

Second Review of Child Safeguarding Practice

in the

Diocese of Kilmore

undertaken by

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the

Catholic Church in Ireland

(the National Board)

Date: August 2018

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Background | <i>Page 3</i> |
| Process of Review | <i>Page 6</i> |
| Standard 1 <i>Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments</i> | <i>Page 9</i> |
| Standard 2 <i>Procedures for responding to Child Protection Suspensions, Concerns, Knowledge or allegations</i> | <i>Page 16</i> |
| Standard 3 <i>Care and Support for the Complainant</i> | <i>Page 26</i> |
| Standard 4 <i>Care and Management of the Respondent</i> | <i>Page 30</i> |
| Standard 5 <i>Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe</i> | <i>Page 34</i> |
| Standard 6 <i>Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message</i> | <i>Page 39</i> |
| Standard 7 <i>Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards</i> | <i>Page 43</i> |
| Conclusion | <i>Page 46</i> |

Background

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (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 and to monitor compliance with legislation, policy and best practice and 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 (MOU) have committed to following *Safeguarding Children, Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*.

In order to assess compliance, the Bishop of Kilmore Dr Leo O'Reilly has invited the National Board to undertake a review of child safeguarding practice in 2018. The diocese was previously reviewed in 2010 against the 2009 version of *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*. The report of the first review was published in 2010 and can be found on Kilmore Diocese's website www.kilmorediocese.ie/safeguarding-children-policy (Review), and on the National Board's website www.safeguarding.ie/publications.

The purpose of this second iteration 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 the Church body's Self-Audit – or correction and/or improvement of its Self-Audit;
- Opportunities for learning.

The process of review was initiated through a letter of invitation from Bishop Leo O'Reilly to the National Board and the signing of an MOU and Data Processing Deed. The latter allowed the National Board's reviewers to access all material held by the diocese relating to Child Safeguarding and Case Management. There were two pre-fieldwork meetings with Bishop O'Reilly and the Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator, to agree parameters of the Review and to gather background information, all of which is detailed in this report. The Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator took responsibility for ensuring and facilitating access to all records; to the relevant personnel in the diocese and in civil authority agencies; and with children, complainants and respondents.

From the outset, Bishop O'Reilly saw this Review as a learning opportunity and was keen to ensure full access to all aspects of Child Safeguarding practice and records in the

Second Review - Diocese of Kilmore

diocese. The reviewers experienced a very open approach from Bishop O'Reilly and his team, reflective of their obvious commitment to ensuring that Kilmore Diocese has a focus on best practice in relation to safeguarding children.

As part of the quality assurance approach adopted by the National Board, a copy of the Review Report was legally scrutinised by the National Board's lawyer, to ensure that assessment is based on evidence, and that any recommendations are appropriate.

Personal sensitive data has been redacted in the report for data protection legislative requirements.

Bishop O'Reilly has confirmed that the reviewers have had access to all case material available in the diocese.

Introduction

The Diocese of Kilmore covers most of County Cavan, large sections of County Leitrim, two parishes in County Fermanagh, and small portions of Counties Sligo and Meath.

According to the Kilmore Diocesan website in February 2018 the following information is noted:

- The overall population of the diocese is 83,076 with a Catholic population of 69,758: The percentage Catholic Population therefore is 83.97%.
- The diocese has 78 priests, 19 of who are retired without pastoral appointments, 7 retired with pastoral appointments and 2 are working outside the diocese.
- There are 5 congregations of religious sisters based in the diocese, with a total of 50 members. There is also one male religious order which has 3 members.
- Kilmore has 34 parishes; 32.25 in the Republic and 1.75 in Northern Ireland. Each parish has a Pastoral Committee, a Finance Committee, a Recruitment Committee, when required, and at least one safeguarding children rep, some have two.

Bishop Leo O'Reilly has been Bishop of Kilmore since 1998. His predecessor, Bishop Francis MacKiernan (1972 – 1998) managed some of the cases outlined in the previous Review Report published in 2010. The Terms of Reference for this Review cover the period, in terms of Case Management from the date of the last review published in 2010 (following fieldwork in 2010). New cases reported to the diocese since 2010 were therefore examined in this Review, along with cases still being managed since the last Review. Practice relating to all the Standards is assessed from the date of the introduction of the revised Standards in 2016.

Previous Review

The previous Review Report published in 2010 concluded:

It is gratifying to report that the review has shown that practice is generally of a high standard. There were no case examples of poor practice with the exception of those that relate to concerns which emerged prior to the arrival of the present bishop, the development of his safeguarding team, and the adoption of the Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance. All who are involved are to be commended. In many ways, they provide an excellent example for other Church authorities to follow. Through their commitment to the review process they have shown an openness to receive constructive criticism aimed at enhancing their present and future practice.

That Review made five Recommendations:

1. There is a strong argument to support the view that the role of designated person is best undertaken by a lay person. Where there is a deputy designated person, that role may be filled by a priest. However, because the designated person has to undertake tasks that involve speaking to colleague priests about allegations that

have arisen against them, it is felt that a lay person would be best suited to this role. It is therefore recommended that Bishop O'Reilly reviews the post of designated person.

2. Bishop O'Reilly must ensure the case file template, recommended by the National Board continues to be used for all new safeguarding cases and that existing files in loose leaf format be held in binders for greater security.
3. The Training Co-ordinator in consultation with the Safeguarding Committee should use the new National Board's template in the presentation of future training plans for the diocese.
4. The Safeguarding Committee should consider planning a diocesan safeguarding conference for all those involved in safeguarding children. The purpose is to communicate the diocesan policy, procedures and the safeguarding structure.
5. Bishop O'Reilly must ensure that the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee build on its work of auditing safeguarding practice throughout the diocese, using the self-audit tool of the National Board and forward an annual report to the National Board on its findings.

Towards the end of 2012, Bishop O'Reilly wrote to the National Board confirming that all five recommendations had been implemented.

Process of Review

An initial planning meeting was held between the CEO for the National Board and Bishop Leo O'Reilly on December 7th, 2017 where the parameters of the review were agreed. Bishop O'Reilly wrote to the National Board on January 22nd, 2018 inviting it to conduct a Review of all Child Safeguarding practice against *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland – 2016*.

A pre-review meeting was held on 9th of February 2018 where dates and a timetable were agreed.

The first on site visit took place on 26th February 2018 when the reviewers met the Diocesan Trainers, two Parish Safeguarding Representatives, the Administrator of the Cavan Cathedral parish of Urney and Annagelliff, the Safeguarding Committee, a pastoral assistant in the same parish who is also the leader of the Confirmation programme, four leaders of the *You Shall Be My Witnesses* Programme; 14 children participating in the *You Shall Be My Witnesses* Programme; and parents of the children preparing for Confirmation. The meetings were arranged as part of the examination of Standard 1- Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments, Standard 5 – Training and Support, and Standard 7 - Quality Assurance of compliance.

Second Review - Diocese of Kilmore

Further fieldwork was conducted on 26th and 27th March 2018 in the diocesan office. This fieldwork looked at safeguarding in the diocese at a whole. As part of this, case management records were examined, and meetings held with safeguarding personnel relating to aspects of case management. In a new development, a meeting was held between the reviewers and a complainant; and a questionnaire was issued to respondent priests, all of whom responded to it.

The diocese placed a notice on their website to inform people that the Review was taking place, and inviting anyone with views on child safeguarding practice to come forward.

STANDARDS

This section provides the findings of the Review. The template employed to present the findings are the seven Standards, set down and described in the Church guidance, *Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016*. Kilmore Diocese agreed to adopt the 2016 guidance as its Child Safeguarding Policy through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on 08 of June 2016.

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

Each Standard is supported by a number of Indicators by which compliance with the Standards is measured. To support implementation of the Standards, the National Board has produced detailed web-based Guidance. Kilmore Diocese has mostly adopted the Guidance of the National Board, but in a small number of instances it has produced its own guidance to support practice.

This Review, while noting the existence of written procedures, concentrates however on actual practice, through a combination of the examination of written records of actions taken; interviews with Church personnel; communication with children; information from a discussion with a complainant; correspondence and discussion with respondents; and discussions with personnel in statutory agencies about their experience of the diocesan safeguarding service.

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.

Standard 1 sets out the expectations around ensuring that children are safe whilst under the care and supervision of Catholic Church personnel. The Indicators which support the standard relate to the reasonable steps that should be taken to promote the wellbeing of children by making sure – as far as possible – that those who minister with children are safe, know how to engage positively with children, and enrich their lives through the teachings of the Gospels.

Requirements for safe recruitment and engagement through, conducting police vetting checks, obtaining references, following codes of behaviour etc., are part of the bigger process of selecting and supporting those who have the skills and commitment to minister with children. There has been a growing anxiety among some adults involved in Church activities about engaging with children, so it was refreshing to learn of the significant children's ministry taking place in Kilmore Diocese.

As one example of children's ministry, the Diocese of Kilmore invited the National Board reviewers to observe two groups of children preparing for Confirmation. The consent of parents, the children and the group leaders were all obtained. The reviewers had prepared questions relating to child safeguarding for the leaders to ask the children, including:

- What was the agreement reached at the outset of the programme about behaviour?
- If you became concerned or worried during the programme, who would you speak to?

By observing the small groups, the reviewers were able to gauge at first hand that the atmosphere was relaxed and caring. The leaders clearly had a positive rapport with the children, some of whom presented confidently and energetically. Whilst the presence of the reviewers presumably changed the dynamics in the room, it did not appear to cause anxiety or to inhibit the children from speaking out and having their points of view heard. In response to the reviewers questions in particular, the children were able to reflect on the agreement they established with each other and with the leaders at the outset of the programme relating to respect and caring for each other. They cited their parents and the Confirmation programme leader as those they would go to if they were worried about anything during the *You Shall Be My Witnesses* Programme.

Indicators that ensure the standard is being met

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 1.1 | The Church body follows effective practice guidelines and legislative requirements in the recruitment of all Church personnel and in assessing their suitability to work with children. |
| 1.2 | The Church body implements effective practice on the expected standards of adults' behaviour towards children. |
| 1.3 | The Church body implements effective practice in encouraging children's positive behaviour. |
| 1.4 | The Church body implements effective practice in safe care for all children, including those with specific needs. |
| 1.5 | The Church body ensures that the safe use of Church property by external groups complies with effective child safeguarding practice. |
| 1.6 | The Church body has in place clearly written whistle-blowing procedures to support and assist Church personnel to raise concerns about possible dangerous or unethical conduct by others towards children involved in Church activities. |
| 1.7 | The Church body has a clearly written complaints procedure regarding safeguarding concerns that are not allegations of abuse. |
| 1.8 | The Church body implements effective practice for Church personnel on assessment of hazards when working with children. |
| 1.9 | The Church body implements effective practice for the appropriate use of information technology, including social media by Church personnel and by children. |
| 1.10 | The Church authority has responsibility for ensuring that all clerics/religious, who are members of the Church body and are ministering with children in an external organisation/Church body, agree to follow effective safeguarding practice. |

Taking each indicator in turn, the following reflects the assessment of the reviewers in terms of the Diocese of Kilmore meeting the indicator.

1.1 There is a distinction between those personnel who have been in role for some time and those recruited since 2016. The diocese has in place detailed recruitment procedures which include vetting. The Chancellor of the diocese also has the diocesan responsibility to centrally coordinate police vetting on behalf of those engaged in ministry with children and vulnerable adults. These include all priests, staff and volunteers, school staff not registered with The Teaching Council, SNAs, caretakers, football coaches etc. Since

2017, vetting has become a legal requirement which has resulted in an increase in the number of applications. The approximate annual vetting total equates to 1004, of which 504 relate to non-teaching staff in schools and 434 in parishes and for diocesan personnel. To coincide with terms of office for parish personnel, the diocese is now in the process of arranging for all personnel to be re-vetted, a requirement they have set to meet every four years. The Garda National Vetting Bureau has introduced an electronic system, which has placed emphasis on the applicant providing detailed information via email response. The Diocese of Kilmore has an effective system in place for sharing information that comes back from the Gardai with those who need to know. This is only relevant where a disclosure of a conviction of any kind emerges; in these circumstances the applicant having, in all cases, been contacted and advised to inform the employer of the disclosure, the employer can make an informed decision about the suitability of the applicant based on what has been returned from the vetting check. The resources employed in providing vetting for the diocese include a part-time person, set up and computer costs, postage, and travel for training and meetings.

There was frustration expressed by some Church personnel about multiple vetting for different roles in the diocese. This was discussed during the fieldwork, and arrangements are being put in place to legitimately share information through the use of agreements (see National Board's Guidance 1.1B Standard 1, Pages 21-31) which will in turn reduce the requirement to vet more than once.

It is important to remember that vetting forms only one part of the overall recruitment process.

1.2 Signing the Kilmore Diocese Safeguarding Children Code of Behaviour for Adults is a requirement for all personnel as an undertaking that they will follow its provisions. To explain to the reviewers how this code affects practice, two Parish Safeguarding Representatives described holding information sessions for parents of altar servers – 61 parents attended between the two nights – in September and December 2017. The servers tend to be in the 10 – 12 year age group. As well as being briefed on good safeguarding practice in the diocese and the parish, the parents are expected to be involved in a roster for the signing-in and signing-out procedures in church Sacristies before and after Mass; and the parents declared themselves very happy with the clarification that these sessions gave in terms of everybody's responsibilities for safeguarding. All priests, staff and volunteers working with children receive an Information Pack, which includes the adults' code of behaviour.

1.3 The reviewers had the opportunity to hear from children in one group activity that they were involved in drawing up a specific code of behaviour at the start of the programme in which they participated. The atmosphere created and the behaviour of the children were experienced and observed by the reviewers. Clearly the reviewers only observed two small groups of children, and cannot extrapolate from this that such good practice occurs in all children's activities across the diocese. However the reviewers commend the approach, organisation and appropriately friendly manner of the activities observed.

1.4 In discussion with the Administrator of the parish, and the pastoral assistant, the reviewers learned of engagement with Traveller children, children from other cultures (Polish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Indian and Philippino) and a small number of children with physical / learning needs who have participated in sacramental preparation programmes. The pastoral assistant who is leader of the programme reflected that she attends schools to assist in the sacramental preparation and that she engages with parents who she informs about the safeguarding arrangements that are in place. She stated that the parents appear more relaxed about safeguarding than the leaders who are acutely aware of their responsibilities to safeguard children. The Church's child safeguarding notice has been translated into Polish.

Standard 1 contains a number of indicators that have not been required to be activated yet in Kilmore Diocese, including Indicator 1.6 on Whistle Blowing, and 1.7 on Complaints. The reviewers are confident that the diocese has the correct policy and procedures in place for both Indicators in the event of them being required to be utilised.

1.5 Safe use of Church property

The reviewers were provided with the diocesan procedure for the use of Church property by external groups, which clarifies, in line with the National Board's Guidance, that any groups should have their own child safeguarding policy and insurance. In addition the reviewers were given, two examples of this procedure in practice, documentation from St Anne's Parish Hall, Bailieborough, Co. Cavan. The reviewers are satisfied that the appropriate steps have been taken to ensure that anyone using this property has put in place mechanisms to safeguard children which are not the Church's responsibility.

1.6 Kilmore advised that there is a whistle blowing procedure in place. To date it has not been used.

1.7 The Complaints procedure has not been used, although the diocese has one in place since 2006.

1.8 Hazard Assessment

As an example of how personnel within the diocese conduct hazard assessments, the reviewers were given a copy of the annual preparation assessment for the Lourdes Pilgrimage. This process involved an identification of risks: (unsuitable volunteers; behavioural and boundary violations); supervision ratios, who would potentially be at risk (assisted pilgrims; young volunteers), the likelihood of harm and consequences of not assessing and managing the risk along with the controls needed. The controls included clear recruitment and selection of volunteers; codes of behaviour, suitable accommodation, gender balance, and appropriate supervision ratio.

Interestingly what was not recorded, but the reviewers are aware that it has taken place, was six hours training for leaders and two hours training for volunteers.

1.9 The reviewers requested information on communication with children using digital technology and were advised that all electronic communication is through the parents and never directly with children.

1.10 In November 2016, the diocese developed an agreement for all priests who provide ministries in external environments including schools and hospitals. The agreement requires the priest to commit to following the Kilmore diocesan policy as well as confirming that the external organisation in which they minister has safeguarding policies and procedures in place and they agree that when ministering in this external organisation they will adhere to its policies and procedures. The diocese provided the reviewers with a list of each priest by parish and the date on which they signed the agreement to follow the policy and procedures in Kilmore Diocese. The same form has an inclusion relating to ministry outside the diocese, whereby the priest confirms that organisation has child safeguarding policies in place.

Assessment by Reviewers

The diocese has shown earnest commitment to scrutinising the procedural and practical requirements of ensuring safe environments as determined under Standard 1 and localising practice in ways which involve children, their parents and those who minister with children. The reviewers note in particular the warmth of the relationships between Church personnel and children, and their obvious enthusiasm to promote Youth Ministry in the diocese. This is consistent with the Diocese of Kilmore Pastoral Plan 2015 – 2020, in which four areas for priority attention are identified, the first of which is Youth Ministry. The following actions and target dates for completion are set out in the Pastoral Plan:

1. The Diocesan Assembly identified ministry to young people as the top priority for the diocese in the coming years. Much good work has already been done with young people over the years and indeed the diocese continues to make significant investment in youth through its involvement in Catholic education.
2. Clearly a more structured and focussed ministry to the young is required at parish level. In order that this can become a reality, it is vital that each parish has an active Youth Officer who can promote initiatives at parish level with the support of the parish pastoral councils [by the end of 2015].
3. A Diocesan Youth Core Group will be established in order to begin formulating a comprehensive youth ministry strategy for the diocese [by mid-Summer 2015].
4. This Pastoral Plan recommends that Youth Ministers be employed in the diocese on a regional basis. The Core Group will advise on job description and qualifications. These Youth Ministers will be supported by the Diocesan Director of Pastoral Services [by end of September 2016].
5. As Pastoral Areas become a more defined and important place of pastoral action, a Pastoral Assistant/Worker can be tasked with ensuring youth ministry is promoted and sustained in each area. The PA/PW will be an important support person for parish

Youth Officers and assist the proposed Youth Ministers. This recommendation should be kept in mind in the future when contracts are being drawn up for PA's/PW's so that a youth ministry dimension is reflected therein [from 2015 onwards]. The diocese will support Youth Officers by providing training and resources on an on-going and regular basis (from autumn 2015 onwards).

6. The Pope John Paul II Awards were acknowledged at the Assembly as being a worthwhile initiative. Over the next five years every parish in the diocese will be able to participate in the awards [by 2020]¹.

What the Bishop and his Diocesan Assembly have undertaken following extensive consultation is *a thoroughgoing reimagining of life and ministry in Kilmore in the 21st century*² through the implementation of a challenging and transformative strategy for the diocese.

Ministry with children in the diocese includes: Children's liturgies; Altar servers; John Paul II Award; Children's choirs; Young Readers; *Faith Friends* programme; *You shall be my Witnesses* programme; and *Faith and Light*. The Safeguarding Committee has been proactive in taking on board and adapting the National Board's Guidance and using it to inform the written local procedures and information leaflets that it disseminates.

There is a very comprehensive Kilmore Diocesan Safeguarding Plan, which will be discussed under Standard 6 below.

The reviewers wish to commend in particular the pastoral assistant for her engagement with children and young people. Her dedication in providing the children and young people in her care with friendship and faith direction shone through and resulted in the children remaining engaged into adulthood in faith formation in the diocese. An interesting observation made by this pastoral assistant is that there are an increasing number of female children and young people taking on roles in the Church, which skews the gender balance somewhat. She wondered whether this is due to a lack of confidence on the part on boys and young male teenagers. However, in the Cathedral Parish (Urney and Annagelliff) there is a cohort of older male altar servers who mentor younger servers, and this is a group from which a number of young men are recruited for other roles within the diocese.

There was evidence of good leadership in the parish from all the priests who engaged in the safeguarding committee and the children's activity observed by the reviewers. There was also a sense of the importance of involving parents who were required to attend the Confirmation preparation programme with a priest. Parental role in child safeguarding is critical and demonstrates the partnership approach adopted by Kilmore Diocese and the priests in the parish.

¹Page 9, *Kilmore Diocesan Pastoral Plan 2015 – 2020*

²Page 6, *Kilmore Diocesan Pastoral Plan 2015 – 2020*

The reviewers met Parish Safeguarding Representatives and priests of the diocese who are enthusiastic about child safeguarding in the diocese. They expressed their confidence about the systems and practices which prioritise the safety of children, noting that there is good community spirit across the diocese and that priests are active in their communities. The representatives remarked that priests visit schools every week, and are actively engaged with children. In spite of the poor history of abuse of children in the Catholic Church in Ireland, they felt that there was no animosity towards priests and that both children and parents are delighted to see priests continue to have a visible role in their communities and in schools.

It is apparent from the literature (Diocesan Pastoral Plan, Safeguarding Plan, information leaflets etc.), and from the meetings the reviewers had, that there is strong leadership in Kilmore on all matters relating to creating environments that are safe for children from Bishop O'Reilly, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, and the Safeguarding Committee.

The Safeguarding Committee has been in existence for at least 12 years. It meets bi-monthly, but can also be convened as required if any matter requires attention.

The committee members spoke to the reviewers about -

- The Annual Audit.
- Their Safeguarding Plan, based on the audit.
- Safeguarding Sunday.
- The diocese as a safe place for children.
- Training.
- The strength of the support that they receive from Bishop Leo O' Reilly.

There was an air of positive youth ministry evident in discussion with pastoral workers, safeguarding representatives, priests and trainers. There is an active mentoring programme whereby the senior youths support the younger children in their faith development in the altar services, choir and in other youth ministry.

All personnel who engaged with the reviewers showed enthusiasm and commitment to youth ministry and importantly to child safeguarding in the Church; they actively lived out the requirements under Standard 1 which create and maintain safe environments. There was an eagerness to do the right thing both in practice and in ensuring accountability for child safeguarding, with all those who met the reviewers acknowledging the importance of children's safety in the Catholic ministries in Kilmore Diocese, even when at times they find it is somewhat bureaucratic.

Overall, the reviewers conclude that all procedures are in place, and written information is clear and gives direction on all relevant aspects of safeguarding. Personnel are exceptional and provide good role models.

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.

In advance of the fieldwork, the diocese forwarded detailed statistical information about child protection allegations received by the Kilmore Diocese against priests of the diocese and allegations received by the Diocese of Kilmore against priests, brothers or sisters from other dioceses and religious congregations. The reviewers were also provided with information on the canonical status of diocesan priests, against whom there were allegations, and with monitoring plans for priests out of ministry. Some of these issues will be referenced under the discussion of Standard 4 below.

Indicators that ensure the standard is being met

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|------------|---|
| 2.1 | <p>The Church body has clearly written child safeguarding procedures and access to the personnel to implement them if suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations are received about the abuse of a child.</p> <p>These procedures specify that all suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations that meet the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities (apart from those received in the Sacrament of Reconciliation) will be reported.</p> <p>In addition to reporting to the statutory authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if the allegation relates to a Church authority, the National Board must also be informed; • if the allegation relates to a cleric or religious, the National Board and the Church authority must also be informed; • if the allegation relates to a lay member of Church personnel, the Church authority must be informed. |
| 2.2 | <p>The Church body records all suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations and action taken which complies with relevant data protection legislation, statutory guidance on confidentiality and storage of information.</p> |
| 2.3 | <p>The Church authority shares information about child protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations with those who need to know, in order to keep children safe.</p> |

The following reflects the assessment of the reviewers of the Diocese of Kilmore meeting the Indicators under Standard 2.

2.1 The Kilmore Diocesan website home page contains an obvious icon for linking to Safeguarding, the drop-down menu for which contains the link with Child Safeguarding; Adult Safeguarding. The Child Safeguarding page contains the Safeguarding Children Policy in the Diocese of Kilmore, as well as hyperlinks to a large number of documents relating to the Safeguarding Children Committee, Safeguarding Newsletters, Policy Statements, the 2010 National Board's Review Report, and then all of the documents relating to the seven 2016 Standards. The final document accessible is headed Kilmore Statistics November 2017.

This Safeguarding Children web page also has hyperlinks to give a user a pathway to information on the National Board, Tusla, the Children First National Guidelines, Towards Healing, One-in-Four, Towards Peace, Barnardos, the ISPCC, HSE, CARI, the Samaritans and the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre.

The reviewers suggest that two improvements could be made to the Child Safeguarding information on the diocesan website. Firstly, the contact details for An Garda Síochána could also be listed on the safeguarding homepage in addition to being displayed in Standard 2. A second improvement would be to have a *How to Report a Concern* section, accessible via an easy to notice icon on the Safeguarding homepage, in addition to being displayed in Standard 2.

The National Board can provide details of some websites of other Church bodies that incorporate this feature; and the National Board itself also displays such an icon on its own website home page.

In addition to the requirements under Safeguarding Children, Kilmore Diocese has now inserted their Child Safeguarding Statement on its website, in line with the requirement of the Children First Act 2015. This statement sets out the diocese's commitment to mandatory reporting, caring for the welfare of children, and providing pastoral support to complainants and to respondents.

2.2 Standard 2 places a strong emphasis on reporting, notification and information sharing. Since the last review of safeguarding practice conducted by the National Board and published in 2011, Kilmore Diocese has received ten new allegations against six clerics, as set out in Table 1:

Second Review - Diocese of Kilmore

Table 1

New Allegations regarding child sexual abuse notified to Kilmore Diocese since 2010

| Number by respondent | Number reported to Gardai / PSNI | Number reported to Tusla / HSCB | Number reported to the National Board | Allegations prior to 2010 |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Cleric 1: 2 allegations | 2 | 2 | 2 | No |
| Cleric 2: 4 allegations | 2 reported by the diocese; and 2 allegations were notified to the diocese by the Gardai | 4 | 4 | Yes [first allegation received in 2004] |
| Cleric 3: 1 allegation | This allegation was notified to the diocese by the Gardai | This allegation was notified to the diocese by Tusla | 1 | Yes [first allegation received in 2003] |
| Cleric 4: 1 allegation | 1 | 1 | 1 | Yes [first allegation received in 2002] |
| Cleric 5: 1 allegation (deceased) | 1 | 1 | 1 | Yes [first allegation received in 2002] |
| Cleric 6: 1 allegation (deceased) | 1 | 1 | 1 | No |

Incidence of safeguarding allegations received by the Diocese of Kilmore against priests, brothers or sisters from religious orders since the date of the last review

| Type of Religious | Number of ordained and non-ordained Religious | Number of allegations | Numbers being supported or supervised by Kilmore on behalf of another Church authority |
|--------------------------|--|------------------------------|---|
| Religious Order priest | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Religious Order Brother | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Religious Order Sister | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The diocese made all notifications that it was required to regarding every one of these new cases, and this is commended. Notifications were made to An Garda Síochána, Tusla and the National Board without any undue delay.

The total number of allegations received by the diocese, since 1975 up until the time of the fieldwork of this review (March 2018) is set out below.

Table 2

Incidence of safeguarding allegations received by the Kilmore Diocese against priests of the diocese between 01/01/1975 and March 2018

| Category | Number |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Total number of Diocesan priests against whom allegations have been made since the 1 st January 1975 up to the date of the 2018 Review | 13 |
| Total number of allegations received by the Diocese since 1 st January, 1975 | 17 |
| Number of allegations received since the last Review in 2010 against Kilmore Diocesan priests | 10 |
| Total number of Diocesan priests accused of child abuse since the 2010 Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers against living priests of the Diocese • Numbers against deceased priests of the Diocese • Numbers against former priests of the Diocese | 4 2 0 |
| Status of living accused priests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In ministry • Out of ministry | 1 3 |
| Number of allegations reported to An Garda Síochána involving priests of Kilmore Diocese since the last Review in 2010. | 7 |
| Number of allegations reported to Kilmore Diocese by An Garda Síochána involving priests of the diocese since the last Review. | 3 |
| Number of allegations reported to Tusla involving priests of Kilmore Diocese since the last Review in 2010. | 8³ |
| Number of allegations reported to Kilmore Diocese by Tusla involving priests of the diocese since the last Review in 2010. | 1 |
| Number of allegations not reported to Tusla involving priests of Kilmore Diocese, but Tusla are aware of since the last Review in 2010. | 1 |
| Number of priests who have been convicted of having committed an offence or offences against a child or young person since the last Review in 2010. | 1 |
| Number of priests who have been found guilty in a canonical process | 1 |

This Table also indicates that notifications to the statutory child protection agencies have been made by Kilmore Diocese in all cases.

Kilmore Diocese publishes statistics relating to allegations on its website at the end of each year.

³ In Table 1, it is noted that 9 notifications were made to HSE / Tusla. One of these related to a priest not incardinated into the diocese

The reviewers examined all of the new allegations received since the previous Review in 2010, as well as any older cases where there continues to be involvement with priests who have been accused of child abuse. Details of all the cases examined can be found in the section of this report on Standard 4.

Without exception, all case management files examined were of an excellent quality. They are well structured, with a Table of Contents; chronology; contemporaneous case notes that can be easily read to provide the narrative of the case; all necessary correspondence; and all canonical documents, including decrees, precepts, and documents submitted to the CDF in Rome. All notes on case management files are signed and dated.

The details of the current case management work with active cases are provided in the following box.

Cleric 1

An allegation was made by a complainant against Cleric 1 to Kilmore Diocese in August 2011, relating to alleged abuse in the 1980s; and a second allegation was made by a second complainant to the diocese in October of the same year. Both allegations were speedily notified to the Gardai, HSE and the National Board. No criminal prosecution followed. The priest respondent immediately stepped aside and continues to be out of ministry.

The Diocesan Advisory Panel was involved immediately and played an appropriate role in the case. At the conclusion of a canonical penal process authorised by The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in May 2014, the diocese put in place an agreed permanent Safety Plan, which has been reviewed and revised on four occasions. The respondent's views are taken into account in this review process, and there is evidence that a revision has been made to the plan to take account of a specific request from the respondent.

There was one interagency meeting between the diocese, Gardai and HSE, a further five meetings between the diocese and the HSE and another one meeting between the diocese and the Gardaí.

The case management file contains excellent written records of the canonical process, and of a fair and rational collection and evaluation of evidence. There is clarity around why and how the final decision was made.

Cleric 2

An allegation was notified to the diocese by a complainant in September 2011, relating to abuse which allegedly took place in 1985. The allegation was reported without delay to An Garda Siochana, HSE (TUSLA) and the National Board. The priest respondent immediately stepped aside and in March 2012 retired from all ministries.

The Diocesan Advisory Panel was convened quickly and offered advice and support. Effective interagency cooperation was evidenced.

A criminal conviction in March 2014 led to a period of imprisonment.

There was three interagency meeting between the diocese, Gardai and HSE, a further four meetings between the diocese and the HSE and another three meeting between the diocese and the Gardaí.

A strong and comprehensive Safeguarding Plan was developed in December 2014, which has been reviewed and revised on three occasions since.

Canonical action is deferred pending the outcome of further criminal investigations.

Cleric 3

The diocese received official notice from HSE of an allegation against Cleric 3 in October 2013. Both the Gardai and HSE were already aware of the case, and the diocese notified the National Board. Bishop O'Reilly informed CDF of the situation at the earliest possible time. The priest respondent immediately stepped aside and continues to be out of ministry.

The Diocesan Advisory Panel and the National Case Management Committee of the National Board have both provided advice to the Bishop in relation to this case. There were three interagency meetings between the diocese, Gardai and HSE and a further three meetings between the diocese and the HSE.

Following a Garda investigation, criminal charges were made in July 2014, but it was 2017 when the matter came before the courts. There was no conviction.

The criminal process having concluded, the Bishop initiated a canonical Preliminary Investigation, which was still in process when the reviewers were conducting this Review.

Cleric 4

Two anonymous third-party allegations were made against this priest, the first in December 2002 and the second in June 2015; and both were reported by the diocese to the statutory child protection services. The allegations made related to a time span of 1970/80, and 1991. Because there was so little information shared by the anonymous callers, no investigation was possible. The diocese took all actions that were possible in the circumstances.

Cleric 5 (deceased)

An allegation was received from a complainant by the diocese in May 2013 relating to abuse in 1980 and was reported to the Gardai. As the priest was deceased, no criminal investigation or HSE risk assessment was indicated. The diocese undertook considerable and effective pastoral work with the complainant in this case, led by Bishop O'Reilly.

Cleric 6 (deceased)

An allegation was received from a complainant by the diocese in February 2017 relating to abuse in the mid 1960's. The complainant did not wish that any identifying information about them be provided to the Gardai or Tulsa.

Extensive pastoral support was provided by a Support Person and by the Bishop.

Cleric 7

In July 2013, the diocese received an allegation relating to a priest from another Church Body who had been ministering as a summer supply priest in the diocese in the mid 1980's. There was full and speedy follow-up by the diocese in terms of reporting to An Garda Síochána, HSE and National Board. The complainant is being supported by the Church Body responsible for Cleric 7.

The Gardai closed their investigation in January 2014.

2.3 The Ferns Report of October 2005 on the Ferns Inquiry dealt in detail with the idea of an Inter-Agency Review Committee, made up of senior representatives of An Garda Síochána, HSE (now Tusla) and the relevant diocese. Such a group had been established in Ferns to assist all three interested parties to cooperate in ensuring that all available information required for investigation, assessment and case management would be shared between them, and that they would cooperate in developing and monitoring management

plans for priests about whom legitimate concerns were established. The Ferns Report made a number of specific recommendations on the proposed establishment of such committees in every diocese in the Republic of Ireland. While the widespread implementation of these recommendations has been hindered by Data Protection concerns, as well as difficulties encountered by an Garda Síochána who would wish to avoid compromising the chance of achieving a criminal conviction by sharing information prematurely, the Diocese of Kilmore, Tusla and An Garda Síochána have found a way of conducting a local Interagency Committee on a regular basis. This forum is not founded on any formal written protocol, and so depends to a degree on the willingness of people in posts of responsibility to be open to information-sharing and cooperation. The existence and operation of the Interagency Committee is evidence of the Bishop sharing ‘information about child protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations with those who need to know, in order to keep children safe’ (Indicator 2.3). It is another example of how the development and supporting of good relationships is a thread that runs right through Child Safeguarding in Kilmore Diocese.

Assessment of Standard 2

The case files are extremely well documented, making an analysis of practice easy to conduct.

All allegations were reported promptly; and actions taken to restrict the respondents’ ministry taken decisively by Bishop O’Reilly.

Undoubtedly, the primary focus of diocesan interventions is on safeguarding children.

There is clear evidence of really good consultation with the statutory child protection agencies, the Diocesan Advisory Panel, and the National Board, including the National Case Management Committee (NCMC).

Kilmore Diocese has retained its own Advisory Panel in addition to seeking advice from the NCMC. The local Advisory Panel is made up civil lawyers, canon lawyer, social worker, former Garda and a priest. They have clear terms of reference and have been in operation since 11th February, 2016, when the current panel members were recruited and trained. Previously Kilmore was part of a three Diocesan Panel which disbanded in October 2015.

The Panel review cases and offer advice on management of initial allegations, management plans and reviews of cases. They operate on an anonymous basis, in line with data protection requirements. In discussion with the Advisory panel, it was apparent that they apply serious rigour to the scrutiny of cases and to ensuring that the Bishop and DLP pursue a consistent approach to the management of allegations and to the development of safety plans.

Second Review - Diocese of Kilmore

There is also evidence of compassionate responding to complainants, even when the civil authority agencies do not take action. The response to complainants will be dealt with in more detail under Standard 3 below.

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.

As one of two new Standards since the last review, the reviewers were keen to examine the ways in which complainants were responded to by diocesan personnel. In advance of the fieldwork, the National Board asked Bishop O'Reilly to place a notice on the diocesan website informing readers of the forthcoming Review and inviting anyone to come forward to the diocese or reviewers if they wished to express any opinions relating to child safeguarding practice in the diocese. The wording of the notice is reproduced in the box below. There were no contacts made with diocesan personnel or with the reviewers in response to this notice.

The Diocese of Kilmore has invited the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) to conduct a review of safeguarding practice. If you have any views about Safeguarding in the Diocese of Kilmore, we invite you to come forward to:

Kilmore Diocese [DLP contact details provided]

NBSCCCI [National Board's contact details provided]

If you wish to report a child safeguarding concern, please contact:

Kilmore Diocese }
}

An Garda Siochana }
}

PSNI } [Contact details provided for all]
}

Tusla }
}

HSC }
}

The four sources of information about how complainants were engaged with were (i) interviews with the Bishop and with the DLP; (ii) a face-to-face interview with a complainant; (iii) interviewing a Support Person; and (iv) reading the case management file records.

The National Board is very grateful to one complainant for their willingness to meet with the reviewers, and to provide a personal insight into the challenges of reporting clerical abuse, dealing with the trauma of being abused, and slowly recovering and rebuilding a life, including spirituality.

Indicators that ensure the standard is being met

| | |
|------------|--|
| 3.1 | The Church authority offers appropriate pastoral care to complainants, which recognises their unique needs. This should include an offer from the Church authority to meet the complainant in person. |
| 3.2 | The Church authority has access to appropriately trained personnel - lay, religious or clergy - whose clearly defined roles are to listen to and represent the pastoral needs of the complainant. This is done in consultation with the complainant. |
| 3.3 | The Church body works in cooperation with relevant organisations and seeks specialist advice from the statutory child protection services when necessary. |

3.1 Bishop O'Reilly has been open to meeting with complainants, and he has not interposed legal advisors between complainants and himself. He has a clear understanding of the difference and separation between providing appropriate pastoral care and defending civil legal proceedings. The diocesan response to complainants is primarily pastoral in nature. The diocese publishes an annual total figure of costs incurred by the diocese of its own legal defences and costs of settlements reached with complainants, which is another indication of openness and transparency on the part of the Bishop.

The reviewers examined seven case management files during the fieldwork visit to Kilmore and noted the supportive actions taken in response to allegations from complainants. The diocese offered the appropriate support and assistance to both the complainants and respondents. Where a complainant did not take up the offer of a Support Person or counselling, they were kept informed as the canonical process unfolded, and stated that they were satisfied with the process. Where a complainant remained anonymous it was not possible to make contact and therefore the diocese could not offer any support. The complainant who was interviewed by the reviewers expressed genuine satisfaction and gratitude for the compassionate support that they had received from Bishop O'Reilly and from his DLP.

This Review is focused on the actions of Kilmore Diocese in response to complaints it receives from people who have allegedly been abused by a priest or religious; it cannot provide any explanation as to why individual complainants declined offers of support from the diocese. However, given the traumatic character of disclosing abuse, perhaps some complainants were unable to hear the offers of support made when they were made, or did not wish to engage with Church services. It is suggested that in every case a complainant would, subject to any stipulation that they themselves might make, receive a written confirmation of the receipt of their report, as well as a written offer of pastoral support, including counselling.

The reviewers had requested an opportunity to meet with a complainant, if this could be arranged without causing any difficulty or distress to them. Bishop O'Reilly and the DLP discussed this request and identified one complainant who the DLP subsequently approached. This person agreed to meet with the reviewers during the fieldwork.

From the file reading and from discussion with one complainant, the reviewers assessed that the lifelong damaging impact of sexual abuse by a priest was and continues to be profound for those complainants. Accounts given to the reviewers demonstrated that when other life events happen, the trauma of abuse can be retriggered, and affect how those individuals deal with issues. For one complainant in particular, further support and counselling was necessary to assist in dealing with the re-traumatisation. The complainant who agreed to meet the reviewers recounted their experience of being received positively by the DLP, whom they found very supportive, and by Bishop O'Reilly, about whom they spoke warmly. This interview provided the reviewers with a much richer perspective than could be got from accessing information second hand; and it also raised two issues for consideration:

1. Striking the correct balance between the needs of a complainant and not wishing to cause them any more hurt, and the obligation of reporting to the statutory authorities; and
2. The reality that for some complainants, the ready availability of life-long support is necessary, as certain life events can unexpectedly trigger unresolved distress still anchored in their abuse by a priest.

3.2 The reviewers also interviewed a diocesan Support Person for complainants of abuse. This person is professionally trained in a relevant branch of health care, pastoral care and spiritual direction, which equips them very well for their support task. They see their commitment to the complainant with whom they are working as being completely open-ended, and are happy to be contacted whenever the complainant feels the need for a chat or a meeting. This Support Person has facilitated a meeting between the complainant and Bishop O'Reilly, which the complainant experienced as very helpful. Once again the reviewers were impressed by the way in which the personal characteristics and professional training of this person combined to enable them to forge a therapeutic relationship with a person in need of support and assistance from the diocese. Bishop O'Reilly, the diocesan DLP and the Support Person all share characteristics of sensitivity, kindness, respect and empathy, which has allowed them to reach out in a most impressive way - pastorally and spiritually - to complainants of abuse.

3.3 Section 2 above has already referenced the significant interagency collaboration that is evidenced in the case files. In addition, all complainants were offered counselling and support. Some complainants have engaged with Towards Healing, while others have accessed their own counselling which has been financially supported by the diocese. The reviewers had a discussion with Bishop O'Reilly about how to provide support for complainants on a long term basis as their personal circumstances change and the impact of their abuse affects their daily living.

Assessment of Standard 3

From examining the case records and from meeting with a complainant, it is clear to the reviewers that the DLP invests significant personal time in responding to complainants. There is evidence of warmth and consideration in notes and texts sent to complainants at

Second Review - Diocese of Kilmore

difficult times, as well as in accounts of numerous meetings, phone calls and offers of support. In addition, Bishop O'Reilly regularly makes himself available personally to complainants and he is keen to offer the best support possible. In considering how best to respond to complainants who will have lifelong needs for support and counselling, the Bishop is working on securing solutions that will remain available to individual complainants after he leaves office. The reviewers highly commend the DLP and Bishop O'Reilly for their humane and generous response, and consider their approach as setting a standard for best practice.

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.

Indicators that ensure the standard is being met

| | |
|------------|--|
| 4.1 | The Church authority has access to appropriately trained personnel – lay, religious or clergy – whose clearly defined roles are to listen to and represent the pastoral needs of the respondent. This is done in consultation with the respondent. |
| 4.2 | The Church authority has arrangements in place to inform the respondent that an allegation has been received about them, and has a procedure for deciding whether an interim management plan needs to be put in place for the respondent. |
| 4.3 | When statutory authority investigations and assessments have been completed, the Church authority resumes the preliminary investigation/collecting the proofs as provided for in Canon 1717 (1)-(3) (cleric) and Canon 695 (non-ordained religious). |
| 4.4 | The Church authority has in place suitable arrangements for the monitoring of a respondent, where there is a case to answer, until (and if) the Church authority no longer has responsibility for monitoring the respondent. |

The details relating to the seven clerics accused of child abuse are set out in Standard 2. Of the seven, two are deceased, one is the responsibility of another Church body, and one is a priest in good standing. The remaining three priests require care and management.

The reviewers had requested that Bishop O'Reilly and his DLP would consider allowing them to communicate directly with respondents. What was agreed was that prior to undertaking the fieldwork, the reviewers would send a personalised letter and a questionnaire to each respondent, through the Diocesan Safeguarding Office. The letter and questionnaire are reproduced in the box overleaf. The questionnaire had the Indicators for Standard 4 at the top of the first page so that the respondents could easily refer to them in the event that they chose to reply. All three respondents who received the letter and questionnaire replied, and one of them also requested to be interviewed by phone.

Letter and Questionnaire to Respondents

Dear Father,

Bishop Leo O'Reilly has invited the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland to conduct a review of child safeguarding practice in Kilmore Diocese. As part of the review we are interested in hearing from complainants and respondents of abuse.

We understand that you have been informed that an allegation of child abuse has been made against you. In reviewing how Kilmore Diocese has managed the allegation, the National Board is interested in receiving your views on a number of matters which relate to the Church's Child Safeguarding Standards.

The 2016 Standards contain a new Standard 4 – Care and Management of the Respondent – and this is the particular Standard which relates to your situation. The Standard has four Indicators, and these are what we would like you to consider when making your reply on the questionnaire overleaf. Your reply will be confidential to the two reviewers, and great care will be taken to ensure that you cannot be identified from what will be written in the Review Report.

You can send your response directly to me at the National Board teresa.devlin@safeguarding.ie by 23rd March, 2018.

Thank you in anticipation of your response.

Yours sincerely

Teresa Devlin

CEO

National Board

| | |
|-----|--|
| 4.1 | What has been your experience of being consulted, listened to and helped to identify your pastoral needs since you were informed of the allegation made against you? |
| | |
| 4.2 | How were you informed by the Diocese that an allegation was made against you? |
| | |
| 4.2 | If you were informed at a meeting that an allegation had been made against you, who attended that meeting? |
| | |
| 4.2 | Were you advised of your right to access a civil and a canon lawyer? |
| | |

Second Review - Diocese of Kilmore

| | |
|--|---|
| 4.2 | Were you offered the support of a priest Advisor? |
| | |
| 4.3 | Have the police investigation and social services assessment been completed, to the best of your knowledge? |
| | |
| 4.3 | Has the preliminary Investigation under canon law commenced, to the best of your knowledge? |
| | |
| 4.3 | Do you have a canon lawyer representing you? |
| | |
| 4.4 | Is there a written safety plan, or behavioural contract in place which you are aware of? |
| | |
| 4.4 | From what sources do you draw your support? |
| | |
| Is there anything else you would like to advise the National Board of in relation to the management of the allegation against you? | |
| | |

4.1 In all three cases a Priest Advisor was appointed by the diocese. The reviewers met one Priest Advisor who presented as caring and approachable, but who also clearly understood that while his role was to represent the pastoral needs of the two respondents for whom he has a remit to support, he also had a responsibility to safeguard children. He was able to distinguish between fact and fiction when dealing with priests accused and found guilty of child abuse. In spite of the heavy burden he carries as someone supporting a respondent, he accepted his role with ease, ensuring that the respondent was not left abandoned. This has included being alongside a priest through a criminal court process and subsequently visiting him in prison. He has been engaged in this support role for over 12 years, which Bishop O'Reilly requested him to take on; and he formally meets the Bishop annually to speak about it. This is an 'add-on' to his main role as a Parish Priest within the diocese. The advisor shared concerns about the challenging personalities of those who may seek to harm children and how manipulative they may be. The reviewers commend the Priest Advisor and his work in supporting respondents and in safeguarding children.

4.2 From the case files it was clear that respondents were notified following consultation with civil authority agencies (where appropriate) of allegations made against them.

4.3 In the three cases where the clerics are alive, a preliminary investigation has taken place in two, and one was commenced in the third. The Bishop and DLP sought advice from the National Board and canon lawyers in all cases. Where required, safety plans were put in place and reviewed at regular intervals.

4.4 Kilmore Diocese currently engages the DLP to monitor those who are out of ministry. As with all her other practice, the DLP's contacts are conducted fairly and respectfully, whilst recognising the importance of ensuring that the respondents' behaviour does not present a risk to children. It is reassuring to note the frequency of interagency contacts and consultation with the Diocesan Advisory Panel.

The reviewers issued a questionnaire to four diocesan priests accused of child abuse. All responded; three in writing and one chose to have a telephone interview with the reviewer. In all cases the respondent felt that they had received appropriate and timely communication from Bishop Leo O'Reilly and that appropriate action had been taken, based on the Standards in operation at the time. The person who chose to have a discussion with the reviewers believes that the diocese had been fair in all its dealings with him. Two of the respondents are of the view that once an allegation is made, there is a strong tendency for it to be believed; and the need then becomes for the priest to prove his innocence, rather than for his guilt to be proven through a formal, objective investigative process.

Assessment of Standard 4

The reviewers have established a fair and honest approach by Bishop O'Reilly and his safeguarding personnel to dealing with respondents is evidenced. Whilst not condoning their behaviour, the diocese has taken all appropriate steps to manage any identified risk presented by the respondent, and to provide care for them, so that any future risk is minimised. There is good consultation with other agencies, the Diocesan Advisory Panel and the NCMC.

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.

Indicators that ensure the standard is being met

| | |
|------------|---|
| 5.1 | The Church authority takes responsibility to ensure that the induction of all personnel – lay, religious or clergy – includes training in the Church’s child safeguarding policy and procedures. |
| 5.2 | The Church body conducts an annual training-needs analysis that identifies all Church personnel who require training and develops a training plan based on this. |
| 5.3 | The Church body ensures delivery at a local level of basic training programmes that are identified and approved by the National Board, as outlined in the National Board’s Training Strategy, where this has been identified as necessary through the annual training-needs analysis. |
| 5.4 | The Church body ensures that Church personnel who have specific child safeguarding responsibilities have appropriate, role-specific training that is identified and approved by the National Board, as outlined in the National Board’s Training Strategy. |
| 5.5 | The Church body provides children who access Church-related activities and their parents/guardians with information, advice and support on keeping children safe, and involves them in Church child safeguarding training initiatives wherever possible and appropriate. |
| 5.6 | The Church body facilitates the provision of an appropriate level of support to all involved with the Church in relation to their responsibilities to safeguard children. |

Kilmore Diocese has two National Board-accredited Trainers who work together on the Child Safeguarding brief. They report to the Safeguarding Committee which takes responsibility for the diocesan Safeguarding Plan, including the plan for safeguarding training. That committee meets approximately six times per year. They were both recruited in 2005 and were initially trained by the VDA of NI, over seven weekends. They have been subsequently monitored and approved as Trainers in 2006; and then as National Board-accredited Trainers in 2012 and 2016. They are both happy to continue in this role, as they enjoy the work and evidently have developed a competence in it.

The two Trainers described the different levels of organisation in the diocese:

- Diocesan Conferences c. 3 times per year

- Deanery meetings
- Parish pastoral areas

There are 34 parishes in the diocese, with approximately 59 priests active. There are 52 Parish Safeguarding Representatives, who each serve for a 4-year term (with the option of a second 4 years). There are 34 Chairs of Parish Councils. The two Trainers take responsibility to ensure that all new parish and diocesan Child Safeguarding personnel receive six hours training and all those in parish who will have a role in relation to children and young people receive the basic two-hour awareness training as part of their induction.

The list of diocesan personnel trained includes

- Clergy
- Deacons
- Clergy coming into diocese from abroad
- Clerical students (2 at the moment)
- Parish Reps (52)
- Leaders from parish activities (one from each parish)
- Chairs of Parish Councils (34)
- Pastoral Assistants (5)
- Lourdes pilgrimage leaders
- Support persons
- Advisory panel
- Diocesan safeguarding committee
- Priest advisers
- Diocesan advisors
- Youth director

They said that in the course of training they had identified the problem of people not being able to integrate all of the information that they receive in longer sessions, which has led to back-up / refresher sessions being necessary.

They confirmed that they receive a lot of queries during training sessions on specific Vetting issues; this was a theme repeated by others over the course of the Review. The Trainers have adapted the National Board's Guidance on the use of Social Media. Information on safeguarding is communicated by Parish Safeguarding Reps through Youth Activities Leaders to children and young people. The Trainers showed the reviewers two child and youth-friendly leaflets which contain Codes of Behaviour and details on who to contact in a situation in which they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

As an example of good practice they spoke about youth activities at which the participants have to hand up their mobile phones at the beginning, and then sign for them when the activity is over. This combines a signing in procedure with a control of access to social media and possibilities for photographing during Church-related activities. In response to a question, the Trainers said that any Religious who minister within the diocese do have to come for Diocesan Child Safeguarding Training; and to illustrate this they gave the example of a Religious Sister who is employed as a Pastoral Assistant in the diocese.

Second Review - Diocese of Kilmore

5.1 The Diocese runs a very comprehensive training programme which captures the needs of all personnel. In terms of induction, some of this happens externally, e.g. the DLP sought induction from the National Board; which other personnel new to roles attend the Diocesan one day programme.

5.2 The training needs analysis is a function of the safeguarding committee, but administered by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator on behalf of the Committee. The methodology used is to provide the parish priest and safeguarding representative with a form to complete indicating the name of each church activity involving children in the parish and to provide the name and contact details of the leader/s of each activity. The names and contact details are also given of Eucharist ministers bringing Holy Communion to the house bound. The contact details of members of the parish recruitment committee (parish priest, chair of the pastoral council, safeguarding representative and one other for gender balance if necessary) is also gathered. With this information a needs analysis is done as to what level of training each of these require. Training dates are arranged and each attendee is written to explaining the need for training and giving them the dates to attend.

The Child Safeguarding Training Plan 2016 -2019 is a 13-page landscape document which is laid out in five columns – *Target Group, Role and Responsibility, Programme, Learning Outcome and Delivered by*; so to illustrate this, the section relating to Support Persons is reproduced here.

| Target Group | Role & Responsibility | Programme | Learning Outcome | Delivered by |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Support Persons</u> | Support survivors & journey with them through recovery. | NSBCCCI annual conference | Best practice in working effectively with survivors | NBSCCCI 13 th /14 th October 2016 |
| | Be available throughout the case management process | Role specific training | Role, the practicalities of supporting complainants & the importance of supervision and self-care | NBSCCCI 8 th February 2017 |
| | | Meeting with DLP and Bishop | Role, standard and guidance | Trainer 1: 7 th April 2017 |
| | | Update training | Update on standard and guidance | Trainer 1: 14 th November 2016 |

Second Review - Diocese of Kilmore

| | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------|---|--|
| | | Domestic violence | Understanding what domestic abuse is, signs, symptoms, who abuses & how to report | Women's Aid 30 th November 2017 |
|--|--|-------------------|---|--|

5.3 This is an extremely comprehensive list and covers all who might need training, as well as identifying the appropriate level of training required by them.

Awareness raising Induction, basic six-hour training and role-specific training are all provided in a planned way; and the Trainers access training from outside agencies when they are not competent to provide it themselves.

5.4 The following Target Groups are detailed in the Safeguarding Training Plan 2016 – 2019:

1. The Bishop
2. The DLP / Safeguarding Coordinator
3. Trainers
4. Priest Advisers
5. Support Persons for complainants
6. Clergy who have previously attended the six-hour training module
7. Parish Priests
8. Retired clergy
9. Chair of the Pastoral Council
10. Newly appointed clergy
11. Parish Safeguarding Reps who have previously attended the six-hour training module
12. Newly appointed Parish Safeguarding Reps
13. The Authorised Signatory for Garda Vetting
14. Pastoral Assistants who have previously attended the six-hour training module
15. Newly appointed Pastoral Assistants
16. Permanent Deacons
17. Lourdes Pilgrimage leaders
18. Lourdes Pilgrimage volunteers
19. Diocesan Safeguarding Committee members who have previously attended the six-hour training module
20. Newly appointed Diocesan Safeguarding Committee members
21. Chair and Secretary of the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee
22. Diocesan Advisory Panel
23. Parish Leaders
24. Parish Eucharistic Ministers

Outside training is supplied by NOTA, Women's Aid, Tusla, SBNI, PPANI, the National Board and named individual training consultants, as required; and it is clear that the two

Trainers are in contact with and are up to speed with the training and development being undertaken by colleagues in other organisations.

Indicator **5.5** requires that Kilmore Diocese...

...provides children who access Church-related activities and their parents/guardians with information, advice and support on keeping children safe, and involves them in Church child safeguarding training initiatives wherever possible and appropriate.

Evidence has been provided earlier on training for the parents of new altar servers, and on the parallel programmes for young people being prepared for Confirmation and their parents. The young people's Confirmation preparation groups engage them in generating their own Code of Behaviour for that specific activity which is inserted into the booklet that they use for the programme. This allows discussion on practical steps to co-create an atmosphere that is both comfortable and safe for all participants and to naturally address safeguarding issues while doing so.

Regarding the *appropriate level of support* that is flagged in Indicator **5.6** as being due *to all involved with the Church in relation to their responsibilities to safeguard children*, the DLP / Coordinator and the Safeguarding Children Committee very obviously provide this; and everybody is in turn supported by Bishop O'Reilly. It is the Bishop's ability and willingness to hold and contain the safeguarding activities of others that gives them the confidence to go ahead with their particular safeguarding responsibilities in the knowledge that he is at their back.

One simple way of providing support that motivates is to thank people for their time and efforts. There was an annual diocesan Child Safeguarding Conference at which the Bishop would give thanks to all who are involved in the safeguarding initiative in the diocese. They have more recently switched their efforts to the Safeguarding Sunday (first weekend in June) for which a newsletter is developed in which the Bishop expresses his gratitude to all who are involved. Also, around the time of the parish self-audits, the secretary of the diocesan safeguarding committee sends out a letter of thanks to all safeguarding personnel acknowledging their contribution. Gratitude is also expressed to participants at all training events.

Assessment of Standard 5

Evidence has been provided to indicate that all six Indicators for Standard 5 are met in full by Kilmore Diocese. The two trainers are dedicated hard working individuals who expend considerable energy in ensuring that all safeguarding personnel, priests, religious, staff and volunteers are aware of their obligations to safeguard children. A concern was expressed by members of the child safeguarding committee over the need to streamline child and adult safeguarding training. While there are two distinct policies, it may be appropriate for the safeguarding committee and trainers to review delivery so that a comprehensive approach does not require a duplication of time and effort on the part of volunteers who attend training and assist the diocese in their child and adult ministries.

Standard 6

Communicating the Church’s Safeguarding Message

Church Bodies appropriately communicate the Church’s child safeguarding message

Indicators that ensure the standard is being met

| | |
|------------|---|
| 6.1 | The Church body has a written plan, which details how the Church’s child safeguarding message will be communicated. |
| 6.2 | The Church body makes information regarding how to safeguard children available to all. |
| 6.3 | The Church body ensures that it communicates the Church’s child safeguarding message to people whose first language is not English, as well as to people who have specific needs. |
| 6.4 | The Church body establishes links with other local organisations in order to promote a safe and caring community for children and to share best child safeguarding practice. |

6.1 Kilmore Diocese is an exemplar of joined up thinking, in that its Pastoral Plan, its Safeguarding Action Plan and its Safeguarding Training Plan all line up with each other, as well as following on from the more wide-reaching one that precedes it. The Kilmore Diocesan Safeguarding Action Plan 2016 – 2019 sets out aims or targets to be achieved in the implementation of all seven Standards. Under Standard 6 – Communication, the plan reads as follows:

| Aims | Action to be taken | Responsibility | Time Frame |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Standard 6 - Communication | Update the diocesan website with latest policy, procedures, guidance, forms, record-keeping and contact details | DLP and Diocesan Secretary | January 2016 on-going |
| | Annual diocesan Safeguarding Sunday & Annual diocesan Newsletter | DLP | 4 th & 5 th June 2016 3 rd & 4 th June 2017 2 nd & 3 rd June 2018 1 st and 2 nd June 2019 |
| | Update parish newsletters and websites | Parish Priests | When updates are sent out from the Diocesan Safeguarding Office |
| | Communications survey | To be given to attendees at parish safeguarding information sessions | At each parish safeguarding information sessions |

6.2 The diocesan website has all of the information that is required; although a suggestion was made earlier about having a ‘how to report a concern’ icon more clearly displayed on it.

The Diocese of Kilmore has now had two Safeguarding Sundays, in 2016 and 2017, and the 2018 one is being planned. The way, in which these designated Sundays work is that the priests are asked to use the Sunday Liturgy to focus on Child Safeguarding, including the content of their homilies and relevant notes in the parish newsletters. To ensure that all members of the diocesan community are in receipt of up to date information and guidance, a special high-quality four page Safeguarding Newsletter is produced and circulated in advance of Safeguarding Sunday for Mass attendees to take away with them at the end of the liturgy. The 2017 Safeguarding Newsletter had a Message from Bishop Leo O’Reilly in which he expressed gratitude to the 200 plus volunteers who work in safeguarding across the diocese; the Diocesan Policy Statement for Safeguarding Children; and short sections on Training, the 2016 Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards, the National Board’s National Conference, the annual Parish Safeguarding Audit, Parish Safeguarding Representatives, a Prayer for those abused by members of the Church, Guidelines on taking Photographs, an invitation to give Feedback, Safeguarding Sunday, Garda Vetting Update and Diocesan Safeguarding Children Contacts. It is a colourful and accessible document in the preparation of which it is obvious that care was taken to communicate with clarity and brevity.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Office is now well established and has gained widespread acceptance among the priests and personnel of the diocese. This allows the office to provide information and guidance as required to the individual parishes and to encourage the Parish Priests to update their parish websites and newsletters accordingly.

In deciding how best to implement Standard 6 in the Diocese of Kilmore, a Consultation Process was started in 2018, based on a commitment made in the Diocesan Safeguarding Action Plan. The elements of this consultation are to be:

1. Convening consultation and feedback meetings using Parish clusters;
2. Seeking participants’ views at any diocesan safeguarding event; and
3. Undertaking an evaluation at the end of any activity with children and young people seeking their views and ideas.

Item 2 had already been initiated by way of a Communication Survey 2016, which was conducted through the distribution of short questionnaires to people attending safeguarding events. The questions asked in the survey questionnaire were:

1. What is your understanding of child safeguarding and why the Church works towards safeguarding children and the adults who work with them?
2. On a scale of 1 to 10, what is your level of awareness of how to recognise report and respond to child abuse? [10 being very aware].
3. How can you play a safeguarding role in your parish?
4. Did ‘Safeguarding Sunday’ (June 2016 and 2017) increase your level of awareness about safeguarding policies and procedures in your parish?
5. Please give your views or ideas on safeguarding practices in the diocese.

The reviewers had the opportunity to examine 22 returned questionnaires as a sample of the larger number returned. It is clear from the feedback provided that participants have given thought to the child safeguarding initiative and their existing and potential roles in it.

6.3 As Ireland is becoming more multi-cultural, there is a need to ensure that people's first language is used if possible to communicate important information. Kilmore Diocese has produced some of its safeguarding materials in Polish as a demonstration of its responsibilities in this regard. It would be important for the Safeguarding Children Committee to continue to be aware of the different nationalities that make up the diocesan community and to produce safeguarding documents translated into other languages, as any need to do so is identified in the future.

6.4 The Diocese of Kilmore plays its part in a well-established interagency group with Tusla and the Gardai. It links with a wide range of agencies and practitioners in planning and delivering training. The diocese also participates in an inter-dioceses forum for child safeguarding in the northern part of the island of Ireland. In all of these ways, Kilmore shows that it is committed to promoting '...a safe and caring community for children and to share best child safeguarding practice'.

As well as employing five Pastoral Assistants, the diocese also has a full-time professional Youth Director, and the reviewers met with her in the course of the fieldwork. This Youth Director is two years in the diocesan role and she works with young people of post-primary school age. Each parish in the diocese has a Youth Officer (volunteer), and she links in with them. She has started a process of organising a core committee for overall coordination through the various Deaneries to develop a more structured 5-Year Plan for youth services in the diocese.

Among the youth activities that she supports and facilitates are the John Paul 2 award scheme, and one-day youth pilgrimages, such as one to Glendalough at Easter 2018. The diocese will be bringing a group of young people to the World Meeting of Families in August 2018 in Dublin.

The Youth Director readily provided information on the safeguarding requirements of this level of work with young people. She is a member of the Safeguarding Children Committee which involves her in the wider diocesan child safeguarding undertakings. The Youth Director reports to the Director of the Diocesan Pastoral Centre. This centre, which has its own website (<https://kilmoredpc.ie>), '... is primarily focused on pastoral development and renewal in the Diocese of Kilmore and providing facilities for a number of diocesan organisations...'. The amenities of the Pastoral Centre are also '...available to external organisations as long as the events do not conflict with our Christian ethos'. The Youth Director and the Pastoral Centre also evidence a networking approach in the diocese and involvement with other agencies that are concerned with children's and young people's welfare.

Assessment of Standard 6

Based on the evidence seen in the course of the Review fieldwork and documents examined, the reviewers are satisfied that Kilmore Diocese meets in full the requirements of Indicators 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4. There is a good understanding that communication is a two-way process, and that feedback is necessary to establish that the messages put out by the various parts of the diocesan Child Safeguarding enterprise have been received and understood. Through feedback and evaluation, the diocese is also open to receiving the opinions and ideas of the wider public, which is an excellent antidote to the exclusive 'group-think' that can develop in closed systems and organisations.

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.

Indicators that ensure the standard is being met

| | |
|------------|---|
| 7.1 | The Church authority: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• puts in place arrangements to ensure and evaluate its compliance with the safeguarding standards at a local level;• produces a report on the level of compliance established through this audit exercise;• notifies the National Board in writing of the completion of this annual audit report. |
| 7.2 | The Church body produces a three-year child safeguarding plan that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• outlines the actions that will be taken to keep children safe;• identifies who is responsible for implementing these actions;• specifies the time frame within which actions are completed;• identifies the resources to ensure that the plan's objectives are realised. |
| 7.3 | The Church authority invites the National Board to carry out an independent review of its safeguarding practice in relation to the applicable indicators of the seven safeguarding standards, in accordance with standard terms of reference at a frequency agreed with the National Board. |

7.1 Bishop O'Reilly has notified the National Board of the completion of the parish self-audit exercise and of the DLP audit exercise each year, and on time. The parish self-audit is conducted in a very organised manner across the 34 parishes in the diocese. Twenty-nine separate pieces of information are sought and returned on the self-audit forms, and the DLP then collates these on an easy to read spread-sheet that indicates where any difficulties with non-compliance occur. The reviewers have examined the collated results for the 2017 self-audit and compliance is at a high level on most elements of the new Standards. The highest level of non-compliance on an issue was where 5 out of 34 parishes do not implement the appropriate hazard assessment process which is in place in the Diocese.

Once the collated report is prepared, the DLP brings this to the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee (DSC), which happened at the end of November 2017. Having discussed the results, the DSC sent four recommendations to Bishop O'Reilly for actions to be taken.

These were:

1. That the DSC would send out a letter of thanks and encouragement to each parish, also requesting that any gaps identified in the self-audit would be addressed without delay;

Second Review - Diocese of Kilmore

2. That some additional people knowledgeable of safeguarding would be temporarily co-opted to the DSC to allow for members of that committee to engage in a series of planned visits to parishes to provide guidance and support;
3. That future parish self-audits would be sent to the Parish Safeguarding Reps (PSR) rather than to the Parish Priests, while the procedure of completing the audit would remain a joint PSR / PP responsibility; and
4. That the two Trainers would provide a 2-hour training during the first half of 2018 to Parish Priests, Chairs of Pastoral Councils and Safeguarding Reps in relation to their roles and responsibilities and also regarding recruitment activities at parish level.

7.2 In earlier sections, the Kilmore Diocesan Action Plan 2016 – 2019 has been described and commented on. It is relevant and comprehensive, and it is structured by addressing each Standard in turn. It contains achievable targets for development, while identifying the personnel whose responsibility they are to initiate and realize. The time frames for the completion of each action are clearly set down through this excellent 9-page document.

As what is being addressed here is Standard 7, the three-year safeguarding plan can be illustrated by reproducing here what it contains about this Standard.

| Aims | Actions to be Taken | Responsibility | Time Frame |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Standard 7 Quality Assurance | Review the annual parish audit | Diocesan Safeguarding Committee | January 2016 on-going |
| | Send annual parish audit to each Parish Priest to complete | DLP to send audit to Parish Priests and Parish Safeguarding Reps for them to complete Diocesan Safeguarding Committee to consider and respond to each parish re: their audit Diocesan Safeguarding Committee makes recommendations to Bishop O'Reilly DLP to collate and send summary report and recommendations to Bishop O'Reilly Bishop O'Reilly to send letter to NBSCCCI informing it that safeguarding audit is complete | September annually November annually |

Second Review - Diocese of Kilmore

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| | DLP audit | DLP completes and sends summary report to Bishop O'Reilly who sends letter to NBSCCCI informing it that DLP audit is complete | November annually |
| | Evaluate the Raising Awareness information sessions in parishes. Safeguarding Reps will seek opinions and views of participants on safeguarding practices in the parish | Two Trainers inform the Safeguarding Reps during their training; and they in turn carry out the evaluation on completion of their parish information session | At each parish safeguarding information session |
| | Evaluate the programmes / activities involving children and young people Safeguarding Reps will seek opinions and views of safeguarding practices in the parish | Safeguarding Reps make sure that this is carried out by the leaders of the activity with children' young people and their parents | At the end of each parish children's activity |

There is nothing hugely sophisticated or complicated about this style of Safeguarding Plan; but it is easy to understand and an effective 'map' for all to follow to reach their goals in terms of children and young people being and feeling safe.

Strictly speaking, the Kilmore Diocesan Safeguarding Action Plan 2016 – 2019 does not specify all resources required for each target to be attained. Resources include people and time, both of which are covered; but it does not specify the material resources required. That said, the evidence seen in the course of the Review fieldwork indicates that all resources required to operate an effective Child Safeguarding Service are being made available. The DLP is a full-time member of staff who also acts as the overall Coordinator and as one of the two Trainers. She is a Religious Sister and Child Safeguarding is her Church ministry. The quality of the communications materials that are being produced and circulated is very high; and a significant commitment has been made to Training, both internally and externally provided, which requires considerable

expenditure. The diocese also publishes an annual total figure for the costs incurred by the diocese in its own legal defences, and costs of settlements reached with plaintiffs, so there is good accountability in place for monies expended.

7.3 The fact that this Review was conducted at the invitation of Bishop O'Reilly is evidence that Indicator 7.3 has been fully met. The National Board is very grateful to Bishop O'Reilly and his Child Safeguarding and other personnel for volunteering to allow the Review to trial some new approaches to the audit of practice, such as observing a children's Church-related activity, meeting with a complainant and corresponding with respondents. All of these engagements enabled the reviewers to gain perspectives of the users of the diocese's safeguarding services and so to get closer to the implementation of the various Standards on the ground.

Assessment of Standard 7

The reviewers are satisfied that Kilmore Diocese has fully met the requirements of Standard 7, and shows a genuine commitment to further improving both the quality of Child Safeguarding and the assurance of that quality through various forms of audit.

Conclusion

This report describes the rationale of the second phase of reviews, (which Kilmore Diocese agreed to pilot) as assessing the practice of child safeguarding against the Catholic Church in Ireland's current standards as detailed in *Safeguarding Children, 2016, Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland*; and identifying evidence which provides:

- 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 the Church body's Self-Audit – or correction and/or improvement of its Self-Audit;
- Opportunities for learning.

At the conclusion of a rigorous process, the reviewers confirm that without any doubt there is significant evidence across all the standards of quality people providing best practice approaches to child safeguarding, reporting allegations, providing flexible care to complainants, and ensuring that those accused are dealt with fairly and are monitored. The work is underpinned by strong leadership and committed individuals who provide direction training, time and concern for those children who are entrusted in their care.