



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

**Second Review of Child Safeguarding Practice
in the Archdiocese of Dublin
undertaken by**

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

Date of Review Report: March 2020

CONTENTS

	Page
Background: -----	3
Standard 1: Safe Environments: -----	4
Standard 2: Responding to Reports: -----	7
Standard 3: Care of Complainants: -----	9
Standard 4: Management of Respondents: -----	10
Standard 5: Training: -----	11
Standard 6: Communications: -----	12
Standard 7: Quality Assurance: -----	13
Conclusion: -----	13

Background

In 2016, Church authorities adopted *Safeguarding Children - Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland*. In order to assess compliance against the Church's standards, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin invited the National Board to undertake a Review of practice in 2019. The archdiocese was previously reviewed in January 2014 under the *Safeguarding Children - Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2008*.

The purpose of this second round of Reviews is to assess the 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* and make statements based on evidence, which 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.

The period covered by this Review is from February 2014 to September 30th, 2019. This Review therefore has considered all cases reported to the archdiocese during this time period, in addition to cases still being managed at the time of this Review. Practice related to all the Standards is assessed from the date of the introduction of the revised National Standards in 2016.

The archdiocese requested all parishes to place a notice of the impending Review in their Parish Newsletters; and it also placed a notice on its website informing people of the approaching Review, inviting anyone with views on safeguarding practice that they wished to share, to come forward; and one person made a submission to the reviewers.

The on-site fieldwork was carried out on the 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st November 2019 by three reviewers, and the following individuals and groups were either met or spoken with by telephone by the reviewers during this time, or in the days following:

- The Church authority, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin.
- The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Director of CSPS (to avoid confusion, this member of staff will be referred to as the Director from here on).
- Other members of the CSPS team, including the Priest Support Coordinator, Child Protection Officer, the Administrator for Garda Vetting, the Training and Development Coordinator, the Safeguarding Officer, and the Administrator for Garda Vetting.
- Diocesan Trainers
- The Priest Delegate.
- A Priest Advisor.
- Respondent Supervision and Support Committee Representatives.
- The Chairperson of the Advisory Panel.
- Statutory Representatives of the Inter Agency Panel.
- The Chairperson and Member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee.
- Parish Safeguarding Representatives.
- Parish Priests.
- Four Complainants.
- The Youth Ministry Coordinator.
- Leaders of children's groups from 3 parishes.
- The Chairperson of a Parish Pastoral Council.
- Parish Catechist.

As part of this process, case management records were examined and any clarifications required were provided by the Director. In addition, all relevant written safeguarding children material was reviewed. The reviewers would like to express their thanks to Archbishop Martin, his safeguarding staff and volunteers and the priests and lay faithful of the Dublin Archdiocese for the invitation to conduct a Review and for their co-operation during this process.

Standard 1 – Safe Environments

The Child Safeguarding and Protection Service

Given the size of the archdiocese of Dublin, Archbishop Martin has developed a large safeguarding team, of 10 lay staff and 1 priest (part-time) to manage all aspects of safeguarding and case management. In addition, it has three committees, which provide advice and assistance to the Archbishop of Dublin in the creation and maintenance of safe environments for children within the diocese. The three committees are:

- The Diocesan Safeguarding Committee provides advice on the implementation of safeguarding policy;
- The Diocesan Advisory Panel provides advice on the management of allegations of child abuse against Dublin diocesan clerics;
- The Respondent Supervision and Support Committee (formerly the Priest Support Committee). This committee is unique to Dublin.

Safe Recruitment

Evidence of good practice included examining the *Child Safeguarding in the Archdiocese of Dublin: Statement, Reporting Procedures and Good Practice Guidelines, 2018; the Parish Safeguarding Representative Handbook* and the *Safeguarding Children: Handbook for Parish Clergy*.

There is a three-year cycle for vetting in the archdiocese. Files created within parishes in respect of vetting prior to 2016 are now archived. Parishes submit hard copies of their vetting applications, which are processed using the database approved by the National Vetting Bureau. The archdiocese acts as a service provider in respect of Garda vetting, processing requests from its **197** parishes; from all non-teaching personnel in over **500** schools; and from a significant number of voluntary bodies, in addition to some of the Dublin-based Religious Orders.

Requests for Garda Vetting from 2016 were as follows:

- 2016 (last 6 months) 9,000 requests
- 2017 21,788 requests
- 2018 30,500 requests (including World Meeting of Families).

Improvements have been made to the Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1) with a tick-box added to it, which aids the applicant to select the role for which they are being vetted. This removes ambiguity, and it is a novel idea, which could perhaps be adopted by other dioceses to streamline their vetting application process. Vetting for schools is now done without use of paper forms or records, and there are plans to extend paperless vetting to parishes in the near future.

A submission was made by a member of the lay faithful who expressed concern about the archdiocese extending its brief of asking for people to be vetted who it was argued do not fall within the criteria set in legislation.¹ This submission was shared by the National Board with the Archbishop.

The reviewers have examined the written procedures relating to recruitment and confidentiality and are satisfied from interviews conducted and documents reviewed that they are appropriate and are being followed.

¹ The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016

In addition to a code of conduct, adult volunteers must sign a confidential application form, providing the names of two people who can vouch for their suitability for the post. Adult employees and volunteers must also sign a declaration form to disclose if they have been convicted of a criminal offence or have been accused of inappropriate behaviour towards children in the past.

Safe Care Practices, including Codes of Conduct

Reviewers had the opportunity to check the notices in the church buildings of 2 of the 3 parishes that were visited. Discussions were held with the Parish Safeguarding Representatives (PSRs) to establish that they had the requisite knowledge of the child safeguarding systems which must exist in their parishes. Based on these discussions, on evidence from parish visits, on interviews with members of the Safeguarding Committee and from sampling some parish self-audit returns, the reviewers are satisfied that the PSR system is operating effectively.

The diocesan Code of Conduct was developed by the CSPS for staff and volunteers. It clearly sets out the expectations of adult behaviour when working with children and young people in the archdiocese of Dublin. There is also a code of conduct in a simpler format which must be signed by children/young people who intend to participate in church activities. Parent/Guardians and their children must sign a Parent/Guardian Child Consent Form, outlining parent's contact details, any special needs/requirements of the child, and who to contact in the event of an emergency.

The reviewers had the pleasure of observing a children's choir; a Pope John Paul II Award meeting; and a Confirmation Club, in three separate parishes. Reviewers witnessed the practical engagement of leaders with the children and young people in their care, and obtained evidence of rules and codes of behaviour that have been formulated and followed by the children. A sign-in register was in evidence in the three parishes; and some parental consent forms were being returned on the nights of the reviewers' visits.

The Confirmation Club participants had drawn up their own code of conduct which was clearly displayed in their meeting room; while the young people involved in the Pope John Paul II Award meeting were in the process of drawing up a code of conduct. The leaders of the children's choir were advised to ensure that the children formulate their own code of conduct for use by the group.

The reviewers believe that the leaders were well-informed about risk and hazard assessment for activities involving children and young people; on the avoidance of one-to-one contact with them; and on adult to children supervision ratios. Children spoken with were well able to speak about their understanding of how to keep themselves safe, about their feelings of being safe, and about what to do if they have worries or concerns.

The reviewers have been advised that parish sacristy attendance registers are in place in most, but not all parishes. Ensuring that attendance registers are kept in all parishes should be made a priority.

One Parish Safeguarding Representative interviewed spoke of her belief that there is much more awareness of safeguarding in all aspects of engagement of children; and she gave an example of having a window installed in a sacristy to allow for visibility of the priest and children undertaking altar serving.

Support to Children and Young People

Reviewers are satisfied that teenagers involved in initiatives such as the Lourdes Pilgrimage and World Youth Day are being properly inducted, trained and supported regarding safeguarding issues. The archdiocesan website includes a section for youth² which comprehensively describes the projects being undertaken to support young people, such as *Teenhope, Faithfest*, a retreat in Ovoca Manor, Co. Wicklow, and the John Paul II Awards. Details of the projects and contact persons are also included in the booklet, entitled *Youth and Young Adults*. Reviewers interviewed the pastoral worker in the office of

² www.evangelisation.ie/youth-and-young-adults/

Evangelisation and Ecumenism in relation to the afore-mentioned initiatives and are satisfied that safeguarding policy is being followed in relation to risk assessment, vetting of volunteers, safeguarding training, sign-in registers, codes of conduct and parental consent.

The Archdiocese of Dublin has printed a young person's information leaflet, entitled *Child Safeguarding and Protection*. This informs young people of their rights and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. Reviewers are satisfied that the safeguarding needs of teenage participants in Church activities are being met.

However, reviewers believe there is a need for age-appropriate, child-friendly safeguarding policies, leaflets and codes of conduct to be developed, aimed at primary-school age children and displayed at a level that they can read and in a language that they can understand.

Use of Church Property

External groups must be insured and must sign to confirm that they have a safeguarding policy in place. The reviewers are satisfied that the very clear *Diocesan Policy on Groups Using Parish Property to Run Activities for Children* is being implemented in practice.

Hazard Assessment

Two examples of implementing the Dublin Archdiocese guide on hazard assessment were provided to the reviewers, the first by the Child Protection Officer who is involved in the organisation of the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes; and the second by a catechist, who was involved in organising a trip to Panama for World Youth Day in August 2019.

The Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes takes two pilgrimages to Lourdes every year, the bigger of which is in September and is led by Archbishop Martin. 2,000 pilgrims travel to Lourdes, together with 550 voluntary helpers and around 145 young people from secondary schools in the archdiocese, who assist with the care of sick pilgrims. Adult-to-young person ratios are well within guidelines. A team prepares the young volunteers; and prior to the Pilgrimage an evening of training is held for them. All adult volunteers attend safeguarding training. Upon their arrival in Lourdes, clinics are held twice daily for volunteers and pilgrims to help manage their feelings, as the Lourdes visit can be emotionally challenging. Significant efforts are made to assure volunteers that emotional support is available to them while on the pilgrimage.

The smaller Lourdes Pilgrimage is held at Easter each year and caters for young sick and disabled pilgrims. Volunteers are assigned to particular children as kind of 'keyworkers' and they visit them before they travel to get to know them a little; and there is a reunion in Dublin a short time after everyone returns. The focus of the pilgrimage is very much on the children and meeting their needs.

The catechist described how 30 people travelled from the archdiocese to Panama to celebrate World Youth Day in August 2019. Three of who were under 18-years of age. Everyone on the trip was Garda vetted, having been given a vetting form as part of their registration pack; and they all underwent a full day's safeguarding training.

Use of Social Media by Church Personnel

The reviewers examined the policy document *Working Safely with Children and Young People. Use of Information Technology: Guidelines for Archdiocese of Dublin, 2015*, which clearly sets out the parameters for safe and acceptable use of mobile phones, bundled text and e-mail messaging, photography/digital cameras, Internet usage, websites, social media, and Webcams and CCTV. There is also a very clear set of *Social and Digital Media Guidelines for volunteers on the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes*.

The person in charge of Youth Ministry was interviewed and demonstrated a good awareness of the safeguarding requirements in relation to the use of social media.

Whistleblowing

The appropriate policy and procedure is in place, but it has not needed to be used to date.

Visiting Clergy Seeking to Minister in the Archdiocese of Dublin

Archdiocesan clergy who are in ministry are Garda vetted every three years; those who are not in ministry are not vetted. Clergy who come into the archdiocese can only minister if they receive faculties from the Archbishop.

It is clear from the procedures and written records examined, and from the discussions held with staff, volunteers and children that Archbishop Martin and the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service are dedicated to ensuring the maintenance of safe environments for children in the Dublin Archdiocese.

Overall, the requirements of Standard 1 are being met and managed effectively.

Standard 2 – Responding to reports

In 2019, the Archdiocese of Dublin published a handbook entitled *Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of children or Vulnerable Adults against clerics of the Archdiocese of Dublin, 2019*, which details the procedures involved in the civil and canonical process when an allegation of abuse is received by the archdiocese.

Incidents or notifications of allegations since the last review

According to CSPS records, there have been **72** allegations of child abuse against **33** Dublin archdiocesan priests and former priests received since the last Review in 2014, of which **10** allegations have been made against **9** living priests, two (2) of whom remain in ministry, and two (2) of whom are out of ministry at the time of this Review. A further five (5) living priests were retired and in good standing when allegations were received about them, and this remains their status.

There were **36** allegations against **7** former priests.

Table 1 – Number of allegations by each category of respondent, and reporting status

Respondent Type	Number by Allegation and Respondent	Number Reported to Garda	Number Reported to the Child and Family Agency - Tusla	Number Reported to NBSCCCI
Dublin Diocesan Priests	72 allegations against 33 priests and former priests. [One of these allegations was subsequently re-classified as a suspicion].	All of these allegations were reported to the Gardaí except for 10 which had been reported by the Gardaí to the Diocese. Of the remaining 62: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 59 were reported by CSPS• 2 were reported by religious orders and• 1 by another diocese.	43 allegations reported to Tusla: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40 were reported by CSPS• 1 was reported by a hospital• 1 was reported by <i>Towards Healing</i>• 1 was reported by a religious order 27 were not reported to Tusla because the respondents were deceased.	71 were reported by CSPS 1 was reported by the Order to which the respondent belonged before he became a Dublin diocesan priest

			1 was not reported because the alleged abuse occurred in the UK. 1 was not reported because there were no details on the alleged victim	
Religious Priests	8 allegations against 7 priests	CSPS reported to Gardaí in relation to 5 allegations. ACCORD reported 1. The relevant orders made the notifications in relation to 2.	CSPS informed HSE/Tusla of 3 allegations. 1 was made by ACCORD. Some were deceased; and the relevant orders made the notifications in relation to the others	Responsibility for this rested with the relevant orders
Priests of other dioceses	4 allegations against 4 diocesan priests	CSPS reported in relation to 2 allegations. <i>Towards Healing</i> reported 1. The relevant diocese reported 1	CSPS reported 2 allegations. <i>Towards Healing</i> reported 1. The relevant diocese reported 1.	Responsibility for this rested with the relevant diocese
Non-ordained Religious (Brothers and Sisters)	10 allegations against 8 Brothers and 1 Sister [Note: the identification of some respondents is uncertain in some instances]	CSPS reported 7 allegations. The relevant orders reported 2. In the other case, the allegation was already known to the Gardaí.	CSPS reported 5 allegations. The relevant orders reported 2. The other cases were referred to the relevant Orders due to difficulties in relation to the identity of the respondents	Responsibility for this rested with the relevant order

There was a delay in notifying the National Board of nine allegations; these cases were finally reported on the 23rd October 2019, along with a letter in which the circumstances for the delay were explained. Complaints received should be reported to the National Board, once the threshold for reporting has been reached.

Case files in the Dublin Archdiocese are organised and managed meticulously. They are stored in locked cabinets in a secure office. An enormous amount of work has gone into ensuring that every step in the investigatory and supervisory process is thoroughly documented and filed in an organised fashion.

Standard 3 – Care of Complainants

Assessment of Complainant Support from Case File

Sources of information about engagement with complainants were (i) discussions with Archbishop Martin, the DLP, the Child Protection Officer and the Safeguarding Officer for Vulnerable Adults; (ii) telephone interviews with two complainants; (iii) face to face interviews with two complainants; (iv) studying the case management file records.

The Dublin Archdiocese is currently involved to varying degrees in the care and support of approximately 30 complainants; personal contact has been made with all of these people. Five of the complainants are receiving financial support for further education.

The complainants are offered a range of service options through the diocesan support service, including *Towards Healing* and *Towards Peace*. The reviewers learned that not only are the complainants themselves being cared for, but there is a very genuine effort being made to look after their children, where appropriate. The reviewers viewed detailed records of a compassionate response to and support of complainants on each of the case management files.

Support personnel

The support personnel are:

- The Director of the CSPS
- The Child Protection Officer
- The Safeguarding Officer for Vulnerable Adults
- The CSPS administrators

It is notable that even though designated roles are assigned to each support person, they are all available to support and listen to complainants and work together to provide a caring service.

Interviews with complainants

The reviewers had the opportunity to interview four complainants, each of who had made allegations of abuse during the period covered by this Review. All spoke in very positive terms of the compassionate and effective responses they received from the CSPS staff they met. They described these staff members variously as *kind, helpful and decent; so human, so professional; the most gentle soul on earth; has been a rock ... I had nobody else because nobody else knew. She was really genuine and still is.*

The Safeguarding Officer, the Child Protection Officer and the Director of CSPS are identified as case managers and provide a caring service to complainants of child sexual abuse within the archdiocese.

Overall, the diocesan response to complainants reflects a respect for the people coming forward and recognition that they have individual needs requiring a range of responses. In accessing a variety of services, the diocese has evidenced engagement with external voluntary and statutory bodies.

The reviewers commend the good example given by Archbishop Martin and the strong cooperation and support of the CSPS team in how they respond to and care for complainants.

Standard 4 – Management of Respondents

Priests receiving care and support under a Management Plan

There is a management plan in place for each of the 15 respondent priests who are still living; and all of these men are being supervised, by the Priest Support Coordinator (13), or the Safeguarding Officer (2), or in the case of seven of them, by both.

Priest Delegate

Reviewers for the 2019 review met with the Priest Delegate and he explained his role, in detail, to them. Among his formal duties are always being present as the archbishop's delegate when a priest is being informed of a concern or allegation; organising the availability of priest advisers from a panel for any priest who may need one; working alongside the Director in advising the archbishop in relation to individual priest respondents; personally delivering canonical decrees and precepts when these are issued by the archbishop; and attending all Priest Support Committee meetings. Along with his formal duties, as a brother priest he provides a level of support and understanding to the priests of the archdiocese around the whole area of child safeguarding. He reports to the Director of CSPS.

Priest Advisors

All respondent priests are assigned a priest advisor. Only one priest advisor was interviewed, so his views may not be representative of the opinion of the priest advisors, in general. This man has been in the role for 20 years, and during this time has provided advice and support to five respondents. He believes that formal training in the role was less important than having the qualities of listening, being non-judgemental, and giving information to the accused priest when needed.

Advisory Panel

The Advisory Panel was established in 1996, although the membership has been refreshed from time to time since then. The Director and the Child Protection Officer prepare the briefing documents for consideration by the panel members; in these the priest is not identified and is given a pseudonym. An administrative person takes the Minutes in which the panel's advice to the archbishop is communicated. If the panel believes that the case discussed has reached the canonical threshold of a *semblance of truth*, the advice will include appointing a properly qualified auditor to conduct a preliminary canonical investigation, and whether the cleric should be stepped aside from ministry. The reviewers met the Chairperson of the Advisory Panel; they examined the written briefs prepared for members in advance of their meetings; and they read records of discussions on all of the 14 cases that had been considered by the panel since the previous Review.

The reporting responsibilities of the archdiocese to the statutory authorities are not deferred to await the outcome of discussions of the Advisory Panel; these are handled by the full-time professional CSPS personnel

The Respondent Supervision and Support Committee (formerly the Priest Support Committee)

The Priest Support Group has been developed into the Respondent Supervision and Support Committee, following a review facilitated by an external consultant in 2019. This committee is unique to the Dublin Archdiocese. Their regular meetings every 4 to 6 weeks allow for the sharing of information and ideas; and provide back-up to the CSPS team who sometimes encounter difficult scenarios and decisions in relation to the monitoring and supervision of respondents.

Child Protection Officer

The review team were impressed by the level of training that the Child Protection Officer has received in the area of risk management and the access to external supervision for this aspect of her work. The management of respondent priests is greatly benefitting from the comprehensive application of risk analysis and risk management plans, as assessed by the reviewers.

The Priest Support Coordinator

The Priest Support Coordinator previously worked in An Garda Síochána. He has been in his role in the archdiocese since 2008. The Priest Support Coordinator explained that he is currently monitoring 13 respondents have been accused of child sexual abuse. The Priest Support Coordinator visits each respondent on his caseload regularly. Two of these respondents are laicised; but the Coordinator still regularly visits them as they are still being supported by the diocese.

Respondent Questionnaires

Prior to conducting this review, questionnaires were forwarded to respondents asking them how they felt they were being treated and managed by the archdiocese. It must be noted that not all allegations result in a finding that abuse has happened. Three respondents replied to the questionnaires; and of these, two were satisfied with the pastoral support that they have received. The third respondent highlighted his experience which he felt was destructive and damaging to him personally.

A very strong and defined process has been developed to ensure that respondents in the Dublin Archdiocese are managed and cared for in a systematic manner. The Priest Delegate, Priest Advisor, Priest Support Coordinator and Child Protection Officer provide support and supervision; while the functions of the Advisory Panel and the Respondent Supervision and Support Committee are to provide objective, independent advice to enable Archbishop Martin to make decisions in relation to each respondent.

Respondents have reported that delays - whether by the Gardaí, TUSLA or in relation to the completion of a canonical process - cause them extra anxiety and stress.

Reviewers are satisfied that the requirements of Standard 4 have been met.

Standard 5 - Training

Trainers

Reviewers interviewed the Training and Development Coordinator who outlined that safeguarding training is delivered by a team of **11** trainers. All trainers have received training accredited by the NBSCCCI. Four of the trainers are on the staff of the CSPS (they were interviewed by reviewers); one is a diocesan trainer based in the HR office; and six of the trainers are volunteers.

Members of the CSPS and the Parish Safeguarding Representatives interviewed by reviewers were grateful for the service that the training team provide in the archdiocese. They reported that the Training and Development Coordinator is always helpful and receptive to calls, even outside of office hours.

Numbers trained

In November 2019 there were **401** Parish Safeguarding Representatives. Since 2015, **364** of this group have attended the one-day training; **20** received this training prior to 2015; **17** representatives are still to receive the full day training, including **14** newly-appointed persons. There is a turnover of twenty to thirty representatives per year within the archdiocese. The data base tracks the training of diocesan appointees, which includes clergy, sacristans and the chairs of Parish Pastoral Councils.

Volunteers who do not work with children receive the two-hour briefing.

From 1.1.19 to 12.11.19 there have been **109** training sessions; **34** were 1-day, **64** were 2-hour briefing sessions; **11** were miscellaneous; and **1** was in respect of the Lourdes Pilgrimage prayer guides. In the 12 months to 30 April 2009, approximately **2,900** people have attended Child Safeguarding training.

Mandated persons' training has been delivered through the Deanery structure, primarily to clergy. Training has also been facilitated for Lay Apostolates, for Safeguarding Committee members and for the Advisory Panel, The Training and Development Coordinator is in attendance at all meetings of the Safeguarding Committee.

Training Plan

Training is included in the Diocesan Safeguarding Strategic Plan. Objective 4 of *The Diocesan Safeguarding and Strategic Plan 2017 to 2019* states that ‘...taking the beginning of 2015 as a baseline, every priest, deacon, parish sister, safeguarding representative and those working with children and vulnerable adults will have completed one-day safeguarding training by the end of 2019’. The archdiocese was unable to confirm if this objective has been met, as not all parishes keep registers with details of volunteers and the training they have undertaken. The CSPS have identified a need to provide assistance in this area, like an easy-to-use database which could be applied by all parishes to consistently record the relevant information.

Supports to Parishes

As previously stated, the Training and Development Coordinator provides support for parishes, and he calls to parishes that require extra assistance to ensure that procedures are being followed in a timely manner.

The reviewers were impressed by the commitment of the Training and Development Coordinator and his training team to ensuring that they have captured the training requirements of all safeguarding personnel within the archdiocese. The connection between the provision of Child Safeguarding training and its practical implementation at ground level was in evidence to the reviewers during the course of fieldwork visits undertaken as part of the Review process. Discussions with the different safeguarding personnel, leaders, parents and children alike revealed that the need for training is fully recognised by those involved and is viewed as an important requisite when participating in Church related activities.

Standard 6 - Communications

The Dublin Archdiocesan website is user-friendly and provides comprehensive, clear information on all aspects of safeguarding, including Garda vetting, policy and procedures, training, resources and the procedure for making complaints.

The reviewers were provided with information booklets outlining valuable information in the following areas:

- *Procedure for dealing with allegations of Sexual Abuse of Children or Vulnerable Adults.*
- *Parish Safeguarding Representative Handbook.*
- *Safeguarding Children Handbook for Parish Clergy.*
- *Child Safeguarding in the Archdiocese of Dublin: Statement, Reporting Procedures and Good Practice Guidelines, 2018.*
- *Child Safeguarding and Protection Service leaflet.*
- *Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes booklet.*
- *Monthly Parish Newsletters.*
- *Child Safeguarding Policy Statement.*
- *Child Safeguarding and Protection Service Leaflet*
- *Youth and Young Adults Booklet*
- *Young Person’s Information Leaflet – Child Safeguarding and Protection*

The Archdiocese also conducts a *Safeguarding Sunday* each year when a particular focus on child safeguarding is taken through the planning of the weekend liturgy and through circulation of awareness-raising literature.

Recommendation 3 of the 2014 Review advised that guidance should be published on the appropriate use of information technology to ensure that children are not exposed to the risks and dangers associated with it. The reviewers were presented with the policy document *Working Safely with Children and Young People - Use of Information Technology - Guidelines for Archdiocese of Dublin 2015*. Having read this, reviewers are satisfied that this recommendation has been met.

Reviewers are impressed by the published material highlighting the child safeguarding and protection services of the Dublin Archdiocese. The diocesan website contains all the necessary information, yet is attractive and easy to use. Reviewers acknowledge that considerable effort has been made to communicate the Church's safeguarding message to adults and young people and are satisfied that the requirements of Standard 6 have been met. Reviewers believe there is a need for age-appropriate, child-friendly safeguarding policies, leaflets and codes of conduct to be developed, aimed at younger children and displayed at a level that they can reach and in a language that they can understand.

Standard 7 – Quality Assurance

Planning

The Archdiocese of Dublin produced the *Diocesan Safeguarding Plan, 2017 to 2019*. This plan was broken down into 10 strategic objectives. This was an ambitious plan, but it is obvious that a huge amount of effort and hard work has gone into achieving the objectives; most of the objectives have been or are being achieved. Where objectives have not been fully met, a new course of action for their achievement has been identified; and reviewers have been assured that these needs will be incorporated into the strategic objectives for 2020 to 2022. This conscientiousness and intent to achieve high standards is commended.

Parish self-audits were completed in 100% of parishes for 2019. From the audit, it would appear that parish priests and Parish Safeguarding Representatives are cognisant of the systems that need to be in place to protect the children in their care.

It is apparent that Archbishop Martin has prioritised safeguarding and has allocated the necessary resources to ensure that all elements of the Diocesan Strategic Plan are being met. The information, questions and comments fed back through the parish self-audits will be used to identify training needs and to help form objectives to be included in the *Diocesan Safeguarding Strategic Plan 2020 to 2022*.

Reviewers are satisfied that the requirements of Standard 7 have been met.

Conclusion

The reviewers are satisfied that there is significant evidence across all seven standards to support the conclusion that the Archdiocese of Dublin has put into practice the supports, procedures and infrastructure to ensure a culture of safety for children at all levels of Church activities.

The commitment to child safeguarding is supported by strong leadership, powerful teamwork and effective cooperation between all safeguarding stakeholders in the archdiocese. If it can be maintained and developed, the apparent sense of unity, mutual respect and cooperation should ensure that the Dublin Archdiocese remains innovative and committed to preserving its compliance with the highest child safeguarding standards into the future.