



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

**Review of Child Safeguarding Practice
in the religious congregation of**

The Sisters of the Cross and Passion

undertaken by

**The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the
Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI)**

Date: February 2015

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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 Irish Episcopal Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland and the Irish Missionary Union, to undertake a comprehensive review of safeguarding practice within and across all the Church authorities on the island of Ireland.

The NBSCCCI is aware that some religious congregations have ministries that involve direct contact with children while others do not. In religious congregations that have direct involvement with children, reviews of child safeguarding have been undertaken by measuring their practice compliance against all seven Church standards. Where a religious congregation no longer has, or never had ministry involving children and has not received any allegation of sexual abuse, the NBSCCCI reviews are conducted using a shorter procedure. The size, age and activity profiles of religious congregations can vary significantly and the NBSCCCI accepts that it is rational that the form of review be tailored to the profile of each Church authority, where the ministry with children is limited or non-existent. The procedure for assessment of safeguarding practice with such congregations is set out in the contents page of this report. The NBSCCCI welcomes that in order to have full openness, transparency and accountability, religious congregations that do not have ministry with children have made requests to have their safeguarding practice examined and commented upon.

The purpose of this review remains the same and it 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 of these Church Authorities is reviewed through an examination of policy and procedures, and through interviews with key personnel involved both within and external to the Religious Congregation.

This report contains the findings of the *Review of Child Safeguarding Practice in the religious congregation of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion*, undertaken by the NBSCCCI, in line with the request made to it by the Sponsoring Bodies.

The findings of the review have been shared with a reference group before being submitted to the Sisters of the Cross and Passion along with any recommendations arising from the findings.

The reviewer examined one file containing information about possible physical abuse, which while not falling within the terms of reference, was examined at the request of the Province Leader. There were no allegations in respect of other forms of abuse within the time period, in respect of deceased and living members of the congregation. The review therefore is primarily based on policies and procedures made available plus interviews with key personnel involved in the safeguarding process within the congregation, particularly in the services run by the congregation.

Introduction

The Sisters of The Cross and Passion were founded by Elizabeth Prout (later known as Mother Mary Joseph) in Manchester in 1852.

Having witnessed the disadvantage and poverty of the people she identified education as a means by which they could escape poverty, gain employment and improve their quality of life.

From these beginnings the Congregation focus was on the provision of education. In addition in Northern Ireland and Yorkshire the sisters developed retreat centres, initially for retreats for women.

The sisters came to Kilcullen in Co. Kildare in 1878 where a primary school was founded and later a secondary school. Maryfield College was founded in Dublin in 1945. Foundations were also made in Belfast, Larne, Hollywood and Ballycastle in Northern Ireland. Following Vatican II the sisters gradually withdrew from direct involvement with schools- remaining involved at management level and on boards of management for a number of years. One sister still works part time as School Chaplain.

Currently the main focus of ministry for The Cross and Passion Sisters is in parish and individual ministries. These ministries include part time work with adults in liturgical and sacramental preparation, in voluntary organisations,(eg providing meals with another male religious order,) counselling and retreats with adults. Sisters also visit the sick and those bereaved, in their homes, while another sister is a part time chaplain in a hospital.

Where they work in parishes the sisters follow the policy and procedures of the diocese in which they minister.

Role Profile (past and present role with children):

As stated above the Cross and Passion Sisters worked as staff members and on boards of management of schools which they founded.

In the Republic of Ireland these schools included:

Second Level Schools

- Cross and Passion College, Kilcullen, Co Kildare: day and boarding school for girls. The boarding school closed in 1987, and the school became co-educational.
- Maryfield College, Glandore Rd. Dublin 9: day school for girls.

Primary Schools

- Private Junior School, Maryfield College
- Marino Girls National School, Griffith Ave, Dublin 3
- St Brigid's National School, Kilcullen Co Kildare
- St Thomas National School, Jobstown, Tallaght Dublin 24
- Our Lady's Nursery School, Ballymun Dublin 9

All of these schools are in the Archdiocese of Dublin

Ministry also included one public health nurse working in Coolock and Tallaght. In addition other sisters worked in the following locations:

- Folk Groups, Kilcullen, Jobstown, (Tallaght)
- Foróige Youth Club, Kilcullen, Jobstown
- Youth Groups Ballymun/Tallaght, Dublin
- Parish Work (Prayer Groups, Liturgy group) Jobstown, Tallaght
- Parish Visitation in Kilcullen

Current Role with Children in the Republic of Ireland

The sisters transferred both secondary schools to the Lé Chéile Trust in 2008. The properties are currently licenced to the Trust. The sisters no longer have teaching or management roles in these schools.

Two sisters are members of the Boards of the Le Chéile and Síol Trust (Síol is the Property and Finance section). One sister is a director of the Síol Board.

In September 2014, each Congregation with schools in the Lé Chéile Trust was requested to report any allegations which may have been made to the schools from its inception, in 2008. There were none in either school.

Only one sister is still involved in the secondary school in Kilcullen. She is a part-time Chaplain. There are no sisters currently involved in primary or nursery schools.

One sister works on a voluntary basis with Crosscare in Dublin.

One sister works in Tearmann, Retreat Centre, Glendalough, Co Wicklow. This is a residential centre for adults. The centre works with day pilgrimages with some of the local schools, mainly with sixth class pupils from primary schools and transition year students from secondary schools.

One sister works in Mount St Anne's Retreat Centre, Killenard, Portarlinton, Co Laois, which also accommodates adolescents.

One sister is on the Board of the Youth Training and Development Centre, run by SOLAS, in Newbridge.

Where sisters work with other organisations they follow the policy of that organisation in relation to child safeguarding.

Past Role with Children Northern Ireland -Schools

Second level

- Cross and Passion College, Ballycastle, Co Antrim
- Star of the Sea Secondary School Ballycastle, Co Antrim
- St Comgall's School, Larne, Co Antrim
- St Monica's School, Ravenhill Rd, Belfast
- Cross and Passion Secondary School, Glen Rd Belfast

Primary Schools

- Ballycastle
- Larne,
- St Matthews, Bryson St, Newtonards Road Belfast
- St Anthony's, Willowfield, Ravenhill Rd, Belfast
- Hollywood, Co Down

Sisters were involved in teaching in all of the above schools

Retreat Work

- Drumalis Retreat Centre: School Retreats

All of these schools and Retreat House are in the Diocese of Down and Connor

Other

Parish visitation in parishes, where sisters were involved in schools.

Current Role with Children, N Ireland

There are currently no sisters involved in any schools, primary or second level in Northern Ireland.

Cross and Passion College, Ballycastle was transferred from the trusteeship of the sisters to the trusteeship of the Diocese of Down and Connor. The sisters no longer have any role in this school or in any of the following schools:

- Star of the Sea, Ballycastle – which has been amalgamated with Cross and Passion Ballycastle.
- St. Comgalls, Larne amalgamated with St Macnissi's Garron Tower and St Aloysius Cushendall. The schools were renamed St Killian's, Carnlough
- Cross and Passion on Glen Road, Belfast has closed.
- St. Monica's School, Belfast has since been amalgamated with St. Augustine's Boy's School and renamed St. Josephs College and opened in 1992.

There are some sisters involved in parish work, on a part-time voluntary basis. Involvement mostly involves Prayer and Liturgy groups, interfaith prayer groups, preparation for sacraments with children who do not attend Catholic schools (always with parents or other adults present) and visitation of the sick, elderly and the bereaved. One sister works part-time as a hospital Chaplain in the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast.

Drumalis Retreat Centre still caters for a small number of school retreats. There are two sisters working full time there. The congregation is responsible for the running of the centre which operates under the Cross and Passion child protection policy.

Profile of Members:

There are currently 55 sisters in the congregation in Ireland (age range 60-98). Sisters in the Republic of Ireland live in Dublin; Sisters live in Northern Ireland, in Ballycastle, Belfast and Larne. The Province Office is in Manchester, as the Province includes England and Ireland. The current Province Leader lives in Dublin.

Policy and Procedures Document:

Clearly the involvement of the sisters in Cross and Passion ministries has significantly reduced. Some schools have amalgamated with others, another has closed and the management of others transferred to Diocese of Down and Connor in the North and The Le Chéile Trust in the Republic of Ireland.

Most of the ministries involving Cross and Passion sisters is supportive of other Church ministry in parishes. The requirement for a stand-alone Cross and Passion child safeguarding policy and procedure document is diminishing. It is appropriate that the Cross and Passion Sisters are guided by and follow the procedures and policies of the diocese in which they work; that said, they do have in place designated liaison persons, who can deal with allegations if they emerge. Sisters who have ministry with children have received appropriate training for their roles both in the north and the south of Ireland – through the Safeguarding Board, diocesan training and C.O.R.I

Structures:

There are DLP's present in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland – these persons keep themselves familiar with any developments with child protection and report to the Province Leader, who in turn advises them on information re Safeguarding.

Management of Allegations and liaison with the statutory authorities:

There have been not been any allegations relating to any sister living and working in the Republic of Ireland.

There was one allegation against a sister living in Northern Ireland; this was an allegation of physical abuse against a deceased sister; the notification came to the congregation through the PSNI. Upon investigation this allegation was proven to be malicious and false. The congregation was commended by the PSNI for its level of cooperation with the investigation. Notification was also made to social services in a timely manner.

Conclusion:

This Congregation of The Sisters of the Cross and Passion played a significant role in Education in Ireland at one time. That is no longer the case. The aging profile and diminishing numbers mean that most of the services provided are through other Church ministries.

The policy and procedures are adequate for the limited ministry with children. Sisters follow the policies of the diocese when working in parish ministry and there are personnel in place to deal with any allegation should they arise in the future. The reviewer is satisfied that the congregation is fully aware of and committed to its obligation in respect of all aspects of child safeguarding, including reporting and co-operating with civil authority agencies.

Review of Child Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland

Terms of Reference

Small Religious Congregations

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

Introduction

In order for the NBSCCCI to be able to state that all Church Authorities on the island of Ireland have been evaluated in respect of their child safeguarding policies and practices, both historical and current, then some form of appropriate assessment has to be conducted of every one of these. It is rational however that the form of assessment is tailored to the profile of each Church Authority, and that needless expenditure of resources and unnecessary interference in the life of religious orders and communities that have no children-specific ministry would be avoided.

This review seeks to examine the current arrangements for safeguarding children across small religious congregations /orders, and missionary societies in Ireland who have limited or no direct contact with children as part of the congregation's ministry.

It would also scrutinize practice within all known cases to ensure that they have been responded to appropriately.

The review's methodology is an adaptation of the methodology developed for all dioceses and large religious congregations and missionary societies, where the ministry involves regular contact with children.

The proposed review would consider the following:-

- (a) Former role with children
- (b) Allegations of child abuse against members and how these have been responded to
- (c) Existing relationships with statutory authorities such as the HSE, Gardai in the Republic and the HSCT or PSNI in Northern Ireland.
- (d) Policies in place and being applied for safeguarding children
- (e) Roles and responsibilities and where they exist the operation of Advisory Panels, and Safeguarding Committees

The objective of the review would be to confirm if there have been any allegations and how known allegations have been responded to; in addition the review seeks to confirm what the current arrangements for safeguarding children are. In particular, emphasis will be placed on establishing how policies and practice match up to the standards set down in *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* published by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland and launched in February 2009. Priority, at all times, will be given to how policy and practice can be improved and strengthened. If policies and/or practices are identified that are concerning, inadequate, or dangerous, they will be addressed through the provision of guidance and support, and through the reporting of these situations to the appropriate statutory authorities, if this has not already happened. Similarly, those that are good examples will be highlighted with a view to them being adopted comprehensively across all parts of the Church. All cases that relate to alleged or known offenders that are alive will be read and included in the review. In cases where the alleged or known offender is deceased, these will be sampled in an attempt to gather learning from them that will be used to inform the framing of recommendations.

Guidance Documents

The review will be guided by the following:-

- (a) *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*
- (b) *Children First* Guidance in ROI; and Regional Child Protection Guidelines in Northern Ireland;
- (c) Legislation that exists in each jurisdiction which contributes to safeguarding children and young people.

The review will be undertaken by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) through their National Office and led by the Chief Executive Officer.

The review process will be overseen by a Reference Group to whom the CEO will report on a regular basis. The membership of this Reference Group has been drawn from each of the statutory child protection agencies in both jurisdictions, along with eminent individuals in the field from academia. The current Reference Group consists of: Dr Helen Buckley (TCD); Mr Paul Harrison (Tusla), and John Toner (SBNI).

It is important to confirm that the value of the review is dependent upon full and complete access to all relevant documentation and information relating to the abuse of children known to the individual Church authorities. The review will proceed on the basis that willingness exists on the part of each of the subjects of the review to provide full access to the fieldwork team, subject, where relevant, to the terms of the Data Processing Deed agreed between the Sponsoring Bodies and entered into between the parties hereto.

Step Guide to the Review Process

Step 1.

A letter of invitation to review is sent by the Provincial/Regional Superior or other person responsible for the congregation/ order or missionary society (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Ordinary’).

Step 2.

The CEO will forward a survey to the provincial which will identify:

- Current number of members
- Past role with children
- Current role with children
- Total number of allegations received up to 2014
- Number of living members against whom there are allegations

Step 3.

For any Order where there have been allegations a full review will proceed, as per step 4 - 23. For those Orders where there have been no known allegations a desk top examination of policies and procedures will take place followed by a site visit to interview all relevant personnel within the safeguarding structure. For these orders step 5 and 13-23 will apply.

Step 4.

The CEO and Ordinary will confirm the dates for the fieldwork for the review, and names of the fieldwork team.

Step 5.

The Church Authority will be asked to make available all of the case files and related documentation in respect of any safeguarding concerns that have been identified within the diocese. The Church Authority will make available a room with wireless internet access for the reviewers to conduct their review of files, so that any records made by the reviewers can be directly typed and stored onto a secure server which is only accessed by the reviewers. In the absence of internet access the reviewers will type their notes onto a secure encrypted USB stick for later uploading onto the secure server.

Step 6.

The Church Authority will be requested to sign the revised Data Processing Deed prior to the arrival of the team.

Step 7.

The Church Authority will arrange a schedule of interviews with all who hold safeguarding roles within its functional area. The designated person and the Church Authority will be available to the reviewers throughout the period of fieldwork.

Step 8.

The fieldwork team when they arrive on site will firstly confirm that they have a suitable place to work in and that all the required documentation has been provided to them for their review. In the event that the fieldwork team forms the opinion that the Church Authority has not provided access to all such documents, the NBSCCCI shall give notice in writing to the Church Authority of the opinion of the fieldwork team and such notice shall specify the reasons for same. Thereupon, the Church Authority shall respond in detail to the notice. Each party shall use its best endeavours to resolve any differences of opinion which shall arise and, in the event that resolution is not arrived at, the parties will attempt to resolve the dispute by recourse to the services of a mediator agreed between them or nominated for the purpose at the request of any of them without prejudice to the NBSCCCI's entitlement to terminate the review. In the event that resolution has not been arrived at following mediation, either party shall be at liberty to terminate forthwith the review.

Step 9.

On arrival, the fieldwork team should be supplied with a single case file index that lists all the cases that have been created within the diocese. These may be divided into two groups. The first group will contain all allegations that relate to living alleged or known perpetrators. The second will contain any that are deceased.

Step 10.

Depending on the volume involved a decision should be made as to whether all or a random sample of the "deceased group" should be reviewed. Care should be taken to include all prominent cases in the sample.

Step 11.

Each case file will be reviewed by each fieldworker independently in the first instance. They will create a written summary with chronological information of the case. In certain cases a second reader may be required, this will be discussed and agreed between the fieldworkers.

Step 12.

Following the reading of the case and the creation of a summary, the fieldworkers will analyse and assess the actions taken in the case. They will assess compliance with agreed Church policy that was extant at that time. They will also indicate whether any current risk exists in respect of the information contained within the file and advise the church Authority of necessary safeguarding action to reduce the risk.

Step 13.

When all the case files have been read, the fieldwork team will then examine and review any procedures or protocols that exist within the diocese to confirm that they are in compliance with the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* document issued by the NBSCCCI in February of 2009.

Step 14.

To complete the review, the fieldwork team will then seek to speak to those directly involved in the safeguarding structure in the diocese. This should include the Advisory Panel, a sample of parish safeguarding representatives, the designated person, the safeguarding committee, victim support and advisors and the Bishop/Provincial. The purpose of these interviews is to form a view of the competence and effectiveness of the safeguarding structure that exists within the Church Authority.

Step 15.

The fieldwork team will also seek to speak to representatives of the key statutory agencies to provide them with an opportunity to express their views on the quality of the working relationships that exist between them and the Church Authority.

Step 16.

A verbal feedback session on initial key findings will be given to the Church Authority.

Step 17.

Upon completion of the field work, the team may request to take materials – other than casework records to review off-site; this alongside all materials gathered by the reviewers, including written notes on cases and meetings, will be analysed and will form the basis of the draft assessment review report.

Step 18.

The draft will be forwarded to the Church Authority for factual accuracy checking.

Step 19.

Alongside all other reports under review, the report will be presented in draft to the Reference Group for their critique and comment. If further work is required at the direction of the Reference group the CEO will ensure this work is completed and advise the Church Authority accordingly.

Step 20.

The report will be legally proofed by NBSCCCI lawyer.

Step 21.

The report will be forwarded to the NBSCCCI for approval

Step 22

A final draft report will then be submitted to the Church Authority. The expectation would be that the report will be published by the Church Authority at an agreed time in the future.

Step 23.

All case material written, including summaries, as part of the review, which are for the reviewers use only, will be stored on a secure server.

Guide for Reviewers

In terms of small (female religious orders) reference should be made to the following:

1. Has the Order provided alternative care to children in an orphanage, industrial school or children's residential home, but no longer is engaged in running such services;
2. Has the order provided education to children, in both or either boarding schools and day schools, but no longer does so ;
3. Has the order provided medical and/or nursing services to children, but no longer does so;
4. Has the order provided any other services to children, in community services centres, youth clubs etc., and no longer does so;
5. Does the order currently provide any sort of service to children and families that brings them into regular contact with children;
6. Has the order never provided any service to children (e.g. contemplative orders).

In relation to category 1 above;

1. The reviewers will establish whether any service they provided is included in the list of children's residential services produced by the Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB);
2. If this is the case, reference should be made to this.
3. If complaints have been referred to the Redress Board or Ryan Commission, this review cannot access these records and that will be stated in the report.
4. If the order has received complaints which have not been processed through Redress or Ryan these cases will be thoroughly examined as detailed above.

Review of Policy and Procedures

1. It is recognised that not all Orders will have any ministry with children and therefore their policies and procedures should reflect the work that they do with children.
2. If the Order only works through other organisations, example in Diocesan work or in schools, they are required to follow the policies of those organisations.
3. If there are gaps in the policy document an assessment should be made as to whether the ministry engaged in requires full compliance with all criteria attached to the seven standards
4. Where it is clear that the criteria do not apply a reference should be made at the beginning of the review report that the Order's ministry is not directly with children and therefore adherence to particular criteria do not apply.
5. If the Order is a contemplative Order, there is no expectation that they will have detailed policies and procedures, but reference should be made to their ministry and that they have no contact with children.
6. In all cases, contact will be made with the civil authorities to identify if they have any child safeguarding concerns in relation to the order.