



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Review of Child Safeguarding Practice

in the Sisters of Nazareth, Irish Region

undertaken by

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the

Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI)

Date: August 2016

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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 child 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 child 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 within the Irish Region of the Sisters of Nazareth*, 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 Regional Superior, along with any recommendations arising from the findings. The review is based on a two-day fieldwork visit to Nazareth House on the Malahide Road in Dublin, which is the Regional Headquarters for the Irish Region. The Nazareth Sisters had a significant residential service for children in Ireland, north and south, but at the time of this Review they were no longer involved in any direct work with children and young people. During the fieldwork the reviewers read all case material provided by the Congregation, as well as files on child safeguarding policy, procedures and activity within the Congregation. The reviewers also interviewed safeguarding personnel.

The Sisters of Nazareth are among a small number of religious orders whose historical child care practices have been examined by the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry, Northern Ireland (HIA NI), in modules dedicated to their Derry and Belfast children's residential centres and to the operation of a Child Migrant Programme in which they participated. The period of time covered by the HIA NI is from 1922 to 1995, while the period covered by this NBSCCCI Review is from January 1st 1975 until November 2015. The NBSCCCI has agreed

with the Chair of HIA NI that it will restrict the period of its review report to January 1st 1996 to November 2015 in order to avoid overlapping with or in any way duplicating the work of the HIA. This is consistent with the NBSCCCI approach to undertaking its reviews in the Dioceses of Ferns, Dublin and Cloyne.

Introduction

On their website at www.sistersofnazareth.com/brief-history-of-the-sisters-of-nazareth there is an account of the early days of the Congregation. Victoire Larmenier, the foundress of the Sisters of Nazareth, was born on 21st July 1827 Rennes in northern France. She received her secondary school education as a boarder in the Ursuline convent at Vitré. In 1845 Victoire left home and set up a small haberdashery business in Rennes in the poorest part of that town. According to the information on the Congregation's website, it was here that her religious vocation developed under the influence of Father Gandon, one of the curates in the parish of Toussaints.

The Little Sisters of the Poor had recently established a house for the care of the elderly poor in Rennes, and Victoire became acquainted with them and their work. Saint Jeanne Jugan, their foundress, was in Rennes during this time and worshipped at Toussaints. Victoire was much influenced by the commitment to the poor of the Toussaints clergy and the Rennes Little Sisters of the Poor. With Fr. Gandon's encouragement, Victoire gave up her successful little business, and entered the Paris novitiate of the Little Sisters of the Poor in February 1851.

Her name in religion was Sister Basile Marie Larmenier, and she and four other Sisters went from Rennes to London to establish a foundation, in response to a request from the London branch of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and supported by the then Archbishop of Westminster. The Sisters in London began to care for elderly poor people, and after a short while, Sr. Basile Marie became their Superior. The Sisters opened a newly built motherhouse in Hammersmith in London, in October 1857, which is still the location of the Congregation's Superior General and Council, or Leadership Team.

The formation of the Sisters of Nazareth as an independent entity is described on their website in the following way:

In 1861, after protracted and difficult negotiations, the Holy See allowed the Hammersmith community to separate from the Little Sisters of the Poor as an independent pious society of laywomen. After a further three years the London sisters were recognised by the Roman authorities as a diocesan religious community under the title Sisters of Nazareth. Victoire Larmenier, now with the religious name Sister St. Basil, was among the first group to make their profession in April 1864. Before she died in June 1878, Victoire Larmenier had founded eight other Nazareth Houses in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, one of which remained with the Little Sisters of the Poor in 1861

The Sisters of Nazareth in Ireland

In 1876, the Sisters of Nazareth established a Nazareth House convent in Belfast. This facility catered for both elderly poor people and for orphaned and destitute children. It ceased operation in 1984, and had provided residential care for 2,909 children by that time.

In 1900, due to pressure of numbers, the Sisters opened a separate children's home nearby, to which they gave the name of Nazareth Lodge. This second facility catered for boys only, and in 1902 it became an Industrial School for Boys. By 1912 it catered for 70 boys in the age range six to ten years. The De La Salle Order opened a home for boys at Rubane in Kircubbin, in 1950. The De La Salle Brothers and the Sisters of Nazareth made an arrangement by which boys on reaching the age of 11 years were transferred from Nazareth Lodge to Rubane, Kircubbin. The numbers transferred were between 10 and 20 boys per year, and this procedure continued until 1972. Nazareth Lodge ceased to admit boys in 1998, by which time it had provided accommodation to a total of **3,708** children.

In 1891, the Bishop of Derry bought a property for the Sisters of Nazareth with money that had been bequeathed for that purpose. The Sisters moved into the property in Bishop Street in February 1892 and they named it Nazareth House. Like their first home in Belfast, this

facility also had a mix of elderly poor people and orphaned and destitute Catholic children. Girls and boys were admitted after their second birthday, and the girls could remain there until they reached their 14th birthdays; but boys had to move to another centre when they turned seven. This residential service for children ceased operation in 1998. At the height of its operation, Nazareth House in Derry accommodated 131 children. Over the period of its operation, Nazareth House in Derry looked after a total of **2,347** children.

The Nazareth House Primary School Derry now operates on the Bishop Street site. This school is vested in the Department of Education NI, while the Sisters of Nazareth own the property and the site. It operates under an independent Board of Governors on which the Sisters are not represented. This establishment is confusingly listed on the main website of the Nazareth Sisters as ‘Our School’. The school’s own website is www.nazarethps.net and the comprehensive list of school policies contained on that website includes a detailed 17-page Child Protection Policy. In addition to this school, the Sisters own the land and buildings that accommodate the St. Michael’s Primary School and Bethlehem Nursery School in Belfast, which are also vested in the Department of Education, Northern Ireland. No Sister has been employed in the Derry school since 2006, or in either Belfast schools since 2002.

Another Nazareth House was opened by the Sisters of Nazareth in June, 1910, in Sligo. This facility also provided accommodation for elderly poor people and for orphaned and destitute Catholic girls. It closed in 1993. The children’s element of this service was included under the provisions of the Residential Institutions Redress Act, 2002, and so the files that were transmitted between the Congregation and the Redress Board were not reviewed, in accordance with the Act of 2002.

In 1922, the Sisters opened separate boys’ home at Termonbacca, Co. Londonderry; and they operated this until its closure in 1982. At one stage in the 1957, Termonbacca accommodated 80 boys. Over the sixty years that it was open, Termonbacca catered for a total of **1,834** boys.

In 1939, the Sisters opened a residential nursery - for babies up to age two years - at Fahan in County Donegal. This development was influenced by the desire to have a safe location outside of the UK due to the outbreak of World War 2. The Sisters of Nazareth facilitated an Adoption Society which placed children from their service at Nazareth House, Fahan, Co. Donegal.¹ It has not been possible to get much information on the links between the Congregation and the Adoption Society, other than that it appears to have been active from 1921 until 1989.

In 1953 the Sisters opened Nazareth House, Portadown, which operated until 1984. During that 31-year period, **1,043** infant children were looked after there.

Sisters of Nazareth today

The Congregation operates worldwide and has five regions, as follows:

- The American Region;
- The Australasian Region;
- The Southern African Region;
- The United Kingdom Region; and
- The Irish Region.

¹ The Family Care Society (NI) was formed in 1998 from The Catholic Family Care Society (NI) established in 1989 by the Northern Catholic Bishops to provide Adoption and Child Care Services formerly carried out by the **Sisters of Nazareth Adoption Society**, Derry and the Down and Connor Family Welfare Society, Belfast, both of which operated in Northern Ireland since 1921.

It is governed by the Superior General and her General Council based in the Motherhouse in Hammersmith in London. The General Chapter of the Order is convened every six years and elects the Superior General and the Council. Sister Mary Anne Monaghan was elected 11th Superior General in May 2006, and was re-elected in 2012 for a second term of six years.

According to the website www.sistersofnazareth.com/brief-history-of-the-sisters-of-nazareth

By 2012 there were 255 Sisters, in 36 communities, and 37 Nazareth Houses.

Worldwide, 2,413 elderly residents were cared for, including 179 priests, religious sisters and brothers. There were 1,614 children in schools and day nurseries, and 76 children in residential care in South Africa. A further 900 or so children are touched by the schools at Hammersmith and Geraldton* in which Sisters of Nazareth hold influential positions. Sustaining this degree of pastoral and social care in the fundamental spirit of the Nazareth charism and tradition has depended above all on the faithfulness of the Sisters with the help of their lay supporters.

[*Geraldton is in Australia]

The Sisters of Nazareth currently own and operate a range of residential services for elderly people in Ireland who require supported and/or nursing care. These are the Nazareth Care Village Belfast, Nazareth House, Dublin, Nazareth House, Fahan, Co. Donegal, Nazareth House, Mallow, Co. Cork and Nazareth House, Sligo.

Role Profile (past and present role with children)

The Sisters of Nazareth currently have no role in providing care and welfare services to children on the island of Ireland. The only organizations providing for children with which they are in any way associated are the schools in Derry and Belfast, which have been mentioned above.

The Sisters had ceased to provide all residential care for children by 2000.

Profile of Members

At the time of the Review fieldwork, there were 60 members of the Irish Region of the Sisters of Nazareth. The age profile of the Sisters was:

50-59 years	1
60-69 years	9
70-79 years	27
80-89 years	17
90 years +	6
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Total =	60

Of these sixty women, 25 were fully retired or in nursing care. Of the remaining 35 Sisters, 22 were in full-time ministry and 13 were in part-time ministry. No Sister had a ministry that involves children or young people. Sisters who were involved in Parish Ministry abided by the requirements of the Child Safeguarding Policy of the diocese in which they were based.

Policy and Procedures Document

A 2011 document entitled *Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures* was signed by the Regional Superior and the four members of the Safeguarding Committee – all four of whom

were members of the Congregation. The reviewers saw no evidence that this document was widely circulated within the Congregation, and it is not available on the Sisters of Nazareth website. A search of the Congregation's website for anything on child safeguarding only yielded one item, which is the Nazareth Nursery in Lancaster in England.

However, the reviewers were provided with a copy of the new *Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures*, 2015-2016 of the Sisters of Nazareth Irish Region. This is an excellent document and its production is commended. It was signed by the Regional Superior and the DLP in September 2015. It is fully consistent with the September 2008 *Safeguarding Children - Standards and guidance* document for the Catholic Church in Ireland. It is relevant to the current work of the Sisters with elderly people, where children and young people may be visitors to their service sites. It is clearly written and has been produced to apply to safeguarding responsibilities in both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland.

One very useful development that has accompanied the production of the policy and procedures is the introduction of credit card-sized Safeguarding Information Cards, which carry the following information for parents who visit elderly relatives, or Sisters in convents, with their children:

Children who visit Nazareth Houses or convents throughout the Irish Region will be the responsibility of parents / guardians. If anyone has a safeguarding concern please contact Sr. X, Designated Liaison Person, or Deputy Liaison Person on: 00353-894482180 <u>or make direct contact with</u> Social Services ... contact details Police Service ... contact details
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Structures

The Sisters of Nazareth have a member based in Dublin who is the Designated Liaison Person (DLP). She is assisted on a part-time basis by male social worker who acts in the role of Deputy DLP. The Sisters convened the first meeting of their Safeguarding Committee on September 1st 2015. The membership of the Safeguarding Committee is comprised of a lay woman as Chair, assisted by a lay woman teacher, a lay woman Director of Nursing, a Sister from one of the services, the Sister DLP and a lay man social worker, who is also the Deputy DLP.

There is evidence on file that over 90% of the staff employed by the Congregation have received Child Safeguarding Training within the Irish Region since 2015. The DLP and Deputy DLP, as well as the Regional Superior have all taken part in NBSCCCI Training events, and the Congregation's Safeguarding Committee has been provided with training for its new responsibilities.

The DLP has ensured that appropriate and up-to-date Child Safeguarding Policy Statements with contact details are displayed in public areas in all Nazareth Sisters' houses and service sites.

The Congregation is planning to produce a safeguarding newsletter named *Cosaint*, the Irish for ‘Protection’, which will deal with safeguarding issues related to children and vulnerable adults.

The Sisters of Nazareth, although very late to take up their child safeguarding responsibilities, have begun to develop plans for the roll out of adequate safeguarding structures and processes, to include:

- Evaluation of ongoing training
- Introduction of an annual safeguarding audit
- Yearly activity calendar for the Safeguarding Office
- Collaboration with managers, superiors and communities in the implementation of safeguarding procedures
- Using the regional website for safeguarding news Introduction of a twice-yearly newsletter

Evidence of planning in relation to child safeguarding is very welcome.

Management of Allegations and liaison with the statutory authorities

The Sisters who were interviewed in the course of the Review fieldwork informed the reviewers that allegations against members of the Congregation have been managed through its solicitor, who is based in Northern Ireland. This is probably due to the fact that all allegations and concerns about the abuse of children in the care of the Sisters have involved Northern Irish care facilities only. However, the reviewers are of the opinion that there are a number of practical difficulties associated with the Congregation’s legal arrangements as they are described by the Irish Regional Leader and the DLP to the reviewers as currently operating.

The Congregational leader advised that historically and currently the leadership has given complete control of the management of child abuse allegations to their solicitor, and this arrangement is still supported by the Superior General who resides in Hammersmith in London. The Regional Superior in Ireland advised that all correspondence or contacts from complainants are automatically relayed directly to the Congregation’s solicitor, and the reviewers were advised that no Sister in the Irish HQ has any master list of these. The Leadership further advised that:

- (a) The solicitor appears to decide whether the Irish Regional Leader and DLP can see correspondence about cases, or access case files.

There is no way therefore that the NBSCCCI reviewers can state with confidence that they have been shown all relevant material related to Child Safeguarding within this congregation, as neither the Irish Regional Leader nor the DLP know how many allegations against named Sisters and others there are.

- (b) The solicitor knows the dates on which allegations were first received, but he has not provided this information to the Irish Regional Leader or DLP. As a result, they have had to use the dates related to HIA NI statements being completed or received.

The NBSCCCI reviewers have no way of establishing the number of years that have elapsed since individual complainants came forward.

The Congregation has no Victim Support / Outreach in place, other than *Towards Healing* (and its predecessor, *Faoiseamh*), for which service they have already paid a substantial amount. While they have names of complainants / victims, they have no contact details for any of the 100 or so people who are using the HIA NI or who have initiated civil cases against the Congregation; The Congregation's leader advised that the Congregation's solicitor has this information, but he declines to share necessary material with the DLP on the grounds of either client confidentiality or Data Protection responsibilities, or both.

Clearly, it is a matter solely for the Sisters of Nazareth to decide on what legal arrangements the Congregation makes for itself. The reviewers however have to point out the difficulties that they have encountered due to the arrangements that are currently in place.

Subsequent to the Review fieldwork, the Congregation's solicitor provided a letter of explanation of the arrangements with the Sisters in which he identified a variety of types of files that the firm has relating to the Nazareth Sisters. [The name of the Congregation's solicitor's firm is given as 'Y' below, and the previous firm employed by the Sisters is referred to as 'X & Co'.] These files are, to quote from that letter:

- a) Redress files – all relate to homes and complaints in Ireland and do not contain any specific allegations, nor do they identify individual Sisters. These files were monitored for a time and are now retained in confidential storage by X & Co;
- b) Requests for information – as these were often addressed to the wrong person they were also referred to our offices. These were mostly just requests for information and they were answered as best as possible, taking account of the need to protect confidentiality. Rarely were there any suggestions of any type of abuse and none identified any Sister. Any files which did not progress to include claims were placed in confidential storage by X & Co., and remain there and will be destroyed at an appropriate time;
- c) Civil Claims – these were predominantly issued directly through X and Co. or more recently through Y. Some early letters of claim were received in Hammersmith, Dublin or Nazareth Care Village in Belfast. As the Sisters in these houses had no detailed knowledge, the letters were sent to us. With the permission of the Sisters and their insurer, we have accepted service of the letters and all court proceedings directly. As files were negotiated or contested they were then closed and filed in secure storage by either X & Co. or Y;
- d) HIA only files – allegations made through the HIA were addressed solely to X & Co., while we reported these to the police as per the policy agreed and directed by the Sisters. We were aware that all such allegations were also reported directly by the HIA. These allegations were referred to the Sisters for comment. These files were placed in secure storage by X & Co. of Y. These files cannot be shared directly with any party, including our clients, as they remain the sole property of the HIA.

The reviewers did not have access to any of these files during the fieldwork visit to Nazareth House in Dublin. The Congregation's solicitor has offered the reviewers to speak with him if

they need any further clarification about the history and structure of the filing systems that exist in the two law firms in Belfast. While that offer is sincere and is appreciated, it does not constitute an invitation to access these files, which remain unexamined by the reviewers.

The practice of effectively passing on responsibility for the management of allegations to the Congregation’s solicitors is not acceptable, as case management is an obligation which each Church Authority has to properly undertake on their own behalf: And a further consequence of this practice is that it is not possible to establish the level of their compliance with relevant child protection standards.

The DLP did provide the reviewers with the table overleaf; but the reviewers have to state that it is impossible to establish the accuracy of the figures presented in this table. This is largely because the records provided to the reviewers contained almost no contemporaneous case notes which could be cross referenced with the information in the table.

Table 1 - Incidence of safeguarding allegations received within the Sisters of Nazareth Congregation – Irish Region Sisters, from 1st January 1975 up to the time of the review

1	Number of Congregational Sisters against whom allegations have been made since the 1 st January 1975 up to the date of the review.	61
2	Total number of allegations received by the Congregation since 1 st January, 1975.	294*
3	Number of allegations reported to An Garda Síochána/PSNI involving Sisters since 1 st January 1975.	115
4	Number of allegations reported to the TUSLA/ HSE/HSC (or the Health Boards which preceded the setting up of the HSE,) involving Sisters of the Congregation since 1 st January 1975.	115
5	Number of Sisters (still members of the Congregation) against whom an allegation was made and who were living at the date of the review.	21
6	Number of Sisters against whom an allegation was made and who are deceased.	40
7	Number of Sisters against whom an allegation has been made and who are in ministry.	8
8	Number of Sisters against whom an allegation was made and who are 'Out of Ministry', but are still members of the Congregation	0
9	Number of Sisters against whom an allegation was made and who are retired	13
10	Number of Sisters against whom an allegation was made and who have left the Congregation	1
11	Number Sisters of the Congregation who have been convicted of having committed an offence or offences against a child or young person since the 1 st January 1975	0

***Out of this 294, 179 allegations were against 40 Sisters who are deceased.**

The reviewers had access to all case files that are held in the Congregation’s Irish HQ in Dublin. These have in the main been assembled by the DLP and Deputy DLP in the months leading up to the Review. On examination, most of the detail contained in these files has in

fact been generated through the operation of the HIA NI. That body has placed on its website transcripts of all written and verbal evidence given to it.

In all, the reviewers read 16 case files during the fieldwork visit. The following table summarises the information contained in these 16 files.

Table 2 – Summary of Sisters of Nazareth Safeguarding Case Files

File No.	Abuse alleged	Information contained of assessment of credibility of the allegations
1	One allegation of physical and emotional	None
2	Four allegations of physical and/or emotional abuse	None
3	One allegation of emotional abuse	None
4	Eight allegations of physical and emotional abuse	None [although the file is kept under the name of a particular Sister, there is no reference to her contained in it]
5	Two allegations of physical and emotional abuse	None [although the file is kept under the name of a particular Sister, there is no reference to her contained in it]
6	Eight allegations of physical and emotional abuse	None [although the file is kept under the name of a particular Sister, she is not named by four of the eight complainants]
7	Four allegations of physical and/or emotional abuse	None [although the file is kept under the name of a particular Sister, there is no reference to her contained in it]
8	Three allegations of physical and emotional abuse	None [although the file is kept under the name of a particular Sister, there is no reference to her contained in it]
9	Three allegations of physical and emotional abuse	None [although the file is kept under the name of a particular Sister, she is not named by two of the three complainants]
10	Two allegations of physical and emotional abuse	None [although the file is kept under the name of a particular Sister, there is no reference to her contained in it]
11	Two allegations of physical and emotional abuse	None [although the file is kept under the name of a particular Sister, she is not named by one of the two complainants]
12	Twenty four allegations of physical and/or emotional abuse	None [most of the information on this file has been assembled from details provided through HIA NI transcripts. However, the Congregation’s solicitor has additional CASE information that has not been shared with the Irish DLP]
13	Two allegations of physical and emotional abuse	None [although the file is kept under the name of a particular Sister, there is no reference to her contained in it]

14	Three allegations of physical and/or emotional abuse	None [although the file is kept under the name of a particular Sister, she is not named by two of the three complainants]
15	Two allegations of physical and/or emotional abuse	None [although the file is kept under the name of a particular Sister, she is not named by one of the two complainants]
16	Eight allegations of physical and/or emotional abuse	None

The reviewers wish to commend the DLP and her deputy for the significant efforts they made to assemble case files in advance of the fieldwork for this Review. They were however severely hampered by the absence of any contemporaneous case notes or other material in the Dublin HQ of the Congregation. The reviewers cannot state with certainty whether this means that there is no case material of a contemporaneous nature within the Congregation's Irish houses; or there is such material but it is stored in the Motherhouse in Hammersmith; or the material that exists is in the files of the Congregation's solicitor in Northern Ireland.

All the reviewers can say about the case files that have now been put together is that they still need a lot of work. Any named Sister about whom a file exists but within which she is not mentioned deserves to have her name erased from the file cover and from any file index list. Any named Sister about whom a file exists but within which there are details of some complainants who have not named her deserves to have this information removed from her file.

The reviewers can make no comment on file material that has been produced through the operation of HIA NI, as that body will be assessing that information and reporting on it in due course.

The Sisters of Nazareth do however need to decide whether to assess the credibility of allegations made against Sisters who are still alive, especially against any who may still be active in some form of ministry. If they decide not to conduct such assessments, they need to state in writing the criteria on which they have based these decisions.

Since the fieldwork for this review was completed, the Sisters have referred two cases to the NBSCCCI National Case Management Committee for advice and guidance.

The Sisters of Nazareth also have a moral responsibility to address the welfare of those adults who have been abused while in their care as children. Unfortunately the reviewers saw no evidence of any plans made by the Congregation to do so. This is in strong contrast to the Congregation's efforts in relation to assisting adults who had gone to Australia as children under the Child Migration Scheme of the 1930s and 1940s, in which scheme the Congregation had played an active role. These adults have been supported through family reunification initiatives as well as by making all extant records available to them.

Conclusion

The Sisters of Nazareth provided care and welfare services to children in both parts of Ireland for approximately 120 years. There are a substantial number of allegations against the Congregation being made to the HIA NI. It is of interest that all allegations made against the Congregation relate to its services in Northern Ireland.

The reviewers have been unable to assess the extent to which the Sisters of Nazareth have dealt with the allegations and concerns that have arisen, due to the unavailability of any contemporaneous case file records. It would be inappropriate for the National Board to arrogate to itself the role and responsibility of the HIA NI to assess the credibility of the evidence placed before it regarding the Congregation's work with children. Observations have been made about the difficulty that the Sisters responsible in the Dublin HQ of the Irish Region to access the information that they need to allow them to respond appropriately to complainants.

It has to be stated that the Sisters of Nazareth have been exceptionally slow to take up their responsibility for Child Safeguarding, and they have to accept severe criticism for this. The first Church guidelines were published in Ireland in 1996, but it was 2015 before the Congregation appeared to take any real action; this is completely unacceptable.

Since the completion of the fieldwork for this Review, the CEO of the National Board, together with the two reviewers, has met with the Irish Regional Leader, the DLP and a member of the General Council. At this meeting and in a subsequent letter to the Congregation, the National Board has impressed on the Sisters of Nazareth the seriousness of the degree of their non-compliance with the Church's Standards and Guidance on Child Safeguarding. The National Board has also listed out to the Congregation the actions that it must take to begin to adequately address its responsibilities, especially in relation to the needs of complainants.

Recommendation

The Regional Superior must ensure that the Sisters of Nazareth sign up to and implement *Safeguarding Children – Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*, and comprehensively address the Congregation's responsibilities for providing safe environments; responding to the needs of complainants; and managing and supporting any Sister who is believed to have harmed a child in any way.

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 Church Authority (Religious congregation/missionary society) by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1st January 1975 up to the date of the review, against Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and who are ministering/or who once ministered under the aegis of the Church Authority, and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the Church Authority.
2. If deemed relevant, select a random sample of complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the Church Authority by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1st January 1975 to the date of the review, against Religious now deceased and who ministered under the aegis of the Church Authority.
3. Examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the Church Authority.
4. To consider and report on the implementation of the 7 Safeguarding Standards set out in *Safeguarding Children* (2009), including the following:
 - a) A review of the current child safeguarding policies and guidance materials in use by the Church Authority and an evaluation of their application;
 - b) How the Church Authority creates and maintains safe environments.
 - c) How victims are responded to by the Church Authority
 - d) The training that is taking place within the Church Authority
 - e) How advice and support is accessed by the Church Authority in relation to victim support and assessment and management of accused respondents.
 - f) The systems that are in place for monitoring practice and reporting back to the Church Authority

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 1990² 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.”

² 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 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).

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/missionary society..

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 1st January 1975 to the date of the Review.

Note 5: Civil Authorities:

Civil Authorities are defined in the Republic of Ireland as TUSLA, Children and Family Agency and An Garda Síochána and in Northern Ireland as the Health and Social Care Trust and the Police Service of Northern Ireland.