

**Private and Confidential**

**Review of Safeguarding Practice**

**in the**

**Diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora**

**undertaken by**

**The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the**

**Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI)**

**The content of this Report is not to be accessed or shared without the consent  
of Bishop Drennan**

**Date 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2013**

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## **Background**

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) was asked by the Sponsoring Bodies, namely the Episcopal Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI) and the Irish Missionary Union (IMU), to undertake a comprehensive review of safeguarding practice within and across all the Church authorities on the island of Ireland. The purpose of the review is to confirm that current safeguarding practice complies with the standards set down within the guidance issued by the Sponsoring Bodies in February 2009 *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* and that all known allegations and concerns had been appropriately dealt with. To achieve this task, safeguarding practice in each Church authority is to be reviewed through an examination of case records and through interviews with key personnel involved both within and external to a diocese or other authority.

This report contains the findings of the *Review of Safeguarding Practice within the Diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora* (hereafter Galway) undertaken by the NBSCCCI in line with the request made to it by the Sponsoring Bodies. It is based upon the case material made available to us by Bishop Drennan, along with interviews with selected key personnel who contribute to safeguarding within the Diocese of Galway. The NBSCCCI believes that all relevant documentation for these cases was passed to the reviewers and Bishop Drennan has confirmed this.

The findings of the review have been shared with a reference group in redacted form before being submitted to Bishop Drennan, along with any recommendations arising from the findings.

## **Introduction**

Bishop Drennan invited NBSCCCI to undertake a review of safeguarding practice in the Diocese of Galway late in 2012. As a consequence, two days of fieldwork were carried out, starting on the evening of 14<sup>th</sup> January 2013 when a series of meetings commenced with lay volunteers and priests and continued over the following two days.

Bishop Drennan has been in post as Bishop of Galway since 2005. He succeeded Bishop McLoughlin, who took up office in 1993, Bishop McLoughlin passed away on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2005. Bishop Eamon Casey was Bishop of Galway from 1976 until May 1992 when he resigned.

This report will reference practice under the leadership of all three Bishops detailed above.

The Diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora consists of 39 parishes, grouped into five deaneries, serving communities living in parts of counties Galway, Clare and Mayo. There are 48 diocesan priests working in the diocese and 15 religious order priests making a total of 63 priests in ministry in the diocese.

In addition to diocesan and religious order priests noted above, there are a number of religious orders/congregations/missionary societies who have a presence in the diocese. These orders/congregations and missionary societies are required to have their own safeguarding policies and procedures in place and their practice was not examined as part of the review in Galway Diocese.

## **STANDARDS**

This section provides the findings of the review. The template employed to present the findings are the seven standards, set down and described in the Church guidance, *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*. This guidance was launched in February 2009 and was endorsed and adopted by all the Church authorities that minister on the island of Ireland, including the Diocese of Galway. The seven standards are:

**Standard 1** A written policy on keeping children safe

**Standard 2** Procedures – how to respond to allegations and suspicions in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

**Standard 3** Preventing harm to children:

- recruitment and vetting
- running safe activities for children
- codes of behaviour

**Standard 4** Training and education

**Standard 5** Communicating the Church's safeguarding message:

- to children
- to parents and adults
- to other organisations

**Standard 6** Access to advice and support

**Standard 7** Implementing and monitoring the Standards

Each Standard contains a list of criteria, which are indicators that help decide whether this standard has been met. The criteria give details of the steps that a Church organisation, diocese or religious order, needs to take to meet the standard and ways of providing evidence that the standard has been met.

**Standard 1**

***A written policy on keeping children safe***

*Each child should be cherished and affirmed as a gift from God with an inherent right to dignity of life and bodily integrity, which shall be respected, nurtured and protected by all.*

Compliance with standard 1 is only fully achieved when Galway Diocese meets the requirements of all nine criteria against which the standard is measured.

**Criteria**

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
1.1	The Church organisation has a child protection policy that is written in a clear and easily understandable way.	Met fully
1.2	The policy is approved and signed by the relevant leadership body of the Church organisation (e.g. the bishop of the diocese or provincial of a religious congregation).	Met fully
1.3	The policy states that all Church personnel are required to comply with it.	Met fully
1.4	The policy is reviewed at regular intervals no more than three years apart and is adapted whenever there are significant changes in the organisation or legislation.	Met fully*
1.5	The policy addresses child protection in the different aspects of Church work e.g. within a church building, community work, pilgrimages, trips and holidays.	Met fully
1.6	The policy states how those individuals who pose a risk to children are managed.	Partially Met
1.7	The policy clearly describes the Church's understanding and definitions of abuse.	Met fully
1.8	The policy states that all current child protection concerns must be fully reported to the civil authorities without delay.	Met fully
1.9	The policy should be created at diocese or congregational level. If a separate policy document at parish or other level is necessary this should be consistent with the diocesan or congregational policy and approved by the relevant diocesan or congregational authority before distribution.	Met fully

*\* Process of review being initiated by the Safeguarding Committee in 2013*

The *Galway Diocesan Safeguarding Policy and Procedures* have been in place in the current format since 2010. In his opening remarks to the document, Bishop Drennan acknowledges the past mistakes and failures in the care and protection of children and young people. He goes on to acknowledge the contribution of the many volunteers in the creation of safe environments within the Church. The reviewers reported to Bishop Drennan the importance of his strong leadership and the obvious respect that is shown to him by all safeguarding personnel. It was abundantly clear from discussions with the many lay volunteers encountered during the fieldwork that *The Galway Diocesan Policy and Procedures* are living documents, which they have all signed up to and which they proactively promote across the diocese and in all Church related activities. The diocese hosts an annual safeguarding conference, attended by Bishop Drennan, as a sign of his commitment to safeguarding and by way of thanking the volunteers and staff.

The Director of Safeguarding, who was closely involved with drafting the current policy and procedures document in his then role as chair of the safeguarding committee, advised that the document is currently under review and will take account of changes to legislation and new guidance issued both by Government and NBSCCCI. The dioceses within the western province are currently consulting to develop a combined new policy for all six dioceses. The NBSCCCI welcome this initiative and would recommend that the western province diocesan safeguarding committee take cognisance of requirements under any revisions to *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* and *Children First* in the redrafting of their policy document.

The safeguarding representatives advised that information on the safeguarding policy, how to make a complaint and contact details for the designated person, An Garda Síochána and HSE are displayed in all Church properties. Interestingly they also informed the reviewers that the code of behaviour for adults is also openly displayed in Churches and other church property. Further details about the steps taken to ensure the safety of children is detailed under Standard 3 below.

**Standard 2**

***Management of allegations***

*Children have a right to be listened to and heard: Church organisations must respond effectively and ensure any allegations and suspicions of abuse are reported both within the Church and to civil authorities.*

Compliance with Standard 2 is only fully achieved when Galway Diocese meets the requirements of all seven criteria against which the standard is measured.

**Criteria**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Met fully or Met partially or Not met</b>
<b>2.1</b>	There are clear child protection procedures in all Church organisations that provide step-by-step guidance on what action to take if there are allegations or suspicions of abuse of a child (historic or current).	Fully Met
<b>2.2</b>	The child protection procedures are consistent with legislation on child welfare civil guidance for child protection and written in a clear, easily understandable way.	Fully Met
<b>2.3</b>	There is a designated officer or officer(s) with a clearly defined role and responsibilities for safeguarding children at diocesan or congregational level.	Fully Met
<b>2.4</b>	There is a process for recording incidents, allegations and suspicions and referrals. These will be stored securely, so that confidential information is protected and complies with relevant legislation.	Fully Met
<b>2.5</b>	There is a process for dealing with complaints made by adults and children about unacceptable behaviour towards children, with clear timescales for resolving the complaint.	Partially Met
<b>2.6</b>	There is guidance on confidentiality and information-sharing which makes clear that the protection of the child is the most important consideration. The Seal of Confession is absolute.	Partially Met
<b>2.7</b>	The procedures include contact details for local child protection services e.g. (Republic of Ireland) the local Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána; (Northern Ireland) the local health and social services trust and the PSNI.	Fully Met



**Table 1**

**Incidence of Safeguarding allegations received within Galway Diocese from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 up to January 2013.**

<b>Galway Diocese</b>		
<b>1</b>	Number of Diocesan priests against whom allegations have been made since the 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1975 up to the date of the Review.	<b>14</b>
<b>2</b>	Total number of allegations received by the Diocese since 1 <sup>st</sup> January, 1975	<b>38</b>
<b>3</b>	Number of allegations reported to An Garda Síochána involving priests since 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1975.	<b>27</b>
<b>4</b>	Number of allegations reported to the HSE (or the Health Boards which preceded the setting up of the HSE,) involving priests of the Diocese/Order since 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1975.	<b>27</b>
<b>5</b>	Number of priests still members of the Diocese against whom an allegation was made and who were living at the date of the review.	<b>7</b>
<b>6</b>	Number of priests against whom an allegation was made and who are deceased.	<b>5</b>
<b>7</b>	Number of priests against whom an allegation has been made and who are in ministry.	<b>3</b>
<b>8</b>	Number of priests/religious against whom an allegation was made and who are “Out of Ministry, but are still members of the Diocese”.	<b>2</b>
<b>9</b>	Number of priests against whom an allegation was made and who are retired	<b>2</b>
<b>10</b>	Number of priests against whom an allegation was made and who have left the priesthood.	<b>2</b>
<b>11</b>	Number of priests of the Diocese who have been convicted of having committed an offence or offences against a child or young person since the 1 <sup>st</sup> January 1975.	<b>1</b>

*Footnote: The term allegation in this table includes complaints and expressions of concern.*

The reviewers examined the case management records of 19 priests. This included 12 diocesan priests 9 of whom are alive and 4 priests from religious orders and 3 priests from other dioceses but who had a connection with Galway.

The case files mainly consist of correspondence with no corresponding narratives. They have recently been enhanced by the insertion of case file summaries which make the flow of the case management easier to understand.

### **Notification to the Civil Authorities**

Historically there have been delays in notifying An Garda Síochána and HSE of allegations in cases during the 1990s and early 2000. More recently there is very prompt reporting of all cases. While all current allegations are referred to the sexual crimes unit in Harcourt Square in Dublin, Bishop Drennan, the designated and deputy designated persons all state that they have a very open and positive relationship with An Garda Síochána in Galway. Bishop Drennan noted the helpful advice and support offered by the local superintendent. For his part the superintendent stated that, in his experience Bishop Drennan is a very open Bishop with a clear commitment to safeguarding children and to sharing information with An Garda Síochána.

Recent changes in the HSE have brought some challenges for the diocese, as their contact person moved to another area and the new child care manager was on sick leave. A telephone discussion was held with the previous child care manager as the diocese states that they have not had any contact with the new manager. The previous manager commented that she had a lot of positive contact with the designated person and has confidence in the reporting arrangements. She advised that she is seeking guidance from her seniors in HSE regarding interagency meetings as she is unclear of their role and purpose and of issues around data protection. There were no interagency meetings held between HSE, Galway Diocese and An Garda Síochána.

### **Church Inquiries and Processes**

It would appear from the records that in all cases prompt action was taken to remove men from ministry where credible allegations were made. The exception to this appears in two cases, one which was brought to the attention of Bishop Casey, which does not appear to have been afforded the attention it required during the early 1980s. Bishop McLoughlin was informed of the concerns against this now deceased priest and removed him from ministry in 1995. There was one other case which was brought to the attention of Bishop McLoughlin where it appears from the records that the complainant did not receive an appropriate response. The accused priest was already out of ministry when the complaint was received and was deceased when a subsequent complaint was made.

As stated above the written records consist of a series of correspondence and do not provide sufficient evidence to support the action that was clearly taken. There are some limited examples of written precepts, but these are usually by way of letters, in one instance to a care provider, rather than by way of a decree from the bishop setting out the restrictions. This lack of formal written restrictions has led to the accused in at least two

cases thwarting the restrictions and appearing at funerals and other public events in full priests clothing and assisting with the liturgy. Where this has happened and has been brought to the attention of Bishop Drennan, he has taken quick action and reaffirmed with the accused his status as a priest “out of ministry”. In order to avoid the likelihood of this happening again, Bishop Drennan should revisit all cases of priests out of ministry and ensure that written precepts are in place.

**Recommendation 1.**

**Bishop Drennan should review all cases of living priests who are on administrative leave (“out of ministry”) to ensure that formal written precepts have been issued and shared with the accused priest, and a copy retained on file.**

It has already been stated that initial action to remove priests against whom there are credible allegations was taken. In some cases there were An Garda Síochána investigations and files submitted to the DPP. In one case there was a conviction against a diocesan priest for abuse of a child. In another case there was a conviction for abuse of a young adult.

The requirements of canon law are, that following the civil investigations, a preliminary investigation under Canon 1717 should proceed and at the end of that process, if there is a case to answer, then information regarding the case and the priest should be forwarded to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) in the Vatican. In two cases in the Diocese of Galway, the accused priests have been laicised. In a further case, the Congregation of the Clergy returned the priest to ministry and in a fourth case canonical proceedings are still in process. There are a further number of priests who are “out of ministry” where there has not been a preliminary investigation and where there is no evidence on file that the CDF has been informed of the priest’s current status.

It is very clear that these men are being monitored and that any risk presented by them is carefully identified. However the Church policies should be adhered to and brought to speedy conclusions as required by canon law.

**Recommendation 2**

**Bishop Drennan needs to appoint a suitable person to initiate the preliminary investigation under Canon 1717, in relation to all priests out of ministry (where this has not already happened) and inform the CDF if required so that any subsequent penal process may take place.**

**Risk Management**

Bishop Drennan highlighted his concern that all men out of ministry should be monitored to ensure that there is no current risk to children. The safeguarding co-ordinator takes responsibility for this task and shared with the reviewers, his direct and indirect contact with priests who are not in good standing. This is clearly a good initiative by the diocese, however there is a lack of written records to evidence this important work.

### **Recommendation 3**

**The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should put in place written risk management plans which should be shared with the accused priest; and a record made of all reviews of risk and monitoring visits.**

### **Advisory Panel**

The former Advisory Panel was stood down by Bishop Drennan in 2010 when NBSCCCI proposed the establishment of regional panels. When this did not take place, Bishop Drennan established a new panel, while awaiting the setting up of the NBSCCCI's National Case Management Reference Group (NCMRG). The diocese has presented a number of cases to the NCMRG and Bishop Drennan and the designated people expressed their satisfaction with the advice offered. The Diocesan Advisory panel has met on a number of occasions to draw up terms of reference and has been consulted in relation to a covenant of care in one case. There is some potential for confusion around Galway Diocese having access to two advisory bodies and it is therefore important that Bishop Drennan and his designated people develop protocols around the future use of these two groups.

### **Recommendation 4**

**Bishop Drennan in consultation with his designated people must decide how to proceed in relation to seeking advice on case management issues. Should they decide to retain both their own Diocesan Advisory panel and the National Case Management Reference Group (NCMRG), then they must draft protocols so that there is clarity around panel roles and responsibilities.**

On the whole cases are responded to well in Galway Dioceses. There is currently prompt notification to the civil authorities, removal from ministry has been decisive and management and monitoring of risk is good. Further work to improve this practice needs to take place in relation to adhering to canon law and ensuring that priests out of ministry are not left in limbo. Even where the administrative leave of a priest is by agreement, Bishop Drennan should ensure that all canonical processes have been completed.

Finally a comprehensive record of the practice must be placed in the case file. It is recommended that the adoption of and compliance with the NBSCCCI case file template as means of achieving this objective.

### **Recommendation 5**

**The designated person must ensure that all case management records follow the NBSCCCI template with narrative accounts of all actions taken and meetings held.**

**Standard 3**

***Preventing Harm to Children***

*This standard requires that all procedures and practices relating to creating a safe environment for children be in place and effectively implemented. These include having safe recruitment and vetting practices in place, having clear codes of behaviour for adults who work with children and by operating safe activities for children.*

Compliance with Standard 3 is only fully achieved when Galway Diocese meets the requirements of all twelve criteria against which the standard is measured. These criteria are grouped into three areas, safe recruitment and vetting, codes of behaviour and operating safe activities for children.

**Criteria – safe recruitment and vetting**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Met fully or Met partially or Not met</b>
<b>3.1</b>	There are policies and procedures for recruiting Church personnel and assessing their suitability to work with children.	Fully Met
<b>3.2</b>	The safe recruitment and vetting policy is in line with best practice guidance.	Fully Met
<b>3.3</b>	All those who have the opportunity for regular contact with children, or who are in positions of trust, complete a form declaring any previous court convictions and undergo other checks as required by legislation and guidance and this information is then properly assessed and recorded.	Fully Met

**Criteria – Codes of behaviour**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Met fully or Met partially or Not met</b>
<b>3.4</b>	The Church organisation provides guidance on appropriate/ expected standards of behaviour of, adults towards children.	Fully Met
<b>3.5</b>	There is guidance on expected and acceptable behaviour of children towards other children (anti-bullying policy).	Fully Met
<b>3.6</b>	There are clear ways in which Church personnel can raise allegations and suspicions about unacceptable behaviour towards children by other Church personnel or volunteers (‘whistle-blowing’), confidentially if necessary.	Partially Met*

<b>3.7</b>	There are processes for dealing with children’s unacceptable behaviour that do not involve physical punishment or any other form of degrading or humiliating treatment.	Partially Met
<b>3.8</b>	Guidance to staff and children makes it clear that discriminatory behaviour or language in relation to any of the following is not acceptable: race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political views.	Fully Met
<b>3.9</b>	Policies include guidelines on the personal/ intimate care of children with disabilities, including appropriate and inappropriate touch.	Fully Met

*\* Galway Diocese have advised to await further guidance prior to finalising the production of a whistle blowing policy until the signing into law of the new rules.*

**Criteria – Operating safe activities for children**

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
<b>3.10</b>	There is guidance on assessing all possible risks when working with children – especially in activities that involve time spent away from home.	Fully Met
<b>3.11</b>	When operating projects/ activities children are adequately supervised and protected at all times.	Fully Met
<b>3.12</b>	Guidelines exist for appropriate use of information technology (such as mobile phones, email, digital cameras, websites, the Internet) to make sure that children are not put in danger and exposed to abuse and exploitation.	Partially Met

The reviewers met seven safeguarding representatives, two parish priests and the safeguarding committee as part of the assessment of compliance of Standard 3. The reviewers were hugely impressed by all and were struck by the energy and commitment of priests and lay people in their work around ensuring that there are safe environments for children in all church related activities.

The safeguarding representatives explained that there are a large number of children involved in altar serving, children’s choir and children’s liturgies. The requirement in Galway Diocese is that as children become involved, so too do their parents. It is parents who are responsible for the supervision and oversight of their children, parents attend with altar servers before and after mass, sign the sacristy register and sign up to the diocesan safeguarding policy. This appears to have a positive two fold effect. Firstly

children feel secure in having parental attendance at all times and secondly it allows for greater participation by parents in their children's ministry.

The safeguarding representatives expressed the strong view that leadership from Bishop Drennan and their parish priests is critical and very forthcoming in safeguarding children in Galway Diocese. It was very reassuring for the reviewers to hear very positive comments about clergy leading from the front in all matters relating to safeguarding. The representatives were also very appreciative of the parts played by the designated person and safeguarding co-ordinator in making sure that the policies and procedures were relevant and easy to understand, as well as ensuring the practice conforms to the standards. The safeguarding co-ordinator visits all parishes on a regular basis, checking that the notices are displayed, that procedures are followed and that practice conforms to the safeguarding standards of the diocese.

Vetting is co-ordinated in Galway Diocese on behalf of the western province. There is a comprehensive electronically managed vetting system which has been developed by the vetting co-ordinator in association with personnel from all the other dioceses in the western province. The system ensures easy tracking of vetting applications as well as comprehensive information about the numbers vetted in the diocese, amongst the religious and in schools in Galway. (Schools do not come under the remit of NBSCCCI and their policies and practices were not examined as part of this review)

The vetting co-ordinator also supports the safeguarding co-ordinator and safeguarding committee in other administrative tasks. She presented as extremely efficient and helpful.

The reviewers would wish to reflect the significant good work that is taking place in relation to all aspects of safeguarding and preventing harm to children and wish to acknowledge all personnel, - lay, clergy, paid and volunteer for their contribution to safeguarding practice in Galway Diocese.

**Standard 4**

***Training and Education***

*All Church personnel should be offered training in child protection to maintain high standards and good practice.*

**Criteria**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Met fully or Met partially or Not met</b>
<b>4.1</b>	All Church personnel who work with children are inducted into the Church's policy and procedures on child protection when they begin working within Church organisations.	Fully Met
<b>4.2</b>	Identified Church personnel are provided with appropriate training for keeping children safe with regular opportunities to update their skills and knowledge.	Fully Met
<b>4.3</b>	Training is provided to those with additional responsibilities such as recruiting and selecting staff, dealing with complaints, disciplinary processes, managing risk, acting as designated person.	Fully Met
<b>4.4</b>	Training programmes are approved by National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) and updated in line with current legislation, guidance and best practice.	Fully Met

There are two trainers who are registered with NBSCCCI to provide safeguarding training in the Diocese of Galway. Both post holders have been in post for some time and lead busy lives outside this role. One is a busy parish priest and the other a religious sister with commitments elsewhere.

The trainers were previously accredited under the *Keeping Safe* programme and have worked very positively with HSE colleagues to provide training. They have developed a diocesan manual for training which records a resume of all training provided within the diocese since 2005 until the current time. This training has included *Keeping Safe*; awareness raising of abuse, responding to allegations and creating safe environments, vetting and recruitment, disability training. This training has been delivered to a wide range of personnel in the diocese and amongst religious congregations.

In addition there is an annual conference for all diocesan staff and volunteers which is arranged by the two trainers. Bishop Drennan always attends as do a large number of diocesan clergy. This conference provides an opportunity for the diocese to communicate



its safeguarding message and update all on new developments. Guest speakers are invited to present on topical key issues.

The two trainers are clearly very experienced and while committed to their roles, it must be recognised that training is a small part of their other important responsibilities. They have indicated that they intend recommending new people attend the training the trainer course run by NBSCCCI in the forthcoming year.

One of the trainers sits on the safeguarding committee as does the Director of Safeguarding and he is participating in the rewriting of diocesan policy and procedures at provincial level.

There is a strong sense of the importance of training in the diocese. It is valued by the priests and lay volunteers and Bishop Drennan. The diocese is fortunate to have two experienced and skilled trainers who continue to show enthusiasm for this important aspect of safeguarding.

**Standard 5**

***Communicating the Church’s Safeguarding Message***

*This standard requires that the Church’s safeguarding policies and procedures be successfully communicated to Church personnel and parishioners (including children). This can be achieved through the prominent display of the Church policy, making children aware of their right to speak out and knowing who to speak to, having the Designated Person’s contact details clearly visible, ensuring Church personnel have access to contact details for child protection services, having good working relationships with statutory child protection agencies and developing a communication plan which reflects the Church’s commitment to transparency.*

**Criteria**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Met fully or Met partially or Not met</b>
<b>5.1</b>	The child protection policy is openly displayed and available to everyone.	Met fully
<b>5.2</b>	Children are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse and who to speak to if they have concerns.	Met fully
<b>5.3</b>	Everyone in Church organisations knows who the designated person is and how to contact them.	Met fully
<b>5.4</b>	Church personnel are provided with contact details of local child protection services, such as Health and Social Care Trusts / Health Service Executive, PSNI, An Garda Síochána, telephone helplines and the designated person.	Met fully
<b>5.5</b>	Church organisations establish links with statutory child protection agencies to develop good working relationships in order to keep children safe.	Met fully
<b>5.6</b>	Church organisations at diocesan and religious order level have an established communications policy which reflects a commitment to transparency and openness.	Partially Met

Communication is well established in the Diocese of Galway.

All Churches have safeguarding notices referring complainants to the diocesan designated person, An Garda Síochána and HSE. In addition, each parish displays the *Diocesan Code of Behaviour* to which all are expected to conform when relating to children and young people. There is a short version of the diocesan policy available in leaflet form as well as the full document.

The diocesan website [www.galwaydiocese.ie](http://www.galwaydiocese.ie) has good information on the safeguarding policies and procedures, forms and contact people. In addition the dioceses produce an annual child protection newsletter and have done so since 2009. Finally, as already stated, there is an annual diocesan safeguarding conference.

**Recommendation 6**

**To enhance communication further, the safeguarding committee should consider developing an annual communication plan and placing this on the diocesan website.**

## Standard 6

### *Access to Advice and Support*

*Those who have suffered child abuse should receive a compassionate and just response and should be offered appropriate pastoral care to rebuild their lives.*

*Those who have harmed others should be helped to face up to the reality of abuse, as well as being assisted in healing.*

### Criteria

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
6.1	Church personnel with special responsibilities for keeping children safe have access to specialist advice, support and information on child protection.	Fully Met
6.2	Contacts are established at a national and/ or local level with the relevant child protection/ welfare agencies and help lines that can provide information, support and assistance to children and Church personnel.	Fully Met
6.3	There is guidance on how to respond to and support a child who is suspected to have been abused whether that abuse is by someone within the Church or in the community, including family members or peers.	Fully Met
6.4	Information is provided to those who have experienced abuse on how to seek support.	Fully Met
6.5	Appropriate support is provided to those who have perpetrated abuse to help them to face up to the reality of abuse as well as to promote healing in a manner which does not compromise children's safety.	Partially Met

There was clear reference in the case records of complainants and their families being offered counselling. The reviewers were also advised by the designated person that a suitable person was approached to take on the role of support person but has turned down this offer. This leaves a significant gap in the safeguarding structure and needs to be remedied as soon as possible. Bishop Drennan, the designated person and the safeguarding co-ordinator have all had contact with victims and offered pastoral support. As with other information these meetings are not well recorded and therefore the lack of written evidence fails to do justice to the good work taking place in this area of responding to the needs of victims.

**Recommendation 7**

**Bishop Drennan needs to ensure that a support person is appointed as soon as possible; that the role is clarified, written down and shared in writing with future complainants. Bishop Drennan must also ensure that all contacts are recorded on the case management records.**

As part of the review, two priest advisers (known as support priests in Galway) were interviewed. These men presented in a very gentle and caring way towards both victims of abuse and perpetrators. The two priests each support two priests out of ministry. In discussion it became clear that these priests were not “appointed” as advisors but became support to friends who had been removed from public ministry. In one case the accused priest had viewed his support with some scepticism, articulating his concern that anything discussed would be reported back to the bishop. *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* sets out the role of priest adviser as someone available to the respondent and as someone representing the needs of the respondent to the Church Authority. The role is neither one of therapist or spiritual adviser nor one of monitoring on behalf of the bishop. Within Galway, the safeguarding co-ordinator takes on the monitoring role. Neither of the priest advisers have had any training for their role and while happy to support their friends, they appeared a little uncomfortable with the role if it involved any monitoring function. In order to eradicate this fear and to support them in their role, the safeguarding co-ordinator and designated person should meet with them and clarify their role as well as offer support and training.

**Recommendation 8**

**The safeguarding co-ordinator in consultation with Bishop Drennan and the designated person should draft role descriptions for priest advisers and identify appropriate training and support for the priests who hold this role.**

Bishop Drennan and his team regularly consult staff at the National Office of Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI), the local Garda superintendent and other experienced personnel when dealing with allegations of abuse. They form part of the Western Province safeguarding group and participate in regular meetings with colleagues to share best practice.

## Standard 7

### **Implementing and Monitoring Standards**

Standard 7 outlines the need to develop a plan of action, which monitors the effectiveness of the steps being taken to keep children safe. This is achieved through making a written plan, having the human and financial resources available, monitoring compliance and ensuring all allegations and suspicions are recorded and stored securely.

#### **Criteria**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Met fully or Met partially or Not met</b>
7.1	There is a written plan showing what steps will be taken to keep children safe, who is responsible for implementing these measures and when these will be completed.	Partially Met
7.2	The human or financial resources necessary for implementing the plan are made available.	Fully Met
7.3	Arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with child protection policies and procedures.	Fully Met
7.4	Processes are in place to ask parishioners (children and parents/ carers) about their views on policies and practices for keeping children safe.	Partially Met
7.5	All incidents, allegations/ suspicions of abuse are recorded and stored securely.	Fully Met

The safeguarding committee in Galway has been in existence for a number of years. It was reconstituted with new members in (2011). The committee is currently developing an annual plan and will be reviewing the parish audits. Upon completion of the parish audits the Safeguarding Director may visit the parish to check and remedy any deficits in practice. This is a good system and indicates the value of one person having oversight on behalf of the bishop for all safeguarding related issues.

At the outset of the report, there was reference to the religious orders present in the diocese. It is important to note that the safeguarding director and trainers include these orders in their safeguarding work. They are invited to training and there appears to be good liaison between the designated person and the provincials. While there is no requirement for the diocese to monitor the practice within the religious orders, it is clear that the diocese expects the provincial to notify it when allegations are made. It would be appropriate for the safeguarding director to formalise any safeguarding requirements so that as well as informing the diocese of allegations against members, the orders also inform the diocese that they have policies and procedures in place and that they annually conduct an audit of practice.

Finally, the safeguarding director takes his role in monitoring and supporting good practice very seriously. He regularly visits parishes and Church groups, gives talks and presentations on good safeguarding and the diocesan policy and procedures and then ensures full completion of the annual safeguarding parish audit. Alongside the safeguarding committee, he also compiles a report for Bishop Drennan on an annual basis which highlights activity in relation to all aspects of safeguarding and an evaluation of implementation of the diocesan policy at parish Level.

**Recommendation 9**

**The Safeguarding Director should ensure that the annual report for Bishop Drennan and the people of Galway Diocese which sets out all steps taken to safeguard children and evaluates the implementation of procedures at parish level is publicised on the diocesan safeguarding website and widely disseminated throughout the diocese.**

## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1.**

**Bishop Drennan should review all cases of living priests who are on administrative leave (“out of ministry”) to ensure that formal written precepts have been issued and shared with the accused priest, and a copy retained on file.**

### **Recommendation 2**

**Bishop Drennan needs to appoint a suitable person to initiate the preliminary investigation under Canon 1717, in relation to all priests out of ministry (where this has not already happened) and inform the CDF if required so that any subsequent penal process may take place.**

### **Recommendation 3**

**The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should put in place written risk management plans which should be shared with the accused priest; and a record made of all reviews of risk and monitoring visits.**

### **Recommendation 4**

**Bishop Drennan in consultation with his designated people must decide how to proceed in relation to seeking advice on case management issues. Should they decide to retain both their own Diocesan Advisory panel and the National Case Management Reference Group (NCMRG), then they must draft protocols so that there is clarity around panel roles and responsibilities.**

### **Recommendation 5**

**The designated person must ensure that all case management records follow the NBSCCCI template with narrative accounts of all actions taken and meetings held.**

### **Recommendation 6**

**To enhance communication further, the safeguarding committee should consider developing an annual communication plan and placing this on the diocesan website.**

### **Recommendation 7**

**Bishop Drennan needs to ensure that a support person is appointed as soon as possible; that the role is clarified, written down and shared in writing with future complainants. Bishop Drennan must also ensure that all contacts are recorded on the case management records.**



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## **Review of Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland**

### **Terms of Reference**

(which should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes)

1. To ascertain the full extent of all complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the diocese / religious congregation by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 to date of Review against Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and who are ministering/or who once ministered under the aegis of the diocese / religious congregation and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the diocese / religious congregation.
  
2. If deemed relevant, select a random sample of complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the diocese / religious congregation by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 to date of Review against Catholic clergy and/or religious now deceased and who ministered under the aegis of the diocese / religious congregation and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the diocese / religious congregation.
  
3. To ascertain all of the cases during the relevant period in which the diocese / religious congregation:
  - knew of child sexual abuse involving Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and including those clergy and/or religious visiting, studying and/or retired;
  - had strong and clear suspicion of child sexual abuse; or
  - had reasonable concern;and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the diocese / religious congregation.
  
4. To consider and report on the following matters:
  - child safeguarding policies and guidance materials currently in use in the diocese / religious congregation and an evaluation of their application;
  - communication by the diocese / religious congregation with the Civil Authorities;
  - current risks and their management.

## **Accompanying Notes**

### ***Note 1***

#### **Definition of Child Sexual Abuse:**

The definition of child sexual abuse is in accordance with the definition adopted by the Ferns Report (and the Commission of Investigation Report into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin). The following is the relevant extract from the Ferns Report:

“While definitions of child sexual abuse vary according to context, probably the most useful definition and broadest for the purposes of this report was that which was adopted by the Law Reform Commission in 1990<sup>1</sup> and later developed in Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Department of Health and Children, 1999) which state that ‘child sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or that of others’. Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child;
- intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
- masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
- sexual intercourse with the child whether oral, vaginal or anal;
- sexual exploitation of a child which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for, or to engage in prostitution or other sexual acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape, or other media) or the manipulation for those purposes of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children which is often a feature of the ‘grooming’ process by perpetrators of abuse”.

### ***Note 2***

#### **Definition of Allegation:**

The term allegation is defined as an accusation or complaint where there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, or is being sexually abused, or is at risk of sexual abuse, including retrospective disclosure by adults. It includes allegations that did not necessarily result in a criminal or canonical investigation, or a civil action, and allegations that are unsubstantiated but which are plausible. (NB: Erroneous information does not necessarily make an allegation implausible, for example, a priest arrived in a parish in the Diocese a year after the alleged abuse, but other information supplied appears credible and the alleged victim may have mistaken the date).

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<sup>1</sup> This definition was originally proposed by the Western Australia Task Force on Child Sexual Abuse, 1987 and is adopted by the Law Reform Commission (1990) *Report on Child Sexual Abuse*, p. 8.

**Note 3**

**False Allegations:**

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland wishes to examine any cases of false allegation so as to review the management of the complaint by the diocese / religious congregation.

**Note 4**

**Random sample:**

The random sample (if applicable) must be taken from complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse made against all deceased Catholic clergy/religious covering the entire of the relevant period being 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 to 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010 and must be selected randomly in the presence of an independent observer.

**Note 5**

**Civil Authorities:**

Civil Authorities are defined in the Republic of Ireland as the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána and in Northern Ireland as the Health and Social Care Trust and the Police Service of Northern Ireland.