



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

Second Review of Child Safeguarding Practice

Irish Province of the Order of Carmelites (O.Carm)

undertaken by

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

Date of Review Report: January 2024

CONTENTS

	Page
Background:	3
Introduction:	5
Process of Review:	6
Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments:	9
Standard 2: Procedures for Responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or Allegations:	15
Standard 3: Care and Support for the Complainant:	19
Standard 4: Care and Management of the Respondent:	22
Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe:	25
Standard 6: Communicating the Church’s Safeguarding Message:	26
Standard 7: Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards:	29
Conclusion:	31

Background

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland, (the National Board), was established in 2006:

- To provide advice, services and assistance in furtherance of the development of the safeguarding of children within the Roman Catholic Church on the island of Ireland.
- To monitor compliance with legislation, policy and best practice.
- To report on these activities as is comprehensively set out in the Memorandum of Association of the Company.

Church authorities who have entered into an agreement with the National Board through signing a Memorandum of Understanding have committed to following *Safeguarding Children - Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*.

In order to assess compliance with the 2016 Standards, the Prior Provincial of the Irish Province of the Order of Carmelites (O. Carm) invited the National Board to undertake a review of child safeguarding practice in 2023. The Order was previously reviewed in 2015 under the *Safeguarding Children - Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2008*.

The report of the first Review can be found on the Carmelite website, at <https://carmelites.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Carmelites-OCarm-Report.pdf>, and on the National Board’s website, www.safeguarding.ie/publications.

The recommendations from the 2015 Review are set out here, along with the status of their implementation.

Recommendation	Implemented – Yes / No
Recommendation 1: The Prior Provincial should amend the procedure for reporting to the civil authorities, and ensure clarity in the written document, which emphasises reporting without delay, once reasonable grounds for concern have been established. This could take the form of an initial notification, followed by further communication with the civil authorities when the Order has completed their information gathering process.	Yes
Recommendation 2: The Prior Provincial should develop a complaints policy for use by those accessing Carmelite ministries.	Yes
Recommendation 3: The Prior Provincial should consider the development of an anti-discriminatory policy that would give guidance on the inappropriateness of discriminatory behaviour based on race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political views.	Yes

Recommendation 4: That the Prior Provincial should invite the safeguarding committee to review how the Order communicates its safeguarding message and having done so develop a safeguarding communications policy.	Yes
--	------------

The reviewers appreciate the detailed information provided by the DLP in relation to the implementation of recommendations made to the Order in 2015; and the quick completion of so many varied tasks is commended.

The purpose of this second round of reviews is to assess child-safeguarding practice against the Catholic Church in Ireland’s current standards as detailed in *Safeguarding Children – Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*. The review seeks a level and quality of evidence to provide:

- Public confidence that the Church body is safe for children.
- Affirmation to child safeguarding personnel that they are doing the right things well.
- Confirmation to the Church authority that what they want to be done is in fact being done.
- Independent verification of Self-Audit – or correction and/or improvement of Self-Audit.
- Opportunities for learning.

Introduction

There has been very significant change in the Irish Province of the Order of Carmelites since the previous Review of 2015. There are now six communities, a reduction of two since the first Review. These are Gort Muire in Ballinteer in Dublin, Whitefriar Street in Dublin, Terenure College in Dublin, Moate in Co. Westmeath, Kildare Town, and Kinsale, Co. Cork. The communities in Knocklyon, Dublin and Knocktopher in Co. Kilkenny have been closed. The communities in Moate and Kildare are very small, with three members in each.

Whitefriar Street is a Dublin Archdiocesan parish. There are churches attached to the other five Carmelite communities, all of which are open to the public, although none is a parish church.

In 2015, there were fifty-seven (57) solemnly professed Carmelites in Ireland, which number has reduced to forty-three (43). Eight (8) of these priests have retired or are otherwise not available for ministry. In addition, there are seven (7) students visiting from other provinces of the Order, two (2) of whom are professed, with five (5) in formation. Three professed Irish members of the Order work in Rome.

The age range of the thirty-seven (37) Irish members of the Irish Province is set out here.

Table 1 – Age range of Irish members of the Irish Province of the Order of Carmelites

Age	Number
30 - 39	1
40 - 49	1
50 - 59	6
60 - 69	7
70 - 79	8
80 - 89	16
90 years and over	2
Total	41

The average age of the Irish members of the Province is just above 71.

There are eight (8) professed Carmelites in ministry in the Irish Province, who have come to Ireland from their country of origin abroad. Their ages range from 33 to 52, their average age being 45½ years. The community in Kildare is comprised of two Carmelites who have come to Ireland from their country of origin abroad.

The Order of Carmelites is international, and is described as

The friars of the Carmelite Order are present in various parts of the world. The Order itself is structured in Provinces, General Commissariats, General Delegations and houses under the direct jurisdiction of the Prior General. We have 19 Provinces, 4 General Commissariats, and 4 General Delegations distributed throughout the world. (<https://www.ocarm.org/en/carmelites-around-the-world/friars>)

It is therefore to be expected that friars be deployed in the locations where they are most needed.

One of the ministries historically undertaken by the Order of Carmelites in Ireland was the management and operation of schools, one in Moate, which is now closed, and the larger one, Terenure College in Dublin, which still operates, and has done so since 1860. According to its website, 'Terenure College Senior School is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School under the Trusteeship of the Irish Province of Carmelites. It is a fee-paying College for boys.' Although there are seven Carmelites in the Terenure College community, none teaches in the school, and one is the school Chaplain. The current relationship between the Order and Terenure College is described later in this report.

St. Enda's Primary School in Whitefriar Street transferred to Dublin City ETB patronage in 2023.

The ministries that bring members of the Order of Carmelites into contact with children and adolescents are church liturgies, including Sunday Masses, school chaplaincy, supporting teachers and pupils of St. Enda's Primary School through their use of the Carmelite Community Centre, as well as a small, nascent youth ministry, pilgrimages, sacramental preparation, music groups, altar servers and a crèche.

Process of Review

The two reviewers visited three of the six Carmelite communities in the course of the Review fieldwork. They were based for three days – November 8 and 9, and December 12, 2023 - in the Provincial Offices in Gort Muire, Ballinteer, which is the largest of the six communities. All of the child safeguarding file records are maintained and stored in this location. One reviewer visited the Whitefriar Street Carmelite community, and the adjacent Carmelite Community Centre on November 9; and the second reviewer visited the Carmelite community in Kinsale on November 27.

In the course of the Review, the reviewers met or interviewed via Zoom or by phone call the following people:

- The Prior Provincial
- The Prior of Whitefriar Street Carmelite community
- The Prior of Kinsale Carmelite community
- The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) / Safeguarding Coordinator
- Members of the Carmelite Order Advisory Panel
- Members of the Carmelite Order Child Safeguarding Committee
- The Manager and members of staff in the Carmelite Community Centre in Aungier Street, Dublin
- A complainant
- A priest advisor
- A detective from the Terenure Garda Incident Room

STANDARDS

The Standards are a level of practice required to ensure good child safeguarding arrangements.

Each standard is self-contained and supported by indicators to evidence if safeguarding arrangements and practice meet the required standard. The National Board has produced detailed Guidance, which is accessible on its website at <https://www.safeguarding.ie/guidance>.

The Carmelites agreed to adopt *Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016* as its child safeguarding policy through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Board. The adherence of the Society to the Policy and Standards is confirmed on its website, at <https://carmelites.ie/safeguarding/#:~:text=As%20a%20constituent%20member%20of,parents%2Fguardians%20to%20do%20this>

The seven Standards are:

Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

Standard 2: Procedures for responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or Allegations

Standard 3: Care and Support for the Complainant

Standard 4: Care and Management of the Respondent

Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe

Standard 6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

Standard 7: Quality-Assuring Compliance with the Standards

This Review concentrates on practice through evaluating written records, interviews with Church personnel and information from complainants and respondents.

An assessment of practice under each standard is set out below.

Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

Church bodies provide an environment for children that is welcoming, nurturing and safe. They provide access to good role models whom the children can trust, who respect, protect and enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

The Order's ministry to and with children and young people is more limited than it was when the first Review was conducted.

In 2020, the Irish Province of Carmelites published its Carmelite Child Safeguarding Handbook. This is an excellent and comprehensive document, which is based on the National Standards and the National Board Guidance. It was the output from extensive work by the Carmelite Safeguarding Committee, supported by the then DLP and Deputy DLP. Just short of 100 pages, the document is very accessible and well laid out. In his Foreword, the Prior Provincial stated that,

There is a danger that we can see safeguarding measures as restricting or limiting to our ministry. I would suggest that it is better to see them as framing our ministry. They provide a safe environment for us, children, and their families, to explore and celebrate our Christian faith, through prayer, activity and community.

This positive presentation of safeguarding policy and practice is welcome and commended.

The DLP also fills the role of Child Safeguarding Coordinator, and she is available to friars and Carmelite staff in all of the six community locations. She works closely with each of the local Priors, who are the local lead safeguarding persons. She also assists and supports the work of the Carmelite Safeguarding Committee, and in turn is backed up by the committee in her safeguarding tasks. Among these tasks are,

- Directing and implementing the child safeguarding statement and associated safeguarding policies and procedures
- Liaising with and supporting the Carmelite Friars and communities to ensure implementation of local policies and procedures
- Being the nominated person for Garda vetting
- Liaising and with the Child Safeguarding Committee
- Arranging safeguarding training when required, and keeping training plans and records
- Reporting directly to the provincial on all child safeguarding practice and issues
- Acting as a liaison person with other agencies in relation to safeguarding matters

Although the Carmelite Community Centre in Dublin's Aungier Street is an initiative of the Order, it is operated by a registered company limited by guarantee and managed by an independent Management Committee. It is a vibrant agency and provides well-utilised services, and due to its close links with the Order, the reviewer who visited Whitefriar Street Carmelite community examined it closely. It would be almost impossible to audit safeguarding within the Order without consideration of the centre. It has its own website, which contains a great deal of information on its activities, at <https://carmelitecommunitycentre.wordpress.com/the-centre/>.

Whitefriar Street is an inner-city parish, and it has had to re-establish its structures and ministries post Covid-19 restrictions, including choirs, Eucharistic ministry etc. It is a popular church and is well known in Dublin and beyond for its connection to St Valentine, whose remains are entombed there, as well as having the Shrine of St. Albert of Sicily, described on the church website at <https://www.whitefriarstreetchurch.ie/index.php/the-church/shrines/stalbertsicily>. The parish congregation is made-up of people from a range of different cultures, backgrounds, and languages. It is essentially a local parish church, which was adopted by the Dublin Archdiocese in 1974.

There are no altar servers in Whitefriar Street church, and this has been the situation there for over 30 years.

The church building has a ground floor comprising of an entrance, shop and café, as well as the church itself. On the second and third floors, there are offices and accommodation for the 12 friars who currently reside there. All 12 are Garda vetted, in accordance with the policy and procedures.

The adjacent community services centre has a separate entrance, and there is no public access between the church and the centre. Its manager has responsibility for all the facilities within the community centre, and for the church itself. The manager is directly accountable to the Prior, and he retains overall responsibility for safeguarding arrangements within Whitefriar Street. He confirmed that he is part of the Order's senior management team led by the Prior Provincial in which forum discussions around safeguarding issues are regularly held. He also confirmed that the Prior Provincial takes an active interest in safeguarding in Whitefriar Street.

The Prior highlighted that one of his key priorities is to promote safeguarding within the Carmelite community by,

- Raising awareness and promoting best practise in relation to child safeguarding
- Recruiting and inducting church personnel in line with current recruitment and selection procedures.
- Ensuring that church personnel adhere to the code of behaviour for adults, and to child safeguarding policies and procedures of the Order.
- Ensuring that church activities are provided in a way that guarantees the safety and well-being of the children involved.
- Ensuring that the contact details of the DLP and An Garda Siochana and Tusla are widely publicised.
- Completing the annual audit for the community, in conjunction with the safeguarding personnel
- Applying the standards and practises advised by the National Board.

The Prior and centre manager are keen to ensure that the safeguarding arrangements are clearly communicated, to staff and to the public that utilises the church and the centre. They confirmed that the Carmelite Order safeguarding policy and procedures are available to all within the Whitefriar Street complex and showed the reviewer where these are kept. The manager and Prior were able to articulate the process for responding to child protection concerns, as outlined in the safeguarding handbook.

The manager also highlighted the Code of Behaviour, which is on display throughout the site. This is available in the Safeguarding Handbook; and all friars, staff and volunteers who may have contact with children are required to sign a statement that they have read, understood and agree to abide by the Code, '...the Carmelite Child Safeguarding Statement and associated policies and procedures.'

It was established by the reviewer that all confidential information is secured in locked cabinets.

Consent forms and risk registers, which were seen, are regularly updated and retained on file within a secured cabinet in the manager's office.

There is a very close working relationship between the manager of the site and the Safeguarding Coordinator / DLP. The manager is a full member of the Carmelite Safeguarding Committee and she confirmed to the reviewer that safeguarding issues relevant to Whitefriar Street are discussed in that forum, as and when required.

Currently, there are twenty-nine (29) lay staff on the payroll at Whitefriar Street, eleven (11) of whom work in the Scallywags Crèche. All relevant staff are vetted, with the assistance of the DLP, who is the liaison person with the Garda National Vetting Bureau.

The crèche is described on the centre's website, at

<https://carmelitecommunitycentre.wordpress.com/facilities/scallywag-creche/>

Scallywags commits to provide children, families, staff and clients with

- A place for childhood to flourish
- A fundamental concern with the health and safety of all children in our care
- Individual, personalised, responsive care and affection for each child
- Active, individualised, developmentally appropriate learning
- A culture of respect for all people and for the world in which we live
- A full partnership with parents
- Flexible, responsive services that meet and anticipate the needs of families
- A professional work environment
- A commitment of support to our employees
- A place to support families tailored to our clients' needs, goals, and cultures

The commitment of our well trained, experienced, and loyal staff, and our ability to retain and support them, contributes significantly to our success.

The Crèche is located in a private and secure purpose-built wing of the centre. Access can only be gained through a Staff member within the crèche. The playground is located in a small atrium designed for the crèche can only be accessed through the crèche itself ensuring a safe environment.

The reviewer met briefly with the crèche leader - she had also engaged with an unannounced Tusla inspection visit the same day. In the course of a brief discussion, the reviewer was able to confirm that the crèche conducts risk assessments, the results of which are kept within the manager's office.

In addition to the centre staff group, there is scope to have up to 30 young people work under supervision in the centre on a Community Employment Scheme, although the numbers at any one time tend to be lower than this. All participants on the scheme are Garda vetted.

A number of groups use the community centre and they are each responsible for having adequate and appropriate insurance, have relevant leaders Garda vetted, manage risks, and have a suitable child safeguarding policy and procedures in place. These are prerequisites for any external group being allowed to use facilities in the centre.

The Carmelite Community Centre also provides a number of activities to pupils in the local St. Enda's Primary School. These include The Dinosaur Club, a Homework Club run by the South Inner City Community Development Association (SICCDA), and Whitefriar Strings, which provides access to free professional string-instrument tuition to children between 6 and 12 years of age attending St. Enda's Community National School.

Overall, the reviewer was satisfied that, robust safeguarding arrangements are in place and safeguarding is integrated into the fabric of the parish church and community services centre. As a parish within the Archdiocese of Dublin, the child safeguarding protocols of that Church body apply to all ministries and activities within the parish church.

In order to ensure that all required Garda vetting is up to date, the DLP has developed a four-page guidance and tracking document headed *The Carmelite Order Role Matrix for the purposes of Garda Vetting under the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012-2016*. The following roles are included:

- Childcare staff in Whitefriar St. Crèche
- Shop staff in Moate supervising student placements
- Santa Claus for Christmas Fair
- Church shop manager/Coffee shop assistant -Whitefriar St. Church
- Maintenance person/Caretaker working in the Whitefriar St. school/crèche
- Centre manager – Carmelite Community Centre
- General assistant in the church and school community- Whitefriar St.
- All members of the Irish Province (ordained or not)
- All visiting priest from abroad
- Visiting priests who supply on more than 3 occasions
- All adults volunteers participating on a pilgrimage
- 16-18 year olds participants on a pilgrimage
- Eucharistic Minister- only if visiting people's homes
- Person involved in Children's liturgy
- People involved in youth groups/youth ministry
- Choir Director who has contact with children or vulnerable adults
- Safeguarding Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

The document states the basis on which vetting is required, with reference to the legislation. The Garda National Vetting Bureau accepted all of the above persons as needing to be vetted. However, it did not accept that the Church shop manager/Coffee shop assistant in Whitefriar St. Church required vetting.

Both the crèche and the Whitefriar Strings have children of mixed ability and specific needs, and these children receive the level of support appropriate to their individual situations.

All of the professional staff who provide care in a nursing home within the Gort Muire community are Garda vetted as well. While the focus of their work is with vulnerable adults, they might occasionally encounter a young person visiting a relative who is a member of the Order. Young persons who are not accompanied by an adult cannot make such a visit.

The Order has a detailed eleven-page Garda Vetting Policy, as well as a five-page Garda Vetting Disclosure Policy, both of which are of a very high standard.

The other Carmelite Order community visited by a reviewer that is involved with children and young people is Kinsale, in Co. Cork. The current Prior was appointed to the role of this five-member community during the pandemic, moving there from Dublin. The initial period of enforced closure gave him time to explore ideas of engaging with children and young people, once life returned to a more normal basis. Slowly, and with the support and advice of the DLP and the Carmelite's business manager in Dublin, a number of initiatives have been taken, including,

- Setting up a five-member local Pastoral Team to plan and oversee all developments and activities, with a focus on risk assessment, training and safeguarding;
- Opening the part of the friary building, previously used as a Retreat and Spirituality Centre, to young people to drop in for occasional activities, such as a pizza night, or watching sporting events on a large screen TV, or for a cinema night;
- Cooperating with the local primary school in running a weekly environmental programme, using a poly-tunnel in the friary grounds;
- Supporting young people from 5th and 6th years in second level schools to participate in the annual Carmelite Pilgrimage to Lourdes;
- Training up college students to take on youth leadership roles;
- Having children and young people involved in liturgy, as altar servers and Ministers of the Word.

In the future, the Prior would like to develop specific children's liturgies, youth retreats, and pilgrimages to the Taizé Community in France. He understands the importance of engaging with parents, and plans to provide faith development initiatives for them. He has linked up with University College Cork in relation to working with their adult continuing education programme as a complementary resource for this work.

What is impressive about these recent developments in Kinsale is that time and care are being taken at each step, and that imaginative cooperation with existing external resources is very evident. The Prior is very aware of the need to ensure that safeguarding is the framework for these new ministries and activities.

The Carmelite Order has a whistleblowing policy and procedure, as well as a procedure for managing complaints that are not reports of abuse of children, and these are included in the Safeguarding Handbook. Neither has needed to be utilised in the period being reviewed.

Because Whitefriar Street is a parish of the Archdiocese of Dublin and as members of the Carmelite Order minister occasionally in the archdiocese, Safeguarding Protocol Agreements have been developed between these two Church bodies, and these are commended.

The Prior Provincial oversees the arrival of Carmelites from outside Ireland, and liaises with the DLP to ensure that all child safeguarding protocols are followed before they are deployed.

Despite the reduction in ministries with and activities for children and young people, the reviewers are satisfied that the Order of Carmelites successfully apply Standard 1 wherever this is required to create and sustain safe Church environments for them, and that **Standard 1 is met.**

Standard 2: Procedures for Responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or Allegations

Church Bodies have clear procedures and guidance on what to do when suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations arise regarding a child's safety or welfare that will ensure there is a prompt response. They also enable the Church to meet all national and international legal and practice requirements and guidance.

The Carmelite Child Safeguarding Handbook 2020 details the process involved when an allegation of abuse is received by the Order (pp. 44-55). The Order of Carmelites has received 49 reports of allegations, regarding members since the first Review in 2014. These are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1 – Allegations of retrospective abuse reported to the Order of Carmelites since April 2015

Cleric	Current Status	Number of Allegations	Gardai notified within required time	Tusla notified within required time	The National Board notified within required time	Appropriate and timely Canonical action taken
Living – sexual abuse						
1	Out of ministry	1 (2021)	Yes -1 day	Yes - 1 day	Yes - 1 day	Yes – PCI initiated
Living – physical abuse						
2	Living	1 (2021)	Gardai reported to the Order	Gardai notified Tusla	Yes - 5 days	N/A
3	Living	1	Yes-next day	Yes-next day	Yes – 2 days	N/A
4	Living	3 (i) (2018) (ii) (2020) (iii) (2023)	(i) Yes – 7 days (ii) Yes – 6 days (iii) Same day	(i) Yes – 7 days (ii) Yes – 6 days (iii) Yes – 2½ weeks	(i) Yes – 2 weeks (ii) Yes – 1 day (iii) Yes – 2½ weeks	Disciplinary initial investigation (2019)
Deceased – sexual abuse						
5	Deceased	6 (between 2019 and 2023) [2 Sexual; 2 Physical; 2 unspecified]	Gardaí reported to the order in 2 cases Notified same day in 1 case Notified next day in 1 case Notified within 1 week in 1 case Notified within 2 weeks in 1 case	Yes – same day in 1 case Not notified to Tusla in 5 cases, as respondent was deceased	Notified within 1 week in 2 cases Notified within 2 weeks in 2 cases Notified within 3 months in 1 case Notified after 6 months in 1 case*	N/A

Review Report on the Irish Province of the Order of Carmelites

6	Deceased	1 [Sexual] (2022)	Yes - next day	Yes - next day	Yes - 3 days	N/A
7	Deceased	21 (between 2017 and 2023) [All sexual]	Gardaí reported to the Order in 1 case Notified within 1 week in 18 cases Notified within 2 weeks in 1 case Notified within 1 month in 1 case	Not notified in 4 cases, as respondent was deceased Gardaí notified Tusla in 1 case Notified within 1 week in 12 cases Notified within 2 weeks in 2 cases Notified within 1 month in 1 case Notified within 3 months in 1 (3rd party) case*	Notified within 1 week in 6 cases Notified within 2 weeks in 6 cases Notified within 1 month in 4 cases Notified within 2 months in 2 cases Notified within 5 months in 1 case Notified after 6 months in 2 cases*	N/A
8	Deceased	1 [Sexual] (2019)	Yes - Notified by another Church body. Garda updated by Order within 1 month	Not notified, as priest deceased	Yes – within 1 month	N/A
9	Deceased	8 (between 2017 and 2022) [6 Physical; 1 physical /sexual; and 1 unspecified]	Notified in 3 days or less in all cases	Notified in 3 days or less in 5 cases Not notified in 3 cases, as priest was deceased	Notified within 1 week in 3 cases Notified within 1 month in 1 case Notified within 2 months in 2 cases Notified within 3 months in 1 case	N/A
10	Deceased	6 (between 2021 and 2023) [All sexual]	Notified within 1 week in 5 cases Notified within 4 months in 1 case*	Notified within 1 week in 3 cases Not notified in 2 cases, as priest was deceased Notified within 4 months in 1 case*	Notified within 1 week in 3 cases Notified within 2 weeks in 1 case Notified within 4 months in 1 case Notified after 6 months in 1 case*	N/A

[1. Where an asterisk * appears in the table above, this indicates that a valid reason for a delay in notification was accepted by the reviewers]

[2. Notifications to Tusla of deceased respondents has only been advised by the National Board since December 2022, so many allegations were not notified to Tusla by Church bodies before that date.]

Forty-nine (49) allegations were received by the Order in the period being reviewed, in relation to ten (10) Carmelite priests, six (6) of whom were deceased. These reports were received between December 2017 and August 2023. Thirty-three (33) of the allegations received were of sexual abuse, thirteen (13) were of physical abuse and two (2) did not specify the type of abuse alleged. All of the reports received by the Order relate to abuse alleged to have taken place in the 1960s, 70s, 80s and 90s.

One (1) further report to the Order is classified as a concern rather than an allegation, as the Order awaits further information.

As can be seen in Table 1 above, there are multiple allegations against four of these priest members.

Notifications within the required timeframe to both statutory agencies, An Garda Síochána and Tusla, Child and Family Agency were made in all cases.

In relation to allegations against deceased priests, there were delays in four (4) notifications to the National Board. The Order has apologised to the National Board for these delays and provided explanations for each, which have been accepted by the reviewers. These delays were identified during internal case management file reviews in 2018 and 2022, and immediately reported to the National Board. In future all notifications to the National Board should be made promptly.

No child was at risk due to delayed notifications to the National Board of allegations against deceased priest members of the Order; and the reviewers have established that there was no delay in the Order's response to all complainants involved, who have been followed up in a compassionate and effective manner.

Liaison with the Gardaí is very open and effective, which was confirmed from direct contact with a member of the Terenure Incident Room investigating team.

Records are securely stored in fireproof cabinets in a locked room.

It is clear to the reviewers that the priorities of the Order have been to reach out to complainants / victims, and to ensure that the Garda investigations of allegations were facilitated.

The reviewers are aware that no canonical action can be taken in cases of alleged physical abuse.

The National Board does not have a remit for reviewing child safeguarding in schools, or for dealing with sexual abuse committed by laypersons. However, it would be incongruous not to refer in this report to what has recently become known in relation to Terenure College Senior School, which is a voluntary Catholic secondary school under the trusteeship of the Irish Province of Carmelites.

All retrospective abuse allegations against lay teachers from Terenure College reported to the Carmelite Order are managed by the Carmelite Safeguarding Office. The Carmelite Order has received fifty-two (52) allegations of retrospective child abuse against former lay teachers. Since December 2017 therefore, the Carmelite Safeguarding Office has responded to one hundred and one (101) reports of allegations, suspicions and concerns related to the abuse of children.

The Carmelite Safeguarding Office offers victims and survivors of retrospective abuse by lay teachers the same support services as those available to victims and survivors of abuse by members of the Carmelite Order. The Order has worked collaboratively with the Garda Incident Room in Terenure throughout the investigation into historical child abuse in Terenure College. All requested information has been shared with An Garda Síochána, who have also had access to files held in the Carmelite Safeguarding Office. Detectives from the Terenure Incident Room share the contact details of the Carmelite DLP and the Towards Healing counselling service with men reporting retrospective child abuse allegations arising from Terenure College.

Since 2019, the Carmelite Order has reached a mediated agreement with twenty-seven people who have reported retrospective abuse by a lay teacher of Terenure College. Five of these past pupils had reported retrospective abuse by a Carmelite Order member as well.

Based on evidence of timely notifications made to the statutory authorities; the Order having clearly written child-safeguarding procedures; and the Order keeping and maintaining comprehensive records of all child-safeguarding matters, **this Standard is met**

Standard 3: Care and Support for the Complainant

Complainants who have suffered abuse as children receive a compassionate response when they disclose their abuse. They, and their families, are offered appropriate support, advice and pastoral care.

The Order of Carmelites have received reports of abuse by its members in relation to 49 complainants / victims in the period being reviewed. They have also received 52 reports of retrospective abuse against lay teachers.

In addition to the Carmelite priests whose cases are listed in Table 1 under Standard 2 above, another two victims who had reported abuse prior to April 2015 had received support from the DLP and the Order during the period under review.

Forty-nine (49) complainants / victims have had contact with the Order since April 2015, on the basis that they had been abused during their childhoods by a Carmelite priest. It is not proposed to list each complainant and to detail what engagement he had with the Order and what supports he received. The following is a summary of the reviewers' assessment of the care offered.

Of the reports received, two complainants did not identify themselves, and until they decide to do so, the Order cannot offer them support.

All of the other men who were reported as having been abused and whose file notes were examined had been offered a pastoral response. Table 2 here details what response they received. It needs to be borne in mind that there is overlap in the table, so, for instance, an individual could have received information about support, including Towards Healing, may have engaged with the Order, and may have reached a mediated agreement to avoid the need for a civil legal court case. The numbers when totalled therefore exceed the number of victims.

Table 2: Supports offered to complainants / victims by Order of Carmelites since April 2015

Pastoral Supports Provided	No. of cases
The Order requested the Gardaí to inform the complainant about what pastoral response he could receive if he made contact	5
The Order requested the complainant's solicitor to inform him about what pastoral response he could receive if he made contact	10
The school informed the complainant of what pastoral response he could receive if he made contact	3
The DLP informed the complainant of what pastoral response he could receive if he made contact	5
The complainant engaged in person with the Order's DLP – also Prior Provincial on occasions	26
A civil mediated agreement was reached with the complainant	12
The complainant was encouraged to engage with Towards Healing	15
The complainant wanted a specific therapeutic service, and this was provided	5

From the records examined, there is evidence that the Carmelites offered pastoral support and counselling to all complainants, not all of whom accepted the offer.

The Order has developed an understanding with the Gardaí in the Terenure Incident Room that they will provide all individuals who make contact with them with the DLP's, contact details, and the contact details for Towards Healing. They have also developed a pastoral response letter that is sent by the DLP via legal advisors to every complainant whose first contact with the Order was by legal correspondence.

Regarding Terenure College, three (3) men made direct contact with the school wanting to report abuse and they have been provided with the information that has been described in relation to the Gardaí and legal representatives.

In five (5) case records, the complainant made direct contact with the DLP, who has then been in a position to provide them with information about available supports, first hand.

Twenty-six (26) men who have alleged that they were abused by Carmelite priests have engaged with the Order's DLP, and on occasions, with the Prior Provincial; the offer to meet with the Prior Provincial is made to everyone who wants this. The reviewers are satisfied from examining the case files that these engagements have been well conducted and have been of positive benefit to the complainants.

Of the men who expressed an interest in receiving counselling or psychotherapy, and who had not already engaged in such a service, fifteen (15) were given the contact details of Towards Healing and were encouraged to refer themselves; that service does not take referrals from a third party on behalf of a client. A further five (5) men who wished to have a service other than Towards Healing, were supported to self-refer to an appropriate therapeutic practitioner. The Order paid for all of these interventions.

The Prior Provincial advised the reviewers that as part of their pastoral response, the Provincial team seeks to reach a mediated agreement with the complainant without a requirement for the complainant to sue the Order. In each case, the complainant is advised of their legal rights. Twelve (12) such agreements have been made in the period under review.

One of the reviewers had the opportunity to speak by phone to one abuse victim who has chosen to engage with the Order's DLP. He had been referred to her by the Prior of the Terenure College Carmelite community. He described being disappointed by and angry at the Order, and having provided a victim-impact statement in a related criminal case. He said that he had experienced his engagement with the DLP as very helpful, and he described her as 'sensitive, sympathetic, understanding, nurturing, non-judgmental, and first class.' He stated that he had been listened to, believed, respected and supported. He commended the DLP helping him to identify his own needs. He was grateful for her referral information about Towards Healing and said that he has found that service to be very beneficial to his recovery.

The information presented in this section does not purport to describe the assessment of all of the responses received by complainants / victims when they came forward to the Carmelite Order. The reviewers read about two complainants who had disengaged from ongoing contact because they were dissatisfied.

Overall, the response to complainants / victims has been timely, compassionate and appropriate, and this is commended.

Having measured the performance of the Order against the indicators underpinning Standard 3, the evaluation of the reviewers is that **this Standard is met.**

Standard 4: Care and Management of the Respondent

The Church Authority has in place a fair process for investigating and managing child safeguarding concerns. When the threshold for reporting has been reached, a system of support and monitoring for respondents is provided.

Table 1. in the section on Standard 2 above sets out the allegations, concerns and suspicions received by the Irish Province of the Order of Carmelites since April 2015. In addition to the ten (10) priests referenced in Standard 2, the Order has also managed three (3) priests during the period under review, about whom child-safeguarding concerns had been described in the 2015 Review Report.

Of the nine (9) priest members of the Order listed in Table 1, six are deceased. They had all died prior to allegations against them being reported to the Order. Their care and management under Standard 4 was therefore not relevant.

The cases of the seven (7) living priest members are briefly described here.

Cleric 1 is out of ministry since the report of an allegation against him was received. He is subject to a Safeguarding Agreement / Covenant of Care, and is monitored on a regular basis by the DLP. The Office of the DPP had returned a decision of “no prosecution” which is currently under appeal. A preliminary canonical investigation was initiated and immediately suspended, pending the conclusion of the criminal legal process.

Cleric 2 is in ministry and lives in a Carmelite community. As the allegation related to retrospective physical abuse, canonical processes are not available

Cleric 3 is in ministry and living in a Carmelite community. As the allegation related to retrospective physical abuse canonical processes are not available.

Cleric 4 is retired. He is subject to a Safety Plan, which is reviewed annually. Cleric 4 was subject to an independent Disciplinary Initial Investigation in 2019. The recommendations from the independent canonical inquiry were implemented.

The following three priests are not listed on Table 1, as no allegations against them have been received since April 2015. They were each reviewed in the 2015 Review.

Cleric 11 was acquitted in court of allegations of retrospective child sexual abuse. He sought voluntary laicisation during the period under review. He remains in regular contact with the Order. He is in employment and lives an independent life.

Cleric 12 lived for eleven years after the allegation against him was received by the Order, but was deceased prior to this Review. Despite consistent requests by the Order to return to community he had been living 'in disobedience', in that he decided to leave the Carmelite community in which he was living in order to live by himself. He had been criminally prosecuted but was found not guilty. He always protested his innocence of what had been alleged against him.

Cleric 13 lives in a Carmelite community under the terms of a Safeguarding Agreement / Covenant of Care, which has been recently reviewed. He was withdrawn from ministry before the Review of 2015. The matter was referred to the then CDF. The decision made by the Curial body was that the Preliminary Canonical Investigation had not produced sufficient information to *substantiate fumus delicti* and therefore, no penal action was authorised. The advice provided was that the relevant Order superior would arrange a Covenant of Care. This respondent had been offered a Priest Advisor, which he declined to avail of. The DLP meets with him regularly to monitor his situation.

In the course of the Review fieldwork, one reviewer met with a Priest Advisor, who has been in that role for over two years. He is a friend of the elderly man who he supports. He spoke about the importance of his relationships with the family members of the priest who he supports. He described assisting the priest with practical matters. He supports the priest in relation to his deteriorating health, making sure that he keeps medical appointments and accompanying him to these. He also is involved in the meetings that are held to review the priest's Covenant of Care, and he liaises with the DLP about the priest's overall welfare. The reviewer was impressed by the sensitivity and compassion of the Priest Advisor who acts as a dedicated and caring confrère.

The National Board received one anonymous questionnaire from a Carmelite priest against whom an allegation had been received. This questionnaire provides men in this situation an opportunity to report on how they were treated by their Order once the allegation about them was received. The priest who completed and returned the questionnaire expressed satisfaction with how his Prior Provincial and the Order has supported him. He described being subject to a Covenant of Care. He had been informed of the allegation by the Prior Provincial and DLP at a meeting, also attended by a Priest Advisor. He has been provided with both a civil lawyer and a canon lawyer. His one critical comment was about the delays in the Garda investigative process.

The reviewers met with the Advisory Committee of the Order, via Zoom. That group is convened three to four times each year. It is comprised of seven members, five laypersons and two priests, one of whom is a member of the Order's Terenure College community, and the other is a canon lawyer who is a priest of the Archdiocese of Dublin. The lay members of the committee include a solicitor, two retired senior Gardaí, a representative of the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, and a member of staff of the Dublin Archdiocese Child Safeguarding and Protection Service.

The committee has been a key support to the Prior Provincial and the DLP, especially over the last three years; both attend the meetings of the panel in an *ex officio* capacity. As well as providing advice to the Prior Provincial on the handling of new reports of allegations, the committee can also review cases that are of a longstanding nature and remain open. The members of this committee are according to the Safeguarding Handbook, ‘...selected on the basis of their child safeguarding knowledge and experience of canon and civil law’, and the reviewers are satisfied that the members understand their role and responsibilities, and that the committee is fit for purpose. The full committee has participated in tailored training provided by the National Board. In addition to meeting with the committee, the reviewers examined the written minutes of four committee meetings – two held in 2022 and two held in 2023. It is clear that this group conducts its business in a very comprehensive, capable and authoritative manner.

Based on the close examination of case management files, and the information provided in interviews with the Prior Provincial, the DLP, a Priest Advisor, and the Advisory Committee, as well as the anonymous questionnaire, the Minutes of the Advisory Committee, and the contents of the Safeguarding Handbook, the reviewers are of the opinion that **this Standard is met.**

Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe

Church personnel are trained and supported in all aspects of safeguarding relevant to their role, in order to develop and maintain the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills to safeguard and protect children.

In her role as Safeguarding Coordinator, the Order's DLP has responsibility for the provision of Training for Order members and for staff. She is herself a registered Trainer with the National Board. She previously completed a Train the Trainers course, and subsequently undertook updating training. She and the Prior Provincial attend relevant National Board training events.

The reviewers have examined the training returns for all six Order of Carmelite communities for 2022. Training was provided during the year to 39 members of the Order, and to 68 laypersons who are involved in supporting the work of the Order in its various locations.

The plan for Training is based on a training-needs analysis that is developed from the annual self-audit conducted within the Order. Training is up to date, which is commended.

Indicator 5.6 is about the support provided to staff who have child safeguarding responsibilities. The reviewers suggest that the Prior Provincial has a discussion with the DLP / Safeguarding Coordinator about their respective support needs, for example through external professional supervision, in order to assess whether additional supports might be useful at this very challenging time.

This Standard is met.

Standard 6: Communicating the Church’s Safeguarding Message

Church Bodies appropriately communicate the Church’s child safeguarding message

The Irish Province of Carmelites has a comprehensive seven-page Communication Plan, drawn up and approved by the Carmelite Safeguarding Committee. This is set out in a landscape document, using the headings, Who, What, How, Who is responsible, and When. At the end of the plan, it is stated that ‘This Communication Plan will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Committee on an ongoing basis in order to ensure that the child safeguarding policies and procedures are being effectively implemented.’ The reviewers checked the Minutes of the Safeguarding Committee and confirmed that such reviews of the plan have been conducted, leading to adjustments to it, as required.

The safeguarding pages on the Order’s website are of a very high standard. They can be accessed by one click on the Safeguarding tab on the Order’s home page, and is at <https://carmelites.ie/safeguarding/>. The page has the following sections:

Section	Contents
Safeguarding Policy	The Order’s commitment to safeguarding, signed by the Prior Provincial
Safeguarding Statement, Structures and Roles	Child Safeguarding Statement of the Order of Carmelites Three-Year Strategic Plan for Safeguarding Safeguarding Structures and Roles Review by the National Board (2015)
Child Safeguarding Policies	Establishing a Safe Environment Code of Behaviour for Adults Code of Behaviour for Children Taking Children/Young People on Trips Away Anti-Bullying Policy Safe Use of Technology, Internet And Social Media Guidance on Children with Additional Needs Intimate Care Policy for Children Responding to Accidents/Incidents Complaints Procedure Use of Carmelite Property By External Groups
Recruitment and Selection Procedures	Recruitment of Candidates for the Order Recruitment of Staff Recruitment of Volunteers Safeguarding Procedures for Visiting Priests/Religious Protected Disclosures Policy (Whistleblowing Policy)

Training and Vetting	Links to dedicated sections on Garda Vetting, and on Safeguarding Training
Forms and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recruitment and Selection – 8 items ➤ Organising Events/Activities with Children – 9 items ➤ Other Resources – 3 items
Reporting Child Abuse	Disclosing and Reporting Concerns, Knowledge and Allegations of Child Abuse

The name and contact details of the DLP appear on every page, which saves a user from having to search for these.

The Carmelite Safeguarding Committee plans and oversees the communication of the information necessary for the protection of children and young people who engage with the Order in any way. The reviewers established that the Safeguarding Policy with contact details was displayed in the three locations they visited during the Review fieldwork.

The reviewer who visited the Carmelite Friary and Community Centre in Whitefriar Street made notes of some of his observations.

As part of my review visit, I was permitted to have access to all areas, and it was clear that there are numerous safeguarding leaflets available on display - including the fact that the National Board were conducting a review of safeguarding arrangements. It is clear from my tour of the facilities - both within the church area and the community centre/crèche - that there are numerous safeguarding posters available at key strategic points.

The leaflets provide key information on safeguarding and information on how to contact the DLP and report a safeguarding concern.

There is also information which is child friendly available on display in the church area and community centre. These safeguarding leaflets and information sheets in English are translated into four other languages, which reflects the multicultural and linguistic make-up of the parish.

The languages referred to are Irish, Spanish, Polish and Malayalam (the language of the Kerala region of India).

Other initiatives taken to communicate child safeguarding information by the Order include,

- Drafting and distributing Safeguarding leaflets to volunteers accompanying the Carmelite Pilgrimage to Lourdes in 2022.
- Updating the Child safeguarding statement (CSS) and the accompanying localised risk assessment. All Priors were all provided with copies of the CSS and asked to circulate these to members of the Order and other relevant people.
- A biannual safeguarding newsletter was produced in the years 2020 and 2021. Following the pandemic restrictions, it was decided by the Safeguarding Committee that shorter child safeguarding circulars and notices would be sent out from the Safeguarding Office when necessary.
- Circulating the Safeguarding Handbook to all who required access to it.
- Experimenting using QR codes on safeguarding posters to allow readers to access the text in Polish or Malayalam.

The Safeguarding Committee has put into the current Safeguarding Plan 2020 to 2024 the goal of preparing for, and running an annual Safeguarding Sunday.

That plan also sets out the goal of updating all safeguarding literature and the Order's website on a regular basis.

Based on all of the evidence that they have examined, the reviewers are satisfied that **this Standard is met.**

Standard 7: Quality-Assuring Compliance with the Standards

The Church Body develops a plan of action to quality assure compliance with the safeguarding standards. This action plan is reviewed annually. The Church body only has responsibility to monitor, evaluate and report on compliance with the indicators under each standard that apply to it, depending on its ministry.

The Carmelite Safeguarding Committee has been referenced in various parts of this report. The role of the committee is described in the Carmelite Safeguarding Handbook, on page 8, in the section on Safeguarding Structures and Roles. In this section of the handbook, the governance structure of the Order is set out. This includes the roles and responsibilities in child safeguarding of the Prior Provincial, the Carmelite Safeguarding Office / DLP, the Carmelite Child Safeguarding Advisory Committee, the Carmelite Child Safeguarding Committee, the Prior of each Carmelite community, and the Mandated Persons, which includes all friars and identified professional staff.

The two reviewers met with the committee members via Zoom during the Review fieldwork. This committee is comprised of six members, with representation of three of the Carmelite communities. One priest member is also a member of the Safeguarding Advisory Committee, which assists the exchange of information, as required. A second priest member is the Assistant Provincial of the Order. The other members, two women and two men, include the Chairperson, who had taught in Terenure College during his professional career, the Manager of the Carmelite Community Centre in Whitefriar Street, and the leader of Whitefriar Strings. All of the members have an in-depth knowledge of child safeguarding and of the Carmelite ethos and spiritual tradition.

As well as having the opportunity to discuss its work with the committee members, the reviewers examined the annual reports from the committee to the Prior Provincial. The Safeguarding Coordinator, who attends meetings of the committee in an *ex officio* capacity, presents her report to the committee, which in turn informs the Chairperson's report to the Prior Provincial. It is clear from both sources of evidence that this is a hard working committee that has achieved a lot in its four years of existence, continuing to function during the pandemic. The committee oversees the planning and rolling out of Garda Vetting, Training, Communications, and the annual Self-Audit. The information and suggestions that come back to the committee through the audit are used to inform planning for future developments.

The Carmelite Safeguarding Committee has developed and published a Safeguarding Plan for the period January 2022 to December 2024. The reviewers have examined this document and discussed it with the committee. It is of a high standard, and is very complete and ambitious in its scope. It addresses all seven Standards, and so encompasses Training and Communication.

The Order of Carmelites placed the following notice on their website on September 15, 2023 to inform people of this Review.

The Irish Province of Carmelites has invited the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (National Board) to conduct a review of safeguarding practice.

If you have any views about Safeguarding in the Irish Province of Carmelites, we invite you to come forward to us at (01) 298 4014, or to the National Board at (01) 505 3124.

The case management element of this review will focus on abuse allegations made against members of the Irish Province of Carmelites only (current, former or deceased).

If you wish to report a child safeguarding concern, please contact (name provided), Designated Liaison Person for Safeguarding.

Mob: 087 194 7212 E-mail: DLP@gortmuire.com

Alternatively, you can contact An Garda Síochána or TUSLA directly.

The reviewers have examined the annual reports from the DLP to the Prior Provincial for the years 2021 and 2022. These are detailed, and there is good information on the outreach to complainants / victims, as well as information on the management and support of respondent priests. These reports are of a high standard.

The reviewers received every assistance from the Prior Provincial, the DLP / Safeguarding Coordinator, and from every individual and group that they met and spoke with in the course of the Review fieldwork.

Having measured the performance of the Order against the indicators that underpin this Standard, the reviewers have determined that **this Standard is met.**

Conclusion

The reviewers are satisfied that the Irish Province of Carmelites has implemented a robust infrastructure to promote a culture of safety for children, while developing effective support structures for people reporting retrospective abuse.

The reviewers acknowledge the impact of the pandemic restrictions on the Order's ministry during the period under review, and at a time of increased activity within its Safeguarding Office.

The reviewers would like to highlight the following positive findings of the Review,

- The leadership of the Prior Provincial;
- The excellent work of the DLP / Safeguarding Coordinator;
- The open and non-defensive attitude of the Order;
- The prioritisation of the needs of complainants / victims; and
- The rational and effective governance structure developed by the Order.