised) to the National Board
- Request for advice on case management issues
- Request for advice from the National Case Management Committee
- Assistance with case management records
- Reviews of child safeguarding and case management records.

MOU and data processing deeds relating to notification of allegations will be issued to all Church authorities. It must be noted that notification information can only be shared with the National Board on an anonymous basis, without sharing any personal sensitive data.

Anyone seeking case management advice, either from a member of National Office staff or the National Case Management Committee (NCMC) must sign a data processing deed agreeing to share information with the National Board. These deeds (and accompanying MOUs) are being issued on a case by case basis.

Requests have been made for assistance with case file construction; again as this requires access to personal sensitive data, a data processing deed and MOU is required.

The final service which requires exchange of information and a data processing deed is a Review conducted by the National Board. This will be issued to Church authorities who invite the National Board to review their practice during the forthcoming months.

Safeguarding Sundays

Twenty responses were received from Church bodies to the request from the National Office for information on their experiences of holding Safeguarding Sundays. Although a small number, some very useful information was shared by the eleven responses, who have run these events (nine responses replied that they have not done so to date). The information received will be supplemented by data and resources taken from relevant Church websites, and a GAP paper will be written up by Easter on *Communicating the Church's Child Safeguarding Message*; this will have a detailed section on Safeguarding Sundays. The National Office will also place examples of Safeguarding Sundays' resources (notes for homilies; suggested Prayers of the Faithful; ideas for a special Newsletter etc.) in a dedicated file on the Home Page of its website, also by Easter 2019.

Review Methodology and Timetable for Reviews

Four independent reviewers have been selected following interviews which took place in February. The National Board would like to thank Bishop Eamon Walsh (IEC) and Sister Geraldine Fitzpatrick (AMRI) for their assistance with the selection process. Training is scheduled with the reviewers for April 2019.

The Review Methodology is available on the National Board's website on page 47 at <https://www.safeguarding.ie/images/Pdfs/Standards/Standard%207.pdf>.

Invitations to conduct a Review should be submitted in writing by a Church authority to Teresa Devlin, CEO NBSCCCI, New House St.Patrick's College, Maynooth.

Training and Support

Training Strategy

We are currently developing our new Training and Support Strategy and as part of this we sent a questionnaire to those on our newsletter list, seeking feedback and ideas regarding the National Board's training and future requirements in terms of training. Could any outstanding responses be returned to Niall Moore before the 20th of March. These can be posted or emailed to niall.moore@safeguarding.ie.

Head to Heart Training

The National Board has been providing child safeguarding training to seminarians in St. Patrick's College Maynooth since 2009, and more recently to other houses of religious formation in Ireland and to the Pontifical Irish College in Rome. Through the experience of delivering this training to men in formation, the National Board has identified additional areas for relevant training that will better prepare these men for their future ministry with children, as priests. Working with the formation teams in St. Patrick's College Maynooth, the Pontifical Irish College in Rome, and Redemptoris Mater, the National Board is facilitating a new programme of child safeguarding training in formation.



The course is called *Head to Heart-Child Safeguarding in Formation*. This name was chosen to fill the gap identified through current practice and experience of providing child safeguarding training which is truly reflective, rather than simply knowing about the policies and procedures, to understand how they can be integrated into the spiritual lives of priests. This approach has also been reflected by Pope Francis when he said “...an education that integrates and harmonizes intellect (the head), affections (the heart) and activity (the hands)...will offer students a growth that is harmonious not only at the personal level but also at the level of society. We urgently need to create spaces where fragmentation is not the guiding principle, even for thinking. To do this, it is necessary to teach how to reflect on what we are feeling and doing; to feel what we are thinking and doing; to do what we are thinking and feeling. An interplay of capacities at the service of the person and society.”

Each seminarian will complete ten modules across their period of formation and each will be assessed using reflective readings and exercises before and after each module, to assist with integrating the theory and practice of safeguarding into ministry. Two of these modules have now been delivered with seminarians from all three seminaries taking part. Further updates will be provided as the programme progresses.

Upcoming Training Events

- **23/03/2019- Trainers update day-** this day is mandatory for all those who are registered as trainers with the National Board. The day will include updates on new training from the manual and an opportunity to network with other trainers. To find out more or to register your place go to <https://www.safeguarding.ie/events/annual-update-for-trainers-2019> .
- **27/03/2019- Lay Apostolates-** This training is for those national or local lay apostolates, who are ministering with children in Ireland and wish to follow the Church's child safeguarding policy 'Safeguarding Children, Policy and Standards 2016'. The aim of this course is to:
 - Familiarise participants with the requirements of the Church's safeguarding children policy and standards
 - Update participants on the legislative developments in relation to safeguarding children
 - Outline the governance requirements in relation to safeguarding children
 - Outline proposals to formalise relationship between lay apostolates and the NBSCCCI.

To find out more or to register your place please follow this link

<https://www.safeguarding.ie/events/training-for-lay-apostolates>.

Update to the Training Manual

As with the Guidance, the Training Manual has to be updated from time to time. To make keeping up the change a bit easier the changes will be coordinated in line with the newsletter.

This time changes have been made to revise the flowchart diagram; in addition following new information from An Garda Síochána the reporting forms slide has now been updated.

Trainers should print all the pages detailed on the trainer's section of the website which can be accessed with the login information given at registration as trainers. It is important that these pages are printed double sided and use them to replace the existing pages in the manual. The PowerPoint slides have also been changed so these must be downloaded and used to replace the previous versions.

Guidance Updates

There have been no changes to the National Boards Guidance since the last Newsletter



Practice Issue- Visiting Clergy and Members of Consecrated Life



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



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The National Board has become aware of a worrying number of examples of breaches of guidance around ensuring safeguards to children are in place in relation to visiting priests. The requirement is that Church bodies either follow the National Board's Guidance, or have their own in place.

Standard 1 of Safeguarding Children, Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2016) states Church bodies provide an environment for children that is welcoming, nurturing and safe. They provide access to good role models whom the children can trust, who respect, protect and enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development

One aspect of this standard is ensuring that all those who minister and work in the Church are assessed for their suitability to engage with children. This includes taking steps to ensure that any priest visiting within Ireland or from outside Ireland is a priest in good standing. The National Board has developed guidance which can be found at

<https://www.safeguarding.ie/images/Pdfs/Standards/Standard%201.pdf> Page 33.

Anyone facilitating a visiting priest having public ministry must ensure that the visiting priests shows his celebret or letter of good standing and that he signs the Sacristy Register. In addition, anyone seeking public ministry must be vetted, in line with legislation in both jurisdictions.

Where there is an intention for a member of a Religious Order to engage in public ministry, all visiting religious must write, seeking permission from the Church authority, giving details about the duration of the visit, the type of ministry and the location of ministry being considered. Contact details of the Church authority of the visiting religious must be provided in advance.

The safety of a child must not be compromised by allowing practice to fall below the agreed standard; even in situations where the visiting priest is known to the parish priest, the procedure must be followed.