

# **Training and Support Strategy**

**2019-2022**



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

## Background

The Memorandum and Articles of Association of Coimirce(2009), govern the running and the operation of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI). The functions of the NBSCCCI can be grouped into three categories:

- Advice and support on all aspects of child safeguarding and case management within the Catholic Church in Ireland.
- Development of policy, procedures and practice on all aspects of child safeguarding within the Catholic Church in Ireland.
- Monitor child safeguarding practice of constituent members within the Catholic Church in Ireland.

This strategy focuses on the second of these categories - *Development of policy, procedures and practice on all aspects of child safeguarding within the Catholic Church in Ireland.*

## Vision

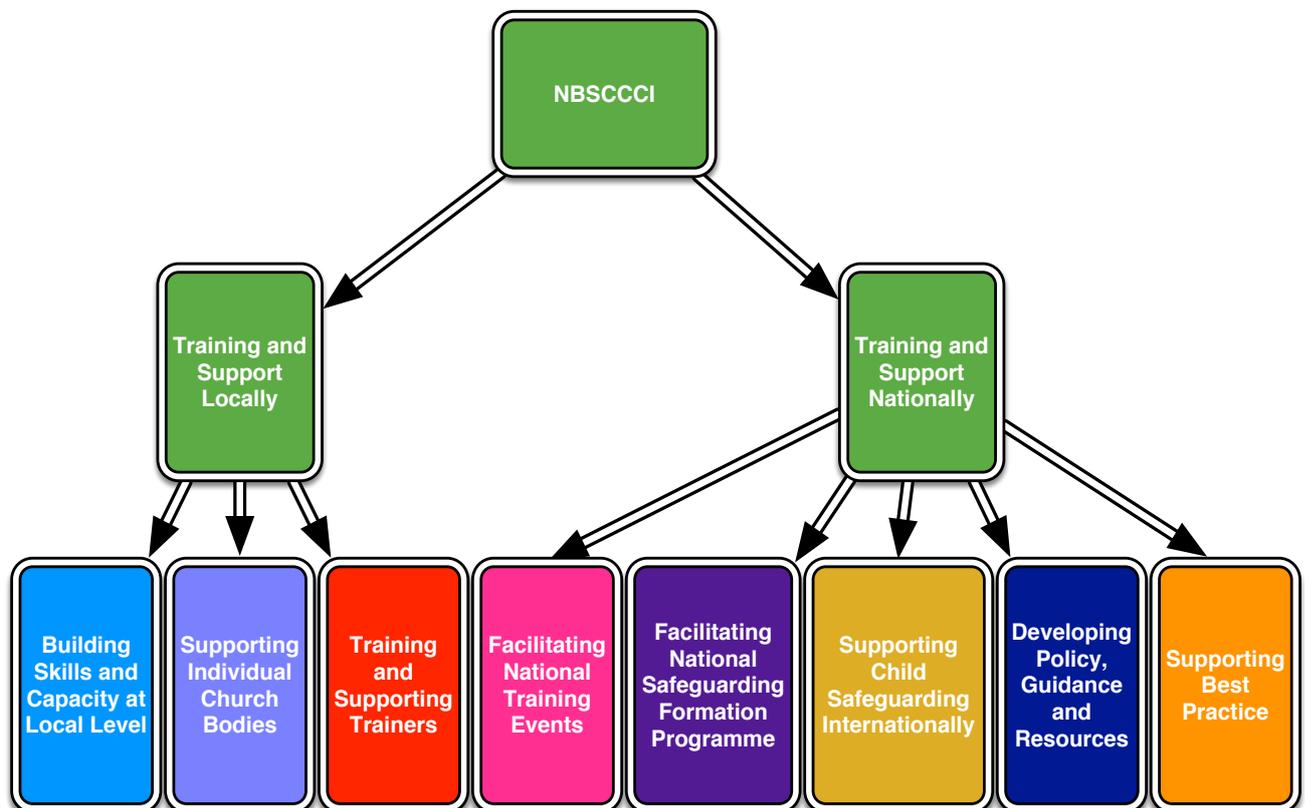
*Pope Francis said 'Our generation will show that it can rise to the promise found in each young person when we know how to give them space. This means that we have to create the material and spiritual conditions for their full development; to give them a solid basis on which to build their lives; to guarantee their safety and their education to be everything they can be; to pass on to them lasting values that make life worth living; to give them a transcendent horizon for their thirst for authentic happiness and their creativity for the good; to give them the legacy of a world worthy of human life; and to awaken in them their greatest potential as builders of their own destiny, sharing responsibility for the future of everyone. If we can do all this, we anticipate today the future that enters the world through the window of the young.'*

This strategy aims to empower and support Church authorities, Church bodies and Church personnel to create and maintain safe, material and spiritual environments for young people and the adults that work with them, through the provision of relevant, effective and high quality training and support.

## Objectives

To fulfil this vision the NBSCCCI will provide training and support on a local and national level through the fulfilment of a number of objectives grouped under the following headings

- A. Building Competence and Skills at Local Level.
- B. Training and Supporting Trainers.
- C. Supporting individual Church bodies.
- D. Facilitating National Training Events.
- E. Facilitating National Formation Programme.
- F. Supporting Child Safeguarding Internationally
- G. Developing Policy, Guidance and Resources.
- H. Supporting Best Practice.



## A. Building Skills and Competence at Local Level

One of the main roles of the NBSCCCI is to empower local Church personnel to implement the child safeguarding policy and standards. To assist with this, local training will be provided to Church personnel at a time and date that suits them and can be tailored to the individual needs of each Church body.

We deliver this tailored training in two ways:

### 1. Training for Child Safeguarding Committees and Advisory Panels

These training programmes are delivered over 3 hours by staff from the NBSCCCI and aim to empower the members of the committee and panel to understand their roles within the child safeguarding structure and function effectively as a committee or panel.

### 2. Specific Training

These training programmes are designed to suit the needs of each Church body and can be focused on any aspect of child safeguarding. The diversity of ministry within the Church means that training must be adaptable and tailored to particular circumstances and it is part of the role of the Director of Training and Support to recognise this diversity through developing and delivering high quality specific training to suit a training need. In delivering training this way the unique needs of each Church body can be explored to empower local Church personnel and ensure good child safeguarding practice.

### What we have achieved

Between 2016 and 2019 we have:

- Delivered 20 safeguarding committee training sessions and 2 of advisory panel training.
- Delivered 18 specific training courses on a range of safeguarding issues.

### What we will do

In the next three years we will:

- Deliver local training as requested by each Church body to empower Committees and Advisory panel members to further develop in their role.
- Deliver specific training as requested by each Church body to help provide clarity and consistency on child safeguarding issues whilst recognising the unique ministry of each Church body.

## B: Training and Supporting Trainers

A key aspect of ensuring the creation and maintenance of safe environments for children and the adults that work with them, is to deliver the message of child safeguarding and the structures within the Church in a relevant and appropriate way, to relevant Church personnel across Ireland. To do this, a one Church approach has been developed through the creation of a national basic awareness training programme, which is facilitated locally by trainers who are registered by the NBSCCCI.

### Role of the Trainer

All Trainers are registered with the NBSCCCI for a period of 3 years after the successful completion of a 6 day long assessment and training programme. They are coordinated by the Director of Training and Support with the assistance of tutors

### Role of the Tutor

To ensure the consistent high quality of training, requires the trainers to be appropriately skilled, trained and supported in their role. The role of the tutor is to:

- Carry out assessments of trainers to ensure they are able to deliver the NBSCCCI training effectively and to the required standards.
- To support trainers in their ecclesiastical provincial area by carrying out support meetings twice a year.
- To attend meeting with the Director of Training and Support in the NBSCCCI to assist with coordination of trainers and the development of new resources for training.
- To assist the Director of Training and Support in coordinating the sharing of trainers across Church bodies within the ecclesiastical provincial area (if required).

### What we have achieved

Between 2016 and 2019 we have:

- Facilitated 3 train the trainer's courses (18 days in total) contributing to 21809 people trained in child safeguarding in the Church in Ireland.
- Revised the training manual each year to take account of new policy, legislation and guidance
- Developed new programmes for trainers to deliver on Mandated Persons and Young Leaders.
- Developed new electronic section of the website to deliver automatic updates to trainers.

### What we will do

In the next three years we will:

- Ensure that there are sufficient skilled and experienced trainers to facilitate the one Church training programme.
- Continue to revise the one Church training programme to take account of feedback from trainers and changes in legislation, policy and guidance.
- Continue to strengthen support systems for trainers across the Church in Ireland.

## C: Supporting Individual Church Bodies

Some Church bodies who have initiated their ministry with children and are new to the child safeguarding requirements in Ireland, may need more intensive help to ensure they have the correct personnel, procedures and resources in place to meet the child safeguarding standards.

In these cases, at the request of the Church authority, the NBSCCCI will offer intensive support to help develop a plan of action to ensure that all ministries are carried out in accordance with the child safeguarding standards. This approach empowers local Church personnel, and provides the support in a way which is relevant to the ethos and experience of each individual Church body.

If national lay apostolates are included within the remit of the National Board it is likely that this area of support will grow as those that sign an MOU with the NBSCCCI strive to meet and embed the safeguarding standards within their specific ministry, this may mean that bespoke support programs need to be created to meet this need.

### What we have achieved

Between 2016 and 2019 we have:

- Offered a number of support meetings, and refined our approach to supporting Church bodies.
- Developed a formalised support programme in relation to structure of case management records at the request of Church authorities.

### What we will do

In the next three years we will:

- Continue to offer intensive support to individual Church bodies to assist them with embedding the child safeguarding standards in their practice and behaviour.
- Develop specific support programs as required to meet the needs of constituent lay apostolates.

## D: Facilitating National Training Events

A key part of ensuring that all of the child safeguarding standards are embedded into the practice of every constituent member of the Catholic Church is to provide relevant training that is specific to each role within the child safeguarding structure.

### National Three Year Training Plan

The NBSCCCI provides an annual training plan outlining the training courses that will be facilitated nationally each year. The Child Safeguarding Committees of each Church body should use this training plan to assist with assessing and fulfilling the training needs of the key personnel within their Church body.

Each training session within this plan has set learning objectives which are evaluated at the end of each session to ensure training is relevant and appropriate.

### Targeted Training

The NBSCCCI will continue to develop its administrative, communication and electronic systems, to ensure that training is targeted and communicated to relevant personnel in line with data protection requirements.

### What we have achieved

Between 2016 and 2019 we have:

- Delivered 29 national training events in line with three annual plans.
- Refined our Communications strategy for national training events through the website, newsletter, ecclesiastical provincial area meetings and direct email, in line with data protection requirements.

### What we will do

In the next three years we will:

- Facilitate national training events in line with the National Training Plan.
- Ensure that annual training plans are available and accessible on our website.
- Communicate national training events through the website, newsletter, ecclesiastical provincial area meetings and direct email, based on the further development of the national database.

## E: Facilitating National Safeguarding Formation Programme

The NBSCCCI has been providing child safeguarding training to seminarians in St. Patrick's College Maynooth since 2009, and more recently to other houses of religious formation in Ireland and to the Pontifical Irish College in Rome.

Through the experience of delivering this training to men in formation, the National Board has identified additional areas for relevant training that will better prepare these men for their future ministry with children, as priests. Working with the formation teams in St. Patrick's College Maynooth, the Pontifical Irish College in Rome, and Redemptoris Mater, the National Board is facilitating a new programme of child safeguarding training in formation.

The course is called Head to Heart-Child Safeguarding in Formation. This name was chosen to fill the gap identified through current practice and experience of providing child safeguarding training which is truly reflective, rather than simply knowing about the policies and procedures, to understand how they can be integrated into the spiritual lives of priests. This approach has also been reflected by Pope Francis when he said "...an education that integrates and harmonizes intellect (the head), affections (the heart) and activity (the hands)...will offer students a growth that is harmonious not only at the personal level but also at the level of society. We urgently need to create spaces where fragmentation is not the guiding principle, even for thinking. To do this, it is necessary to teach how to reflect on what we are feeling and doing; to feel what we are thinking and doing; to do what we are thinking and feeling. An interplay of capacities at the service of the person and society."

Each seminarian will complete ten modules across their period of formation and each will be assessed using reflective readings and exercises before and after each module, to assist with integrating the theory and practice of safeguarding into ministry.

### What we will do

In the next three years we will:

- Continue to facilitate and evaluate the Head to Heart programme.
- Explore opportunities to expand this programme to those in formation for religious congregation.
- Explore opportunities to expand this programme to those who have already been ordained or taken vows in the context of ongoing formation.

## F: Supporting Child Safeguarding Internationally

A growing area of work for the NBSCCCI is supporting the work of child safeguarding on an international level. Whilst the remit of the NBSCCCI is specifically for the island of Ireland, our support work has increasingly included an international element to it, to share our practice to assist other bodies across the world. We do this in the following ways

### 1. Supporting Irish missionary orders who operate internationally

The NBSCCCI provides training for Irish missionary orders who operate overseas, to assist them in embedding good child safeguarding from Ireland in the countries in which they minister. This training is accompanied by guidance and templates based on the safeguarding standards of Ireland.

### 2. Sharing resources and Experience with Church and state bodies on an international level

The NBSCCCI shares the guidance, and material it produces with other Church and state bodies, nationally and internationally. If requested by other Church bodies internationally the NBSCCCI will provide guidance and support as appropriate.

### 3. Facilitating training for visiting clerics, religious and members of Church personnel

The NBSCCCI facilitates formation training at Loreto House as part of their ongoing formation programme for students from across the world, in addition the NBSCCCI will if requested by another Church body endeavor to facilitate visits from other Church personnel to enable them to learn from the experience of child safeguarding in Ireland.

## What we will do

In the next three years we will:

- Continue to develop and facilitate national training events to support the work of Irish missionaries overseas.
- Develop and engage with key stakeholders and other Church bodies to share our resources and experience as required.
- Continue to facilitate safeguarding training for international clerics/religious who are ministering in Ireland.
- Explore further opportunities to develop our support for child safeguarding internationally, in consultation with other Church personnel and our sponsoring bodies.

## F: Developing Policy, Guidance and Resources

To ensure the new policy and seven child safeguarding standards are embedded across the Church the NBSCCCI will provide resources to underpin the support and training. This is done in a number of ways.

### 1. Continuous development of supporting Guidance

The NBSCCCI will continue to develop guidance on the implementation of the “Safeguarding Children 2016” and ensure this guidance is accessible to all personnel who wish to use it. The NBSCCCI will update this guidance as required to ensure that it represents best practice.

### 2. Training Resources

The NBSCCCI will work with trainers to share best practice and resources and make these available to Church personnel who wish to use them.

## What we have achieved

Between 2016 and 2019 we have:

- Delivered 12 inductions and 4 implementation meetings on Child Safeguarding Policy and Standards 2016 sessions across the Church.
- Updated the Guidance 197 times.
- Streamlined our communications strategy so changes to the guidance and training manual occur at the same time as the quarterly newsletter, to assist Church personnel with updating practice and procedures.
- Developed new sections of our website to function as a constantly updating resource pack for specific roles in the safeguarding structure.

## What we will do

In the next three years we will:

- Ensure that Safeguarding Children 2016 is available and implemented across the Church.
  - Ensure that the supporting guidance documentation is accessible, usable and available.
- Work with all members of Church personnel to ensure the guidance document is relevant and reflects best practice.
- Explore new ways of using additional methods of communication to make the policy, guidance and resources accessible.

## G: Supporting Best Practice

To do this the NBSCCCI has developed a range of mechanisms to ensure that it is informed by best practice and that it can share best practice amongst constituent members.

The NBSCCCI will update its constituents on developments in best child safeguarding practice through:

### 1. Interagency Initiatives

To inform its practice on training and support the NBSCCCI will engage with others working in the field of child safeguarding within the statutory and voluntary sector. Through sharing knowledge and practices, the NBSCCCI will update its guidance which will be available to inform improvements in practice across the Church.

### 2. Development of GAP Papers

To highlight best practice based on current research the NBSCCCI will develop a range of Guidance Advice and Practice papers (GAP) to assist Church bodies in taking appropriate child safeguarding action.

### 3. Ecclesiastical Provincial Area Meetings

Following an independent review of the NBSCCCI it was recommended that the office facilitates regional meetings of relevant representatives of the Church to assist with communicating the Church's child safeguarding message. Facilitating meetings of relevant Church personnel on a regular basis throughout the four ecclesiastical provinces (Armagh, Dublin, Cashel and Tuam) will ensure that members of Church personnel understand and can contribute to the work of safeguarding on a national basis.

## What we have achieved

Between 2016 and 2019 we have:

- Attended 44 interagency meetings.
- Developed 3 GAP papers
- Facilitated 5 ecclesiastical provincial area meetings.

## What we will do

In the next three years we will:

- Consult on our training and support with relevant members of Church personnel and external bodies.
- Participate in appropriate network and support groups to develop best practice.
- Develop GAP papers as necessary to ensure safeguarding children practice is informed by developments nationally and internationally.
- Facilitate ecclesiastical provincial area meetings to ensure that each Church body feels connected and able to contribute to the work of the NBSCCCI.



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR  
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IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND

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Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2019

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