



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

**National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland
Operational Plan 2025-2028**

Purpose

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (the National Board) was established to provide advice, services and assistance to constituent members of the Catholic Church in furtherance of the development of the safeguarding of children within the Roman Catholic Church on the island of Ireland. The National Board also has a role in monitoring Church bodies compliance with legislation, policy and best practice and is required to report upon activities of the Company and the cooperation which it receives in respect of such activities to the extent that such activities are always and in all respects carried out with due regard to the doctrines and applicable Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church.

This Strategic Plan outlines how the National Board staff will work to achieve the objectives of the National Board in the period 2025-2028.



OBJECTIVE 1

Provide Advice and Support on all aspects of child safeguarding and case management within the Catholic Church in Ireland

Ways to meet this objective	Performance Indicators
Provision of advice on case management issues as requested by relevant Church personnel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electronic copies of advice provided to be maintained on the Database• Provision of quarterly reports to the Directors of the National Board on advice provided by CEO• Annual report produced which provides statistical information on advice provided
Facilitation of meetings of the National Case Management Committee (NCMC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Copies of case submission and discussion forms from NCMC to each Church body who presents a case for advice to be maintained on Database• Agendas and minutes of meetings of NCMC maintained on Database• Quarterly reports to the National Board on NCMC meetings and Annual report on NCMC meetings
Provision of Training and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development and delivery of Training and Support Strategy• Quarterly reports to the Directors of the National Board on Training and Support delivered• Training returns from registered trainers on the delivery of basic awareness training maintained on Database• Database of all training delivered (local and national) maintained• Evaluation process for trainers established and monitored• Accreditation and reaccreditation records for all registered trainers maintained on Database
Provision of advice on safeguarding matters with the aim of creating safe environments for children	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electronic copies of advice provided maintained on Database



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quarterly reports to the Directors of the National Board on advice provided by CEO• Annual report which provides statistical information on advice provided
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	Evidence that this objective has been achieved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CEO reports to Board including evidence of activity related to this objective.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual report to include comparison with previous year activity across all indicators.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training and Support Strategy approved by Board.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•



OBJECTIVE 2

Development of policy, procedures and practice on all aspects of child safeguarding within the Catholic Church in Ireland

Ways to meet this objective	Performance Indicators
Development of guidance to support Church personnel, those in authority and those who have a safeguarding role in implementing ' <i>A Safe and Welcoming Church – Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2024</i> '.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic copies of guidance provided and to be available on the National Board website www.safeguarding.ie • Quarterly reports by CEO to the Directors of the National Board on guidance created or amended. • Details of amended guidance/guidance produced in quarterly newsletters • Annual report to include details of guidance provided.
Facilitation of Bi Annual Child Safeguarding Conference and Ecclesiastical Provincial Area Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes and agenda of Conference and Ecclesiastical Provincial Area Meetings to be published. • Evaluation forms from conference and Ecclesiastical Provincial Area Meetings utilised and examined for learning.
Development of Guidance, Advice and Practice (GAP) papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and release of two GAP papers in 2025.
Development of practice information as necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information meetings with DLPs and relevant Safeguarding Personnel when required. • Practice issues addressed in quarterly Newsletters. • Research, review and comparative inquiries as necessary and approved by Board.

	Evidence that this objective has been achieved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record of Ecclesiastical Province area meetings and Conference completed and stored on Database.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO reports to Board on progress towards achievement of objective every quarter or as required.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of GAP Papers and guidance on website.



OBJECTIVE 3

Monitoring the child safeguarding practice of constituent members within the Catholic Church in Ireland

Ways to meet this objective	Performance Indicators
Monitoring allegations that are reported by Church bodies and other personnel to the National Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledgement letters of allegations received and follow-up advice if requested recorded on Database.• Annual report on allegations received and comparison to previous years.
Completion of reviews into child safeguarding practice of constituent Church bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review reports completed following requests from Church Bodies.• Annual report with details of reviews completed.

	Evidence that this objective has been achieved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quarterly reports to the Directors of the National Board on allegations received by CEO.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publication of Review reports and Annual Report on National Board website.



OBJECTIVE 4

Establishing and running the National Office, legally, efficiently and effectively for our constituent members and sponsoring bodies

Ways to meet this objective	Performance Indicators
Effectively communicating with our stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Production and publication of Newsletters on a quarterly basis.• Revision of Website in line with feedback from stakeholders and in consultation with Board.• Annual Reports published on website.• 3-year Communication plan written and approved by Board.• Quarterly Reports to the Directors of the National Board by CEO.• Quarterly Reports to the Liaison Committee by CEO.• Attendance and reporting to quarterly meetings of the IEC by CEO and Chair.• Attendance of CEO at AMRI meetings as required.• Report by CEO to Coimirce AGM.
Ensuring compliance with data protection legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appointment and registration of DPO.• Procedures and policies relating to data protection in place and being implemented.• Process of data destruction implemented in line with legislative requirements.• Reporting of any data breaches to DPO.• Reporting on data protection issues quarterly to the Directors of the National Board.• MOU and Deeds signed by constituent members.
Ensuring effective financial management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular budget reports to the Directors of the National Board.• Annual budget planned and approved with Columba Centre Finance Department staff.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial management procedures in place and being implemented. • Reappointment of professional external auditors annually at AGM.
Ensuring effective compliance with lobbying legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of lobbying returns.
Ensuring effective human resource management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR policies in place. • Supervision records maintained. • Copies of signed induction forms maintained.
Ensuring effective management of risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk register created, reviewed and updated. • Appropriate insurance in place.
Ensuring effective running of the National Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board procedures in place in line with Memorandum and Articles of Association. • Memorandum and Articles of Association reviewed with Sponsoring Bodies. • Compliance with Charities Regulator. • Board review of Risk Register twice yearly.

	Evidence that this objective has been achieved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record of activities associated with Performance Indicators maintained through minutes of meetings which are recorded on Database.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report published on website.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recording of CEO reports to stakeholders on Database.



Specific Objectives for 2025

1. Hold Biannual Conference that engages those in the Church around Transitional Justice.
2. Develop a communications plan for the National Board, which includes ideas to develop better social media presence; an information leaflet on the work of the National Board and greater accessibility to guidance materials.
3. Establish mechanisms for conducting Reviews of Practice in Church Bodies in 2026, including recruitment of Independent Reviewers.
4. Produce 2 GAP papers on relevant safeguarding issues.
5. Engage with parents and young people involved in Church activities in order to obtain feedback on the effectiveness of Safeguarding measures in place.



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