

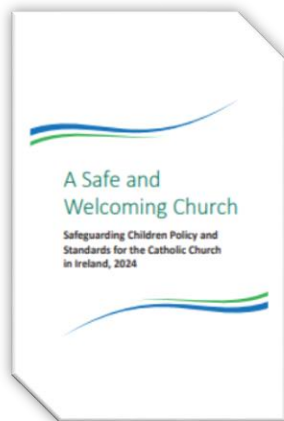


# A Guide to completing a Safeguarding audit

## Introduction

Safeguarding children sits at the heart of everything we do as Church followers, Clergy, Religious, safeguarding professionals and valued Volunteers.

Through our Church policy on child safeguarding *A Safe and Welcoming Church Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2024* we pledge to **safeguard children** and young people from **harm** and to support them in their development as valued and integral members of the Catholic Church in Ireland.



Compliance with child safeguarding standards is an important part of our safeguarding culture. Like yourselves we are always mindful of how we can ensure that safeguarding never becomes an obligatory, bureaucratic, tick-box exercise. With this in mind we have created an auditing template that we hope supports you to examine your safeguarding procedures, protocols and actions with the aim of

1. Protecting children as the Gospels compel us to.
2. Critically reflecting on how we meet the standards we have committed to through our acceptance and implementation of policy.
3. Identifying actions to bring us into compliance and ensure an embedding of our safeguarding culture.

The three standards:



### Leadership, Governance and Accountability.

The Church Authority embodies and imparts the Catholic Church's vision, principles and values, which are reflected and apparent in the child safeguarding culture, structures and practices at all levels and in all ministries with children.

### Nurturing a Culture of Safeguarding

Keeping children safe from harm is an imperative but more than that, the church will promote the wellbeing of children through their participation in the ministry of the church. The church will create and maintain environments that uphold children's rights and that create nurturing, caring conditions where children will flourish in faith and love.

### Responding pastorally and reporting according to Civil and Canon Law

The Catholic Church is committed to reporting all allegations, responding with support and care to complainants of abuse and their families, and ensuring appropriate accompaniment for respondents. The church will ensure a fair and just process of inquiry and equip and support those tasked with responding to allegations.

The annual self-audit will provide assurances to your Congregation or Diocese, the wider community, the Church Leader, Provincial, Bishop or Superior that every measure to promote the welfare of Children, protect them from abuse or maltreatment and to enable them to have the best outcomes when involved in activities within the church have been taken. The audit should be completed by the local safeguarding representatives, alongside the local Parish Priest/Superior/Community leader.

The audit template has two tabs both should be completed yearly. One by the local Parish or local community (religious) which is called local when this audit is completed the results should be sent to the Church Authority so that they can complete their central audit (central tab).

Through the audit you will look at the criteria for meeting each of the three standards, so for this reason the audit is broken into three sections reflecting the 3 Standards, namely: Leadership, Governance and Accountability; Nurturing a Culture of Safeguarding; and Responding Pastorally and reporting

When we are assessing we should reflect on these questions

- What practices do we implement that demonstrate this standard?
- How are our practices improving safeguarding outcomes for children?
- How do we engage with children, families and the community?
- How do we communicate our practice to our community?
- What are the areas where we need to take immediate action?
- What are the opportunities for quality improvement?

Within Column D of the audit tool you are asked a question about where the evidence of compliance with this objective is, for example where is your list of mandated persons stored?

D
Comments / Objective Evidence

In Column E you can sign post the reader to where they could find the objective proof outlined

Each standard or section will have questions relevant to meeting the criteria of the standard. When reviewing each question you are asked to rate your compliance under one of the below headings. If you hover over the bottom right hand corner of each box in column c it will allow you to pick one or other, requirements met or requirements not met.

Selection to be made in Column C (drop down)	Colour Coding for each Selection
Requirements are met or exceeded	
Requirements are not met.	

in Column D

E

**Details ( Evidence as requested in Column D)**

In Column F you can free write what action you are taking in order to meet compliance. For instance, you might discover when completing the audit that 3 key personnel have missed their refresher training. Your action will be a specific action with clear dates as to when they will complete training.

F

**Actions identified**

We are aware that great work goes on across our country to further the involvement of children within our church, with this in mind we have provided a section at the bottom of the local audit where the Parish/ Local group (religious) could highlight the measures that exceed the requirements of policy.

39	Examples of great practice	Please use this section to comment or advise of any measures you have taken that show a culture of child safeguarding within the environment you support.
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Remember you can take this audit and adapt it to the key indicators of the standards that your church authority feels are most important or require attention. The audit will also provide you with a score related to your answers to the indicators. This will give you a quick reckoning on the level of work required to improve practice in your organization.

Contact: If you require further information or assistance, please contact us *National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI)*  
T: 00 353 (01) 5053124 or email us at [admin@safeguarding.ie](mailto:admin@safeguarding.ie)